

“ITS’ SO BORING!”: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MESSAGE FATIGUE ON COVID-19 PREVENTIVE BEHAVIOURS AMONG MALAYSIAN ADULTS

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INTRODUCTION

During COVID-19 pandemic the frequent public health messages and preventative efforts may produce message fatigue, which reduces people's response and likelihood of prevention. Message fatigue is defined by a combination of the following four dimensions: a) perceived overexposure, or the perception of being exposed to a class of messages at a higher frequency than desired; b) perceived redundancy, or the perception that the messages are repetitive and overlapping; c) exhaustion, or a sense of being burned out on the messages; and d) tedium, or a lack of enthusiasm for the messages (So, Kim, & Cohen, 2017). Meanwhile, preventive behaviour encompasses any activity conducted by an individual who feels himself to be healthy with the intention of protecting disease or recognizing disease at an asymptomatic stage (Atchison et al., 2020).

Message fatigue may be a significant barrier to effective health communication techniques since it may reduce the persuasive effects of COVID-19 preventive messages (Han et al., 2020; Ling Ling Chan & Tan, 2020; So et al., 2017). To address this, communication strategies should focus on delivering concise and relevant information, using diverse messaging approaches, and ensuring timely updates. By avoiding message fatigue, we can increase the likelihood of people following preventive measures and effectively combating the spread of COVID-19.



OBJECTIVE

To assess the impact of Message Fatigue on COVID-19 Preventive Behaviours Among Malaysian Adults.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design	An online cross-sectional study
Study Population	Malaysian citizen, 18 years above and residing in Malaysia
Methods	Data were collected via an online survey using a Google Form and shared via email, website, and social media platform
Data Collection Duration	March– April 2021
Study Instrument	Bilingual (Malay and English)
Total Respondent	2,943

DEMOGRAPHY

Total participants:
2943 participants

Majority are:

