

Awareness on Unani medicine among the urban community people in Dhaka city

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Abstract

Common reasons for frustration against modern medicine are due to its serious side effects and lack of curative value in many of the chronic disorders. Traditional systems rely heavily on herbal material compared to modern system of medicine (allopathy). The aim of this study was to find out the awareness, misconceptions and myths about the herbal drugs in urban areas. A sample of 321 persons was assessed by a proper set of questionnaire called proforma by door to door visit. Present study indicates that very little population (36%) is aware about the herbal drugs against a huge population (64%). So the appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness among the society related to herbal drugs. The study found, the age of the respondents were (34.41±12.38) years. Majority 37.38% of them are graduates. About 90.65% of the respondents heard about Unani medicine and 30.84% heard from television. About 43.9% respondents were very good awareness about Unani medicine. About 74.1% know the effect of Unani medicine. About 32.56% think that the effect of Unani medicine is good. About 73.8% took Unani medicine for diseases. About 55.7% are pleased to take Unani medicine. About 59.6% told that Unani medicine uses for all kinds of diseases. About 52.9% don't know the user classes of Unani medicine and 49% told the price of Unani medicine is high. 86.1% told the use of Unani medicine is necessary. About 56% told that it has no side effect. About 33.96% of the respondents think to get available Unani medicine, need more awareness about Unani medicine. The study suggests the appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness among the society related to Unani medicine.

Keywords: unani medicine, Dhaka city, unani pharmacy

Introduction

Today's medicinal science has been partly developed from ancient indigenous science practiced in various countries and many of the pharmaceuticals currently available in the modern medicine have long history of usage as herbal remedies including opium, ephedrine, digitalis and quinine. According to World Health Organization (WHO) about 80 per cent of population in these countries still relies on traditional or herbal medicines for their primary health-care needs [1]. India has one of the richest plant based medical traditions in the world. It is a tradition that is of remarkable contemporary relevance for ensuring health security to the teeming millions. There are over 1.5 million practitioners of traditional medicinal system using medicinal plants in preventive, health promotional and curative applications [2]. There are over 7800 medicinal drug-manufacturing units in India, which consume about 2000 tons of herbs annually [3]. The herbal products today symbolize safety in contrast to the synthetics that are regarded as unsafe for humans and environment [4].

The modern, allopathic medicines became popular and traditional therapy was put away from mainstream. Allopathy focuses on diagnosis, treatment and cure for acute illnesses via potent pharmaceutical drugs, surgery, radiation and other treatment modalities [5]. It works in hand with technology that aids to devise diagnostic procedures, drugs with specific actions, vaccines, sophisticated surgical procedures and transplants, hence, imparting it the top position among all medical systems [6]. But it has flaws like inefficacy in curing certain chronic diseases and unavoidable adverse effects, which need to be addressed seriously to generate an efficient and safe healthcare system. Traditional systems rely heavily

on herbal materials compared to modern system of medicine (Allopathy). Knowledge base of traditional system originates from years of experience, observation, empiricism and intuition that is passed over generations [7]. Only comprehensive approach covering all the aspects of health with drawback of inadequacy in managing emergencies and lack of technology assisted diagnostic techniques must be taken care of. India has a very long, safe and continuous usage experience of many herbal drugs in the officially recognized alternative systems of health Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Naturopathy. These systems have rightfully existed side-by-side with Allopathy. The present study was undertaken to find out the awareness, misconceptions of common man regarding traditional systems (Ayurveda, Homeopathy) and the overall preference of all medicinal system in case of common ailments and medical emergency [8].

Materials and methods

A descriptive cross sectional study was done. Study place were Mirpur-11, Pollibi, Shamoli and ASA University Bangladesh from January 2016 to August 2016. Sample size were a total number 321 person who came in Shamoli Hamdard treatment centre, Mirpur and ASA University students were interviewed for the study. Purposively sample technique was applied and a semi structure questionnaire was used for data collection tool. Data collection was done by face to face interview with the all respondents. One male interviewer, one female interviewers and researcher herself were involved in data collection. The interviewers were trained up before the beginning of data collection. Data was

analyzed by using the software SPSS 16.0 version. And data are presented in tables, graphs, charts and bars. University ethical review committee approved this protocol.

