

OP 26

Knowledge, attitude and the practices towards preventive measures of COVID- 19 and associated factors among employees of selected companies in Colombo Municipality area, Sri Lanka

Weerasinghe T^{1*}, Goonewardene CSE²

¹*Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka,*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka.*

Background: Adhering to preventive measures is the efficient way of mitigating COVID 19. Due to COVID 19 pandemic, demand for Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) increased. FMCG employees directly contact with the public in their production and distribution process.

Objective: To describe knowledge, attitude and the practices towards preventive measures of COVID- 19 and associated factors among employees of selected companies in Colombo Municipality area, Sri Lanka.

Method: A web based descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in employees in selected companies in District 2A and 2B of the Colombo Municipality area. Ethical approval was obtained. By conducting a snowballing sampling method, 105 participants filled the online google form (in-house). Descriptive statistics was analyzed by using SPSS version 26.0 and Chi square test was used to determine the relationship between the variables. Statistical significance was taken as $p < 0.05$.

Results: Mean age of the participants was 37.1 ± 12.8 years and 24.8% were females. Percentage with good knowledge, positive attitudes and good practices among the participants were 49.5% (n=52), 52.4% (n=55) and 64.8% (n= 68) respectively, where good scores considered scores above mean score. The majority knew this was caused by a virus and transmission method. More than 95% identified fever and sore throat as common symptoms. More than 60% had believed facts and myths of COVID 19. The majority (>97%) knew wearing face masks and washing hands as preventive measures. Many agreed that there is stigma related to disease and health education is important. Those less than 35 years, being female and higher education were associated with higher knowledge score, positive attitude and better practices. However, observed differences were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Those with good knowledge had positive attitudes and better practices ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: Although, the majority of the participants showed poor knowledge, their attitude and practices were adequate. Educating public to mitigate stigma was highlighted.