

## **Knowledge and attitudes regarding Basic life support among the final year undergraduates in selected faculties of the University of Colombo (UOC)**

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**Background:** Globally sudden cardiac arrest is an outstanding public health concern for morbidity. For the client's survival in an out-of-hospital setting, early intervention of Basic Life Support (BLS) with Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is crucial. Universities are ideal settings for disseminating knowledge of BLS due to diverse student enrollment. As key stakeholders, they are well-positioned to advocate and disseminate BLS practices entirety of the nation.

**Objective:** To assess knowledge and attitudes regarding BLS among final-year undergraduates in the selected faculties of the University of Colombo.

**Method:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among final-year undergraduates of UOC, using an online questionnaire to gather data regarding; demographics, knowledge, and attitudes toward BLS. The chi-square test, independent samples T-test, and one-way ANOVA test were used to determine significant differences and associations of the variables statistically using SPSS 27.0 software.

**Results:** From the total sample size of 380, 46.1% were accountable for poor knowledge, and 39.7%, and 14.2%, for adequate and good knowledge respectively. A statistically significant difference was observed between the participant's age ( $p < 0.05$ ) category and the faculty ( $p < 0.05$ ) with the level of knowledge. Final year undergraduates of medicine (79.21 ( $\pm 14.46$ )); nursing (73.53 ( $\pm 22.59$ )) faculties have higher mean knowledge of BLS compared to other faculties. Attitude levels were categorized as positive ( $> 75\%$ ) and negative ( $< 75\%$ ) according to their total scores for attitudes. The majority of the participants depicted a positive attitude (86%) toward BLS.

**Conclusion:** Medical and nursing undergraduates have significantly better knowledge compared to the final-year undergraduates of other faculties as they have BLS in their basic degree program curriculums. Despite their low knowledge levels, the majority of final-year undergraduates have a positive attitude toward BLS. It is vital to include the BLS training program in advanced level /university curriculum regardless of the educational stream.

**Keywords:** BLS, knowledge, attitudes, Final-year-undergraduates