

Awareness and Attitudes towards Cervical Cancer Prevention in Women of Childbearing Age at GDTH

HIRA NASREEN KHAN
Department of Community Medicine, AAMC

Introduction

- Cervical cancer is a major public health problem, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.
- Persistent HPV infection, especially with **HPV 16 and 18**, is the major cause.
- Awareness and screening uptake remain low in Pakistan.
- HPV vaccination and regular screening can significantly reduce cervical cancer burden.
- Cultural stigma, fear, embarrassment and limited healthcare access are major barriers.

Objectives include;

- To assess **knowledge** regarding cervical cancer prevention among women of reproductive age.
- To assess their **attitudes** towards cervical cancer prevention.
- To determine the **association** of knowledge and attitude with sociodemographic factors.



Figure 1. HPV vaccination



Figure 2. No screening



Figure 3. Health education

Methods and Materials

- Study design:** Cross-sectional analytical study.
- Study setting:** Gulab Devi Teaching Hospital (GDTH), Lahore.
- Study duration:** April–September 2025 (6 months).
- Study population:** Women of childbearing age (15–49 years).
- Sample size:** 350 participants.
- Sampling technique:** Non-probability convenience sampling.
- Data collection:** Structured, interview-based questionnaire was used to assess knowledge, attitudes and preventive practices regarding cervical cancer.
- Study variables:** Sociodemographic characteristics, knowledge about cervical cancer, HPV vaccination awareness, screening practices and attitudes towards prevention.
- Data analysis:** Data were entered and analyzed using SPSS.
- Statistical test:** The chi-square test was used to assess associations between knowledge/attitudes and sociodemographic factors.
- Level of significance:** A **p-value ≤0.05** was considered statistically significant.

Table 1. Key Findings of the Study

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
Optimal Knowledge	195	55.7	Moderate knowledge
Favourable attitude	157	44.9	Less than half
Single-dose	130	37.1	Low awareness
Screening	46	13.1	Very low uptake

Results

- 55.7%** had optimal knowledge; **44.3%** had suboptimal knowledge.
- 44.9%** had favourable attitudes, while **55.1%** had non-favourable attitudes.
- Only **37.1%** knew that a single vaccine dose can prevent cervical cancer.
- Only **13.1%** had ever undergone cervical cancer screening.
- Better knowledge was significantly associated with:
 - Urban residence
 - Higher education
 - Higher income
 - Marriage at ≥18 years

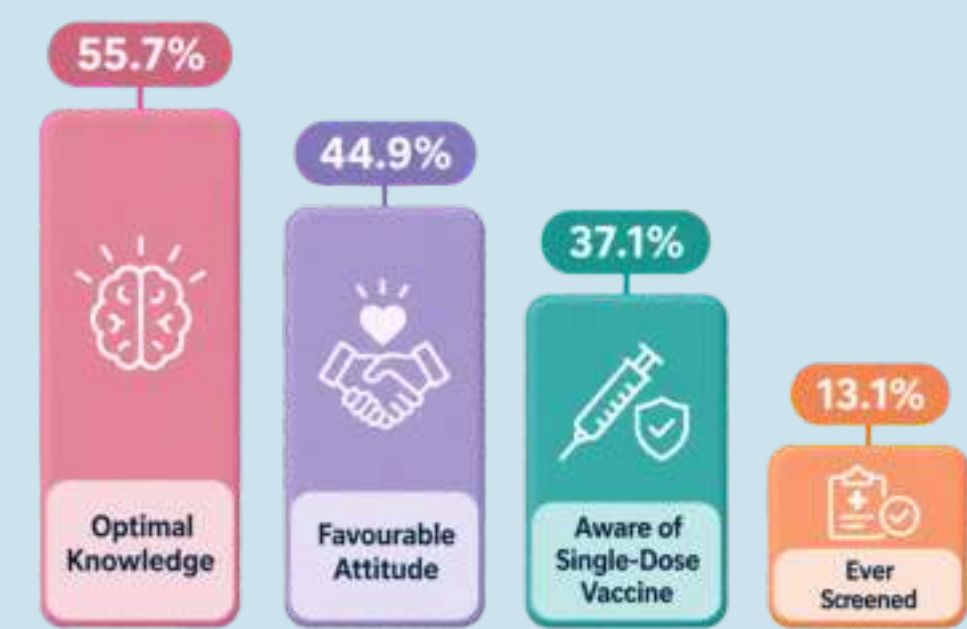


Chart 1. Key Findings

Conclusions

- Cervical cancer prevention knowledge was moderate among participants.
 - Attitudes and screening practices were largely poor.
 - Sociodemographic factors influenced knowledge but not attitude.
 - Improved health education, HPV vaccination and accessible screening are needed.
- Study limitations include:**
- Self-reported data may be subject to recall and social desirability bias.
 - Cross-sectional design cannot establish cause-and-effect relationships.
 - Study was conducted in selected urban/peri-urban areas, limiting generalizability.

References

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