



KNOWLEDGE OF FEMALE STUDENTS REGARDING CARCINOMA CERVIX IN UDAIPUR

Community Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Introduction; The aim of this study was to examine the knowledge of college students about the carcinoma cervix etiology and transmission.

Material and methods; The study was cross sectional descriptive study, conducted in Meera Girls college of Udaipur city. 90 girl students of all streams (science, commerce, arts) were included. Knowledge regarding cervical carcinoma etiology and prevention was assessed by using pre tested semi structured questionnaire.

Results; Mean and median age of students was found to be 18.9 and 18 year respectively. Mean score of knowledge depicted that majority of students (72.2%) had average level of knowledge, 18.8% had poor level of knowledge and 8.8% had good knowledge. Highest mean score i.e. 6.7 was observed in science stream followed by commerce stream i.e. 6.2 followed by arts i.e. 5.7 and this difference was found to be statistically significant. (p value- 0.0264). Attitude towards vaccination depicted that 61.6% students wanted to get vaccination, among them only 19.6% could spend money on vaccination, while 80.3% desired that govt should provide HPV vaccination facility.

Conclusions; Majority of students were aware of the existence of the cervical carcinoma, its morbid potential and the HPV-vaccination.

KEYWORDS

carcinoma cervix, etiology, prevention

INTRODUCTION-

Cervical cancer is a malignant neoplasm arising from cells originating in cervix uteri. It may be completely asymptomatic in early stages.[1] In advanced stages, it may present as persistent pelvic pain, unexplained weight loss, bleeding between periods, unusual vaginal discharge, bleeding, and pain after sexual intercourse.[2] Infection with human papilloma virus (HPV) types 16 and 18 cause 75% of cervical cancer globally.[3] Other risk factors include tobacco consumption, multiple sexual partners, early age of sexual intercourse, increasing parity, prolonged use of oral contraceptive pills, and sexually transmitted diseases.[4]

With access to HPV vaccine and early detection, most cases of cervical cancer are preventable. Pap smear test has been credited with dramatically reducing the number of cases of cervical cancer in developed countries.[5] Unfortunately, despite the availability of methods for prevention, >95% of women in India have never been screened for cervical cancer.[6] There are several barriers to cervical cancer screening uptake for women in low resource areas like India that include-low level of awareness and knowledge[7,8] of risk factors and early signs and symptoms of disease, prevention services, stigma and misconceptions about female cancer and gynecological diseases, socioeconomic limitations, and an overall lack of national cervical cancer screening guidelines and policies.[9]

Cervical cancer is the 2nd most common cancer among Indian women aged 15-44 years with an estimate of 123,000 incident cases and 67,000 deaths in 2013.[10] In the light of India's rapidly growing population, the overall burden of incidence and mortality of cervical cancer in India is projected to increase by 68 and 78%, respectively, by the year 2030.[10]

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY-

STUDY DESIGN: The study was cross sectional descriptive study.
STUDY PERIOD; one month.

STUDY POPULATION: there are five colleges in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Hence we selected Meera Girl College by lottery system. 90 girl students of all streams (science, arts and commerce) were included randomly.

SAMPLING: Sample size was calculated by using formula $N = 4pq/l^2$ on the basis of previous study by Neelkamal Kapoor et al where the knowledge level was 65.5%. A minimum sample size of 87 was required to study at confidence level of 90%. To drop out the failure we rounded up the sample size to 90.

$$N = 4pq/l^2 \\ \sim 87$$

EXCLUSION CRITERIA- 1. Not willing to participate.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUE:

1. A pre tested semi structured questionnaire was used to assess knowledge regarding cervical carcinoma etiology and prevention.
2. Eighteen questions were asked and one marks were allotted to each correct answer and zero mark for incorrect. 0-6 marks depicted poor knowledge, 7-12 average knowledge and 13-18 good knowledge.

