Maryam Ahmadian
Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah, Ma’rof Redzuan and Zahid Emby
Department of Social and Development Sciences, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

The paucity of research looking at the occupational categories of women with breast cancer screening behaviors in Asian countries

Background: The rates of breast cancer increased over the past two decades in the developing world, particularly Asian countries. Screening options for Asian women are also limited because of demographic contrains, and various psychosocial, occupational, and cultural factors on breast cancer along with the knowledge of preventive behaviors. Recent epidemiologic changes, westernization, urbanization, and increased participation by women in employment and industry have created a greater risk of breast cancer in Asian countries where health care systems lack the primary and secondary prevention of cancer. This paper aims to review the existing literature on the occupational categories of women and breast cancer screening behaviors among Asian women.

Method: More than 150 published papers from the year of 1980 through 2012 were identified by electronic databases such as Science Direct, Pub Med, MEDLINE, ISI Web of Sciences, DOAJ, and Google Scholar. The inclusion decisive issues were “occupational categories”, “occupation or employment” and “women worker”, in combination with “breast cancer screening behaviors”, “adherence to breast cancer screening” and “Asian women”.

Results: These studies proved that the decision to adhere to breast cancer screening is inspired by a variety of variables such as age, education, occupation, access to health care services, attitude or perception, and perceived barriers. There is a considerable gap in our understanding of work-related factors and preventive behaviors regarding breast cancer and Asian women workers. A clearer understanding is required regarding women’s occupational categories and breast cancer screening adherence with perceived barriers.

Conclusion: This literature review identified only very few studies on the occupational categories and breast health seeking behaviors among Asian women. This review has practical implications for occupational health professionals and policy makers to adapt health promotion policies and to implement breast cancer early detection strategies for at-risk women in the workplaces. The idea here is rather to emphasize on research examining breast cancer screening behaviors among the working Asian women in certain types of careers mainly industrial and healthcare settings, and agriculture, and also amongst night shift workers across a variety of job sectors such as hospitals, factories, and bars and gambling centers.

Keywords: Occupational health; Occupational categories; Asian women workers; Breast cancer screening behaviors

Biography
Maryam Ahmadian did her Ph.D. in Community Development at the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Currently, she is a second year postdoctoral research fellow at UPM. Her major is Community Development with expertise in Social and Preventive Medicine, and Public Health. She has 8 years of teaching experience in Social Science. She has already published some papers and attended various international conferences related to Social Science and Preventive Medicine. She was awarded by Catherin Peachy Award during October 2010 and also was selected in October 2012 at International Symposium on Breast Cancer Prevention: Nutrition, Communication, and Public Policy at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA.

marydian50@yahoo.com