

SCANTY KNOWLEDGE AND INFERIOR PRACTICE OF BREAST SELF EXAMINATION AMONG EDUCATED WOMEN

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Abstract

According to data available by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR, 2016) specific cancer burden in females includes cancer in cervix, breast, mouth/oropharynx and esophagus. In urban areas the breast cancer is more common compared to rural areas. India has 17% of world's population suffering from breast cancer (Indian Express). 60-80% of cancer cases were diagnosed at late stage in India and 60% of patients did not have access to quality treatment. There are only 300 cancer centers, 400 radiotherapy machines and the doctor, patient ratio is 1:2000 in India (Dr Kirti Bhushan, 2016). The current study was carried out to identify the level of knowledge about breast cancer, warning signs, risk factors and early diagnoses; and to analyze the regular practice of Breast Self Examination among educated women. The study population consisted of the female college teachers attending the refresher course in Human Resource Development Center, Bharathiar University. 50 female college teachers were purposely selected for the study. The data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS, Version 20). The data was analyzed by using descriptive statistical method. The findings of the study showed that all the educated women had scanty knowledge about breast cancer, warning

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signs, risk factors and early diagnoses. Very few of them practiced the Breast self examination regularly.

Keywords: Breast cancer Knowledge Practice Breast Self-Examination College Teachers

1. Introduction

Cancer is a most serious health problem in the world. One out of three people are affected in some form of cancer during their lifetime. Age is the main risk factor for developing cancer and second leading cause of mortality and morbidity in both developed and developing countries. In India, the incidence of breast cancer and deaths are slightly increasing every year. According to the International Agency for Research on cancer report an estimated 79000 and 80000 new breast cancer cases in the year of 2001 and 2002 as compared to 2012 report, an estimated 144937 new incidence of breast cancer and 70218 deaths occurs in India. India faces a serious challenging incidences of cancer coupled with lack of diagnostic infrastructure, poor detection rate with only 20-30% of cancer cases being diagnosed at stage I and Stage II, which is less than half of that in China, the UK and the US. 43% of breast cancer cases were diagnosed at Stage I and stage II of the diseases in India as compared to 62%, 81% and 72% in the US, UK and China (EY Analysis, 2015).

Current status in the Stages of Breast cancer in four major Indian cancer centers

Stage	Mumbai Patients %	Trivandrum Patients %	Chennai Patients %	Lucknow Patients %
I	7.8	4.4	1	4
II	57.4	42.3	23	33
III	28.9	40.5	52	47
IV	5.9	12.8	24	9

Source: www.siroclinpharm.com

Thiruvananthapuram has the highest incidence of breast cancer in India (28.3%), 27.6% incidence of breast cancer in Mumbai, 26.1% in New Delhi and 24.3% in Chennai reported by the Hospital Based Cancer Registry 2012-2014 in India. Chennai stands 5th position for leading incidence of breast cancer reported by the Population Based Cancer Registry 2012-14 in India. Lack of awareness about breast cancer and less availability of breast cancer screening facilities is one of the reasons for delayed presentation of cancer diagnosis.

Three screening tests namely Breast Self Examination, Clinical Breast Examination and Mammography were included for detecting breast cancer early. Breast Self Examination is the best methods for screening breast cancer every month between 3rd and 5th day of menstrual cycle. Several studies have shown that more than 90% of the women detected late stage of breast cancer by themselves through the unplanned practice. These women had never heard about self examination practice and at the same time they didn't know how to practice it. Therefore there is need to educate the women with best self examination practice so that they can identify the cancer at early stages.

Mammography facilities are mostly available in private hospitals and private diagnostic centers and these are mainly located in metropolitan cities. There are few Government and municipal hospitals that have mammography services in the society. 20-25% of women reduce the risk of dying from breast cancer by using the screening mammogram technology once in every 2 years in the age of 40 and above (Lancet, 2002). Despite the fact that the practice of the mobile mammography vans are used for diagnosing breast cancer in rural areas, the utility of this service and the chance for getting awareness about breast cancer and screening practices is scanty

The poor knowledge and wrong belief about breast cancer are responsible for negative perception of curability of breast cancer. Early detection practices and the efficacy of the screening tests are responsible for positive perception of curability of breast cancer. Amidst of technology, teacher plays a substantial role in knowledge transfer and guidance to the students. Therefore they can be instrumental in creating breast cancer awareness and early detection practices to reduce the risk of breast cancer among future young generations. With this rationale,

the current study emerged to understand the awareness level and self breast examination practice among college teachers.

