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Anaesthesia knowledge and associated factors among preoperative patients at Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Introduction & Objectives: Anaesthesia is a vital component of surgical care, yet patients' knowledge regarding anaesthesia remains poorly studied in resource-limited settings such as Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Inadequate preoperative knowledge heightens patient anxiety and can adversely affect decision-making and perioperative outcomes. This study aimed to assess the level of knowledge and associated socio-demographic factors regarding anaesthesia among patients scheduled to undergo surgery at the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna.

Materials & Methods: A descriptive, institution-based cross-sectional study was conducted among 369 pre-operative patients awaiting elective surgery, consecutively recruited from the surgical units of the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, from April to July 2026. Data were collected using a pretested, interviewer-administered questionnaire covering socio-demographic characteristics and a seven-item knowledge assessment. Data were analysed using IBM SPSS 27 with descriptive statistics and the Chi-square test ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Most participants (84.8%) demonstrated inadequate knowledge of anaesthesia; only 15.2% showed an adequate level. Knowledge was significantly associated with gender ($p = 0.013$), marital status ($p < 0.001$), and occupation ($p = 0.027$). Males showed higher adequate knowledge (19.6%) than females (10.3%). Single patients (29.4%) showed higher adequate knowledge than married (12.9%) and widowed (8.3%) patients. Employed patients (18.7%) showed higher adequate knowledge than unemployed patients (10.3%). No statistically significant with age, ethnicity, religion, education, residence, timing of clinic visit, or prior anaesthesia experience.

Conclusions: Patients scheduled to undergo surgery at the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna had inadequate knowledge of anaesthesia, with gender, marital status, and occupation as significantly associated factors. These findings highlight the need for structured, targeted pre-operative educational interventions to improve preparedness and reduce peri-operative anxiety.

Keywords: *Anaesthesia, knowledge, associated factors, preoperative patients, Teaching Hospital Jaffna*