THE AWARENESS ON COVID-19 AMONG THE PEOPLE OF TAMILNADU

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Abstract

COVID-19 is a global health emergency which makes the world to a standstill with unparalleled and unforeseen impact in our lives, our economies, our societies and our livelihoods. Since the novel corona virus exploded in to a pandemic within a few month, the awareness of the public about this pandemic disease is the matter of the time.The present study was explored to find out the awareness on COVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu.An online survey was conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire. Non-probability snowball sampling technique was used. A total of 400responses across the state were received.The findings revealed that there is a significant difference in COVID-19 awareness of the people of Tamilnadu with respect to educational qualification, age, marital status and employability.

Keywords: Corona Virus,Pandemic,COVID-19awareness.

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak has brought a critical, complex and unprecedented situation to whole the mankind. It is a global health emergency which made the world to a standstill with unparalleled and unforeseen impact in our lives, our economies, our societies and our livelihoods.

The corona virus disease was first documented in a crowded city named Wuhan in Hubei a province of China in December 2019 and now it is spreading to the rest of the world in a matter of months. Since it spreads rapidly around the globe, the WHO has declared the COVID-19 a pandemic. As of now (May3rd, 2020) there were around 3.45 million global cases of COVID-19 and the death was about to 2 lakhs around the globe. In India around forty thousand cases are reported.2526 cases are reported in Tamilnadu as of now and it is increasing day by day.

The COVID-19 is caused by novel corona virus, which is transmitted through the respiratory droplets produced as a result of coughing or sneezing of a COVID-19 infected person. The

symptoms of the disease are fever, dry cough, and tiredness. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, sore throat or diarrhea. . Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing hospital treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart and lung problems, diabetes, or cancer, are at higher risk of developing serious illness. Wash your hands frequently, maintain social distance of one meter, follow good respiratory hygiene are some of the preventive measures we can take against this pandemic. The present study made an attempt to study the awareness on COVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu.

Need and Significance of the study

Since the novel corona virus exploded in to a pandemic within a few month, the impact on the mankind is in large scale.The outbreak of novel corona virus brought terrible human suffering andserious impact on the global health and economy. The best way of get out of such a panic situation is taking preventing and precautionary measures to control the spreading of this virus.

People should acquire enough knowledge about COVID-19 infectious disease and also they should be aware of the preventive measures to battle against this corona virus disease. WHO is providing expert guidance and answers to public questions, to help people manage the pandemicCOVID-19(WHO, 2020), but many myths are also prevalent in the general population regarding the prevention and management of the infection. In the time of widespread use of social media, these myths along with fake news around corona are also spreading rapidly. So giving right type of awareness to the public is the matter of the time. Getting the information aboutthe awareness of the public about such a pandemic disease thus will help the respective authorities to take necessary actions to manage this crucial situation now and also in future. In the present study, the investigatorsstudied the awareness on COVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu during the rapid rise period of the COVID-19 outbreak. The findings will help authorities to take various measures to manage the public during this outbreak and to initiate advanced awareness programmes for the future proceedings.

Objectives of the study

- To study the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu
- To study the significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu with respect to theirgender, agegroup, educationallevel, maritalstatus, employment status and type of residency

Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu with respect to a) gender b) marital status.
2. There is a significant difference in the awareness on COVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu with respect to a) age group b) educational level.
3. There is a significant difference in the awareness on COVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu with respect to a) employment status b) type of residency.

Methodology

Population of the study: The people of Tamilnadu, India who are above the age of 16 are the subject of the study.

Sample and Sampling Technique: The cross sectional survey was conducted between 18th April 2020 and 28th April 2020.Since the data were collected during the lockdown period in India, the investigators used online survey.Snow-ball sampling technique which is a type of non-probability sampling technique was used to collect the response from the participants. A sample of 400 people of Tamilnaducouldbe seen as representation for the overall population. A representative sample was notchosen as it had not been possible to obtain a large enough random sample due to timeand monetary constraints. For these reasons, purposive sampling, a form of nonprobabilitysampling was used.

*Data Collection Method:*The cross sectional online survey contain a questionnaire regarding awareness on COVID-19 was carried out.An online semi-structured questionnaire was developed by using Google forms.Participants voluntarily participated in the study and were thus considered exempt from written informed consent.The questionnaire contain two parts.In the first part the demographic variables such as gender,age group,marital status,educational

level,employment status and type of residencywere included.The second part contains 55 questions to measure the awareness of the people onCOVID-19. The questions were answered on a true/false basis with an additional "I don't know" option. A correct answer was assigned 1 point and an incorrect/ 'I don't know' answer was assigned 0 points. The total awareness score ranged from 0 to 55, with a higher score denoting a better awareness of COVID-19.

Statistical Analysis: Data entry and statistical analysis were performed with the Statistical Package for Social Science software program for Windows(version 21.0). Descriptive statistics, such as percentages, means, and standard deviations,were calculated. T-Test and ANOVA were used to analyze the relationship between the dependent (awareness), and independent variables (demographic characteristics of the participants).Statistical significance was considered at P value of less than .05 for all analyses.

Analysis of Data

A total of 400 respondents participated in the online survey and their mean score is 46.59 shows good awareness about COVID-19.

Testing Of Hypotheses

H_0- 1:There is no significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu with respect to a) gender b) marital status.

Table-1

Significant difference in the Awareness onCovid-19 among the People Of Tamilnadu with respect to a) Gender b) Marital status

Variable		N	Mean	SD	't'value	df	Sig	Result
Gender	Male	135	46.31	6.19	0.68	398	0.494	NS
	Female	265	46.74	5.71				
Marital status	Married	222	47.66	4.79	4.15	398	0.000*	S
	Unmarried	178	45.26	6.76				

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

The above table-1 indicates that the calculated "t" value (0.68) is less than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 significant level with respect to gender and thus there is no significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among people of Tamilnadu with respect to gender and hence it is failed to reject the H_0- 1(a).

