

A Study On Breast Cancer Cognizance And Its Linkages To Social Work

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ABSTRACT:

The attempt of this study was focused on highlighting and analyzing the knowledge and awareness on theme of understanding of breast cancer as a disease and associated risk factors by university students in two institutes of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. The study was conducted on 100 college students using questionnaire and responses was collected. The study investigates the perception of students on breast cancer. Also, it establishes the linkages with Social work Profession to help the patients in their time of emergencies. The study also successfully established that the educative and sensitization themes on breast cancer especially among younger population can help in enhancing the knowledge base for the cause of early detection of symptoms.

Keywords: Oncology, Tumor, BSE, Menopause, Psycho-social

INTRODUCTION:

A condition of cancer progression and diagnosis affects and plays with patient life not on physically but it also deteriorates with mental aspects of the patient. Hence, in such crucial times the role of social workers comes to play who can help the patient and their caregivers towards roads to recovery. According to International Agency for Research on Cancer, it has stated that in the year 2020 Breast Cancer has become the most commonly diagnosed cancer form in the

whole world. In relations to the projections the agency documented that in the year 2020, it recorded 2.26 million new cases of breast cancer and in addition near about 6,85,000 deaths worldwide. Another unmasked reality in context of Breast cancer and breast cancer mortality is marked by inequality. As against high income countries where the environment for predicting the chance of recovery are more favorable, the low income economies shows not much promising results in terms of prognosis of disease. The barriers that come in attaining well time bound treatment results in poor survival rate among women who resides in low-income countries. Also in Indian context the incidences of breast cancer among Urban Indian Women is on the steady rise and it has surpassed cervical cancer form to become leading diagnosed cancer type and form. In Indian Fabric system the concept of family is seen as dominant social unit, and therefore in such a situation when the diseases like cancer which can be life threatening situation if not treated at early stages, it is not the patient alone who suffers but rather whole family undergoes an environment of stress. If we talk about Indian culture, it is still patriarchal in nature and men still holds dominance in every sphere be it family, education, and jobs. It is still women who bears the extra pressure and thereby holds responsible to keep the honour of the family alive. In all such complexities a woman often neglects his household chores to fulfill other striking factors that hinder the possible timely treatment of women. Sensing and realizing the severity of the disease of breast cancer in India Agarwal and Ramakant, 2008 pens down that every each passing year the country adds to a total of 1lakh new cases and thereby adding the total rate of cases. If we consider and review the urban cancer registries of cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Trivandrum, Calcutta and Ahmedabad it was reported that the disease of breast cancer constitutes 30% of all cancers. Also, it is imperative to recognize that no doubt with advancement in field of medicine and technology, the country has successfully established the quality centers of excellence which are offering exceptionally good at par with best in the world multimodality protocol- based treatment, however still of majority of women are debarred of getting such specialized treatment due to urban-rural divide, lack of infrastructure, restriction of sound family income. In a report prepared by India Today on account of World Cancer day, and thereby portraying the rising concern on Breast cancer, Dr. Niti Raizada Director Medical oncology and Hematology, Fortis hospital, Bengaluru states Majority of breast cancer cases over 90% have a connections negative lifestyle choices that we chose like obesity, consumption of alcohol related products, Exposure to feminine hormones, Late menopause can aggravate the chances of development of Breast cancer while the remaining percentage (10%) of breast cancer cases can have hereditary linkages with the infliction to the disease

Breast Cancer and Women:

The international women's day is celebrated on March 08-March to celebrate the precious journey of women and to applaud and recognize the women' Achievements all over the world.

