

Knowledge and Awareness of Cervical Carcinoma among Female Students Aged 18-20 in Selected Schools in Kalutara District, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Cervical carcinoma due to Human Papilloma Virus is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among gynecological cancers in developing countries such as Sri Lanka. This study was conducted to assess the knowledge and awareness of cervical carcinoma among female students aged 18-20 in selected schools in Kalutara District, Sri Lanka. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using a validated pre-tested self-administrated questionnaire designed as two sections under the topics of, knowledge and awareness regarding cervical cancer with closed-ended questions. Collected data from 440 participants were analyzed using SPSS 28 and Bloom's cut-off point was used to grade the data. The association between the participants' A/L stream and their knowledge and awareness of cervical carcinoma was analyzed using the chi-square test ($p < 0.05$). The study assessed knowledge and awareness of cervical carcinoma among students. Results showed that 95% had a low level of knowledge, and 86% had low awareness. Only 0.45% knew about screening tests, while 99.55% were unaware. This showed a lower knowledge level compared to a study conducted by K. Gunasekera in 2022 in Sri Lanka. However, a significant relationship was found between participants' A/L stream and knowledge and awareness of cervical carcinoma. In conclusion, the current study found that female students aged 18-20 in selected schools in Kalutara District have low knowledge and awareness regarding cervical carcinoma. It is strongly emphasized that a high priority should be set to provide knowledge on cervical carcinoma while conducting awareness programs at the school level.

Keywords: *Cervical carcinoma, Knowledge, Awareness*