

## **Knowledge, attitudes, practices and associated factors regarding CSE among teachers of adolescents in the Kurunegala education division**

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Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a curriculum-based approach that addresses the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of sexuality. The increasing global and local burden of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections highlights the need for structured sexuality education among adolescents. In Sri Lanka, teachers play a key role in delivering CSE; however, limited research exists on their knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP). A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among all science and physical health education teachers in all 13 Types 1AB mixed schools in the Kurunegala Education Division, excluding those absent during data collection. Data were collected using a structured, pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire covering socio-demographic characteristics and KAP on CSE. Scores were calculated, and teachers were categorized as having “good” or “poor” levels based on whether their score was above or below the mean. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 with descriptive statistics and chi-square tests. Only bivariate analysis was done due to the study design and sample size. All 127 teachers participated (100% response rate). The mean age was 44.6 years (SD ± 9.0); 72.4% were female and 87.4% were Sinhala. Average teaching experience was 16.5 years (SD ± 9.4). Most were university graduates (54.3%) and taught science (74.8%). Good knowledge was observed in 63.8%, positive attitudes in 61.4%, and good practices in only 33.1%. Female teachers had significantly better knowledge ( $p=0.028$ ). Higher education was significantly associated with better practices ( $p=0.026$ ). Positive attitudes correlated with higher knowledge ( $p=0.001$ ) and better practices ( $p < 0.001$ ). Despite adequate knowledge and attitudes, CSE-related practices were low. Incorporating CSE training into teacher education and ongoing professional development is recommended.

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