However, the hidden part is that when it comes to health, the women have always sacrificed their health to bear up with all the Prime responsibilities in almost all spheres. During the Life journey a woman goes through and thereby passes through various stages of Life which includes childhood, Puberty, Reproductive stage and followed to the transitional stage of Menopause. Every stage of women's journey is accompanied by various wears and tears and as a consequence the women health is compromised. In terms of Major health issues that are a woman's body is prone to get inflicted with comprised of following:

S.No.	Common Health Issues	Description
1.	PCOD and Obesity	The Issue of PCOD and Obesity have a major possibility to occur among women's during adolescence. The causative factors include ill Pattern food Habits and Sedentary Lifestyle.
2.	Delivery-related Health Problems	The health issue pertaining to Delivery related complications can be life threatening if not tackled at early stages of Pregnancy. The Scenario of Excessive bleeding after can lead to hemorrhage and hence necessary interventions should be adopted with provision of good tertiary care hospitals.
3.	Metabolic disorders in Pregnancy	This is most seen health issue among women during pregnancy. The main risk factors includes Late age of mother mostly after 35 years and presence of any form of stress factors in working women
4.	Tumours of Uterus and ovaries	This health issue is associated with increased pain or bleeding during the period of menses stage. Fibroid and non cancerous ovarian cyst is possible condition under this health issue and so possibly required surgical based interventions if required.
5.	Malignancies	Among women the major cancer form includes of types such as breast cancer, Uterine Cancer, Cervical cancer and ovarian cancer. Hence it requires the mechanism of early screenings to detect the disease at early stages to save precious lives of women.

GOAL:

The design of the study orients towards in accessing the awareness level of women in context of disease of breast cancer. The present article revolves around in understanding and likewise

realizing how much knowledge the woman are equipped with concerning the breast cancer. The sample comprised with the population that included students, professional and nursing college students.

Objectives:

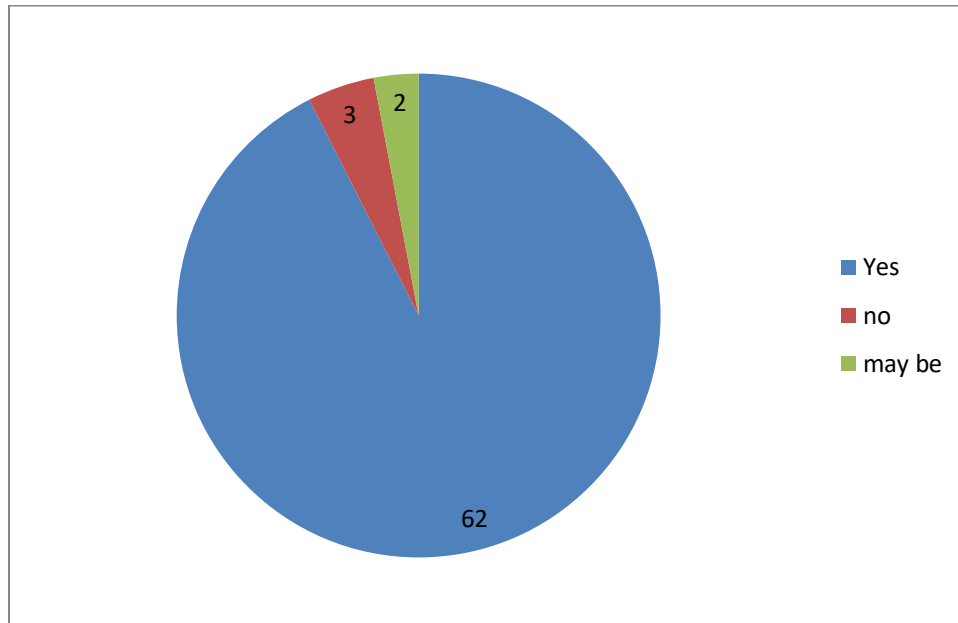
- To portray the Scenario of Breast Cancer in India
- To grasp the level of knowledge of breast cancer among female students
- To Highlight the importance of Social workers in cancer care centers

Materials and Methods:

The present study was carried out at District Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. The sample was selected from two well reputed institutes located in district Kangra of which one is university and another was nursing college. The questionnaire was administered to students on the theme of awareness of breast cancer among students and the necessary data was collected. The age group of respondents was between 18 to 35 years. The questionnaire was sent to 100 students and out of that a total of 67 responses have been collected. The researcher has also organized an awareness talk on the issue of “Scenario of breast cancer in India” and the audience was sensitized with the relevant information. The necessary care was also reviewed in ensuring confidentiality of the responses and responses. The data was analyzed through (SPSS-17) and Simple descriptive statistics was channelized to furnish the result and findings.

