



A Study on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) regarding diabetes mellitus and the effectiveness of patient education

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Open Access Research Journal of Biology and Pharmacy, 2026, 16(02), 081-094

Publication history: Received on 19 February 2026; revised on 03 April 2026; accepted on 06 April 2026

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53022/oarjbp.2026.16.2.0025>

Abstract

Diabetes mellitus is one of the most prevalent chronic metabolic disorders worldwide and is associated with significant morbidity and mortality due to its long-term microvascular and macro-vascular complications. Effective management of diabetes requires adequate patient knowledge, a positive attitude towards the disease, and appropriate self-care practices. However, lack of awareness regarding disease condition, lifestyle modification, medication adherence, and blood glucose monitoring remains a major challenge. Patient education and counselling have been identified as key strategies to improve disease understanding and promote behavioural change among diabetic patients.

Aim: To assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) regarding diabetes mellitus among patients and to evaluate the effectiveness of structured patient counselling in improving disease awareness, self-care behaviour, and treatment adherence.

Objective:

- To assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) of patients suffering from diabetes mellitus.
- To evaluate the role of patient counselling in improving knowledge about diabetes mellitus.
- To study the change in attitude of diabetic patients towards disease management after counselling.
- To assess the improvement in self-care practices following patient counselling.
- To compare pre-counselling and post-counselling KAP levels among diabetic patients.

Keywords: Diabetes mellitus; Patient education; Self-care practices; Medication adherence; Knowledge; Attitude; practice; questions

1. Introduction

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by persistent hyperglycaemia due to defects in insulin secretion, action, or both, and it has become a major public health problem worldwide, particularly in India[10]. The disease is associated with serious complications such as retinopathy, nephropathy, neuropathy, and cardiovascular disorders, which can be minimised through proper glycemic control, lifestyle modification, medication adherence, and regular monitoring.[11,15] However, inadequate knowledge, poor attitude, and improper self-care practices among patients remain significant barriers to effective disease management.[12,13] The Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) model is a useful tool to assess patient awareness and behaviour and to identify gaps that can be addressed through structured educational interventions.[14-16] Patient counselling and education have been shown to improve understanding, promote positive behavioural changes, and enhance treatment adherence. [17-18] Therefore, the present pre- and post-interventional study was conducted to assess the KAP regarding diabetes mellitus among patients and to evaluate the impact of patient education on improving their awareness and self-care practices.[19-20]

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2. Materials and methods

2.1. Study design and Subject recruitment

A pre and post intervention study was conducted to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) regarding diabetes mellitus among the participants.[21-23] The study was carried out in Salem, and participants were recruited by approaching individuals in public areas, healthcare facilities, educational institutions and local pharmacies.[22] Individuals who met the inclusion criteria were informed about the purpose of the study and those who were willing to participate were enrolled after obtaining written informed consent. The structured KAP questionnaire was administered before the educational intervention and reassessed after the intervention to evaluate the impact of patient education.[24-25-26] The collected data were recorded and analysed to determine the improvement in knowledge, attitude and practice scores. Participant confidentiality was maintained throughout the study period.

2.2. Instrument used

The materials used for the study included a data collection form (Annexure 1) to record participant details, an informed consent form (Annexure 2) to obtain consent from the participants, a structured diabetes awareness questionnaire (Annexure 3) to assess knowledge, attitude and practice, and a health education pamphlet (Annexure 4) used to provide patient education[27].

2.3. Methods

Participants were recruited in person from the selected study areas and the purpose of the study was explained, after which written informed consent was obtained. The questionnaire was administered either as self-filled or interviewer-assisted based on the participant's literacy level and preference, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. A pre-intervention assessment (pre-test) was conducted to collect baseline data on knowledge, attitude and practice using a pre-tested structured questionnaire, followed by a patient educational intervention on diabetes mellitus, and a post-intervention assessment (post-test) was carried out using the same questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational program. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: Section A assessed knowledge regarding diabetes, symptoms, complications and management; Section B assessed attitude towards diabetes control, medication, diet and follow-up; and Section C assessed practice including medication adherence, diet control, foot care, blood glucose monitoring and management of missed doses.

