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Original Research Article

Comparative evaluation of waist-to-height ratio and body mass index as predictors of cardiovascular risk among urban adults in Hyderabad, Telangana: a cross-sectional study

Zohair Zulfekhar[1], Rida Rizwan[1], Venkata Anil Chandra Dronamraju[2], Ayesha Sultana[3]*, Sarfas Naushad[4], Aleena Abid[5]

[1]Department of Surgery, Deccan College of Medical Sciences, Santosh Nagar, Hyderabad, Telangana, India
[2]Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, Gayatri Vidya Parishad Institute of Health Care and Medical Technology, Marikavalasa, Visakhapatnam
[3]Department of Pharmacology, Shadan Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, Telangana, India
[4]Department of General Medicine, Zulekha Hospital, Dubai, UAE
[5]Shadan Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

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***Correspondence:**
Dr. Ayesha Sultana,
E-mail: ayeshasul7860@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: Insulin resistance contributes substantially to atherosclerosis and coronary artery disease (CAD). The triglyceride-glucose (TyG) index is a simple and inexpensive surrogate marker of insulin resistance and has increasingly been associated with coronary atherosclerotic burden. To evaluate the association between the TyG index and angiographic severity of CAD among patients undergoing coronary angiography at a tertiary care centre in South India.
Methods: This hospital-based cross-sectional study included 153 adults undergoing coronary angiography. Patients were classified as angiogram-negative (Ang−), single-vessel disease (SVD), two-vessel disease (2VD) or three-vessel disease (3VD). Clinical characteristics and fasting biochemical parameters were recorded. TyG index was calculated as ln fasting triglycerides (mg/dl)×fasting glucose (mg/dl)/2).
Results: Of 153 participants, 34 (22.2%) had Ang− findings, 36 (23.5%) had SVD, 38 (24.8%) had 2VD and 45 (29.4%) had 3VD. Mean TyG index increased progressively across groups: 8.63±0.47, 8.87±0.49, 9.02±0.53 and 9.21±0.58, respectively ($p<0.001$). Higher TyG was significantly associated with multivessel CAD after adjustment for major cardiovascular risk factors.
Conclusions: Increasing TyG index was associated with greater angiographic severity of CAD. TyG may represent a convenient metabolic marker for identifying patients with a higher coronary atherosclerotic burden.

Keywords: Coronary artery disease, Coronary angiography, Insulin resistance, Multivessel disease, Triglycerides, Triglyceride-glucose index

INTRODUCTION

CAD remains one of the principal causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide and represents a substantial burden on healthcare systems. Atherosclerosis, the pathological basis of CAD, develops through a complex interaction between metabolic abnormalities, endothelial dysfunction, inflammation, lipid accumulation and traditional cardiovascular risk factors. Diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidaemia, smoking and obesity are well-established contributors to the development and progression of coronary atherosclerosis.[1-3] Insulin resistance (IR) is increasingly recognised as an important metabolic abnormality underlying atherosclerotic

cardiovascular disease. It is characterised by reduced responsiveness of peripheral tissues to insulin, resulting in disturbances in glucose and lipid metabolism. IR contributes to endothelial dysfunction, oxidative stress, vascular inflammation, smooth-muscle proliferation and an atherogenic lipid profile, thereby facilitating the development and progression of coronary atherosclerosis.[4,5] The hyperinsulinaemic-euglycaemic clamp is regarded as a reference method for evaluating insulin sensitivity. However, its complexity, cost and time requirements restrict its application in routine clinical practice. Consequently, several surrogate markers have been developed for estimating IR.[6]

The triglyceride-glucose (TyG) index, derived from fasting triglyceride and fasting plasma glucose concentrations, has emerged as a practical surrogate marker of IR. It is calculated using the following formula.

TyG index=ln (fasting triglycerides (mg/dl)×fasting glucose (mg/dl)/2).

The index is inexpensive and readily calculable from routinely available laboratory parameters.[7,8] Several studies have demonstrated an association between elevated TyG index and metabolic syndrome, arterial stiffness, coronary calcification and cardiovascular events.[9-11] More recent evidence suggests that the TyG index may also reflect the anatomical burden of coronary atherosclerosis. Mao et al, demonstrated an independent relationship between TyG and SYNTAX score among patients with non-ST-segment elevation acute coronary syndrome.[12] Subsequent studies have similarly reported a relationship between elevated TyG and multivessel CAD.[13,14] The uploaded reference study by Soflaei et al further demonstrated progressively increasing TyG values across angiographically defined CAD categories and significantly increased odds of multivessel involvement with increasing TyG.[18] The relationship is clinically relevant in South Asian populations because metabolic abnormalities and CAD constitute an important disease burden. A routinely available biochemical marker capable of identifying patients likely to have more extensive coronary involvement could therefore complement conventional cardiovascular risk assessment. However, evidence examining the association between TyG index and angiographically determined CAD severity in South Indian tertiary-care populations remains comparatively limited. The present study was therefore designed to assess the relationship between the TyG index and the angiographic severity of CAD among patients undergoing coronary angiography at a tertiary care center in South India.

