

ABSTRACT

There is an increasing tendency of RH problems in rapidly changing rural areas and schools have a major role for rectifying through the dissemination of RH knowledge. This study was conducted to assess the knowledge of selected aspects of RH and their attitudes on providing such information through schools among school teachers in a rural zonal education division.

A quantitative study in cross sectional descriptive design was conducted among 500 teachers selected from cluster sampling in zonal educational division Udugama, Galle district. A Self administered questionnaire was used to collect the data.

The results of the study indicate that Most of the teachers are from the 0-5year service category (45.6%) as well as having an experience of 0-5 year of RH teaching (32.5%). A large proportion of them (92.7%) are not having training in RH teaching. Majority (61.5%) are teaching arts subjects.

The overall knowledge of the RH is fair (81.9%) for a large number of them. Knowledge of the most of the subcomponents was also fair. But knowledge of sexuality and contraception was poor for most of them (98.7%), (34.8%).

The overall attitudes of proving RH information through schools were positive (78.5%). They have identified the schools as recognized places of providing such knowledge (94.9%) through an allocated teacher (65.6%) with mainly the support of MOH office (84.3%). Only 44.9% has positively responded to the starting point of RH in schools in grade6. The tendency has increase towards the higher grades except grade 7. Furthermore, they have suggested that RH education should be a formal and compulsory education (64.3%) with a higher degree of priority (60.5%) targeting examinations. They have indicated that it is of paramount importance to introduce the novel teaching and learning methodologies like problem-based (71.8%) and scenario-based techniques (68.9%). They have complied with that premarital sex (87.8%) teenage pregnancy (91.4%) and STI (91.6%) can be reduced by RH teaching in schools. Relatively large proportion of them was against the inclusion of sexuality (20%) and contraception (12.4%).

The main sources of RH information to them were electronic media (60.6%), television (29.7%) and radio (14.2%) was the most preferred Medias.

It was found that although sex of the respondents has no association with the total knowledge on RH, there is an association with the total attitude on RH. This difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 5.14$, $p=0.02$, $df=1$). In the same way, there is an association between the total knowledge and attitude. This difference is also statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 54.39$, $p=0.00$, $df=1$). A fair general knowledge and positive attitudes regarding RH as well as a poor knowledge regarding contraception and sexuality with negative attitudes towards both components were revealed by this study..

RH should be an integral part of training among school teachers. Using new methodologies for teaching RH in schools.

Keywords. Reproductive health

Knowledge

Attitudes