3. Observation and result

3.1. Knowledge section

- What is the main problem in diabetes?
 - High blood pressure
 - **High level of sugar in the blood**
 - Lack of vitamins

Table 1 Main problem in diabetes

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	14	15
B	79	82
C	7	3

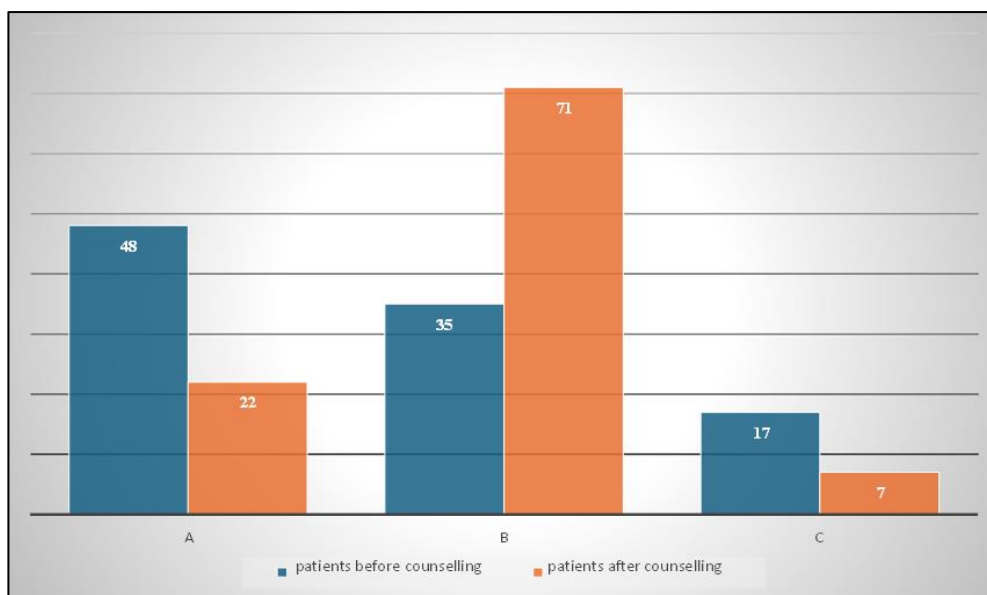


Figure 1 Main problem in diabetes

- Which of these is a common symptom of high blood sugar?
 - Shakiness and sweating
 - **Increased thirst and frequent urination**
 - Feeling very cold

