

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS RUBELLA VACCINATION AMONG WOMEN AGED 18 - 45 YEARS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT

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Rubella is considered a common cause of congenital disabilities worldwide and still rising in developing countries despite widespread vaccination campaigns. This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 412 females between 18 - 45 years in the most densely populated district of Colombo in Sri Lanka to assess the knowledge and attitudes regarding the rubella vaccine. The data were collected using the pre-tested online survey with the ERC approval of KIU (KIU/ERC/21/182) and analyzed using SPSS 25 software. The mean population age was 27 years, and the majority were between 22-25 years (33.7%). 27.9% of participants knew that Sri Lanka was now a rubella-free country. 84.7% of participants accepted the need for rubella vaccination before pregnancy. 70.9% of participants had thought that the rubella vaccination was safe, and 25.2% had assumed the vaccine had serious side effects. 71.4% of participants stated that the rubella vaccine should be given to society even after eliminating rubella disease from Sri Lanka. 46.6% of the population had good knowledge about rubella vaccination, and 31.0% had moderate knowledge. 17.9% of the population had a good attitude towards rubella vaccination, and 43.6% had a moderate attitude. Significant positive associations were found between knowledge and attitudes regarding vaccination ($p < 0.05$) and the willingness to vaccinate their children with the rubella vaccine ($p < 0.0001$) using chi-square test in descriptive statistics. Females between 18-45 years in the Colombo District had commendable knowledge and moderate attitudes about rubella vaccination, which is essential in maintaining rubella eradication in Sri Lanka. However, it is necessary to increase the awareness of rubella vaccination in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Females, Rubella, Sri Lanka, Vaccination