Results

A total number of 321 respondents were interviewed. The ages of the respondents were (34.41±12.38) years.

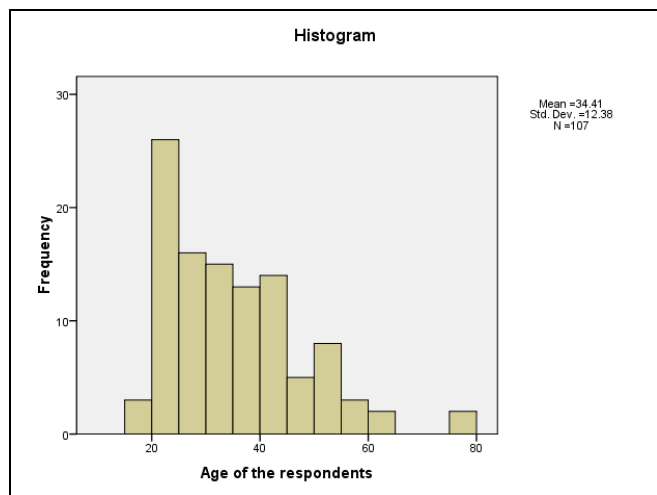


Fig 1: Distribution of the respondents according to age

Regarding educational status, majority 37.38% of them are graduates in contest 9.35% respondents were secondary school certificate. About 27.10% respondents had complete higher secondary school certificate and 26.17% respondents were found master’s degree. The majority respondents (58.9%) were male while 41.1% were female (Figure-2).

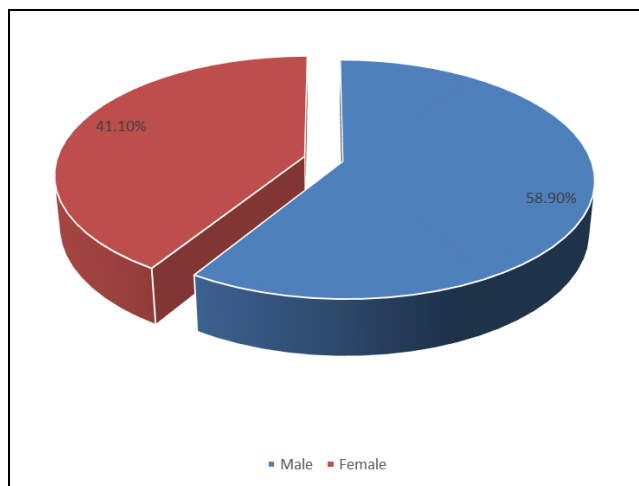


Fig 2: Distribution of the respondents according to sex

96.7% of respondents were found Muslim in the contest only.9% was found Christian and 9.3% respondents were found Hindu.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to religion (n=321)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Religion		
Muslim	288	89.7
Hindu	30	9.3
Christian	3	.9

Among the respondents, majority 66.4% were married while 32.5% were unmarried in the contest only.9% were found divorced.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to marital status (n=321)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Marital status		
Married	213	66.4
Unmarried	105	32.5
Divorce	3	.9

The study investigated the monthly income of the respondents. Mean income of the respondents were (Tk. 34695.95±32705.705). Most of the respondents (35.1%) incomes were Tk. 5000-19000.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to monthly income (n=321)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Monthly income (Tk.)		
Tk. 5000-19000	78	35.1
Tk. 20000-34000	60	27
Tk. 35000-49000	27	12.2
Tk. 50000-64000	24	10.8
Tk. 65000-79000	09	4.1
Tk. 80000-94000	24	10.8
Mean income (Tk. 34695.95±32705.705)		

Mean family member of the respondents were 4.95±1.84. Most of the respondents (49.5%) family members were 5-7 persons.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to family members n=321

Variables	Number	Percentage
Family member		
2-4 person	138	43.0
5-7 person	159	49.5
7-10 person	24	7.5
Mean =person 4.95, SD= person 1.84		

Most of the respondents (69.2%) are in single family in contest 30.8% are lived in combined family.