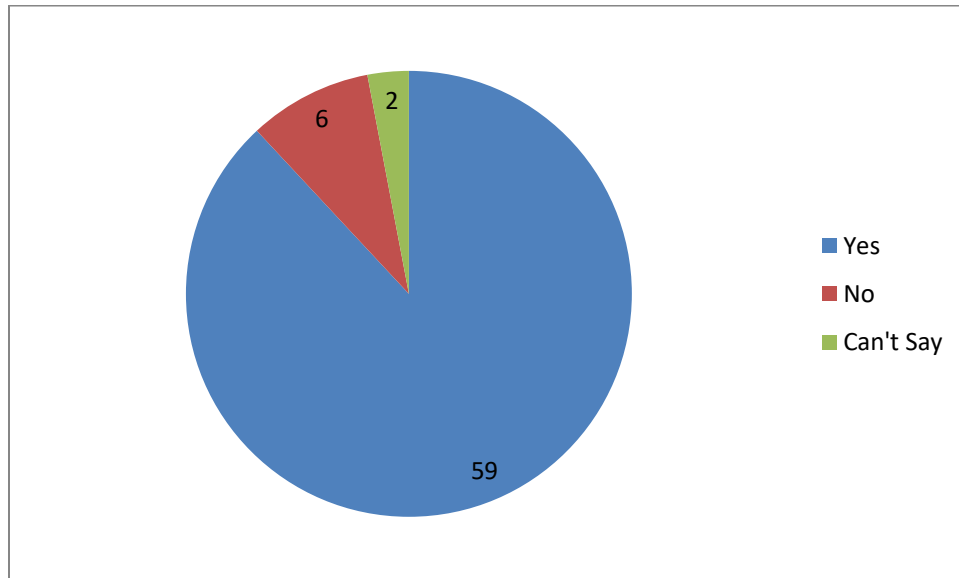
Results:

Do you know what Breast Cancer is?



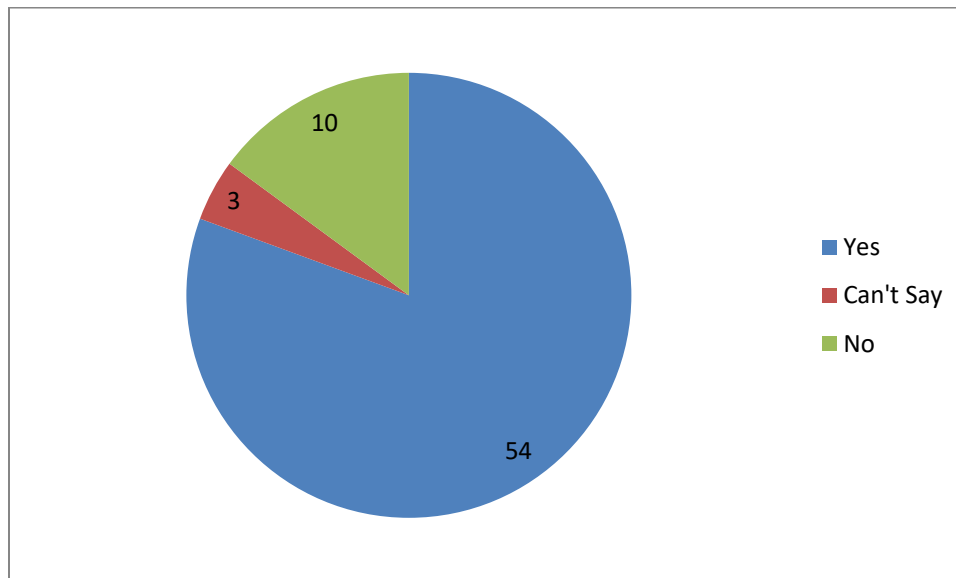
Figno.1 predicts the knowledge level of disease of Breast cancer. The results furnished that about 92.53% of respondents comprised of students were having fair amount of information in context of etiology of breast cancer. Only 7.46% sample population were not having sufficient information on the domain of basic information on breast cancer. Although, when the researcher asked the respondents in detail on questions revolving basics of breast cancer, most respondents were not having equipped with sufficient knowledge in detail about what constitutes the breast cancer.