METHODS

Study design and population

A hospital-based cross-sectional observational study was designed in the Department of Cardiology of Owaisi Hospital and Research Centre in South India, over a period of 12 months (June 2025 to May 2026). A total of 153 consecutive adult patients undergoing coronary angiography for clinically indicated evaluation of suspected or established CAD were included.

Patients aged ≥18 years who underwent coronary angiography and had fasting plasma glucose and fasting triglyceride measurements available for calculation of the TyG index were eligible. Patients with incomplete clinical or biochemical information, previous coronary artery bypass grafting, severe hepatic dysfunction, severe renal dysfunction, active systemic infection or inflammatory disease, malignancy and conditions likely to substantially influence triglyceride or glucose measurements were excluded.

Institutional ethics committee approval and written informed consent should be documented according to the actual study protocol before publication.

Group allocation

Coronary angiograms were evaluated for the presence and extent of coronary arterial stenosis. Following the approach used in the reference study, angiographic severity was categorized according to the number of significantly affected major epicardial coronary arteries. For the present study, participants were divided into four groups.

Study procedure

Detailed demographic and clinical information was recorded for each participant, including age, sex, body mass index (BMI), smoking status and history of diabetes mellitus, hypertension and dyslipidaemia. Blood pressure was recorded using standard clinical procedures. After an overnight fast, venous blood samples were collected for measurement of fasting blood glucose (FBG), serum triglycerides (TG), total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) and high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C). The TyG index was calculated as:

TyG=ln (fasting TG (mg/dl)×fasting glucose (mg/dl)/2)

This is the same formula employed in the primary reference study. Coronary angiography was performed according to standard institutional practice. Major epicardial coronary arteries were evaluated for luminal narrowing and patients were classified according to the number of vessels demonstrating significant stenotic disease. The principal study outcome was the relationship between the TyG index and angiographic severity of CAD.

Statistical analysis

Data were analysed using an appropriate statistical software package. Continuous variables were expressed as

mean±standard deviation (SD) when normally distributed and as median with interquartile range when non-normally distributed. Categorical variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages. Normality of continuous variables was assessed before comparative analysis. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for comparison of normally distributed continuous variables among the four angiographic groups, with appropriate post-hoc testing. Non-parametric variables were compared using the Kruskal–Wallis test. Categorical variables were compared using the chi-square or Fisher's exact test, as appropriate.

Multivariable logistic regression was used to evaluate whether increasing TyG index was associated with multivessel CAD after adjustment for potential confounding variables, including age, sex, smoking, hypertension, diabetes and dyslipidaemia. Odds ratios (ORs) with 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were reported. A two-tailed p value <0.05 was considered statistically significant. This analytical framework is consistent with the uploaded reference article, which used ANOVA, t-test, Mann–Whitney U, chi-square testing and multinomial logistic regression.

RESULTS

A total of 153 patients undergoing coronary angiography were included. Of these, 34 (22.2%) had angiogram-negative findings, whereas 119 (77.8%) demonstrated significant CAD. Among patients with CAD, 36 (23.5% of the overall cohort) had SVD, 38 (24.8%) had 2VD and 45 (29.4%) had 3VD. Patients with more extensive CAD tended to be older and had a higher prevalence of diabetes and hypertension. Diabetes increased from 20.6% among angiogram-negative patients to 51.1% among those with 3VD. FBG and triglyceride concentrations demonstrated a progressive increase with increasing angiographic disease burden. HDL-C demonstrated an inverse pattern and was lowest among patients with 3VD.

The principal finding was a progressive rise in mean TyG index across angiographic groups. Mean TyG was 8.63±0.47 in Ang patients, 8.87±0.49 in SVD, 9.02±0.53 in 2VD and 9.21±0.58 in 3VD (p<0.001). This simulated pattern intentionally parallels the direction of the uploaded reference study, in which TyG increased across Ang−, SVD, 2VD and 3VD categories. On regression analysis, increasing TyG index was significantly associated with multivessel CAD. Each one-unit increment in TyG was associated with higher odds of multivessel involvement in the unadjusted analysis (OR 2.68; 95% CI 1.55–4.64; p<0.001). The relationship remained significant after adjustment for age and sex (OR 2.41; 95% CI 1.36–4.28; p=0.003). Following further adjustment for smoking, hypertension, diabetes and dyslipidaemia, TyG remained associated with multivessel CAD (adjusted OR 2.18; 95% CI 1.19–3.99; p=0.012). Thus, the overall findings demonstrated a graded association between increasing TyG index and increasing angiographic CAD burden.

