

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Awareness Among Females in the UAE: A Cross-Sectional Study

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INTRODUCTION

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal disorder affecting females of reproductive age. Clinical guidelines recommend following diagnostic criteria of PCOS based on an appropriate assessment of the patient's clinical presentation. Sufficient awareness among the population will prompt females to seek medical attention when necessary.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess awareness about PCOS among females in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- To correlate awareness status with women's backgrounds, demographics, and education levels.

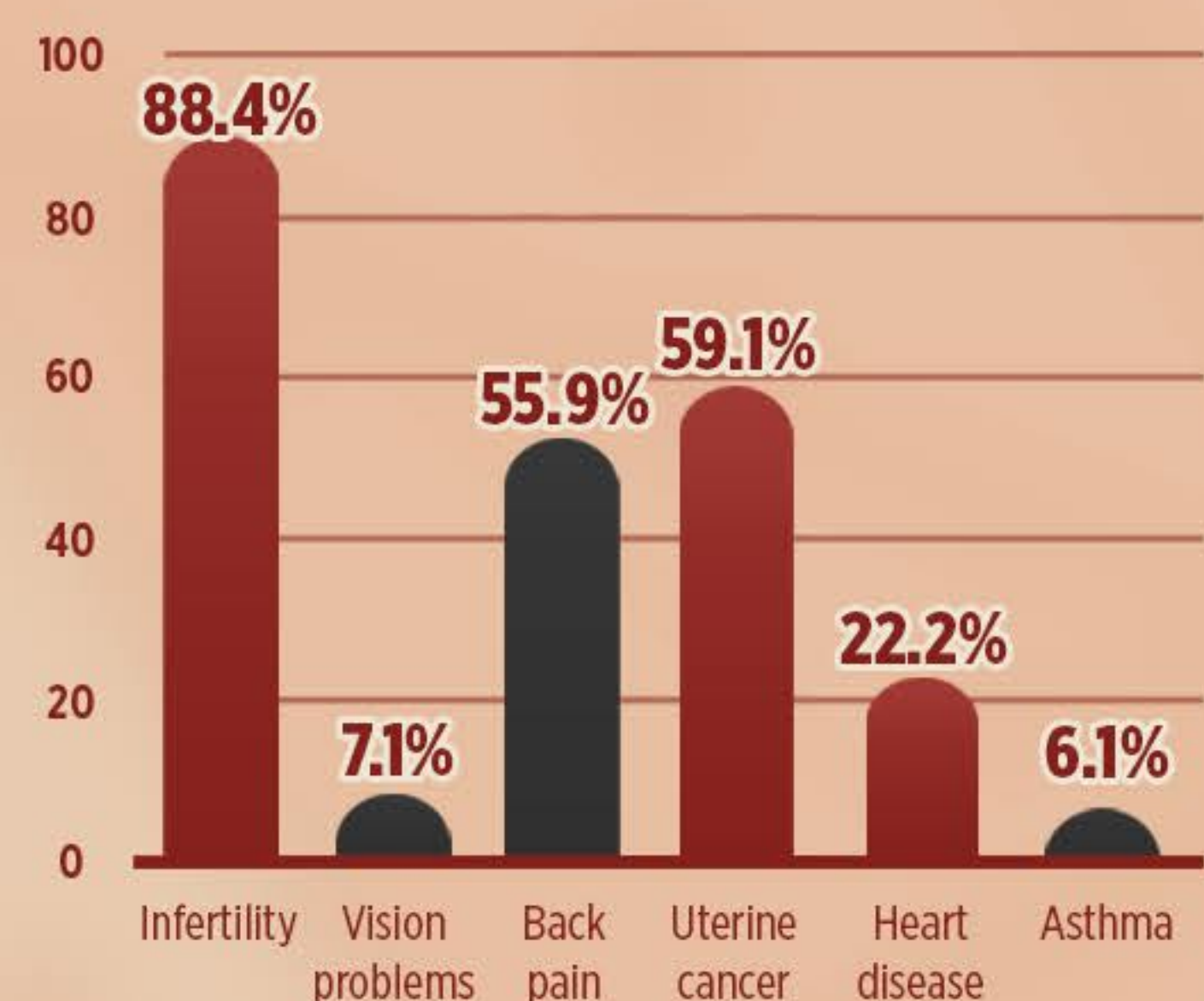
METHODS

In early 2020, 430 females over the age of 18 years were interviewed in the UAE using a 21-item questionnaire that assessed awareness of PCOS as a term, its causes, symptoms, complications, treatment, and prevention. IBM® SPSS® Statistics was used for data entry and analysis.

