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A Cross- Sectional Study on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices Associated with COVID-19 Among Interns, An Institutional Survey in A Private Medical College.

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: The rapid and extensive spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has become a major cause of concern for the healthcare profession. An infection (COVID-19) without any specific cure makes the people more vulnerable to get affected due to insufficient knowledge and unhealthy practices. In this scenario, this study was aimed to assess the knowledge and perception among interns in a private medical college, Eluru. **OBJECTIVE:** The main objective of the study was to assess the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) of interns towards COVID-19 pandemic. **METHODOLOGY:** This was an institutional based, analytical cross-sectional study. Data was collected from interns (n=130) posted in COVID-19 wards using a convenient sampling method. A predesigned and pretested questionnaire was used for study. Interns were assessed regarding the necessary knowledge, positive attitude, and proactive practice in response to COVID-19 outbreak, indicating the efficacy and success of present public health campaigns. The data was analyzed using SPSS 26 trial version. **RESULTS:** Firstly, about knowledge regarding COVID-19, The study results showed that 97.7%, 72% and 77.7% were having good knowledge, attitude and practices about COVID-19 preventing measures. **CONCLUSION:** The interns showed overall an adequate knowledge, positive attitude, and proactive practice of COVID-19. Our study finding also highlights the specific aspects of knowledge and perception, where the partial or incorrect responses were noted and these areas should be addressed in future through webinars, educational campaigns to improve understanding and to correct the myths about COVID-19.

Key word: COVID 19, pandemics, interns, preventive measures

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INTRODUCTION

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), has spread rapidly around the world since emerging in Wuhan, China, in late 2019¹. Our current understanding of COVID-19 comes largely from disease surveillance and epidemiologic studies undertaken during the early

phases of the pandemic in China¹⁻³ and in the high-income countries of Europe⁴⁻⁵ and North America⁶⁻⁸.

The rapid and extensive spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has become a major cause of concern for the healthcare profession⁹. An infection (COVID-19) without any specific cure makes the people more

vulnerable to get affected due to insufficient knowledge and unhealthy practices¹⁰. The interns are directly involved in managing COVID-19 patients, they can serve as information providers. They can sensitize community on maintaining personal hygiene, symptoms of COVID-19 and how to prevent its spread. They must possess the basic knowledge about novel Coronavirus and be able to clear the myths pertaining to COVID19 in the community.

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the study was to assess the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) of interns towards COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

The study is Observational and Cross-sectional study and it was conducted among all the interns who are posted in covid 19 duties and the total interns who are posted in the duties are considered as sample that is 130. The study was conducted in Alluri Sitarama Raju Academy of Medical Sciences, which is a private medical in west Godavari district, Eluru, Andhra Pradesh for a period of two months (November to December 2020).

Data was collected from interns (n=130) posted in COVID-19 wards using a convenient sampling method. A predesigned and pretested questionnaire was used for study as a study tool.

The data was analysed with Microsoft Excel and Trail version of SPSS 20 statistical package. The data obtained was presented in proportions and percentages using bar charts and pie charts etc. The interns were assessed regarding the necessary knowledge, positive attitude and proactive practice in response to COVID-19 outbreak.

RESULTS

Among all the study subjects, 74.6% were male and 25.4% female. Further 73.1% were from urban background and 26.9% were from rural areas.

Fig.1 represents that among all the interns, most of them i.e., 97.7% were having good knowledge about COVID-19 preventing measures. Only 33.9% were having poor knowledge, when they were asked about disinfection of stethoscope.

Fig 1: Showing the knowledge of the study subjects towards COVID-19

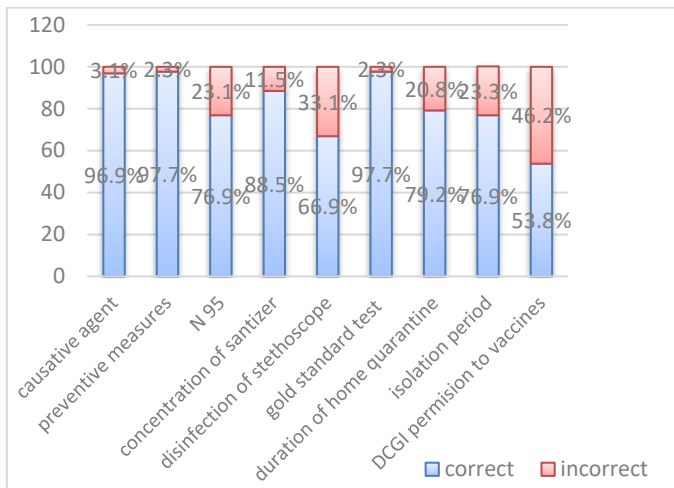
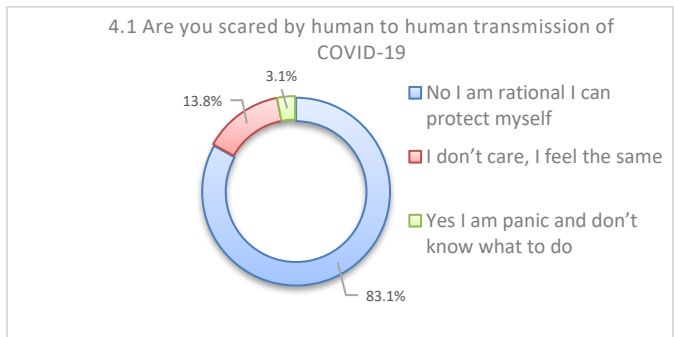
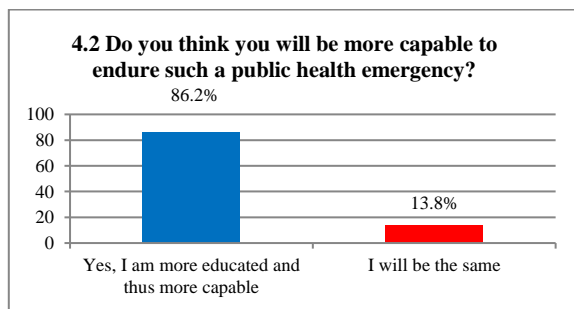


Fig 2.1; 2.2; Showing the positive attitude of the study subjects



Above pie diagram depicts that most of them were i.e., 83.1% were having positive attitude, when they were asked about if they were scared by human-to-human transmission of COVID-19.



