



Medical Surgical Nursing

A STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS COVID -19 VACCINATION AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION IN A SELECTED AREA.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Despite India's adoption of a dynamic vaccine strategy—centered on vaccine availability, liberalized pricing, and expanded coverage—only 56.5% of the population had received two doses, and 70.7% had received at least one dose as of 19 February 2022 (Google News, 2021). Since 1 May 2021, the pace of vaccination had slowed due to factors such as vaccine shortages, refusal, or hesitancy. However, the momentum is gradually recovering. Public complacency and a lack of awareness regarding vaccination continue to pose challenges to achieving widespread immunization. **Aim And Objective:** To determine the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding covid -19 vaccination among the general population. **Methodology:** A cross-sectional, online population-based survey was conducted among individuals aged 18 and older following the implementation of lockdown measures. The survey utilized a structured questionnaire created through the Google survey tool (Google Forms). The survey link was disseminated publicly on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, and personally shared with the contact lists of investigators and research assistants. The investigators opted for online data collection methods to adhere to social distancing requirements during the strict lockdown in Chennai. A total of 162 respondents completed the survey. **Results:** Participants with higher education levels, living in nuclear families, belonging to upper socioeconomic groups, and residing in urban areas demonstrated a significantly higher mean knowledge score (3.34 ± 1.95 out of 5). Notably, females demonstrated a significantly higher perception of the protection offered by the COVID-19 vaccine (p -value = 0.001) and of the safety of vaccines formulated in India compared to those from other countries (p -value = 0). The average score for respondents perception of the COVID-19 vaccine was 7.34 ± 2.46 , indicating an overall positive attitude toward vaccination. **Conclusion:** The impact of COVID-19 on the lives of ordinary people is indescribable. In the current scenario, the only viable solution to curb the exponential rise in infections is through vaccination. This cross-sectional study highlights public attitudes, knowledge, and personal beliefs about COVID-19 vaccines. The insights gained from this study can guide the development of targeted interventions to disseminate accurate information, reduce vaccine hesitancy, and motivate individuals to get vaccinated.

KEYWORDS : Knowledge, Attitude, Perception, Covid 19, Vaccination

INTRODUCTION

India experienced a devastating second wave of coronavirus driven by the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 and is now facing a third wave (Mandal et al., 2021; Pal et al., 2021; Ranjan et al., 2021). The severity of the third wave will largely hinge on the extent of vaccination coverage. Given that the new strain "Omicron" exhibits numerous mutations and a higher transmission rate, it is crucial to expedite vaccination efforts and evaluate the need for booster doses. In response, the Indian government is intensifying its immunization drive.

India has been adopting a dynamic vaccination strategy that accounts for vaccine availability, liberalized pricing, and expanded coverage. As of 19 February 2022, 56.5% of the population had received two doses, while 70.7% had received at least one dose (Google News, 2021). However, since 1 May 2021, vaccination progress had slowed due to factors such as vaccine shortages, refusal, or hesitancy. Fortunately, the pace is now gradually picking up. Public complacency and a lack of awareness about vaccination remain significant obstacles to achieving widespread immunization (Dror et al., 2020; Sharun et al., 2020; Surapaneni et al., 2021; Wouters et al., 2021).

Statement Of The Problem

A study to assess the knowledge, attitude and perception towards covid -19 vaccination among the general population in a selected area.

Objectives

1. To determine the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding covid -19 vaccination among the general population.
2. To find the association of knowledge, attitude and perception regarding covid -19 vaccination among the general population.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional, online population-based survey was conducted among individuals aged 18 and older following the implementation of lockdown measures. The survey utilized a structured questionnaire created through the Google survey tool (Google Forms). The survey link was disseminated publicly on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, and personally shared with the contact lists of investigators and research assistants. The investigators opted for online data collection methods to adhere to social distancing requirements during the strict lockdown in Chennai. A total of 162 respondents completed the survey. Eligibility to participate in the study required being a resident of Chennai, having internet access, and

participating voluntarily. The data collection tool consisted of demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, educational status, occupation, socio economic status and type of family, residence, vaccination details, structured knowledge questionnaire, attitude and perception scale.

Plan For Data Analysis

The collected data were tabulated and analysed by using descriptive statistical methods. Frequency and percentage is used to describe the demographic variables. Mean and standard deviation is used to assess the knowledge, attitude and perception regarding covid -19 vaccination among the general population. Chi-square test was used to find out the association between knowledge, attitude and perception regarding covid -19 vaccination among the general population with their selected demographic variables.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Among the 162 respondents, most of them 85.8% were aged between 18 – 30 years, 76.5% were female, 64.8% were under graduates, 80% belong to middle income group, 51% lived in rural area, 43% took first dose covid vaccine and 53% took Covishield vaccine.

A significant portion of the community (83.3%) acknowledged the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine; however, 58% expressed concerns that overuse of the vaccine might pose risks. Among the respondents, 43.5% had received the COVID-19 vaccine, whereas 44.5% had not received any dose. A comparison of respondents' knowledge regarding the impact of COVID-19 vaccines on autoimmune diseases revealed a significant difference among males, who believed that vaccination could increase autoimmune diseases (p -value = 0.002). Participants with higher education levels, living in nuclear families, belonging to upper socioeconomic groups, and residing in urban areas demonstrated a significantly higher mean knowledge score (3.34 ± 1.95 out of 5).

More than half of the participants expressed a positive attitude toward COVID-19 vaccination, viewing it favorably. Approximately 69% strongly believed that vaccination should be universal, and 79.6% were willing to encourage their family members to get vaccinated. Around 60.5% emphasized the importance of ensuring fair distribution of the vaccine for everyone. However, 43.2% believed that the promotion of the COVID-19 vaccine is driven by the commercial interests of pharmaceutical companies. Additionally, 45.7% preferred acquiring natural immunity against COVID-19 over getting

vaccinated.

Nearly half (54.9%) of the participants believed that the COVID-19 vaccine might have side effects, while 69.8% wanted the vaccine to be provided free of cost. Additionally, 39.5% perceived the possibility of unforeseen long-term effects from the vaccine. However, 64.2% expressed confidence that the government has released sufficient data on the vaccine's safety and efficacy. Notably, females demonstrated a significantly higher perception of the protection offered by the COVID-19 vaccine (p -value = 0.001) and of the safety of vaccines formulated in India compared to those from other countries (p -value = 0).

The average score for respondents perception of the COVID-19 vaccine was 7.34 ± 2.46 , indicating an overall positive attitude toward vaccination. A multiple regression analysis, adjusted for variables identified as statistically significant in the bivariate analysis, revealed that being female and residing in rural areas were strongly associated with a favorable perception of the COVID-19 vaccine.

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