
Poverty, Gender, and Youth

Social and Behavioral Science Research (SBSR)

7-15-2020

Are more people adopting COVID-19 prevention measures?

UNICEF

Population Council Institute

Follow this and additional works at: https://knowledgecommons.popcouncil.org/departments_sbsr-pgy



Part of the [Demography, Population, and Ecology Commons](#), [International Public Health Commons](#), and the [Public Health Education and Promotion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

UNICEF and Population Council Institute. 2020. "Are more people adopting COVID-19 prevention measures?" COVID-19 Research Results Brief #2. New Delhi: UNICEF and Population Council.

This Brief is brought to you for free and open access by the Population Council.

ARE MORE PEOPLE ADOPTING COVID-19 PREVENTION MEASURES?



The adoption of preventive measures has increased over time. Even so, just a little less than two-fifths of males and one-quarter of females reported that they and their family members were currently practicing all four standard preventative measures.

The better educated, wealthier and those belonging to privileged castes were more likely than others to practice these preventive measures, as were those who perceived moderate or high risk of COVID-19 in their neighbourhood.

Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) activities that enable communities to act upon their awareness of COVID-19 preventive measures are essential. The importance of adopting all standard measures needs to be highlighted. Such SBCC activities need to pay special attention to more vulnerable sections of society..

BACKGROUND

In India, the number of COVID-19 positive cases has increased substantially in recent weeks. With the easing of lockdown, albeit for justifiable reasons, there has been an increase in movement of people from red zones to green zones and vice-versa. It is important that people continue to adhere to the government guidelines on preventive measures.

Drawing on data from two rounds (Phase 1 and the earlier research) of COVID-19 knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) telephone surveys conducted in Bihar, this research brief sheds light on the socio-economic differentials and changes over time in the adoption of COVID-19 preventive measures.

METHODS

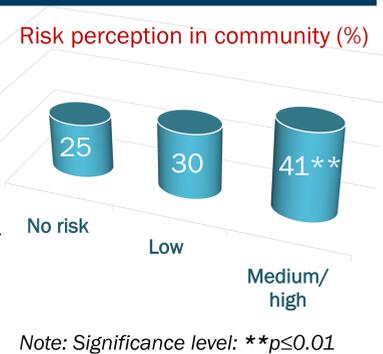
- The sample households for the KAP surveys were drawn from an existing state-representative cohort study of adolescents and young adults UDAYA (www.projectudaya.in) study, in Bihar. However, it is noted that respondents who participated in the COVID-19 KAP surveys were better educated, wealthier and less likely to have belonged to disadvantaged castes and tribes (SC/ST) compared with those who did not. There were no differences in terms of rural-urban or religious distributions.
- In the earlier round of the survey (April 3–12, 2020, 175 men and 385 women were interviewed and in the Phase 1 round of the current study (May 13-22, 2020), 242 men and 552 women were interviewed, including 111 men and 246 women who participated in both rounds of the survey (see the table below for a profile of participants in the two rounds).

PROFILE OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

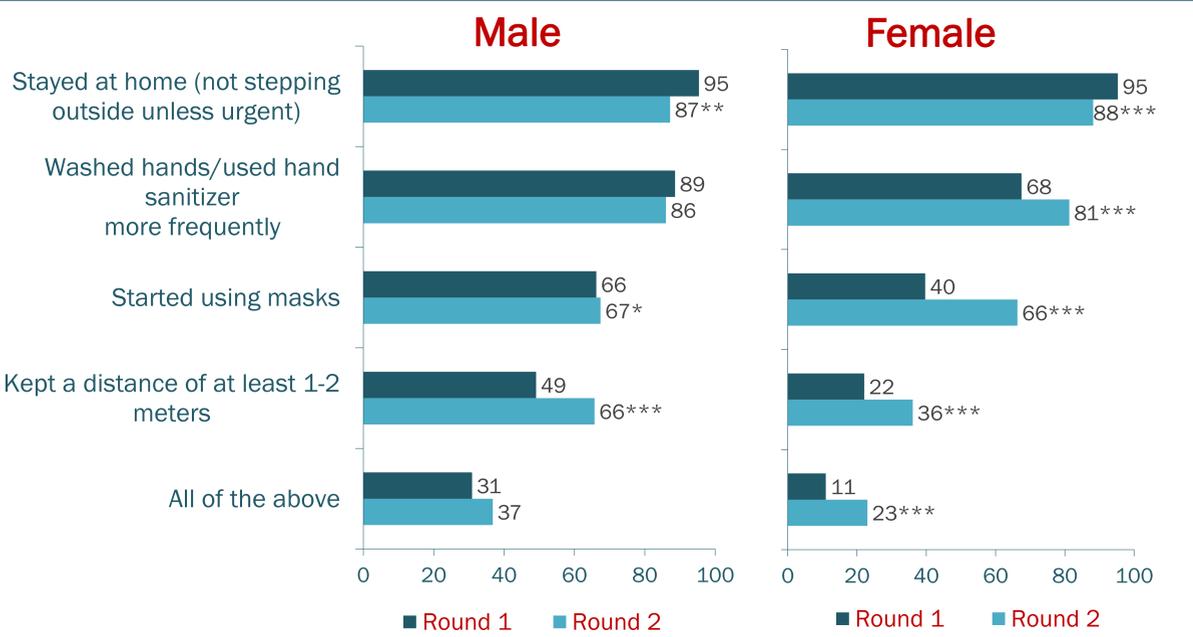
Characteristics	Round 1 (N=560)	Round 2 (N=794)
Mean age	23.3	23.0
Mean years of education	10.0	11.1
% Female	68.7	69.5
% Hindu	89.5	85.5
Caste (%)		
SC/ST	20.5	16.4
OBC	61.1	63.7
General	18.4	19.9
Wealth index (quintiles as of UDAYA 2015-16 survey)		
Bottom two quintiles (poor)	11.8	13.7
Medium	15.5	13.9
Top two quintiles (rich)	72.6	72.5