Table 2 A Common symptom

options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	23	6
B	62	91
C	15	3

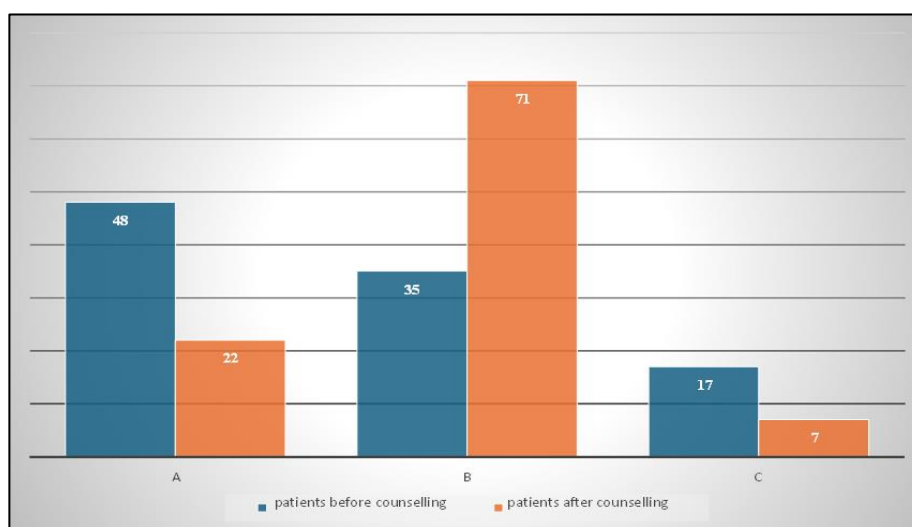


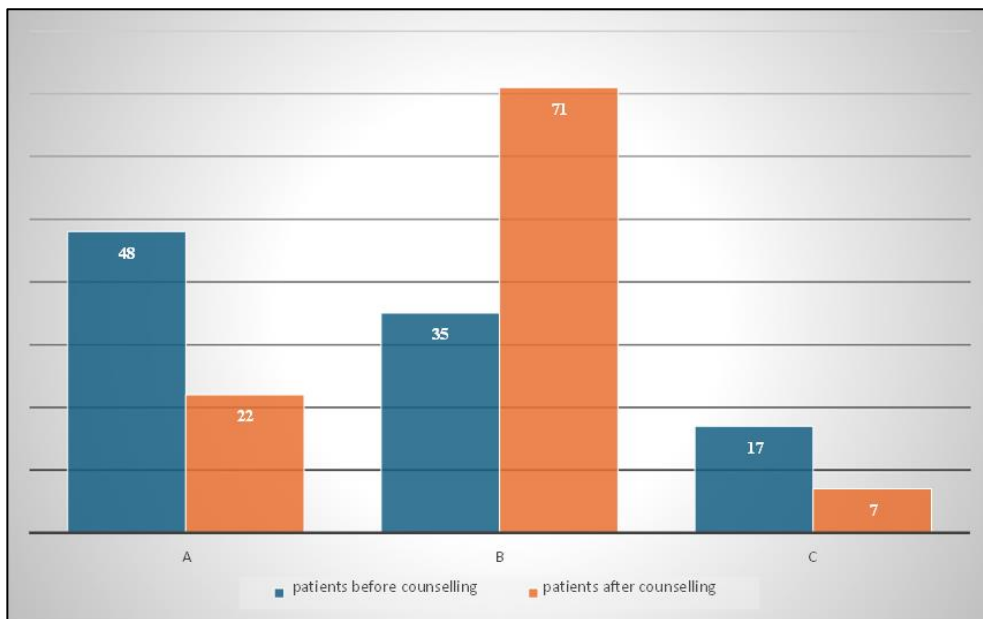
Figure 2 A Common symptom

- Why is foot care especially important for people with diabetes?

- For general cleanliness
- **Because injuries can heal slowly and lead to serious infections**
- It is not very important

Table 3 Important for foot care

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	23	7
B	65	89
C	12	4

**Figure 3** Important for foot care

- Regular physical activity (like walking) helps in diabetes by:
 - Curing the disease
 - Having no effect
 - **Helping your body use insulin better and controlling weight**

Table 4 Physical activity

options	Patients counselling before	Patients counselling after
A	31	8
B	15	23
C	54	69

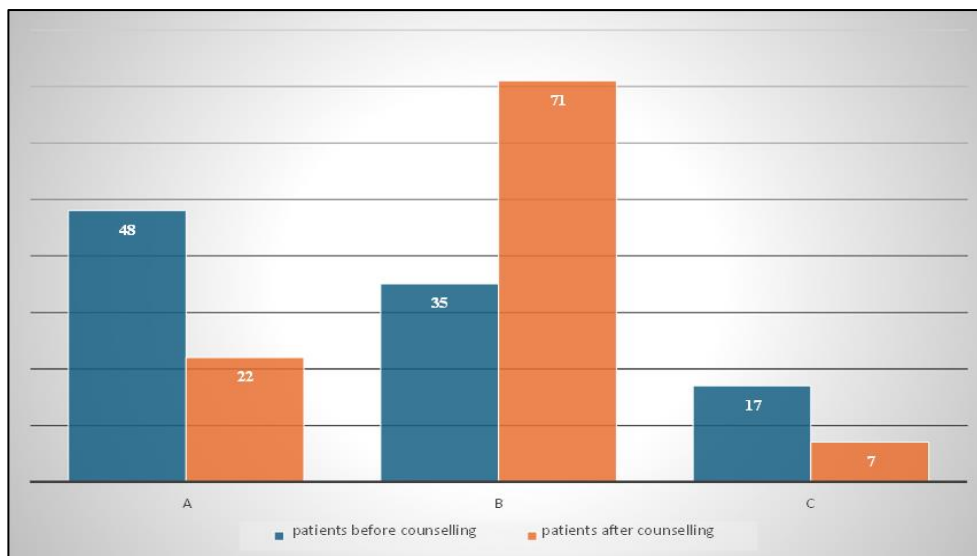


Figure 4 Physical activity

- What is the first thing you should do if you feel symptoms of low blood sugar (e.g., shaking, sweating)?
 - Take your diabetes medicine
 - Lie down and rest
 - **Have a spoon of sugar or a sweet drink**

Table 5 Feel symptoms

Options	Patients before counselling	Patient after counselling
A	16	7
B	20	10
C	64	83

