

# IS IT HARD FOR MILLENNIALS TO FOLLOW HEALTH PROTOCOL WHEN HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS?

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of millennial knowledge on the decision to follow health protocols when hanging out with friends. The research data were obtained using observation, interviews and questionnaires to millennials in Sukabumi. The research population is millennials who have hang out with friends in cafe. The questionnaire was distributed with 150 respondents on 9 cafes. Purposive sampling technique used for the data collection. Path analysis with Lisrel 9.30 was also used to test the hypothesis. Millennials have good subjective and objective knowledge regarding the Covid-19 virus. They also understand that implementing health protocols can minimize the spread of the virus. However, they will still hang out with friends even though the implementation of health protocols is difficult. Subjective and objective knowledge are not related to the decision to implement health protocols. The main reason it is difficult to follow health protocols is due to unfamiliarity. Apart from that, the reasons for the feelings of uneasiness and fear of offending friends when gathered are also the reasons. In addition, it is less comfortable to use masks and be far apart when gathering. Another reason is the lack of awareness caused by socialization that is not well targeted to millennials. Therefore, it is necessary to improve socialization and media strategies and the right message. Information should also be provided using real examples. Furthermore, it is necessary to be firm with government officials in taking action against violators. There is also a need for consistency in enforcing health protocols so that people are forced to implement them.*

**Keywords:** Subjective Knowledge, Objective Knowledge, Decision-Making Process, Health Protocol

## INTRODUCTION

The number of cases of residents who are positive for Covid-19 and who have died in Sukabumi continues to increase. The Sukabumi Government responded to this condition by tightening health protocols in crowded places. This step was carried out amid the increase in positive cases of Covid-19 in the City of Sukabumi in early December 2020 which penetrated 1,031 people. This policy refers to the Regulation of the Mayor of Sukabumi Number 36 of 2020 concerning Imposition of Administrative Sanctions for Violations of Health Protocols in Prevention and Control of Corona Virus Disease 2019 in Sukabumi (Iman, 2020).

The increase in positive cases of the Covid-19 virus in Sukabumi is thought to be mostly millennials. This assumption is based on the awareness of the lack of awareness of millennials to implement health protocols. This assumption is based on the results of a survey conducted in other regions which are also considered not much different from other regions in Indonesia. A survey at the beginning of the pandemic carried out in Central Java Province showed that the awareness of adults to the elderly in implementing health protocols was higher when compared to the millennial generation. The hope is that the millennial generation can become a pioneer in implementing new behaviors in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because, until now the pandemic has not ended nor is showing signs of sloping (Sushmita, 2020).

This condition is very unfortunate because it is hoped that millennials can become a pioneer in implementing health protocols. The younger generation as agents of change are

expected to be able to provide education to the public regarding the implementation of the Covid-19 Health protocol in the era of adapting to new habits (Haryadi, 2020).

Socialization from various parties (Sidiq, Siti Sofro & Achmad, 2021), especially the government, regarding the Covid-19 virus and how to anticipate it has been done well. Information that is easily obtained in various media, both printed and electronic, has led the public to understand the Covid-19 virus and how the implementation of health protocols is an effort to anticipate the impact of the virus. Of course, millennials as the young generation who understand technology also get this information well.

The rapid information and outreach from the government regarding the implementation of health protocols both at home and in public areas still does not make millennials apply health protocols when gathering with friends in public areas (for example, cafes or restaurants). Information on the number of people infected and died due to the Covid-19 virus is thought to have not been able to increase their awareness of implementing health protocols when gathering with friends.

For this reason, in order to increase adherence to health protocols when gathering in public areas, the Sukabumi Government has started to impose fines on health protocol violators since December 2020. The maximum sanction given is IDR 100,000 for residents who violate health protocols (For example, for residents who do not use health protocols masks, crowding or not keeping your distance). Including businesses that do not apply health protocols will be sanctioned with temporary business license revocation (Rohman, 2020).

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of millennial knowledge on the decision to follow health protocols when hanging out with friends. This research is important to do to find out the reasons why millennials find it difficult to apply health protocols when hanging out with their friends. It is hoped that by knowing these reasons, solutions can be found so that millennials want to follow health protocols when gathering with friends.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Consumer Knowledge**

Before the late 1980s, Alba & Hutchinson (1987) argued that consumer knowledge was treated as a unidimensional construct and Brucks (1985) also stated that many of the early attempts to model consumer behavior failed to distinguish between the different kinds of knowledge and used considerably different measures of consumer knowledge (Ellis, 2015). Early measures of consumer knowledge included frequency of purchase, objective tests, formal training (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987), self-reports of knowledge, memory tests, amount of purchasing and usage experience (Brucks, 1985) (cited in (Ellis, 2015).

