

Gynaecological morbidities among women attending a cancer screening centre in rural Karnataka, India: Reg ID: 250

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ABSTRACT

Background: Reproductive illness is a common yet underreported issue among women in developing countries, including India, having a great impact on the health and quality of their lives. Studies have shown that despite this high prevalence, women in developing countries rarely approach health facilities. **Methods:** This was a cross-sectional study carried out among women attending a community cancer screening facility covering rural and semi-urban population of coastal Karnataka in Southern India. Participants' demographic characteristics and reproductive history was assessed, and they were clinically screened for gynaecological morbidity. Study participants were subjected to per speculum examination and Pap smears followed by Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA) **Results:** Of the 599 women who consented to participate nearly 68% were in the age group of 30- 50 years. The Pap smear test diagnosed 36.9% of women with infection. Gynaecologic morbidity was found to be more (54.5%) among women less than 30 years of age and least (24.6%) in women more than 50 years of age. Predictably older women (>50 years of age) were observed to present with prolapse and this association was significant ($p < 0.005$). Around 51.3% of OCP users had infection on Pap smear versus 35.5% of non-users ($p=0.048$)., out of the 67 women positive for VIA, 3 women were found to have a positive Pap smear result, indicating presence of cervical cancer. **Conclusion:** The study underscores the urgent public health need to strengthen routine gynaecological screening, integrate reproductive health care into primary services, and promote community awareness. Early detection and timely management can prevent chronic complications and enhance women's health and dignity across the life course.

KEYWORDS