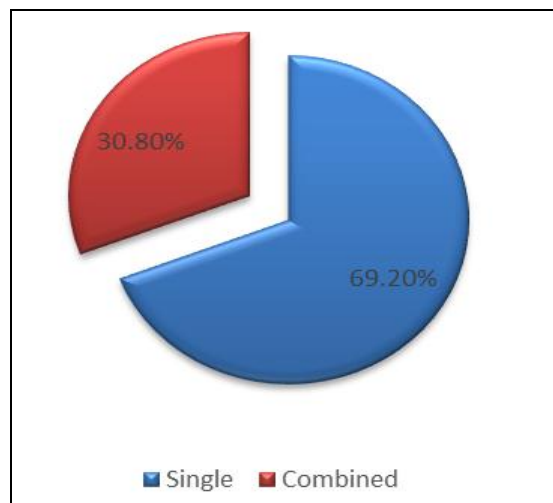


Fig 3: Distribution of the respondents according to family types

90.65% of the respondents heard about Unani medicine. In contest of that only 2.8% don't know about Unani medicine. About 6.54% of the respondents don't hear about Unani medicine. As per operational definition, 43.9% respondents

were very good awareness about Unani medicine in the contest 26.2% of them had poor awareness about Unani medicine. About 9.9% had good awareness about Unani medicine (Table-5).

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to level of awareness on Unani medicine n=321

Awareness about Unani Medicine	Number	Percentage
Very good awareness	141	43.9
Good awareness	114	29.9
Poor awareness	84	26.2

Nearly one third of the respondents (34%) heard about Unani medicine from television. In contest of that only 1% of them heard about Unani medicine from radio. About 29.9% of the respondents heard about Unani medicine from doctors/health

workers while 1% of the respondents heard about Unani medicine from her husband. About 13.4% of the respondents heard about Unani medicine by reading newspaper and 11.3% of them are known by parents.

