



KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION IN NURSING STUDENTS

Efrin Nalpa Rongko¹, Maikkye Hessel Fanggi², Sulastri Anggraini Ndun³, Joice Cathryne⁴

^{1,2}Siloam Hospital Denpasar

³Siloam Hospital Kupang

⁴Faculty of Nursing Universitas Pelita Harapan, Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia

Email: joice.cathryne@uph.edu

ABSTRACT

Cervical cancer is a malignant disease that affects the cervix, characterised by the growth of abnormal cells and causing many deaths among women; as nursing students, it is important to know how to prevent cervical cancer. Based on a survey conducted among 20 nursing students, it was found that 90% were unaware of where cervical cancer occurs, and 60% of the students had never learnt about cervical cancer prevention, and three female students had family members who had suffered from cervical cancer. This study aims to determine the knowledge and attitudes regarding cervical cancer prevention among nursing students. This study employed a descriptive quantitative method with univariate analysis. The sample comprised 134 female students selected using purposive sampling. The study was conducted from February to April 2022 using a questionnaire. The results showed that 76.9% of the female nursing students had good knowledge, and 74.6% had a positive attitude towards cervical cancer prevention. Although the students possessed good knowledge and attitudes, education or seminars on cervical cancer prevention should still be provided, and future research is expected to investigate the factors influencing attitudes towards cervical cancer prevention.

KEYWORDS: *Cervix Uteri, Female, Nursing, Students*

ABSTRAK

Kanker serviks merupakan penyakit ganas yang menyerang leher rahim, ditandai dengan tumbuhnya sel-sel abnormal dan menyebabkan banyak kematian di kalangan wanita, sebagai mahasiswa keperawatan penting untuk mengetahui melakukan pencegahan terhadap kanker serviks. Berdasarkan survei yang dilakukan kepada 20 mahasiswa keperawatan, didapatkan 90% tidak mengetahui tempat terjadinya kanker serviks, dan 60% mahasiswa belum pernah belajar tentang pencegahan kanker serviks dan tiga mahasiswi memiliki anggota keluarga yang pernah menderita kanker serviks. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gambaran pengetahuan dan sikap pencegahan kanker serviks pada mahasiswa keperawatan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif deskriptif dengan analisis univariat. Sampel dalam penelitian ini sebanyak 134 mahasiswi yang diambil dengan teknik purposive. Penelitian ini berlangsung pada bulan Februari hingga April 2022 dengan menggunakan kuesioner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 76,9% siswi memiliki pengetahuan yang baik, dan 74,6% siswi memiliki sikap yang positif terhadap pencegahan kanker serviks. Meskipun siswi memiliki pengetahuan dan sikap yang baik, edukasi atau seminar mengenai pencegahan kanker serviks tetap harus diberikan, dan penelitian selanjutnya diharapkan dapat meneliti faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi sikap pencegahan kanker serviks.

KATA KUNCI: Perempuan, Perawat, Mahasiswi, Leher Rahim

INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer, more commonly known as cervical cancer, is a condition when the growth of malignant cells in the cervix is uncontrolled. Cervical cancer is caused by persistent oncogenic Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (Tarmizi, 2024) and the most common type of cancer in women is cervical cancer. Worldwide, an estimated 660,000 women received a diagnosis of cervical cancer in 2022, which claimed the lives of nearly 350,000 women (WHO, 2020). Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women worldwide after breast cancer, colorectal cancer, and lung cancer (Globocan, 2020).



In 2018 there were around 570.000 new cases of cervical cancer with deaths reaching 311.000 cases each year (WHO, 2022).

Asia has the number of cervical cancer cases in 2020 reaching 351.720, with cervical cancer deaths totaling 199.902. There are around 1.6 million women who are vulnerable to cervical cancer, aged > 15 years. So, this puts cervical cancer in third place as the highest number of cases in Asia. In Southeast Asia, cervical cancer cases are recorded annually at 62.456, with the number of deaths annually reaching 35.738, and Indonesia ranks first in Southeast Asia with the highest estimated number of cervical cancer cases, with a total of 32.469 new cases in 2018 and the number of deaths reaching 18.279 cases, which then increased in 2020 with 36.633 cervical cancer cases (Globocan, 2020), with the increase in the number of cases, cervical cancer rose to second place as the cancer with the most patients in Indonesia after breast cancer (Puskesmas Banjarejo, 2021) and from 2018 to 2020 in Tangerang Regency, there were 133 patients treated for cervical cancer (Rissanti, 2021). In general, patients with cervical cancer come to the hospital in an advanced stage so that it is difficult to cure. This shows that the importance of knowledge and attitudes for the prevention and early detection of cervical cancer is still low (Spagnoletti, Bennettorcid, Wahdi, Wilopoorcid, & Keenan, 2019).