2. Objective

- To understand the socio economic background of the respondents
- To study the level of knowledge about breast cancer, warning signs and risk factors
- To find out the level of knowledge about Breast Self Examination practice and frequency of performing BSE among college teachers.

3. Hypothesis

- There is no significant association between demographic factors and knowledge of breast cancer.
- There is no significant association between knowledge about the method of BSE practice and frequency of performing BSE
- There is no significant association between teacher's knowledge on the method of BSE practice and transfer of BSE practice knowledge to their students

4. Methodology

The study has used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through Self Administered questionnaire. Secondary data have been collected form Text books, Journals and related Websites. The study population consisted of female college teachers attending the refresher course in Human Resource Development Center, Bharathiar University. A Self Administered questionnaire was distributed to 50 respondents for collecting the data. The data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS, Version 20). The data was analyzed by using descriptive statistical method which includes Frequency, Simple Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation and Chi-Square test.

5. Socio Economic Background

It was attention-grabbing research to have interaction and discussion about the breast cancer with educated young working women. It is to note that 92% of the respondents belong to the age group of 26-45 years. The mean age was found to be 38years. Age is considered as important

factor because age plays an essential role in breast cancer. 47(94%) of the respondents were married while 3(6%) were single. The current life style changes have increased the age of marriage among Indian women. The entry of women in public sphere has also influenced the age of marriage. Late marriage leads to late pregnancy in one's life (after the age of 35) possibly will increase the higher chance for developing breast cancer. In the present study, though 72% of the respondents had completed PhD, 7 (14%) had M.Phil degree and 7 (14%) had post graduate degree; It is distressing to note that only 22% of educated women knew about these risks of breast cancer. 56% of the selected respondents were in the income of Rs 6.5 to 7.5 lakh per annum. Lack of education and poverty is a main reason for late stage of diagnosis and poor knowledge about breast screening practices. But the educated women had at least minimum level of knowledge about breast cancer and screening practices through the sources of information like internet, books, journals, newspaper, social media, etc,. The below table is explain about the respondents age, education and monthly income is significantly associated with knowledge of breast cancer.

Table: 1

Knowledge of Breast Cancer

	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Chi – Square test</i>	<i>Sig</i>	<i>Null Hypothesis</i>
<i>Knowledge of Breast Cancer</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>.005</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
	<i>Education</i>	<i>.001</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
	<i>Monthly Income</i>	<i>.001</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Rejected</i>

Hypothesis: There is no significant association between demographic factors and knowledge of breast cancer.

The above table shows that the hypothesis is rejected and it proves that there is association between knowledge of breast cancer and demographic variables.

5.1 Knowledge of Breast cancer and Practice of Breast Self Examination (BSE) among College

Teachers

All the respondents are familiar with term breast cancer, however 72% of respondents concede that breast cancer affects only women. 92% women are aware that early detection of breast cancer will increase the chances of survival rate. All the respondents were exceptionally clear that the breast cancer will not spread from one woman to other women and 84% of women are unambiguous about the age that affects breast cancer. More than half of the women knew about breast cancer symptoms and they were naive about breast cancer risk factors. Teachers can play an important role in dissemination of information regarding breast cancer symptoms, risk factors and screening methods. But the study results shown that all the respondents had heard about only the name of breast cancer and more than half of the respondents perception is breast cancer affects only for women. In this manner, they how to transfer the knowledge for their students regarding breast cancer symptoms, risk factors and screening methods.

It is remarkable to make a note of 82% respondents being sensitized to Breast Self Examination (BSE). 60% of the respondents received their major source of information from print and picture media. 80% of women agreed that BSE is the best method for screening breast cancer, 68% of respondents agreed that BSE practice should be done by all individual every month, 60% of women knew about BSE starts at the age of 20 and above, 62% of women agreed that BSE is doing in front of the mirror, 58% of women had accurate knowledge about the practice of BSE which should be done at 3rd and 5th day of every month after period's starts and 64% of women make out that most of the women can spot breast cancer by themselves.

It is enthusiastic to note that 60% of women are aware about the procedure for doing Breast Self Examination which has proved that education is instrumental in knowledge development. However 22% of women didn't know about how to practice it. 56% of women practiced BSE, while 4% of women didn't practice it. 46% of women reveled that doctors/health care providers educated them about the procedure for doing BSE and 28% of respondents practiced BSE monthly once, more than 34% of respondents started to perform BSE in the age of 31-40 years. 56% of women practiced BSE due to the reason for breast pain and 18% of women practiced BSE as regular health checkup. Very few respondents (10%) practiced BSE with doctor advice and 10% practiced it for the fear of breast cancer affecting their body. Only 22% of women

continuously practiced BSE every month. It is also motivating to perceive that 30% of respondents conducted an awareness program about breast cancer for their students and 22% of teachers taught the importance of BSE practice for their students. It is remarkable to witness that 18% of college teachers followed by their students for doing BSE every month which again proves that a good teacher can become a good guide throughout one's life.

