



PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS REGARDING HPV VACCINE AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN SRI LANKA

De Silva S.H.¹, Rathnayake N.¹ and Silva S.N.²

¹Department of Nursing, International Institute of Health Sciences, Sri Lanka

²Department of Academic Affairs, International Institute of Health Sciences, Sri Lanka

shwethadesilva97@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a common sexually transmitted virus all over the world. But HPV is important mainly because it can cause cervical cancer in women. It is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women around the world including Sri Lanka. Many Sri Lankans are unaware of HPV and its prevention and the risk of spread of cervical cancers are increasing. It is important thereby to assess the knowledge and perception regarding the prevention vaccination of HPV. A descriptive study was done on 150 urban Sri Lankan individuals using convenience sampling through a self administered online questionnaire to assess knowledge, awareness and perceptions on HPV vaccination. Among the 107 eligible participants, when asked whether they were aware of HPV, 64 responded yes, but only 5 were actually aware. Nine of them had partial knowledge and 49 of them were completely unaware of the conditions of the virus. Ninety-one of the respondents had not been vaccinated because 73 of them were unaware of the vaccine, 4 of them were allergic, another 4 were fearing the side effects and 10 thought the vaccine was not available in the country. Out of the 15 who were vaccinated, only 5 received it in the ideal age; which is between 9-13 years of age. Only 68.2% had a positive perception on the action of HPV vaccine when they were asked of their general thoughts on this. Research findings demonstrate that the urban public are ignorant of the HPV vaccine and hold negative perceptions. Steps need to be taken to reduce this condition and prevent complications caused by this infection.

Keywords: Human Papillomavirus, Awareness, developing countries, urban public, perception, Sri Lanka