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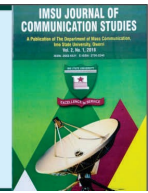
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ASSESSMENT OF BAYELSA PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS

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Abstract

This study examined the attitude of the people of Bayelsa State towards the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. The objectives of the study were to assess the extent to which Bayelsa State people are exposed to campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination, the responses and influence of the campaign. The study made use of analytical descriptive survey design. It selected 384 respondents through the multi-stage sampling technique among residents of all the eight (8) local government areas of Bayelsa state. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection, the simple percentage and weighted mean score for analysis. Findings revealed that the extent Bayelsa State people were exposed to the campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination was low, while that of public announcement encouraging vaccination uptake was high. The study concludes that campaigns led to no action because it was unable to dispel misinformation, unreasonable fears about vaccine safety, poor communication at the onset of the campaign and public mistrust of government intentions. The study therefore recommends that since the level of exposure to campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination was low, massive awareness campaign should be undertaken on health-related issues to enlighten people on the dangers of hesitancy and benefits of vaccine or such health-related issue to the public.

Keywords: Attitude, COVID-19, vaccination, campaigns, Bayelsa People

Introduction

The whole world embraced vaccination to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Nigeria started vaccination of its citizens in March 2021, following the shipment of over 3.94 million doses of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine by the COVAX facility- a partnership between CEPI, Gavi, UNICEF and WHO (Eze et al., 2021). Records show that out of the over 4.1 billion population fully vaccinated worldwide only 5.1 million Nigerians (i.e. 2.5 percent of Nigeria's population) are fully vaccinated, and we have 13.1 million (i.e. 6.4 percent of the population) that have taken at least the first dose of the vaccine (Our world in data, Jan 2022). Experts projected that Nigeria would likely become the epicentre of the pandemic due to its weak healthcare systems and relatively higher population density (Eze et al., 2021). Melinda Gates, Co-Chair of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation warned that dead bodies would be all over the streets of Africa "Look at what is happening in Ecuador, they are putting bodies on the streets, you are going to see that in countries in Africa (Nwachukwu, 2020). Contrary to these projections the disease ran a relatively less severe course in Nigeria and the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. The early fears of contraction and death, which coerced the people into socially responsible behaviours at the early stage of the pandemic, soon eroded when it was believed that the rate of spread and severity of cases in Nigeria

compared to other climes was rather mild and inconsistent with media portrayal (Eze et al., 2021). In the West African sub-region, the average case fatality rate was 3.9% (Idajili, 2021). The surprisingly low case fatality rate may have also contributed to the attitude of Nigerians towards COVID-19 vaccination.

There has been widespread misinformation about the COVID-19, and this has posed a challenge to the acceptance of the vaccine. The WHO Director General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at the Munich Security Conference of 15th February, 2020 stated that “we are not just fighting an epidemic, we are fighting an infodemic” (Mohammed et al., 2021, p.31). Mohammed et al (2021) note that misinformation and rumours regarding COVID-19 vaccines have been around and repeatedly shared on social media platforms even before the release of an effective vaccine. One of such rumours is that Bill Gates is using the vaccine to insert microchips in someone to make that person infertile. Others claim that the climatic condition of Africa does not allow COVID-19 to survive in Africa as our weather is too hot for the virus to survive. Another misconception about the COVID-19 vaccine is the religious beliefs some Nigerians hold about the vaccine. Most Nigerians identify with one religion or another and religious leaders have significant influence on the faithful. In some churches, Christian leaders publicly discouraged their members from getting the vaccine. Chris Oyakhilome, the General Overseer of Christ Embassy for example, berated some pastors who were urging their members to take the COVID-19 vaccine (Idajili, 2021). Among some Nigerian Muslims is the fear that the vaccine contains anti-fertility chemicals that can be used to control the Muslim population. Such unverified information has aided the misunderstanding towards the vaccination exercise.

Vaccine hesitancy is behavioural in nature which rests on the principle that SAGE Working Group (2015) identifies as the 3C model: Confidence (trust in healthcare professionals, vaccines, and their effectiveness), Complacency (low awareness of the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases and the importance of vaccines), and Convenience (availability of and accessibility to vaccines and healthcare services). To assure Nigerians of the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines, Walter Mulombo, the WHO Representative in Nigeria, affirms that “Vaccines are a critical new tool in the battle against COVID-19; therefore, this is a step in the right direction. These vaccines have undergone rigorous regulatory processes at global and country level and have been deemed safe and effective.” (WHO Africa, 2021). Faisal Shuaib, the Executive Director of The National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) emphasised the importance of taking COVID-19 vaccine as it is safe and effective in protecting Nigerians against the disease. He maintained that no person had died as a result of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) as cited in the Guardian (Henley, 2021) reports the federal government’s Strategic Vaccine Roll-Out plan to get 70% of the population vaccinated. Public sites were targeted including public health facilities, private health facilities, mobile vaccination posts, mass vaccination sites such as schools, markets, shopping malls, recreation centres, motor parks, worship houses and other public spaces that attract high human traffic. The mass media were employed by the government to drive this campaign for mass vaccination

To encourage the uptake of the vaccine, a series of campaigns were also launched at the federal and state levels. The federal government in partnership with some donors like the WHO, UNICEF and Ministry of Health embarked on a campaign to enlighten the public on the need to get vaccinated using the conventional and non-conventional media (WHO, 2021). In Bayelsa State, for instance, several stakeholders and relevant humanitarian bodies launched campaigns focused on driving awareness and vaccine acceptance in Bayelsa state. Bayelsa is a southern state in Nigeria which was created in 1996 by the military administration of General Sani Abacha making it one of the newest states in Nigeria.