Do you have the Knowledge of symptoms of Breast Cancer?



The Figure-2 depicts the Knowledge of respondents in terms of symptoms of disease of breast cancer. To the total sample, n-67, around 88.05% of respondents shared that they have mild knowledge of symptoms of breast cancer. Most respondents have predicted Lump in Breast in any part of the breast as triggering factor for the development of breast cancer and its initiation. The other symptoms reported by the respondents include Pain in breast, Discharge of fluid from, unusual size of breast and regular itching in breast. However, 11.96% of respondents were not having any information on the knowledge of symptoms that pose a threat on the development of breast cancer.

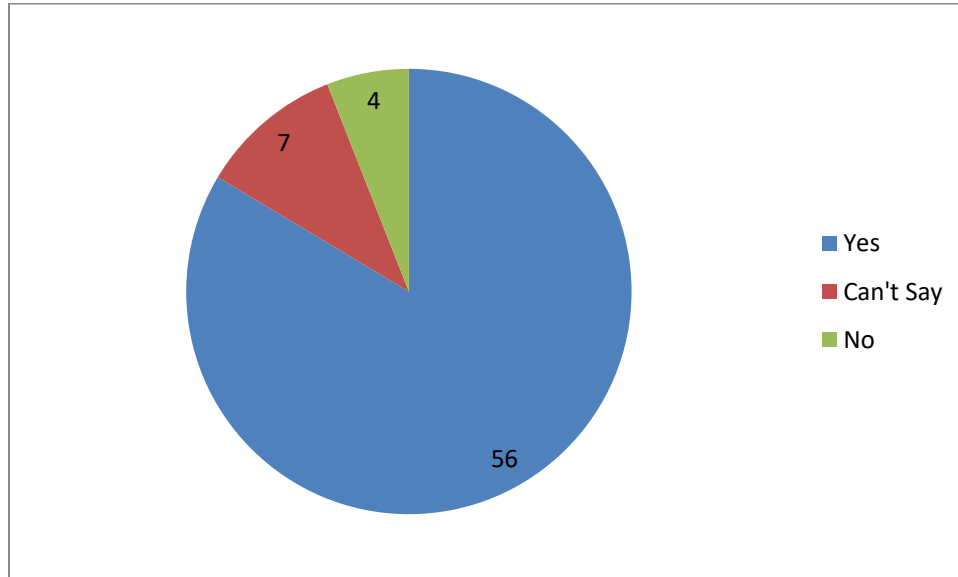
Do you have the knowledge of factors leading to breast cancer?



The Figure-3, illustrates the Knowledge level of respondents in terms of factors contributing to the disease of breast cancer. From, the figure it can be analysed that 81% of respondents were having moderate information on the factors that can enhance the risk of infliction with the disease of breast cancer. On the contrary, 19% of respondents were not sensitized on the contributing factors of breast cancer. The following factors responsible for development of breast cancer were recorded by the researcher which includes the following:

- Family History
- Exposure to Radiation
- Genetic Mutation
- Advanced Age
- Excessive exposure to UV rays
- Sex
- Obesity
- Consumption of alcohol
- Early menopause
- Irregularity in Periods
- Consumption of contraceptives
- Viral infection like HPV
- Late Child Birth

Do you have the information on how breast cancer is detected and examined?



