

Attitude of the Students towards the Unprecedented Challenges of COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Covid 19 disease is continuously and rapidly circulating, causing heavy damage on public health. While numerous research activities are being carried out throughout the world on the treatment and preventive aspects of this threatening infection. This study attempted to assess the changing attitude of the nursing students during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. An online survey was conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire using a non-probability snowball sampling technique. A total of 98 responses were received. The results of the study found varied attitude of the students in different areas of assessment the findings may help policymakers identify the target populations and create awareness in the needed areas to enhance a more favourable attitude of the students.

Keywords: Attitude, COVID 19, Social distancing and Quarantine.

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), viral diseases continue to emerge and represent a serious issue to public health. The pandemic Corona has deliberately occupied the entire world and symbolically conveying that the universe is ruled by the king 'crowned Corona'. With India now reporting thousands of COVID-19 Cases, there is huge concern about the consequence of the pandemic in India.

COVID 19 disease is continuously and rapidly circulating, causing heavy damage on public health. While numerous

research activities are being carried out throughout the world on the treatment and preventive aspects of this threatening infection, the psychosocial impact of this COVID 19 is also to be reviewed to maintain the mental health at an optimum level. The aim of this study is to evaluate the attitude changes among the students due this COVID-19 lockdown.

METHODS

This study was conducted in the Union Territory of Puducherry, India. Due to the adverse effects of COVID-19, there was lockdown and all the school and college students were given online instructional and teaching and many people from Wuhan travel to Henan before the Spring Festival. This inquiry surveyed all the college students of Puducherry. An electronic survey was sent to all the students groups to collect information on attitude towards COVID 19 lockdown. The students groups were selected based on the accessibility of the respondents (location, cooperation, and interest shown). The students of Govt as well as Private colleges of Puducherry, with majority of nursing students participated in the survey. Data were collected from the respondents using a self-administered questionnaire designed to assess attitude concerning COVID-19. All participants were guaranteed anonymity and they provided informed consent.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part assessed the students' general information and demographic

variables including age, gender, course, institution, occupation of father and mother, no. of siblings, monthly income of the parents and residence. The second part of the survey contained 06 items to assess the attitude of the students towards unprecedented challenges faced due to COVID -19 lockdown. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 ('Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree') with total scores ranging from 1 to 30.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics have been used in the study to analyse the findings. A total of 98 responses were recorded. All the participants were above 18 years of age and Indian origin. The study included only those participants who understood English and had access to the internet. Majority of the study participants were female as given in the fig.1

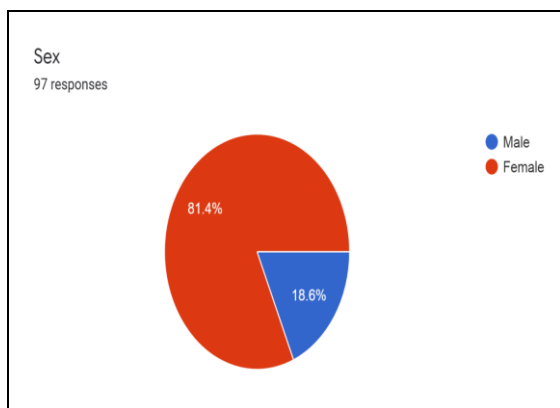


Figure1: Percentage of the Gender of the study participants

Part II: assessing the attitude of the students towards COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown.

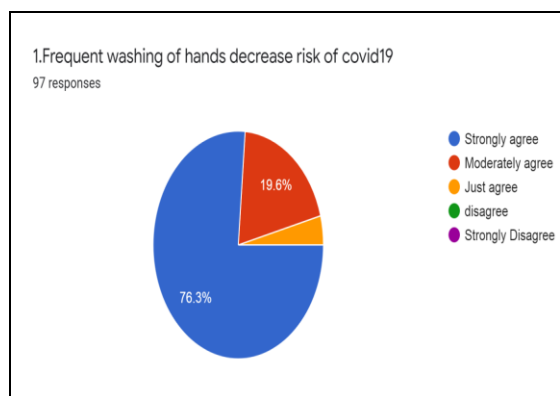


Fig.2: Attitude towards Handwashing

The attitude of the students towards COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown was assessed using the self reported questionnaire and the results are shown below.

