

# Knowledge and Practices Regarding First Aid among School Teachers in the Kurunegala Zonal Educational Division

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**Abstract-** To describe knowledge and practices regarding First Aid among school teachers in the Kurunegala Zonal Educational Division.

A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out using a sample of 384 school teachers. Simple random sampling method was used to select the sample and Self administered questionnaires were used to assess knowledge on first aid. Data analysis was conducted with the computer software SPSS version16.0.

Most of the participants, 332(86.5%) were female and 52(13.5%) participants were male. Only one fourth (24.0%) of the participants had received first aid training. 94 (24.5%) participants had "very good knowledge" while, 152 participants (39.6%) had "Good knowledge" and 106(27.6%) participants had "Average knowledge" on First Aid. While only 32(8.3%) participants had "Poor knowledge" regarding first aid. The mean average knowledge level on first aid was 68.56%. The mean knowledge level on emergency management was only 50.52%. There was no statistically significant difference in knowledge level when comparing gender and educational status. Statistically significant association was found in knowledge level when comparing age groups, work experience and previous first aid training. The mean knowledge level on first aid was less in the 21-30 year age group, when compared to the other groups ( $p=0.003$ ). The mean knowledge level on first aid was less in the group with less than 5 years work experience ( $p=0.002$ ). Participants who had prior training in first aid had better mean knowledge level than those with no training ( $p=0.002$ ). 322 (83.9%) participants claimed that the commonest incident when they had to administer first aid was fainting, while 46 (12%) said blunt injuries.

Over 90% of participants had at least an average knowledge level. The knowledge on emergency management needs to be improved. The findings also indicate the need of first aid training programme for school teachers.

**Keywords—** First aid, knowledge, practices

## I. INTRODUCTION

First Aid is the initial treatment given to a person for any injury or sudden illnesses before the medical opinions. The aims of first aid are to save life, ease the pain, promote recovery, prevent conditions that might increase the original injury and arrange for transportation to the hospital.

First Aid is concerned not only with physical injury or illnesses, but also with other initial care including psychosocial support for people suffering emotional distress from experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event or injury. It may involve improving with facilities and materials available at that time. (*International first aid and resuscitation guidelines*.2011)

Injuries during school hours and accidental contamination have always been a threat to the life of the school children. The main problems in modern societies are accidental injuries, natural disasters, burns, accidental falls, poisoning, cut injuries and fractures etc.... And also many children and adolescents lose their lives or become disabled in such situations. Adolescence is a time of transition from childhood to increasing independence for young people, and is often a period where youth engage in risky behavioral choices. These choices can place preteens at risk for many health and social problems. (Dryfoos JG. 2001)

Feldman et al conducted a prospective study on school injuries, incidence types, related factors and initial managements, they found that annual incidence rate of 5.4 injury events / 100 children, which appears to be underestimate of the actual rate of all the injury events 28.7% resulted in serious injuries. Most of the time children are prone to get accidents in school time. Because they are spend majority of day time in school. And also it is the common cause of child morbidity and mortality. To reduce this, immediate administration of first aid is essential. Teachers are the once who administer first aid and save their lives at the school. Therefore school teachers should have enough knowledge regarding administering first aid in emergency situations. However it was determine that most of the teachers do not have enough first aid knowledge and correct practice in some cases (Muruvvet Baser at al. 2007)

According to Waibel R et al, (2003) Unintentional injuries, such as accidental injuries, natural disasters, burns, accidental falls, poisoning, cut injuries and fractures likewise occur in child-care programs. Schools and playgrounds are the most common location for falls (40.4%). It has been found that, most injuries in preschools are requiring only first aid treatment. Therefore schools are important locations to focus on the prevention of injuries and diseases in children, because situations that requiring first aids are often encountered there. In a study among public school teachers in the United States, one third had no training in first aid and 87% of them agreed that emergency care training should be included in teachers' preparatory programs (Afrasyab Khan at al, 2010)

According to Singh A. 2004, the major areas need first aid in schools are, foreign body air way obstructions, bleeding, burns, poisoning, head injury, bites and drowning. School teachers are the once who can apply their first aid knowledge to these situations and save the life of children. Therefore the aim of this study is to evaluate school teachers' knowledge and practice on first aid in emergency situations.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Muiuvvet Baser at al, (2007) conducted a study to evaluate first aid knowledge and attitudes

of a sample of Turkish primary school teachers. Data has been obtained using questionnaire. According to this study, it was determine that most of the teachers do not have correct knowledge on epistaxis. More than half of the teachers would give first aid incorrectly in case of bee stings. And also the ratio of the teachers who gave appropriate first aid for poison ingestion is quite low. Finally they had determined that most of the teachers in this study do not have correct first-aid knowledge and do not give accurate first aid. Because teachers have constant contact with children, ensuring that they are proficient in first aid is a priority. They had recommended that teachers should be trained in first aid and pediatric basic life support.

