

ABSTRACT

Background

Breast cancer is the uncontrolled or abnormal growth of breast cells which spread, multiply and also affect other body parts in women (CDC, 2005). World wide, one among the four women diagnosed with cancer have breast cancer and among the frequently diagnosed cancer types, breast cancer lies second with an incidence of 11.9%. It was then indicated that the situation arises from the problems experienced by women in developing countries to access breast cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment services (Jemal et al., 2011). Generally in Africa, from 68,000 women who were diagnosed with breast cancer, 37,000 deaths were registered. (J Ferlay et al, 2008). In Uganda, breast cancer is the third commonest cancer among women after cervical cancer and Kaposi's sarcoma (Parkin et al., 1997). And it accounts for 16% cancer deaths in adult women thus it is a major life threatening public health issue and it calls for attention (Semarya et al., 2013). Factors for this prevalence are not systematically stressed out.

Study Aim

This study aimed to identify the factors influencing access to breast cancer screening services among slum dwellers in Kamwokya II, assess the level of knowledge, socio economic and availability of breast cancer screening services in Kamwokya II.

Methodology

This study was conducted using a cross sectional study design and the data was gathered between the month of July and August using interviewer administered questionnaires from a random sample of 207 respondents selected from Kamwokya II. The sample size used was calculated using the Leslie Kish's formula. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency tables and charts while inferential statistics included the use of Pearson's Chi-square. In order to compute the statistics, the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) V.20 and Epi Info.

Study Results

The study revealed that 77.3% of the respondents had failed to access breast cancer screening services which indicated low levels of access. However, breast self examination (78.7%) was the most accessed breast screening technique. The research found no significant association between level of knowledge on breast cancer and access to breast cancer screening services. There were no recognized breast screening campaigns in the area and thus the respondents reported distance from to the health facility being long. The research found that socio economic factors such as employment status and source of payment for the screening services have an influence on access to breast cancer screening services. And also found out that cultural beliefs had no influence on access to breast cancer screening services.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The access to breast cancer screening services was very low and thus the study concluded that respondents need to be more sensitized on the available breast cancer screening services. The ministry of health and that of Education should work on a policy framework to disseminate breast cancer screening information to women in schools through public reforms and an integrated curriculum to encounter the misconceptions and fear.