

Influence of socio demographic factors and undergraduate training on knowledge of breast cancer and practice of early detection among Sri Lankan undergraduate nursing students

Sheron, AV.¹, Surenthirakumaran, R.², Thabotharan, D.¹, Indranath, K.³

1Unit of Allied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

2Department of Community & Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

3Department of Oncology, Base Hospital Thellipalai, Sri Lanka

<antoshreorio@gmail.com>

Abstract - Breast cancer is one of the most common malignancies among the women and second cause of cancer death in globally, with the prevalence of more than one million in worldwide annually. The fatal outcome is most probably due to the presenting at late stage of Breast cancer.

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 269 nursing students in Sri Lankan Allied Health Sciences to assess the influence of socio demographic factors and undergraduate training on knowledge of breast cancer and practice of early detection measures. Data was collected using by a self-administered questionnaire. Nearly equal proportion of participants was in 1st year (33.1%), 2nd year (30.9%) and 3rd year (36.1%). The mean age of the participants was 21.5 years and nearly female and male ratio was 2:1.

Knowledge and practice was scored as good, adequate and poor. Nearly one third (30.9%) and two third (61.7%) of the female participants had good and adequate level of overall knowledge on breast cancer respectively. However, nearly half of the female participants not aware on early detection and preventive measure of breast cancer.

Only 13.6% of female participants had good practice on early detection measures of breast cancer whereas this number was little high (18.5%) in male participants. Among the female participants 40% were practicing self-breast examination on monthly basis, 19% were practicing yearly basis and 31% were not practicing. Furthermore, 29.1% and 12.7% of female participants were undergone clinical breast examination and mammogram respectively. The knowledge and practice level of breast cancer was influenced by the age, undergraduate training and year of study of the participants.

Key words- Breast Cancer, Nursing students, knowledge and Practice, Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

Breast cancer is the common cause of cancer death among women in both developed and developing countries. The chance of a woman having invasive breast cancer some time during her life is about 1 in 8, and the chance of dying from breast cancer is about 1 in 35. According to the 2012

statistics of world cancer research fund international, it is the commonest cancer in women.

According to the Sri Lankan National Cancer Control Programme approximately 1500 cases are diagnosed annually, and many are diagnosed at late stages, due to lack of awareness. The most effective way to improve the prognosis of Breast Cancer is to detect and treat from an early stage. In developed countries, breast cancer mortality rates declined, because of the improvements in early detection and treatment. The best solution to early detection and prevention lie on education to the women to be able to judge their risk and take relevant measures. The important resources of dissemination of breast cancer knowledge to women are the health-care professionals especially nurses comprise the group most suited for this purpose because of their numbers, frequent contact with patients.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An institutional based descriptive cross sectional study was carried out at Unit of Allied Health Sciences of Jaffna University; Department of Allied Health Sciences of Sri Jeyawardanapura University; Faculty of Allied Health Sciences of Peradenia University; Faculty of Health Care Sciences of Eastern University; Faculty of Allied Health Sciences of Sir John Kothalava Defence University and Allied Health Sciences of Ruhuna University from December 2015 to September 2016. The study participants were almost all the first the first, second and third year undergraduate nursing students of the above Universities.

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data which consists of part A & B with total number of 36 questions. The questionnaire consists of part A & B with total number of 36 questions. Part A consisted of the students' socio demographic characteristic & academic details. Part B consisted of questions to assess the nurse's knowledge on risk factors, sign and symptoms and early detection measures and the nurse's practice on prevention measures. The independent variables are socio demographic factors and Undergraduate training factors.

The knowledge of breast cancer and the practice of its prevention are the dependent variables for this study. Chi squared test was used as test of significance to determine association between dependent variable/outcome and the independent variables.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There were 269 undergraduate nursing students were recruited in this study. Non respondent rate was 10.3%. The mean age of participants was 23.51 and the participated female and male were 182 (62.7%) and 87 (37.3%) respectively. That study resembled 52.5% participants were aged 35 years and most (76.7%) were married. And almost all of the participants were single (98.8%).

From the 269 participants 215 (79.9%) got knowledge on Breast Cancer's risk factor and its prevention measures. Knowledge and practice was scored as good, adequate and poor. Nearly one third (30.9%) and two third (61.7%) of the female participants had good and adequate level of overall knowledge on breast cancer respectively. However, nearly half of the female participants not aware on early detection and preventive measure of breast cancer. Only 13.6% of female participants had good practice on early detection measures of breast cancer whereas this number was little high (18.5%) in male participants.

Among the female participants 40% were practicing self-breast examination on monthly basis, 19% were practicing yearly basis and 31% were not practicing. Furthermore, 29.1% and 12.7% of female participants were undergone clinical breast examination and mammogram respectively. Among the reasons for not performing the BSE 11.6% reported that 'I have no enough time to perform BSE'. Nearly 11.6% reported that 'I forgot performing BSE'. Also 10.4 reported that 'I don't know how to perform BSE'. And 9.3% reported that 'I think that BSE is an unnecessary examination'.

Nearly 6% reported that 'I don't know the frequency of performing'. And nearly one third female nursing students reported there are few facilities and service to undergo CBE and 25% reported there is no facilities to have a mammography 19.2% reported the mammography is costly.

The study showed that, knowledge and practice level of breast cancer was influenced by the age, undergraduate training and year of study of the participants. Based on the comparison between the previous findings and the present finding, the education can make a massive improvement of breast cancer knowledge and the practice of early detection which can improve the early stage presentation of breast cancer. The awareness on breast cancer's early detection can be created and maintained by continues education programme by frequent community workshop and seminars, mobile screening programmes as well as the awareness advertisements through the mass medias.

References

1. Faiza Ahmed, Sadia Mahmud, Juanita Hatcher and Shaista M Khan (2006): Breast cancer risk factors knowledge among nurses in teaching hospitals of Karachi, Pakistan: a cross-sectional study. BMC Nursing 2006, 5:6 doi: 10.1186/1472-6955-5-6.
2. National Cancer Control Programme Sri Lanka .Cancer incidence data: Sri Lanka 2009. 11th Publication. Colombo: National Cancer Control programme, 2015
3. Nilaweera, R., Perera, S., Paranagama, N. and Anushyanthan, A. (2012) Knowledge and practices on breast and cervical cancer screening methods among female health care workers: A Sri Lankan experience, Asian Pacific journal of cancer prevention : APJCP. 13(4), pp. 1193-6.