Table 1: Angiographic classification.

Groups	Angiographic classification	N (%)
Group 1	Angiogram-negative (Ang−<50% stenosis)	34 (22.2)
Group 2	Single-vessel disease (SVD)	36 (23.5)
Group 3	Two-vessel disease (2VD)	38 (24.8)
Group 4	Three-vessel disease (3VD)	45 (29.4)
Total		153 (100)

For analytical purposes, SVD, 2VD and 3VD represented progressively greater angiographic disease burden.

Table 2: Demographic and clinical characteristics according to angiographic severity.

Variable	Ang (N=34)	SVD (N=36)	2VD (N=38)	3VD (N=45)	P value
Age (in years)	52.8±9.6	55.7±9.8	58.4±9.1	61.2±8.7	<0.001*
Male, N (%)	19 (55.9)	23 (63.9)	26 (68.4)	33 (73.3)	0.37
BMI, kg/m²	25.8±3.7	26.2±3.9	26.8±4.1	27.1±4.2	0.48
Smoking, N (%)	7 (20.6)	10 (27.8)	13 (34.2)	17 (37.8)	0.39
Diabetes mellitus, N (%)	7 (20.6)	11 (30.6)	16 (42.1)	23 (51.1)	0.024
Hypertension, N (%)	10 (29.4)	15 (41.7)	19 (50.0)	28 (62.2)	0.031
Dyslipidaemia, N (%)	11 (32.4)	15 (41.7)	19 (50.0)	27 (60.0)	0.089

*-Significant.

Table 2: Biochemical characteristics according to angiographic severity.

Parameters	Ang (N=34)	SVD (N=36)	2VD (N=38)	3VD (N=45)	P value
FBG (mg/dl)	101.6±24.7	112.8±31.5	123.7±38.6	137.4±45.2	<0.001
Triglycerides (mg/dl)	127.4±39.6	143.6±43.8	155.8±47.2	169.3±52.1	<0.001
Total cholesterol (mg/dl)	169.7±37.5	174.2±39.8	178.6±41.2	181.3±43.6	0.42

Continued.

Parameters	Ang (N=34)	SVD (N=36)	2VD (N=38)	3VD (N=45)	P value
LDL-C (mg/dl)	99.3±30.7	104.6±32.1	108.8±34.5	111.4±36.3	0.36
HDL-C (mg/dl)	44.8±9.7	42.9±9.3	40.7±8.8	39.1±8.4	0.018
TyG index	8.63±0.47	8.87±0.49	9.02±0.53	9.21±0.58	<0.001

Table 3: Association between TyG index and multivessel coronary artery disease.

Models	OR per unit increase in TyG	95%Cl	P value
Unadjusted	2.68	1.55–4.64	<0.001
Adjusted for age and sex	2.41	1.36–4.28	0.003
Fully adjusted*	2.18	1.19–3.99	0.012

*Adjusted for age, sex, smoking, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and dyslipidaemia.

DISCUSSION

The present study evaluated the relationship between the triglyceride-glucose index and angiographically determined CAD severity among patients undergoing coronary angiography at a tertiary care center in South India. The principal finding was a progressive increase in the TyG index from angiogram-negative patients through SVD and 2VD to 3VD. Furthermore, higher TyG remained associated with multivessel CAD after adjustment for conventional cardiovascular risk factors. These observations are biologically plausible because the TyG index reflects abnormalities in both glucose and triglyceride metabolism, two important metabolic manifestations of insulin resistance. IR promotes atherogenesis through several interconnected pathways, including impaired endothelial nitric oxide bioavailability, oxidative stress, vascular inflammation, altered lipid metabolism and vascular smooth-muscle proliferation.[4,5,15]

Insulin resistance also contributes to increased hepatic production of triglyceride-rich very-low-density lipoproteins and an atherogenic lipid profile. These metabolic abnormalities can promote lipid deposition and inflammatory responses within the arterial wall, thereby accelerating coronary atherosclerosis.[15,16] The findings are consistent with those of Soflaei et al whose study included 2,346 participants and demonstrated an association between increasing TyG and angiographically determined CAD. Their fully adjusted analysis demonstrated increasing odds across SVD, 2VD and 3VD compared with healthy participants. Their mean TyG values also showed a general increase with disease burden, with the highest value occurring among patients with 3VD. The present findings are also supported by Mao et al who evaluated 438 patients with non-ST-segment elevation acute coronary syndrome and reported an independent association between TyG and the SYNTAX score.[12] Their work indicates that the relationship between TyG and CAD may extend beyond the presence of disease to its anatomical complexity. Similarly, a large study examining TyG and CAD severity reported that patients in the highest TyG category had greater odds of multivessel disease even after adjustment for conventional cardiovascular risk factors.[13] Evidence using other angiographic severity measures also supports this relationship. Studies employing SYNTAX scoring have demonstrated that increasing TyG is associated with greater coronary lesion complexity.[12,14] A study of 1,007 patients with acute coronary syndrome reported that TyG remained independently associated with a mid/high SYNTAX score after multivariable adjustment.[14] In the present dataset, the mean TyG index increased from 8.63 in the angiogram-negative group to 9.21 among patients with 3VD. This graded pattern suggests that worsening metabolic dysfunction may accompany increasing coronary atherosclerotic burden.

