



A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE OF SENIOR INHABITANTS DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THRISSUR DISTRICT

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Abstract: The first coronavirus disease 2019 reported in Kerala on 30th January 2020. As the number of positive cases of corona virus disease increases to nearly 500 per day the central government declared 'Janata curfew' on 22 March 2020. From 24th march 2020 onwards 21 days lockdown declared which further extended to 4th May 2020. The lockdown restricted the people from going out from their places. World Health Organization (WHO) declared this disease as pandemic and they officially declared that people belong to the age group of 60 & above and kids below the age of 10 years are more vulnerable to the diseases. According to various reports, the senior inhabitants are more risky people if they are suffered with lungs diseases, diabetics etc. their psychological changes that come with ageing is a threat. WHO, Government of India and Government of Kerala, all insist the elderly to stay back home. The awareness campaign on social distancing, sanitizer usages, mask etc. are always from government side. The death rate is increasing day by day due to corona virus. Official reports says that those who are elderly or having any other health issues are vulnerable and the percentage of death rate is higher in this category. Ultimately, up to a great extent, this leads to apprehensions, illness and mental disorders among senior inhabitants. In this situation it is felt necessary to undertake a study on the attitude and awareness of senior inhabitants during COVID 19 pandemic. The present paper tries to get an idea on these and some remedial measures to overcome this issue.

Keywords: COVID 19, Senior inhabitants, awareness, attitude, vulnerable.

I. INRODUCTION

The first coronavirus disease 2019 reported in Kerala on 30th January 2020. As the number of positive cases of corona virus disease increases to nearly 500 per day the central government declared 'Janata curfew' on 22 March 2020. From 24th march 2020 onwards 21 days lockdown declared which further extended to 4th May 2020. The lockdown restricted the people from going out from their places. All services except essential services stopped. All educational institutions, industries sector and hospitality sector were suspended. Actually, there was no proper medication was available for this disease. World Health Organization (WHO) declared this disease as pandemic and they officially declared that people belong to the age group of 60 & above and kids below the age of 10 years are more vulnerable to the diseases. From May 4, 2020 onwards several relaxations allowed as different stages of unlock process. But the senior inhabitants are insisted to stay back home.

According to various reports, the senior inhabitants are more risky people if they are suffered with lungs diseases, diabetics etc. their psychological changes that come with ageing is a threat. WHO, Government of India and Government of Kerala, all insist the elderly to stay back home. The awareness campaign on social distancing, sanitizer usages, mask etc. are always from government side. The death rate is increasing day by day due to corona virus. Official reports says that those who are elderly or having any other health issues are vulnerable and the percentage of death rate is higher in this category. Ultimately, up to a great

extent, this leads to apprehensions, illness and mental disorders among senior inhabitants. In this situation it is felt necessary to undertake a study on the awareness and attitude of senior inhabitants during COVID 19 pandemic. The present paper tries to get an idea on these and some remedial measures to overcome this issue.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chee (2020) conducted a study among elderly people in aged care homes. The study conducted in a qualitative approach. The study conducted with a semi structured interview schedule and the out come of the study was the elderly are almost optimists and they think the time also pass away and they can live as earlier.

Morrow N (2020) in her article discussed the various issues related to age during COVID-19 pandemic. She suggests that a complete package for the protection like financial, health, protection of race etc. of aged is essential for elderly.

Mertans G & et.al. (2020) conducted an online survey to study the fear of people on COVID 19. They used a newly developed fear of coronavirus questionnaire and assessed predictors vulnerability. Using regression analysis, they came to a conclusion that the respondents were more anxious on their health as well as the health of their loved ones.

Holmes E A & et.al. (2020) discussed the need for mental health of vulnerable people. They argued that the government and funding agencies should focus more on this area. They provide various strategies which can be adopt by various countries.

Oliver N & et.al (2020) conducted an online survey among Spanish people. They found that elderly people were very much interested to stay back home. The authors found out the perception of respondents. They use multivariate regression and linear regression model for analysis.

III.OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To know the awareness and attitude of senior inhabitants during COVID-19 pandemic.

IV.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Population and sample

The population of the study is senior inhabitants in Thrissur district. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) selected Thrissur, Eranakulam and Palakkd for serological survey as the highest COVID-19 cases are reported in these three districts in Kerala. As per Government records, the highest cases are reported in Thrissur. So, the sample is selected from the senior habitants of Thrissur district. A sample of 100 senior inhabitants were selected.

4.2. Data Collection.

The data collection was done through online mode as well as telephonic interview. The data were analysed with the help of SPSS.

4.3. Conceptual Framework

The socio demographic factors have significant influence on the awareness and attitude of senior inhabitants.

Dependent Variables: Attitude and Awareness.

Independent variable: Socio-demographic profile of the respondents. For the present paper, gender is selected for analysis.

Hypothesis

1.H0: There exists no significant difference between gender and awareness about COVID-19.

2.Ho: There exists no significant difference between gender and attitude.

V. RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1. Profile of the Respondents

Out of the 100 respondents 64 were female and 36 were male.

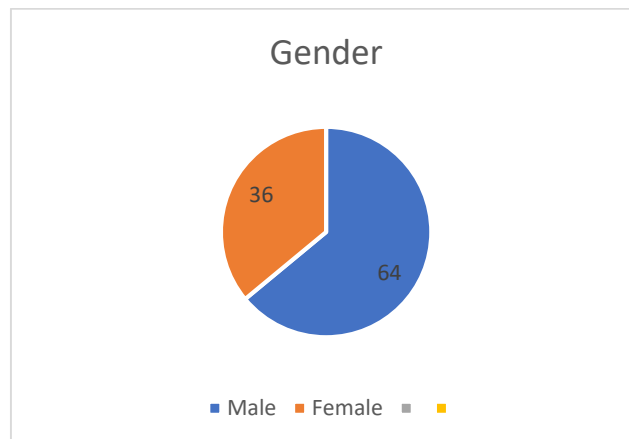


Figure 1 Gender of the respondents

5.2. Educational Qualifications

Out of 100 respondents, 22 having elementary education, 34 having high school education, 28 having degrees 16 having Post Graduation.

