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EMPOWERING WOMEN: UNVEILING THE LINK BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND KNOWLEDGE FOR EARLY TESTING OF CERVICAL CANCER IN FERTILE AGE

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Abstract

Cervical cancer, a malignancy affecting the female reproductive organs, has been increasingly demanding serious attention. The significance of self-efficacy lies in its crucial role in augmenting knowledge and enhancing reproductive health among women in their childbearing years The objective of this study is to examine the correlation between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women in their childbearing age regarding the early detection of cervical cancer. This study used a descriptive correlational design using a cross-sectional approach, this quantitative study involved 97 respondents from the Harapan Raya Community Health Centre area. The investigation used a descriptive correlational design and chose to use a cross-sectional approach. Data analysis was conducted with a chi-square test. Demographic data revealed that 53.6% of respondents are early adults, 43.3% hold high school degrees, and 82.5% are housewives. Univariate analysis showed that 62.9% of respondents had low self-efficacy, while 55.7% possessed sufficient knowledge. The analysis using the Chi-square test revealed a noteworthy association between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women in their fertile age concerning the early testing of cervical cancer. (p-value = 0.002). The results showed a significant correlation between self-efficacy and knowledge in women of childbearing age in early testing for cervical cancer. The results of this study illustrate the importance of increasing self-efficacy and knowledge of women of childbearing age in improving early testing of cervical cancer.

Keywords: Early Detection, Cervical Cancer, Knowledge, Self-Efficacy, Women of Childbearing Age.

INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer is a condition of the cervix with tissue growth with abnormal cells, caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Global Burden of Cancer (GLOBOCAN) data by the World Health Organization (WHO), there were 396,914 cases of cervical cancer in Indonesia in 2020, resulting in 234,511 deaths. By 2030, the death rate from cancer is projected to rise even higher to over 13.1 million people, with cancer rates increasing annually.[15]

In Riau province, the prevalence of cervical cancer among women has continued to grow each year. Data from the Tulip Room at Arifin Achmad Hospital reveals that there were 89 cases in 2016, 109 cases in 2017, and 209 cases during the January-December 2018 period. Out of these, 113 cervical cancer patients received chemotherapy treatment[9].

In Riau province, Indonesia, the prevalence of cervical cancer among women has continued to grow each year. Data from the Tulip Room at Arifin Achmad Hospital reveals that there were 89 cases in 2016, 109 cases in 2017, and 209 in 2018. Out of 113 cases of cervical cancer, 48 patients underwent chemotherapy treatment.[9].

The rising prevalence of cervical cancer can be attributed to delays in early detection. Leading to more advanced stages upon diagnosis and reduced life expectancy. Lack

of knowledge and awareness about early detection of cervical cancer, as a cause of cervical cancer. [12]

Preventing cervical cancer is possible through early detection measures such as Visual Inspection Acetic Acid (VIA) testing. VIA is a cervical cancer screening method by applying 3-5% acetic acid to the mouth area of the uterus and the results are observed directly with the naked eye after 1-2 minutes. Detecting the HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) in its early stages lowers an individual's risk of developing and dying from cervical cancer.[6]

However, Indonesia's health profile shows a decline in early detection rates among women aged 30-50 years old using the VIA testing method - from 8.3% in 2020 to only 6.83% in 2021. In Riau province particularly, early detection prevalence stands at 7.97% for women who have undergone early cancer detection using the VIA testing method.[12]

The motivation to improve the reproductive health of women of childbearing age, by conducting early detection of cervical cancer is getting higher[7]. Research on "The Relationship between the Level of Knowledge about Cervical Cancer and Attitudes towards VIA Examination in Women of Fertile Age at the Panaguan Pamekasan Community Health Center" found that low knowledge about early detection of cervical cancer by VIA method in women of childbearing age. Respondents with poor understanding (low knowledge) of cervical cancer tend not to underestimate the importance of early detection through VIA examinations, hindering them from doing this test. On the other hand, respondents with a better understanding (good knowledge) of cervical cancer are more likely to be aware and motivated to improve their health, resulting in a higher number of women of childbearing age undergoing VIA examinations.

Self-efficacy is the belief of women of fertile age in their ability to organize and carry out the actions needed to achieve the desired results[30]. The significance of self-efficacy becomes evident in the early identification of cervical cancer, as it plays a crucial role in lowering the morbidity and mortality rates among women in Indonesia due to this condition. Hence, prioritizing and enhancing early cervical cancer detection is imperative. Decision-making processes, such as self-efficacy, can be influenced by both internal factors and external factors like the environment surrounding the individuals[21].