A survey has been carried out by Samodzielna et al, (2007) among 100 schoolteachers from two high schools in the Western Pomerania region regarding Assessment of knowledge about first aid among the teachers. A standardized questionnaire, which was previously applied to investigate a problem of giving the first aid among Polish society, had been used as a diagnostic tool. They had mentioned that, although majority of respondents took part in first aid courses, the survey has confirmed that the level of knowledge about giving the first aid is insufficient. The half of respondents knows rules of giving first aid, and one third declares that can put these rules into the practice. They had proposed that cyclical training courses for teachers led by medical professionals, and further courses for pupils led by those teachers in collaboration with students of the last year of paramedical studies.

K.Maloti Devi (2006) conducted a pre and post experimental study on effectiveness of planned teaching programme on knowledge regarding first aid in selected conditions among primary school working in schools at B.K. Nagar, Bangalore. The main aim of this study was to assess the existing knowledge, effectiveness of planned teaching programme and to find out the association between pre and post test levels of knowledge. In this study they had focus on general information about first aid, first aid in wound and injury, epistaxis, foreign bodies in ear, nose, eye and first aid on bites. According to this study, 100% has inadequate per test knowledge regarding first aid. The overall post test level of knowledge had showed 80% of teachers had gain moderately

adequate knowledge and 20% of teachers had adequate knowledge. According to that they had mention that, the planned teaching programme was effective as there was a significant gain in knowledge.

B. Toure et al, (2011) conducted a study on Primary School Teachers' Knowledge Regarding Emergency Management of Avulsed Permanent Incisors. The purpose of study was to evaluate primary school teachers' knowledge regarding emergency management of avulsed permanent incisors. Total number of fifty hundred randomly chosen samples of primary school teachers has been selected from Casablanca, Morocco. The data had been collected by self administered questionnaires. According to this study, they had shows that school teachers' lack of knowledge regarding dental trauma and especially tooth avulsion. Therefore, the results indicated that educational programs are necessary for improvement in their level of knowledge.

Feng Li et al, (2012) conducted a study on Pediatric first aid knowledge and attitudes among staff in the preschools of Shanghai, China. A cross-sectional study was carried out among the staff members at selected preschools, by using a stratified random sampling method. According to this study, the author had mention that, although this study shows that the level of first aid knowledge among personnel who care for children was low; it also shows that they are interested in obtaining proper training. There is an urgent need to educate preschool staffs about first aid practices and the risk factors related to specific injuries. And also they had recommended that pediatric first aid training be made more widely available to the preschool staffs.

The survey has been carried out by Yurumez Y et al, (2007) among 118 participants to evaluation of the level of knowledge of first aid and basic life support of the educators working in preschools. Study was conducted in Afyonkarahisar province on preschool educators working in school district in May 2005. The written questionnaire was formed with 34 questions. As this study reveal that participants have stated 61.9% of them have previous first aid education. But according to this study, 84.7% of participants felt being inadequate in first aid. According to this result, the mean score of achievement for the participants in first aid and

basic life support is found to be 48.9. And also author has mentioned that although the educators of preschool in the study have inadequate knowledge on the first aid and basic life support providing, they are interested in getting proper training.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive cross sectional study was used to carry out the research. Study population was school teachers in Kurunegala Zonal Educational Division during the period of data collection. Total sample size was 422. A simple random sampling method was used to identify sample. The study was conducted at four randomly selected schools in the Kurunegala Zonal Educational Division. The teachers in the selected schools were been invited to participate in the study until 100 participants were recruited from each of the four schools. Teachers register was used to select the sample.

Inclusion criteria- School teachers who gave consent and can read, understand and write in Sinhala or English in selected schools

Exclusion criteria – Teachers, who can't read, understand and write in Sinhala or English.

