



2nd Annual Students' Research Session - 2020

"Enhancing Healthcare Through Innovative Research"

BOOK OF ABSTRACT

**ASRS
2020**

10th December 2020

Knowledge, Attitude and Screening Practices of Breast Cancer Among Female School Teachers in Selected Schools in Batticaloa Educational Zone

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Abstract

Introduction: Breast cancer is the most frequent cancer of women worldwide as well as in Sri Lanka. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the occurrence of breast cancer is increasing. Breast cancer is often curable, if detected early. The study was aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude and screening practices of breast cancer among female school teachers in selected schools in Batticaloa educational zone.

Methodology: Cross Sectional Descriptive Study was conducted among 174 female teachers in selected schools in 3 divisions of the Batticaloa educational zone, including Manmunai North, Eravur Pattu-1 and Manmunai Pattu. Samples were selected with simple random sampling and self – administered questionnaires were used to collect the data. Frequencies, percentages and the association of knowledge variables on socio-demographical factors were assessed through chi-square test and $p < 0.05$ was considered as a significant.

Results: Total of 174 participants were recruited for this study. Only 1.7% of participants had high knowledge on risk factors, signs and symptoms and treatment of breast cancer. Even though participants' knowledge on breast cancer screening was revealed as low; breast self-examination 39%, clinical breast examination 25% and mammography 9%, their awareness was as high as 90.8%, 87.9% and 62.6% respectively.

The attitude of breast cancer occurrence was positive in the study population while attitudes about barriers for participation of breast cancer screening practices were poor. The age, educational level and

teaching experience were significantly associated with increased knowledge on breast cancer with a p -value of less than 0.05.

Conclusion: The knowledge on breast cancer and its screening were poor among the female teachers and it is recommended a greater focus on related education programs to improve the knowledge, to change misconceptions about breast cancer and to avoid barriers related screening

Key words: Breast cancer, Breast cancer screening, Breast self - examination, Knowledge, Attitude and Barriers.