As shown in fig.2, almost three fourth of the participants (76.3%) felt that frequent washing of hands decreases the risk of COVID 19 risk. The same fact is supported by Erasmus et al. 2010 that many years before the epidemic hand washing among health care workers (HCW) remained an area that needed improvement (CDC 2019, Erasmus et al. 2010)

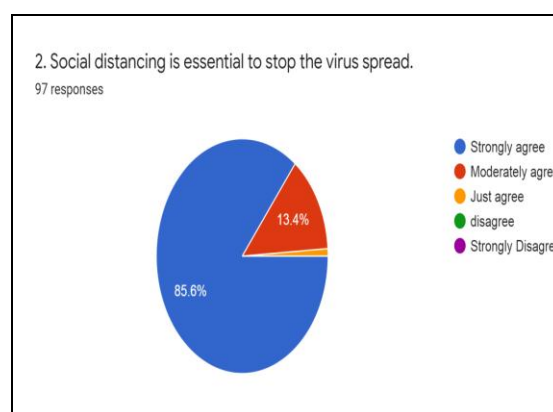


Figure3: Attitude towards Social distancing

Fig. 3 shows the attitude of the students towards the importance of social distancing. Most (85.6 %) of the participants thought social distancing is essential to stop the virus from spreading. This finding is further strengthened the study performed by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) and published in Nature Human Behaviour, shows that, in countries that have not yet reached the peak of active cases, lockdowns must remain in place for at least 60 days

The above fig 4 shows the attitude of students towards quarantining themselves if they had any symptoms of corona. Almost 83.5% agreed to undergo quarantine if they suffer from the symptoms of corona. This result is supported by a cross-sectional study of the adult population of Israel which was conducted by Moran Bodas and Kobi Peleg in the last week of February 2020 to assess public attitudes toward the COVID-19

outbreak. In particular, public compliance rates with self-quarantine were assessed, depending on whether lost wages would be compensated for. When compensation was assumed, the compliance rate was 94 percent. When compensation was removed, the compliance rate dropped to less than 57 percent. This study demonstrated that providing people with assurances about their livelihoods during self-quarantine is an important component of compliance with public health regulations.

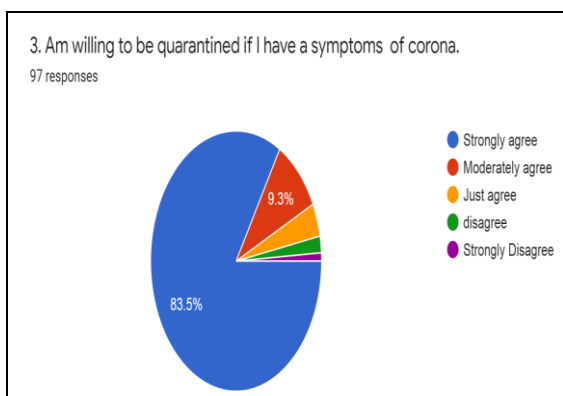


Figure4: Attitude towards self quarantine

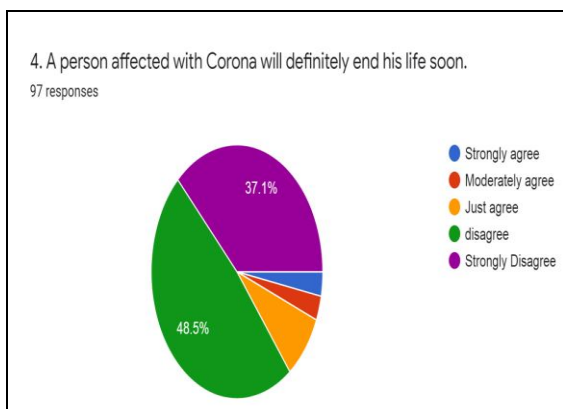


Figure 5: Attitude towards Prognosis of Corona infection

Fig.5 represents the percentage of the attitude of the students towards the prognosis of corona. Nearly half of the participants (48.5%) felt that corona affected patients will end their life soon. The findings are supported by the retrospective case study that was undertaken at two hospitals in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the COVID-9 outbreak. The study evaluated patients admitted with the diagnosis of coronavirus. The clinical course of non-survivors and survivors was

compared, and the risk factors for mortality were evaluated. The researchers noted that of the triphasic illness pattern, days 7-13 were the most critical. Patients who showed signs of improvement during this period did well, but patients who showed clinical signs of worsening had a poor prognosis.