The table further reveals that the calculated "t" value (4.15) is greater than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 significant level with respect to marital status and thus there is a significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 with respect to marital status and hence the formulated H_0 -1(b) is rejected. Themean score of married people (47.66) is greater than that of unmarried people (45.26) which indicates the married people have more awarenessonCOVID-19 than unmarried people.

H_0 - 2:There is no significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people of Tamilnadu with respect to a) age group b) educational level.

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Table-2

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Significant difference in the Awareness on COVID-19 among the People of Tamilnadu with respect to A) Age group B) Educational level

Variables	Source And Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Age group	Between	709.814	3	236.605			
	Within	13026.763	396	32.893	7.19	0.000*	S
	Total	13736.578	399				
Educational level	Between	446.441	2	223.221			
	Within	13290.136	397	33.476	6.67	0.001*	S
	Total	13736.578	399				

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

The above table-2 shows that the calculated 'F' values (7.19, 6.67) are greater than the table value (2.30)at 0.05 level with respect to age group and educational level respectively, hence the formulated H_0- 2 (a&b)is rejected and thus there is a significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among people of Tamilnadu with respect to age group and educational level.

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Table-2.1

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Scheffe Test-Significant difference in the Awareness onCOVID-19 with respect to age group

Age group				MD	Sig	Result
16-25	26-35	36-45	46 and more			
45.10	46.71	--	--	1.61	0.179	NS
45.10	--	48.69	--	3.59	0.000*	S
45.10	--	--	46.71	1.61	0.360	NS
--	46.71	48.69	--	1.98	0.118	NS
--	46.71	--	46.71	0.01	1.000	NS
--	--	48.69	46.71	1.98	0.214	NS

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

From the analysis of above table, it is revealed that 16-25 and 26-35 age groups, 16-25 and 46&above age groups, 26-35 and 46&above age groups, 36-45 and 46&above age groups are not significantly differ at 0.05 level. However,it is revealed that the age group 36-45 and 16-25 significantly differ at 0.05 level. The mean score of age group 36-45(48.69) is greater than that of the age group 16-25 (45.10) which indicates that the age group of 36-45 have more awarenesson COVID-19 than the age group 16-25.

Table- 2.2

Scheffe Test- Significant difference in the Awareness onCOVID-19 with respect to educational level

Educational Level			MD	Sig.	Result
School Education	Graduation	PG and more			
43.15	46.04	--	2.89	0.070	NS
43.15	--	47.23	4.08	0.003*	S
--	46.04	47.23	1.19	0.174	NS

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

From the analysis of above table 2.2, it is exposed that the people are having only school education and people are having post-graduation degree and more, significantly differ at 0.05 level. It is also revealed that the mean score of the people holdpost-graduation degree and above (47.23) is greater than that of the people having only school education (43.15) which indicates the people having post-graduation degree have more awarenesson COVID-19 than the people having only school education.

H_0 -3:There is no significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu with respect to a) Employment status b) Residency

Table-3

Significant difference in the Awareness onCOVID-19 among the people ofTamilnadu with respect to a) Employment status b) Residency

Variable	Source And Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
Employment Status	Between	424.170	3	141.390	4.21	0.00*	S
	Within	13312.408	396	33.617			
	Total	13736.577	399				
Residency	Between	40.566	2	20.283	0.59	0.556	NS
	Within	13696.012	397	34.499			
	Total	13736.577	399				

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

The above table-3shows that the calculated 'F' value (4.21) is greater than the table value (2.30) with respect to employment status, hence the formulated H_0 -3 (a) is rejected.Thus there is a significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 among people of Tamilnadu with respect to employment status. Whereas, in the case of type of residency, the calculated 'F' value (0.59) is lesser than the table value (2.30) at 0.05 level hence it is failed to reject the H_0 -3 (b) and there is no significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 with respect to type of residency.

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Table- 3.1

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Scheffe Test- significant difference in the awareness onCOVID-19 with respect to Employment status

Employment Status				MD	Sig	Result
Student	Employed	Unemployed	Self employed			
45.37	47.58	--	--	2.21	0.007*	S
45.37	--	47.00	--	1.63	0.622	NS
45.37	--	--	46.91	1.54	0.599	NS
--	47.58	47.00	--	0.58	0.973	NS
--	47.58	--	46.91	0.67	0.947	NS
--	--	47.00	46.91	0.09	1.000	NS

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

From the analysis of above table-3.1, it is learnt that the students and unemployed, students and self-employed, employed and self-employed,unemployed and self-employed do not significantly differ at 0.05 level. It is also learnt that only the students and employed people significantly differ at 0.05 level. The mean score of employed people (47.58) is greater than that of students(45.37) which indicates the employed people havemore awarenesson COVID-19 than students.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicates that the people of Tamilnadu havegood awareness on COVID-19.It also indicates that the married people have more awareness than unmarried people. The age group of 36-45 are more aware than 16-25 age group. The people who hold post graduate and abovehave more awareness, than the people having school education only. Also the employed people shows more awareness than students. Thus the overall survey indicates that the highly educated group of people especially those who are at their earlier adulthood age,married and having an employed status are more concernon the pandemic COVID-19.This may be due to

the people at this age are more responsible towards their family and society. Students do not have to hold the family responsibility and the people of 46+ age may not have much exposure to the media, especiallyto social media .This might be the reason for their less awareness on COVID-19.Thus the concerned authorities have to give special attention to the above said category of people who have comparatively less awareness on COVID-19 and take necessary steps to make them aware to conquer the pandemic COVID-19.

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