Based on the data above, it is possible that the number of people with cervical cancer will continue to grow, so it is very necessary to have knowledge and a positive attitude towards cervical cancer early to balance the age of adolescents who experience physical changes, namely sexual maturity, in order to minimize and prevent risk factors that can develop and cause cervical cancer (Pohan, 2018). Early prevention of the incidence of cervical cancer can be done by living a healthy lifestyle, maintaining the hygiene of reproductive organs, and performing HPV immunization. Adolescent girls generally care about reproductive health when they begin to enter the late adolescent age group, namely the age of 18-21 years, (Junita Silitonga, 2020). At that age, adolescent girls begin to consider preparations for the reproductive process so that they begin to realize the importance of paying attention to reproductive health (Rachmani, Shaluhayah, & Cahyo, 2012).

A preliminary survey has been conducted at a private university in Tangerang involving 20 second-year nursing students, it was found that 90% were unaware of where cervical cancer occurs, 60% had never learnt about cervical cancer prevention, and three female students had family members who had suffered from cervical cancer. Knowledge of and prevention of cervical cancer are vital, particularly as nurses must themselves be healthy in order to promote health in relation to cervical cancer. Based on the above phenomenon, the researcher wants to identify the description of knowledge and attitude of cervical cancer prevention in nursing students in Tangerang.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research uses quantitative design with a descriptive approach. This research took place from February to April 2022 at one of the private universities in Tangerang. The population in this study was 201 second-year nursing students, while the sample size was 134 students, selected using the Slovin formula. The sampling technique employed in this study was purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria in this study were nursing students aged 14-21 years who were willing to become respondents, while the exclusion criteria were respondents who were incomplete in filling out the questionnaire.

The questionnaire used in this study was a questionnaire on adolescent girls' knowledge and attitudes toward cervical cancer, adapted from Purba (2015) research. The knowledge and attitude questionnaire has been reviewed by experts and deemed appropriate and valid. This knowledge questionnaire has Cronbach's alpha of 0.80 and consists of 15 questions in the form of multiple choice in which, if the answer is correct, it is given a value of one, and the wrong answer is given a value of zero. The attitude questionnaire in this study has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 and consists of 10 statements whose assessment was measured using a Likert scale, for positive statements scored 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree, and negative statements scored 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, and 4 = strongly disagree.



This research has obtained permission from the Research Ethics Commission of the Faculty of Nursing, Pelita Harapan University, with number No. 040/KEPFON/I/2022, which aims to protect the rights of respondents with ethical principles applied in this study, namely respect for persons, justice, beneficence and non-maleficence, and confidentiality. This study used univariate data analysis, a data analysis technique that focuses on examining one variable separately with the aim of getting a comprehensive picture of each variable. To analyze categorical data, the researcher used a computerized system that distributed the frequencies of the data and then converted the results into percentages.

RESULT

Table 1. Distribution Characteristics of Respondent (n=134)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
14-17	2	1.5
18-21	132	98.5
Have received information on cervical cancer		
Yes	115	85.8
No	19	14.2
Sources of information		
Teacher	14	10.4
Friend	18	13.4
Family	9	6.7
Media (Internet)	73	54.5
Other	1	0.7
History of cancer in family		
Yes	6	4.5
No	128	95.5

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents in this study were aged 18-21 years, with 132 (98.5%) respondents, and 115 (85.8%) respondents had received information about cervical cancer, where 73 (54.5%) respondents got the information from the internet. And there are 6 (4.5%) respondents who have a history of cervical cancer in their family.

Table 2. Knowledge and Attitudes about Cervical Cancer (n=134)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Knowledge		
Good	103	76.9
Moderate	20	21.6
Low	2	1.5
Attitude		
Positive	100	74.6
Negative	34	25.4

Based on table 2, the majority of 103 (76.9%) respondents had knowledge in the good category about cervical cancer prevention, and 100 (74.6%) respondents also had a positive attitude towards cervical cancer prevention.

DISCUSSION

Overview of Respondent Characteristics

The results showed that this study was dominated by late adolescents who are quite mature in their thought process and ability to capture information (Mubarak, 2012). At the ages of 18-21 years, adolescents are adaptable to the environment and have been exposed to cervical cancer information



(Sarawasti, 2018). The results also showed that 85.8% of respondents had received information about cervical cancer; this result is in line with the research of Mapanga, Girdler-Brown, & Singh (2019) and the research of Mburu, Itsura, Mabeya, Kaaria, & Brown (2019), where 96.7% and 84.4% of respondents had heard and received information about cervical cancer. However, this result is not in line with the research of Olubodun, Odukoya, & Balogun (2019) where 98.7% of the respondents had secondary level education and had never even received information about cervical cancer. Mature age, mindset, comprehension, and attitude affect a person's search for cervical cancer information (Hakim & Kadarullah, 2016).

