COVID-19 PANDEMIC: IMPACT OF SOP CONFUSION ON PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND COMPLIANCE

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(Received 20th May 2024; revised 05th August 2024; accepted 13th August 2024)

Abstract. This article examines the impact of confusion arising from the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during the COVID-19 Movement Control Order (MCO) in the Semenyih district. The pandemic has transformed global lifestyles, with the MCO aiming to curb transmission. The study investigates how SOP-related confusion affects the community due to inconsistencies and laxity. Utilizing a random sample of 100 Semenyih residents, a questionnaire was employed, and data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. While respondents display high SOP comprehension and adherence, moderate confusion indicates perception variations leading to community uncertainty. Recommendations highlight the necessity for uniform, explicit, and accurate SOPs during the MCO to prevent confusion among the community and authorities. Findings can guide the government in effectively disseminating SOP-related information via media to manage the pandemic's spread, fostering targeted measures for awareness and compliance. The study underscores transparent and consistent SOP execution and government initiatives to provide clear information for mitigating community confusion during pandemics.
Keywords: *Covid-19, standard operating procedures, movement control order, Selangor*

Introduction

COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus (CoV), is a virus that infects the respiratory tract and can lead to various types of illnesses, ranging from a common cold to more severe complications, especially in individuals with weakened immune systems. People with compromised immune systems, such as the elderly and infants, as well as those with preexisting health conditions, are at a higher risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Carlos et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020; Xia et al., 2020). Some indicators of a COVID-19 infection include fever, dry cough, fatigue, nasal congestion, headache, diarrhea, sore throat, and vomiting (Huang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). These symptoms are commonly experienced by individuals infected with the virus. However, it's important to note that COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe, and some infected individuals may remain asymptomatic. The virus spreads through respiratory droplets that are produced when a person coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes. It can also be transmitted by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and subsequently touching the face, mouth, or eyes. Due to the rapid transmission and potential for severe health impacts of COVID-19, preventive measures such as

maintaining social distancing, wearing face coverings, practicing regular hand hygiene, and adhering to health authority guidelines are essential to curb the virus's spread.

The COVID-19 outbreak was first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and later spread to other countries. The transmission occurs primarily through human-to-human interaction, mainly via respiratory droplets expelled during coughing, sneezing, or speaking. The rapid spread of this outbreak is facilitated by the virus's high transmissibility and its ability to survive on surfaces for a certain duration. After its initial spread in Wuhan, the virus was transmitted through international travel and human contact, leading to a pandemic worldwide spread of the disease. This transmission occurs through human movement across various modes of transportation, such as air, sea, or land travel. Additionally, rapid and frequent human mobility allows the virus to easily reach diverse communities and regions. Consequently, numerous countries globally have implemented various strategies to manage the virus's spread, including movement restrictions, testing and treatment provisions, mask usage encouragement, and the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for public compliance. The overarching goal is to slow down transmission and reduce the number of new cases. In conclusion, the global spread of COVID-19 from Wuhan, China, to other countries underscores how diseases can disseminate swiftly in the era of globalization. This has presented significant challenges to worldwide public health and health authorities, necessitating collaboration to manage and mitigate the virus's spread. *Table 1* displays the top 10 countries with the highest number of reported COVID-19 cases as of April 11, 2020 (Worldometer Web Portal, 2020). The United States recorded the highest number of cases, totalling 502,876, while Malaysia ranked 34th with a total of 4,346 cases.

***Table 1**. Top 10 Countries with the Highest COVID-19 (Cases on April 11, 2020).*

No.	Country	Total case	Total deaths	Total recovered
1	United State	502,876	80,747	27,340
2	Spain	158,273	16,081	55,668
3	Italy	147,577	18,849	30,455
4	Germany	122,171	2736	43,913
5	France	124,869	13,195	24,932
6	China	82,003	3342	77,525
7	Iran	68,192	4232	35,465
8	UK	73,758	8958	344
9	Turkey	47,209	1006	2423
10	Belgium	26,667	3019	5568
34	Malaysia	4346	70	1830

The global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has induced anxiety among populations in affected countries. This phenomenon has garnered worldwide attention due to its substantial impact on economies (Nicola et al., 2020). The virus's rapid transmission has prompted shifts in societal norms and culture. For instance, practices such as wearing face coverings, practicing social distancing, and limiting physical activities to prevent virus transmission have become commonplace. Consequently, social isolation and reduced human interactions that were once part of daily routines have emerged. Social gatherings, including family meetings, friend gatherings, and religious activities, are now constrained by established SOPs. Economically, COVID-19 has disrupted numerous industries and led to economic downturns in affected nations.

