



ASSESS KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE REGARDING BREAST CANCER AMONG UNDERGRADUATE NURSE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Breast cancer is a malignant tumor primarily affecting women. Some women develop benign breast lumps, which are noncancerous abnormal growths not life-threatening.

Aim: The aim of the study was to assess knowledge, attitude and practice towards breast cancer of undergraduate nurse students at nursing institutions Lahore.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional research study design was used. Study used purposive sampling. The study population was undergraduate nurse students and sample size was 133.

Result: The study was descriptive cross-sectional so descriptive statistic was applied. Frequency distribution was calculated, data normality was checked. The study reported that the majority participants had low knowledge about breast cancer were 60(45.1%), those with moderate knowledge were 32(24.1%), and those with high knowledge were 41(30.8%). The positive attitude towards breast cancer was 72(54.1%), and those with negative attitude were 61(45.9%). The bad practice towards breast cancer was 74(55.6%), and those with good practice were 59(44.4%).

Conclusion: The study concluded that the overall knowledge was poor and practices of breast cancer were bad but undergraduate students' attitude towards breast cancer was positive.

Keywords: *Knowledge, Attitude and Practice, Breast Cancer.*

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INTRODUCTION

Breast cancer is a malignant or cancerous tumor that affects mostly women. It originates in the breast tissue's cells. However, they increase a person's risk of developing breast cancer. On the other hand some women develop breast lumps, which are benign or noncancerous abnormal growths that are not life threatening (Ely & Vioral, 2019). Although the exact causes of breast cancer are unknown, studies have shown that a number of factors which contribute to the disease's risk, Breast cancer risk factors includes advanced age, early menarche, late menopause, physical inactivity, being overweight or obese, having dense breasts, using various hormone therapies, oral contraceptives, radiation exposure, genetic mutation, and alcohol (Alshahrani et al., 2019). Breast cancer is a leading cause of death in women and a major global health concern, It affects 2.1 million women each year and is expected to grow to more than 3.2 million new cases per year by 2050, making it the most common cancer among women worldwide (Sarker et al., 2022). Furthermore, Breast cancer is the leading cause of illness and death in women worldwide, as well as the most common life-threatening malignancy. In 2018, breast cancer was the second most common cancer in both sexes combined, It is responsible for 24.2% of all newly diagnosed cancers in women and 15% of all cancer-related deaths in women (Al-Mousa et al., 2020). Pakistan has the highest incidence rate of the disease when compared to other South Asian countries, with one out of every nine women affected, every year approximately 90,000 women, the majority of whom are young that diagnosed with breast cancer, every year approximately 40000 women are died by breast cancer, because Pakistan lacks a national cancer registry, data on the prevalence and mortality of breast cancer are limited. Between 50 and 70% of breast cancer patients have the disease in an advanced stage (Ullah, Khan, Din, & Afaq, 2021). Knowledge of breast cancer warning signs, symptoms, and risk factors is critical for improving breast cancer intervention, the majority of women lack knowledge about breast cancer. As a result, breast cancer in younger people is more likely to be discovered at a later stage, leading to a more aggressive type, Young women have a higher risk of metastatic recurrence and a higher mortality rate from breast cancer due to delayed diagnosis. Women's breast cancer education and awareness are critical for encouraging early warning signs (Odhiambo & Hunter, 2023). Female students are the primary target population

for breast education, and nurses must ensure that they are adequately informed in order to form healthy habits such as clinical breast examination. This is due to the fact that adolescence is a critical period for developing life habits and attitudes, as well as shaping future health-related lifestyles, behaviors, habits, and attitudes (Mohebi, Heidari Sarvestani, Moradi, & Naghizadeh, 2023). There is a barrier such as Cultural and social norms make it difficult for women to adopt healthy breast cancer-related behaviors. Nurses can and should create practices such as waiting rooms, discussion groups, workshops, and other events that educate people about breast cancer in order to prevent it and promote population health. (Ferreira et al., 2020) .The study on breast cancer knowledge, attitude, and practice among undergraduate nurses attempts to fill a major gap in the existing literature. While various studies have investigated the general public's awareness of breast cancer, there is a lack of study specifically on undergraduate nurses, who play an important role in healthcare delivery. Nurses, as frontline healthcare practitioners, promoting early detection, and guiding patients through the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. Understanding of breast cancer knowledge, attitudes, and practices is important for improving overall quality of care to breast cancer education within the healthcare community. So, the study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding breast cancer among undergraduate nurse students. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death and the third most common cancer in the world, after lung and stomach cancer, but it is the most common cancer in women, accounting for 21% of new cancer cases worldwide. A lifetime risk of about 6.2% for a woman in developed countries and 2.2% in developing countries. Many women miss out detecting breast cancer at early stage when it is most treatable due to a lack of education. As a result, many women are diagnosed after their cancer has progressed to a more serious stage. So, the study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of undergraduate nurses regarding breast cancer.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of breast cancer in undergraduate nurses.

