



Impact of a pharmacist driven breast cancer awareness intervention

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Introduction

Worldwide, breast cancer is one of the most common form of neoplasm and is the leading cause of death of Maltese women¹. Pharmacist are able to increase the public's awareness on breast cancer and may help patients to identify signs and risk factors of breast cancer.

Aim

- To assess the knowledge of breast cancer of Maltese women above the age of 25 years before the intervention.
- To evaluate the impact of a pharmacist driven breast cancer awareness intervention.

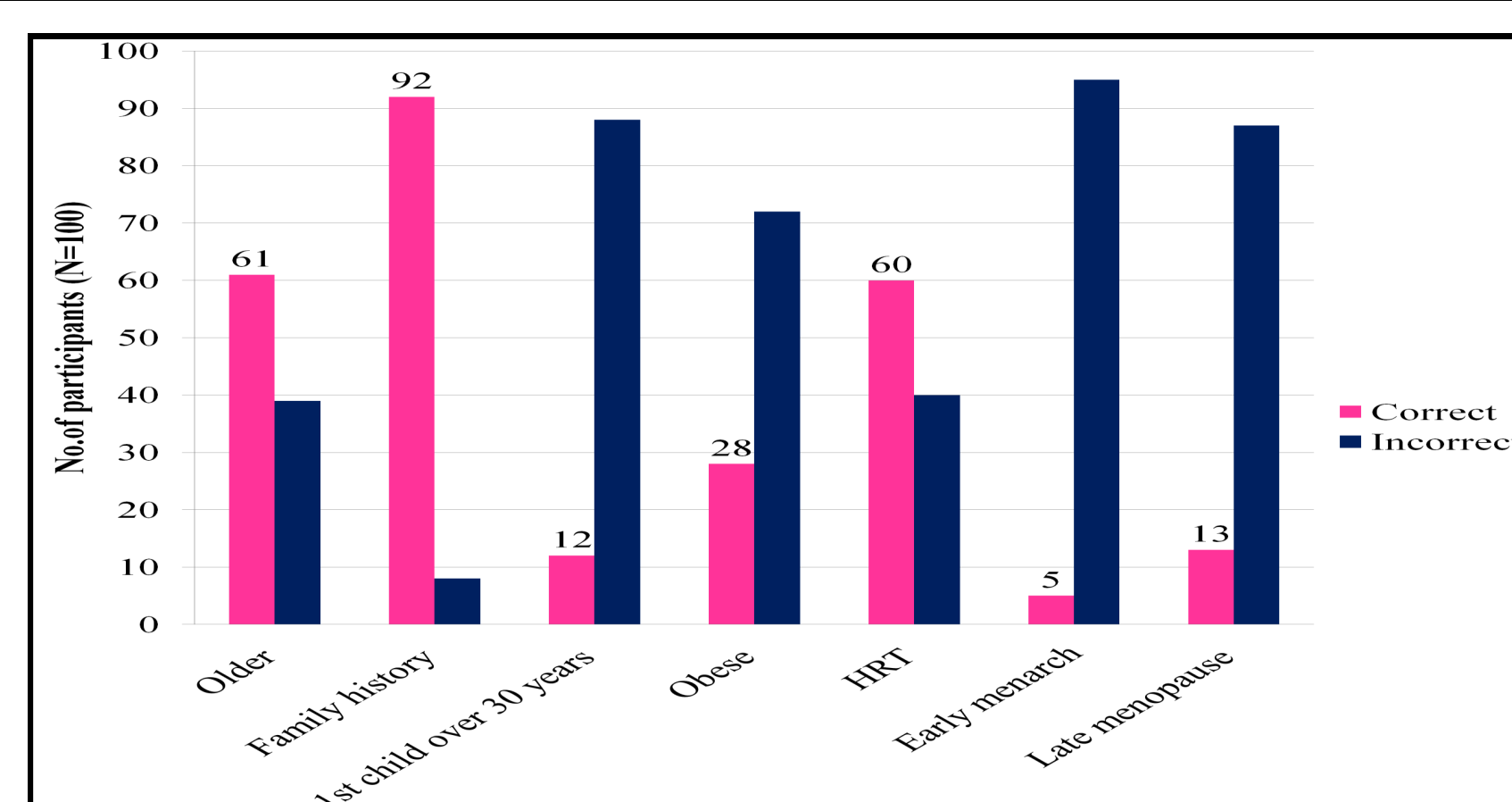
Method

Women's knowledge on breast cancer was assessed by using a pre-structured, pre-validated self-administered questionnaire. The majority of the questions were presented as statements and the participants had to respond 'True', 'False' or 'Don't Know. The responses were recoded dichotomously to 0 for the incorrect response and 1 for the correct response. Higher scores indicate more knowledge. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 women in 3 community pharmacies and this was followed by an educational intervention available electronically. The information available on the web-site was initially validated by pharmacists. A post-intervention assessment was done after 2 weeks.

Fig 1. Online intervention on www.sahhti.com.



