

Awareness of Self Examination for Breast Cancer among Women of Karachi

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Examination for
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ABSTRACT

Objective: To assess the awareness of self-examination and symptoms of breast leading to breast cancer in women above 40 year of ages. And to assess the awareness of risk factors and screening test leading to breast cancer in women above 40 year of ages.

Study Design: Descriptive / cross-sectional study

Place and Duration of Study: This study was conducted at the OPDs of Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Center at Karachi from November 2017 to February 2018.

Materials and Methods: The sample size of 284 women above 40 years of age was drawn through non-probability purposive sampling technique at surgical OPDs of Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Center at Karachi. A structured questionnaire regarding awareness about self-examination, risk factors, symptoms and screening test of breast diseases was constructed. Data was collected through the structured questionnaire. Pilot study was done to check the authenticity of questionnaire. Data was entered and analyzed on statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20) with 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error. P-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results: The results showed insufficient knowledge regarding breast diseases in women above 40 years of age. 65 % (0.001) of the women did not know how to self-examine themselves. 64.4% (0.003) agreed breast lump was common in married women. 65.8% (0.059) considered Breast feeding as a cause of Breast lump. 70.1 % (0.000) of them were unaware of the screening test. 53.2% (0.002) didn't take redness of breast seriously. 53.2% (0.055) didn't consider irritation or inward folding of the nipple as a symptom of breast cancer. 65.2% didn't know about risk factors such as contraceptives which can lead to breast cancer. 46% women of age's b/w 40-45 were eager to had knowledge about breast self-examination and risk factors.

Conclusion: Study concluded the women's lack of awareness about self-examination, symptoms and screening test of breast lump which can easily be cancerous due to lack of knowledge. The study will divert the attention of health concerned authorities towards this growing threat by promoting awareness among women and providing proper facilities for the screening programs and early diagnosis.

Key Words: awareness, symptoms, self-examination, cancer, lump, screening

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INTRODUCTION

Breast cancer is one of the most common malignancies among females globally. It is the 2nd leading cause of cancer death in US¹. Due to lack of awareness of screening and course of disease, in Pakistan, thousands of women become its victim each year. Guidelines for women at very high risk recommend a combination of mammography and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and are appropriate for women with known or suspected inherited susceptibility to breast cancer².

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The rate of death from breast cancer was reduced by the introduction of a breast-cancer screening program³ while on the other hand the role of mass media for creating awareness has been proved vital⁴. Women need to be aware about the clinical symptoms and course of the disease to increase the chances of early detection of breast cancer and thereby to reduce mortality due to it⁵. Significant change was also observed in the proportion of those who intended to have mammography⁶. General lack of awareness of the rising incidence of breast cancer is an attributing factor in the Free State among both the public and healthcare professionals⁷. The only variable that has a significant effect on breast cancer awareness is knowledge of someone with breast cancer⁸. In 2012, Pakistan showed lack of recognition of breast cancer as a public health priority⁹. Positive public opinion regarding screening mammography is understandable given that screening advocates have heavily promoted the slogan "early detection saves lives" while ignoring screening harms¹⁰. An urgent need emerged to find out the level of awareness about breast cancer among women above 40

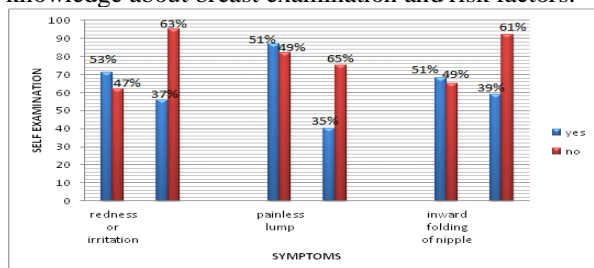
years in Karachi. Poverty, social taboos, lack of resources, limited education, lack of government interest and traditional barriers are the major obstacles that prevented women from acquiring awareness that can lead to early diagnosis and prompt treatment. No national screening program exists on government level in Pakistan. There is delayed presentation of women to the clinics and cancer is diagnosed at advanced stage which decreases their survival rates.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional study was conducted on women age above 40 years at surgical OPDs of JPMC in Karachi from November 2017 to February 2018 using a questionnaire regarding awareness about self-examination, risk factors, symptoms and screening of breast cancer. A sample size of 284 women was taken through non-probability sampling technique. An informed consent was taken from the women who were personally interviewed through a structured questionnaire. The significance of the data was determined by using Statistical Package of Social Sciences software Version 20.0 with 95% confidence interval (95%) and 5% margin of error, p-value of 0.05 was considered as statistically significance. The results were expressed as frequencies, percentages, cross tabulations, pie charts and bar charts.

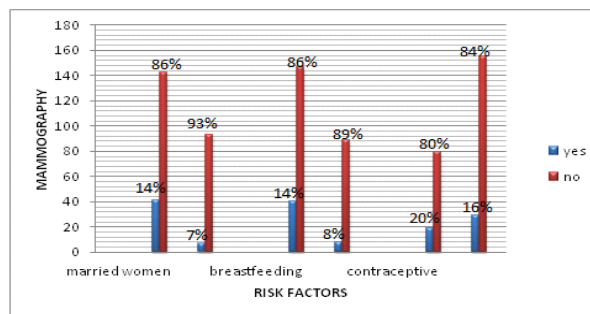
RESULTS

The results showed insufficient knowledge of breast diseases in women above 40 years of age. 65 % (0.001) of the women did not know how to self-examine themselves. 64.4% (0.003) agreed breast lump was common in married women. 65.8% (0.059) considered Breast feeding as a cause of Breast lump. 70.1 % (0.000) of them were unaware of the screening test. 53.2% (0.002) didn't take redness of breast seriously. 53.2% (0.055) didn't consider irritation or inward folding of the nipple as a symptom of breast cancer. 65.2% didn't know about risk factors such as contraceptives which can lead to breast cancer. 46% women of age's b/w 40-45 were eager to had knowledge about breast examination and risk factors.



