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BOOK OF ABSTRACT

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Knowledge and perceptions of school teachers regarding first aid for epilepsy in selected schools in Kalkudah educational zone

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Abstract

Background: Epilepsy is a tendency towards recurrent unprovoked seizures and remains one of the most common neurological disorder in children worldwide. First aid management of epilepsy is an essential component for holistic healthcare approach in patients with epilepsy. Affects an estimated 10.5 million children worldwide. And children represent 80% of the 3.5million new cases that are identified each year. The overall prevalence of childhood epilepsy is 5.7 per 10000 children aged 0-16 years in Sri Lanka. While 40% of children's developing life is spent at school, it is imperative that teachers become an important role player in the epilepsy care and surveillance for children with epilepsy during this time. The purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge and perceptions of the school teachers regarding first aid for epilepsy in selected schools in the Kalkudah Educational Zone.

Method: A Cross Sectional Descriptive study was conducted from September 2019 to August 2020 among 226 school teachers from 12 selected schools representing all divisions of Kalkudah Educational Zone. Participants were selected using simple random sampling method and a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 19 (SPSS V.19) was used to enter and analyze the data.

Result: Of the 226 teachers recruited for this study, 15.9% of participants had adequate knowledge on causes, clinical presentation and treatment of epilepsy. Only 2.7% scored adequate knowledge on first aid management for epilepsy. Overall knowledge on epilepsy was inadequate in the majority (59.3%). Most of the teachers (85.8%) had never done any first aid management as they have not had any training on first aid epilepsy management and lack of awareness about epilepsy and its management. There was strong evidence of association between religion and overall knowledge of epilepsy (Chi-square=14.003, df=4, p<0.05) and location of school and overall knowledge of epilepsy (Chi-square=0.924, df=2, p<0.05) in this study.

Conclusion: Knowledge on epilepsy and its first aid management among school teachers in this study was unsatisfactory in many aspects. There is a need for a multi-faceted educational intervention directed at improving the awareness and understanding of the condition by teachers.

Key words: Epilepsy, First aid management, Knowledge, Perceptions, Teachers.