

Role of biopsy in pediatric lymphadenopathy

To the Editor

I would like to comment on the interesting study by Hanif et al¹ on the role of biopsy in pediatric lymphadenopathy.

First, Hanif et al stated in their study that they statistically analyzed the data using chi-square to signify the correlation between the diagnosis of lymphadenopathy and various variables. However, they did not ascertain the exact X² values and the levels of significance (*p*-values) of these correlations neither in the results section nor within the tables. I, therefore, wonder how they could rush into the conclusion that the cause of lymphadenopathy was significantly associated with age, gender, and site of lymph nodes involved.

Second, recent epidemiological data have demonstrated that human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection /acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) represent important health threats and are anticipated to significantly increase in the Pakistani population.^{2,3} Though no published data exist considering the exact prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Pakistani children, I presume that the figure is substantial. Surprisingly, none of the studied lymph nodes biopsies was related to children with HIV/AIDS. I presume that pediatric HIV/AIDS is still largely underrated or unrecognized by pediatricians. Therefore, continuing medical education programs are needed to enhance awareness of health professionals, in particular pediatricians, on HIV/AIDS.

Third, for a considerable time, excisional lymph node biopsy (ELNB) was thought to be superior to fine needle aspiration cytology (FNAC) as a diagnostic

modality for the etiologic workup in significant lymphadenopathy in children. However, this concept ought to be revised with the recent observations that the diagnostic accuracy, sensitivity, specificity, and positive predictive values of FNAC are fairly high ranging from 80-100%.^{4,5} It is almost as sensitive and specific as ELNB when an adequate aspiration is examined by expert eyes.⁶

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Reply from the Author

No reply was received from the Author.

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