AWARENESS ABOUT BREAST CANCER AMONG YOUTH OF GUJRAT- CITY OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of present study is to investigate the rate of breast cancer awareness among youth of city Gujrat, Pakistan. Breast cancer is a cancer of earliest age among females. A cross sectional survey was conducted where 828 respondents participated. The respondents split into 2 categories having sciences and non-sciences backgrounds. The survey consists of agreed respondents including 362 females and 12 males from sciences background and 410 females and 44 males from non-sciences. The samples for the survey were selected from different departments of an educational institute in Gujrat Pakistan. Different characteristics like gender, marital status, area, cost on doctors and hospital were recorded. The obtained results from this inductively analyzed qualitative data indicated the terrifyingly low level of breast cancer awareness among the young generation of city Gujrat, Pakistan.

Keywords: Breast Cancer, Frequency, Females, Gujrat, Survey

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INTRODUCTION

Most common cancer that is originated in females is breast cancer and it ranks second prevalent cancer with 14% deaths rate in females when comparison is made in both sexes [1]. The pattern of breast cancer in Arab countries is seen very distributing [2-4]. This Cancer is observed in earliest age females at advanced stages in Arabs as compared to the western countries [5]. The factors that increases the risk of breast cancer among females is age, mutation in genes and their family history [6]. Basically, the three tests which are most commonly used for screening are X-ray mammography, clinical breast examination, and breast self-examination [7, 8].

Breast cancer mortality rate is declining in the industrial areas [9]. The lack of knowledge about breast cancer among females and wrong beliefs about breast cancer prevention are crucial factor in false perception of early age cancer detection and screening procedures [10]. The rate of breast cancer can be controlled by regular exercise, lowering the use of alcohol use and balancing weight. Moreover, early detection is also helpful in decreasing the risk of cancer [11]. Participation of women in screening programmes is about 10% with greater than 65%of patients with breast cancer at last stages [12]. The cancer screen program, monthly and regular examination of breast in clinics and X-ray mammography can play important role for detections and treatments of breast cancer at early stages among young females [13].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The samples to collect data for this cross sectional study were selected from different departments of an educational institute in city Gujrat Pakistan. Various departments were visited and the respondents who agreed to participate in this survey were interviewed to answer a prepared questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: the first section is covered with personal and socio demographic characteristics including gender, age, area, education level, and marital status. The second section comprises the questions related to the source of awareness of breast cancer (Doctor, Electronic media, Seminar, books, Print Media, others or none) or from someone close to you suffered with breast cancer. Third section includes symptoms, diagnostics of breast cancer and attended any camp that held for a breast cancer screening/mammogram. Fourth section is knowledge or awareness about doctors, hospital, and cost of treatment of breast cancer.

RESULTS

Over all 828 respondents participated in this study, comprising 362 females and 12 males from sciences background, and 410 females and 44 males from

non-sciences. Table 1 indicate the results from Science group and Table 2 shows the results of non-sciences group. Table 1 includes 96.8% females and 3.2% male only who agreed for this survey. According to demographic characteristics, 95.7 % respondents belong to 16-24 of age group. About 96.3% are single and married respondents who participated in this study are of only 3.7%.

We observed that the participants in this study are mostly (75.4%) of graduation level; some (13.9%) of them are of intermediate level, 9.9% of postgraduate level, and a few (0.8%) belongs to matric level. The percentages of respondents from the urban area are 63.9% and 36.1% are belongs to rural area. To assess the awareness about this disease in terms of any experience in their family or relatives, only 30.2% participant's experienced it in this way, while 69.8% are those participants who do not have any experience of this disease in the said way.

To assess the source of awareness, we found that the source of 47.3% is electronic media, 15.2% are those they know this from doctor and 13.1% are those who participated in awareness seminars, 12.0% are those who reads curriculum books, few of them (5.1%) have awareness from printing media and 7.2 % are those they had not have any awareness knowledge.

