

An Investigation of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Specific COVID-19 Public Health Regulations and Precautions Among Students of The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus (The UWI STA).



PRESENTERS:
Quaranteam

BACKGROUND:
After the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, the government of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) began instituting regulations and precautions, following The WHO guidelines. Evidently, the second wave in T&T was spread by persons ages 25-49 (1), attributed to their highly social lifestyle and their susceptibility to showing no to mild symptoms, whilst being infectious. Investigation to determine if this age group is compliant can assist in the successful prevention and control of the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

- OBJECTIVES:**
- ✦ To assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of students of The UWI STA toward the public health regulations enforced as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
 - ✦ To determine whether students of The UWI STA are taking precautions to prevent the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, besides those mandated by the government.
 - ✦ To inquire whether students of The UWI STA intend to continue the implementation of these practices when COVID-19 regulations are relaxed.

METHOD:
A cross-sectional study was used to measure:

- ✦ Knowledge Score [KS] (where Poor KS is <70%, Good KS is ≥70)
- ✦ Attitude Score [AS] (where Negative AS is <50%, Positive AS is ≥50)
- ✦ Practice Score [PS] (where Poor PS is <70%, Good PS is ≥70).

A snowball sample of 290 students from 7 faculties at the UWI, STA completed the survey during February 22nd 2021 and June 30th 2021. Data analysis was conducted by IBM SPSS software, producing comparative tables and Pearson chi-square values.

