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Research Article

### A CLINICAL STUDY OF COVID-19 IN PAKISTAN: PERSPECTIVE OF GENERAL PEOPLE

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**Abstract:**

**Background:** corona virus was reported on 17 November, 2019, in China, when 55-year-old man contracted COVID-19. It takes couple of weeks, when the doctors of china noted further cases in Wuhan. The corona virus surfaced in seafood and poultry market of Wuhan, quickly spread to at least 177 countries. So far 2.5 million have contracted virus, out of which ten thousand people has died around the globe. In Pakistan 9,749 cases are reported in which 209 people died. In Pakistan first two cases of coronavirus was reported on 26 February 2020.(1) This number may also increase with passage of time and after relaxation in lockdown in all the major cities of Pakistan. As a developing country and facing other major issues in the form of economy, Pakistan may not control the outbreak of COVID-19 at larger level. However, awareness in general people regarding symptoms, control and precautions may help Pakistan to control this pandemic.

**Objective:** To find out level of awareness in people of Pakistan about COVID 19, also about its symptoms and precautionary measures.

**Methods:** Survey was carried out in Lahore, Pakistan. In which data from 162 respondents were selected through systematic random sampling technique. Data collected through questionnaire. Due to prevailing circumstances in the country after Coronavirus Pandemic, data was collected from the respondents through an online survey. Approval from ethical committee of Evergreen Hospital, Lahore was taken. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS.

**Results:** Out of total 162, 63 were females and 98 were males. Mean age was found to be 48.5 with minimum value of 16 and maximum of 6. Source of information regarding COVID-19 for 97.5% was internet (WHO/ CDC and other related sites) website and social media, 99.4% had knowledge that corona virus is caused by virus, 97% had knowledge that symptom of COVID-19 are similar to flu, cough, fever. 96.9% had knowledge that disease transmits by shaking hand with infected person or using things that they have used before, 56.2% had knowledge that incubation period for virus is 7 days, 80.9% had knowledge about preventive measurements.

**Conclusion:** Level of awareness regarding COVID-19, its symptoms and precautionary measures is present in people of Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Coronavirus. COVID-19, Developing countries, health, Pakistan, Pandemic

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Corona virus is viral disease that affected most parts of world as it emerged and spread rapidly in a shorter duration. Not only had it affected individuals with causing symptoms, it also affected the world's economy due to ongoing lockdowns in many countries. Corona virus was reported on 17 November, 2019, in China, when a 55-year-old man contracted COVID-19 virus. It took couple of weeks, when the doctors of china noted further cases in Wuhan. The corona virus surfaced in seafood and poultry market of Wuhan, quickly spread to at least 177 countries. So far 2.5 million have contracted virus, out of which ten thousand people has died around the globe. In Pakistan 9,749 cases are reported in which 209 people died. In Pakistan first two cases of coronavirus was reported on 26 February 2020.(1) This number may also increase with passage of time and after relaxation in lockdown in all the major cities of Pakistan.

COVID-19 cause of corona virus can enter into human body through naos pharyngeal route, in some cases may be through eyes affects respiratory system in most cases and causing symptoms. However person can be asymptomatic in some cases. Sign and symptoms for corona virus may appear within 14 days after one has contracted virus.(2) Symptoms include high fever, body ache, sore throat and cough sometimes accompanied by breathlessness and other infections. Symptoms may vary from person ranging from mild to severe, sometimes even no symptom. In Middle Eastern countries it causes severe acute respiratory syndrome in some patients while show mild symptoms or no symptoms.(3) In china corona virus causes viral pneumonia in some patients leading to severe sickness or even death while few showed mild or no symptoms. Development of symptoms is found to be associated with genetic makeup and life style e.g. smokers get severe symptoms as compared to nonsmokers.(4)

This Disease can spread or transmit in many ways including coming in direct contact with infected person or in some cases indirect exposure to virus can cause disease. Direct method includes droplet from coughing or sneezing of infected person and shaking hands, touching objects that infected person has used. Indirect method transmission can occur if infected person coughs, sneeze or talk droplet from their mouth remain in air for some time and healthy person can inhale them, not only these droplets remain in air but also they sit on surfaces for a time duration around ranging from hours to days. If some ones touch those surfaces followed by touching their nose, mouth, eyes and ear, can become infected.(5)

Laboratory findings show high levels of C reactive protein and low oxygen saturation levels. Level of C reactive protein can be used to categorize disease into mild, moderate or severe. Altered level of lymphocytes can be seen in lab diagnostic testing, high levels of lymphocytes are found to be directly proportional to disease severity. However specific pathological testing is done for diagnosis COVID 19 by taking swab culture from nose or throat.(6) Preventive measures include washing hands frequently with soap, keeping distance of 6 feet's from others; avoid social gatherings, wearing masks and gloves and proper use of personal protective equipment by doctors and health care workers. Disinfecting surroundings around and use of sanitizer can reduce risk of infection spread.(7) Treatment is symptomatic and mainly involves supplements to aid and facilitate body externally to boost its immunity.(8)

As a developing country and facing other major issues in the form of economy, Pakistan may not control the outbreak of COVID-19 at larger level. However awareness in general people regarding symptoms, control and precautions may help Pakistan to control this pandemic. Hence, study aimed level of awareness in people of Pakistan about COVID 19, also about its symptoms and precautionary measures.

**MATERIAL/SUBJECTS/PATIENTS AND METHODS:**

Survey was carried out in Lahore, Pakistan. In which data from 162 respondents were selected through systematic random sampling technique. Data collected through questionnaire. Due to prevailing circumstances in the country after Corona virus Pandemic, data was collected from the respondents through an online survey. Approval from ethical committee of Evergreen Hospital, Lahore was taken. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS.