In order to assess the general awareness of breast cancer, 83.7% participants reported that they never heard about the symptoms of breast cancer, only 11.5% had some knowledge about it and 4.8% are those they have better knowledge about symptoms. 73.3% respondents reported they know about diagnostic tests of breast cancer and 26.7% respondents did not know about diagnostic tests. 51.6% respondents never had any knowledge about breast cancer screening programs and 48.4% respondents considered this cancer as some rare disease for screening program. In order to estimate their knowledge about doctors of this disease, only 55.6% participants reported they know about it and 38.0% are those they have better knowledge whereas 6.4% have no awareness about it. 71.1% have knowledge about hospitals, 2.4% have some better knowledge and 26.5% have no awareness. 43% were aware of cost of its treatment and 57% did not know about it. At the end we asked participants give their suggestion for improving their knowledge about awareness 34% respondents said there should be a subject to teach its awareness in high schools. 27.8% asked to arrange seminar and 20.6% go with electronic media (T.V and Radio). About 17.6% suggested for health camp in which doctor or health officers should provide its awareness.

Table 2 indicates that 90.3% females and 9.7% males agreed for this survey. According to demographic characteristics, 81.3 % respondents belong to 16-24 of age group. 87.4% respondents are single and 12.6% married respondents participated in this study.

Table 1: Science Performa Frequency.

Question	Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Female	362	96.8
	Male	12	3.2
Age	16-24	358	95.7
	25-35	13	3.5
	36-50	1	0.3
	51-65	2	0.5
Marital Status	Single	360	96.3
	Married	14	3.7
Education	F.sc.	52	13.9
	Graduation	282	75.4
	Post-Graduation	37	9.9
	Matric	3	0.8
Area	Urban	239	63.9
	Rural	135	36.1
Experience about Disease	Yes	113	30.2
	No	261	69.8
About Symptom	Know	43	11.5
	More know	18	4.8
	Don't know	313	83.7
About Test	Yes	274	73.3
	No	100	26.7
About screening	Yes	181	48.4
	No	193	51.6
About Doctor	Know	208	55.6
	More know	142	38.0
	Don't know	24	6.4
About Hospital	Know	266	71.1
	More know	9	2.4
	Dont know	99	26.5
Cost	Know	161	43.0
	Dont know	213	57.0
Source of awareness	Doctor	57	15.2
	Electronic media	177	47.3
	Seminar	49	13.1
	Curriculum Books	45	12.0
	Print media	19	5.1
	NONE	27	7.2
Subject	Health Official	66	17.6
	Electronic media	77	20.6
	Arrange seminar	104	27.8
	Subjects in high schools	127	34.0

We observed that the participants in this study are mostly (68.9%) of graduation level; some are of intermediate level (5.7%), 22.5% belong to postgraduate level, and a few (2.9%) belongs to matric level. The percentages of respondents from the urban area are 59.3% and 40.7% are from rural area. To assess the awareness about this disease in terms of any experience

Table 2: Non-Science Performa Frequency

Question	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Female	410	90.3
	Male	44	9.7
Age	16-24	369	81.3
	25-35	62	13.7
	36-50	17	3.7
	51-65	6	1.3
Marital Status	Single	397	87.4
	Married	57	12.6
Education	F.sc	26	5.7
	Graduation	313	68.9
	Post-Graduation	102	22.5
	Matric	13	2.9
Area	Urban	269	59.3
	Rural	185	40.7
Experience about Disease	Yes	127	28.0
	No	327	72.0
About Symptom	Know	22	4.8
	More know	2	.5
	Don't know	430	94.7
About Test	Yes	226	49.8
	No	228	50.2
Willing about screening	Yes	155	34.1
	No	299	65.9
About Doctor	Know	189	41.6
	More know	199	43.8
	Don't know	66	14.5
About Hospital	Know	315	69.4
	More know	6	1.3
	Don't know	133	29.3
Cost	Know	204	44.9
	Don't know	250	55.1
Source of awareness	Doctor	82	18.1
	Electronic media	211	46.5
	Seminar	41	9
	Curriculum Books	23	5
	Print media	50	11
	NONE	47	10.4
Subject	Health Official	86	18.9
	Electronic media	113	24.9
	Arrange seminar	92	20.3
	Subjects in high schools	163	35.9

