

Abstract

Breast cancer is an abnormal growth of a tissue that starts in the cells of the breast. It is a major health burden in women both in developed and developing countries. Most women present with breast cancer at advanced stages when little treatment benefit can be derived. Kenyans aged 18 years and above are at risk of developing breast cancer. Seventy to eighty percent of cancer cases in the country are screened at later stages due to a lack of awareness, inadequate diagnostic facilities, lack of treatment facilities, high cost of treatment and high poverty index. Early detection and screening as cornerstones for breast cancer control play a pivotal role in reducing related mortalities. At Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) in Kisumu, the number screened for breast cancer is actually low (averagely 4-5 patients on monthly basis). This cross sectional study assessed knowledge, attitude and practices of female outpatients on breast cancer screening hence will induce appropriate interventions e.g. education and correct practice. From the targeted population, systematic random sampling was used to select 400 female outpatients aged 18 to 65 years seeking medical services at JOOTRH though the number of valid cases was 340. Data was collected using structured questionnaires and then analyzed by SPSS version 17. Seventy five point nine percent of the study population had knowledge on breast cancer screening but very few were seeking screening. Fear and preference of health care provider were at 37.9% and 23.5% respectively and this was observed to have affected attitude of study population towards (BCS). Other than BSE at 69.1%, the rest screening methods were poorly practiced due to lack of knowledge. Significant association between knowledge and attitude as well as knowledge and practice were determined by chi-square. This study found no significant association between knowledge and attitude same to knowledge and practice among the respondents on breast cancer screening ($p>0.05$). The study recommends counselors to be trained on provider-initiated breast cancer screening (PIBCS) so as to screen and provide psychological support to the presumed breast cancer cases. There should be emphasis in ensuring the implementation of the already existing strategies in promoting breast cancer screening among women.