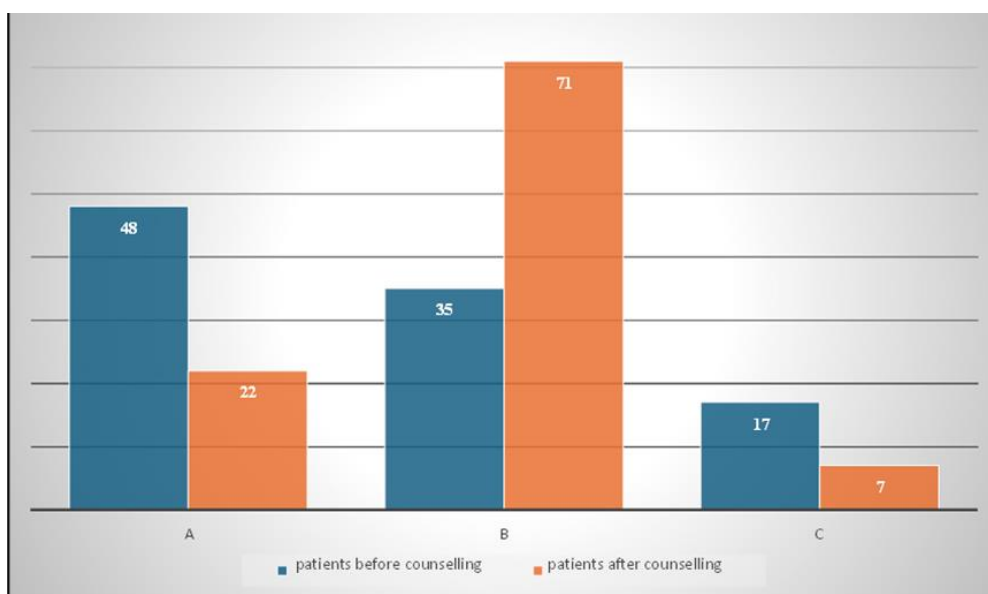


Figure 5 Feel symptoms\

- Can diabetes affect wound healing?
 - **Yes**
 - No
 - Sometimes

3.1.11. Observation

Table 6 Affect wound healing

Options	Patients before counselling	Patient after counselling
A	69	88
B	18	4
C	13	8

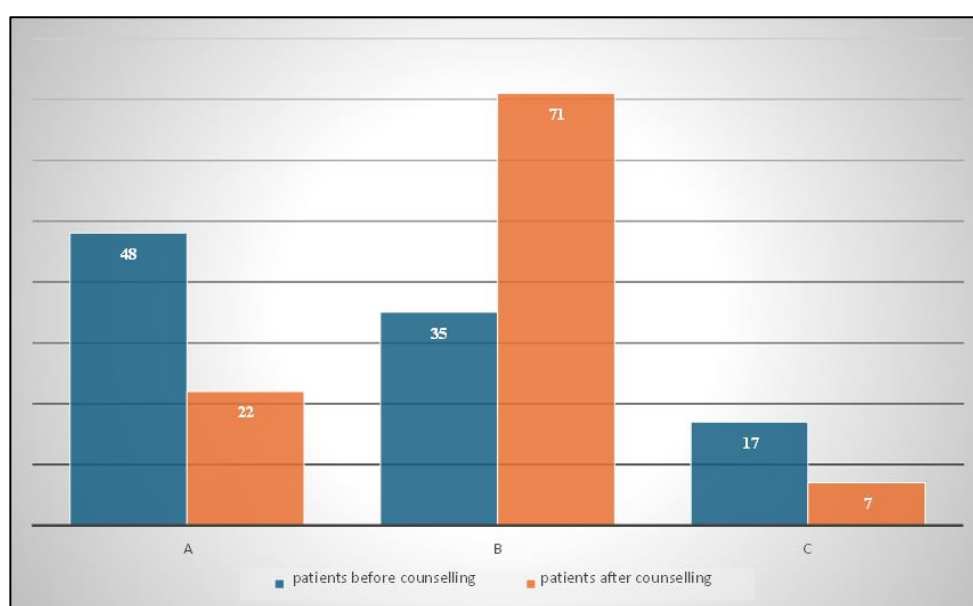


Figure 6 Affect wound healing

- Can uncontrolled diabetes cause loss of vision?
 - **Yes**
 - No
 - d) Only in elderly

Table 7 Loss of vision

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	55	87
B	29	7
C	16	6

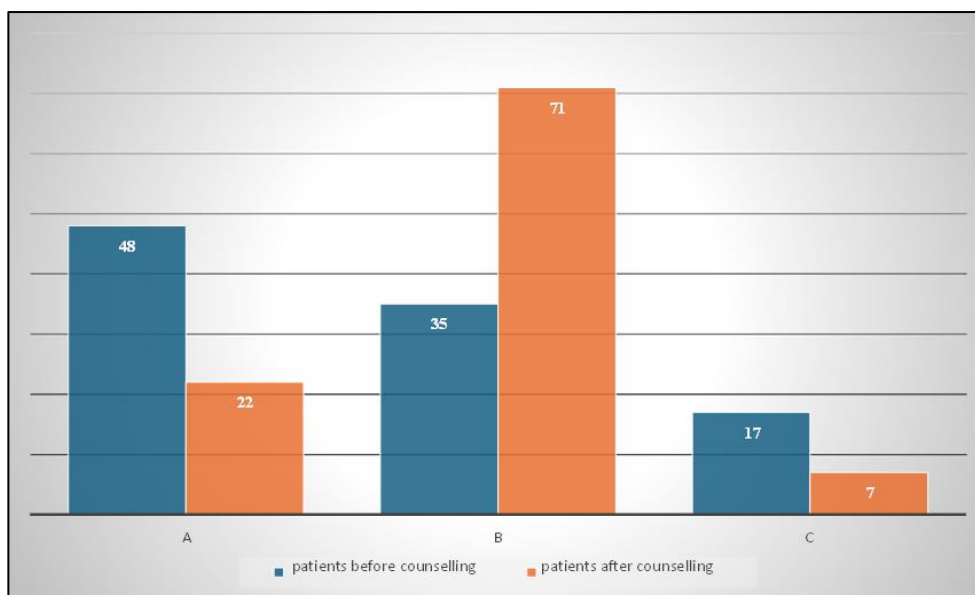


Figure 7 Loss of vision

3.2. Attitude section

- I believe that controlling my diabetes is very important for my future health.
 - **Agree**
 - Neutral
 - Disagree