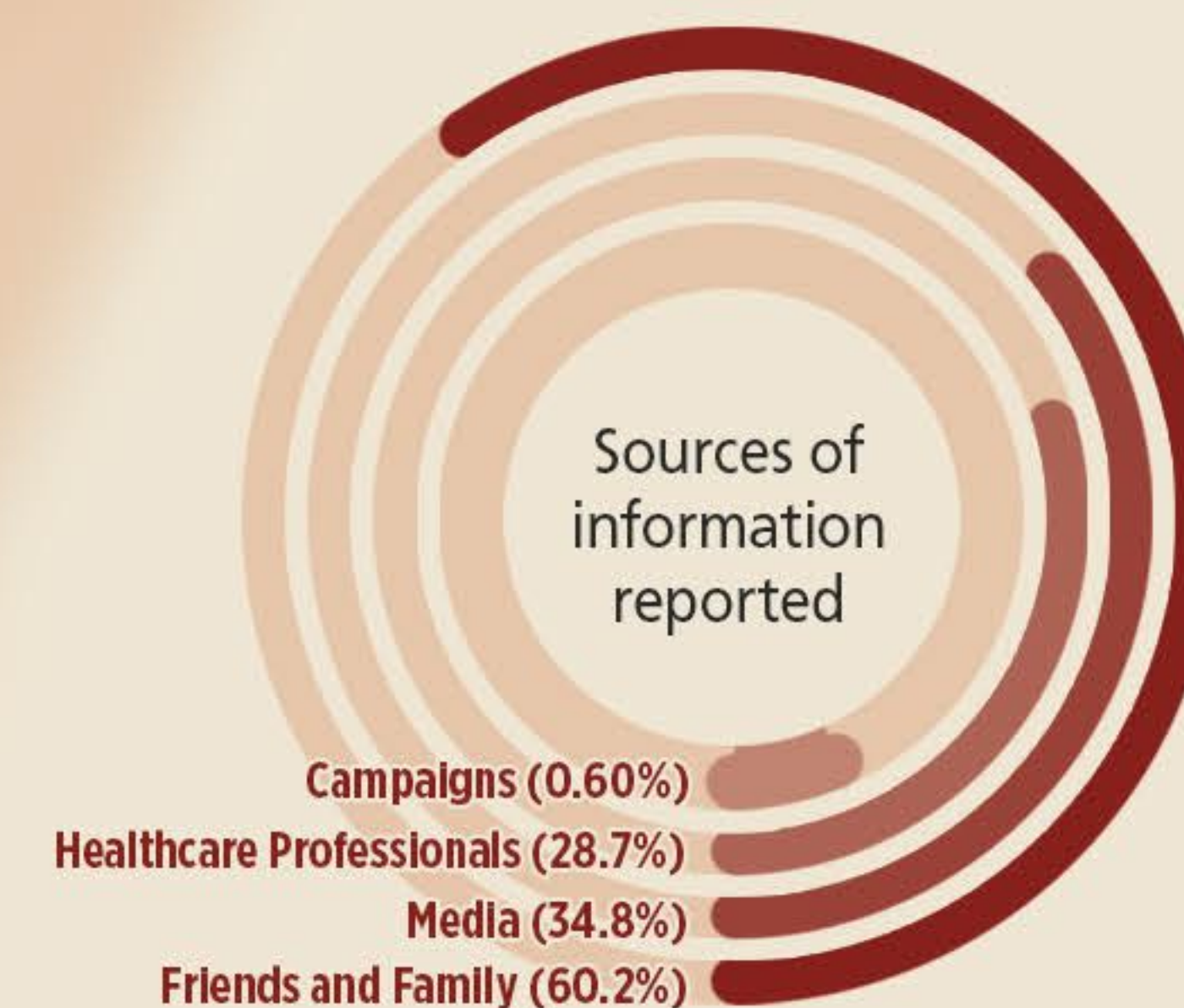
RESULTS

349 participants were familiar with the term PCOS. However, only 21.7% of them had sufficient awareness of the syndrome (95% CI = 17.77-25.71%). Being knowledgeable of PCOS was significantly associated with having a previous diagnosis ($p=0.002$) and with studying or working in a medical field ($p<0.001$). In addition, females who knew someone diagnosed with PCOS were 5 times more likely to be aware compared to those who didn't (95% CI = 2.5-10.8; $p<0.001$). Age, education level, and nationality showed no correlation with awareness status.

How frequently was each complication chosen?



ONLY 20%
OF FEMALES
DEMONSTRATED
SUFFICIENT
AWARENESS OF
THE SYNDROME



DISCUSSION

Among the study sample, PCOS awareness was found to be low despite the fact that a majority achieved higher education, and almost half working/studying in a medical field. Notably, subjects were least knowledgeable about complications—a finding that was similarly reported in the literature. This extends time to diagnosis and decreases patients' quality of life as PCOS is most easily managed in the early stages.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the level of PCOS awareness was insufficient. Accordingly, awareness of PCOS needs to be raised among females in the UAE, aiding early diagnosis and improving patient-oriented outcomes.

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