

NEW NORMS COMPLIANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN MALAYSIA

¹Abu Bakar R, Zaikiah MZ, ¹Mariatul Umeera MD, ¹Sheikh Shafizal SI, ¹Nadia Hani J, ¹Nurashma J, ¹Komathi P, ¹Manimaran K, ¹Khairulnissa AK.

¹Institute for Health Behavioural Research, Ministry of Health Malaysia
Correspondence: abubakar.rahman@moh.gov.my

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic created the concept of adapting to the new normal of life; physical distancing, lockdown, home quarantine, work from home setting and the mandatory wearing of face mask and face shields. However, as the infectious diseases continues to mutate and create new variants, leaving limited hope of total eradication, the Malaysians start to experience the fatigue of sustaining the preventive behaviour. To address this, Malaysian government encouraged public to be self-responsible and continue in sustaining the new norms practice through moral appeals. Thus, this study was conducted to assess the factors influencing Malaysians to comply with the new norm practise.

METHODS

This was an online cross-sectional study conducted among Malaysian public using adopted and adapted questionnaire from Almutairi et. al, (2020) and Van Rooij et. al., (2020). For reliability test, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all 9 constructs and the results ranged from 0.79 – 0.89.

RESULTS

An online survey was conducted from April 1st -31st May 2021. A total of 4102 adults aged 18 above participated. The overall results showed self-reported compliance among respondents towards physical distancing, wearing of face mask, hand washing and following movement control order were high (85% - 92.9%). Respondents agreed that measures taken by Government attributed to their compliance behaviour. Cost of compliance (OR 0.93, 95% CI 0.75, 1.16), deterrence (OR 1.18, 95% CI 0.87, 1.61) and strain (OR 1.03, 95% CI 0.58, 1.3) did not play a significant role in compliance. The self-intrinsic factor such as moral alignment (OR 2.47, 95% CI 2.30, 3.01) and social norms (OR 1.42, 95% CI 1.18, 1.72) showed significant association with compliance towards the new norms practise. The findings also showed appeals for public to practise self-discipline did not apply for everyone, and people who reported more impulsivity (OR 0.56, 95% CI 0.41, 0.78) were more likely to violate the rules. Findings also showed high compliance rate for wearing face mask (95.6%) and MySejahtera registration (92.9%) possible due to this practise made mandatory.

Table 1: Analyses of socio-demographic and associated domains toward the compliance using logistic regression

Variable	Univariable		Multivariable	
	Crude OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Study domain				
Moral alignment	3.04 (2.56, 3.6)	<0.001	2.47 (2.03, 3.01)	<0.001
Cost of compliance	0.69 (0.57, 0.82)	<0.001	0.93 (0.75, 1.16)	0.539
Strain	0.9 (0.74, 1.1)	0.294	1.03 (0.82, 1.3)	0.786
Deterrence	1.51 (1.13, 2.01)	0.006	1.18 (0.87, 1.61)	0.288
Ability to comply (physical, facemask, hand, temp)	7.55 (5.18, 10.99)	<0.001	3.97 (2.57, 6.13)	<0.001
Opportunity to comply	0.7 (0.54, 0.89)	0.005	1 (0.74, 1.36)	0.986
Social norms	1.86 (1.58, 2.2)	<0.001	1.42 (1.18, 1.72)	<0.001
Obligation to obey the SOP	0.33 (0.26, 0.42)	<0.001	0.58 (0.43, 0.78)	<0.001
Justice 1	1.4 (1.01, 1.95)	0.046	1.15 (0.73, 1.82)	0.545
Justice2	1.3 (0.97, 1.73)	0.074	1.09 (0.73, 1.61)	0.687
Legitimacy	0.5 (0.42, 0.61)	<0.001	0.69 (0.55, 0.87)	0.001
Willing to report	1.52 (1.29, 1.8)	<0.001	1.12 (0.92, 1.35)	0.254
Trust in science and media	1.76 (1.49, 2.08)	<0.001	1.19 (0.98, 1.43)	0.077
Impulsivity	0.52 (0.39, 0.69)	<0.001	0.56 (0.41, 0.78)	<0.001

Classification table 83.8%, Nagelkerke R Square 17.3%, Hosmer and Lemeshow test p-value=0.960

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reflected that sustainment of compliance towards new norm practise among public relies strongly on the facilitative environment, such as enabling rules for public to maintain physical distancing by controlling the number of people to enter certain premises and restrictions to reduce opportunities for unsafe gatherings. Thus, it is recommended for government to incorporate strategic guidelines and rules for public to follow rather than relying on concept of self-discipline to ensure the continued practice of new norms.

Keywords: New Norms, Compliance, Malaysian Public

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the Director General of Health for permitting us to present this poster. We would also like to express appreciation for all the support from all parties that have contributed directly or indirectly to this study.

References

- Almutairi AF, BaniMustafa A, Alessa YM, Almutairi SB, Almaleh Y. Public Trust and Compliance with the Precautionary Measures Against COVID-19 Employed by Authorities in Saudi Arabia. Risk Manag Healthc Policy. 2020; 13:753-760 <https://doi.org/10.2147/RMHP.S257287>
- Brislin RW. Back-Translation for Cross-Cultural Research. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology. 1970;1(3):185-216. doi:10.1177/135910457000100301
- Hoeben, E. M., Liebst, L. S., Bernasco, W., Van Baak, C., & Lindegaard, M. R. (2020). Social distancing compliance: A video observational analysis. Preprint posted on Open Science Framework.
- Kamarulzaman 2020 Emir Research. Covid-19 Vaccine Breakthrough Calls for Cautious Optimism.
- Lan, F. Y., Suharlim, C., Kales, S. N., & Yang, J. (2020). Association between SARS-CoV-2 infection, exposure risk and mental health among a cohort of essential retail workers in the USA. Occupational and environmental medicine.
- Lyu, W., & Wehby, G. L. (2020). Community Use of Face Masks And COVID-19: Evidence From A Natural Experiment Of State Mandates In The US: Study examines impact on COVID-19 growth rates associated with state government mandates requiring face mask use in public. Health affairs, 39(8), 1419-1425.