RISK PERCEPTION AND PREVENTIVE PRACTICES

A larger proportion of participants who perceived a moderate to high risk of COVID-19 in their neighbourhood reported that they & their family members practiced all four standard preventive measures than those who perceived no/low risk.



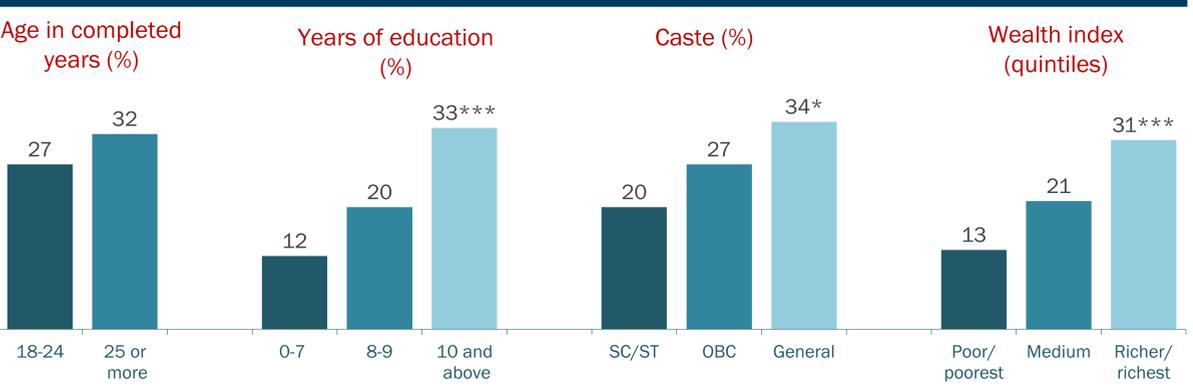
ACTION TAKEN BY SELF AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS¹



Note: ¹Based on answers given spontaneously in response to a single question about the preventive practices adopted by respondents and their household members; percentages less than 10% are not shown in Figure. Significance level: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001;

- The proportion of males and females who reported that they & their family members were staying at home unless urgent declined over time. At the same time, those who reported that they & their family members were practising social distancing of 1-2 meters increased.
- The proportion of females who reported frequent hand washing and using masks increased over time.
- While there was no statistically significant difference in the proportion of males who reported that they & their family members were practising all four common measures—staying at home, frequent hand washing, using masks and keeping social distance of 1-2 meters—between the two rounds of survey (31% at round 1 and 37% at round 2), more female respondents reported so in round 2 than in round 1 (23% and 11%).
- More males than females reported that they & their family members were practising all four common preventive measures (31% vs. 11% in round 1 and 37% vs. 23% in round 2).

COVID-19 PREVENTION PRACTICES² BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS



Note: ² % who practised all four common preventive measures; Significance level: *p<0.05 and ***p<0.001

Reported practice of all four common preventive measures increased with education, household economic status and caste hierarchy.

LIMITATIONS

- Findings cannot be generalised to the overall situation in Bihar given the selectivity bias in the sample as mentioned in the Method section.
- Given efforts by many stakeholders to raise awareness about preventive measures, the chances of respondents giving socially desirable responses cannot be ruled out.
- Findings were based on self-reports and not based on observations.

CONTACT INFORMATION

This work was jointly undertaken by Population Council Institute and UNICEF/Bihar. For more information, contact fzavier@popcouncil.org; kgsanthya@popcouncil.org; msinha@unicef.org