

**TITLE: GLOBAL QUEST TO ERADICATE CERVICAL
CANCER; CRITICALLY ANALYSE THE ROLE OF THE OCI
FOUNDATION'S CERVIBREAST PHONE APPLICATION
FOR USE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SUGGEST
STRENGTHENING MEASURES.**

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The cervical cancer is the cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix. The cervix is a part of the female reproductive system, it is the opening between the vagina and the uterus. Cervical cancer is the fourth most frequent cancer in women worldwide; In developing countries like Nigeria, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer, predominantly in women aged 15 to 44 years.

Cervical cancer is predominant in developing countries and global death from the disease occurs majorly in these countries. In 2018, the WHO recorded an estimate of 570,000 women who were diagnosed with cervical cancer worldwide and about 311,000 women had died from the disease. In 2017, 14,089 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in Nigeria and 8,240 died from this disease. The prevalence of this cancer and its effects on the mortality rate worldwide necessitate the global quest to eradicate the cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is one of the most easily treated cancer if detected early. In developing countries, cervical cancer prevention and screening programs are relatively scarce resulting in late detection of the cancer in women until it is in an advanced stage. Government funded universal vaccination, screening, diagnostic and treatment programmes are not readily available to those in these developing countries like Nigeria and Algeria hence the prevalence of this disease in these developing countries.

The Cervical cancer is mainly **caused** by various strains of a virus called **Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)** which is a sexually transmitted infection. The HPV type (16

and 18) causes 70% of cervical cancer. Those who are at risk of contracting the Human Papilloma Virus and its persistence, thus having the Cervical cancer include; Women with many sexual partners, women that engage in sexual activities at an early age, some women with weakened immune system has an increased risk to HPV. Women who took some type of miscarriage prevention drugs while pregnant can make the fetus prone to an increased risk of a type of cervical cancer called clear cell adenocarcinoma. Some women who smoke tobacco, Women who possess other sexually transmitted diseases like Chlamydia, Herpes etc, Women with poor hygiene and poor diet are also at risk.

The **symptoms** of the cervical cancer begins to unravel if there is persistent infection with the causative virus leading to pre-cancerous lesions, this can lead to cervical cancer.. These symptoms are: Change in vaginal discharge in terms of quantity, color and odor. Abnormal bleeding after intercourse. Pelvic, leg and lower back pain. Irregular vaginal bleeding between periods. Fatigue, loss of weight and loss of appetite.

The cervical cancer screening test that are available are: the conventional test (Pap smear) with the liquid based cytology(LBC) the most common type and readily available in Nigeria. Others include; the HPV testing for high risk HPV types and the Visual inspection with Acetic Acid(VIA).

There's a global quest to eradicate the cervical cancer and the statistics has greatly shown over the years that the predominance of this disease actively affects mostly the developing countries. With this in mind, the Onyebuchi Chris Ifediora (OCI) foundation which is a non-governmental, non-profitable and non-political foundation under one of it's many interventions, the major intervention being the Arm Our Youths Campaign, embarked on empowering high school teenagers on techniques of breast and cervical cancer preventive measures in a sustainable manner.

The OCI foundation through one of the health campaigns component of the Arm Our Youths (AROY) health campaign invented the **CERVIBREAST** mobile phone application and it was made freely available to the general public on the Android play store on September 6th , 2019 and the Apple IOS store on May 13th, 2020.

The OCI foundation invented the CERVIBREAST App in a bid to empower women to look after their health, identify early symptoms of cervical cancer and embrace cancer-preventive measures in their lifestyle and minimize the impact of cervical cancer.

The CerviBreast mobile Application is; free and lacks in-app purchases, this facilitates the use of the app and in turn helps create awareness on the cervical cancer. The application can be easily shared from one mobile device to another.

The CERVIBREAST App invented by the OCI is easily accessible and very flexible to use as it possess easy login details. The application is accessible using an existing Facebook or Google accounts or by simply creating a new login details. The flexibility of this app allows larger percentage of women who were ignorant or lacking concrete information about the disease to easily access the application and get familiar with the information available on the app.

The CERVIBREAST App is very relatable and it allows familiarity; The App features top Nollywood stars which makes it easier for the public to connect with the message passed across to them, This increase the sensitization of Women to the information about the cancer. The CERVIBREAST App make use of life saving videos of step by step techniques that is understandable even to a layman. The pictorial and video representatives of these techniques and the cervical cancer makes it easily assimilated and the awareness is made.

The CERVIBREAST App is a unique app that combines lot of features in the sensitization of the public to the Cervical cancer, its preventive measures and appropriate screening guides.

The CERVIBREAST App provides information on cervical cancer preventive measures. On the mobile application, explicit details on Cervical cancer which entails the causes, symptoms and the preventive measures are readily available . This plays an important role in sensitization of the public and evidently causes a decrease in rate at which the cervical cancer is predominant.

The CERVIBREAST App gives it's users the privilege of locating cervical cancer service providers in Nigeria without stress. This aids in eradicating the cervical cancer because the users gets the necessary information about the disease, can get screened on time and get treatment required if need be.

Registered users on the application can customize monthly reminders on Cervical Cancer screening to be sent to them. This reminder helps to avoid forgetting scheduled screening.

The CERVIBREAST App possess customizable two yearly cervical cancer screening. It allows users to set reminders using information about their screening history. This plays an important role in the early detection of the cancer if present, and fosters early treatment.

Users of the CERVIBREAST App are allowed to book for the Cervical cancer screening, this gives room for early detection, early treatment and most importantly reduces the mortality rate of this disease.

The features of the CERVIBREAST App highlighted above, collectively plays an important role in the global quest for eradicating the Cervical cancer.

Although, CERVIBREAST App is readily available for download not a lot of people are aware of the app . The OCI organization can advertise the application on various social media platforms, radio and tv stations to create more publicity about the application.

Guidelines on how the application function should be made easy on flyers and pamphlets and distributed to the public, this increases the awareness about the application and more people can download it for use.

The app layout should be more animated, fun and there should be a tweak in the stiffness and basic colors. This allows the app to be more user friendly.

Instead of the 2-yearly cervical cancer screening reminder, an annual cervical cancer screening should be scheduled and the users should be reminded in time for their appointment.

The CERVIBREAST App is limited to a type of language that is the English language. The application can be programmed to run in other languages for those who don't speak/ understand the English language to reduce language barrier.

The CERVIBREAST App should include centers for Vaccinations against HPV.

Workshops and seminars should be held at intervals all over the world. These seminars should sensitize the public about the disease, the causes and symptoms. The seminars should also highlight the importance of the CERVIBREAST Application, the information on the operation of the application should be explained in clear terms at these programmes. These Seminars should also be conducted in smaller communities where ignorance is the order of the day. The seminars should be conducted in secondary schools to sensitize students in high schools about the disease and the application.

The CERVIBREAST App is restricted to android phones and IOS phones, negligent of individuals using neither of these phones. The Application should be made available on all type of phones.

Outreaches should be carried out on Anticervical cancer and appropriate information about the disease must be communicated to the areas where these outreaches are conducted. The CERVIBREAST App information must be communicated as well.

The primary aim of all the points stated above is to reduce the prevalence of the cervical cancer, increase the sensitization of the public to the cancer and ultimately reduce it's morbidity and mortality rate and eradicate the cervical cancer globally.

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