

Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice towards Epilepsy among Non-epileptic Adults in Sri Lanka

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Background: Epilepsy is a common neurological disorder that impacts individuals and communities worldwide. Understanding and support from the general population are crucial for creating an inclusive and empathetic environment for individuals with epilepsy. However, limited research exists on the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) towards epilepsy among non-epileptic individuals, particularly among adults in Sri Lanka

Objective: To assess the KAP towards epilepsy and associated socio-demographic characteristics among adults above 18 years old in Sri Lanka

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire distributed both online and through in-person interviews among 389 adults (non-epileptic) from various districts in Sri Lanka. The questionnaire assessed participants' KAP towards epilepsy separately and categorized as good, bad, and average based on the score.

Results: The majority (n=241) of the sample was between 18-28 age group. Majority of them were females (54%) and 38% were residents in Kalutara district. Majority of participants had poor knowledge (65%) and poor attitudes (52%) towards epilepsy, while their practices were rated as average (55%). Correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between knowledge, attitudes, and practices ($p<0.05$). Additionally, an association was seen between knowledge and age, living district and current employment status ($p<0.05$), between attitude and ethnicity, living district, completed highest education level and current employment status ($p<0.05$) and between practices and, living district and highest education level ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: Poor level of knowledge, poor attitude, and average level of practices on epilepsy was seen among non-epileptic individuals above 18 years old in Sri Lanka. The outcomes indicate a critical need for educational campaigns and awareness programs to enhance community understanding of epilepsy. Future research should focus on designing interventions to increase awareness and knowledge about epilepsy among the general population.

Keywords: Attitude, Epilepsy, Knowledge, Practice, Sri Lanka