

Knowledge on cervical carcinoma and associated screening practices among female teachers of Nallur Educational Division

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Background: Cancer of the cervix is the second most common cancer among women worldwide. Cervical cancer is curable if detected in the precancerous stage because effective treatment is possible at this stage. Screening is most important to detect cancers at an early stage. Identifying the level of knowledge on cervical carcinoma and its influence on screening practices is thus important to guide efforts to promote use of cervical cancer screening services. This study aimed to assess knowledge on cervical carcinoma and its influence on screening practices among female school teachers in Nallur Educational Division.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 465 female school teachers in the Nallur Educational Division from November 2017 to January 2018. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. SPSS (v.21) was used to analyze the data.

Results: Among 465 participants, the majority of female teachers had average total knowledge on aetiology (49.2%), risk factors (63.9%), screening (77%) and prevention (50.5%). A statistically significant association was identified between total knowledge on cervical carcinoma and knowledge on risk factors and participation in screening. A significant association was not found between knowledge on etiology of cervical carcinoma, knowledge on screening and knowledge on prevention, and participation in screening. A statistically significant association was identified between knowledge on prevention and non-participation in screening. A significant association was not found between total knowledge, knowledge on etiology, knowledge on risk factors and knowledge on screening and non-participation in screening.

Conclusion: Total knowledge on cervical carcinoma was significantly associated with participation in screening programmes. Raising awareness about cervical carcinoma and screening services may promote greater participation in cervical cancer screening.

Keywords: Cervical cancer, personal factors, teachers, Jaffna