

Comment on: Online survey on practice patterns in the treatment of corneal ulcer during COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Editor,

We read the interesting article by Raj *et al.*^[1] on an online survey of practice patterns in treating corneal ulcers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we must congratulate the authors for bringing out this important and thought-provoking article. However, we have a few important observations and suggestions to make, which we believe will be beneficial for all of the readers.

Firstly, the duration of the survey is not highlighted. It is highly imperative to know this since, during the lockdown, there was an acute shortage of corneal buttons, and the practice, storage, and retrieval patterns differed highly from center to center.^[2] Can the authors throw some light on this?

Secondly, the authors state that the survey questionnaire comprised of 21 questions with multiple choices. The questionnaire could have been provided at the end of the paper to get detailed insights into the survey, and would have benefitted all in replicating similar studies in the future. Can the authors throw some light on this?

Thirdly, an interesting observation is that the survey was directed towards all ophthalmologists. This could be a probable reason for a reduced response rate of approximately 35%, as the majority of general ophthalmologists refer the corneal ulcer to cornea specialists for better management. The response rate would have peaked up if the survey had been directed towards cornea specialists only. Additionally, more private practitioners responded to the survey as probably most government hospital practitioners were busy performing COVID-19 duties.^[3]

Lastly, in Table 5 of the paper, 12 practitioners from government institutes responded that there was a hike

in either OPD or surgical charges. This could be slightly misleading since, as per the protocols, the treatment facility at a government hospital is usually freely available. It was unlikely that there was a hike in treatment charges at a government institute during the pandemic.

Once again, we congratulate the authors for highlighting this novel concept, and in the future, the survey can be more comprehensive and targeted towards cornea and external disease specialists.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest

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