

PP 28: Knowledge and lifestyle adaptations to COVID-19 among tea plantation owners in Balangoda, Sri Lanka

Lishani Dharmalingam, Chithma Chandrasekera, Sarith Pramodya, Pradeepika Gamage, Charindu Fernando, Shamini Prathapan

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Introduction: COVID-19 pandemic is the current global health crisis with a socioeconomic impact around the world. Tea plantation owners need adequate knowledge of COVID-19 to prevent its spread in tea estates and sustain their economy during the pandemic.

Objectives: The objective was to describe the knowledge and lifestyle adaptations to COVID-19 among tea plantation owners in Balangoda, Sri Lanka

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study, was conducted among 85 tea plantation owners of a Tea Estate Development Society in Sri Lanka. Simple random sampling technique was used. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire comprising of participant's sociodemographic data, effect of COVID-19 on estate economy (during March to August 2020 compared to 2019), knowledge, lifestyle adaptations to COVID-19 and chronic diseases among the participants. Data was analysed using SPSS software. The significance level was set at 5%.

Results: Most of the participants had poor knowledge and lifestyle adaptations to COVID-19 (50.6%). No significant association was found between knowledge of COVID-19 and sociodemographic data such as age ($p=0.579$), gender ($p=0.263$), education level ($p=0.941$) and monthly income ($p=0.082$). Majority (56.0%) had a positive effect on estate economy during March to August 2020 compared to 2019. No significant association was found between poor knowledge of COVID-19 and poor effect on estate economy due to COVID-19 ($p= 0.365$). Statistical significance was observed between the presence of diabetes and poor knowledge of COVID-19 ($p=0.049$).

Conclusions: Majority of the tea plantation owners lack adequate knowledge and lifestyle adaptations to COVID-19. Thus, it is essential to improve the knowledge among them.

Keywords: Knowledge, lifestyle, COVID-19, tea plantation owners