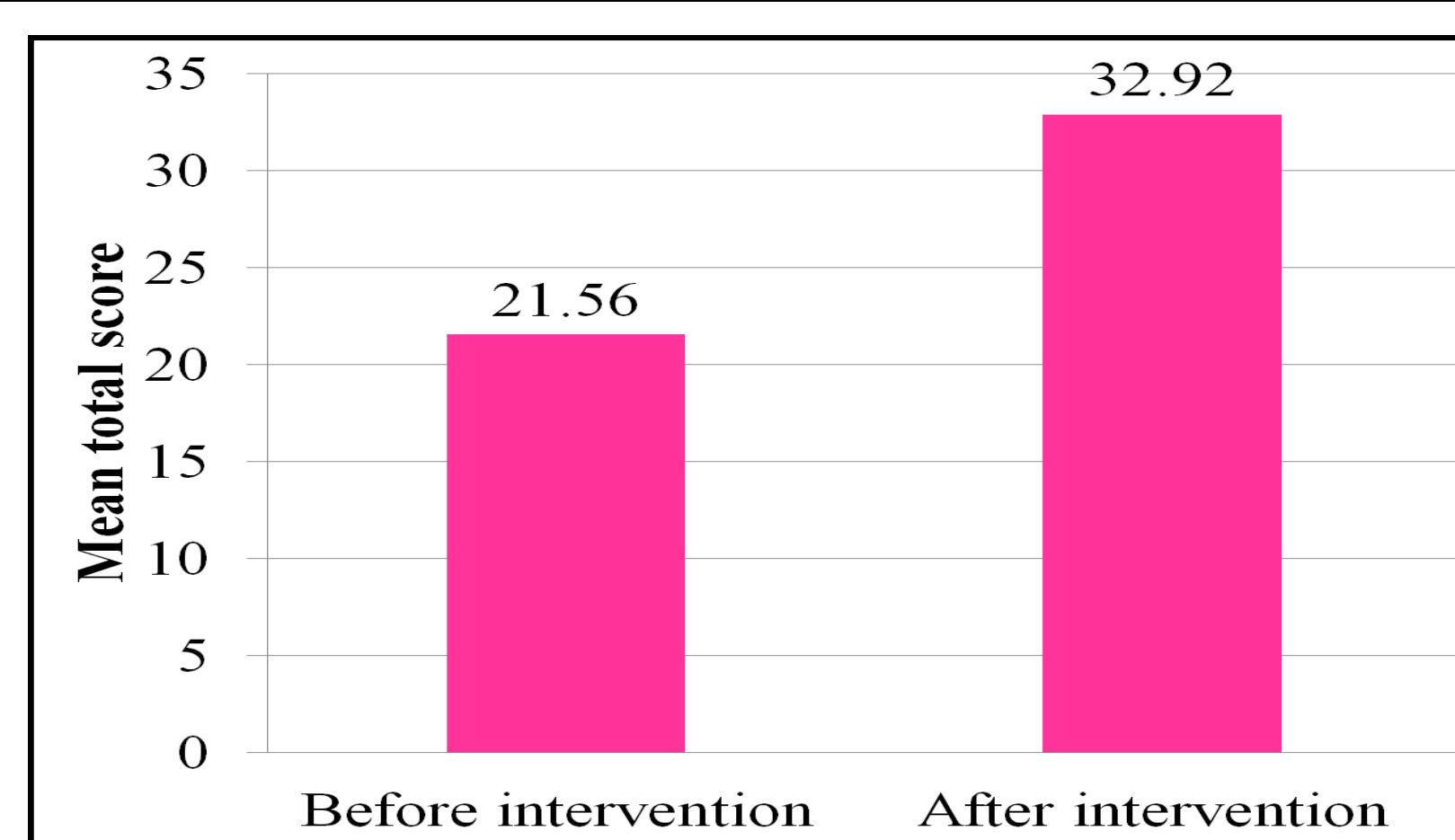
Fig 2: Pre intervention knowledge on risk factors (N=100)



Post-intervention knowledge

Seventy two post-intervention questionnaires were returned and analysed. The mean total score obtained was significantly higher than that obtained in the pre-intervention (p=0.000). When the participants were asked from where they obtain information, 68% reported that they use the internet, while only 26% of the participants turn to a pharmacist for health advice.

Fig 3: The mean total score pre and post intervention (N=72) (maximum score = 35)



Results:

Pre-intervention knowledge

Prior to the intervention, the respondents' knowledge was inadequate, particularly in the symptoms and risk factors section. The mean score for this section was 8.8 (SD=1.72) out of a maximum score of 17. Late pregnancy, obesity, early menarche and late menopause were the least known risk factors.

Conclusion

The pharmacist driven educational web-site was effective on public's health knowledge. Pharmacist can empower society with reliable information by recommending patients with educational web sites that are evidence based and patient oriented.

Reference

1. Malvezzi M, Bertuccio P, Levi F, La Vecchia C, Negri E. European cancer mortality predictions for the year 2012. *Ann Oncol.* 2012;23(4):1044-52.