The Figure-4 highlights the knowledge level of respondents on the diagnostics performed to detect the disease of breast cancer. 83% of students and allied professionals were having fair amount of information on the theme of diagnostic involved in breast cancer and elaborated following techniques that includes following, Breast Self-examination, Mammogram, Fine Needle Aspiration, Breast MRI, FNAC Scan, Biopsy, X-ray. However, 17% of respondents didn't share any information due to lack of knowledge on theme of breast cancer examination.

Do you know Breast self-examination

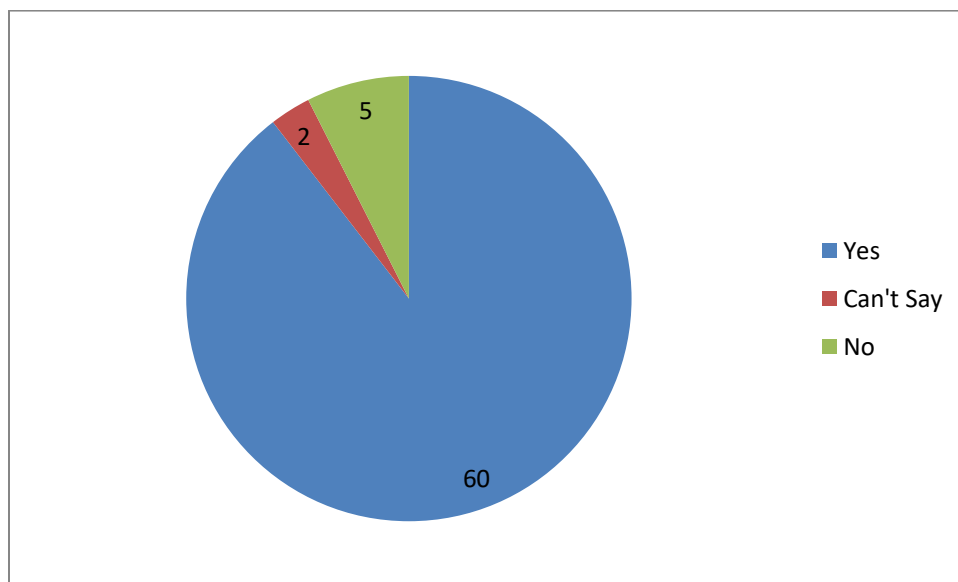


Figure-5, discloses the Information of Knowledge levels of technique of Breast Self-examination. It can be concluded that 90% of respondents did know the technique of Breast Self-Examination. However, only 10% of respondents lack knowledge about Process of BSE. The second part of the questions revolves around frequency of using BSE technique by the respondents to which following results were obtained:

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Once in Month	30	45
Once in 15 Days	04	06
Once in week	19	28
Everyday	05	08
Once in three months	02	03
Never	07	10

The third part of question talked about visiting health expert or agency for getting done BSE exercise by the Medical Expert. The results showed a reverse trend as respondents were hesitant in visiting agency of health for much necessary check-up by the health expert. Around 55 respondents that constituted to about 82% lack confidence in getting check up done by the expert dealing in health while only 12 respondents (18%) were bold enough in attaining a health check up done by the expert. During the interactions, the female respondents shared that Breast being a sensitive part, they got shy and hesitant from male medical practitioners and thereby they lack confidence in visiting health agencies. They also shared that if there will be female experts they feel more confidence to visit health agency. The last part of the interactions touched on the subject of barriers in carrying out breast self-examination to which the respondents furnished the following information:

What can be the Hurdle for carrying out breast Self-Examination?