Table 8 My future health

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	67	87
B	25	7
C	8	6

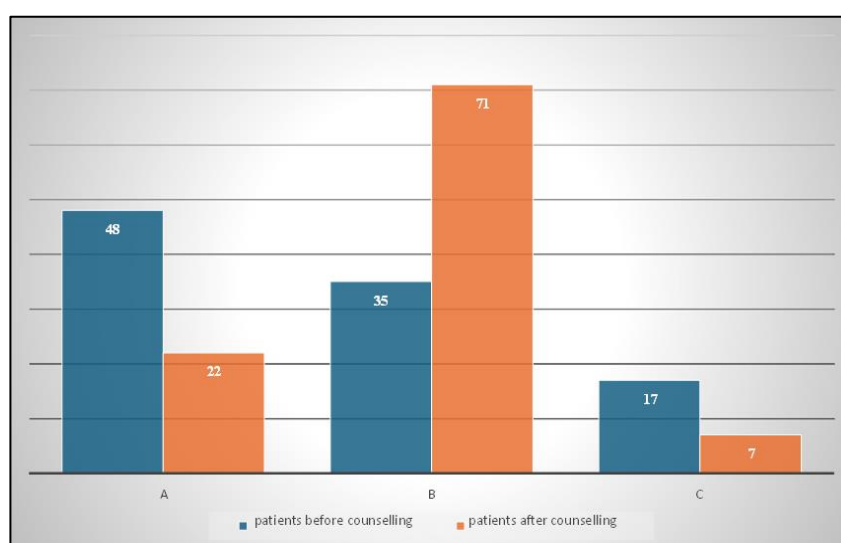
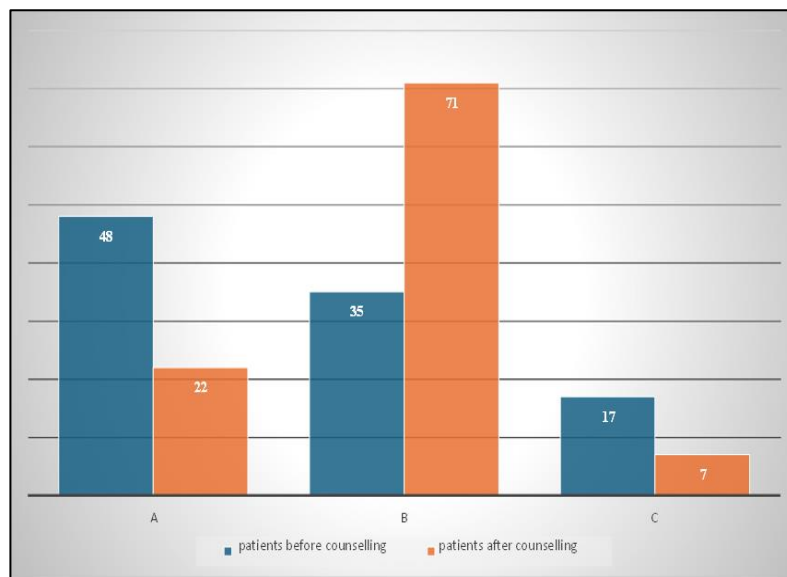


Figure 8 My future health

- Taking diabetes medication every day is a burden for me.
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - **Disagree**

Table 9 A burden Disease

Options	Patients counselling before	Patients counselling after
A	24	11
B	30	10
C	46	79

**Figure 9** A burden Disease

- Following a healthy diet for diabetes is too difficult and restrictive
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - **Disagree**