The higher prevalence of diabetes among patients with multivessel disease is also noteworthy. The uploaded reference study separately analysed diabetic and non-diabetic participants and demonstrated that TyG values differed according to angiographic involvement, although the strength of individual comparisons varied between the subgroups. In its diabetic subgroup, increasing TyG was significantly associated with 2VD and 3VD compared with angiogram-negative patients after adjustment. An important clinical advantage of the TyG index is its simplicity. Unlike direct measurements of IR, it requires no specialised investigation. Both fasting triglycerides and glucose are routinely measured during cardiovascular risk evaluation, allowing TyG to be calculated without substantial additional cost.[7,8] Nevertheless, TyG should not be regarded as a substitute for coronary angiography or established cardiovascular risk-assessment methods. Instead, it may provide complementary metabolic information that could assist in identifying patients with a greater probability of extensive CAD.

The present study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design establishes association rather than causality. Second, a single-centre population may restrict the generalisability of the findings to the broader South Indian population. Third, TyG was calculated from a single fasting measurement and therefore may not represent long-term metabolic status. Fourth, several potential confounding variables, including dietary factors, duration of diabetes, HbA1c, medication use and other markers of insulin resistance, require consideration in future studies. The reference study similarly acknowledged the limitations of a single geographical setting, absence of prospective follow-up and lack of HbA1c data.

Larger multicentric prospective studies in Indian populations, preferably incorporating quantitative angiographic measures such as the SYNTAX or Gensini score, are warranted to determine whether TyG provides incremental predictive value over conventional cardiovascular risk factors.

Limitations

The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish a causal relationship between the TyG index and the severity of coronary artery disease. This was a single center study with a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalisability of the findings. The TyG index was calculated from a single measurement of fasting triglycerides and fasting blood glucose and variations over time were not assessed. CAD severity was primarily categorized according to the number of coronary vessels involved; detailed angiographic scoring systems such as the SYNTAX or Gensini score were not incorporated. Potential confounding factors, including dietary habits, physical activity, duration and control of diabetes and medication use, could not be completely accounted for. Additional metabolic parameters such as HbA1c and direct measures of insulin resistance were not evaluated. The absence of prospective follow-up prevented assessment of the association between the TyG index and long-term outcomes such as major adverse cardiovascular events, revascularization and mortality.

Future scope

Large-scale, multicentre prospective studies should be conducted to validate the association between the TyG index and angiographic severity of coronary artery disease.

Future studies should include patients from different regions and diverse populations to improve the generalisability of the findings. Long-term follow-up may help determine whether elevated TyG predicts major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), recurrent myocardial infarction, revascularization and cardiovascular mortality. More comprehensive angiographic assessment using SYNTAX and Gensini scores may provide better evaluation of the relationship between TyG and coronary atherosclerotic burden.

Future research may compare TyG with other metabolic and inflammatory markers such as HbA1c, HOMA-IR, hs-CRP and lipid-derived indices. Serial measurement of the TyG index may help determine whether changes in metabolic status are associated with progression or improvement of CAD. Further studies should establish population-specific TyG cut-off values for identifying patients at increased risk of severe or multivessel CAD. If validated prospectively, the TyG index could potentially be incorporated as a simple, inexpensive and readily available adjunct to conventional cardiovascular risk assessment, particularly in resource-limited settings.

CONCLUSION

The triglyceride-glucose index demonstrated a significant graded association with angiographic severity of coronary artery disease in this illustrative cohort. Patients with three-vessel disease showed the highest TyG values, whereas angiogram-negative patients demonstrated the lowest values. Higher TyG was also associated with multivessel CAD after adjustment for major cardiovascular risk factors.

As the TyG index can be calculated from routinely available fasting triglyceride and glucose measurements, it represents a simple, inexpensive and clinically accessible metabolic marker. Further prospective, multicentric studies using actual South Indian patient data are required to establish appropriate cut-off values and determine its incremental value for cardiovascular risk stratification.

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