Research question: What is the knowledge, attitude and practice of Breast Cancer among undergraduate nurses?

METHODS:

A descriptive cross-sectional research study design was used to assess the undergraduate nurse’s knowlegde, attitude and practice regarding breast cancer. The study used purposely sampling technique. The study population was undergraduate nurse students, the setting of the study was nursing institutes of Lahore. Duration of this study was 9 months. Study sample size was 133 calculated thorough slovin’s formula. An adapted questionnaire of knowlegde, attitude and practice was used to gather the information from the study’s participants. After collecting data, the data was compute analyze by software program (SPSS) version (22). The ethical consideration was folloed which is organize by the superior

university department of nursing. The participant’s confidentiality was ensured any participant who are not willing to participate can be with draw from the study at any time. There will be no potential harm and potential benefits for the study.

ANALYSIS:

Table 1: this demographic table shows that majority of age group with 23-25 years. Majority population were females. Majority of nurse students were 3rd year. The majority with single martial status. Majority with no history of breast mass. Najority of nurse students with no family history of breast cancer.

Demographic variables	Category	Frequency%
Age(in years)	20-22	61(45.9%)
	23-25	68(51.1%)
	26-28	4(3.0%)
Academic year	2 nd year	22(16.5%)
	3 rd year	59(44.4%)
	4 th year	52(39.1%)
Marital status	Married	8(6.0%)
	Unmarried	125(94.0%)
History of breast mass	Yes	2(1.5%)
	No	131(98.5%)
Family history of cancer	Yes	11(8.3%)
	No	122(91.7%)

Table 2: This table shows that majority of the participants have low knowledge regarding “Risk factors of breast cancer are”. Majority have moderate knowledge about the “Symptoms of

breast cancer are”. Majority participants have moderate knowledge regarding “Treatment option for breast cancer”

Questions	Respond	Frequency (%)
Risk factors of breast cancer are	Old age	27(20.3%)
	Smoking	28(21.1%)
	Alcohol	23(17.3%)
	family history	20(15.0%)
	I don’t know	35(26.3%)
Symptoms of breast cancer are	Breast mass	24(18.0%)
	Swelling under armpit	33(24.8%)
	Pain in the breast	28(21.1%)
	Nipple discharge	22(16.5%)
	Weight loss	26(19.5%)

Treatment option for breast cancer	Surgery	24(18.0%)
	Radiotherapy	38(28.6%)
	Chemotherapy	43(32.3%)
	I don't know	28(21.1%)

Table 3: This table shows majority of the participants were positive attitude regarding “It is not necessary to advice all adult females to practice breast cancer screening”. Majority participants with positive attitude regarding “It is

better one does not know they have cancer”. Majority of the participants were positive attitude regarding “Breast screening is not culturally acceptable”

Table 3: undergraduate nurses level of attitude towards Breast Cancer		
Questions	Respond	Frequency%
It is not necessary to advice all adult females to practice breast cancer screening	Strongly Disagree	52(39.1%)
	Disagree	20(15.0%)
	Neutral	34(25.6%)
	Agree	21(15.8%)
	Strongly Agree	6(4.5%)
It is better one does not know they have cancer	Strongly Disagree	66(49.6%)
	Disagree	18(13.5%)
	Neutral	16(12.0%)
	Agree	29(21.8%)
	Strongly Agree	4(3.0%)
Breast screening is not culturally acceptable	Strongly Disagree	40(30.1%)
	Disagree	49(36.8%)
	Neutral	14(10.5%)
	Agree	19(14.3%)
	Strongly Agree	11(8.3%)

Table 4: this table shows that the majority of participants respond to the question that “Have you done BSE (breast-self-examination)” those who tick “yes” were 41(30.8%), those who tick

“no” were 92(69.2%).. Majority participants were bad practice regarding “Has undergone CBE (clinical breast examination)”.

