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**Knowledge and attitudes towards sexually transmitted infections among non-medical undergraduates in three selected universities of Sri Lanka**

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**Background:** Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are among the emerging diseases in the world mostly affecting adolescents and young people. More than one million people acquire STIs daily worldwide. One third of the curable STIs affect young adults.

**Objective:** To assess knowledge and attitude towards STIs among non-medical undergraduates in three selected universities of Sri Lanka.

**Method:** This descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among non-medical undergraduates of three state universities of Sri Lanka. Sample size was 384 and with the 10% of missing data 422 were invited to fill the questionnaire by using a convenient sampling technique. Undergraduates from each university and faculty were proportionately decided. Data were collected through a google form and questionnaires were pretested (n=10). Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 26.0. Knowledge scores were categorized as good (>75%), moderate (50-75%) and poor (<50%). Attitude scores were categorized as positive (Score $\geq$ 11.6) and negative (Score<11.6). Descriptive statistics, Chi-square test, one-way ANOVA and bivariate correlation were employed. Significance was considered as  $p<0.05$ .

**Results:** Three hundred and ninety-two undergraduates responded. Response rate was 92.8%. Mean age was  $23.3\pm 1.3$  years. The majority was Sinhalese (93.9%), males (54.6%). Undergraduates from University of Sri Jayewardenepura (44.9%), University of Peradeniya (30.9%), and University of Jaffna (24.2%) participated. Nearly 18% had a good level of knowledge while, 50.8% and 31.6% had moderate and poor levels of knowledge, respectively. Undergraduates in Faculty of Arts showed a good knowledge level (33.5%), which was highest among faculties. The majority had positive attitudes (62.2%) regarding STIs. Significant associations were observed between knowledge level and socio-demographic factors; University ( $p<0.001$ ) and faculty ( $p=0.01$ ), and gender and attitude ( $p=0.04$ ). Males (66.8%) and females (56.7%) had positive attitude. A significant correlation between knowledge and attitudes were seen ( $p<0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** The majority of the undergraduates had moderate level of knowledge. A significant percentage had poor knowledge and negative attitudes. Thus, it is recommended to implement awareness programs for undergraduates.