Alba and Hutchinson suggest that consumer knowledge is consisted of two components, familiarity and expertise (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). But, Brucks (1985) states that consumer knowledge from three perspectives: prior experience, objective and subjective knowledge where objective knowledge is what is actually known and subjective knowledge is "what individuals perceive they know, also indicated as perceived or self-rated knowledge" (Aertsens et al., 2011).

Objective knowledge is the knowledge that the individual truly possesses, and can model for example by knowing facts about a topic such as wine, and being able to answer questions about it correctly. In contrast, subjective knowledge is when individuals believe or think they know about a particular topic and these perceptions may correctly or incorrectly reflect real knowledge (Ellis, 2015).

### **Objective Knowledge**

Veale and Quester explain that bjective knowledge is sometimes referred to as 'real' knowledge, or knowledge of the 'truth' and is "current, accurate information stored by

individuals in their long-term memory” (Ellis, 2015). Objective knowledge includes both the cognitive structures and processes that determine expertise (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987).

Alba and Hutchinson argue that objective knowledge reduces the cognitive effort required in decision making and improves “a consumer's ability to analyze, elaborate on, and remember product information” (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). Later, they explain that objective knowledge has to do with the accuracy of knowledge (Alba & Hutchinson, 2000).

### **Subjective Knowledge**

Subjective knowledge in the consumer behaviour literature refers to self-assumed knowledge, or more simply, how much one thinks he or she knows about a topic. Flynn and Goldsmith defined subjective knowledge as “a consumer’s perception of the amount of information they have stored in their memory” (Ellis, 2015). According to Alba and Hutchinson (2000), confidence reflects subjective knowledge (Ellis, 2015). Thus Barber, et al., (2008) mention “purchase confidence reflects consumers’ subjective evaluations of their ability to generate positive experiences in the marketplace” (Ellis, 2015). Some researchers argue that because subjective knowledge reflects confidence, it provides a better understanding of decision making (Dodd et al., 2005; Park & Lessig, 1981; Raju et al., 1995). Selnes & Grønhaug (1986) & later Park, Mothersbaugh & Feick, (1994) found that subjective knowledge was a stronger motivation of purchase-related behaviours than objective knowledge (Ellis, 2015).

### **Relationship between Consumer Knowledge and Decision-Making Process**

Product knowledge has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decision-making (Anindityo et al., 2017; McEachern & Warnaby, 2008; Rachmawati et al., 2020).

Objective and subjective knowledge tend to increase search, while direct experience tends to reduce search. Consumers with higher objective knowledge search more when pursuing credence products. However, they search relatively less when pursuing search products. Consumers with higher subjective knowledge are much more likely to search in the context of experience products, but as is the case for objective knowledge having little effect on search for experience products, subjective knowledge has no significant effect on information seeking for search products. In addition, objective knowledge facilitates more information search in a complex decision-making context while higher subjective knowledge fosters more external information search in a simple decision-marketing context (Jiang & Rosenbloom, 2014).

Thus, the hypothesis of this research is "Subjective knowledge and objective knowledge have a significant effect on the decision-making process either simultaneously or partially".

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research data were obtained using observation, interviews and questionnaires to millennials in Sukabumi City. The pilot study was did to first 30 respondents and the result showed that the questionnaire was valid and reliable. It means that the questionnaire is understandable and targeted the right audience.

The research population is millennials (aged 15-30 years) who have hang out with friends in the contemporary place of Sukabumi. There is no data related to the number of population, because those who hang out in these places are not only millennials from Sukabumi, but also their friends from other cities. Therefore, the iteration method is used to obtain a minimum sample of 115 people. In Implementation, the questionnaire was distributed to 150 respondents.

For the data collection, using purposive sampling technique. Questionnaires were distributed in 9 contemporary cafes in Sukabumi. Path analysis with Lisrel 9.30 (student version) was also used in this study.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondents in this study were mostly men. The dominant age of the respondents are 18-23 years and 23-30 years who work as students and private workers. More details about the respondent's profile can be seen in the following table:

NO	INDICATOR	%	TOTAL
<b>SEX</b>			
1	Man	58,8%	100,0%
2	Woman	41,2%	
<b>AGES</b>			
1	18 - 23 years	58,8%	100,0%
2	23 - 30 years	38,2%	
3	> 30 years	2,9%	
<b>OCCUPATIONS</b>			
1	High school student	2,9%	100,0%
2	Student	55,9%	
3	Private worker	26,5%	
4	Entrepreneur	8,8%	
5	Civil servants	2,9%	
6	Fresh Graduate	2,9%	
Source: Results of Research Data Processing, March 2021.			