Table 10 Healthy diet

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	20	11
B	33	5
C	47	84

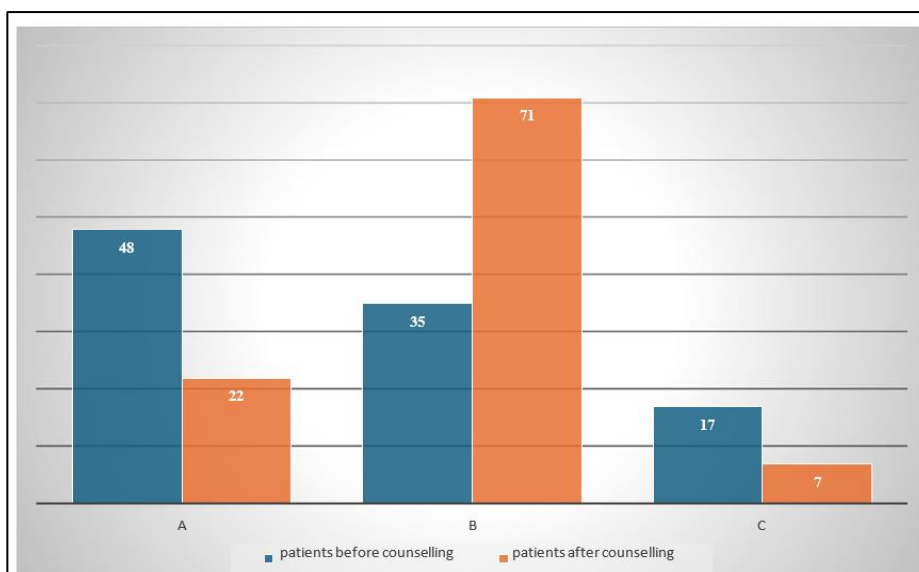


Figure 10 Healthy diet

- I believe that regular follow-up with my doctor is essential.
 - **Agree**
 - Neutral
 - Disagree

Table 11 Regular follow-up

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	62	90
B	28	9
C	10	1

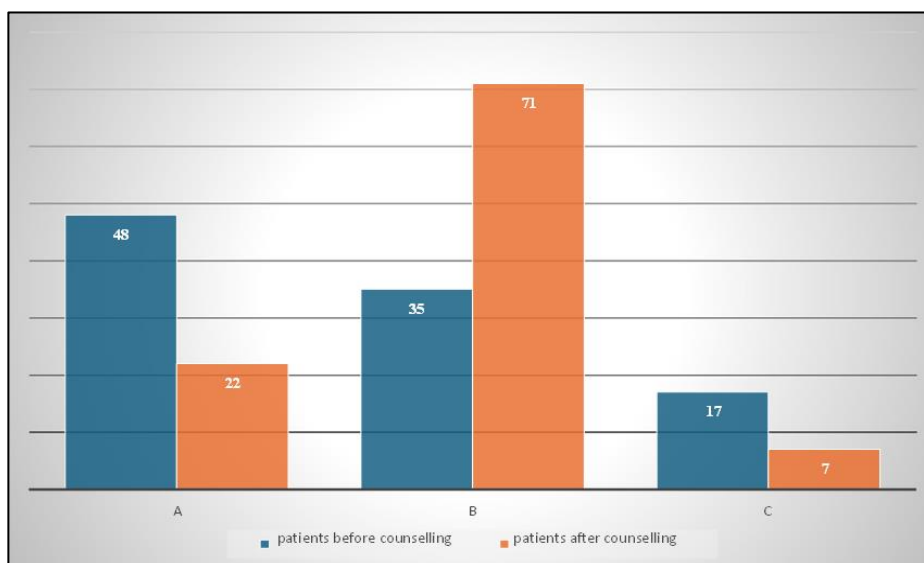


Figure 11 Regular follow-up

3.3. Practice section

- How often do you take your diabetes medicines exactly as prescribed by your doctor?
 - **Always**
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely/Never

