O R I G I N A L   P A P E R

Perceptions of Barriers and Facilitators of Cervical Cancer Early Detection Behaviors among Elderly Women

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Abstract

Background: Elderly women have lower levels of Papanicolaou (Pap) testing than other population subgroups and thus, they were the groups of top priority.
Objective: The aim of this study was to determine the barriers and facilitators of elderly women as regards to the cervical cancer early detection behaviors.
Method: Qualitative research method was used. Data of 21 elderly women that were collected via in-depth individual interviews were assessed by the content analysis based on Champion's Health Belief Model and Pender's Health Promotion Model.
Results: Sensitivity areas perceived in the participation of elderly women to the cervical cancer early detection behaviors were determined as "possibility of having cancer and presence of symptoms" and related barriers were determined as "lack of knowledge, embarrassment/privacy, previous health service experience, fear, elderliness" while health motivation was found as "wish of detecting the health problem early and being healthy" and perceived facilitators were found as "encouragement and information by the health personnel, interactions between people".
Conclusion: In compliance with both models, results demonstrate that perceived barriers constitute an important variable in the cervical cancer early detection behaviors. These results may provide a useful framework to the health professionals in preparing training and consultancy services aimed at increasing the early detection behaviors of elderly women and planning the health services.

Keywords: uterine cervical neoplasms; early detection of cancer; culture.