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Awareness of COVID-19 disease among Pakistani residents during a rapid outbreak: A rapid online survey

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Background: Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a lethal illness that affects most countries around the world. For the design of effective control strategies during a public health crisis, public awareness, including knowledge of signs and symptoms, mode of transmission, and hygiene of COVID-19, is critical. The current research aims to examine the viewpoint of the public on COVID-19, including their perception, attitude and practices.

Methods: During the rapid outbreak of COVID-19 in Pakistan, a rapid online survey comprising 22 items was administered. Questions centered on COVID-19 prevention, transmission, clinical characteristics, and control. Besides, the participants' behaviors and activities were discussed. During data processing, descriptive statistics, Mann- Whitney tests, Kruskal- Wallis tests, and regression analysis were performed.

Results: This study included a total of 1257 respondents. Most of the respondents had good knowledge of COVID-19 (good=64.8%, average=30.5%, poor=4.7 percent). It was observed that gender, marital status, education and residence significantly associate with the information score. The overwhelming majority of survey respondents (77.0 percent) thought that COVID-19 in Pakistan would be successfully regulated. Among the participants, the activities of wearing a mask (85.8%) and handwashing (88.1%) were popular.

Conclusion: The participants demonstrated good awareness and rational attitudes and practices towards most aspects of the COVID-19 outbreak. By mass-level schooling, changes in some areas could be made.

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