RESEARCH ARTICLE

Knowledge Regarding Breast Cancer Among Female Para Medical Students in Baghdad-Iraq

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Abstract

Determined the knowledge regarding breast cancer among females Para-medical students in Baghdad-Iraq, data collection from paramedical students for institutes-Baghdad based on a convenience sampling method questionnaire, the results in the present study showed that low and moderate knowledge of paramedical students toward breast cancer.

Introduction

Breast cancer is the common cancer in females, which is occur in females over 50 years of age, breast cancer is low incidence in the developing countries [1]. According to recent information by the world health organization, the largest increase in breast cancer incidence over the next 15 years will be in the Middle Eastern countries, the mortality rate from all types of breast cancer in the Middle East in currently 70% compared to 40-55% in western countries [2]. The early detection of breast cancer can be achieved through a combination of monthly breast self-examination (BSE) regular breast examination and annual mammography beginning at the age of 40 years, are the best ways to limit morbidity and mortality associated with breast cancer [3]. Hereditary and non-hereditary factors are effective in the etiology of breast cancer, the age and sex are the most important factors which are contributes to breast cancer, the age specific breast cancer incidence increase rapidly starting at the age of 40 years [4]. Other risk factors include menarche, age of menopause, age at first birth, number of births, breast feeding, smoking, and radiation exposure [5]. Breast cancer is a progressive disease, the three screening tests usually considered for early detection such as clinical breast examination, x-ray mammography, and breast self-examination [6]. Breast cancer is most common type of female cancer, women knowledge and views toward breast cancer and its treatment may contribute considerably to medical help-seeking behaviors [7]. Incidence rates breast cancer are increasing in most countries, industrial countries breast cancer mortality is declining when screening mammography is the standard for care [8]. Mammography is the most effective screening method for early diagnosis of breast cancer [9]. The first symptoms of breast cancer is a lump that feels differ from the rest of breast tissue, the breast becoming larger or lower, a nipple changing position or shape or becoming inverted [10].

Most types of breast cancer are easy to diagnosis by analysis of samples or biopsy, the physical examination of breast tissue and mammography are the two most commonly used screening methods [11].

Aims

To determine the knowledge of paramedical students toward breast cancer.

Material and methods

Using a cross-sectional study, this study examined the knowledge of females students, the target population of the study was paramedical students registered at Baghdad medical institute, data collection from the first and second class in the same institute, the total number of females students was around 200 students, the data collection took place between March 2017 and April 2017, based on a convenience sampling method 16 questionnaire, participating was invited by a formal covering letter to complete prepiloted questionnaire, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic language modified to be applicable in Iraq-Baghdad medical institute and then translated back to English, the questionnaire include 3 sections : 1 demographic characteristics, 2 the respondents knowledge of breast cancer and breast self-examine, 3 the current practice for breast cancer screening and breast self-examine, participants include the first class and second class of medical institute -Baghdad-Iraq. A positive answer was assigned one point but the negative answer was assigned zero. The females students were divided according to their answers

into three levels, limited level (0-1 point), moderate level (3-5 point) and high level (6+ points), the high levels were coded as the better level.

Results

(Table 1) the distribution of paramedical students according to age had revealed that the majority (45%) were in age group (18-19) years. (Table 2) the number of paramedical students was 150 (75%) from technical (medical / institute-Baghdad and for technical medical institute Al-Mansour 50(25%) (Table 3) Regarding the contraceptive pills as a risk factor of breast cancer (15%) of females while (90%) of females considered genetic factor as a cause of breast cancer, while (40%) of females considered the high diet as a cause of breast cancer, while 60% of females considered the breast feeding as a cause of breast cancer (Table 4) The table shows that family and friends were the source of information for (45%) of students, television and internet (37.5%) of students, lecture (10%) of students, health workers (15%) of students. (Table 5) the table shows that the breast self-examine as early diagnosis of breast cancer (35%) of students, answered correctly, clinical breast examine as a sign for diagnosis of breast

Variables age (years)	N	%
18-19	90	45%
20-21	80	40%
22-23	30	15%

Table 1: Distribution of studied sample according to age (total N=200)

Variables	N	%
Technical medical institute Baghdad	150	75%
Technical medical institute Al-Mansour	50	25%

Table 2: Distribution of studied sample according to education (total N= 200)

Risk factor of breast cancer	yes		No		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Contraceptive pills	30	15%	150	75%	20	10%
Genetic factor	180	90%	15	7.50%	5	2.50%
High diet	40	20%	130	65%	30	15%
Breast feeding	120	60%	10	5%	70	35%

Table 3: Distribution of studied sample according to their knowledge about the risk factor of breast cancer (total N= 200)

Source of information	N	%
Family / friends	90	45%
Television / internet	75	37.50%
Lecture	20	10%
Health workers	15	7.5

Table 4: Distribution of studied sample according to their knowledge about the source of information of breast cancer (total N=200)

Diagnosis	yes		No		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Breast self-examine	70	35%	120	60%	10	5%
Clinical breast examine	160	80%	25	12.50%	15	7.50%
mammography	170	85%	20	10%	10	5%

Table 5: Distribution of studied sample according to their knowledge about the diagnosis of breast cancer (total N= 200)

Variable	yes		No		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Breast cancer patient should be isolated	20	10%	150	75%	30	15%
Breast cancer patient should be allowed to live freely in the community	40	20%	130	65%	30	15%
Breast cancer patient should not be allowed to breast feed	170	85%	10	5%	20	10%
Women should be afraid of breast cancer	120	60%	40	20%	40	20%

Table 6: Distribution of studied sample according to their knowledge toward prognosis of breast cancer.

cancer (80%) of students answered correctly, mammography (85%) of students answered correctly (Table 6) Regarding the knowledge of students about the prognosis of breast cancer whether the breast cancer patients should be isolated (75%) of students answered correctly, while breast cancer patients should be allowed to live freely in the community (65%) of students answered correctly, breast cancer patients should not be allowed to breast fee (85%) of students answered correctly, women should be afraid of breast cancer (60%) of students answered correctly.

Discussion

In the present study, the distribution of the paramedical students demographic characteristics has revealed that (100%) were females and (45%) of them were of (18-19) years old. In the present study clear that the genetic factor the main cause of breast cancer known by (90%) of students, higher the results were found by Alma A, A 2006 [12], in Saudi Arabia (13.8%). The correct responses indicate good knowledge of students about the genetic factor as the main cause of breast cancer, in the current study it is clear that family and friends were the source of information for (45%) of students, this is slightly decrease than result done by Ibrahim N, A. 2009 [13]. In Nigeria a (51.8%) in the present study, regarding the knowledge about diagnosis of breast cancer (85%) of students have strong agreement that the mammography is a sign for diagnosis of breast cancer, this result is higher than what is found by Bener A, 2001[14] in Saudi Arabia (50.7%). Regarding the knowledge of students about prognosis of breast cancer (85%) of students believe that the patients with breast cancer not allowed to breast feed, this result similar to study done by Bae J, M. (2015) in Korea [15] women.

Conclusion

There is high percentage of incorrect responses regarding the knowledge of students about the risk factor, source of information, diagnosis, prognosis of breast cancer, the results of this study suggest that females institutes students have mild to moderate knowledge of breast cancer, there is a need to enhance knowledge of females regarding issues related to breast cancer.

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