



**KNOWLEDGE OF CERVICAL CANCER AND SCREENING PRACTICES AMONG
FEMALE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KAMPALA CITY, UGANDA.**

BY

DR. SSENYONJO LEONARD

MBCHB (MUST)

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SUPERVISORS:

DR. OKOTH ANTHONY NDIRA

MBCHB; M.Med- Obs & Gyn, MSc- CEB, Dip Obs (Mak.CHS)

Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

DR. NAKALEMBE MIRIAM

MBCHB; M.Med- Obs & Gyn (Mak.CHS)

Lecturer Mak.CHS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Background

Cancer of the cervix is the commonest cancer of women in Uganda. Over 80% of patients diagnosed with cervical cancer in Mulago Hospital present with advanced disease. Cervical cancer screening enhances early detection and treatment of precancerous lesions. Screening adults together with vaccination of adolescent girls reduces morbidity and mortality from cancer cervix. Knowledge of the disease is important, so that people are aware and through motivation they can have positive attitude towards screening for premalignant cervical lesions. Teachers are professional people and society takes them as an elite group and are a port of entry to the adolescent group. Objectives of this study were to assess the knowledge of cervical cancer and determine screening practices among female primary school teachers in Kampala.

Methods: It was a cross-sectional study and quantitative approach was used. A total of 450 teachers were interviewed using a self administered questionnaire. Knowledge on cervical cancer was assessed (awareness of disease, risk factors, symptoms, and treatment modalities), practices regarding screening and barriers to screening.

Results: Response rate was 97% (450). Of these, 94% had ever heard of cervical cancer, 57.3% knew at least two risk factors for cervical cancer and 46.8% knew at least two symptoms of cervical cancer. Most of the teachers had inaccurate knowledge on the risk factors and symptoms, and were not aware that cervical cancer is curable if diagnosed early. Out of the 391 respondents who had knowledge on cancer screening, 70% knew a place where its done and only 21.3% had ever been screened for cervical cancer.

Conclusions: Despite having knowledge on cervical cancer and having positive attitudes towards screening, uptake of screening services remains low among this elite group. Teachers command respect in society and the public listen them. For them to educate communities on cervical cancer, they need correct information and encouraged to actively get involved .