88.3% with Good Knowledge
97.6% with Positive Attitude
47.6% with Good Practice

SCORES

Towards specific COVID-19 Public Health Regulations and Precautions

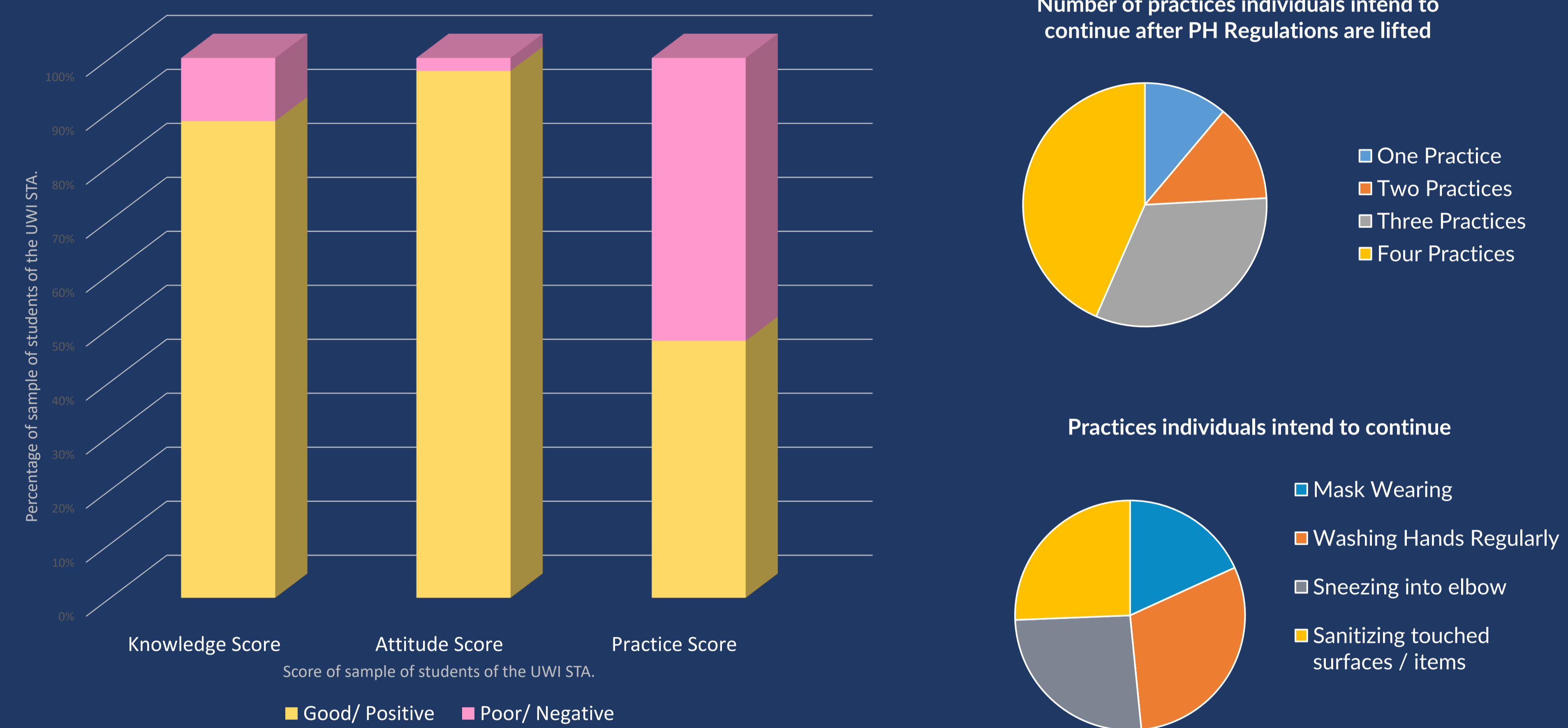
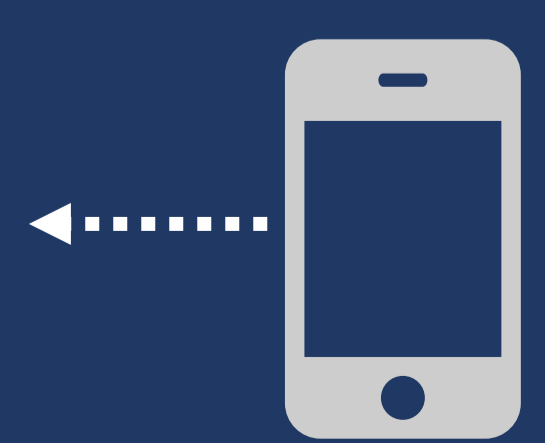
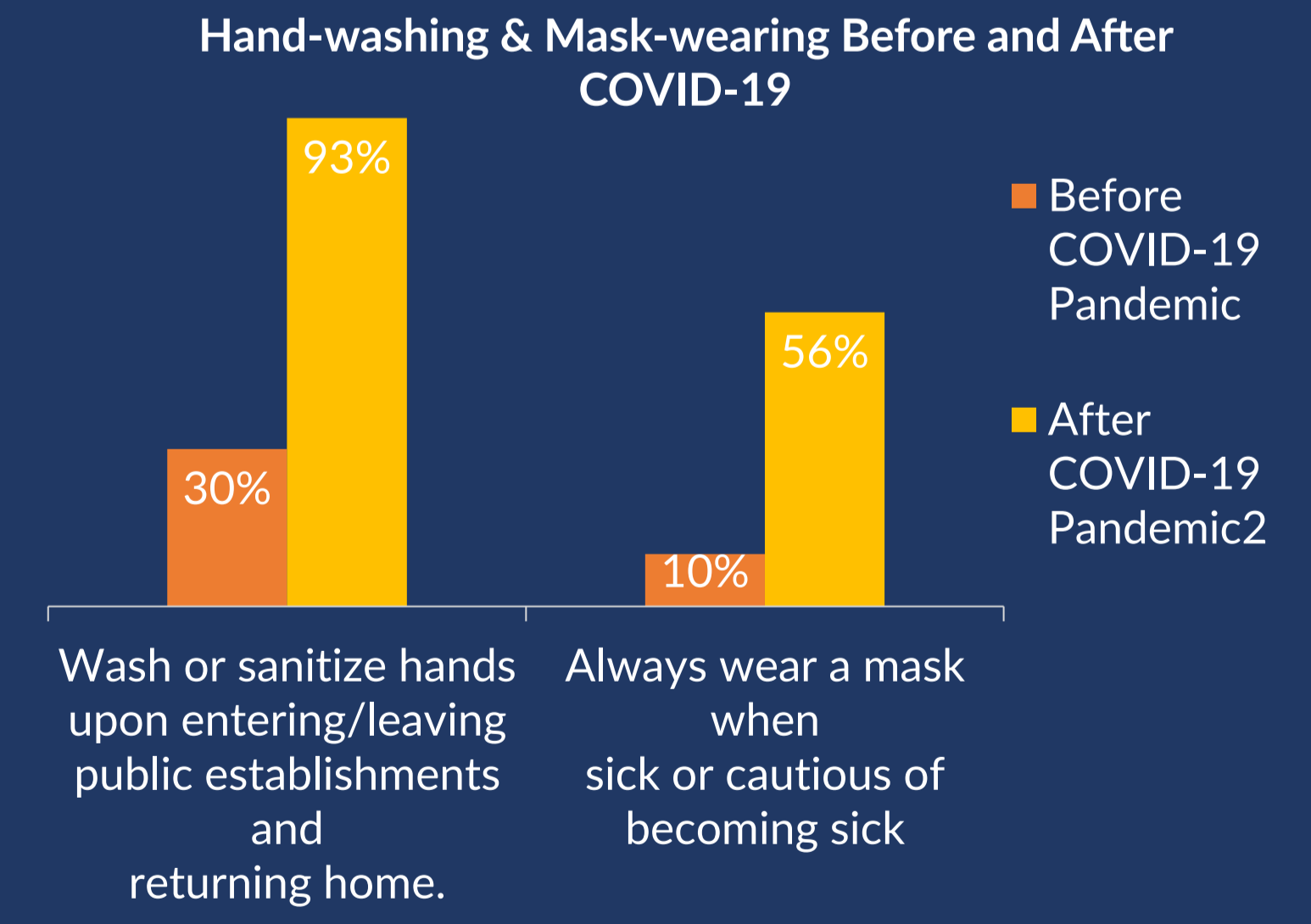


Figure 1: Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice Scores of the sample of students of the UWI STA concerning Public Health Regulations and Precautions.



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DISCUSSION:
Good knowledge scores were most common (Figure 1) differing from international studies with average awareness among university students and adolescents (1,2).

Over 95% of respondents had **positive attitude scores**, like results yielded in other studies (1).

Respondents were more likely to have **poor practice scores** (52.4%) despite the majority recording high knowledge scores.

Notably, **knowledge** and **attitudes** were statistically dependent, in accordance with another study (3). However, no relationships (of knowledge and attitudes) to **practices** existed, revealing education about public health guidelines, and belief in their effectiveness did not affect adherence. This trend aligns with other studies (1,2).

¾ of participants intended to continue most practices. Compared to before the pandemic, respondents were 5 times more likely to wear masks when sick or cautious of becoming sick and 3 times more likely to wash or sanitize their hands upon relaxation of public health measures. This can have fortuitous effects on healthcare in the future.

CONCLUSION:
While the *knowledge* and *attitudes* of COVID-19 public health regulations and precautions among the UWI STA students are *generally good*, their *practices require improvement*. The intention to continue these public health practices is prevalent in 70.0% of the population.

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