

Abstract

NMA/AGSM/2022/PUBH/002 - Willingness, Hesitancy, and Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination among Students at The University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

*Gbobie Dumle Jane¹, Ikpotokin AB¹, Gospel Ose¹, Ogbonna Vivian Ifeoma², Maduka Omosivie³

¹Department of Medicine and Surgery, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. ²Department of Community Medicine, University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. ³Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Abstract

Background: COVID-19 vaccination is an important public health tool for controlling and preventing COVID-19 infection. With global prevalent views on COVID-19, its vaccine development, and safety, this study ascertained the willingness, hesitancy, and uptake of COVID-19 vaccination among students of the University of Port Harcourt.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study design with multi-stage sampling was employed and an online self-administered semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect information from 473 undergraduate students. Data collected were uploaded into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) IBM version 26.

Results: A total of 473 respondents, with a median age of 20 years, were interviewed. Females were 245 (51.8%). A total of 458 (96.8%) were aware of the COVID-19 vaccine, 363 (76.7%) were hesitant, and 50 (10.6%) had received the vaccine. Among the 423 (89.4%) who had not received the vaccine, 183 (43%) were willing to get vaccinated. Statistically significant relationships were observed between 'concern about getting COVID-19', 'safety of vaccine', 'vaccination at no cost', 'trust in public health agencies', 'preferred location to get vaccinated', and hesitancy (p -value=0.001). There was no statistically significant relationship between socio-demographics and hesitancy ($p>0.05$), and 'knowledge of adverse reaction' and vaccine hesitancy ($p>0.05$).

Conclusion: Ensuring the wide acceptability of the vaccine is important. The adoption of modern efficient and effective means of dissemination of information on the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine, and the creation of more vaccination points within the university campuses are recommended.

Keywords: Willingness, Hesitancy, Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination, Nigeria.

Corresponding Author: *Dumle Jane Gbobie, Department of Medicine and Surgery, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Email: omosivie.maduka@uniport.edu.ng

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