

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that originated in Wuhan, China. It spread worldwide to become a global pandemic. In the Dominican Republic, the first cases of COVID-19 were reported in February 2020, and officially confirmed the following month in mid-March. Due to the airborne transmission of the virus that can occur during procedures that generate aerosols, dentists have been forced to follow a stricter biosecurity protocol. This whole situation has directly affected dental students, who may manifest behaviors of anxiety, stress, and concern in general.

OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study is to analyze the risk perception and self-efficacy to take appropriate preventive measures against COVID-19, to protect the safety of undergraduate dental students at Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña (UNPHU).

METHODS & MATERIAL

The research was conducted through an online questionnaire on the QuestionPro website. 122 students were surveyed, and their responses were measured on the Likert Scale.

Informed consent was provided prior the survey.

The questionnaire consisted of questions referring to risk perception, self-efficacy, anxiety, knowledge, and attitude in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To do the statistical analysis of the information, tables were created in Excel where the respondents' answers were tabulated and represented in percentages.

DISCUSSION

Risk perception was high because the students had received good training on how to prevent and avoid COVID-19 transmission. They considered the mandatory use of masks necessary to avoid contagion. Likewise, self-efficacy, since they understood that it was necessary to follow certain guidelines such as: keeping 2 meters distance, washing hands, using disinfectant, and all this with the intention of preventing contagion. With all the above, since the students presented a high-risk perception and self-efficacy, this shows that they were knowledgeable about COVID-19 and its prevention.

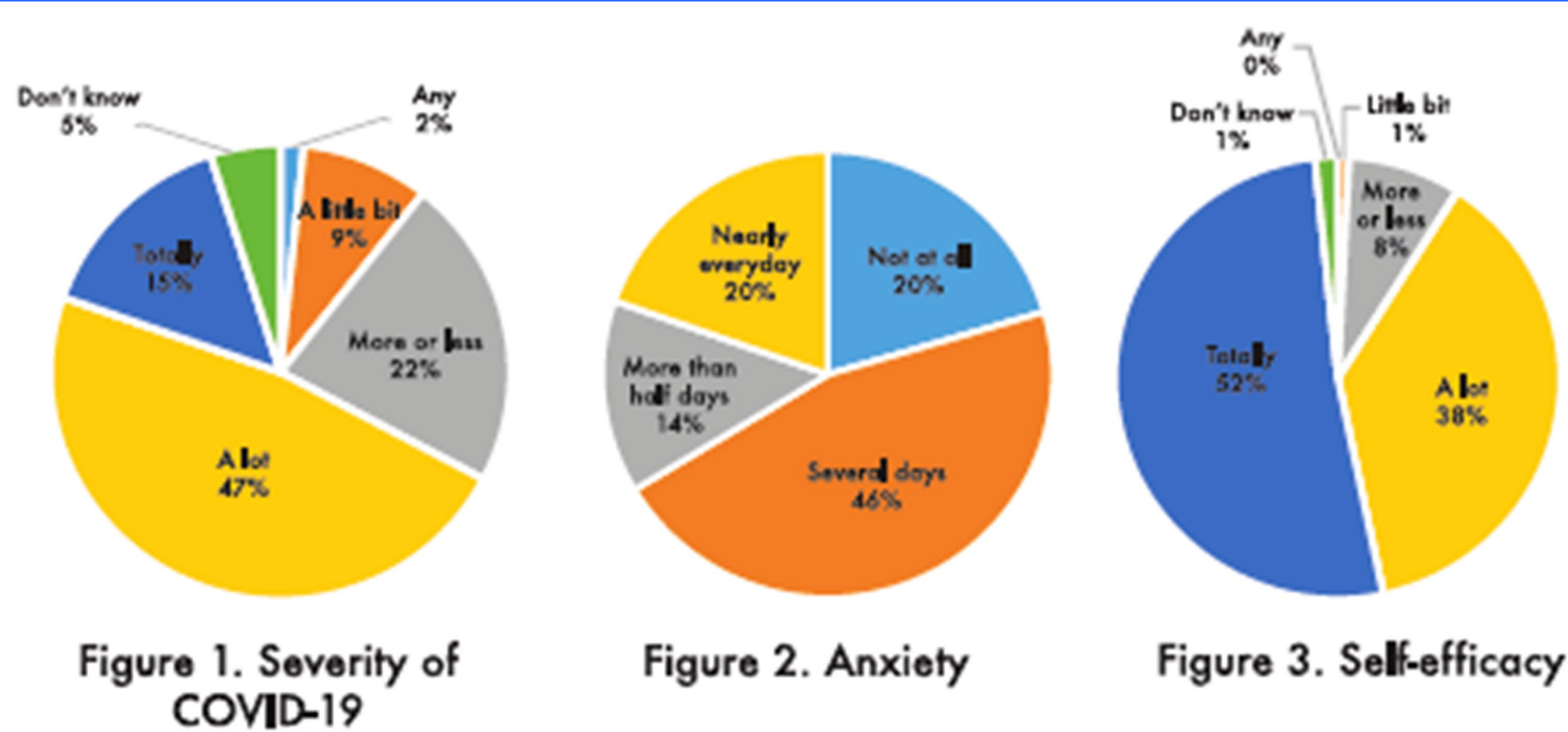
RESULTS

- According to the results obtained, most of the students considered COVID-19 to be serious for health (Figure 1).
- For a short period of time, they felt anxiety about the pandemic situation (Figure 2).
- Most were able to wash their hands frequently with soap and water and/or use hand sanitizer, following proper biosafety protocol (Figure 3).

CONCLUSIONS

- Most students considered COVID-19 to be a serious health threat. This indicates that they presented a high-risk perception.
- They presented a high level of self-efficacy, as they considered themselves capable of carrying out the necessary guidelines to avoid contracting the COVID-19 virus.
- Most of the respondents experienced anxiety at least a few days a week. This often resulted in the respondents having an inability to control their concern about the pandemic. However, with appropriate bio safety protocols in place and readily accessible, this helped to at least decrease the amount and frequent of anxiety by the respondents.

RESULTS



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