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Cervical cancer screening knowledge and practice among women at Adeoyo teaching hospital in Nigeria: A prevention tool for cervical cancer

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Background: Cervical cancer is one of the leading cancer killers among women all over the world. Cervical cancer is the most common female cancer in developing countries, a woman die of cervical cancer every two minutes. Its contribution to cancer burden is significant across all cultures and economies. However in Nigeria this disease is still killing up to 8,000 women annually. Fortunately, this cancer is preventable by screening for premalignant lesions but this is rarely provided and hardly utilized.

Aim: The aim of this research is to assess the knowledge of cervical cancer screening among Nigerian women.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional survey was adopted to assess the knowledge of cervical cancer screening among women attending Adeoyo Maternity Teaching Hospital in Ibadan North Local Government of Oyo State. The sampling technique adopted in the study was the simple random sampling. The respondents were reassured of the confidentiality of the data. The instrument used basically was self-structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square.

Results: Respondents' mean age was 26.0 ± 1.5 years, 40.8% had primary education, 54% of the respondents were self employed, 55% were Muslim by religion, majority were Yoruba (51.5%) had between 1 and 2 children, 26% of them practice polygamy. 55.4% of the respondents understood that it is a malignant growth of the cell. Common sources of information were clinics (48.5%) and media (23.1%). 52.3% of the respondents were not aware that the screening centre was at their locality. Thirty-eight (38%) of the respondents reported that Pap smear should be done between 1 to 3 years, only 26(20%) out of 130 respondents have done pap smear before. 75.4% had poor knowledge of prevention of cervical cancer. The relationship between source of awareness of cervical cancer and knowledge of Pap smear was not significant ($p > 0.72$), 73.7% of the respondents that had poor knowledge of prevention had primary educational background but there was no significant relationship between the educational status and the knowledge of the prevention of cervical cancer ($p > 0.86$).

Conclusion: Knowledge about the cervical cancer was fair, but respondents had poor knowledge about the Pap smear and the overall uptake of the cervical screening was low among the respondents. Incorporating periodic health publicity programmes in the market, religious setting and working places will improve the knowledge and uptake of the cervical screening.

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