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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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MYOPIA AMONG ADVANCED LEVEL STUDENTS IN BATTICALOA EDUCATIONAL ZONE

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Background: Myopia is the most prevalent refractive condition of the eye. Its nature is defined anatomically by axial lengthening, depth of vitreous chamber and changes in the greater convexity of the cornea. Its classification is made on the basis of age of onset and the degree of refractive power.

Objectives: To assess the prevalence of refractive error and myopia among A/L students in selected schools in Batticaloa educational zone and to determine the factors associated with these conditions.

Methods: Descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted. Schools were selected by convenience sampling method. Students expressing willingness to participate in the study (n=260) were included. Self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection.

Results: Prevalence of refractive error was 13.5% (n=35) and higher in males (7.7% n=20) than females (5.8% n=15). Among them, 18 were myopic with equal male female distribution, 2.7% (n=7) were hyperopic and 3.8% (n=10) didn't know about their condition. Onset of myopia was little high in the age group of 16 - 18 years (61.1% n=11) than 6 – 15 years (38.9% n=7). Most of the students (96% n=24) were using spectacles while only one (4%) was using both spectacles and contact lens as the correction for refractive error. Nearly half of them were continuously using spectacles throughout the day. Around 52% (n=13) check their visual acuity in every 6 months and 20% (n=5) checked annually. Myopia was significantly associated with maintaining adequate light while reading books. There was negative association in myopia with quantity of time spending in outdoor. One third of the parents (father 33.5% and mother 30.8%) had refractive error diagnosed in their late adult age (20-40years). It also had significant association in their children's refractive error.

Conclusions: Myopia was the commonest refractive error. Incidence is higher in the age group of 16 – 18 years. Myopia is associated with maintaining adequate light while reading books and positive history of parents' refractive error.

Keywords: Refractive error, prevalence of Myopia, influencing factors