Assessment of students' knowledge regarding breast self-examination in Erbil City-Iraq

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المستخلص

الهدف: تقييم معلومات الطالبات حول الفحص الذاتي للثدي.

المنهجيّـة: شملت العينة ١٠٠ طالبة من المرحلة الاولى والثانية في المعهد الطبي الفني في اربيل وقدد استعمل مقياس متكون من قسمين ويتعلق بالمعلومات الديمغوغرافية ومعلومات الطلاب حول الفحص الذاتي للثدي.

النتائج: أظهرت نتائج البحثأنّ معلومات الطلاب حول الفحص الذاتي للثدي كانت ضعيفة ولم تكون هنالك علاقة بين معلومات الطلاب وبعض اعوامل الديموغرافية لهم مثل العمر والحالة الزوجية او الحالة الاقتصادية.

التوصيات: أوصت الدراسة بضرورة التركيز في مناهج التعليم في المعهد الطبي على موضوع كيفية اجراء الفحص الذاتي للثدي وزيادة التثقيف الصحي للاناث من الطلبة وضروة طبع كراسات وكتب وصور حول كيفية اجراء الفحص الذاتي للثدي والتاكيد على هذه الممارسات في ورش العمل.

Abstract

Breast cancer is the most common cause of death among women worldwide [(1)]. Breast self-exam (BSE) is considered an important public health procedure; primary prevention should be given the highest priority in the fight against cancer.

Cancer is considered the second leading cause of death in developed countries there was some 6.2 million cancer related deaths, accounting for 12% of all deaths globally [(5)].Patients perception toward this disease and preference concerning the types and aims of their treatment are vary they may loss hopes and become devastated and crippled or even dies earlier, if told about the diagnosis [(13)]. The study aimed to assess knowledge of female students regarding BSE, and to find out relationship between sociodemographic variables and breast self-exam.

One hundred of female students from, Medical technical institute in the first and second class were selected to participate in the study. The questionnaire was designed for data collection. The data were collection from January 1st, 2010 to March 20th, 2010.

The questionnaire it consists of two parts related to sociodemoraphic characteristics for study sample, and female student's knowledge about breast self exam. The study revealed that female student's knowledge about breast self-exam was reported poorly, and there were no significant differences among study sample about. The study revealed that female students' knowledge about breast self-exam was reported poorly according to their age, marital status, and economic status.

The study recommended to emphasizing to curriculum of Medical Technical Institute and should be included breast cancer knowledge and prevention, and Implementation of health education program for female students to raise breast cancer knowledge and awareness among female students.

Keywords: knowledge; breast self-exam; Cancer; Iraq

Introduction:

Breast cancer represents an important public health problem; primary prevention should be given the highest priority in the fight against this disease. Breast cancer is the most common cause of cancer death among women worldwide [(1)]. Globally, breast cancer ranks first among cancers affecting women worldwide. It has been reported that 10 women is affected by breast cancer during their life–time [(2)]. The WHO estimated that 1.2 million cases of breast cancer are diagnosed worldwide each year which represented 10% of all diagnosed cancers and constituted 22%of all new cases in women in 2000 making it by far the most common cancer in women [(3)]. In 2002, it represented 11% of all diagnosed cancers worldwide; being 2nd to lung cancer. BSE has been indorsed and widely promoted by cancer organizations and

