

ORIGINAL PAPER

Assessment of the Knowledge and Practice of Breast Self Examination among Female Cleaners in Obafemi Awolowo University Ile Ife, Nigeria

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Abstract

Background: The breast is a very important part of a woman's body. Breast problems and diseases like carcinoma bring distress to women and most women would do anything in their capacity to prevent its occurrence. Breast Self-Examination (BSE) is an important and cheap method for early diagnosis of breast cancer. The understanding of women's belief and behaviour towards this method is indispensable to enhancing early detection, prompt diagnosis and management of the breast disease to increase the survival rate.

Aims : to assess the knowledge, practice and attitude of female cleaners in Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria towards Breast Self-examination as a means of early detection of breast anomaly.

Methodology: The instrument used for data collection was a self- structured, validated, self-administered and interviewer administered questionnaire. The data collected were sorted and analysed using statistical package for science solutions, the results were presented in tables and figures and the hypotheses were tested with Chi-square.

Results: This revealed that 51% and 25% of the population respectively had average and excellent knowledge of Breast Self-examination and majority of them had a positive attitude towards it. However, only 10.7% and 3.1% of those with positive attitude respectively demonstrated fair and good knowledge of its practice in search for breast lumps.

Conclusion: The study showed more than half of the study population had an average knowledge of Breast Self-Examination but quite few practiced it well. This calls for an attention to women's reproductive health care and a need for dissemination of information through teaching and demonstration to educate women on Breast Self- examination for early detection and prevention of breast problems especially breast carcinomas.

Key Words: Assessment, Breast, Knowledge, Practice, Self-examination