The results of this study showed 4.5% of female students had a family history of cervical cancer. This research is in line with Maharani (2017) research, where 0.93% of respondents have families with a history of cervical cancer. The history of cervical cancer in family members puts a person at risk of developing cancer that can be genetically inherited so that the immune system cannot fight HPV infection. Individuals who have a family history of cervical cancer tend to be at risk of cervical cancer caused by gene mutations that are inherited around 5-10% (Kailos, 2021).

Overview of Knowledge

The results showed that 103 (76.9%) nursing students had good knowledge about cervical cancer prevention. The results of this study are in line with the research of Mangki (2023), where 74.4% of respondents had good knowledge. In her research, Junita Silitonga (2020) also found that 60% of his respondents had good knowledge about cervical cancer because they had obtained information about cervical cancer from various sources, such as teachers, friends, family, or online media. Similarly, a study by Rachmani et al (2012), found that 87.1% of respondents had good knowledge about cervical cancer because they had health education and therefore obtained information from lecturers, friends, and the media. This research is also supported by research from Burhan, Rahman, & Haque (2021) where 71.8% of respondents use the internet as a source of information on cervical cancer.

In contrast to research by Pohan (2018), where 62.2% of respondents had poor knowledge because respondents had a high school educational background and had never received material about cervical cancer. This study is also not in line with Indryani (2019), where 55% of respondents had poor knowledge because respondents had never attended reproductive health counseling and could not utilize social media to find information. Kusumawardani (2015) said that counseling is an activity of delivering knowledge that is expected to affect a person's knowledge and behavior.

Knowledge is influenced by age, educational background, sources of information, and a family history of cervical cancer. The results of this study show that 98.5% of respondents were aged between 18 and 21 years. Budiman (2013) state that age is one of the factors influencing an individual's knowledge. This is supported by Antarsih and Kusumastuti (2019), whose research indicates that during adolescence there is an increase in sexual drive, leading young people to seek out various forms of information, which in turn influences their level of knowledge. Good knowledge is also influenced by educational background in the field of health, which exposes respondents to material on cervical cancer; furthermore, family members' experiences with a history of cervical cancer can motivate individuals to learn more about the condition (Manoppo, 2016). Families with a history of cervical cancer tend to possess good knowledge, which can influence attitudes (Maharani, 2017). The source of information about cervical cancer used by 54.5% of respondents was the internet. This study is in line with the research of (Tadesse, Tafa Segni, & Demissie, (2022), in which 57.4% of respondents obtained knowledge about cervical due to the internet. The development of internet technology as an information channel that provides a wide range of information, which can now be easily accessed (Zaharnita & Rosyid, 2015).

Overview of Attitude

The results of the study indicate that 100 (74.6%) female students held a positive attitude towards cervical cancer prevention. This study is consistent with the research conducted by Sagitarini (2019),



in which 60.6% of respondents held a positive attitude towards cervical cancer prevention, as the respondents already possessed a good understanding of cervical cancer. This study is also supported by research by Dewi, Purnami, & Heri (2021), in which 60.8% of respondents held a supportive attitude towards HPV vaccination. This study is also supported by Pohan (2018), which found that 72.6% of respondents held a positive attitude towards cancer prevention by avoiding all factors that cause cervical cancer. Azwar (2015) defines attitude as a response arising from the influence of various factors, such as personal experience, the influence of others, cultural influences, the mass media, education, religion, and emotional factors, which cause individuals' attitudes towards a particular matter or object to vary.

The results of this study contradict those of a study by Antarsih & Kusumastuti (2019), in which 61.6% of respondents were found to lack a commitment to primary prevention of cervical cancer due to a lack of promotional materials. Tekle, Wolka, Nega, Kumma, & Koyira (2020), in their study, showed different results, where 54.5% of respondents had a negative attitude towards cervical cancer prevention due to a lack of information regarding cervical cancer screening. Similarly, the results of a study by Indryani (2019) also showed inconsistent findings, with 63% of respondents holding a negative attitude due to a lack of knowledge regarding the correct and appropriate management of cervical cancer. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the positive attitudes of female nursing students are influenced by a good understanding of cervical cancer.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this study is that nursing students have good knowledge and positive attitudes towards preventing cervical cancer. The knowledge and attitudes obtained are influenced by the age of students who can think clearly, and the internet is used by students as a tool to find information about cervical cancer prevention, furthermore, having a history of cancer in the family further encourages students to seek information on cervical cancer, especially regarding the prevention of cervical cancer, and the Faculty of Nursing is expected to organize regular seminars on cervical cancer prevention, including information on the HPV vaccine, in order to maintain and enhance the knowledge and attitudes of female nursing students.. and further research is expected to examine the factors that influence the attitude toward cervical cancer prevention.

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