

COVID-19 RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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Public perceptions, anxiety, and the perceived efficacy of health-protective behaviours to mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 pandemic

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Research indicates that, during occurrences of widespread infectious disease, individuals are more likely to comply with official government-mandated regulations relating to preventive behavioural change if they perceive that the respective behaviours are likely to be effective in preventing infection, they believe themselves to be at increased risk of being negatively affected by the pandemic, they believe

that the illness carries severe and life-threatening ramifications, the illness is perceived as being impervious to vaccination and/or treatment, and where the prevailing perception is that the authorities are providing information that is clear and understandable to the public.

This study examined the behavioural and psychological predictors of compliance with health-protective behaviours in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic in the UAE. 44.8% of the 634 participants who responded to the online survey reported the consistent use of all recommended behaviours (i.e. spatial distancing, wearing facemask, frequent handwashing, avoidance of public spaces).

This study's data suggests that the dissemination of reliable public health information during a public health crisis is essential. This study's results highlight the importance of providing the public with information that is clear and consistent and, moreover, emphasises the efficacy of the recommended behaviours as this is likely to improve adherence. When individuals perceive themselves to be at personal risk and are aware of the severity of the consequences posed by the illness, they are more likely to adopt caution.

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If you are interested in sharing your COVID-19 related research, please send your contribution to research.office@uaeu.ac.ae