Based on the study results and the details provided earlier, the researcher sought to explore the correlation between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women in their fertile years regarding the early testing of cervical cancer.

Research objective

To assess the correlation between the self-efficacy and knowledge of women in their childbearing years regarding the early detection of cervical cancer

MATERIAL & METHODS

This investigation is a quantitative study using a descriptive correlational design and a cross-sectional approach. The study sample consisted of 97 respondents from the Harapan Raya Community Health Centre area who were selected based on inclusion criteria using a purposive sampling technique. The chi-square test analysis was used for data analysis. This research is quantitative research with a descriptive correlation

design and a cross-sectional approach. The research sample consisted of 97 respondents from the Harapan Raya Community Health Centre area who were selected based on inclusion criteria and using purposive sampling techniques. Chi-square test analysis was used for data analysis. Ethical Approval Number: 5373/UN19.5.1.1.10/EP/2023

RESULTS

Univariate Analysis

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondent Characteristics by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Late Teenagers (17-25 Years)	15	15.5%
Early Adulthood (26-35 Years)	52	53.6%
Late Adulthood (36-45 Years)	30	30.9%
Amount	**97**	**100.0%**

Based on Table 1, 53.6% of respondents aged between 26 and 35 years or in the early adulthood category.

Table 2: Demographic of Respondent Characteristics based on Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Not attending school	3	3.1%
Elementary school	17	17.5%
Middle School	20	20.6%
High schools	42	43.3%
Undergraduate	15	15.5%
Amount	**97**	**100.0%**

Based on Table 2, 43.3% of respondents have high school education levels.

Table 3: Demographic of Respondent Characteristics based on Employment Status

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Housewife	80	82.5%
Works	17	17.5%
Amount	**97**	**100.0%**

Based on Table 3 shows, that the majority of respondents (82.5%) are housewives.

Explanation of the Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Levels of Women in their Childbearing Years Regarding the Early Testing of Cervical Cancer

a. Description of Self-efficacy Self-efficacy among women in the childbearing age group

Table 4: Description of Self-efficacy

No*Self-Efficacy*	Frequency	Percentage
1 Low	61	62.9%
2 High	36	37.1%
Amount	**97**	**100.0%**

According to the data presented in Table 4, the predominant portion of participants (62.9%) have low self-efficacy regarding their efficacy in the early detection of cervical cancer

b. Description of the Level of Knowledge of Women of Childbearing Age in Early Detection of Cervical Cancer

Table 5: Explanation of the Awareness Levels of Women in their Childbearing Years Regarding the Early Detection of Cervical Cancer

Knowledge Level	Frequency	Percentage
High	14	14.4%
Medium	54	55.7%
Low	29	20.9%
Total	**97**	**100.0%**

According to the data in Table 5, 55.7% of participants possess a moderate or satisfactory level of understanding regarding the early detection of cervical cancer

Bivariate Analysis

The connection between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women in their fertile years regarding the early testing of cervical cancer

Table 6: The correlation between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women about cervical cancer

Knowledge	*Self-Efficacy*				Total	*Value*
	Low	%	High	%		
Low	20	68.97	9	31.03	29	0.002
Medium	38	70.37	16	29.63	54	
High	3	21.43	11	78.57	14	
Total	61	62.89	36	37.11	97	

The outcomes of statistical assessments employing Pearson Chi-Square reveal a p-value of 0.002, signifying a substantial association between self-efficacy and knowledge among women in their fertile age about cervical cancer. The results of the data analysis showed that of the 29 respondents who had low self-efficacy knowledge, 20 had self-efficacy, while 9 had high self-efficacy. Furthermore, of the 54 respondents with medium knowledge, 38 had low self-efficacy, and 16 had high self-efficacy. Lastly, among the 14 respondents with high knowledge, 3 had low self-efficacy, and 11 had high self-efficacy

DISCUSSION

Univariate Analysis

Respondent Characteristics

a. Age

In this research involving 97 women in their childbearing years, it was observed that the predominant portion of participants (53.6%) fell within the age range of 26-35 years. This age range represents maturity in physical development and thought patterns. Women in this group are more receptive to information from others and better decision-makers. Therefore, respondents in this age group are expected to be more aware of cervical cancer prevention, especially through early detection via VIA examinations.

This study aligns (2019) with research, which found that 57.7% of respondents fell within the same age range. As individuals age, their thought patterns and comprehension generally improve, resulting in increased knowledge[7]. The results of this research align with a study with a similar majority of 26-35 years old age range (57.7%). Dewi's study suggests that as someone age, their thought patterns and comprehension generally improve, resulting in increased knowledge[7].