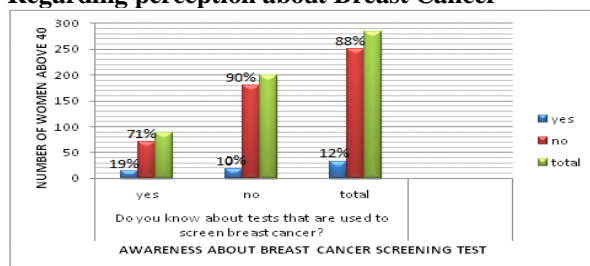
*Result showed most women that didn't know how to self-examine themselves

Figure No.1: Comparison B/W Breast Cancer Symptoms & Self Examination



*Result showed most women didn't know about risk factors

Figure No.2: Frequencies of Yes & No Result Regarding perception about Breast Cancer



*Result showed most women that didn't know about mammography test.

Figure No.3: Frequencies of Yes & No Result Regarding Screening of Breast Cancer

*Result shows women B/W 40-45 were eager to get knowledge.

DISCUSSION

According to this study, majority of the females although knew about the fact that breast lump can lead to breast cancer, the main insufficiency in knowledge was the lack of recognition of lump symptoms as symptoms of breast cancer and a poor understanding of risk factors. The results showed insufficient knowledge regarding breast diseases in women above 40 years of age. 65 % (0.001) of the women did not know how to self-examine themselves which was in contrast according To a Study Conducted in UK in which those women with fewer educational qualifications had poorer knowledge of symptoms, less awareness of lifetime and age-related risks, but were more likely to check their breasts than more highly educated women. This national survey demonstrates a significant lack of the prerequisite knowledge and confidence to detect a breast change. Raising breast cancer awareness and promoting early presentation among older women is important, as they are more at risk of breast cancer and more likely to delay seeking help with breast cancer symptoms than younger women ¹¹. The study stated that 70.1 % (0.000) of our participants were unaware of the screening test. 64.4% (0.003) agreed breast lump was common in married women. This Finding was similar to a study conducted in Iran in 2011 which

showed that 7.6% of the participants reported performing Breast Self-Examination regularly.¹² Women undergoing routine screening mammography have a two- to threefold higher breast cancer detection rate than those who are not screened¹³. According to a study the women had not gone through the screening regarding the factors leading to breast cancer. Early detection and more effective treatments for breast cancer have significantly improved the outlook for women with the disease¹⁴. Screening is linked to perceptions of risk, benefit and barriers through a reasoning process that includes personal and social influences and attitudes¹⁵. Perceived breast cancer risk depends on psychological and cognitive variables and influences adherence to mammography screening guide lines¹⁶. In A Study, five factors extracted from the exploratory factor analysis generally paralleled those of the physical, social/family, emotional, and functional well-being¹⁷.

A Study Conducted In Karachi Stated findings that suggested that only few of the reproductive factors may play an important role in the development of breast cancer among Karachi population compared to the Western populations. The discrepancies between this study's findings and other studies might be due to the different characteristics of Pakistani women that merit further investigation to further clarify the role of all the risk factors and obtain a deeper insight into the breast cancer epidemic in Karachi.¹⁸

Although women have good understanding of some aspects of breast cancer there is poor awareness of other important issues, including knowledge of non-lump breast symptoms and lifetime risk of developing the disease¹⁹. The Study Discovered That among our participants 65.8% (0.059) considered Breast feeding as a cause of Breast lump. One risk factor that the majority of women recalled was a family history of the disease although women with a strong family history of breast cancer have a higher risk, a larger percentage of cases occur in women without a positive family history²⁰. Furthermore, radio, television and print media can also play an effective role in providing awareness regarding breast cancer in Pakistan. This Study showed 53.2% Women (0.002) didn't take redness of breast seriously. A red breast is an uncommon presenting complaint in patients evaluated at a breast center; however, the differential diagnosis is extensive. With appropriate diagnosis and treatment, most patients will have improvement or resolution of their symptoms.²¹ The Study Showed 53.2% women (0.055) didn't consider irritation or inward folding of the nipple as a symptom of breast cancer. 65.2% didn't know about risk factors such as contraceptives which can lead to breast cancer. Use of the oral contraceptive pill (OCP) is associated with numerous health benefits as well as risks, and it is important that women take these into consideration when making informed contraceptive choices.²² 46%

women of age's b/w 40-45 were eager to have knowledge about breast examination and risk factors Breast self-examination should be taught routinely to women aged 40 to 69 years and there is little evidence to suggest it is a useful screening tool at other ages. In the study, most of the women did not have any awareness about breast self- examination, and those with the knowledge didn't ever perform. Furthermore awareness about risk factors is lacking among women in Karachi and a very few go for screening and mammography. Better education and improved primary health care will help detection of breast cancer at early stage and prevent mortality.

CONCLUSION

This Study concluded severe lack of awareness about the self-examination, symptoms and screening test of breast lump which can easily be cancerous due to lack of knowledge. The study would be able to divert the attention of health concerned authorities towards this growing threat by promoting awareness among women and providing proper facilities for the screening programs and early diagnosis.

Author's Contribution:

Concept & Design of Study:	Faheem Ahmad
Drafting:	Tafazzul H Zaidi
Data Analysis:	Kiran Mehtab
Revisiting Critically:	Faheem Ahmad,
	Tafazzul H Zaidi
Final Approval of version:	Faheem Ahmad

Conflict of Interest: The study has no conflict of interest to declare by any author.

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