

Assessment of Knowledge, Perception, and Attitude Towards Screening for Breast Cancer Among Women in Tabata Kimanga Ward, Ilala District, Dar-Es-Salaam Region, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The study concerned with assessing knowledge, perception, and attitude towards screening for breast cancer among women in Tabata Kimanga ward, Ilala district. Breast cancer is the second most common leading cancer worldwide. The disease affects the breast, where cells of the mammary gland become malignant. Risk factors include older age, early menarche, late menopause, prolonged progesterone/ estrogens exposure, family history of breast cancer, and nulliparity. Screening is done to look for any signs of cancer before a person has any symptoms. Methods include breast self-examination, clinical breast examination, ultrasonography, and mammography.

A quantitative research method was employed, a community-based cross-sectional study and structured questionnaire were used where written consent was obtained before participation. The study's sample size was 113, involving women aged 20-75 who were selected randomly. Data analysis was done using EPI INFO and SPSS.

The study discovered that only 15% know risk factors. The majority of participants (61%) do not go for screening due to little information on its hazardous effects, while only 39% have gone for screening. Nevertheless, 81% prefer clinical breast examination to other methods. 96% believe screening helps them to know their health status. Health Centre is the most common source of information on screening, although 93% of the participants were not satisfied with their breast cancer and screening. Partial knowledge on breast cancer and lack of emphasis on screening is the main reason why many women do not go for screening. The majority have a positive attitude towards screening, but many do not screen due to poor access to screening areas. The government should conduct more programs on screening breast cancer at all levels, ward to ward, where most women will be accessed. Government should fund more health centers with the equipment necessary for breast cancer screening.

