

eLiteracy on covid among portuguese women: web-based survey study

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Background:

Digital tools are recognized public health tools for literacy. Their effectiveness is relatively unknown - some studies describe 40% of adults with literacy levels below the necessary for optimal use. eLiteracy has been a buzzword during the pandemic, but we still don't understand who benefits from it. This study aims to understand the ability of women to identify and use COVID-19 online information and its link with knowledge and behavior

Methods:

Web-based survey conducted on female adults. Coronavirus eHealth literacy scales measured skills to apply information (CoV-eHEALHS) and COVID-19-related knowledge, conspiracy beliefs, and adherence to protective behaviors (COVID-19 KAPs). Spearman correlation and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to identify association between CoV-eHEALHS and COVID-19 KAP, and between these and age, income, and level of education

Results:

Higher CoV-eHEALS were seen in higher level of education ($\chi^2=17,03$; $p=0,002$), higher knowledge ($\beta=0,19$; $p=0,000$), lower conspiracy ($\beta=-0,27$; $p=0,000$) and higher adherence to protective measures ($\beta=0,24$; $p=0,000$). Higher knowledge was seen in greater ages ($\beta=0,11$; $p=0,000$), higher education ($\chi^2=36,40$; $p=0,000$) and greater income ($\chi^2=19,96$; $p=0,001$). Lower conspiracy was seen in higher education ($\chi^2=31,50$; $p=0,000$) and higher income ($\chi^2=9,71$; $p=0,046$).

Higher adherence to protective measures had no correlation with socioeconomic factors.

Conclusions:

There was association between higher eHealth literacy and COVID-19 KAP, reinforcing public health stakeholders to invest on disseminating digital information. There were worse results in younger women of lower education and income, suggesting information should be adapted to this population

Key messages:

- Digitally disseminated information is important because of the association between higher eHealth literacy and knowledge and protective behavior.
- It should be adapted for younger women with lower levels of education and income to maximize results.