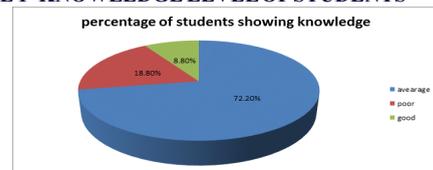
RESULTS;

TABLE 1- Age wise distribution of students of all streams

Age group(in years)	Streams of students			
	Science	Commerce	Arts	TOTAL
<18	1(3.33%)	0	1(3.33%)	2
18-21	23(76.6%)	25(83.3%)	24(80%)	72
>21	6(20%)	5(16.6%)	5(16.6%)	16
Total	30	30	30	90

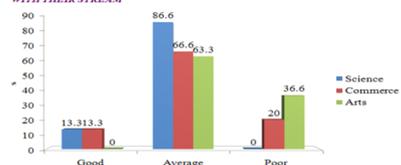
Age wise distribution of students revealed that majority of commerce students i.e. 83.3% belonged to 18-21 year age group, followed by 80% arts students and 76.6% science students who belonged to same age group. There were 20% science students and 16.6% commerce and arts students who belonged to >21 yr age group. While there were only 1-1 students of both science and arts stream belonged to <18 yr age group.

FIGURE 1- KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF STUDENTS



Knowledge level of girl students transpired that majority of students i.e. 72.2% had average level of knowledge, followed by 18.8% who had poor level of knowledge and 8.8% had good knowledge.

FIGURE II- ASSOCIATION OF KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF FEMALE STUDENTS WITH THEIR STREAM



p value- 0.0264

Association of knowledge level of female students with their streams transpired that majority of science students i.e. 86.6% had average knowledge level, followed by commerce students i.e. 66.6% and then arts students i.e. 63.3%. while equal percentage of students from science and commerce i.e. 13.3% in both had good level of knowledge. No student of arts had good level of knowledge. Poor level of knowledge was seen in 36.6% of arts students, followed by 20% commerce students. While no student of science stream had poor level of knowledge.

DISCUSSION- Age wise distribution of students revealed that majority of commerce students i.e. 83.3% belonged to 18-21 year age group, followed by 80% arts students and 76.6% science students who belonged to same age group. There were 20% science students and 16.6% commerce and arts students who belonged to >21 yr age group. While there were only 1-1 students of both science and arts stream belonged to <18 yr age group. Knowledge level of girl students transpired that majority of students i.e. 72.2% had average level of knowledge, followed by 18.8% who had poor level of knowledge and 8.8% had good knowledge. Association of knowledge level of female students with their streams transpired that majority of science students i.e. 86.6% had average knowledge level, followed by commerce students i.e. 66.6% and then arts students i.e. 63.3%. while equal percentage of students from science and commerce i.e. 13.3% in both had good level of knowledge. No student of arts had good level of knowledge. Poor level of knowledge was seen in 36.6% of arts students, followed by 20% commerce students. While no student of science stream had poor level of knowledge. These data are higher than study of George Koshy et al who conducted a study in Delhi in which about 48% of students had not even heard of cervical cancer and HPV. This was especially true for graduate students in nonprofessional colleges where almost 90% revealed lack of basic knowledge. Similar low knowledge levels have been seen even in studies from developed countries like UK and USA.¹¹⁻¹³ Low levels of awareness among different population groups in four developing countries including India has been highlighted by Bringham et al.¹⁴

These data are comparable to study of Saha et al who conducted a study in Kolkata premier colleges to assess knowledge about cervical carcinoma. Mean age was 19.9 (s d 1.2) years. However, our analysis showed that the students from the science disciplines and those from the city had significantly better awareness level about cervical cancer. Cervix cancer is most prevalent type of female cancer among Indian women was correctly responded by only 20% of the students and significantly (p-value < 0.005) more by the students of science than by those from the non-science stream.¹⁵

CONCLUSION-

Mean and median age of students was found to be 18.9 and 18 year respectively. Mean score of knowledge depicted that majority of students (72.2%) had average level of knowledge, 18.8% had poor level of knowledge and 8.8% had good knowledge. Highest mean score i.e. 6.7 was observed in science stream followed by commerce stream i.e. 6.2 followed by arts i.e. 5.7 and this difference was found to be statistically significant. (p value- 0.0264). Attitude towards vaccination depicted that 61.6% students wanted to get vaccination, among them only 19.6% could spend money on vaccination, while 80.3% desired that govt should provide HPV vaccination facility.

RECOMMENDATION

Assessment of knowledge reflected that all students from science and commerce students had good and average level of knowledge while no student from arts had good level of knowledge. Hence there is an immense need to approach students via several manners like campaign, NSS, NCC.

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