

Prevalence and risk factors of neck and shoulder pain among G.C.E. Ordinary Level (O/L) students in two selected schools in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka

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Neck and shoulder pain is a common musculoskeletal complaint among adolescents, with a possible increase in prevalence due to change in lifestyle and use of devices. This study is aimed to assess the prevalence and associated factors of neck and shoulder pain among G.C.E. Ordinary Level (O/L) students in two selected schools in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among students in grades 10 and 11 in two selected schools in Batticaloa District. Total sampling of the population was done and data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire which included the questionnaire for Screen Time of Adolescents, Physical activity questionnaire for Adolescents, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Standardized Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire. Weight, height of participants and the weight of the school bag were measured. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 24.0 with descriptive statistics and chi-square test. Of the 337 respondents, 63.8% and 45.1% reported neck pain and shoulder pain respectively during the last 12 months, and 19.6% and 27.9% reported current neck and shoulder pain respectively. Significant associations were noted between screen time for studying ($p=0.002$) and browsing the internet ($p=0.001$), physical activity ($p=0.001$), desk height ($p=0.002$), method of carrying school bag ($p=0.005$), method of travel to school ($p=0.001$), body mass index ($p=0.014$) and neck and/or shoulder pain. Screen time for watching videos, playing video games, and social media usage, chair comfort, seeing blackboard, school bag weight, duration of carrying school bag and psychosocial factors were not significantly associated with neck and/or shoulder pain. Neck and shoulder pain is highly prevalent among G.C.E. (O/L) students. Screen time, physical activity, classroom furniture, school bag carriage variables, and body mass index are potentially modifiable risk factors among G.C.E. (O/L) students. Interventions addressing these factors are recommended.

Keywords: *Neck and shoulder pain, Screen time, G.C.E. (O/L) students*