Chapter 12
Audience Perception of COVID-19 Vaccination and Its Effect on the Behavioural Responses of Respondents in Oyo West Local Government

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 disease presents an imminent danger that requires immediate action as it could be deadly. Vaccines against COVID-19 are considered to be of great importance to prevent and also to control, but there are challenges, one of which is uncertainty about public acceptance of the vaccine. The study looked at audience perception of COVID-19 vaccination and its effect on the behavioural responses of respondents in Oyo West Local Government. The study was anchored on the perception theory and the behaviour theory. The multistage probability sampling technique was adopted. The study found out that the COVID-19 vaccination awareness was not enough, thereby making the social media to have the upper hand by passing false rumours about the vaccine in order to get the people discouraged thereby leading to their non-challan behaviour and superstitious beliefs. The study concluded that the masses should be educated on the need to get vaccinated and therefore recommended that there should be more awareness on the COVID-19 vaccination to prevent future infections and deaths.

INTRODUCTION

The world woke up to the report of a novel viral infection, coronavirus (Covid-19), in December 2019 with its first case reported in China's Wuhan territory. The upper respiratory tract virus has since been called a global pandemic after cases were recorded in most continents (Kolawole, 2020). Corona virus also known as Covid-19 is a severe acute respiratory disease that is known to have symptoms such as

pneumonia, fever, breathing difficulty and lung infection. The World Health Organization (WHO) used the term 2019 novel coronavirus to refer to a coronavirus that affected the lower respiratory tract of patients with pneumonia in Wuhan, China on 29 December 2019. The WHO announced that the official name of the 2019 novel coronavirus is coronavirus disease (Covid-19). The coronavirus belongs to a family of viruses that may cause various symptoms such as pneumonia, fever, breathing difficulty, and lung. According to Anho and Muoboghare (2021) in Nigeria, the index case was recorded on the 27th February, 2020, when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus while the second case involves a Nigerian citizen who had contact with the Italian citizen was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun State on the 9th March 2020. Researchers noted that in a bid to control the spread of Covid-19 in Nigeria, there was immediate prohibition of social gathering and religious activities and lockdown of the major epicenters of Lagos, Ogun and Abuja and this was later followed by a total lockdown, which lasted for almost two months in the first phase before gradual easing in subsequent phases. Newman (2020) avers that the pandemic has played a significant role in shaping human history throughout the ages by giving the examples of the Antonine plague (165-180AD), the Black death (1346-1353), the Spanish flu (1918-1920), the Asian flu (1956-1958), the HIV (1981-present), the Ebola (2014) among others.

The covid-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11th March, 2020. According to worldometers, (2021) in Ajayi, Fatukasi and Asemah (2021) since it broke out, the virus is said to have accounted for about 4,181,853 deaths globally out of a swooping statistics of 195,275,961 positive cases which sadly increases daily. In order to curtail the rate at which people were dying from the disease, it became necessary for vaccines to be created to control the spread of the virus and mitigate the impact of the pandemic on public health systems all over the country.

Scholars have explained that vaccines are an essential tool for stemming the spread of pandemics like Covid-19, influenza, and other infectious diseases while Bhartiya, Kumar, Singh, Murugan, and Wadhwani (2021), revealed that there were approximately one hundred competitors running for the position of delivering the Covid-19 vaccine, stating further that the Covid-19 vaccine was introduced into the market just nine months after the virus was identified. Several Covid-19 vaccines have been given the go-ahead to be used, and their distribution is currently being expanded across the globe. According to Rodrigues, (2020), when a person is immunized against a disease, the body's immune system is prompted to begin developing defenses against that illness. The Immunization Action Coalition (2021) on March 2, 2021, records theworld'sfirst vaccine that can act against the virus. This occurred at the same time that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published an interim recommendation for the utilisation of the Jassen (Johnson and Johnson) Covid-19 vaccine. This was the first vaccine developed to combat the Covid-19 virus. Following this, the staff at the Mayo Clinic (2021) report that a number of vaccines were eventually granted permission to be used in a variety of countries. Vaccines such as mRNA, Vector, and Protein subunit that were developed by Moderna, Astra Zeneca, and Novavax filled the market. But the issue now is the perception of the people towards the vaccine as majority of the population have not deemed it fit to collect based on their perception of the vaccine and this has actually affected their behavioural responses to the vaccine.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Scientists all over the world have been motivated to collaborate, share data, and reach some level of compromise in order to find a cure for Covid-19 by providing a vaccine for that purpose. Scholars have

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