Table 12 Medicines Prescribed

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	57	86
B	34	9
C	9	5

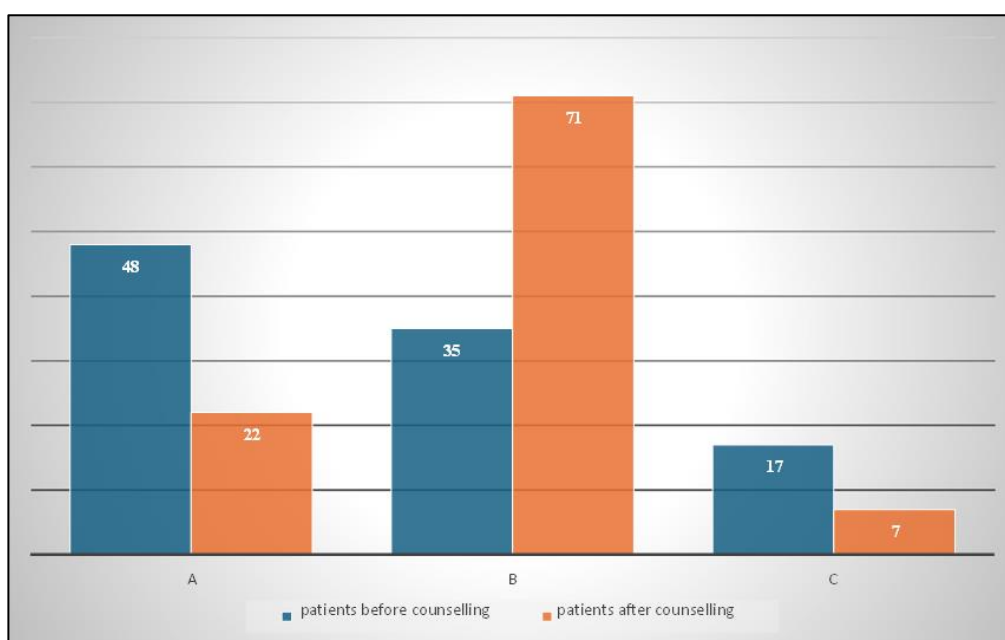


Figure 12 Medicines Prescribed

- How often do you check your feet for any cuts, blisters, or injuries?
 - **Daily**
 - Weekly
 - Rarely/Never

Table 13 Check for Cuts

options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	62	87
B	28	8
C	10	5

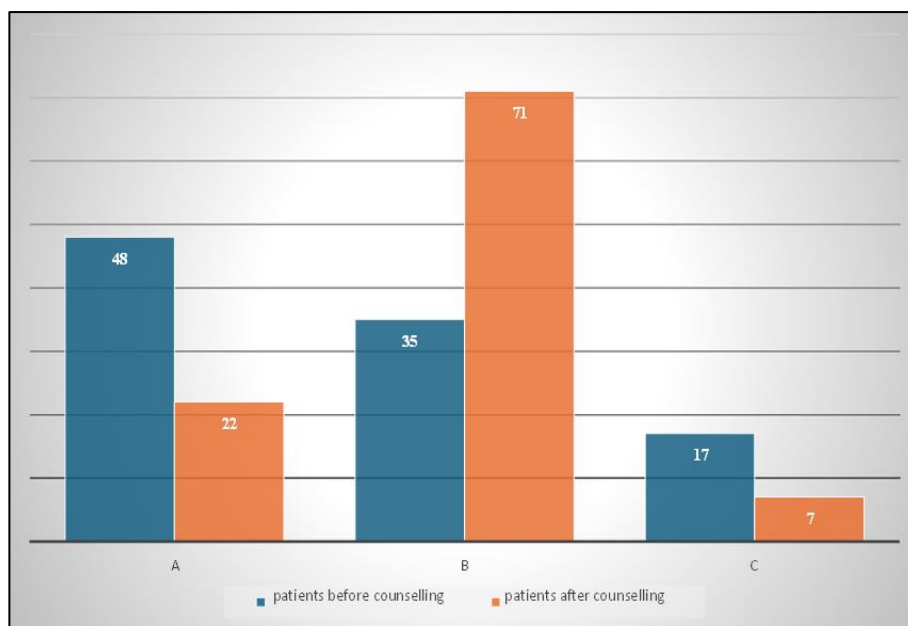


Figure 13 Check for Cuts

- How often do you follow a healthy diet plan for your diabetes?
 - **Most of the time**
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely/Never

