October 01, 2021.

Editor

PLOS ONE

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find our enclosed manuscript entitled “Knowledge, attitude and practices towards coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Southeast and South Asia: a mixed study design approach”, which we expect you will appraise for the publication in your journal ‘PLOS ONE’.

Our study makes effort to meet your journal’s focus on public and emergency health. In this study, we aimed to assess the person’s knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) towards the COVID-19 epidemic in Southeast and South Asia applying the mixed study design (cross-sectional and systematic review). In the cross-sectional study, respondents’ socio-demographic and KAP-related information was collected through an online population-based survey from the Malaysian population. In the systematic review, the database PubMed, Web of Science and Google Scholar search engine were searched and related published articles from South and Southeast Asia were included. Frequency distribution, Chi-square association test and binary logistic regression were fitted using cross-sectional data whereas random effect model and study bias were performed in meta-analysis. As of 743 respondents, the prevalence of good knowledge, positive attitude and frequent practice towards COVID-19 epidemic were found 52.6%, 51.8% and 57.1%, respectively. The KAP prevalence were ranged from 26.53 (Thailand) to 95.4% (Nepal); 59.3 (Turkey) to 92.5% (Pakistan); and 50.2 (Turkey) to 97% (Afghanistan), respectively, obtained by 18 studies included in the meta-analysis. The prevalence of KAP was higher in South Asia compared to Southeast Asia, obtained by subgroup analysis. Some studies reported mean level instead of the proportion of the KAP where the score varied from 8.15-13.14; 2.33-33.0; and 1.97-31.03, respectively. The study reveals that having more knowledge and attitude were encourage more likely to practice towards COVID-19. Our mixed study suggests age, gender, education, place of residence and occupation as the most frequent significant risk factors of knowledge, attitude and practice. The study also informs how other countries in Southeast and South Asia enriches their knowledge during the pandemic which may help health professionals and policymakers to develop targeted interventions and effective practices.

This manuscript has not been published and is not being considered for publication elsewhere, in whole or in part, in any language. We believe our findings will help researchers, policymakers, and academicians for long-term planning on the issue in the developing countries. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript. There is no conflict of interest among the co-authors.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of all authors,

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Files attached