

Knowledge, Attitude and Practices related to cervical cancer

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Abstract

Background: Known predisposing factors for cervical cancer include early age at first sexual intercourse, multiple sexual partners, smoking and women are immunosuppressed.

Material and methods: A facility based cross sectional study was done 100 women of reproductive age group (15-45 years).

Results: A total of 100 women are approached for interview, in which 84(84.00%) had not heard about cervical cancer, only 16.00% women had knowledge about cervical cancer. About 80.00% women had positive attitude about cervical cancer screening & it's vaccine.

Conclusions: Women need more information about cervical cancer risk factors, symptoms and screening program.

Keywords: Cervical cancer, awareness, screening.

Introduction

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women worldwide. Almost half a million of women are newly diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer each year, and majority of them were never

screened for the disease. If this will continue by year 2050 over, one million women will be newly diagnosed with cervical cancer. In these, over 80% of women are residing in developing countries where most of the women do not have access to screening, treatment, and prevention programs.^{1,2}

In India, cervical cancer is one of the most common causes of cancer-related deaths. According to National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research, one woman dies of cervical cancer every 8 minutes in India.³ Cervical cancer is the third largest cause of cancer mortality in India accounting for nearly 10% of all cancer-related deaths in the country.⁴ The average 5-years survival rate is 48.7%. Length of survival depends on cancer stage at the time of diagnosis. The survival rate of a person becomes better if the cervical cancer is diagnosed and treated at earlier stages. Most cases of cervical cancer in India are diagnosed at later and more serious stages which will reduce the survival rate of women with cervical cancer. The prime reason for late stage diagnosis of disease is a lack of awareness about screening and preventive methods of cervical

cancer. Screening for cervical cancer is essential as the women often do not experience symptoms until the disease has advanced.⁵ The most common symptoms present in cervical cancer are bleeding between periods, persistent back pain, pelvic pain, bleeding after intercourse, urinary urgency, unexplained weight loss, and severe swelling in one or both legs. Infection with human papillomavirus (HPV), particularly HPV 16 and 18 strains causes 75% of cervical cancers globally. Other risk factors include having multiple sexual partners, early age of sexual intercourse, tobacco consumption, prolonged use of oral contraceptive pills, increased parity, and early age of giving birth.⁶

Material and Methods

Study Design: Cross sectional survey.

Study Population: Women reproductive age group(15 -45 years)

Study Participants: The study population was child bearing women (15–45 years) who had the chance of being randomly selected from the source population at a hospital level.

We excluded women who had any serious illness during data collection and who are less than 18 years from the study.

Data collection: Pretested structured questionnaire was used to collect data from each study subject. The questionnaire was adapted from related literatures ⁶with slight modification in line with the objectives of this particular study and to fit to the local context. Data collection was conducted through face to face interview. The questionnaire was completed after obtaining verbal consent from the participants. The completed questionnaires were collected on a daily bases to check for its consistency and completeness.

Data Analysis: After entering data into Excel worksheet, it was analyzed with the help of frequency,

proportion, mean, standard deviation and tests of significance wherever applicable.

Chi-square test was used for p-value calculation. If p-value <0.05 was significant and >0.05 was non-significant.

Observations

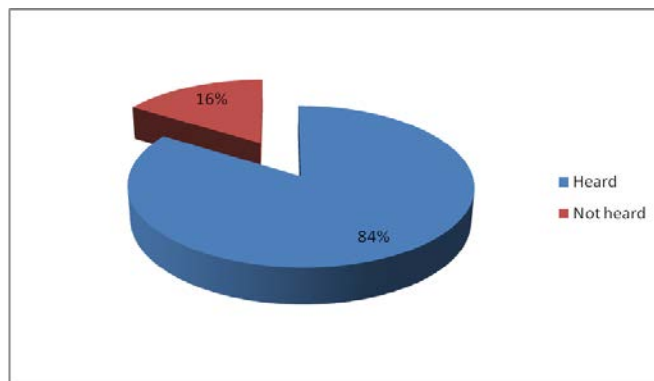


Fig. 1: Knowledge about cervical cancer

Most of women 84 (84.00%) was not heard about cervical cancer, only 16 (16%) women had knowledge about cervical cancer.

Table no.1.Knowledge about Risk factors

Risk factor	Respondent	Percentage
Family history	16	16.00%
Early stage coitus	14	14.00%
Multiple sex partner	13	13.00%
Smoking	11	11.00%
Cause by some infection	16	16.00%

16.00% women knew that infection is risk factor.

Table no.2.Knowledge about Symptoms

Symptoms	Respondent	Percentage
Post coital bleeding	16	16.00%
Bleeding between menses	13	13.00%
Foul smelling vaginal discharge	12	12.00%

12.00% women knew that foul smelling is risk symptoms.

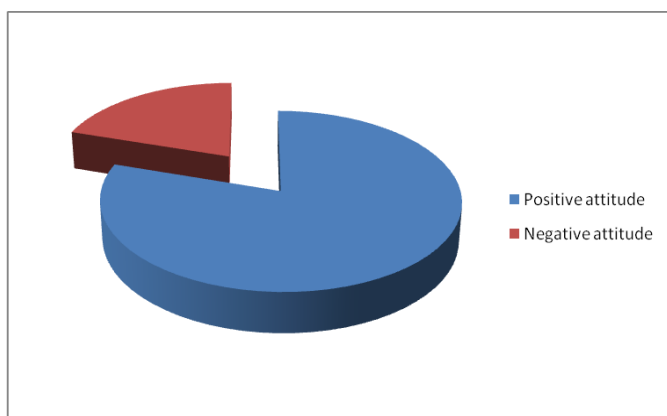


Fig.2: Attitude about Cervical Cancer

80.00% women had positive attitude and 20.00% women had negative attitude about cervical cancer screening & it's vaccine.

Discussion

The present study explored the KAP among women who are attending obstetrics and gynecology department of tertiary care referral hospital. among 100 respondents, most of them were illiterate, farmers, homemakers, and low economic status group. It is not uncommon, even in the 21st century also, the era will continue to find young women with little formal education and no training who are homemakers with children.

The study found that more than three fourth of population never heard about cervical cancer which is similar with results of studies conducted in developing and underdeveloped countries by Anorlu and Yifru and Asheber.^{7,8} However, these results are contrast with a study conducted by Chande HM *et al.*⁹ show more than three-quarters of population are heard about cervical cancer.

16.00% women knew that infection is risk factor. This is consistent with findings from a similar study conducted in Northern Uganda by Mukama *et al.*¹⁰

Still there is a lack of awareness about cervical cancer in women residing at rural area, where there is a need to

conduct campaigns to improve their knowledge regarding symptoms, risk factors, and preventive measures. Women who are aware about cervical cancer they are more likely to take up measures of prevention by seeking medical attention and early screening¹¹.

In this study 80.00% women had positive attitude and 20.00% women had negative attitude about cervical cancer screening & it's vaccine. Some studies report that even providing of screening opportunities to women may not be utilized well due to some barriers such as fear of positive cervical cancer diagnosis, fear of cervical screening, and vaginal examination.¹² Continuous conducting of cervical cancer awareness program will bring change in the attitude and perception of women toward cervical cancer screening.

Conclusion

Women need more information about cervical cancer risk factors, symptoms and screening program. The universal literacy program in the country has helped to improve the knowledge of cervical cancer prevention and reduce the exposure to various risk factors in the younger populations. It's major needs to involve multimedia, print-media, medical persons even ASHA, Anganwadi workers, teachers for awareness about cervical cancer screening.

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