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Nurses need to educate the public about self-examination, but do they examine themselves?

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Breast cancer is a major health burden in Bahrain. Breast self-examination is one of the screening techniques which aid the early detection of abnormalities. Bahrain has a paucity of educational programs related to screening for breast cancer in schools. Nursing students, and in turn, nursing professionals have a pivotal role and a unique responsibility to protect themselves and the public through information. We performed a study, which explored the knowledge level and the attitudes that influence the compliance with recommended practices for breast self-examination, among student nurses. This was a cross-sectional quantitative descriptive study. A total of 348 undergraduate nursing students at a **School of Nursing and Midwifery in Bahrain were selected randomly and surveyed using a questionnaire**. Our findings showed a positive attitude and a moderate level of knowledge regarding breast self-examination. However, 61.2% of participants are not performing breast self-examination. The main motivating reason for students to carry out regular examination was to become more aware of their breasts (28.7%). The main reason for not performing breast self-examination was because participants had not experienced any symptoms (36.2%). A significant relationship was found between the knowledge score and the attitude ($P < 0.05$). There was a significant difference in the mean knowledge score between their age, year of study, and sex. There was also, a significant relationship between sex and attitudes. This highlights the need for breast self-examination awareness and the implementation of educational training programs. Improved awareness should improve performance of professional nurses in their role as educators within the community.

Biography

Hana Kadhon has 33 years' experience in nursing as a practitioner and educator. Her experience has been across the Middle East and UK. She obtained her PhD from the University of Hull (UK) and she has Postgraduate diplomas from British universities (in nursing education and Health & Safety). She is currently a senior Lecturer and Director of a Nursing Degree Bridging program in Bahrain and Saudi Aramco.

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