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Research Article

**ANALYSIS OF CERVICAL CANCER AND AWARENESS OF
PAP SMEAR TEST AMONG FEMALE POPULATION**¹Dr Sadia Hira, ²Dr Sarah Shaukat, ³Dr Sidra Ishaq¹King Edward Medical University, Lahore, ²Women Medical Officer at RHC More Khunda, Nankana Sahib, ³Women Medical Officer at BHU Nangal Bucher, Sheikhpura.

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Abstract:

Introduction: Cervical cancer is a female genital cancer that results from infection with the human papilloma virus, commonly serotypes 16 and 18. This infection results in transformation of the cervical epithelial cells, first to precancerous lesions and then to frank cancer.

Aims and objectives: The main objective of the study is to analyze the cervical cancer and awareness of pap smear test among female population.

Material and methods: This descriptive study was conducted in King Edward Medical University, Lahore during March 2018 to December 2018. This study was done with the permission of ethical committee of hospital. The data was collected from 100 female patients with age range 18 to 65 years. The data was collected through a questionnaire. This questionnaire include all the socio-demographic data of selected patients.

Results: The data were collected from 100 female patient with mean age 39.5 ± 7.3 years. More than two-thirds of respondents had 4–6 children, while only 1.0% of reported having more than one sexual partner in the last ten years, with the mean being 1.01 ± 0.12 partners per respondent. Approximately 50.9% of respondents reported having heard about cervical cancer. Twelve and half percent believed the disease to be treatable, while 45.6% felt it could be prevented.

Conclusion: It is concluded that there is a lower level of awareness of cervical cancer, and Pap smear test compared with reports from other parts of world. The major source of information about cervical cancer and Pap smear test was the media.

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INTRODUCTION:

Cervical cancer is a female genital cancer that results from infection with the human papilloma virus, commonly serotypes 16 and 18. This infection results in transformation of the cervical epithelial cells, first to precancerous lesions and then to frank cancer. Cervical cancer is the fourth leading cause of female genital cancers and sixth cause of female cancer death in the United States [1]. Globally, it is the most common cause of female genital cancer and female cancer deaths. Over 75% of the annual cases of cervical cancer and cervical cancer related morbidity and mortality occur in developing countries usually with less comprehensive cervical cancer prevention programs [2].

Despite the high mortality from this disease in developing countries, it is preventable and its morbidity and mortality could be greatly reduced using preventative health methods such as safe sexual practice and most importantly the Pap test. The Pap smear test is currently the most widely used approach for preventing cervical cancer, via a 1–3 yearly screening depending on the environment [3]. The benefits of Pap smear test in preventing cervical cancer has been demonstrated by in countries like Finland, Sweden with National screening programs. As a result, these countries are reported to have the lowest incidence and prevalence of cervical cancer and related morbidity and mortality in the world [4]. The high incidence and prevalence of cervical cancer in developing countries such as Nigeria is highly suggestive of health care access issues. For example, a pilot study in Jos, Nigeria reported an estimated annual incidence rate of cervical cancer in 77/1,000 women and mortality of 3000–8000 [5]. These estimates are much higher than those of the United States, or Europe where there is regular cervical cancer screening [6].

Aims and objectives:

The main objective of the study is to analyze the cervical cancer and awareness of pap smear test among female population.

Material and methods:

This descriptive study was conducted in King Edward Medical University, Lahore during March 2018 to December 2018. This study was done with the permission of ethical committee of hospital. The data was collected from 100 female patients with age range 18 to 65 years. The data was collected through a questionnaire. This questionnaire include all the socio-demographic data of selected patients.

Statistical analysis:

The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS version 21.0. Bi-variate analysis was conducted using Chi-square and t-test to investigate associations. Finally, multivariate logistic regression was done to investigate factors that independently predict cervical cancer and Pap smear test awareness and/or utilization of Pap smear test.

RESULTS:

The data were collected from 100 female patient with mean age 39.5 ± 7.3 years. More than two-thirds of respondents had 4–6 children, while only 1.0% of reported having more than one sexual partner in the last ten years, with the mean being 1.01 ± 0.12 partners per respondent. Approximately 50.9% of respondents reported having heard about cervical cancer. Twelve and half percent believed the disease to be treatable, while 45.6% felt it could be prevented. Slightly over 38% reported having heard about the Pap smear test and 27.0% said that regular screening with Pap smear test can prevent cervical cancer.

Table 01: Proportional difference among respondents based on utilization and practice of Pap smear test.

Variables	Chi-Square Value	P-value
Age category (years)	29.02	<0.01
20–35		
36–55		
>55		
Marital status	1.73	0.63
Single		
Married		
Widowed		
Divorced		
Educational level	12.19	0.01
Primary		
Secondary		

Tertiary		
Number of children	2.54	0.28
1–3		
4–6		
≥7		
Number of sexual partners	-	-
Only one sexual partner		
Two or more sexual partners		
Believe that cervical cancer is treatable	5.35	0.02
Yes		
No		
Awareness of cervical cancer preventability	18.05	<0.01
Yes		
No		
Regular Pap smear test can prevent cervical cancer	8.67	0.01
Yes		
No		
Ever heard about the Pap smear test	52.39	<0.01
Yes		
No		

DISCUSSION:

This study assesses the awareness and detection methods of cervical cancer. The significant difference with the study among female undergraduates might be because this study involved a large portion of the “lay public” as opposed to study by Ayinde et al which was done among female undergraduates, a good portion of whom were medical student [7]. But it is noted that this level of awareness was lower than had been reported among Kuwaiti, Jordanian, Indian and Saudi Arabian female outpatient population [8]. About half of the respondents still cited the media followed by hospitals as their source of information about cervical cancer or Pap smear test. Thus the media plays an important role in disseminating health educational information with the next most common source being the hospitals. Other authors have shown that the role of the media in disseminating health maintenance information cannot and should not be discounted when health education is being carried out [9]. A health education program about cervical cancer that incorporates the media could be very impactful in our environment [10]. The National Health Service (NHS) stated that the involvement of prominent public figures like movie stars or music artists can go a long way. For instance, they reported an increase in uptake of cervical cancer screening when a prominent movie star was brought in to tell her story about how cervical cancer has impacted her life negatively [11].

CONCLUSION:

It is concluded that there is a lower level of awareness of cervical cancer, and Pap smear test compared with

reports from other parts of world. The major source of information about cervical cancer and Pap smear test was the media. There was no statistically significant relationship between educational level and level of awareness.

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