The bar diagram depicts that most of the interns i.e., 86.2% were having positive attitude and they were more capable to endure such a public health emergency.

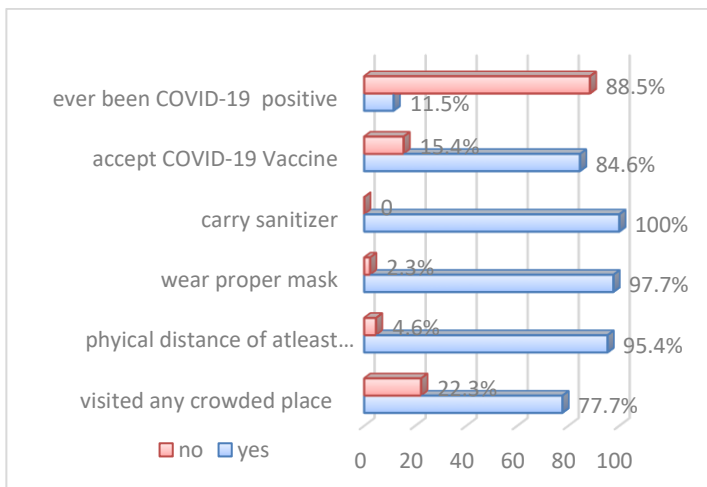
More than 95% of interns were having best practices towards COVID-19 preventive measures like carrying sanitizers, maintaining a physical distance of at least 2metres and wearing a proper mask to cover

their faces. Only 15.4% of interns were showing hesitancy to take vaccine in any form.

Table 1. showing overall positive attitude towards COVID-19.

Positive response from the interns	Percentage
1. Interns who felt rational and protect themselves from human-to-human transmission of COVID-19.	83.10%
2. Interns who return to do normal duties, hoping that the outbreak will stop quickly	82.30%
3. Never mind to have a non veg diet	49.20%
4. More capability to endure public health emergencies	86.20%
5. More impact on their education	86.20%
6. More chances of successful control of pandemic	67.70%
7. Agree to avoid crowded places	51.50%
8. Rare possibility to touch the face during COVID-19 duties	77.70%
Mean	72.90%

Fig 5: Showing the different practices shown by the study subjects



DISCUSSION

Firstly, about knowledge regarding COVID-19, The study results showed that 97.7% were having good knowledge about COVID-19 preventing measures. In a similar study conducted by Most. Zannatul Ferdous et al. shows that only 48.3% of respondents had more accurate knowledge about COVID-19¹¹. The difference was due to selective population i.e., the interns had more knowledge compared to general population. A study by Zhong BL, Luo W, Li HM et al., revealed that they were predominantly female and well-educated population, had an overall correct

rate of 90% on the knowledge questionnaire, indicating that most respondents were knowledgeable about COVID-19¹². A study by Muhammad Abrar Yousaf et.al., the overall veracious knowledge score observed was 88.9% in the general population of J&K related to COVID-19 and the score was significantly associated with gender, age, education, and occupation¹³.

Secondly, about attitude regarding COVID-19, our study results showed that majority of them i.e., more than 72% having positive attitude during COVID-19 pandemic. A study conducted by Hager E et.al., showed that most (67%) of the respondents had generally satisfactory attitudes. Compared to our study the difference might be due to the severe economic hardship faced by the citizens of both countries associated with workers who need to earn their daily wages and the poor government palliative plans for the citizens¹⁴. Our study results showed that 67.7% of the study subjects think there were more chances of successful control of pandemic. To a similar question a negative pessimistic attitude of 36.4% is observed in a study conducted by Kasemy ZA et.al.,.This could be attributed to the frequent news received from all over the world about the seriousness and rapid speed of the disease and the increase in the number of patients and deaths in many countries, especially Italy, Spain and USA¹⁵.

Third, about practices during COVID-19, most of our study subjects i.e., 77.7% answered they had been to a crowded place during the pandemic, but with precautionary measures like a physical distance of at least 2 metres of physical distance and always carried a sanitizer with them. Similar results like most participants reported taking precautions such as avoiding crowded places and practising proper hand hygiene observed in a study conducted by Azlan AA et.al.,¹⁶. A study by Yaling Peng et.al., showed that most of them were well informed with COVID-19 related knowledge, showed positive attitude and proactive practice during the outbreak¹⁷.

CONCLUSION

Current global pandemic situation demands substantial awareness about the clinical presentation, spread, preventive measures and management of COVID-19. The interns showed overall an adequate knowledge, positive attitude, and proactive practice of COVID-19. Our study finding also highlights the

specific aspects of knowledge and perception, where the partial or incorrect responses were noted and these areas should be addressed in future through webinars, educational campaigns to improve understanding and to correct the myths about COVID-19.

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