

PP 21

## Assessment of Knowledge and Attitudes on Sexual Education among Teenagers in Matale District, Sri Lanka

Ranaweera S.P.M.T.#, Krishanthi N.M.V., Weerakoon W.M.N.P.

*School of Nursing, International Institute of Health Sciences, Welisara, Sri Lanka*

*#Corresponding author: makshikaranaweera97@gmail.com*

**Background:** Sexual education aims to strengthen the ability of adolescents into making the correct choices regarding relationships, sexuality and health. Meanwhile, it does not encourage them to engage in sexual activities. It gradually equips and empowers children and young people with information, skills and positive values to understand their sexuality, have safe relationships and take responsibility for their own and other people's sexual health and wellbeing.

**Objective:** To identify the level of knowledge and attitudes on sexual education among teenagers

**Methods:** A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted among 100 (13-19 years) teenagers. Convenient sampling technique was used to select the research sample of school students in Matale District, Sri Lanka. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire.

**Results:** The majority of the students (53.1%) have received knowledge of sexual education from their parents. The respondents were asked whether the sexual education was useful for their life and the majority said that it is useful (86.8%). A 26.5% of the sample had felt very comfortable while the least amount of the sample 2% had felt very uncomfortable during the lesson. Half of the participants have negatively responded on the acceptability for boys and girls of their age to have the opposite gender partner during the lesson on sexual education. The 80% of students indicated that they knew contraception methods and few respondents had mentioned family planning methods and 20% of the sample indicated that they did not know about any contraception methods.

**Conclusions:** The parents support on sexual education is at an average level, however, most of the students had identified that the sexual education is useful for their life. Considering their attitudes, the students' acceptability for the opposite gender partner during the lesson was negative though their level of knowledge states at a good level.

**Keywords:** *Attitudes, Knowledge, Sexual education, Teenagers*