Business closures, reduced production, restricted air travel, and other economic activities have significantly impacted revenue streams. The statistic highlights the pandemic's social repercussions in the country, affecting education, healthcare, safety, welfare, religious practices, and social relationships. Schools and universities have shifted to online learning, mental health has gained prominence as a concern and social and cultural events like weddings and gatherings have been affected.

The global fight against COVID-19 involves implementing movement restrictions and social distancing to curb transmission (Sabran, 2020). Measures like Movement Control Orders (MCO) and distancing temporarily halt social activities, though their prolonged use could have adverse effects on well-being and prosperity (Sabran, 2020). Extended distancing could lead to loneliness and stress, affecting mental health, while MCO measures negatively impact sectors like small businesses and tourism (Sabran, 2020). Such situations can also result in political unrest and economic setbacks (Sabran, 2020). Striking a balance between health and community welfare is vital (Sabran, 2020). Governments adopt Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to mitigate these impacts (Lone and Ahmad, 2020). SOPs provide guidelines for safe practices, covering education, social gatherings, and religious events (Lone and Ahmad, 2020). Adhering to these SOPs helps individuals adapt to new norms while preventing COVID-19 transmission (Lone and Ahmad, 2020). SOPs encompass practices like physical distancing, isolating cases, quarantining exposed individuals, and imposing travel restrictions (Lone and Ahmad, 2020). These strategies aim to disrupt the chain of COVID-19 transmission (Lone and Ahmad, 2020). Italy's response to COVID-19 serves as an example (Saglietto et al., 2020). Early SOPs, such as restricting movement and closing public spaces, aimed to limit transmission and ease pressure on healthcare (Saglietto et al., 2020). Italy's experience highlights the value of timely and rigorous measures (Saglietto et al., 2020).

Chowell and Mizumoto (2020) analyzed the US response to COVID-19, including nationwide SOPs, school closures, and remote work to reduce transmission risk. Effective SOPs were pivotal in safeguarding public health and managing healthcare challenges. During the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO), confusion over SOP implementation arose in the Klang Valley, Selangor, and Putrajaya. Ambiguous instructions by Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob resulted in varied interpretations, affecting enforcement and public compliance. Clear communication is essential in crises like pandemics. Unclear directives, amplified by the media, eroded public confidence and complicated containment efforts. Berita Harian noted that unclear SOP understanding during the Movement Control Order (MCO) could hinder business sales. Despite Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry (MITI) permissions, ambiguity posed challenges, prompting some businesses to suspend operations. Understanding SOPs is critical for business continuity. Ambiguity disrupts operations and causes financial losses (as reported in Berita Harian previously). Clear comprehension of SOPs is vital for businesses during pandemics, as misunderstandings risk operation suspension and financial losses. Authorities must ensure directives are clear (Said, 2021). Utusan Malaysia highlighted confusion during the RMCO regarding physical distancing and dine-in SOPs. Both business owners and customers lacked clarity on these protocols (as reported in Utusan Malaysia previously). Misunderstandings about SOPs posed challenges during the RMCO, affecting various activities and businesses. Addressing this requires educational efforts to ensure safety and clarity (Said, 2021). During the MCO, confusion in implementing SOPs stems from inconsistencies at

different levels, leading to delays and potential penalties for individuals and businesses (Said, 2021). To mitigate this confusion and its consequences, authorities must issue clear and comprehensible SOPs to ensure the well-being of the community (Said, 2021).

In summary, the pandemic has triggered a spectrum of responses, urging global adaptation to new norms for personal and communal safety. The crisis highlights the value of international cooperation in addressing the challenge collectively. New societal norms have emerged due to COVID-19's transmission, focusing on reducing the spread and safeguarding health. These norms encompass: (1) Social Distancing: Encouraging physical distance to prevent respiratory droplet transmission, reshaping interactions in public spaces like stores and workplaces; (2) Online Interactions: Vital for maintaining distance, including remote work, digital learning, and virtual social connections; (3) Remote Work: Embraced by companies to decongest workplaces, requiring adjustment to new environments and reliance on technology; as well as (4) Face Coverings: A new norm in public areas, preventing droplet spread and protecting individuals from inhalation.

