

Assessing the Knowledge Regarding Breast Self Examination Among Nursing Students in Rayat Bahra University

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Abstract In India, the incidence of breast cancer is increasing at an alarming rate and Breast Self Examination is an important method to identify it its earliest stage. Therefore, a study to assess the knowledge of Nursing students regarding Breast Self- Examination was conducted in Rayat Bahra University, Mohali, Punjab. Quantitative research approach was used in the study and using purposive sampling technique, data was collected from the sample of 95 students using structured multiple choice questionnaire. The present study exhibited that most of the students had inadequate knowledge and do not perform Breast Self Examination as a routine. Therefore, there is need to encourage the students to practice it as a routine so that the breast cancer can be detected at an early stage.

Keywords: Knowledge, Breast Self Examination, Students

1. INTRODUCTION

“An ounce of prevention is better than pound of care”

Breast cancer is a leading cause of the death in many developing countries amongst middle age women. During the year 2007, among developing countries about 5.4 million cases were reported while and 6.7 million were identified in developing countries. 20% of cancer related deaths are accounted for breast cancer [3].

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Breast cancer is the most common site of cancer in the female. It is one among the 5 most common cancers in India according to the population based tumours registry cell of the "Indian council of medical research (I.C.M.R) New Delhi". In Delhi, breast cancer constitutes about 12% of all cancers and about 24% of all cancers in women.

Current statistics indicate that women lifetime risk to have breast cancer is 1 in 8, but this risk is not the same for all age groups. The risk for developing Breast cancer by age 35 years is 1 in 622 and by the age 60 years is 1 in 23. Approximately 80% of breast cancer is diagnosed after age of 50. A combination of Hormonal, Genetic and Environmental event may contribute to its development. Early diagnosis helps in early treatment and improved survival rate.

A WHO expert committee has recommended BSE for the early identification of Breast cancer. BSE is a primary tool for prevention of Breast cancer. It is as a simple, very low cost, non-invasive screening method. It's important for early detection of breast lumps and while performing it, the women observe, palpate and feel her breasts that help to identify any deviation from normal. Thus, it is a useful self-care activity for all adult women over age of 20 to perform a regular monthly Breast Self-Examination after the completion of their menstrual cycle to look for any lumps and other changes. Women can detect 95% of cancers by this method.

As it is most suitable and readily available method, experts advise that every woman who has begun to menstruate should know the correct way to perform Breast Self- Examination. Self-palpation of breasts is more sensitive than by physician or nurse palpation as the women being more familiar with her own breasts detect any changes in advance that can be missed out by an infrequently visited health practitioner

The effectiveness of Breast Self-Examination does not depend only on frequency, but also on the accuracy with which Breast Self-Examination is performed. Thus, educating about the Breast Self-Examination can be life saving. Several studies conducted to check the knowledge and practices of Breast Self-Examination among peer group revealed that they have less knowledge regarding Breast Self-Examination.

A set of factors limit the performance of Breast Self-Examination, such as lack of confidence, fear of an abnormality, and lack of time. The most commonly reported barrier was worry about Breast cancer which suggested that worry may interfere with performing Breast Self-Examination thoroughly. So, it is necessary to educate the students that how to practice the Breast Self-Examination, its importance and its effectiveness to investigate the Breast cancer at as early stage.

Competence of performance has been shown to affect the efficacy of the self-examination. A study conducted by Memis S, Balkaya N A (2009) among 244 female student nurses to “determine the effect of nursing and midwifery education on breast self examination and reflected that it has a positive effect on student’s knowledge. The study suggested that nursing students should be thoroughly prepared to perform breast self examination on themselves. So that they can further educate other women about breast self examination.”

2. AIM OF THE STUDY

To determine the knowledge of female nursing students regarding Breast Self-Examination.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of knowledge of Nursing students regarding Breast Self-Examination.
- To find out the relationship of knowledge with selected socio-demographic variables.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Non experimental exploratory Research Design with quantitative research approach was adopted to carry out the study. Independent variables comprised of Academic Qualification, Family history of Breast Cancer and ever performed BSE. Sample comprised of 95 out of 117 students pursuing Basic B.Sc Nursing in Rayat Bahra University, Mohali, Punjab. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique. Self-structured questionnaire was developed to assess the knowledge of students. The tool comprised of the two parts: Part 1 to collect Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the sample and Part 2 included Questionnaire comprised of 26 multiple choice questions regarding different aspects of knowledge related to Breast self-examination. Each question carried ‘1’ mark & wrong answer carried ‘0’ mark.

Content validity was established by the experts of the field of nursing. Suggestions & modifications were incorporated in the final tool. Verbal consent was taken from the students. They were assured that their response would be kept as private information & used for the research purpose only. Collected data was entered in the excel sheet and analyzed using different statistical methods. The level of significance chosen was <0.05.

5. RESULTS

SECTION I: Socio-Demographic characteristics of Sample

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Sample Characteristics.

N=95

Sample Characteristics	n	%
Academic Qualification		
1 st year	25	26.3
2 nd year	26	27.3
3 rd year	21	22.1
4 th year	23	24.2
Family history of Breast cancer		
Yes	4	4.2
No	91	95.7
Have you ever performed BSE		
No	63	66.3
Yes	32	33.6

Table 1 depicts the socio- demographic characteristics of the sample. It shows that total sample was 95 students pursuing B.Sc Nursing. According to Academic qualification, majority of the students (27.3%) were from 2nd year followed by 26.3% from 1st year, followed by 24.2% from 4th year and least (22.1%) from 3rd year respectively. According to any history of breast cancer present in any family member, majority (95.7%) of the students did not have any family history and only 4.2% had family history. According to Breast Self- Examination practice, majority (66.3%) of the students have not performed Breast Self- Examination while 33.6% have ever performed Breast Self- Examination.

