

The Effectiveness of a Breast Self-Examination Educational Program on Knowledge, Health Beliefs and Practices in Community Health Volunteer *

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examined the effectiveness of a Breast Self-Examination (BSE) educational program on knowledge about breast cancer, BSE practice and health beliefs in community health volunteer women before and after attending the program.

Design: Quasi-experimental research.

Methods: The participants were 30 health volunteer women aged between 41-67 years who lived in one urban community of Bangkok. Data were collected using the questionnaires developed by the investigators. Descriptive statistics using percentage, mean, and standard deviation Repeated Measures ANOVA were used for data analysis.

Main findings: The results showed that knowledge about breast cancer screening significantly increased at all three time points of measurement: immediately, six months and 1 year after the educational program ($p < .01$). BSE practice significantly increased at 1 year after an educational program ($p < .01$). Knowledge about breast cancer ($r = 0.300$, $p < .01$), health beliefs about BSE including perceived benefits of BSE ($r = 0.145$, $p < .01$), the perceived barriers of BSE ($r = 0.193$, $p < .01$) and perceived self-efficacy ($r = 0.225$, $p < .01$) were significantly correlated with BSE practice.

Conclusion and recommendations: The results obtained from this study indicate the benefit and appropriateness of a BSE educational program in promoting knowledge and engaging BSE practice among community health volunteer women. It is therefore recommended the BSE program be implemented in particular for high risk groups of women in other communities, and further evaluation of the program be undertaken.

Keywords: breast self-examination, breast cancer screening, health beliefs

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