

THE AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE ON CLIMATE CHANGE WITH ZOOONOTIC DISEASES : A PILOT STUDY



¹D.I Yusof, ¹S.A Ismail, ¹N.U Amir, ¹N.A Mohd Radzi, ²N.M Muhd Faizul, ¹M.D Mohd Rani and ¹N.A Mohamed

¹Faculty of Medicine & Health Science, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia; and ² Faculty of Engineering & Build Environment, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.



ABSTRACT

Climate change indirectly influences the emergence and re-emergence of **zoonotic diseases**. Humans attitude are responsible for the existence of this interaction. A pilot study was conducted by distribution of online survey to observe the awareness and knowledge on the interaction between climate change and zoonotic diseases among university students in Malaysia. There were 186 respondents who participated in this survey.114 (61.3%) of them are aware of the relationship between climate change and zoonotic diseases. 75.3% of respondents think that their social circle also believe that climate change and zoonotic diseases are a serious problem. This survey proved that the majority of respondents are aware and have good knowledge regarding the relationship between climate change and zoonotic diseases.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change indirectly has been impacting both humans and animals' health and significantly influenced the emergence and re-emergence of zoonotic diseases. This is because climate change can affect habitats for plants, insects and animals and also expected that the ecology and epidemiology of infectious diseases will change (Parkinson et al., 2014).

In 2016, a large outbreak of anthrax disease in the Arctic Russian Siberia caused by high thawing rates may have led long buried infected carcasses to surface again. (Stella et al., 2020). Therefore, zoonotic disease has consistently become a major and burning health concern as it extensively causes millions of deaths each year.

OBJECTIVE

To study the awareness and knowledge on interaction between climate change with zoonotic diseases among university students in Malaysia.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional study conducted by distribution of an online survey on 4th of February 2022 to all university students in Malaysia asking sort of questions related to climate change and zoonotic diseases. The survey contains three sections which consists of qualitative and quantitative form questions. Inclusion criterias are :

Local or international students

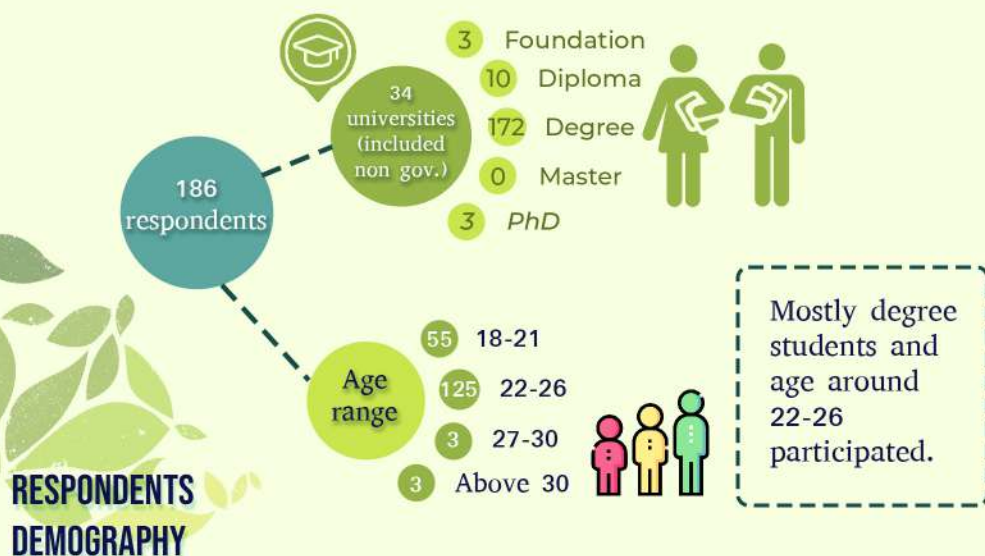
No limit to major science students

All levels of education in university

Primary qualitative collecting data. Few subjective questions were given to more in-depth understanding and observe respondents' opinion about study topic.

Primary quantitative collecting data. A collective question was testing general knowledge of climate changes and zoonotic diseases that is happening nowadays among respondents.

RESULTS



RESPONDENTS DEMOGRAPHY

QUALITATIVE

50% of respondents believe climate change can be completely solved due to the **technological advancements and continuous human discovery**. Another half of respondents mention that it is impossible to completely solve the problem because they believe climate change **needs a long term process to recover** from the effects of climate change. They also agree **unstoppable human greed** accelerates the climate change.

QUANTITATIVE

97.3%

RESPONDENTS KNOW THE DEFINITION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

83.3%

RESPONDENTS BELIEVE CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES CAN BE TACKLED

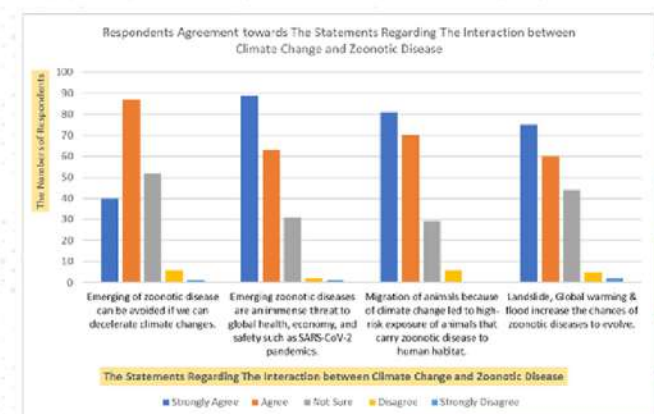
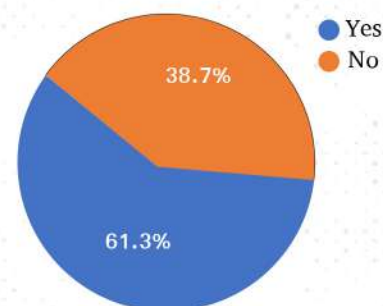
61.3%

RESPONDENTS KNOW THE DEFINITION OF ZOOONOTIC DISEASES

75.3%

RESPONDENTS BELIEVE THEIR SOCIAL CIRCLE IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INTERACTION

RESPONDENTS AWARENESS ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND ZOOONOTIC DISEASE



DISCUSSIONS

- The questions that have been constructed for this study purposes **act as an indicator to determine the level of awareness and knowledge** on this issue among them.
- 97.3% of respondents acknowledge the definition of climate change because they are **currently exposed to global issues** related with climate change.
- 61.3% of respondents are aware of this relationship eventhough the survey was **distributed to different academic background**. Despite the result, previous study conducted in Taiwan reported social science students were **significantly more likely to report higher levels of concern** (Di Giusto, Lavallee and Yu, 2018)
- Furthermore, researchers acknowledge that **respondents' social circle are concerned** about this issue. Hence, it implies that this problem is of significance to more than just university students.
- However, as this study was conducted randomly towards different number of respondents assigned to each category, the researchers unable to identify the exact highest degree of awareness and knowledge in these categories, regardless of current level of education or age range.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, there are a lot of emergence of zoonotic diseases that are influenced by climate change and become global issues. After the survey has been done, we conclude that the majority of respondents are aware and have good knowledge regarding the relationship between climate change and zoonotic diseases. To recapitulate, with this discovery, everyone can begin to increase their efforts to educate and expand their knowledge to every corner of the world. Hence, there is a potential to continue this research into a wide scale of subjects and well distributed to all Malaysia university students.

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