Similar results (2019), 62% of respondents were aged 26-35 years. This age corresponds to the early adulthood category, which is a productive age characterized by advanced thinking patterns and high comprehension abilities. The participant's study acknowledged the importance of early cervical cancer testing using the VIA examinations[11].

The Indonesian Ministry of Health's 2021 policy states that women aged 20-50 years are the target group for cervical cancer screening as part of preventative measures. Due to high hormone levels during this period, there is an increased risk of developing cervical cancer[12].

b. Education level

According to this investigation, it indicates that the dominant of participants have a high school education, which is 43.3% of the total respondents. The prevalence of this educational background can be attributed to many individuals choosing to pursue work or marriage immediately after high school, learning researchers to discover a higher proportion of high school-educated participants. The results of this research align with studies in 2022, which reported 59.6% and 50% of respondents were high school graduates, respectively. However, this study indicated that the majority of participants had low knowledge about the early detection of cervical cancer by the VIA method. Early detection of cervical cancer is very important, due to their low access to relevant information10.

According to (2019) research, A person's elevated level of education correlates with increased knowledge, influencing the decision-making capacity of women in their childbearing age.

Education is a crucial factor in increasing participation and motivation to improve one's health[8]. Easy access to information is possible with education, leading to a greater understanding of health that can influence behavior. However, it is important to note that a high level of education does not guarantee better health. This discrepancy can complicate efforts to prevent cervical cancer[14].

c. Occupation

The study indicated that the majority of respondents (80.5%) were identified as housewives, as the participant's occupation. This high percentage of occupation is due to husbands typically being responsible for earning an income, while mothers take care of their children at home. Husbands often work in roles such as laborers, traders, builders, and farmers. Although the majority of respondents are housewives with more free time to undergo VIA examinations, there remains limited information available.

A study (2022) found that 58% of respondents were not employed. Compared to working mothers, housewives have more time to prioritize their health. They can allocate time to maintain and monitor their well-being, Particularly, regarding the early

detection of cervical cancer through the VIA technique, a crucial measure in enhancing overall well-being and quality of life[7].

Similarly, research (2018) found that the majority of respondents are housewives, making up 74.7% of respondents. The study revealed that women working outside the home were more likely to acquire information on identifying cervical cancer at an early stage using the VIA technique from diverse information outlets. In contrast, non-working women have less access to information regarding early detection of cervical cancer through the VIA method[31].

Description of Cervical Cancer Knowledge Level

The present study found that of the 97 respondents being studied, 55.7% exhibited a moderate level of knowledge about cervical cancer, indicating that the majority have sufficient understanding. Nevertheless, a considerable number of participants remained uninformed about early detection techniques for cervical cancer, such as the VIA method. This deficiency in awareness might discourage women in their childbearing years from opting for VIA examinations, due to insufficient information from sources like TV, brochures, leaflets, posters, and limited awareness campaigns about cervical cancer risk and the importance of VIA examinations by health officers and cadres.

The findings of this study align with the research conducted in 2017, which indicated that 47.4% of participants exhibited sufficient knowledge about cervical cancer. The mentioned study proposed that women in their childbearing age who have received information about cervical cancer and VIA examinations tend to be more aware of the risks of cervical cancer and the benefits of having VIA examinations, prompting them to undergo VIA examinations[25].

Similarly, (2018) research found that 64.9% of respondents had sufficient knowledge about cervical cancer. Low public awareness and unsupportive attitudes towards early detection may contribute to women neglecting early cervical cancer screenings, resulting in late-stage diagnoses that are difficult to treat[26].

A person who is well-informed about cervical cancer will make efforts to prevent risk factors or conditions that promote its occurrence. Such efforts include recognizing signs and symptoms of cervical cancer, understanding early detection methods, avoiding smoking or exposure to cigarette smoke, and undergoing early screenings for cervical cancer. The more information a mother receives about cervical cancer, the better her knowledge of early detection of cervical cancer will be, thus encouraging her to take early detection of cervical cancer[29].

The self-efficacy of women in the fertile age group regarding the early testing of cervical cancer.

The investigation findings revealed that 62.9% of participants exhibited low self-efficacy, whereas 37.1% demonstrated high self-efficacy in the context of early checking of cervical cancer. A significant portion of women in their childbearing years expressed hesitancy and lack of confidence in utilizing the VIA method for early detection. Many participants believed that there was no need for early detection until signs and symptoms of cervical cancer appeared.

The busy lives of these women, including housework and childcare, left little time for participating in early detection examinations for cervical cancer. Additionally, some

women also felt embarrassed, anxious, or fearful about the exam process and its potential outcomes. Self-efficacy is primarily impacted by cognitive processes related to women's beliefs about their abilities.