Barrier	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of Knowledge	47	70
Sensitive to touch Breast	06	09
Fear to find a Lump	03	05
No breast complaint	06	09
Other	05	07

Social Work for Breast Cancer care:

The discipline of Social Work has a primary objective to raise the capacities and thereby enhance the human growth and wellbeing. The Subject of social work is designed to offer reasonable and logical explanations to complex Psycho-social problems. In Context of health settings the profession of Social work orients towards in Providing Patient- Centered care in conditions of life threatening illness and diseases. In last decade, it has come into limelight that the cases of cancer in India are increasing at magnifying rate. The Primary reason that we can make responsible for the spread can be deteriorating life-style changes, Adoption of Junk Food to avoid time and other age related factors. The impact of the word cancer in our societies is such that most persons due to limited health awareness relate cancer with death which is not the truth. The social work in specific to oncology vows for addressing the challenging issues of psycho-social care and thus Patient specific supportive care is backbone of social work Practice in Oncology (Abott,2017). No doubt with the development of technology the lifestyle of people has become much simplified and easier, But the another part of this easy availability of means of lifestyle, lucrative and materialized thing of pleasures is that the burden on the environment is taking a Hefty toll on itself and thus various health problems are bulging out from the negative environmental conditions. The subject of providing affordable healthcare and similar areas of management are becoming more challenging each day passing and it is account of this scenario where therole of a social workers steps in and thus social workers becomes the frontline warriors who reach out and advocate for the Patients. With the in-hand objective of providing much necessary relief to the patient, the Social Workers employ the scientific set of interventions to deliver reasonable social work services. Respecting the grassroots of theory, the social worker values the theme and element of Principal of Confidentiality to ensure the privacy of each case encountered by them. In Indian context, the concept of oncology social work is still in its infancy due to which there exists a scarcity of well trained professional social workers in cancer care centers. The reason behind this scarcity of recruitment of social workers in India is that in India still the focus of treatment revolves around solving the immediate symptoms and recognizing the medical model of treatment. There is very little attention given to offering solutions to psycho-social concerns of patient (Lilliehorn,2019). Hence, seeing the rising trends of cases of cancer in India, the present time demands to initiate the subject of oncology and linking it with social work with an objective to find answers to problems involving psycho-social concerns of Patients and their caregivers. Another plausible explanation of including the philosophy of social work into cancer care settings stands out that the social workers can bring an element of working on patient specific intervention model to bring positive adjustment to the whole process of diagnosis and treatment. So to sum up it can be concluded that the social work and associated professionals are strong links who can provide and manage personalized supportive care to the patients battling cancer and their families. The social workers presence and worth should be realized and

accordingly they should be provided with all necessary facilities and space for timely consultations. As far as the disease of breast cancer form is concerned, it is mostly the women who are inflicted with the disease and the treatment of breast cancer can be challenging and devastating. The women of less age may get inflicted with aggressive type form of breast cancer and most of the women have unanswered questions on issues involving Fear of Sexual function, impact of breast cancer of fertility, body related changes. Battling breast cancer might be challenges and difficult and it completely compromises quality of life parameters of breast cancer patients. So, the social workers must learn to assess these specific challenges faced by women cancer patients and accordingly make suitable women centered interventions designs to attend to their needs and concerns. The breast cancer induces bodily changes and that accordingly segregates the physical burden on patients and survivors. These bodily changes due to cancer treatment not only compromises the physical wellbeing, rather it also influences the emotional and psychological wellbeing which may result to conditions of Depression, anxiety and feeling of isolation. So, acknowledging the bigger concerns of breast cancer women the social workers can contribute towards in developing holistic plan of action in returning the breast cancer patients and survivors in leading a normal life with utmost self-care and prevention. Also, the social workers can immensely contribute towards conduction sensitization drives at grass root level to make the women and communities much more sensitized towards themes of prevention and symptoms of breast. Social workers are part of multidisciplinary team so they can also lend a helping hand in motivating the women for early screening test for the cause of early detection of cancer.