A self administered questionnaire was developed and it was pre tested to determine acceptability, feasibility, comprehensibility and appropriateness using 15 School teachers. The questionnaire had been divided in to two sections. Section A was focused on demographic information of the participants, practices and about general information. Section B had been comprised of 19 simple choice questions on knowledge of the first aid on common school time incidents. Knowledge score was calculated for each correct response. Participants were instructed to select the best answer from a choice of four options. Five points was award for each correct answer. No credits were given for unanswered questions or an answer of "No idea".

Data was analyzed using SPSS Statistical package (16th version). Descriptive statistics including Mean, Median, Standard deviation and percentages present with relevant charts.

#### IV. RESULTS

##### C. Demographic data

Findings related to gender of the participants shows that most of them 332(86.5%) were female and 52(13.5%) of the subjects were male teachers. 37.5% of the samples were at the age group of 41-50 years and 30.2% were in 31-40 years. When considering their work experience 176 (45.8%) participants have more than 20 years work experience, 88(22.9%) have 11-20 years of work experience, 84(21.9%) have 6-10 year of experiences and only 36(9.4%) have less than 5 years work experience. The study finding revealed that out of 384 school teachers 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sample has not gain any first aid training. Only 24.0% of sample has previous first aid training. The demographic data shown in Table 1

**Table 1 Frequency distribution of demographic characteristics of study sample**

Characteristics	Frequency (n=384)	Percentage %
Gender		
Female	332	86.5
Male	52	13.5
Age		
21-30	38	9.9
31-40	116	30.2
41-50	144	37.5
51<	86	22.4
Educational status		
Up to A/L	28	7.3
Teachers training	152	39.6
Graduate	88	22.9
Post graduate	116	30.2
Work Experience		
<5 yrs	36	9.4
6-10 yrs	84	21.9
11-20 yrs	88	22.9
20< yrs	176	45.8
First Aid training		
Yes	92	24.0
No	292	76.0

##### D. common injuries needs to practice first aid knowledge

In order to determine the common injuries need to practice first aid knowledge at the school, one question inquired the teachers about the most

common injury that they have seen in school children.

Most of the teachers (83.9%) claimed that most common incidence that teachers had seen was injuries due to fainting. Frequency distribution of common injuries needs to practice first aid knowledge shown in table 2.

**Table 2 Frequency distribution of common injuries needs to practice first aid knowledge**

Common injuries in the schools	Frequency	Percentage %
Foreign body in eyes/ nose/ear	2	0.5
Cut injuries	8	2.1
Blunt injuries	46	12.0
Fainting	322	83.9
Other	6	1.6
Total	384	100.0

##### E. Level of knowledge on first aid

Mean score of the participant was  $68.56 \pm 12.211$  Sample was not normally distributed according to normality test ( $p= 0.000$ ). Therefore median can use to represent the sample. Median of total marks was 68.42 which is at the level of good knowledge.

Largest proportion of the sample 152 (39.6%) were included in good knowledge category. 106(27.6%) of teachers were in average knowledge level. Only 32 (8.3%) were in poor knowledge level. Frequency distribution of the knowledge level on first aid, shown in table 3.

**Table 3 Frequency distribution of the level of knowledge of the school teachers**

Knowledge level	Range	Frequency	Percentage
Poor knowledge	<50	32	8.3
Average knowledge	50-64	106	27.6
Good Knowledge	65-74	152	39.6
Very good Knowledge	74<	94	24.5

The chi-square test was used to assess associations between knowledge level and the different demographic characteristics at the level

of 95% confidence level. Association between Knowledge with Selected Demographic Variables shown in table 3

No statistically significant differences were observed between demographic variable gender and knowledge level ( $p = 0.548$ ). Also, there were no significant differences between educational status of the teachers and the knowledge level ( $p=0.548$ ). Conversely, a statistically significant difference was found in knowledge level and the demographic variable age groups ( $p= 0.002$ ). According to this, there is a significant association between Knowledge level and work experience ( $p=0.000$ ). Finally, Table 4.5 shows there is a statistical association between knowledge level and teachers with and without previous first aid training ( $p= 0.004$ ).