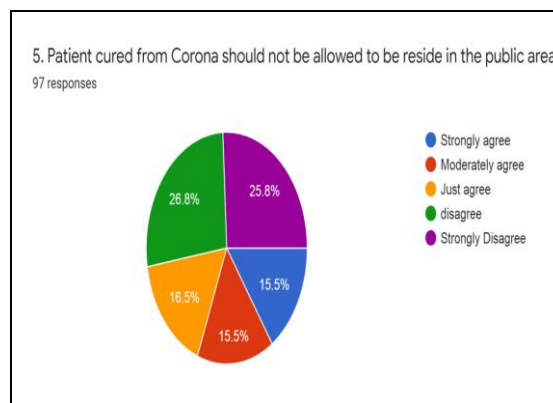


Figure 6: Attitude towards Social stigma

Varied attitude of the students was obtained when asked about their opinion of whether the corona patients, who were recovered from the infection, can be allowed to stay in their own community areas. Nearly half of the participants expressed their unwillingness (26.8% disagreed and 25.8% strongly disagreed) to the fact that the cured patients staying back in their community as shown in fig 6.

The findings are supported by the study conducted by Tiziana Ramaci et al on Social Stigma during COVID-19 and its Impact on HCWs Outcomes in Italy, using a self-administered multiple-choice questionnaire developed by See et al. about attitudes of discrimination, acceptance, and fear towards HCWs exposed to COVID-19. The findings suggest that stigma has a high impact on workers' outcomes. Stigma may influence worker compliance and can guide management communication strategies relating to pandemic risk for HCWs.

Fig.7 represents that Lesser students felt that it is not dangerous to travel to other country during this COVID pandemic. However, 85.6 % of them considered traveling within the country to be safe during the pandemic. The study is supported by the calibrated model developed in china,

on the basis of internationally reported cases and showed that, at the start of the travel ban from Wuhan on 23 January 2020, most Chinese cities had already received many infected travelers. Modeling results also indicate that sustained 90% travel restrictions to and from mainland China only modestly affect the epidemic trajectory unless combined with a 50% or higher reduction of transmission in the community.

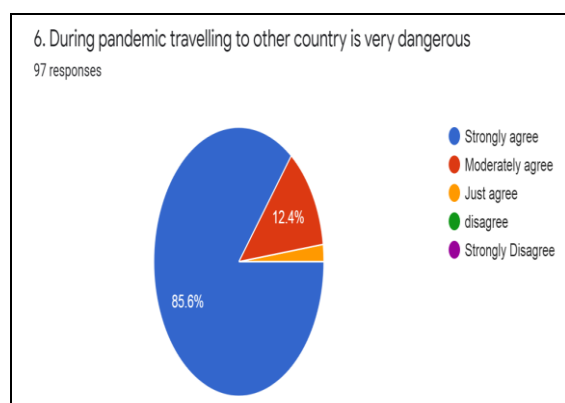


Figure.7: Attitude towards travel during pandemic

CONCLUSION

Despite the unprecedented national measures in combating the outbreak, the success or failure of these efforts is largely dependent on public behavior. Specifically, public adherence to preventive measures established by the government is of prime importance to prevent the spread of the disease. Adherence is likely to be influenced by the public's attitudes toward COVID-19. The findings may help policymakers identify the target populations, for COVID-19 prevention and health education. It is equally essential that attitudes towards policies on a number of issues-health, the economy, civil liberties-and towards

governments and institutions be investigated and documented

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