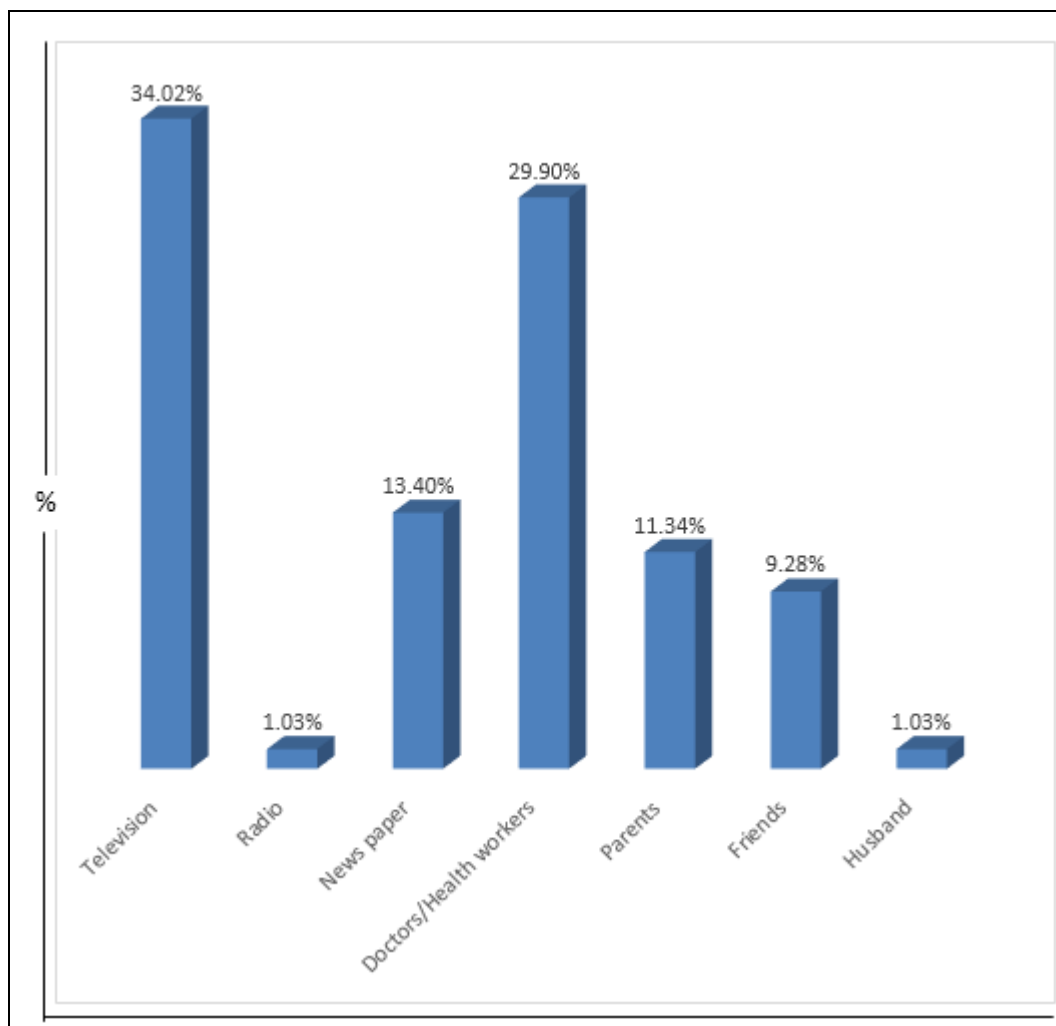


Fig 4: Distribution of the respondents according to source of information about Unani medicine

About 85.4% of the respondents know about the source of Unani medicine and 7.8% the respondents answer was negative while 6.8% the respondents don't know about the source of Unani medicine. Most of the respondents (51.85%) overview about the source of Unani medicine is only Unani pharmacy. In the contest of that 2.11% of them told about the source of Unani medicine is general shop. About 46.32% of the respondents told about the source of Unani medicine is all pharmacy. The study investigated that 70.1% respondents know about the types of Unani medicine in contest 14% the

respondents don't know about the types of Unani medicine answer and 15.9% the respondents answer was negative about the types of Unani medicine. Most of the respondents (50.63%) knows that all types of Unani medicine are available while 2.53% of them knows that the types of Unani medicine is semisolid. 20.25% respondents think that it is only tablet and 18.99% of them knows that the types of Unani medicine is syrup. Only 7.59% knows that the types of Unani medicine are capsule. Most of the respondents (74.1%) know the effect of Unani medicine while 11.2% the respondents don't know

about the effect of Unani medicine and 14% the respondents answer was negative about the effect of Unani medicine. Most of the respondents (32.56%) think that the effect of Unani medicine is good while 1.16% of respondents overview that the effect of Unani medicine is bad. About 31.4%

respondents think that the effect of Unani medicine is very good in the contest 3.49% of them like to no comments about the effect of Unani medicine. About 31.4% of the respondents think that the effect of Unani medicine is little good.