**Table 4 Association between Knowledge with Selected Demographic Variables**

Variable	Mean	SD	P-value	Df	X <sup>2</sup>
Age			0.003	1	0.002 S
21-30	62.05	10.322			
31-40	67.70	12.890			
41-50	70.47	11.991			
50<	69.40	11.489			
Gender			0.642	1	0.548 NS
Female					
Male					
Educational status			0.815	1	0.548 NS
Up to A/L					
T:training					
Graduate					
Post graduate					
Work experience			0.002	1	0.000 S
<5yrs	61.11	08.742			
6-10yrs	67.54	12.547			
11-20yrs	68.42	13.257			
20<yrs	70.63	11.523			
First Aid training			0.002	1	0.004 S
Yes	71.47	10.999			
No	67.56	12.419			

S = Significant, NS = Not Significant

## V. DISCUSSION

The present study used a questionnaire to assess the knowledge regarding first aid among school teachers in Kurunegala Zonal Educational division. No study had so far been conducted in the region with the same objective. Response rate was 96% as 400 questionnaires were distributed directly to the teachers and collected soon after completion. But Claudia Londero Pagliarin et al (2011) conducted a study to assess the knowledge of emergency management of tooth avulsion among 217 physical education teachers in Universidade Luterana do Brasil. They had mention that response rate of their study was low, only 47% because questionnaires were not distributed directly to the teachers; rather, they were handed to the schools' principals.

The study results shows that most of them 332(86.5%) were female and 52(13.5%) of the subjects were male teachers. 37.5% of the samples were in the age group of 41-50 years and 30.2% were in 31-40 years. On considering their work experience out of 384 teachers of the sample, 176 (45.8%) have more than 20 years work experience, 88(22.9%) have 11-20 years of work experience, 84(21.9%) have 6-10 year of experiences and only 36(9.4%) have less than 5 years work experience. The study finding revealed that out of 384 school teachers 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sample has not gain any first aid training. Only 24.0% of sample has previous first aid training.

K.Maloti Devi (2006) conducted a study to assess the effectiveness of planned teaching programme on knowledge regarding first aid among primary school teachers working in schools at B.K. Nagar, Bangalore. Findings revile that most of the subject in age group of 36 and above. In relation to gender, majority of subject (73.3%) were female and only 26.7% were male. The entire subject has not undergone any training on first aid according to this study.

According to the current study findings, although the overall knowledge of participants were adequate, first aid knowledge regarding emergency management was not adequate which is very much important. Overall knowledge score was ranged from 32 to 95. Mean score of the participant was  $68.59 \pm 12.211$  which is at the level of good knowledge. Largest proportion of the

sample 152 (39.6%) were included in good knowledge category. 106(27.6%) of teachers were in average knowledge level. Only 32 (8.3%) were in poor knowledge level according to overall knowledge of the participants. But the mean score for the first aid for the emergency management area was  $50.52 \pm 34.652$ , and the median was 50.00 which show that the subjects had inadequate knowledge on first aid management in emergency situations.

Findings were supported by Dr Wesam (2013) who conducted a study by collecting data from 314 school instructors to identify the prevalence of first aid knowledge among participants in Al-Madinah Al-Munawarah City, Saudi. The study showed that school instructors have low level of knowledge about using first aid in dealing with emergencies. (30.18%) of the participants had encountered with an emergency conditions, (29%) of them applied the first aid, (57.4%) asked for help and the rest did nothing

Study was also supported by Abernethy L, et al conducted a study to determine the knowledge on Immediate care of school sport injury among physical education teachers at schools in Ireland. This also showed poor knowledge of teachers how to treat children during emergencies

Table 4.4 shows that the maximum median score 100.0 was obtained for First Aid on burn management and maximum mean score  $81.94 \pm 18.916$  were obtained from dog and snake bite area of first aid. Mean score for first aid in wound care was  $64.06 \pm 19.014$ , for burn management  $78.39 \pm 34.109$ ; Hemorrhage can be life-threatening. Losing more than 20% of total blood volume leads to hemorrhagic shock. Generally, minor bleeding stops between 6 to 10 minutes, but treatment are necessary for persons with a deep injury. Mean score for the first aid knowledge on bleeding management was  $65.97 \pm 23.343$  and  $70.18 \pm 22.555$  for foreign body obstruction.