Table 14 Healthy diet plan

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	57	72
B	33	23
C	10	5

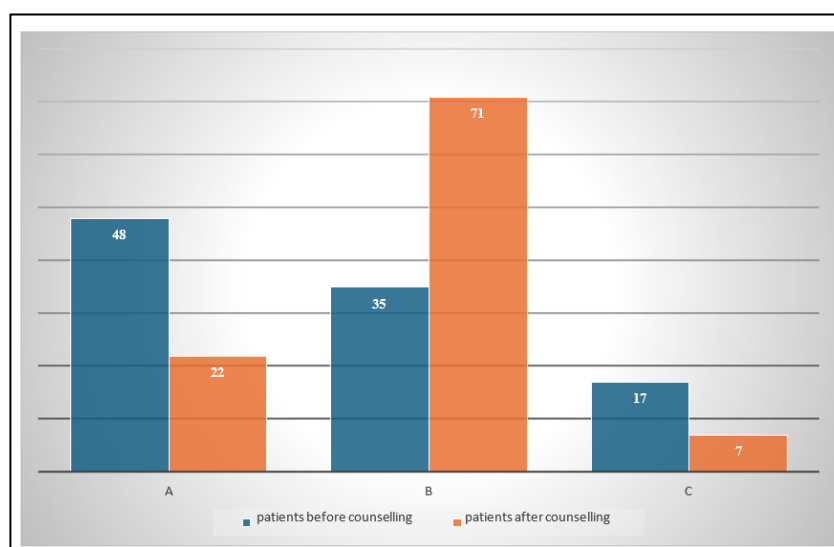
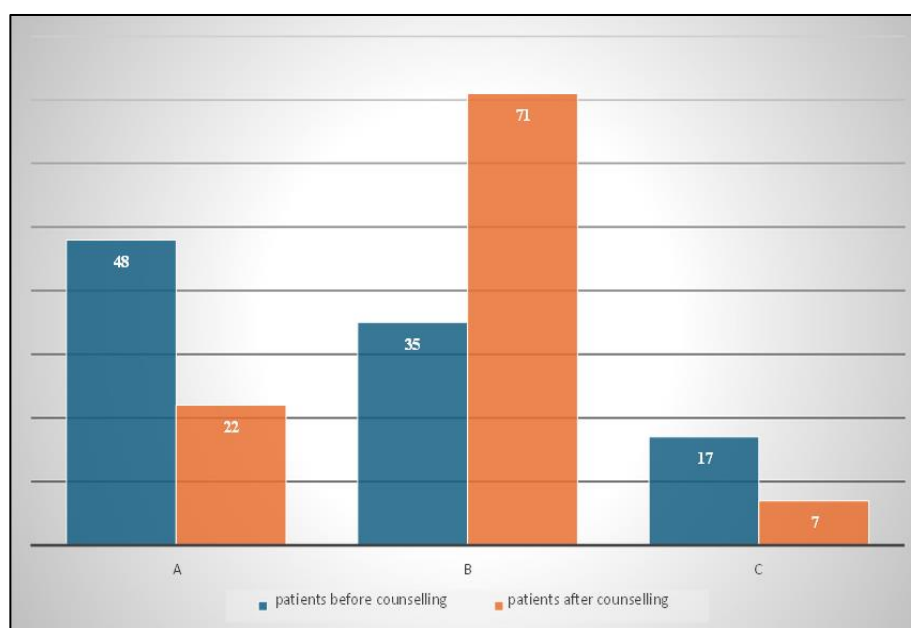


Figure 14 Healthy diet plan

- What do you do when you miss a dose of your diabetes medicine?
 - Take it as soon as I remember
 - **Skip it and take the next dose at the usual time**
 - Stop taking it for the rest of the day

Table 15 Missed dose

Options	Patients before counselling	Patients after counselling
A	48	22
B	35	71
C	17	7

**Figure 15** Missed dose

4. Discussion and Result

This study evaluated the impact of patient counselling on diabetes mellitus patients using the KAP questionnaire system. The comparison of responses before and after counselling clearly shows that counselling significantly improved the patients' knowledge, attitude, and practice towards diabetes management.

Before counselling, most patients had limited knowledge about diabetes. Many of them were unaware of the exact causes of diabetes, normal blood glucose levels, symptoms of hypo- and hyperglycaemia, importance of regular monitoring, and long-term complications. Knowledge about diet control, exercise, medication adherence, and foot care was also poor. This indicates that lack of proper information is a major barrier in effective diabetes control.

After counselling, there was a marked improvement in knowledge scores. More patients were able to:

- Identify diabetes as a chronic metabolic disease.
- Understand the importance of regular blood glucose monitoring. Recognise symptoms of hypoglycaemia and hyperglycaemia.
- Know the role of diet, physical activity, and medication in controlling diabetes. Understand the importance of foot care, eye check-ups, and regular follow-up.
- This shows that structured counselling is an effective tool in increasing awareness and understanding of diabetes.

- In terms of attitude, before counselling many patients showed a casual or negative attitude towards diabetes management. Some believed that medicines alone were enough, some felt lifestyle changes were difficult, and some were not worried about long-term complications.
- After counselling, there was a positive shift in attitude. Patients showed: Greater acceptance of diabetes as a lifelong condition.
- Increased motivation to follow diet and exercise plans. Better confidence in self-management.
- Stronger belief that good control can prevent complications.

5. Conclusion

The present study clearly demonstrates that patient counselling based on the KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) questionnaire system has a significant positive impact on diabetes management. After counselling, patients showed marked improvement in their knowledge about the disease, its complications, and the importance of lifestyle modification, medication adherence, and regular monitoring. Their attitude towards diabetes also became more positive, with increased motivation and responsibility for self-care.

Moreover, practical behaviours such as following a proper diet, engaging in regular physical activity, monitoring blood glucose levels, maintaining foot care, and attending regular medical follow-ups were significantly improved after counselling. The higher number of correct and positive responses in the post-counselling KAP assessment confirms the effectiveness of structured patient education.

Thus, patient counselling plays a crucial role in empowering diabetes patients, improving treatment outcomes, and preventing long-term complications. Incorporating regular counselling sessions into routine clinical practice can enhance patient compliance, promote healthier lifestyles, and ultimately improve the overall quality of life of diabetic patients.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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