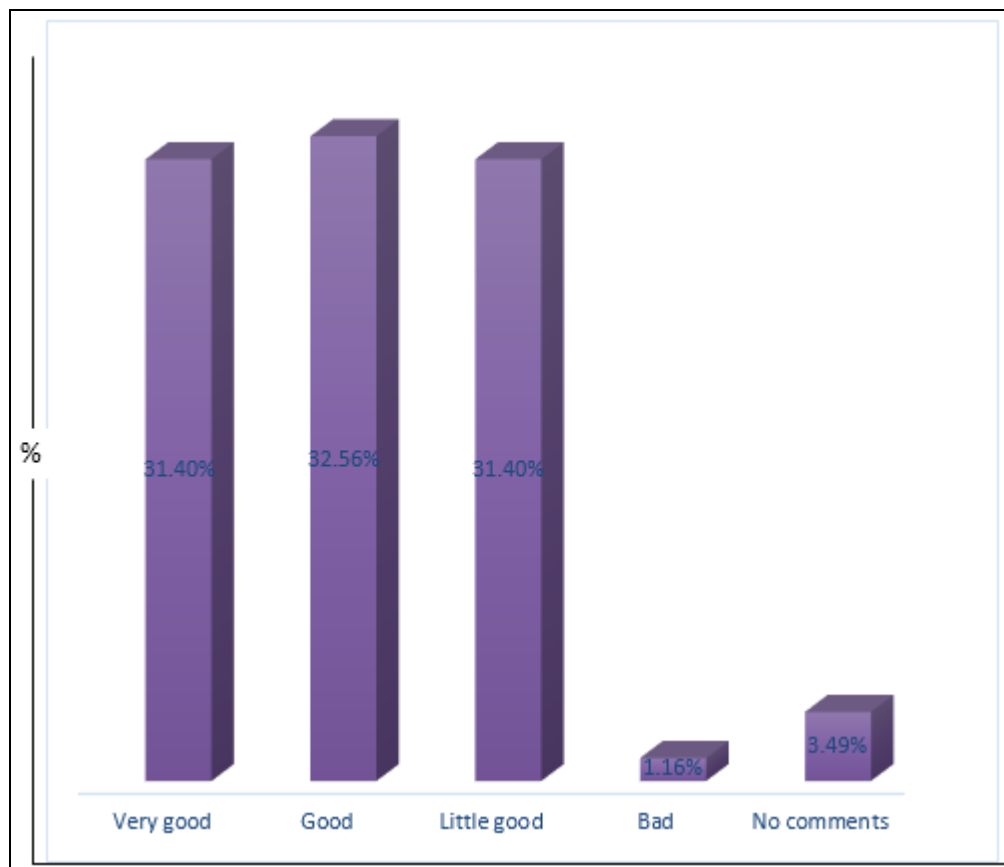


Fig 5: Distribution of the respondents according to effect of Unani medicine

Most of the respondents (73.8%) take Unani medicine for diseases while only 26.2% the respondents take Unani medicine never. Most of the respondents (55.7%) are pleased to take Unani medicine in the contest 6.33% of respondents were not pleased after taking Unani medicine and 37.97% respondents told that Unani medicine is little good. According to respondents view, most of them (59.6%) told that Unani medicine uses for all kinds of diseases. In the contest 6.4% of them told that Unani medicine uses for sexual diseases and 34% of them told that Unani medicine uses for chronic diseases. More than fifty percentage respondents (52.9%) don't know the user classes of Unani medicine while 16.3% of them told the user are rich and 16.3% told the user are poor. Most of the respondents (49%) told the rate of Unani medicine is high and 31.7% told the rate of Unani medicine is low. In contest of that 19.2% of the respondents don't know the cost

or rate of Unani medicine. Most of the respondents (86.1%) told that the use of Unani medicine is necessary and 10.9% of them don't know about the necessity of Unani medicine in contest of that only 3% of the respondents answer was negative about the necessity of Unani medicine. About 56% of the respondents think that Unani medicine has no side effect and 30.5% told that they had no knowledge about the side effect of Unani medicine while 13.3% think that Unani medicine have some side effect. Regarding of the study, 33.96% of the respondents think to get available Unani medicine, need more awareness about Unani medicine, 15.09% think about government help, 13.21% think for available of Unani medicine in all pharmacies and 11.32% think about the publicity of Unani medicine. About 26.42% of the respondents think for availability of Unani medicine all the above matters are needed.