**RESULTS:**

Out of total 162, 63 were females and 98 were males. Mean age was found to be 48.5 with minimum value of 16 and maximum of 6. Source of information regarding COVID-19 for 97.5% was internet (WHO/ CDC and other related sites) website and social media, 99.4% had knowledge that corona virus is caused by virus, 97% had knowledge that symptom of COVID-19 are similar to flu, cough, fever. 96.9% had knowledge that disease transmits by shaking hand with infected person or using things that they have used before, 56.2% had knowledge that incubation period for virus is 7 days, 80.9% had knowledge about preventive measurements.

Table 1

**Source of information about COVID 19**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Electronic & social media;WHO/CDC and other related sites	158	97.5	97.5	
Internet	4	2.5	2.5	
Total	162	100.0	100.0	

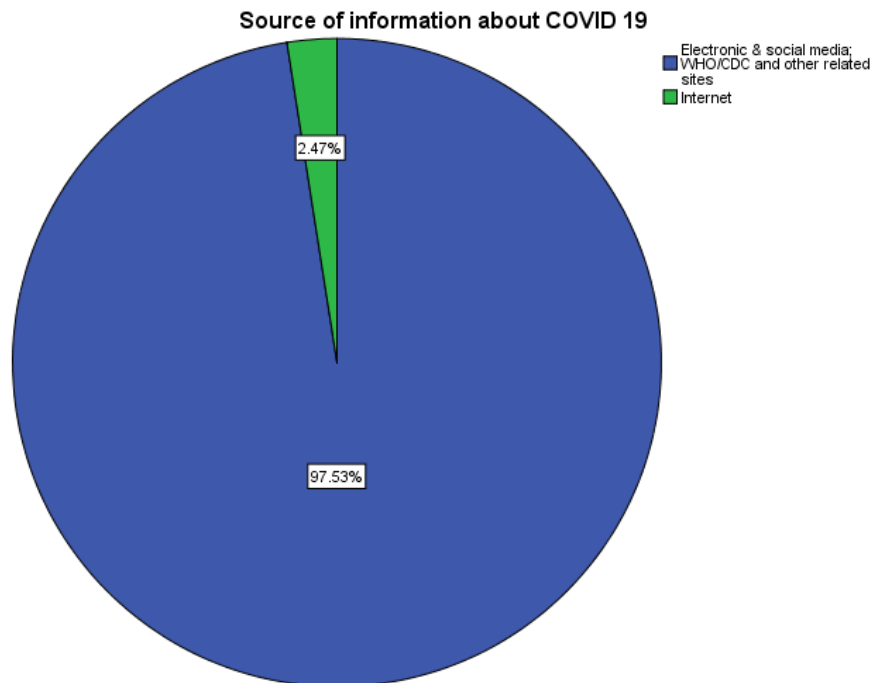
**Figure 1 Source of information about COVID 19**

Table 2 Knowledge about COVID-19

variables	Yes	no
Knowledge about treatment	42%	58%
Knowledge about Vaccine	4.3%	95.7%
Knowledge about symptoms of corona virus	97%	3%
Fear of death associated with corona virus	27.2%	73.8%
Knowledge about precautionary measures	80.9%	19.1%
Knowledge about incubation of virus in 7 days	56.2%	64.8%
Knowledge about cause of corona virus is virus	99.4%	0.7%
Knowledge about transmission of disease	96.9%	4.1%

**DISCUSSION:**

“Is Pakistan prepared for the COVID-19 epidemic? A questionnaire-based survey” conducted in 2020 by Samea, Mahjabeen, Khizra *et al.*, results of study showed that in response to a question about the name of the virus 95.36% responders were aware, 82.45% of responders responded that they were aware of its origin, 8.61% of responders were not sure regarding the origin of COVID-19. Nurses

had the highest uncertainty rate about the origin of COVID-19 which was found to be 50%. 91.3% of responders responded they had knowledge about sign and symptoms of COVID 19. Responders responded that 10.26% having flu fever and cough means that you are infected.(9)

“Knowledge, attitude, practice and perceived barriers among healthcare professionals regarding

COVID-19: A Cross-sectional survey from Pakistan” conducted in 2020 by Saqlain, Munir and Rehman et al. conducted study which showed 93.2 % health care workers had knowledge about corona virus, 40.1% had poor knowledge about disease transmission, It was considered major barrier in disease prevention.(10)

Study conducted by Wolf, Serper and Opsasnic Et al. on topic “Awareness, attitudes, and actions related to COVID-19 among adults with chronic conditions at the onset of the US outbreak: a cross-sectional survey” stated that 24.6% were found worried about getting virus and 23.8% had no clear knowledge about symptoms, 24.6% believed they could not get virus, 21.9% believed they had little to no effect on their daily life.(11)

“Dentists' awareness, perception, and attitude regarding COVID-19 and infection control: cross-sectional study among Jordanian dentists” conducted in 2020 by Khader, Nsour and Al-Batayneh et al. showed Study of participants responded that 74.4% believed it was necessary to guide patients about social; distancing and most of them were aware about sign and symptoms and preventive measures about corona virus (12). These results are in accordance with results of our study which states 97% had knowledge that symptom of COVID-19 are similar to flu, cough, fever. 96.9% had knowledge that disease transmits by shaking hand with infected person or using things that they have used before, 56.2% had knowledge that incubation period for virus is 7 days, 80.9% had knowledge about preventive measurements.

### CONCLUSION:

Level of awareness regarding COVID-19, its symptoms and precautionary measures is present in people of Pakistan.

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