Table: 2

Knowledge of the method of BSE practice

	Variables	Chi – Square test	Sig	Null Hypothesis
<i>Knowledge of the method of BSE practice</i>	<i>Frequently performing BSE</i>	<i>.000</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
	<i>Transfer of BSE practice knowledge to their students</i>	<i>.019</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Rejected</i>

The above table shows the chi square test to find no significant association between knowledge of the method of BSE practice and frequency of performing BSE of the respondents. The chi-square test results revealed that there is a significant association between them. The significant level is 100%. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Chi square test was applied to find out whether there is significant association between knowledge for the method of BSE practice and transfer of knowledge of the teachers education about the method of BSE practice for their students. The chi-square test results revealed that there is a significant association between them. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

6. Discussion

Early detection and screening is a crucial role for control of breast cancer and reducing related mortalities. A few decades back, breast cancer affected women in the age group of fifty years

and above. But in recent days, breast cancer is more common in the younger age group which is supported by the study of The Times of India, 2015 revealed that 50% of breast cancer cases are in the age group of 25-50 years. The present study was carried out to understand the knowledge and practice of Breast Self examination among college teachers. The results revealed that majority of the respondents know about breast cancer symptoms and they were unaware about breast cancer risk factors. 68%, 72% and 66% of women with respect to low level of breastfeeding, family history of breast cancer and personal history of breast cancer can increase the risk for getting breast cancer. The result is in contrast to a study conducted by a Samina Khokher et al, 2011 among 1155 samples were collected from students, faculty members and non faculty female employees in the educational institute of Lahore, Pakistan. Only 27% had good knowledge, 59% had fair knowledge and 14% had poor knowledge about breast cancer

This study reported that 82% of respondents had heard about Breast Self Examination (BSE), 60% of women knew about the procedure for doing Breast Self Examination, 56% of women were practiced about BSE. Only 30% of college teachers conducted an awareness program about breast cancer for their students. This study result is compared to another study conducted by Alwan N A S et al, 2012 among 304 samples (256 females and 48 males) were collected from students, teaching staff and administrative staff of Kirkuk University, Iraq. The results showed that 69.1% of respondents have heard about Breast Self Examination and 42.6% of respondents have practiced Breast Self Examination and they were not continuously practiced.

The study was conducted by N.A. Alharbi et al. 2011 said that the reason for starting to perform BSE monthly among Kuwaiti female school teachers. 61.3% of women doing BSE monthly due to reason for fear of breast cancer affected my body (29.2%), breast pain (24%), if they felt a mass as compared to the current study results shown that 56% of women practiced BSE due to the reason for breast pain (18%); regular health checkup (18%); for doctor advice (10%) and fear of breast cancer affected my body (10%),

All the respondents are well educated and their economic status is good. They know at least minimum knowledge of nutritional foods and preventive measures for how to reducing the health problem and what are the foods to be affected my health. 100%, 82% of respondents were heard

about breast cancer and Breast Self Examination practice. But they are not ready to know about the importance of Breast Self Examination Practice. Only 22% of college teachers are continuously performing BSE in every month and these teachers are educate our students for the importance of BSE practice and 18% out off 22% of college teachers followed by our students for continuously doing BSE every month compare to another study conducted by Alwan N A S et al, 2012 said 89.7% of female participants have positive attitude towards learning the correct procedure of Breast Self Examination and the intention to teach others on the technique. The research has found to create awareness program for college teachers and students. The teachers are motivating our students for continuously practice of Breast Self Examination in every month.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, all the respondents were knowledge on breast cancer and early detection practices. Only half of the women practiced BSE with including 28% of women continuously performing BSE in every month. The study had demonstrated that the knowledge and understanding of breast cancer and early detection practices was very low. They didn't know about the importance of BSE practice. October is a breast cancer awareness month celebrated all over the world every year. Many organizations are involved in the campaign to highlights breast cancer education, awareness and research. The current research recommends that all the education institutes should create awareness program on "breast cancer" every year for both college teachers and students in the month of October and at the same time the teachers should be motivated to follow the students for continuous performance of BSE every month.

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