

Study of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices on Covid-19 among Students at Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Kotelawala Defence University

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The health crisis due to COVID-19 has escalated all over the world since the end of 2019. The people are advised to adhere to preventive measures such as social distancing, wearing masks and regular washing of hands. Therefore, this study aimed to evaluate knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) on COVID-19 among undergraduates to improve their awareness of averting COVID-19. A cross-sectional study was conducted among undergraduates of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (FAHS), Kotelawala Defence University. Students from all the intakes of FAHS (n=576) were included. An online validated self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data after the ethical approval. The mean percentages of KAP and the scores were calculated. The score scale of Berihun et al., 2021 was used to assess KAP. The knowledge scored ≥ 9.6 and < 6.0 were considered as good and poor knowledge. The attitude scored ≥ 8 and < 8 considered as positive and negative attitudes. The practices scored ≥ 8 and < 8 considered as good and poor practices respectively. The female population was 72.9%, and 27.1% were male. The majority of the population (94.0%) had good knowledge. Positive attitudes were expressed by 65.3% of undergraduates while 82.8 % had good practices. Statistically significant associations ($p < 0.05$) were observed between knowledge and the streams ($p = 0.002$), attitudes and gender ($p = 0.045$), practices with the study year ($p = 0.040$), gender ($p = 0.000$) and sources of information used ($p = 0.045$). This study infers that FAHS undergraduates had good KAP toward COVID-19. Conducting awareness programs and displaying posters on preventive measures against Covid-19 would be beneficial to further improve the KAP.

Keywords: Covid-19, knowledge, attitudes, practices, allied health students