authorities around the world. Breast self-exam should be in combination with mammography and Clinical Breast Examination (CBE) and not as substitute for other methods [4]. The purpose of breast self-exam for a women is to learn the topography of her breast to know how her breasts normally feel and be able to identify changes in the breast should they occur in the future. Breast self-exam consists of two basic steps, visual and tactile examination of the breast. Breast self-exam can be done using vertical strip, wedge section and concentric circle detection method [11]. In Iraq, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women and increasing steadily in the last ten years. In Kurdistan Region, breast cancer has been shown to be the most common cancer among patients who attend outpatient clinics in hospitals. Breast cancer is becoming an epidemic for women in Kurdistan due to women's lack of health awareness and breast cancer is becoming more aggressive and affects women at young ages while in other countries it is affecting women after year 50 [5]. Several risk factors for breast cancer have been identified; a family history breast cancer is one of the strongest risk factors. Breast cancer risk increases with increasing age. So, the rate is greatest for women after 50 year [6]. Clinical breast examination is an examination of breast by health care professionals such as physician, nurse or assistant physician and it includes both looking at the breast and palpation. The areas examined included the entire breast lymph nodes above and below the collarbone and under each arm [7]. Several studies have shown that screening for early detection of breast cancer is an effective way to reduce mortality and to improve the prognosis of the disease. In USA, for example, a 30% reduction in mortality was achieved over 10-12 years follow-up for women aged 50-69 years [8]. Mammography alone, or combined with physical examination by health professionals has been widely used in developed countries and found to reduce the mortality from breast cancer by about 40% among women aged 50 years or older.

Nevertheless, mammography is costly and calls for sophisticated technology which might not be available in developing countries. In addition, women still assume that Mammography is unnecessary in the absence of symptoms. Accordingly, breast self-exam has been adopted recently in several countries. It is an easy and low cost procedure. In addition, several studies have revealed that breast self-examination is an effective procedure in the early detection of breast tumors [12].

Objectives of the study:

1. To assess female knowledge students regarding breast self-examination.
2. To find out relationship between socio demographic variables and breast self-examination.

Materials and Methods:

A descriptive study was carried out to investigate student's knowledge regarding breast self-exam in Erbil City-Iraq. The sample consisted of one hundred female students in the first and second classes were selected to participate in the study. The study was conducted at Medical Technical Institute for the period from June 1st through March 2nd, 2010. The questionnaire was designed for data collection and viewed for 10 experts in nursing field for validity and the questionnaire was consisted of two main parts as below:

Part one: socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample.

Part two: questions related to knowledge, and practices. Data were analyzed by using the statistical packages for the social science (SPSS) version 15. Means were calculated to summarize numerical variables, and proportions were calculated for categorical variables. T-test, and chi-squire were used. A p-value of equal or less than 0.05 was considered as statistical considerable.

Results:

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the study sample

Variable	frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-20 year	68	68%
21- 23year	28	28%
24-26 year	4	4%
Social status		
Single	96	96%
Marred	4	4%
Economic status		
High	48	48%
Medium	28	28%
Low	24	29%

It shows that the majority of female were between 18-20 years old, single and from low economic status.

Table 2. Differences between mean of scores and theoretical mean

Variable	No.	Mean of score	Std. Dev.	Theoretical Mean	t-value	Sig.
Knowledge	100	5.8	2.817	10	10.089	0.001

No.=Number; Sig.= Significance; Std. Dev.= Standard deviation

Table (2) shows that the knowledge of female toward breast self-examination was poor.

Table 3. Differences in knowledge according to age

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	P-value
Between Groups	27.858	2	13.9	1.813	0.174
Within Groups	361.122	47	7.6		
Total	388.980	49			

df= Degree of freedom; F-value= ; P-value= Level of probability

Table (3) shows that there were no significant differences among female students about breast self-exam knowledge according to age.

Table. 4. Differences in knowledge according to marital status

Socio status	No.	Mean	Sd.	t-value	P-value
Single	96	6.1	2.884	1.098	0.278
Marred	4	4.5	1.291		

df= Degree of freedom; F-value= ; P-value= Level of probability

Table (4) displays that there was no significant differences between two groups about knowledge of breast self exam according to marital status.

Table.5. Differences in knowledge according to economic status

Economic status	No.	Mean	Sd.	t-value	P-value
High	48	6.3	2.6993	1.058	0.295
Medium	32	5.5	2.9337		
Low	20	4.9	2.9001		

df= Degree of freedom; F-value= ; P-value= Level of probability

Table (5) displays as well that there was no significant differences between two groups about knowledge of breast self exam according to economic status.

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