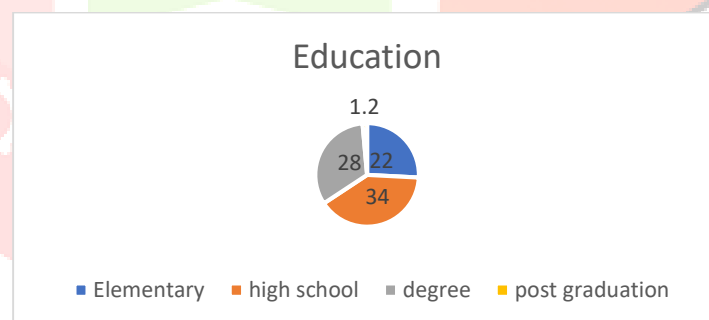


Figure 2 Education

5.3 Awareness of respondents

Table 1 Awareness of Respondents

Statements	Very much Aware	Aware	Neutral	Somewhat aware	Not at all Aware
COVID 19 is a virus infection	88	6	6	0	0
The main clinical symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, sore throats, shortness of breath and fatigue.	30	70	0	0	0
Sometimes, the common symptoms of COVID-19 are not visible to corona patients.	66	34	0	0	0
Washing hands with soap and water, using hand sanitizers, wearing of mask and maintaining social distancing prevent the spread of corona virus.	44	56	0	0	0
Isolation of infected people help to prevent the spread of coronavirus	42	42	16	0	0
Those who have primary contact with the covid-19 infected patients must go for self-quarantine.	44	48	0	8	0
In order to safeguard ourselves, we must keep away from crowded places.	44	48	0	0	8
Senior inhabitants with underlying chronic diseases are vulnerable to COVID-19.	60	40	0	0	0
Government will levy penalty for the senior inhabitants if they visit public places.	60	32	8	0	0
Vaccines are available in the market but they are not recommended for senior inhabitants.	70	30	0	0	0

Source: Primary data collection.

In order to know the awareness level of Senior inhabitants on COVID-19 pandemic 10 statements related to the pandemic were asked. They were asked to express their awareness level in a five-point scale as very much aware, aware, neutral, somewhat aware and not at all aware. Table 1 shows the response of senior inhabitants on awareness. From the table, it is clear that out of the 100 respondents, majority are very much aware about this pandemic.

In order to test any significant difference in the awareness level among male and female, independent t-test was conducted. The hypothesis formulated for this analysis is as follows: *H₀: There exists no significant difference between gender and awareness about COVID-19.*

The result of the analysis is as follows: -

Table 2. Awareness and Gender

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Awareness total	male	64	44.7812	4.22941	.52868
	Female	36	44.7778	3.09018	.51503
F= 4.617		P=.034			

From, the table 2, it is clear that there is significant difference among male and female about the awareness on COVID-19. F value is significant at 5 percent level. So, we reject the null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis as *There exists significant difference between gender and awareness about COVID-19.*

5.4 Attitude of respondents

Table 3 Attitude of Respondents

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Disagree
COVID-19 can be controlled successfully	72	6	8	6	8
Kerala can win the battle against the COVID-19 virus	44	22	8	6	20
The government restrictions help to safeguard my life	72	8	0	20	0
Precautionary measures help a lot to prevent the spread of corona virus	58	42	0	0	0
COVID-19 disease badly affects my day-to-day activities and my mental health.	44	36	20	0	0
I think, I probably get the illness	42	38	0	20	0
I am worried about the health of my family members	44	36	20	0	0
If infected, I am ready for isolation	34	66	0	0	0
Patients must disclose their exposure	50	50	0	0	0
If COVID-19 vaccines are available to senior habitants, I am ready to get vaccinated.	54	46	0	0	0

Source: Primary data collection.

In order to know the attitude of Senior inhabitants on COVID-19 pandemic 10 statements related to the pandemic were asked. They were asked to express their awareness level in a five-point scale as strongly agree, agree, neutral, somewhat agree and not at all agree. Table 3 shows the attitude of senior inhabitants. From the table, it is clear that out of the 100 respondents, majority have positive attitude on this pandemic.

In order to test any significant difference in the attitude among male and female, independent t-test was conducted. The hypothesis formulated for this analysis is as follows: *H₀: There exists no significant difference between gender and attitude.*

The result of the analysis is as follows: -

Table 4. Gender and attitude

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attitude total	male	64	42.3125	7.19540	.89943
	Female	36	43.3889	.83761	.13960
F=179.823		P=.000			

From, the table 4, it is clear that there is significant difference in attitude among male and female on COVID-19. F value is significant at 1 percent level. So, we reject the null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis as *There exists significant difference between gender and attitude.*

VI. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic is widely spreading across the world. Though many countries come out with vaccines, the vaccine which is developed by India seems too good and having less side effect. The battle of Kerala Government against corona virus is remarkable. The senior inhabitants, who are seemed to be more vulnerable to this disease, are more aware about this diseases and they are taking much care and precautions. From the analysis, it is clear that majority of the senior inhabitants have positive attitude and they think that *we shall overcome one day.*

VII. REFERENCES

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