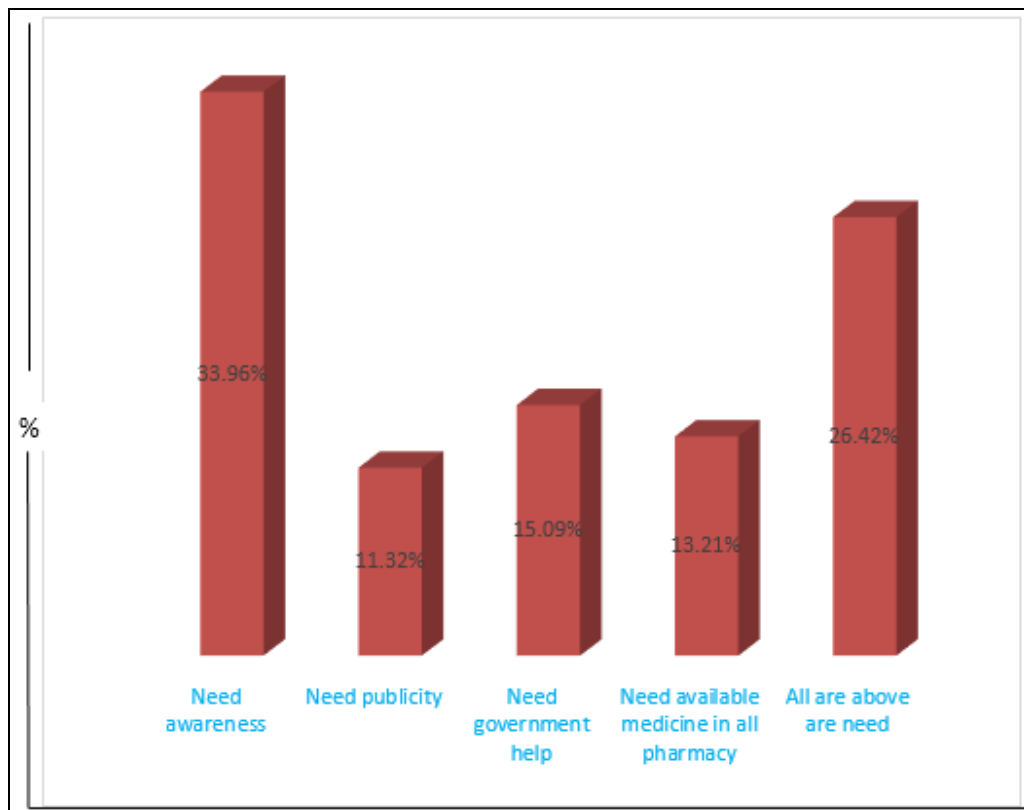


Fig 6: Distribution of the respondents according to their assessment for availability of medicine

Discussion

Unani medicine practitioners should practice based on Unani theory and should warn patients when metals, minerals or poisonous substances are included in the prescription or prescribed medicinal formulation. Information regarding the safe use of these substances, signs of potential adverse effects and recommendations for emergency response to these adverse events should be provided. The information collected from the pharma co-vigilance system should be learned by Unani practitioners. The dispensers should verify the prescriptions every time, and refer back to the prescribers immediately whenever it is needed [9].

Herbal drug constitutes only those traditional medicines which primarily use medicinal plant preparations for therapy [10]. Herbal medicines may be made from the whole plants or a part of the plant, including the bark, stem, root, or seed and can be purchased fresh, dried, in pills, capsules, and in tinctures that are preserved in alcohol, glycerin, or another liquid. Herbal medicines are also in great demand in the developed world for primary health care because of their efficacy, safety and lesser side effects [11].

India is a vast repository of medicinal plants that are used in traditional medical treatments. Certain herbs have become popular over the last some years, but herbal medicines are still poorly understood by the public, medical practitioners and the media [12]. The various indigenous systems such as Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani and Allopathy use several plant species to treat different ailments [13]. Because of the toxicity and side effects of allopathic medicines, the use of herbal medicine becoming popular. This led to sudden increase in the number of herbal drug manufactures [14].

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the Unani System of Medicine (USM) as an alternative system for

the health care needs of human population. Alternative medicine is being practiced worldwide. Unani is one of the most well known traditional medicine systems and draws on the ancient traditional systems of medicine of China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Persia and Syria. In fact Unani medicine and herbal products are gradually more being used in many countries where modern medicine is easily available. India has accepted it as one of the alternative health care system and has given it official status [15].

Unani system is popular day by day. Bangladesh is one of the Muslim countries of the world. Many worldwide companies are production herbal/Unani products. So, these findings vary from the results of [16].

Conclusions

The appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness about importance of the traditional system in the society. This can be made possible by integration of modern medicine with traditional systems of medicine. Traditional systems must undergo evidence based approach as carried out in modern medicine. Traditional medicines must be extensively exposed to clinical research to establish efficacy and safety without any bias.

There is limited information available regarding interactions between herbal products and conventional medicines. However, awareness of this issue is increasing and the potential for herbal and conventional medicines interactions should always be considered. Therefore it is important that the patient should give the Unani medicine practitioner full details of all medicines being taken concurrently. Proper precautions and monitoring are required and, if necessary, treatment should be adapted to accommodate for potential herb/conventional drug interaction.

So the appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness about importance of the herbal drugs in the society. This can be made possible by various ways like involvement of Unani practitioners, govt. awareness programmers, medical camps by pharmaceutical companies, conduction of seminars in educational institutions to create awareness among the young generation. Such studies are also required to be carried out in each corner of country to find out the depth of awareness and measures to be taken.

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