

Abstract

Triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) is a type of breast cancer that tests negative for estrogen receptors, progesterone receptors, and excess HER2 protein. Since this type of cancer is not fueled by these hormones or the HER2 protein, neither hormone therapy nor medicines that specifically target the HER2 protein are effective treatments. Considering the lack of efficient medications, triple-negative breast cancer tends to be more aggressive than other types of breast cancer, and it is more likely to spread to other areas of the body. While anyone can be diagnosed with this disease, it is more prominent in individuals younger than 50 years of age, women of African American or Hispanic descent, and individuals with a BRCA1 mutation. The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge and awareness about triple negative breast cancer through an informational zoom event.

Background/Purpose

The aim of this research was to promote awareness about triple-negative breast cancer and to provide information regarding ways to potentially prevent this disease among African American women. African American women are disproportionately affected by triple-negative breast cancer, resulting in a higher rate of mortality than women of European descent. In fact, research published by the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) indicates that African American women who are diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer are 28% more likely to die than white women with the same diagnosis.

Methods

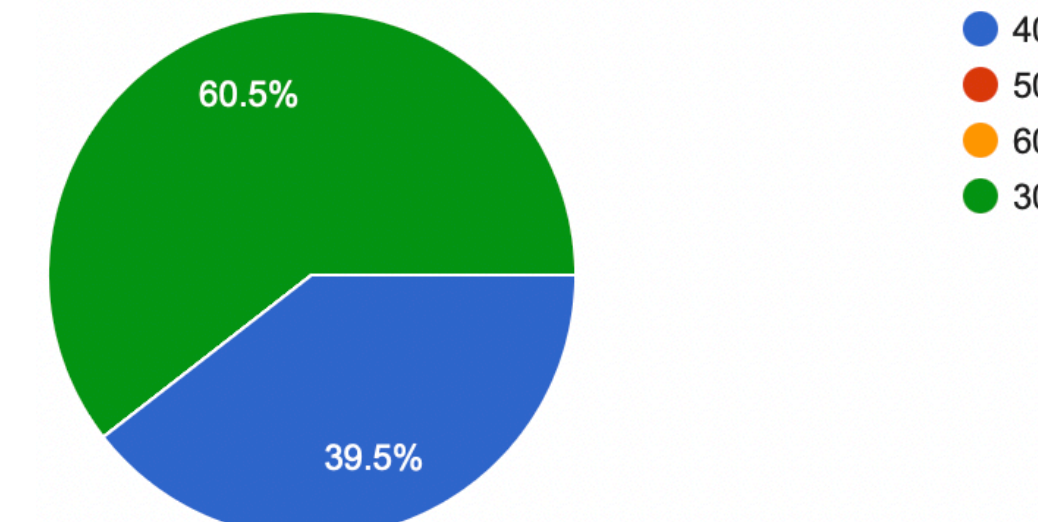
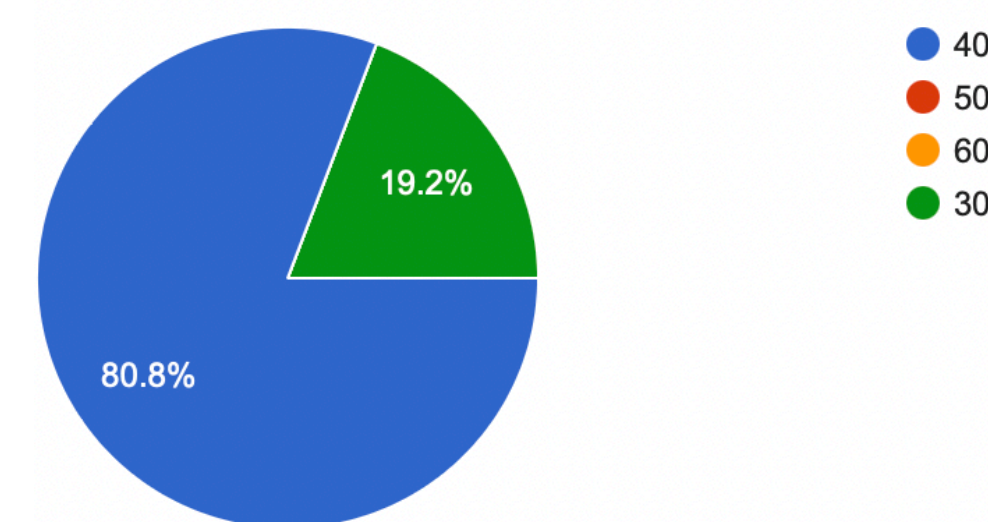
As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this event was held in a virtual format on zoom. The speaker, Dr. Heather Beasley, informed participants on the background of triple-negative breast cancer, treatment options that are available, and potential preventative measures. To collect preliminary data about the knowledge of the participants, a pre-test with a series of questions about triple-negative breast cancer was given. Following the event, participants completed a post-test to assess the knowledge gained from the event.

Outcomes

The outcomes of this project are as follows:

- 1) All participants ranged between 18 - 22 years of age
- 2) There was a forty-one percent (41%) increase in knowledge when participants were asked, “What age should you begin getting mammograms?”
- 3) There was a six percent (6%) increase in knowledge when participants were asked, “ True or False? Triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) is a type of breast cancer that is more prominent in African American individuals younger than 50 years of age.”

Pre and post test responses to the question, “What age should you begin getting mammograms?”



Student Lessons Learned

The information that was presented at this event raised awareness about the science behind triple-negative breast cancer, informed participants on ways to potentially lower the risk of triple-negative breast cancer, and emphasized the importance of breast cancer screenings. By comparing the pre-tests and post-tests, there was a significant increase in knowledge regarding TNBC. By attending this virtual event about triple-negative breast cancer, the knowledge and behaviors of the participants dramatically increased. Since African American women are disproportionately affected by triple-negative breast cancer, this event is significant to help bridge the gap between African Americans and the healthcare system.

Community Partner Acknowledgements

Fisk University

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TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project

Dr. Heather Beasley