

ABSTRACT

Background: Cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers in women worldwide. Cervical cancer screening is an effective strategy to reduce mortality, cervical cancer screening, as a health seeking behavior, and understanding of the cervical cancer screening process are needed to find context-based explanation in order to find a blueprint to increase the screening rate.

Aim: The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perception of Kurdish women regarding cervical cancer screening.

Methods: A qualitative design, based on a grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, approach 2008), was used to reach this study aim. In this study, 22 in-depth individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. The sample which included 21 individuals consisted of 14 female participants (one of the them was interviewed twice), and 7 nurse, physicians and managers as well as 5 documents including: cervical cancer screening guidelines of Kurdistan region, related forms, registry books (Erbil, Dohok and Suleimanya) have been used for data collection and analysis.

Results: The findings of this study were reported in 5 main categories. Data analysis led to the four main categories emerged after data analyzed which included “conflict”, “belief”, “cancer horrifying”, “socio-cultural factors” and a core category “knowledge about cervical cancer screening” as well as explained the process of cervical cancer screening.

Conclusion: Cervical cancer is a major health problem for women in developing country; until now only small numbers of Kurdish women have under taken cervical cancer screening in Kurdistan region of Iraq. Understanding factors associated with women’s perception related to cervical cancer could guide future educational planning and clinical interventions to improve cervical cancer screening.

Key words: cervical cancer screening, Kurdish women, grounded theory, qualitative research.