

## Knowledge and awareness towards COVID-19 among Sri Lankan social media users

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**Introduction and Objectives:** COVID-19 has become a devastating pandemic with an increased morbidity and mortality rates causing unpredictable social disruption, economic loss, and general hardship worldwide. This study was done to assess knowledge and awareness of COVID-19 among the Sri Lankan public.

**Methods:** An online self-reported survey was designed as a Google form and distributed through several social media platforms. A total of 1171 responses were received. Data was analyzed using MS Excel & IBM Statistics SPSS version 23.0. The analyzing process followed a scoring method by giving “1” for a correct answer and “0” for the wrong. Knowledge score of everyone was obtained using the formula; [No. of correct answers/ Total No. of questions × 100]. From the knowledge score of all participants, the mean total awareness score was calculated. As the data were normally distributed, an independent sample T-test and one-way ANOVA were conducted at a 5% statistical significance level to identify the awareness level differences in different demographic groups.

**Results:** The majority of respondents were male (50.3%), 15-25 years old (63.0%) with a degree level education (34.1%) and students (51.7%).

**Table 1:** Significance values obtained from Post hoc analysis.

	Group 1	Group 2	Sample Size (N)		Mean		P Value
			Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	
Education Levels	Upto O/L	General Degree	76	400	63.35	67.61	0.021
	Upto O/L	MSc, PhD	76	75	63.35	71.44	0.000
	Upto A/L	MSc, PhD	372	75	67.21	71.44	0.011
	Upto Diploma	MSc, PhD	249	75	66.77	71.44	0.006
	General Degree	MSc, PhD	400	75	67.61	71.44	0.027
Age	15-25 Years	26-35 Years	738	255	65.67	70.60	0.000
	15-25 Years	36.45 Years	738	92	65.67	68.92	0.048
Occupation	Student	Employed	606	458	65.80	69.39	0.000
	Unemployed	Employed	89	458	66.04	69.39	0.035

**Conclusions:** The results showed a significant difference in the awareness level on COVID-19 based on education, occupation, and age. There was no significant difference in the awareness level based on gender and province. The awareness score increases with the education level as well as in employed people who showed a higher level of awareness compared to others (Table 1). More awareness is needed among the less educated and unemployed groups.

**Keywords:** Coronavirus, COVID-19, knowledge, awareness, awareness score

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