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to assess the awareness of breast cancer in city Gujrat Pakistan. The obtained results from inductively analyzed qualitative data indicated the terrifyingly low level of breast cancer awareness among the young generation of city Gujrat, Pakistan. Emerged themes and sub-themes indicated different categories of barriers preventing women to present early while signs and symptoms were visible. The findings of our study are consistent with the results of other qualitative studies done in various regions of the world [14-19].

In our study main source of awareness is electronic media that is similar to various other studies such as peer group, television, and print media were mostly mentioned as sources of information about the awareness of breast cancer [15, 17, 20, 21].

in their family or relatives, only 28.0% participant's experienced it in this way, while 72.0% are those participants who do not have any experience of this disease in the said way.

To assess the source of awareness, we found that the source of 46.5% is electronic media, 18.1% are those listen about it from doctor and 9% are those who participated in awareness seminars, 5% are those who read it from some curriculum books, 11% of them have awareness from printing media and 10.4 % are those they had not have any awareness knowledge.

In order to assess the general awareness of breast cancer, 94.7% participants reported that they never heard about the symptoms of breast cancer before and only 4.8% have some knowledge about it whereas .5% are those they have more knowledge about symptoms. 49.8% respondents reported they know about diagnostic tests of breast cancer whereas 50.2% respondents did not know about diagnostic tests. 65.9% respondents never had any knowledge about breast cancer screening programs and 34.1% respondents considered this cancer as some rare disease for screening program. In order to estimate their knowledge about doctors of this disease, only 41.6% participants reported they know about it and 43.8% are those they have better knowledge whereas 14.5% have no awareness about it. 69.4% have knowledge about hospitals, 1.3% has some better knowledge and 29.3% have no awareness. 44.9% were aware of cost of its treatment and 55.1% did not know about it.

To conclude our survey, we asked participants give their suggestion for improving their knowledge about awareness 35.9% respondents insisted to add a subject to teach its awareness in high schools. 20.3% asked to arrange seminar and 24.9% go with electronic media (T.V and Radio). About 18.9% suggested for health camp in which doctor or health officers should provide its awareness.

Conclusions and Recommendations: This study indicates that there is any no precautionary measure in Pakistan to raise breast cancer awareness. Some limitations are also found in our study like knowledge regarding diagnostics measure breast self-examination, limited willingness for screening like mamogram.

Literature shows that same situation also exists in Turkey [22], however an improved scenario is observed in United Arab Emirates, where 53.8% women were aware about self-examination of breast [23]. The conformation of knowledge given by doctors and related to health department can play major role in enhancing the awareness about breast cancer through society awareness program. The awareness about diagnostic tests like BSE at an initial stage is contentious and American Cancer Society does not recommend it as it raise the anxiety level and rather than to extend survival in females [24].On the other hand the similar practice is suggested for people living in rising countries where screening program such as mammography are not well performed [25].

For that reason, it is recommended that people have detailed knowledge about self-examination of breast and awareness of breast cancer. There should be govt organized programs and seminars to promote the level of knowledge among population having its high risk and observe its occurrence in the country. Although this study indicate remarkable results but it is limited in numerous ways. Firstly we have limited data that belongs to one city because there is not any source of funding. Thus, these findings are not to all over the Pakistan. Secondly, we have no concern with intervention or measured the particular programs of breast cancer awareness held or not. Thus, more research can be performed to find the answer of this question. At the end, convenience sampling method was used to approach the respondents which could cause unequal enrolment from various demographic groups.

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