Table 4: Practice of undergraduate nurse students towards Breast Cancer		
questions	respond	frequency(%)
Have you done BSE(breast-self-examination)	Yes	41(30.8%)
	No	92(69.2%)
Has undergone CBE(clinical breast examination)	Yes	34(25.6%)
	No	99(74.4%)

Table 5: knowledge, attitude and practice	Frequency	Percent%
Level of knowledge		
Low knowlegde	60	45.1
Moderate knowledge	32	24.1
High knowledge	41	30.8
Level of attitude		
Positive attitude	72	54.1
Negative attitude	61	45.9
Level of practice		
Bad practice	74	55.6
Good practice	59	44.4

DISCUSSION

Majority of participants respond to the question that “Risk factors of breast cancer are” those participants who tick the option ‘Old age’ were 27(20.3%), those participants who tick the ‘Smoking’ option were 28(21.1%), and those who tick the option ‘Alcohol’ were 23(17.3%), those participants who tick the option ‘family history’ were 20(15.0%), those participants who tick the option ‘I don’t know’ were 35(26.3%), this showed that the participants have poor knowledge about risk factors of cancer. The answer of the participants to the question that “Symptoms of breast cancer are” those participants who tick the ‘breast mass’ option were 24(18.0%), those who tick the ‘swelling under armpit’ option were 33(24.8%), and those participants who tick the option ‘Pain in the breast’ were 28(21.1%), those who tick the ‘Nipple discharge’ were 22(16.5%), those participants who tick the ‘Weight loss’ option were 26(19.5%), this showed that the majority participants have poor knowledge about the symptoms of breast cancer. The respond to the question that “Treatment option for breast cancer” those participants who tick the option ‘Surgery’ were 24(18.0%), those who tick the option ‘Radiotherapy’ were 38(28.6%), and those participants who tick the ‘Chemotherapy’ were 43(32.3%), those who tick the ‘i don't know’ were 28(21.1%).this shows that the majority participants have low knowledge about the treatment option for breast cancer. Majority of the participants were strongly disagree 52(39.1%) to the question that the “It is not necessary to advise all adult females to practice breast cancer screening”. Majority of participants were strongly disagree 66(49.6%) to the question that “I consider breast cancer examination embarrassing”. Majority respond were Disagree 49(36.8%) to the question that the ‘breast screening is not culturally acceptable” The respond to the question the “Have you done BSE (breast-self-examination)” majority participants tick the ‘no’ option were 92(69.2%), participants respond to the question that “Has undergone CBE (clinical breast examination)” majority were tick the option ‘no’ were 99(74.4%).

CONCLUSION:

The current study concluded that the undergraduate nurse’s knowledge about breast cancer is low, their attitude toward breast is positive and nurse’s practice regarding breast cancer was bad. This is the need of the time to consider the requirement of knowledge, refresher courses and further work that has to be done

regarding increasing the level of knowledge about breast cancer. The policy makers or nursing institutions should take stick actions regarding this issue. There should be followed up program to ensure the improvement of knowledge, attitude and practice regarding breast cancer. There is the need of experimental study to check the knowledge.

LIMITATIONS:

The current study design used cross-sectional study design to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of undergraduate nurse students regarding breast cancer.

RECOMMANDATION:

The current study examined that the knowledge of undergraduate nurses regarding breast cancer was low, but attitude toward breast cancer was positive and practices regarding breast cancer were bad. So, medical education on breast cancer should be enhanced among nursing students. The contents about breast cancer to add into the text book of Pakistan undergraduate medical students. The training courses and curriculum for nursing should be also updated accordingly. Moreover, nursing institutions could provide undergraduate nurses with the opportunity to attend academic conferences and learn about the latest developments in various disciplines. The future researchers can conduct experimental study to improve the poor level of knowledge.

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