In the context of Malaysia, the government has taken significant measures to enforce these norms. Mandates such as maintaining a 1-meter social distance, wearing face coverings in public spaces, and practicing hand hygiene with sanitizers or soap have been implemented. Additionally, the government consistently emphasizes citizens' adherence to these norms to protect themselves and others. The introduction of these norms is crucial in addressing COVID-19 transmission and safeguarding public health, underscoring the importance of awareness and collective responsibility in confronting global health challenges. To effectively address the crisis caused by virus transmission and maintain control, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been introduced. These guidelines within the SOP aim to ensure that the Movement Control Order (MCO) imposed on the public can effectively control and mitigate the outbreak's spread. Given the swift and extensive transmission of the COVID-19 virus, this situation is deeply concerning. The SOP's instructions and procedures, set by authorities and health experts, must be followed by the public and organizations. The goal is to curtail the virus's spread to the maximum extent. Measures like wearing face coverings, practicing social distancing, avoiding gatherings, and maintaining hygiene are included. Adherence to the established SOPs is essential to safeguard one-self and others from virus transmission risks. Non-compliance with SOP instructions may contribute to wider and faster transmission, leading to an increase in COVID-19 cases. Because of this, the government may impose fines or penalties on individuals or organizations that breach SOPs. This approach aims to encourage compliance and impact those who disregard safety norms. Implementing SOPs is pivotal to ensuring public safety and well-being during a pandemic like COVID-19. It offers comprehensive guidelines to control virus transmission, mitigate its severe spread, and underscores that awareness and cooperation from all stakeholders are crucial in overcoming the crisis.

Various government departments, including the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), Ministry of Defence Malaysia (MINDEF), Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), Royal Malaysia Police, National Security Council, and others, have introduced different Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to address COVID-19 spread. However, the diversity of SOPs has sometimes led to confusion among the public. This confusion arises from varying SOP implementation across different states or regions, resulting in inconsistent directions and actions required. Such inconsistency has raised concerns and discontent among the public, particularly during the implementation of the Movement

Control Order (MCO). This issue has garnered attention on social media and in news coverage due to the challenges people face in comprehending and following differing SOPs. This study aims to investigate the impact of COVID-19 SOP implementation confusion on the public. The study's objectives are: (1) To evaluate the public's understanding of government-imposed SOPs; and (2) To identify the extent of confusion among the public regarding SOP implementation, including conflicts arising from different authorities' directions. This study aims to offer a clearer view of how SOP confusion affects the public and provide guidance for enhancing communication and coordination of SOP instructions. By addressing this issue, the government and authorities can take more effective steps in communicating and coordinating SOPs.

Materials and Methods

In this study, data collection was conducted through a questionnaire survey, which serves as a tool for gathering information and responses from respondents about a specific topic or issue. The advantage of using a questionnaire survey lies in its efficiency in collecting data from various respondents. The study took place in the Semenyih district, Selangor, Malaysia, where a total of 100 respondents were selected for participation using the simple random sampling method. This method ensures that each individual in the population has an equal chance of being chosen as a respondent. The collected data were then analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 27 software. SPSS is widely utilized statistical software in social and scientific research for various analyses, including descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, hypothesis testing, and more. In this study, SPSS version 27 was employed to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire survey. This analysis involved descriptive statistics such as minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each variable, along with potential statistical tests like t-tests, ANOVA, or regression analysis, depending on the study's objectives and questions. In this study, respondents answered the questionnaire using a Likert scale, which measures opinions, views, or understanding of a particular issue or statement. The Likert scale employed here includes five response options, ranging from 1 to 5, indicating the level of agreement or disagreement with the given statement. Each number on the scale corresponds to a specific level of agreemen: (1) Strongly Disagree: Strong opposition or complete disagreement; (2) Disagree: Disagreement, but not as strongly as “Strongly Disagree”; (3) Neutral: Uncertainty or lack of a clear opinion; (4) Agree: Agreement or approval of the statement; as well as (5) Strongly Agree on Strong affirmation of the statement.

This Likert scale was used to assess respondents' understanding and perspectives on SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) and confusion about it. Each statement related to SOP or confusion was presented in *Table 2* with five response options based on respondents' levels of agreement. Respondents' choices on the scale reflect their understanding and views on each statement. Following data collection, statistical analyses were performed to process the data. Descriptive statistics like mean, median, standard deviation, and variance were calculated for each statement to provide an overview of respondents’ levels of understanding and views. This analysis can reveal patterns or trends in respondents' perspectives. For example, researchers might discover that respondents generally agree with SOP-related statements but express confusion about their implementation. The analysis of Likert scale data allows researchers to present an overall view of respondents' comprehension and views on SOP and

confusion. This approach offers both qualitative and quantitative insights into how the community perceives SOP and the associated confusion. The Likert scale's use allows for detailed data collection and comparison among statements, providing a richer understanding of respondents' attitudes toward the topic. It aids in measuring respondents' understanding and views in a detailed manner. Analyzing Likert scale data provides a deeper insight into respondents' perceptions and views on the research topic.

