



**AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS COVID 19 : AN EMPIRICAL STUDY
AMONG RURAL RESIDENTS IN MALAPPURAM DISTRICT IN KERALA**

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Abstract

COVID -19 is a pandemic situation faced by human beings all over the world. The present study focuses on determining the impact of COVID -19 on rural livelihood in Kerala with special reference to five villages in Malappuram district. The study seeks to examine the awareness level of village people towards this pandemic condition and the ways in which the village withstands with this situation. The work attempts to develop the best strategies or measures adopted by the village to combat the challenges posed by COVID -19. The primary data was collected from 76 sample respondents from selected five villages namely Athavanad, Marakkara, Valanchery, Kuttippuram and Irimbiliyam gramapanchayath through simple random sampling method. A pre scheduled questionnaire was used for data collection and it was collected through Google form. The data were analysed with the help of SPSS software and tools like percentage analysis, pie charts and Chi-square test are used for analyzing the data. The findings of the study shows that majority of the village people are aware about pros and cons of this disease. The local bodies can play a positive role in protecting rural people from this situation.

Key words : Rural Residents, COVID -19, awareness, social impact.

Introduction

Our world is going through one of the biggest crisis which the mankind has ever faced. The name of the crisis is "COVID -19". Corona virus belongs to the coronaviridae family in the Nidovirales order. The international committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) named the virus as SARS-CoV-2 and the disease as Covid -19. The novel corona virus originated from Hunan Sea food market at Wuhan, China where bats, snakes, raccoon dogs, palm civets and other animals are sold and rapidly spread upto 109 countries (Shereen, Muhammad Adnan, et al, 2020). Corona viruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several corona viruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19 (WHO Report). Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, and tiredness, aches and pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell or a rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes. Some people become infected but only have very mild symptoms. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing hospital treatment. Around 1 out of every 5 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart and lung problems, diabetes, or cancer, are at higher risk of developing serious illness. However, anyone can catch COVID-19 and become seriously ill. People of all ages who experience fever and/or cough associated with difficulty breathing/shortness of breath, chest pain/pressure, or loss of speech or movement should seek medical attention immediately (WHO Report).

In India the first corona virus case reported in Kerala. The patient was a medical student who had recently returned from Wuhan, China. One of the first important steps the state took was to control the spread of