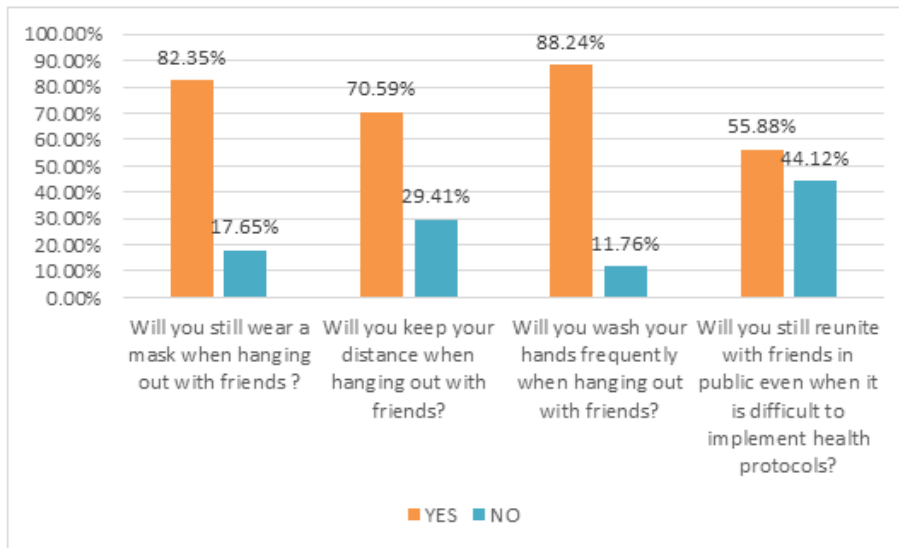
After the questionnaire data is processed and calculated, descriptive analysis can be seen as follows:

Variables	%	Category
Subjective Knowledge	79.72	Good
Objective Knowledge	80.56	Good
Decision Making	74.75	Good
Source: Results of Research Data Processing, March 2021		

Respondents have good subjective knowledge regarding health protocols and the dangers of the Covid-19 virus. Most of them understand the dangers of the Covid-19 virus. This good understanding is because they often seek information related to the Covid-19 virus in various media. Information is not only sought for the virus, but also how to handle/anticipate the virus. Other information that they often look for is how health protocols are implemented and also the consequences of not applying health protocols when they are in the public area, therefore they also understand that health protocols must be applied when in public areas. When gathering in public areas, they often remind themselves and their friends to implement health protocols. The use of masks, maintaining distance and washing hands when hanging out with friends in public areas is very important to them. In addition, they also understand that health protocols should still be followed while at home.

Respondents also have good objective knowledge related to the Covid-19 Virus. They often hear and see the socialization of the Covid-19 virus carried out by the government in the media. The information conveyed by the government is very clear and easy to understand. The manager of the cafe/restaurant where they gather with friends is serious about implementing health protocols. In some cafes/restaurants, the health protocol is quite strict.

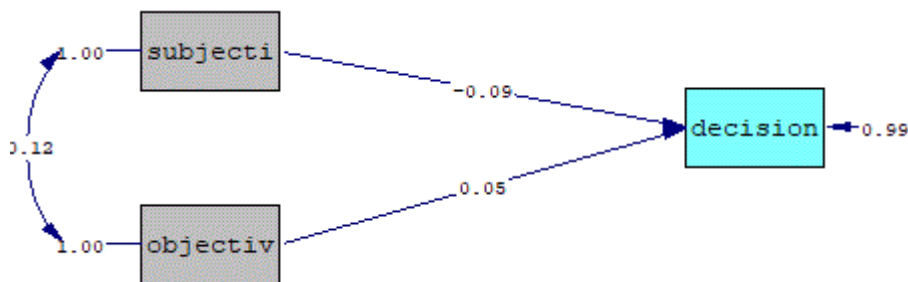
From the research results it is also known that most of the respondents will still gather with their friends in the public area. The implementation of health protocols when they gather with friends they admit is quite difficult to do. Despite good knowledge about the dangers and anticipation of the Covid-19 virus, it is still a bit difficult to implement health protocols for several reasons. For example, because their friends didn't do it either. Feelings bad with friends is often the reason why the health suit protocol is being implemented. Mainly is to keep your distance and wear a mask. This is because they were used to being close together and not wearing masks before the pandemic. However, they often do hand washing because most of them already bring their own hand sanitizers or are available at every cafe/restaurant they visit. Because almost all of them often wash their hands (using hand sanitizers), there is no fear of offending friends. For more details, please see the following figure:



