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Cervical cancer screening among female undergraduates and staff in the Niger delta region of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

A significant decrease in the incidence of cervical cancer and mortality is expected when all eligible women have access to regular Screening tests. Factors that can influence participation rate include: acceptability, accessibility, screening interval, promotion of screening among others. This study is aimed at the assessment of the risk factors for cervical cancer, the knowledge and level of utilization of cervical cancer screening among female staff and female undergraduates of Niger Delta University. A standard questionnaire was used for data collection. The questions were made to capture the objectives of the study. 182 (50.6%) were aware of cervical cancer screening, 22 (12.1%) of the respondents have had at least one pap test in the past, the commonest reasons for uptake of screening were; When it is free or subsidized 6 (27.3%), as part of a general screening program 6 (27.3%), Doctor' s request 4 (18.2%) and self-conviction 4 (18.2%). Many 98 (41.4%) of the respondents, considered themselves healthy and did not see any reason to subject themselves to any form of cervical cancer screening. The reasons for uptake and non uptake of cervical cancer screening are statistically significant between the students and staff ($\chi^2 = 18.175$, $p = 0.001$; $\chi^2 = 11.31$, $p = 0.046$). The mean age for the initiation of penetrative sex among the respondents was 15.4 ± 2.7 , 226 (71.1%) had more than one sexual partner and 184 (51.0%) had been treated for sexually transmitted infections in the past. The study shows that awareness of cervical cancer screening and Uptake was low amongst the respondents, this is despite the fact that a large proportion of the respondents had risk factors for cervical cancer.

KEYWORDS

Knowledge; Cervical Cancer; Risk Factors; Screening; Niger Delta

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