SECTION II: LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENTS

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Nursing Students According to Level of Knowledge regarding Breast Self- Examination.

N=95

Level of knowledge	Nursing students		
	Knowledge score	n	%
Excellent	>21	03	3.1
Good	18-21	13	13.6
Average	13-17	61	64.2
Below average	<13	18	18.9

Max Score =26; Min Score =0

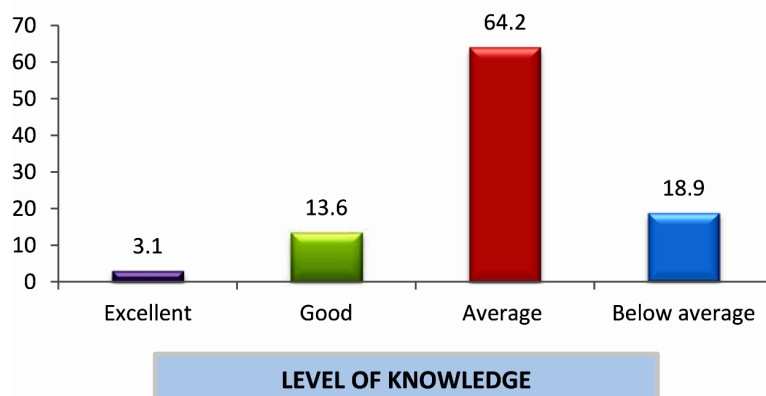


Figure 1: % Distribution of Sample.

Table 2 and Fig 1. depicts that majority of the students (64.2%) had average knowledge, whereas 18.9% had below average knowledge followed by 13.6% who had good knowledge and only 3.1% had excellent knowledge regarding Breast Self- Examination.

SECTION III: Relationship of knowledge with selected socio- demographic variables.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Analysis of Variance of Knowledge Score of Nursing Students regarding Breast Self- Examination According to Academic Qualification- B.Sc. Nursing.

N=95

Academic Qualification	n	Knowledge score		F
		Mean	SD	
1 st year	25	14.76	3.49	0.7 ^{NS}
2 nd year	26	14.46	3.70	
3 rd year	21	15.42	3.29	
4 th year	23	15.69	2.38	
Source of variation	df	Sum of squares	Mean sum of squares	F
Between the groups	3	23.69	7.89	0.7 ^{NS}
Within the groups	91	977.05	10.7	
Total	94	1000.74		

Max score =26
Min score = 0

NS=Non- significant

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Table 3 depicts that the mean knowledge score was the highest (15.69) in students of 4th year, followed by 15.42 in 3rd year, followed by 14.76 in 1st year and least (14.46) in 2nd year.

The tabled F value for 3/91 degree of freedom was 2.6 at 0.05 level of significance and calculated F value was 0.7, which was less than the tabled value. The difference in the mean was found statistically non-significant. Academic qualification was found to have no impact on knowledge of students regarding breast self- examination.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and z test of Knowledge Score of Nursing Students regarding Breast Self- Examination According to Family History of Breast Cancer.

		N=95		
Family History	n	Knowledge score		
		Mean	SD	z
a) Yes	04	1.6	4.5	0.7 ^{NS}
b) No	91	14.8	3.2	

Max score = 26

Min score = 0

NS = Non- significant

Table 4 depicts that the mean knowledge score was the highest (14.8) among students who did not had family history of Breast Cancer as compared to 1.6 among those who had history of Breast Cancer. The difference in the mean was found statistically non- significant and Family history of breast cancer had no impact on knowledge of students regarding Breast Self- Examination.

Table 5: Knowledge Score of Nursing students According to Ever performance of Breast Self- Examination.

		N=95		
Ever performed BSE	n	Knowledge score		
		Mean	SD	Z
No	63	14.8	2.8	5.3*
Yes	32	15.5	3.8	

*significant at <0.05 level

Table 5 shows that the mean knowledge score was the highest (15.5) among students who have performed Breast Self- Examination as compared to 14.8 among those who have never performed Breast Self -Examination. The difference in the mean was found statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance.

6. DISCUSSION

In the present study, it was found that, majority (64.2%) students had average knowledge regarding Breast Self Examination. The same findings were reported by Faeda Eqtaït, Lubna Harazneh (2015). They studied the knowledge of students pursuing nursing and their practices at Arab American University and found that majority (41.2%) had fair knowledge and only 15.5 % had good knowledge regarding BSE.

Further, the study findings shows that only 32 (33.6%) out of 95 students have ever performed Breast Self Examination. Also, a case control was conducted by Ali Abu Salem (2007) to identify the knowledge of nursing students and their practice method of self examination of breast. He also found that among the total 80 female nurses from Prince Rasheed Military Hospital, only 52% of the sample performs breast self-examination.

The study has few limitations like sample size was small and the sample was selected only from one university.

7. CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that maximum of the Nursing students had average knowledge regarding Breast Self- Examination and most of them do not perform it as a routine. Therefore, there is need to strengthen their knowledge and encourage them to practice. And as they play an important part of the health team, they can further disseminate this information appropriately to the community.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The study can be replicated on a large sample to generalize findings
- The study can be conducted in different institutions.
- A comparative study can be conducted to assess the knowledge of students regarding Breast Self- Examination in medical and non- medical professionals
- A quasi-experimental study can be conducted to assess the effectiveness of planned teaching programme on knowledge of students regarding Breast Self- Examination.

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