**FIGURE 1**  
**WILL MILLENNIALS IMPLEMENT HEALTH PROTOCOLS**

Source: Results of Research Data Processing, March 2021

After calculation for path analysis using Lisrell 9.30 (student version), then the result of path diagram as follows (Figure 2):



**FIGURE 2**  
**PATH DIAGRAM**

In addition to the path diagram, also generated structural equations as follows:

**Structural Equations**

$$\text{decision} = -0.0855 \cdot \text{subjecti} + 0.0548 \cdot \text{objectiv}, \text{ Errorvar.} = 0.989, R^2 = 0.0114$$

Standerr (0.0823) (0.0823) (0.115)

Z-values	-1.038	0.666	8.602
P-values	0.299	0.505	0.000

From the above structural equations, the hypothesis test is as follows:

<b>Hypothesis Null</b>	<b>F<sub>count</sub></b>	<b>F<sub>table</sub></b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Subjective knowledge and objective knowledge have no impact on decision	0.847	3.06	$F_{count} < F_{table}$ Not Significant	Subjective knowledge and objective knowledge have no impact on decision
<b>Hypothesis Null</b>	<b>t<sub>count</sub></b>	<b>t<sub>table</sub></b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Subjective knowledge has no impact on decision	-1.038	1.976	$t_{count} < t_{table}$ $H_0$ accepted	Subjective knowledge has no impact on decision
Objective knowledge has no impact on decision	0.666	1.976	$t_{count} < t_{table}$ $H_0$ accepted	Objective knowledge has no impact on decision

From the table above, it can be seen that subjective and objective knowledge do not have a significant effect on the decision. Likewise, partial hypothesis testing, both subjective and objective knowledge, did not have a significant effect on the decision.

The test results show that the two variables do not influence millennial decisions to comply with health protocols when hanging out with friends. This is contrary to previous research (Anindityo et al., 2017; McEachern & Warnaby, 2008; Rachmawati et al., 2020) where subjective and objective knowledge have significant and positively influence the consumer decision. They understand the dangers of the Covid-19 virus and the implementation of health protocols is an effective effort to minimize the impact of the Covid-19 virus. However, the fear of offending friends and the belief that their friends will not transmit the Covid-19 virus are the reasons for the difficulty of implementing health protocols. In addition, because they are accustomed to hanging out with friends and not yet among them has been infected with the Covid-19 virus, it raises a sense of trust and finally they dare to take off their masks and not keep their distance. Therefore, they feel that washing hands is sufficient to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus when gathering with friends. Implementation of health protocols is difficult to implement because of the habit (before the pandemic) to always be close to friends, so often forgetting to apply health protocols. The use of masks often causes stifling, discomfort and difficulty breathing. In addition, the use of masks also often causes voices to be heard not clearly and also creates an unpleasant atmosphere when hanging out with friends.

Maintaining a distance is also often difficult to do because the condition of the cafe/restaurant where they gather is not possible. Or if possible, but when there are many of them and have to split the table it causes inconvenience so that they finally decide to unite the tables even though they have to squeeze (not keep their distance).

Another reason related to the difficulty of implementing health protocols is the feeling of boredom in implementing health protocols because it has been implemented for so long but still does not guarantee that you will not be infected. In addition, they are also saturated because there is no certainty when this pandemic will end while activities must continue.

## CONCLUSION

Millennials in Sukabumi have good subjective and objective knowledge regarding the Covid-19 virus and how to anticipate the virus. They also understand that implementing health protocols can minimize the spread of the virus. Furthermore, they will still hang out with friends even though the implementation of health protocols is difficult. This is because it has become a necessity for them to gather with their friends.

Subjective and objective knowledge are not related to the decision to implement health protocols when hanging out with friends. The test results partially and simultaneously show this. It can be interpreted that despite having good knowledge (subjective and objective) it is still difficult to implement health protocols.

The main reason it is difficult to implement health protocols among millennials is that they are unfamiliar with health protocols. Before the pandemic, it was not customary to implement health protocols so they often forgot when to implement them.

Feelings of uneasiness and fear of offending friends when gathered, then keep your distance and wear a mask. In addition, it is less comfortable to use masks and be far apart when gathering.

Another reason is the lack of awareness caused by socialization that is not well targeted to millennials. Therefore, it is necessary to improve socialization and media strategies and the right message for millennials. Information should also be provided using real examples of cases of the spread of the Covid-19 virus that occurred as a result of gathering with friends in public areas without implementing health protocols.

Furthermore, it is necessary to be firm with government officials or related institutions in taking action against violators of health protocols. This repressive effort is the last way to enforce health protocols and reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. There is also a need for consistency in enforcing health protocols so that people increasingly understand and are forced to implement health protocols.

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