Mürüvvet Başer, et al conducted a study to evaluate First-aid Knowledge and Attitudes of a Sample of 312 Turkish Primary School Teachers. 70.5% gave accurate first aid for burns, in evaluating the data from the study, it is clear that the teachers give accurate first aid when faced with hemorrhage

Feng L et al (2012) conducted a study to assess a baseline level of first aid knowledge and overall attitudes regarding first aid among 1067 staff members in Shanghai preschools. The relative number of correct answers to specific questions ranged from 16.5% to 90.2%. In particular, subjects lacked knowledge regarding first aid for convulsive seizures (only 16.5% answered correctly), chemical injuries to the eye (23%), and inhaled poison (27.6%), and choking and coughing (30.1%). According to their criterion, only 3.7% of the surveyed teachers had an adequate knowledge of first aid.

In order to determine the common injuries need to practice first aid knowledge at the school, one question inquired the teachers about the most common injury that they have seen in school children. According to current study findings most of the teachers (83.9%) informed that most common incidence they had seen was fainting. Table 4.2 shows that the most common injury that teachers had to practice first aid was injuries due to fainting. 12.0% had commonly practice first aid for blunt injuries, 2.1% for cut injuries and only 0.5% had indicate the common injury as foreign bodies in eyes/ nose/ ear. According to these results, teachers should have more knowledge on emergency management. School teachers should train for manage the emergency situations.

When analyzing, the chi-square test was used to assess the associations between knowledge level and the different demographic characteristics at the level of 95% confidence level. No statistically significant differences were observed between demographic variable gender and knowledge level ( $p = 0.548$ ). Also, there were no significant differences between educational status of the teachers and the knowledge level ( $p=0.548$ ).

Findings were supported by B. Touré, et al conducted a study among 501 Primary School Teachers in Casablanca, Morocco. Findings showed that the difference was not significant between genders. No difference was detected regarding management of emergency between gender and level of education ( $p>0.05\%$ ).

In current study, out of 384 participants, only 24.0% had previous first aid training. The results of table 4.5.5 shows that most of the participants (82.5%) with previous first aid training were had

good or excellent knowledge levels analysis showed statistically significant association was found in knowledge level and the previous first aid training. ( $p=0.004$ ). Table 4.6 shows that a statistically significant difference was found in knowledge level and the demographic variable age groups ( $p= 0.002$ ). Results findings reveal that Knowledge level on First Aid gradually increases with age but there is some reduction in older age. Same as, there is a statistically significant association between Knowledge level and work experience ( $p=0.000$ ) When work experience increase, knowledge level also increase. Table 4.5.4 indicated that largest proportion that has good knowledge (44.3%) was with work experience more than 20years.

Feng L et al (2012) conducted a study to assess a baseline level of first aid knowledge regarding first aid in Shanghai preschool staff members. In this study, only 30.6% of the study participants had ever received first-aid training before and the findings show that very high score on the questionnaire obtained by the participants who has had pre-existing medical knowledge. This analysis showed scores were significantly higher among staff members who had received first aid training before or were already healthcare providers and younger employees. They had comment that younger employees scored higher, which may be due to younger employees having already been exposed to newer knowledge regarding first aid

In summary, these results confirm a general lack of knowledge of the first aid on emergency management among school teachers. First aid is essential for saving life and minimizing the consequences of injuries and illnesses until obtaining help from the medical practitioner or nurse. School teachers can administer first aid in these situations and save the lives of children. Considering these facts I would like to suggest an urgent need of first aid training for the school teachers especially regarding emergency management.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices regarding First Aid among school teachers. In the present study revealed that a largest proportion of participants (64.1% had

“good” or “very good” knowledge on First Aid. But First Aid knowledge on emergency management was not adequate which is very much important. Although knowledge level was not affected by the demographic variable gender or educational status, there is a significant association between age group / work experience. Especially knowledge level of the participants was depending on the previous first aid training they gained. Participants who had previous First Aid knowledge gained more marks in this study.

The findings of this study indicated the need of first aid training programme for school teachers especially regarding emergency management.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

First aid is essential for saving life and minimizing the consequences of injuries and illnesses until obtaining help from the medical practitioner or nurse. School teachers can administer first aid in these situations and save the lives of children as children spend a significant portion of their day in schools. According to this study it is important to design first aid training programme to improve knowledge level on first aid among school teachers.

Furthermore comparative study can be done by giving first aid training and comparing pre and post training knowledge of the teachers.

Practices regarding first aid can be assess by arranging practical sessions among school teachers.

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