In line with the (2019) research findings, 94.5% of respondents had low self-efficacy regarding cervical cancer early detection. The reluctance stemmed from not wanting to be examined by a male doctor or male health worker. Additionally, these women experienced difficulty in finding time for such examinations due to their busy schedules[5].

On the other hand, this present research also found that 37.1% of respondents demonstrated high self-efficacy in the early detection of cervical cancer. These women were confident in taking part in early detection because they wanted to be aware of their reproductive health before any signs and symptoms emerged. According to (2018) research supported this finding, stating that women of childbearing age who have high self-efficacy were more likely to have undergone at least one early cancer detection examination after marriage[33].

Self-efficacy relates to a person's belief in their ability to successfully carry out tasks and achieve desired results. Having a strong belief concerning cervical cancer prevention will support preventing early cervical cancer intervention efforts. Furthermore, an individual's choice to participate in the early checking of cervical cancer can be impacted by their level of self-efficacy[6].

Bivariate Analysis

Relationship between Self-efficacy and Knowledge of Women of Fertile Age in Early Testing of Cervical Cancer

The findings revealed a notable correlation between self-efficacy and the knowledge of women at their fertile age concerning the early checking of cervical cancer, evidenced by a p-value of 0.002. High knowledge about cervical cancer increases behavior and participation in the early detection of cervical cancer.

Regrettably, the understanding of cervical cancer among participants remains limited, resulting in a low engagement in early detection screenings. Consequently, diagnoses are often delayed until the disease reaches an advanced stage, making it challenging to treat. Robust self-efficacy and a commitment to early detection are crucial to encouraging women of childbearing age to undergo timely screenings for cervical cancer. These findings echo the (2017) study which found that respondents who are well-informed about cervical cancer and VIA examinations tend to be more aware of the risks of cervical cancer and the benefits of early detection of cervical cancer, hence having the confidence or self-efficacy to carry out VIA examinations[25].

Health behavior is influenced by various factors, including knowledge and education. A person's knowledge influences their mindset and behavior because knowledge enables a person to consider what is good and bad for himself and can determine the steps to take from the results of his analysis. High or low knowledge will influence a person's behavior and decision-making[16].

VIA examination is a method of early cervical cancer detection by applying acetic acid to the cervix and then observing the color changes that occur[2]. The VIA examination aims to identify abnormal cells that develop into cervical cancer. When pre-cancerous or cancerous lesions are found, they can be treated as early as possible [18].

Knowledge of women of childbearing age will influence their behavior in undergoing early detection of cervical cancer[21]. However, in reality, there are still many women who have limited knowledge about cervical cancer, including the risk factors and its early prevention methods. Apart from its risk factors, early prevention of cervical cancer is less informed to many women of childbearing age, hence many mothers neglected early cervical cancer detection[12].

Good knowledge also influences the formation of beliefs, which are related to the formation of behaviors. Knowledge is important in forming women's self-efficacy in undergoing early detection exams. The higher the knowledge of women, the higher self- to undergo detection of cervical cancer[26]. Aligned with the study conducted in 2018, there is a greater likelihood of women opting for early checking of cervical cancer when their self-efficacy is higher. Conversely[32]. Conversely, low knowledge about cervical cancer negatively impacts the self-efficacy of women to undergo early cancer exams. A research project (2019) regarding the influence of self-efficacy on early testing of cervical cancer revealed that 296 respondents (72.3% of women) with self-efficacy were able to participate in the early detection of cervical cancer, and 114 respondents (27.8%) with self-efficacy were less able to undergo detection exam due to their lack of knowledge and confidence[29]

High self-efficacy can be perceived as solving difficult tasks as a challenge to be mastered, not as a threat to be avoided. Whereas with high self-efficacy people are believed to be able to do something to change the events around them[3]. The majority of women of childbearing age are not confident in participating in the early checking of cervical cancer, due to a lack of support from family and knowledge, leaving them feel embarrassed, anxious, and fearful to undergo VIA examinations[29].

Based on a study (2019), there is a relationship between the level of knowledge and motivation in carrying out VIA examinations on women of childbearing age in the Pabelan Community Health Center Work Area[23]. Women who have good knowledge (61.2%) are easily motivated to undergo VIA examinations. Finally, research (2019) suggests that there is an influence of the husband's knowledge and support on the women's self-efficacy age to undergo VIA examinations[3].

CONCLUSION

There is a noteworthy connection between self-efficacy and knowledge levels among women in their childbearing age concerning the early checking of cervical cancer.

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Conflict of İnterest

The author(s) have stated that there are no potential conflicts of interest related to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the paper.

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