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ABSTRACT SUPPLEMENT

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Coronavirus-related Health Literacy in elderly and adult population during COVID pandemic in Italy

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Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic caused an overabundance of valid and invalid information rapidly spread via traditional media, by internet and digital communication. Health Literacy (HL), as the ability to access, understand, appraise, apply health information, is fundamental for finding, interpreting, correctly using COVID-19 information.

Methods:

In 2021, in the framework of the participation to the WHO M-POHL (Measuring Population and Organizational Health Literacy) network, a survey was conducted in a representative sample of the Italian general population aged 18+ years (N = 3,500). The validated HL questionnaire included coronavirus-related HL (HL-COVID, 16-items), general HL, sociodemographic characteristics, risk factors, lifestyles sections. For the HL-items, a 4-point Likert scale was applied: very easy, easy, difficult, very difficult. HL-COVID levels were defined as Good: very easy+easy>81.3% (more than 12 of 16 answers); Sufficient: 50.0%<very easy+easy<=81.3% (9-12 of 16 answers); Limited: very easy+easy<=50.0% (fewer than 9 of 16 answers). Elderly were responders aged 65+ years, the remaining ones were defined as adults. Ordinal Logistic Regression analysis was performed to assess the association of HL-COVID with sociodemographic characteristics (sex, age-group, educational level, financial deprivation).

Results:

Good HL-COVID prevalence was lower in elderly than in adults (44.8% vs. 51.0%, p-value=0.001); the opposite for both sufficient (22.8% vs. 19.9%) and limited (32.5% vs. 29.1%) levels, but not statistically significant. The odds of a low HL-COVID (sufficient/limited) increased by 31% in the elderly and by 50%, 92%, and almost triple in persons with a low, considerable, and severe financial deprivation level, respectively.

Conclusions:

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need to improve HL and to prepare the general population for future emergency and non-emergency situations, confirming that HL can be considered a social vaccine.

Key messages:

- Low coronavirus-related HL level is mostly associated to elderly and to increasing deprivation level.
- The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed that Health Literacy can be considered a social vaccine.

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Participation in prevention measures during the corona pandemic in Germany in 2020/21

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Background:

The availability and use of preventive measures such as diet courses, sports groups, and counselling services were hindered by containment measures set by the German government and local authorities to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regulations on contact restriction, closure of sport and leisure facilities made it difficult to use prevention programs in 2020 and 2021. So far, no information is available to what extent the participation of the population in prevention programs has changed as a result of the pandemic and whether there are group differences regarding socio-demographic characteristics.

Methods:

We used standardized telephone interviews of the adult German-speaking population to ask for changes in the participation in prevention measures in the last 12 months as a result of the corona pandemic. The data were collected between 17.3.2021 and 18.08.2021 in four cross-sectional surveys and is representative of the population aged 18 years and older in Germany. Analyses of the weighted and pooled data were conducted for n = 3,998 individuals by gender, age and education.

Results:

Almost one third of the respondents reported a lower use of programs (28.3%). An unchanged use of the programs was stated by 6.5%, a higher use by 2.1%. 63.2% said they did not use such programs. More women (33.6%) than men (22.7%) reported reduced pandemic-related use (p<0.0001). For women, we observed a difference between age and education groups, but not for men: Lower participation was reported by a higher proportion of older than younger women (p<0.0001). More women with high education reported an increased use than ones with low education (p = 0.003) (preliminary results).

Conclusions:

The observed differences indicate to different barriers to use prevention measures during the pandemic, especially for women. To promote equal opportunities, resilient structures of prevention and health promotion should be built for future crises in advance.

Key messages:

- The use of prevention measures was seriously reduced by the corona pandemic.
- To be prepared for further crises, concrete barriers to use prevention programs under crisis conditions should be identified and addressed through public health actions.

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Predictors of physical activity and smoking among German teachers during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic

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Background:

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has influenced the social and health-related behavior due to significant changes and constraints in the professional and private life. Especially in the school context, there were considerable changes, which may have promoted positive and negative health behaviors. Therefore, the aim of our study was to identify the predictors of physical activity and smoking of teachers during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Methods:

In March 2021, a nation-wide online survey was conducted among teachers in Germany. A total number of 31,089