***Table 2**. Likert Scale and Level of Agreement.*

Scale	Level
1	Strongly disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

The interpretation scale is employed to translate Likert scale values into more meaningful and easily comprehensible interpretations. This aids researchers and readers alike in obtaining an overarching understanding of respondents' levels of understanding or viewpoints. In the context of this study, the interpretation scale, as devised by Kotschevar and Withrow (2007), was utilized to assign significance to the obtained Likert scale values. *Table 3*, referenced in this text, likely displays a sequence of score values provided by respondents based on their chosen answers in the Likert scale. Each score value may signify distinct tiers of understanding or perspectives concerning the questionnaire statements. The interpretation scale developed by Kotschevar and Withrow (2007) is then utilized to associate score values with more coherent qualitative interpretations. For instance, for a specific statement, a score of 1 could be correlated with the interpretation "Strongly Disagree", while a score of 2 might correspond to "Disagree", and so forth. This approach streamlines the presentation of the study's outcomes into a more accessible and intelligible format. The incorporation of an interpretation scale offers a simpler way to convey Likert scale data findings to readers or audiences. It obviates the necessity to scrutinize individual score values and empowers readers to grasp a comprehensive overview of respondents' perspectives or comprehension. Through the utilization of the interpretation scale created by Kotschevar and Withrow (2007) and referencing *Table 3*, which possibly encompasses score values derived from the Likert scale, researchers can link these score values with readily understandable qualitative interpretations. This approach facilitates the communication of research findings and furnishes a clearer insight into respondents' viewpoints or grasp of the presented questionnaire statements.

***Table 3**. Minimum score scale and interpretation.*

Minimum score	Level	Minimum score scale and interpretation
1.00≤min≤2.33	Low	Low Disagree/less helpful/less skilled/less fulfilling/ uncertain/sometimes/none/small portion
2.34≤min≤3.67	Moderate	Moderate Agree/helpful/skilled/fulfilling/half
3.68≤min≤5.00	High	Strongly agree/very helpful/very skilled/very fulfilling/very often/all/majority

Descriptive analysis is a statistical method employed to organize, examine, and provide a summarized presentation of data in statistical form. In this study, descriptive analysis has been utilized to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire and to understand the perspectives and level of comprehension of the respondents regarding Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Additionally, it assists in identifying the

demographic characteristics of the respondents. Frequency distribution is a method used to showcase the count or percentage frequency of each value within a dataset. In this study, frequency distribution has been applied to analyze the demographic information of respondents, including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, marital status, educational level, occupation type, and monthly income. This aids researchers in gaining insights into respondents' profiles and offers an overview of their demographic attributes. Pilot testing is a critical pre-study phase aimed at ensuring the appropriateness of the questionnaire and its ability to generate high-quality data. During this pilot test, the objective is to assess the questionnaire's suitability in terms of time allocation, clarity of instructions, and relevance of questions. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient is a measure used to evaluate the internal consistency or reliability of items within a questionnaire. Ranging from 0 to 1, a higher Cronbach's Alpha value indicates a greater level of reliability among the items. In this study, the results of the pilot test revealed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.823 for the section related to respondents' understanding of SOP and 0.943 for the section concerning confusion regarding SOP.

According to Bond and Fox (2013), Cronbach's Alpha values falling within the range of 0.71 to 0.99 are considered indicative of good quality and are acceptable for survey instruments. Therefore, the Cronbach's Alpha values obtained in this study suggest that the questionnaire employed is reliable and of high quality in assessing respondents' comprehension and confusion related to SOP. Descriptive analysis, frequency distribution, and pilot testing involving Cronbach's Alpha values constitute crucial steps in a study, ensuring the validity, reliability, and high quality of the data collected. This approach empowers researchers to derive conclusions based on accurate and pertinent information obtained from the participants.

