

Awareness and utilization of cervical cancer screening services among women in selected rural communities in IFE east local government, Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Cervical cancer occurs in the cells of the cervix which is the lower part of the uterus connects to the vagina. Various strains of the Human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection, play major role in causing most of the cervical cancer. This cervical cancer grows slowly, so there is time to diagnose and treat it before it causes problems. It kills fewer women each year. Cervical cancer is a lethal disease that is preventable yet has killed numerous Nigerian women. This high fatality is because of its late diagnosis. It is believed that the early diagnosis of the invasive disease and screening of women for precursor lesion can lead to reduce the number of cervical cancer and cervical cancer deaths. The study evaluated the information and usage of cervical cancer screening among women in selected rural communities in Ife East Local Government, Ile Ife. The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive plan in directing the survey and it was delimited to women. 426 women were participated in this survey. They were selected from various rural communities randomly. Semi structured questionnaires tried for validity and reliability was utilized to gather information. After that, the data was coded and entered into statistical package for social sciences version 17.

Then these data were tabulated in frequency tables and cross tabulations. Chi square and T-test were done to decide relationship between the factors of interest at a level of significance of <0.05 . Results indicated that the mean age of the respondents was in between 36 to 46 years; the women who participated in the study were aware of cervical cancer (77%) but did not know about the papanicolaou smear or Pap test as the screening test for cervical cancer (62.9%). Better than expected (54.5%) of the respondents had a reasonable information about cervical disease and screening however a couple of rate (9.4%) reported to have done pap smear test previously, identified barriers to the uptake of the test were funds, pain, lack of awareness, embarrassment. The study demonstrated a huge relationship between women's knowledge about cervical cancer and cervical cancer screening (results) and their age ($X^2=21.15$, $df=8$, $P=0.007$). There was also a huge difference in between literate and illiterate in their knowledge about cervical cancer and screening services ($p=0.027$). In conclusion, the awareness on Papanicolaou smear as a method of screening is needed to increase. Also awareness is required to know about its significance in the prevention of cervical cancer. The public authority should also be sensitized to support women's support by subsidizing the cost as cost remains a major challenge for women in utilizing the service.