



IDENTIFICATION OF MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AMONG SRI LANKAN POLICE OFFICERS IN SELECTED POLICE STATIONS OF COLOMBO DISTRICT

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There are some occupations which affect the employee's health directly or indirectly giving rise to various complications later in their lives. Police force always makes the top of the above list especially due to the high stress levels involved in the line of duty. Majority of officers tend to practice lot of unhealthy coping mechanisms to keep up with their jobs which ultimately lead them to develop non communicable diseases (NCDs). This study was conducted to determine the prevalence of modifiable risk factors for NCDs among Sri Lankan police officers in selected police stations of Colombo District. Randomly selected 420 police officers were included in this descriptive cross sectional study. Of them 393 were male officers. According to Body mass index (BMI) 46.9% was overweight and 5.24% were obese. Blood pressure measurements identified 15.5 % with pre hypertension and 18.8% within hypertensive range. Furthermore, 62 participants were diagnosed hypertensive patients. However, only 29 had taken their medication regularly. Out of 27 female officers, 21 had high waist circumference (≥ 80 cm). Out of 393 male officers, 58% had high waist circumference (≥ 90 cm). Prevalence of smoking was 29.4%. Regarding alcohol consumption, 93.2% had consumed alcohol within past 12 months, and 82.3% within past 30 days. Moreover, 7.3% admitted that they consume high amount of salt with the diet. In male population, 22% with healthy waist circumference and 45% with high waist circumference were identified with hypertension ($p=0.000<0.05$). In addition, 20% of normal BMI and 40% of high BMI had hypertension ($p=0.000<0.05$). In conclusion, this study found that there is high prevalence of overweight and obesity among Sri Lankan police officers. Similarly, high prevalence of smoking and alcohol consumption were also found. Out of all the other risk factors, high waist circumference was most prevalent. Findings indicated that majority of participants are at higher risk of developing NCDs in near future.

Keywords: *Prevalence, Blood pressure, Body Mass Index, Smoking, Alcohol*