Results and Discussion

Demographic profile

Table 4 displays the demographic information of the participants. This study encompassed a distribution of 56% female respondents and 44% male respondents. The largest proportion of participants fell within the age range of 31 to 40 years (50%), trailed by 19 to 30 years (34%), 41 to 50 years (12%), and smaller segments comprising those under 18 years (2%) and 51 to 60 years (2%). This investigation further encompassed 96% of Malay respondents, while 1% identified as of Indian ethnicity. These percentages also reflect 99% Muslim and 1% Hindu respondents. In the context of marital status, 62% of the respondents were married, followed by 36% who were single, and a smaller fraction of 2% who reported being divorced. As for educational attainment, the majority of participants held a Bachelor's degree (41%), followed by Diploma holders (26%), those with a Secondary School education (17%), individuals with a Master's degree (8%), and those with a Skill Certificate or equivalent (8%). Concerning occupational categories, respondents were distributed across various sectors: private sector employees (32%), government sector employees (34%), students (15%), self-employed individuals (8%), unemployed participants (10%), and a minimal fraction (1%) of respondents who were retired. Income levels were categorized into four groups: no income, B40 (below RM4849), M40 (RM4850-RM10959), and T20 (RM10960 and above). The preponderance of respondents fell within the B40 group, indicating a monthly income of RM1-RM4849 (51%), followed by the M40 group with an income ranging from RM4850 to RM10959 (25%), and a smaller subset within the

T20 group with RM10960 and above (2%). Moreover, 22% of the respondents indicated no income.

Table 4. *Demographic information.*

Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	44	44.0
Female	56	56.0
Age		
Under 18 years	2	2.0
19 - 30 years	34	34.0
31 - 40 years	50	50.0
41 - 50 years	12	12.0
51 - 60 years	2	2.0
Ethnicity		
Melayu	96	96.0
India	1	1.0
Others	3	3.0
Religion		
Islam	99	99.0
Hindu	1	1.0
Marital Status		
Single	36	36.0
Married	62	62.0
Divorced	1	1.0
Spouse deceased	1	1.0
Education Level		
Master's degree	8	8.0
Bachelor's degree	41	41.0
Diploma	26	26.0
Skill Certificate	8	8.0
Secondary School	17	17.0
Occupation		
Government Employee	34	34.0
Private Sector Employee	32	32.0
Self-Employed	8	8.0
Student	15	15.0
Retired	1	1.0
Unemployed	10	10.0
Income		
No Income	22	22.0
Below RM4849	51	51.0
RM4850 – RM10959	25	25.0
RM10960 and above	2	2.0

Respondents' understanding of SOP

This section is dedicated to evaluating the extent to which respondents comprehend Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) during the Movement Control Order (MCO) period. SOP encompasses specific guidelines and protocols mandated by the government to ensure a consistent approach in managing specific situations, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic. Within this section, the study incorporates nine items or

questions as part of the survey to assess respondents' grasp of SOP. Each item pertains to a distinct facet of adherence to and understanding of SOP. The text alludes to *Table 5*, a tabulated presentation featuring minimum values (min) and, presumably, maximum values (although not explicitly mentioned in this excerpt) for each of the nine items related to respondents' comprehension of SOP. The passage notes that minimum values fall within the range of 3.69 to 4.63, signifying a strong level of understanding among respondents. The overall minimum value for respondents' SOP comprehension is calculated at 4.07, indicating a high level of understanding across all the considered items. This value is likely attained by averaging the minimum values of all nine items.

***Table 5**. Respondents' understanding of SOP implementation.*

No	Item	Percentage (%)					μ	SL
		SD	D	NAD	A	SA		
1	I understand the SOP established by the government.	3	2	15	40	40	4.12	H
2	I comply with the SOP established by the government.	-	1	9	43	47	4.36	H
3	I am not confused by the SOP established by the government.	2	15	25	28	30	3.69	H
4	I am aware that the SOP established by the government varies during different phases of MCO and MCO Tightened.	-	4	15	29	52	4.29	H
5	I am not afraid to leave home as I am clear about the implemented SOP.	1	8	23	38	30	3.88	H
6	I provide complete documentation according to the implemented SOP.	-	3	20	36	41	4.12	H
7	I pay attention whenever SOP changes according to different MCO areas.	3	9	14	43	31	3.90	H
8	I have no issues with authorities regarding SOP throughout the MCO.	1	2	15	33	49	4.27	H
9	I have never been fined for failing to comply with SOP.	5	-	3	11	81	4.63	H
Overall minimum value							4.07	H

Note: SD=Strongly Agree; D=Disagree; NAG=neither Agree nor Disagree; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; μ=Minimum Value; SL=Score level; H=High.

