

Subjective Evaluation of Perceived Sources of Noise Annoyance and Associated Ailments of Teachers in Selected Sinhala Medium Primary Schools in the Attangalla Education Division

E.Devapaksha¹, L.D.Ileperuma¹, D.Siriwardhana¹

¹ *Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya*

Noise levels in school premises have increased at present than in past years. In most countries, there are policies and regulations regarding noise exposure in school premises. However, Sri Lanka lacks significant research findings regarding noise exposure and outcomes in the educational settings. 7 schools in the Attanagalla Educational Division were selected purposively and all teachers employed in those schools were included in the study. Data was collected via a self-administered questionnaire. A higher number of participants among the surveyed teachers were in the age range of 45-55 years. 85.83% of teachers considered noise to be annoying. The most presenting indoor noise source was students chatting in the class during lessons (33.03%). The most presenting outdoor noise source was traffic noise (9.17%). It showed that every participant who considered noise was annoying had reported at least one ailment. A significant amount of teachers had tiredness (74.31%) and vocal discomfort (67.69%). Less number of teachers complained of otologic symptoms (ear fullness-11.92%, Tinnitus-13.77%, perception of reduced hearing sensitivity-13.77%). Noise in the school environment is the main annoying factor for teachers during their working hours. There was a low number of hearing impaired teachers (3.14%) reported among the surveyed teachers. It is difficult to figure out whether the hearing loss occurred with age or noise. Teachers' awareness should be raised by implementing awareness programmes on noise and its hazards and noise control methods to school settings.