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Awareness and Practice of Breast Self-Examination (BSE) among Women in Selected Areas of Morang District: A Community Based Interventional Study

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Abstract

Background

Breast cancer is a major public health concern, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Breast self-examination (BSE) is a simple, non-invasive, and low-cost approach for promoting breast awareness and recognizing abnormalities. This study assessed BSE knowledge and practice among women in Sundarharaicha Municipality, Morang District, and evaluated the effect of a structured educational intervention on BSE performance.

Methods

A community-based pre-post interventional study was conducted among 339 women of reproductive age selected through multistage sampling. Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Committee of PUSHHS (79-081/82). Data were collected using a structured interview schedule and a 17-step observational checklist for BSE technique. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 21 with descriptive statistics, chi-square test, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

Results

Mean age was 32.38 ± 12.02 years; 51.6% (175) were aged 21–30 years. Adequate BSE knowledge was found in The mean age of participants was 32.38 ± 12.02 years, with 51.6% were aged 21–30 years. Adequate BSE knowledge was observed in 49.3%, with a mean knowledge score of 3.76 ± 4.06 . Only 27.7% had practiced BSE in the preceding month, of whom 43.6% demonstrated good practice. Following the intervention, mean BSE practice scores increased from 3.36 ± 5.49 to 15.54 ± 2.66 ($p < 0.001$). Age, education, occupation, age at marriage, number of children, breastfeeding duration, and smoking status were significantly associated with BSE knowledge and/or practice ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion

Knowledge and regular practice of BSE were suboptimal among women in the study area. The educational intervention substantially improved BSE technique, supporting the integration of skill-based breast-health education into community health programs.

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