For each of these nine items, a corresponding minimum value (min) is provided, denoting the lowest score attained for that specific item. These minimum values offer insights into respondents' perspectives on their understanding of various aspects related to SOP: (1) Respondents assert that they have never faced fines due to SOP non-compliance (min=4.63); (2) Respondents adhere to the government-prescribed SOP (min=4.36); (3) Respondents recognize that SOP varies across different phases of the MCO (min=4.29); (4) Respondents encounter no issues with authorities concerning SOP during MCO (min=4.27); (5) Respondents understand the government-mandated SOP (min=4.12); (6) Respondents furnish complete documentation in line with implemented SOP (min=4.12); (7) Respondents pay attention to SOP changes in different MCO areas (min=3.90); (8) Respondents are not hesitant to leave their homes as they grasp the enforced SOP (min=3.88); as well as (9) Respondents do not find the government-specified SOP confusing (min=3.69). The provided minimum values collectively convey that respondents generally possess a high level of understanding regarding SOP during the MCO period. Higher minimum values indicate stronger agreement among respondents with the provided statements, reflecting their positive perspective on SOP understanding and compliance. These statistics also underscore that respondents exhibit a high level of SOP comprehension during the MCO period based on their responses to the given items. The minimum values associated with each item signify respondents' agreement or viewpoint on distinct facets of SOP.

Misunderstanding of respondents regarding SOP

The study's discussion now shifts to assessing how well respondents understood the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The survey includes eight questions designed to gauge the extent of confusion surrounding SOP. Each question addresses specific aspects related to potentially misleading or unclear information and perceptions about SOP. The information is referenced from *Table 6*, which likely displays minimum values (min) and possibly maximum values (though not mentioned here) for each of the eight questions about SOP confusion. These minimum values reflect the degree of confusion felt by respondents for each aspect. The overall minimum value for SOP confusion is 3.54, indicating a moderate level of confusion among the respondents. This value is derived by calculating the average of the minimum values from all eight questions. For each of these questions, a minimum value (min) is provided, representing the lowest score recorded for that particular question. These minimum values offer an overview of how respondents perceive confusion in various SOP-related aspects: (1) Respondents express that there is a considerable amount of false information about SOP on social media (min=4.07); (2) Respondents believe that SOP-related information lacks consistency across different states (min=3.70); (3) Respondents feel that SOP-related information frequently changes, leading to confusion (min=3.67); (4) Respondents think that SOP-related information doesn't reach all segments of society (min=3.60); (5) Respondents notice that SOP-related information isn't consistent in some areas, even during the same MCO phase (min=3.60); (6) Respondents believe that the government struggles to control false SOP information (min=3.44); (7) Respondents find that SOP-related information is unclear (min=3.20); as well as (8) Respondents find that SOP-related information is difficult to understand (min=3.07).

***Table 6**. Confusion about SOP.*

No	Item	Percentage (%)					μ	SL
		SD	D	NAD	A	SA		
1	Information related to SOP is unclear.	11	20	25	26	18	3.20	M
2	Information related to SOP is difficult to understand.	11	25	24	26	14	3.07	M
3	Information related to SOP does not reach all segments of society.	6	15	25	21	33	3.60	M
4	The government fails to control false information related to SOP.	5	17	27	31	20	3.44	M
5	Information related to SOP frequently changes confusion.	6	11	26	24	33	3.67	M
6	Information-related SOP is not consistent in some areas of the same MCO Phase.	5	12	29	26	28	3.60	M
7	Information related to SOP is not consistent across states.	6	10	28	20	36	3.70	M
8	There is a lot of false information related to SOP on social media.	3	5	24	18	50	4.07	H
	Overall minimum value						3.54	M

Note: SD=Strongly Agree; D=Disagree; NAG=neither Agree nor Disagree; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; μ=Minimum Value; SL=Score level; H=High; M=Moderate

The provided minimum values collectively suggest that respondents generally perceive a moderate to high level of confusion concerning these aspects. This points to their perception of how much SOP information might be unclear, inconsistent, or hard to comprehend. This statistic indicates that respondents have a moderate to high level of confusion about SOP-related information during the MCO period, based on their responses to these questions. The minimum value attached to each question reflects respondents' perceptions of various aspects of SOP-related confusion.

The findings indicate that the level of public understanding of SOP during the Movement Control Order (MCO) is high. This implies that the majority of respondents

have a good understanding of the SOP set by the government. This high score level demonstrates awareness, willingness to comply, and a high level of attention to SOP, which in turn can help prevent virus transmission. The findings also show that the Semenyih community as a whole understands the importance of SOP and implements it effectively. The results reveal that the Semenyih community is compliant with the established SOP. This means they adhere to practices following the government's instructions. Such compliance helps prevent issues with authorities and mitigates the risk of fines or penalties due to non-compliance with SOP. It also reflects the positive attitude and awareness of the community towards personal and collective safety amid the pandemic. Public awareness and willingness to adhere to SOP are crucial in curbing the spread of COVID-19. This positive attitude and awareness contribute to preventing spikes in infection cases. The community's proactive approach, such as understanding and practicing SOP, aids in safeguarding their well-being and that of others.