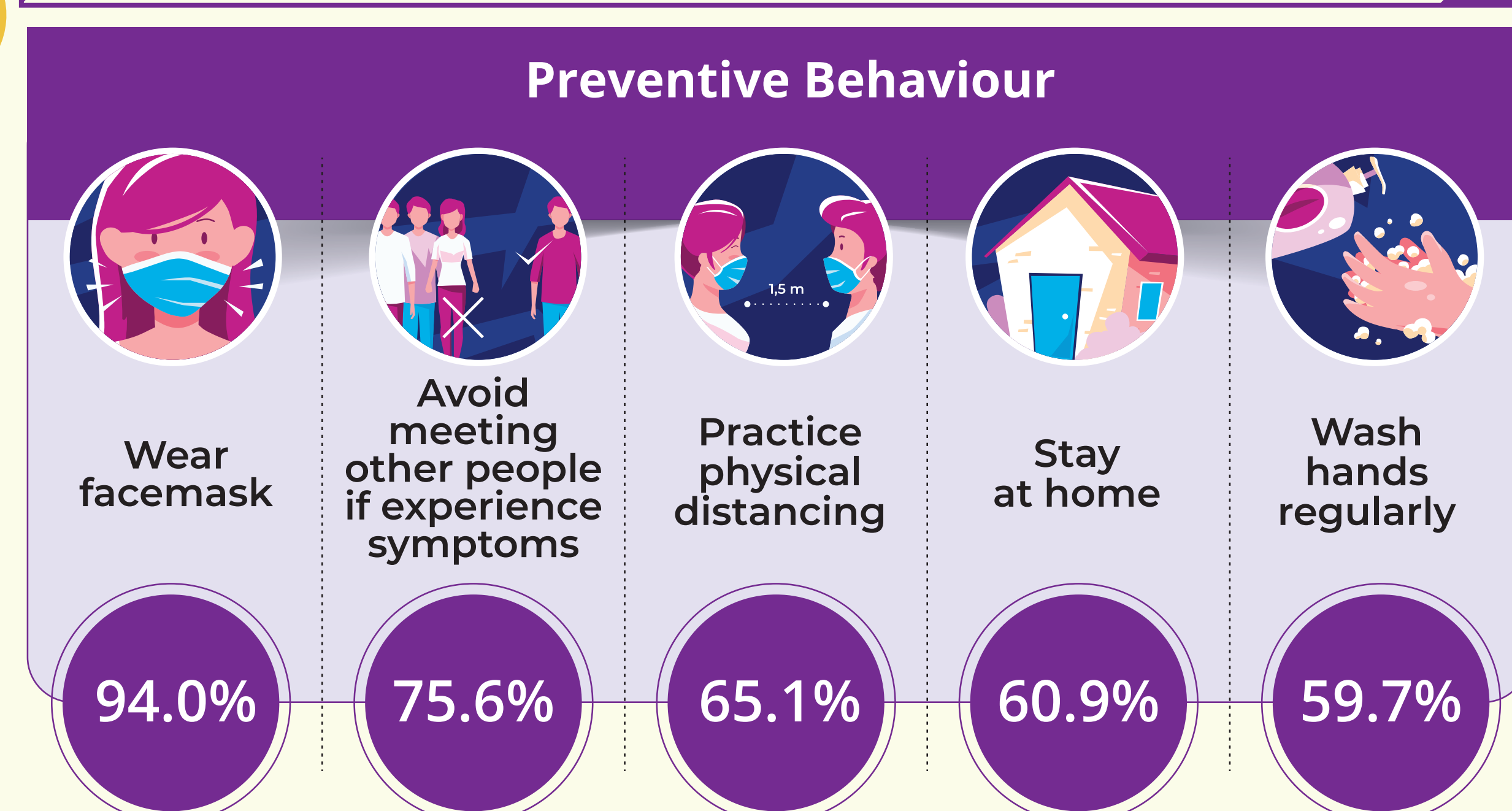


RESULTS

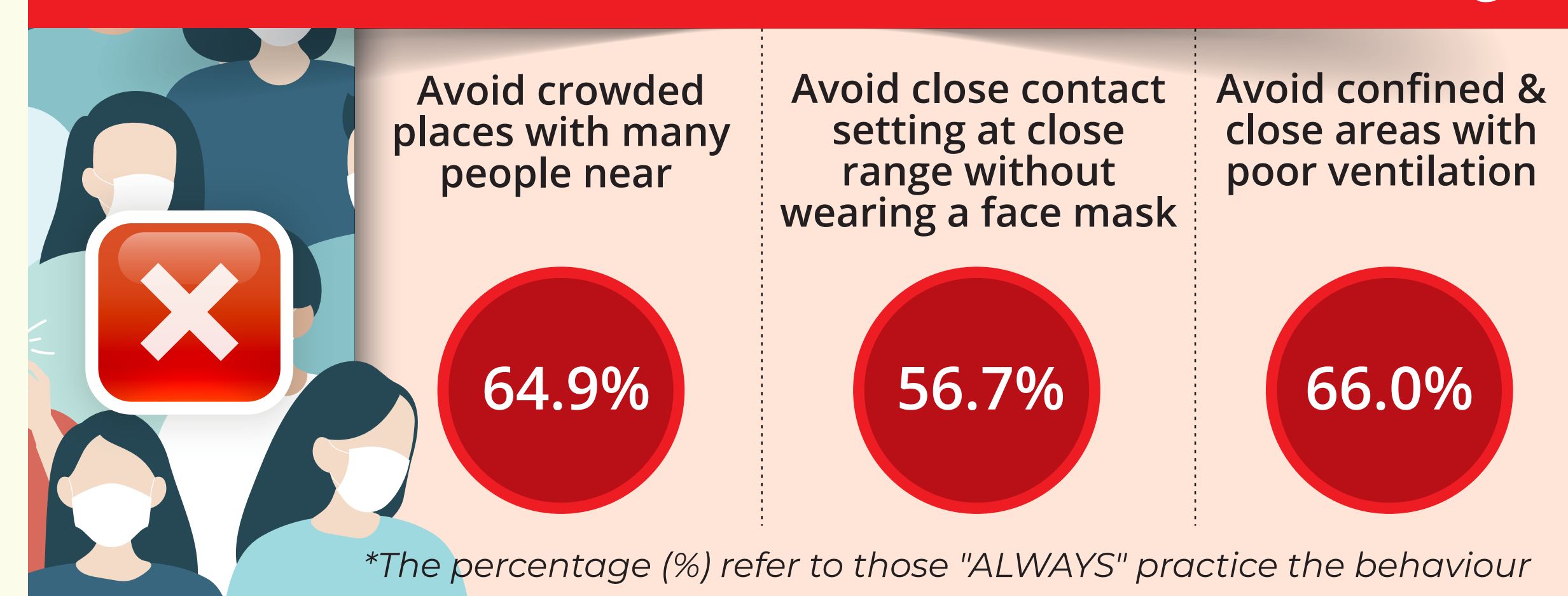
Mean score of message fatigue by sub-domains

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Message Fatigue	69.3	22.4
Overexposure	25.2	6.1
Redundancy	17.2	5.9
Exhaustion	14.1	7.6
Tedium	12.6	7.1

Preventive behaviour towards COVID-19



Avoid the Three 3Cs Be aware of different levels of risk in the different settings



Correlation between COVID-19 message fatigue and preventive behaviour

			Message fatigue	Preventive behaviour
Spearman's rho	Message fatigue	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.155**
		Sig (2 tailed)	.	.000
		N	2943	2943
	Preventive behaviour	Correlation Coefficient	-.155**	1.000
		Sig (2 tailed)	.000	.
		N	2943	2943

A significant correlation between message fatigue and preventative behaviour (r_s (2943) = - 0.155, $p < .001$). Participants who reported higher levels of message fatigue may have a lower likelihood of adhering to COVID-19 preventive behaviours.

CONCLUSION

Repeated COVID-19 prevention messages can lead to message fatigue, decreasing people's adherence to preventive measures. When individuals become tired of hearing the same messages, they may not take precautions seriously, increasing the risk of infection. Further research is needed to confirm this relationship, but it's crucial to find engaging ways to keep people committed to preventive measures.

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