

# Abstract

## Introduction

Out of 20.4 million of Sri Lankan Population 16% consisted of adolescents of 10-19 years. A sexual and reproductive health service provision is a major need among adolescents in developing countries in context of availability, accessibility, acceptability and confidentiality. When it comes to the emergencies and marginalized populations, problem is more aggravated. Public health midwives are the front-line health care workers who provide sexual and reproductive health for adolescents at grass root level. Hence, it is very important to know the baseline knowledge and attitude on provision of adolescent sexual and reproductive health care during a disaster situation and associated factors among public health midwives for development of necessary interventions. The present study was conducted, to assess knowledge and attitude on provision of adolescent sexual and reproductive health care during a disaster situation and associated factors among public health midwives in Polonnaruwa district.

## Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among one hundred and nineteen public health midwives attached to all medical officers of health areas in Polonnaruwa district who works more than six months period. A self-administered pretested questionnaire was administered after obtaining informed consent. Scoring system was developed with expert support. Data entry and analysis were conducted using SPSS 20 software. Percentage scores were calculated for assessment of knowledge and attitude. Depending on the distribution, percentage scores were presented using median and interquartile range. Cut off levels were identified for satisfactory and unsatisfactory levels of knowledge and attitudes separately. Associated factors were looked for the levels of knowledge and attitude using Chi Square test at level of significance of  $p < 0.05$ .





## **Results**

The median age group of the study population was 40 years and inter quartile range was 34 to 48 years. All of them were Sinhala Buddhist. Majority of them were remarried (n=101, 84.9%). 84.9% of the population have passed general certificate of education advanced level (n=101). Mean service duration of the study population was 13 years and inter quartile ratio was 9 to 19 years. Most of them have undergone training on adolescent and reproductive health (n=85, 71.4%). More than 55% have not underwent on training on disaster management (n=67). But more than half of the population had experience on providing adolescent sexual and reproductive health in internally displaced persons camps (n=69; 58.4%). When considering overall knowledge on adolescent sexual and reproductive health care during a disaster period majority 89% (n=106) of public health midwives had satisfactory knowledge. Gaps in knowledge were identified in individual sections on contraception (69.9%, IQR=58.3 to 83.3) related to adolescents. The attitudes among the study population on providing adolescent sexual and reproductive health care in a disaster situation were found to be unsatisfactory (n=62, 52.1%). The total knowledge score was significantly associated with education qualifications ( $p < 0.05$ ) and experience in providing adolescent sexual and reproductive care in a disaster situation ( $p = 0.036$ ). The total attitude score was significantly associated with training on adolescent sexual and reproductive health ( $p < 0.001$ ).

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The present study showed that though public health midwives were having satisfactory knowledge on providing adolescent sexual and reproductive health care. They lacked knowledge on handling adolescent sexual and reproductive health care problems in disaster situation. Their attitude on providing adolescent sexual and reproductive health care in a disaster situation was unsatisfactory. Study recommends incorporation of training on adolescent sexual and reproductive health care related to disaster management at basic, post basic and in-service levels

## **Key Words**

Disaster, Adolescents, Sexual reproductive health, Sri Lanka