While the confusion level about SOP is relatively low, it still demands attention. These minor confusions, though not critical, provide room for review and improved communication regarding SOP. This can enhance the community's understanding and effective implementation of SOP, preventing more significant misunderstandings in the future. These findings underscore that education and communication strategies regarding SOP effectively cultivate public awareness and understanding. To maintain high levels of understanding and compliance, it is important to continue providing clear and consistent information to the public about SOP and safety measures. Referring to the authors and sources cited in the text, the research mentioned by Adnan (2021), Hayin (2021), and Puteh (2020) supports the significance of positive attitudes, awareness, and compliance of the community with SOP in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings show that the majority of items related to confusion about SOP during the MCO are scored at a moderate level. This indicates that despite some confusion, most of the community possesses a moderate level of understanding regarding SOP. However, it is crucial to remember that even at this moderate level of confusion, corrective measures are needed to ensure public safety. The findings reveal that confusion exists in SOP due to inconsistencies observed across states during the implementation of MCO phases. This phenomenon may arise due to varying requirements and conditions among different states, leading to differing directions and SOP from authorities. This can create confusion among the public when they encounter inconsistent SOP throughout the country. Some states relax SOP, such as inter-district travel, dine-in at restaurants, and business activities, even during the MCO phase, which can pose risks of increased COVID-19 cases. This relaxation of SOP can enable virus transmission if not managed properly. These risks need to be taken into consideration by authorities and the community, with safety measures prioritized to prevent unwanted spikes in infections. Ensuring consistency in SOP across the country is crucial to prevent confusion among the public. Clear and effective communication regarding changes in SOP and instructions should be regularly provided to the public. Moreover, SOP relaxation should be managed prudently to avoid risks of increased COVID-19 cases. Referring to the authors and sources cited in the text, the research mentioned by Hairom (2022) supports the risk of increased COVID-19 cases due to imbalanced relaxation of SOP during the MCO phase.

The Movement Control Order (MCO) has witnessed a significant increase in the use of social media as a source of information and interaction among the community.

However, the inundation of information on social media can trigger confusion and uncertainty among the public. The proliferation of information, including unverified or false information, makes it increasingly challenging for individuals to discern accurate and reliable information. The spread of false or unverified information on social media can lead to confusion and misperception within the community. This can result in inappropriate responses and the potential to hinder the authorities' efforts to manage the situation. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the dissemination of false information related to treatment, prevention, and infection statistics can lead to incorrect perceptions and endanger public health. The dissemination of false information can erode public confidence and trust in the information provided by authorities, potentially fostering skepticism toward government measures to control the pandemic. A skeptical public may continue unsafe practices, ignore important instructions, or neglect necessary precautions. In addressing confusion arising from the spread of false information on social media, government authorities must take proactive steps. This includes providing official and accurate information through official media channels and verifying information with valid evidence. Official and clear statements from authorities can help convey accurate information to the public. Referring to the authors and sources cited in the text, research by Aziz et al. (2021) and Hamzah et al. (2020) supports the serious implications that can arise due to the dissemination of false information on social media during situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. Authorities need to diligently work to address confusion and provide accurate and useful information to the public.

The frequency of information delivery through various official media channels such as television, radio, and social media platforms like Facebook plays a crucial role in disseminating up-to-date information to the public. Daily updates and consistent delivery contribute to raising awareness and understanding of the required SOP. The effectiveness of delivering SOP-related information depends on the authenticity and accuracy of the information provided. Verified and authentic information from official sources instills confidence in the public. Precise and accurate information ensures that the public has a correct understanding of the necessary steps, aiding in preventing any confusion. The delivery of clear and consistent information plays a vital role in cultivating public awareness of the importance of complying with SOP. When the public sees daily reports on infection statistics, deaths, and recoveries, they are more likely to comprehend the severity of the situation and the importance of adhering to SOP to reduce virus transmission. Quoting from the interview with Dato' Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob on Bernama TV also highlights the significant role of leaders and prominent figures in conveying information to the public. Information provided by credible leaders and subject matter experts adds a layer of confidence for the public to follow established directives and SOPs. In conclusion, the high effectiveness of delivering SOP-related information is a result of ongoing efforts by authorities to ensure the authenticity, accuracy, and consistency of information conveyed to the public through various official media channels. This enhances awareness, understanding, and compliance with SOP among the public, consequently aiding in controlling the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. “The Malaysian people understand the necessity of the MCO, and overall compliance is very high, even during its initial implementation”.

