

## Relationship between Musculoskeletal Pain and Stress Level of Secondary Teachers in Selected Schools of Matara District

MSW Dahanayake<sup>1#</sup>, C Pathmanathan<sup>1</sup> and KRM Chandrathilaka<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Allied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

<sup>#</sup>sanjulawijesekara@gmail.com

### Abstract

Musculoskeletal (MSK) pain is a common occupational health problem among school teachers. Stress level may contribute for MSK pain. The study aims were to determine the prevalence of MSK pain, stress level, determine the relationship between MSK pain and stress level among secondary school teachers. This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 222 secondary school teachers who were recruited using two-stage random sampling method from selected schools of Matara district. Teachers of both genders aged 25-60 years who had been teaching for one year or more were recruited. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data. The Nordic MSK questionnaire was used to assess MSK pain and Perceived Stress Scale was used to assess stress level. Descriptive statistics and Chi-square test were used to analyze data. Results were the majority had MSK pain in one or more body regions both during the last 12-month period (n=155, 69.8%) and last 7-day period (n=147, 66.2%). Lower back pain was the most prevalent region of MSK pain in last 12 months (39.2%) and last 7-days (33.8%). The majority had a moderate level of stress (n=185, 83.35%) following 9.5% school teachers had low level of stress and 7.2% had high level of stress. Increasing stress level was significantly associated with increase in MSK pain in one or more body region during both last 12 months ( $p=0.017<0.05$ ) and last 7 days ( $p=0.004<0.05$ ). MSK pain among secondary school teachers were high while lower back region was commonly affected. Increased stress level may cause increase in MSK pain. Comprehensive occupational health approaches to minimize MSK pain, to manage stress were highly recommended.

**Keywords:** *MSK pain, Stress level, School teachers*