Discussion:

In this study focused upon measuring awareness levels of knowledge around Breast cancer among students in two institutes of Himachal Pradesh, it was found that most students did know about the disease of breast cancer and the impact it can create to the body if not detected at early stages. Most students reported commonest symptom that may be seen as red flag for development of breast cancer includes the formation of Lump in any part of the breast or adjoining lymph nodes. Around 88% of respondents confirmed that they have basic knowledge of symptoms of breast cancer. The result of the study also revealed although the respondents were having fair knowledge of Basic of Breast cancer as a disease, still the women were having below par information on other aspects of subject matter that includes differentiation between cancerous and non-cancerous lump, different risk factors that catalyst the chances of infliction with the disease. The other subject of the study tried to check the knowledge level on factors that can pose a threat towards onset of disease of breast cancer and the most student respondents highlight that the advanced age and presence of previous family history of incidence of breast cancer within family pose severe risk of initiation to the disease of breast cancer. Among women

the breast cancer is major and leading cancer form in India. The premier agency Indian council of Medical Research (ICMR) in their document “Consensus Document for Management of Breast Cancer” pointed the rising concern of breast cancer in India and adds that near to 144000 women gets influenced to the disease each year. The study also fits in line with the premier hospital chain “Medanta” who also shares that Rising age pose a major threat of attaining the disease of breast cancer. Although the respondents were not having fair information of how the disease of breast cancer responds in the younger set of population women. It is to be noted that although rising age elevates the risk of getting the disease of breast cancer, still this is not universal as even the young women of any age can be inflicted to the disease. 83% of students and allied professionals were having fair amount of information on the theme of diagnostic involved in breast cancer and elaborated following techniques that includes following, Breast Self-examination, Mammogram, Fine Needle Aspiration, Breast MRI, FNAC Scan, Biopsy, X-ray. The results of the study revealed that a high number of around 90% respondents are equipped with the purposeful information on techniques of Breast Self-Examination and consider it to be an important exercise as a Preventive measure against Breast Cancer. Still, when it comes to applicability only 45% of students apply the exercise of BSE one time in a month and the students who apply this technique of BSE to check for Breast cancer symptoms on everyday basis constitutes only 8% of sample population. On the side of what prevents the women from carrying out BSE exercise the respondents summarized that lack of knowledge of functional steps in BSE technique (70%), hesitation in touching breast and fear of finding a lump are others factors that prevents women in carrying out BSE exercise.

CONCLUSION:

The frequency and mortality rate of disease of breast cancer is expanding its grip on women in India including other countries of the world. Breast cancer is ranked as most diagnosed type form of cancer among women in India. The condition of breast cancer comes at a time in once life when anybody has least expected it. The Shock of disclosure of the disease is such that it impacts and plays with physical, emotional and psychological domains of the patient. It presents the family with condition of emergencies and the scars of psychological repercussions affects whole family of the patient. With adoption and inclusions of technology in field of medicine, it has given a new ray of hope to the communities as with the implementation of devices and modern technology; the symptoms can be easily recognized in initial stages which help in preventing life threatening situations. The study furnished that the respondents in the study were equipped with wise judgment on the subject of awareness of Breast Cancer. The crisis of rising number of cases of cancer cases in India demands for conducting sensitization drives and awareness camps on theme of spreading breast cancer awareness among larger audience of women in both rural and urban spheres. The Multi-disciplinary approach should be adopted in linking science with the

discipline of social sciences, Gender studies to devise out scientific interventions to reduce the risk factors for breast cancer and devise out relevant practices for prevention. The health literacy programs with focus on cancer prevention and other life threatening disease should be initiated in all states of India with inclusion of community Participation (Taylor, 1994). In context of Breast cancer there exist still cultural restrictions which at times become reason that women become hesitant in disclosing the initial Symptoms (Facione&Katapodi,2000). The Successful Interventions of type “Mohalla Clinics” should also be initiated on specific disease of Breast cancer which will help in more women coming out for cancer screening drives. The Asha workers and community health workers should be provided with in-hand training on subject like BSE Technique, Detection of Symptoms of Breast Cancer and using technological devices to perform cancer screening exercises. In case of any previous family history of Breast cancer, the women should be encouraged to apply BSE into their daily affair routine.

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