Frequent information delivery refers to the consistent communication of current and relevant information to the public. This involves using various official media channels such as television, radio, news portals, social media, and more. By repeatedly presenting

the same information, the public is continuously exposed to the information, thereby reinforcing their understanding and awareness of the required SOP. Transparency of content, on the other hand, pertains to delivering information that is clear, detailed, and easily comprehensible to the public. This involves using concise and straightforward language, avoiding technical jargon that might be difficult for the general public to understand, and presenting information in a manner that is easily digestible. Clear information assists the public in understanding the necessary steps, the benefits of safety measures, and the implications of adhering to SOP. The combination of high-frequency delivery and transparent content is crucial because consistent information delivery strengthens public awareness of SOP and the importance of adhering to government directives. Clear content helps the public better grasp the required steps. Easily understandable language and practical examples can help the public relate the information to real-life situations. Clear and frequently delivered information reminds the public about SOP and the importance of compliance. This can aid in reducing confusion and improving the public's compliance with established directives. A delivery strategy that focuses on high-frequency and transparent content is essential in maintaining public awareness, understanding, and compliance with SOP. By ensuring that information is easily accessible and comprehensible, and by delivering it consistently, authorities can bolster public awareness and compliance with directives related to issues like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has yielded findings indicating that the Semenyih community possesses a high level of understanding of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) set by the government during the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO). The majority of the community in this area comprehends and adheres to the provided SOP. The results of the analysis also show that the Semenyih community is generally well-informed about the SOP being executed by the government. This level of understanding is supported by the fact that the Semenyih community is aware of the latest SOP and monitors current information regarding issued SOPs. They also pay attention to discrepancies that may occur in SOPs across different places and are conscious of the importance of complying with the established SOPs. Furthermore, the study has also found that the Semenyih community does not encounter significant issues with authorities regarding SOPs. This indicates that the public's compliance with SOPs is positive and does not lead to any conflicts or disputes with authorities. Overall, this study demonstrates that the Semenyih community holds a favorable attitude towards understanding, complying with, and being aware of SOPs during the MCO. This is crucial for reducing virus transmission and maintaining the safety and well-being of the community. These findings also reflect the effectiveness of information delivery strategies and the efforts of authorities in ensuring public awareness and compliance with SOPs.

The study results also indicate that the level of confusion among the Semenyih community regarding SOPs is at a moderate level. This suggests that some individuals in the community might face difficulties or confusion concerning the implementation of SOPs during the MCO. One contributing factor to this confusion is the proliferation of inaccurate SOP information spread through social media. Social media often serves as a platform where inaccurate or false information regarding SOPs can easily circulate. This

can confuse the public and make them uncertain about the actual SOPs established by the government. Additionally, the inconsistency of SOP information among states also contributes to confusion. In situations like the implementation phases of the MCO, there are variations in the SOP measures implemented in each state. This can lead to confusion, particularly for individuals who may need to travel between different states or regions. Despite the Semenyih community having a good level of understanding of SOPs, confusion still exists among some individuals due to false information on social media and the inconsistency of SOP information among states. Therefore, efforts to disseminate accurate and consistent information and to enhance public awareness of credible information sources are essential for reducing such confusion.

The efforts taken by the government to curb virus transmission through SOPs are indeed commendable. The implementation of SOPs is a crucial step in controlling and reducing the spread of the virus, especially in crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. This represents a proactive action by the government to safeguard the safety and well-being of the people, as well as to preserve the healthcare system's capacity from being overwhelmed by the rise in COVID-19 cases. During the implementation of the MCO or other control measures, harmonizing SOPs across all states is crucial to avoid confusion among the public. Confusion can arise when there are differences in the measures implemented across states. This can perplex the public and lead to uncertainty about the measures to be followed. Moreover, consistency in the dissemination of SOP information is important. Accurate and consistent information will assist the public in better understanding the required measures. This will also facilitate the public's adherence to SOPs more accurately and effectively. With alignment and effectiveness in disseminating SOP information, the risk of virus transmission can be reduced more swiftly, collectively aiding in containing the pandemic's spread. In conclusion, the implementation of SOPs is a critical aspect in curbing virus transmission such as COVID-19. The government's efforts to ensure public safety and well-being deserve appreciation. Consistency and coherence in disseminating SOP information will help the public understand and comply with these measures, contributing to the success of virus containment efforts.

Acknowledgement

This research study is self-funded.

Conflict of interest

The author confirms that there is no conflict of interest involved with any parties in this research study.

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