Peer Review Report

Review Report on Effect of COVID-19-related interventions on the incidence of infectious eye diseases: Analysis of nationwide infectious disease incidence monitoring data

Original Article, Int J Public Health

EVALUATION

Q1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

This paper used the real-world data in Korea to analyze the impacts of social distancing policy on the Infectious Eye Disease Suspected Case (IEDSC). The authors found that social distancing policy can decrease the number of IEDSC and the relaxation of the social distancing policy increased the number of IEDSC.

Q2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

The authors did a great job using the segmented regression analysis and the real-world data of IEDSC during 2017 and 2020 to figure the correlation between social distancing policy and IEDSC. However, the limitation is that they only consider limited types of IED. They did not integrate other possible influencers, such as air pollution, variation of hand hygiene education in different regions in Korea, and weather.

Q3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

This paper provides an interesting statistical analysis of the correlation of social distancing policy and IEDSC. The authors found that social distancing could potentially reduce the number of IEDSC and advocated the needs to implement other precautionary measures to reduce not only COVID-19, but also other infectious diseases. It would be better if the authors could address the following issues.
1. In line 47, there is an unnecessary space after the word, "viral conjunctivitis."
2. In line 83, why the time variables have a continuous value of 1-191? What is the unit (days or weeks)?
3. In line 95, how is the coefficients 32 and 17 determined? It would be helpful if the authors could explain this in detail.
4. In Table 2, it seems that there is a typo in the last column. "Compared to Jan 3rd week 2019" should be "Compared to Jan 3rd week 2020)".
5. The authors demonstrated that appropriate social distancing can prevent the transmission of IED, especially in children and adolescents. It could be helpful if the authors can provide more implications on why this is the case. One possible interpretation is that children and adolescents do not care about hand hygiene in schools, not like adults. To support the possible interpretations, data or literature about hand hygiene education in different age groups or regions in Korea could be helpful.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes. I would suggest, "Effect of COVID-19-related interventions on the incidence of infectious eye diseases: Analysis of nationwide infectious disease incidence monitoring data in South Korea"

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes.

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes. It is easy to read and understand this paper.

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

Yes. The authors did a great job citing other related papers and literature which they did not integrate into their study.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9	Originality	▮▮▮▮▯ (4/5)
Q 10	Rigor	▮▮▮▯▯ (3/5)
Q 11	Significance to the field	▮▮▮▯▯ (3/5)
Q 12	Interest to a general audience	▮▮▮▮▮ (5/5)
Q 13	Quality of the writing	▮▮▮▮▯ (4/5)
Q 14	Overall scientific quality of the study	▮▮▮▮▯ (4/5)

REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.