According to Jones Stow, Director, Public Health with the Bayelsa State Ministry of Health there were campaigns embarked upon by the ministry on COVID-19 Vaccination Awareness campaigns tagged “Massive Vaccination Campaigns” (MVC). The purpose of the campaign was to increase the uptake of the vaccine in the state (Henley, 2021). As observed by the researchers, the ministry in the first phase of

the campaign had jingles and programmes sent to radio and television stations across Bayelsa. The media content and jingles were produced in English, pidgin and local languages (Izon and Ogbia) by the ministry and received some jingles from the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and were scheduled during peak and off-peak periods, news bulletins and programmes to reach a wider audience. Also, from the observation of the researchers, the second phase of the campaign was launched at Azikoro Primary School, the ministry officials created health teams that also took the campaign to the streets, schools, creeks, markets, and churches to boost the campaign done in the mass media.

Peace to the Streets and Creeks an NGO, Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) and Rotary International executed COVID-19 vaccination awareness campaigns from March to December 2021 across the media stations in Bayelsa to sensitize the public on the safety of the vaccine. Some media houses like Creek Fm (Radio Nigeria), People's Fm and Niger Delta Television created station programmes, jingles and public service announcements with the aim of encouraging people to take the vaccines as observed by the researchers. Creek Fm for instance, had jingles in English, Izon and Ogbia, these jingles were played intermittently daily for months and in-house programmes in Izon "IzonOtuIfie" meaning Ijaw people's time and Ogbia "EfiOgbia" which means Ogbia people's corner incorporated these jingles and emphasised the need for the vaccine uptake as observed by the researchers. There were other campaigns by civil society organisations and media houses across the state as part of their corporate social responsibility (Fenana, 2022). Following the discovery and release of COVID-19 vaccines as well as misgivings linked to the COVID-19 vaccines (WHO, 2021).

The government embarked on massive campaigns using various channels and approaches advocacy, community engagement, mass media messages in television, radio, billboards, posters etc) primarily to counter misgivings and encourage positive attitude towards the vaccines and its uptake in Nigeria (Fenana, 2022). Nevertheless, it is observed that these misgivings and the attitude of reluctance towards the vaccine hitherto existed. Although the low uptake of the vaccines may have other factors responsible, the target of the campaigns which includes among othersto encourage uptake, has not translated to that in Bayelsa State. In spite the massive campaigns in the state and observable exposure and influence, Bayelsa State is ranked 37th on the vaccination log of Nigeria's 36 states and the FCT (meagre 0.69 percent of its target population). Thus, raising concerns as to the people's attitude in respect of the extent of exposure to these campaigns, the influence of and the response to these campaigns. Therefore, this study examines Bayelsa people's attitude towards COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.

Statement of the Problem

COVID-19 vaccination is aimed to curtail the spread of COVID-19 virus among the populace. Ideally, people are supposed to visit designated health centres to receive the vaccine at no cost. This is to ensure people are safe and prevented from contracting and spreading the deadly COVID-19 virus. Lamentably, researchers' personal observation suggested that there could be low level of acceptance and negative attitudes toward the vaccination due to low awareness of the campaign messages. It seems that majority of the Bayelsa people lacked good knowledge on the significance of getting vaccinated because of negative information on COVID-19 vaccine. People tend to be more careful especially with the news of health complications resulting from those who have already taken the COVID-19 vaccine, especially the speculations that the vaccine alters ones "DNA". Could the very low vaccination of the people of Bayelsa be attributable to their attitude towards COVID-19 vaccine campaigns? This paper is set out to ascertain Bayelsa people's attitude towards COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to assess the attitude of the people of Bayelsa State towards the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the extent to which Bayelsa State people are exposed to campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination
2. Examine the response of Bayelsa State people to COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.
3. Find out the extent to which Bayelsa State people are influenced by COVID-19 campaigns to get vaccinated.

Literature Review

Vaccination and Vaccine Hesitancy

Vaccination is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of public health. During the 20th century, mass vaccination programmes have resulted in dramatic declines in the incidence of, morbidity, and mortality of various infectious diseases, with diseases such as smallpox and poliomyelitis being (nearly) eradicated (Dubé et al., 2013; Rémy et al., 2015). When a critical proportion of a population is immunised, the circulation of the pathogen decreases, and unvaccinated persons incur a lower risk of infection, a phenomenon known as herd immunity. For vaccination programmes to be successful, however, a high uptake level is often crucial (Anderson & May, 2015).

While research on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is in its infancy, early work suggests that COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is related to but distinct from hesitancy towards other vaccines. Individuals who endorse the anti-vaccine label or who are less trusting of the safety of vaccines generally are more likely to refuse an eventual COVID-19 vaccine (Trujillo & Motta, 2020). Notably however, large segments of the United States population who are otherwise trusting of vaccines are also hesitant about the COVID-19 vaccine (Trujillo & Motta, 2020). COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is driven by several factors, including concerns about the safety and efficacy of a vaccine developed with unprecedented speed, imprecise messaging from the Trump administration (i.e. Operation Warp Speed), and continual efforts by anti-vaccine advocates to sow doubt in the general public (Cohen, 2020; Hastline, 2020).

Empirical Review

Sakulsantiporn (2021) carried out a study on “Attitude to vaccinate against coronavirus disease among high school students in Chonburi province, Thailand: a study of grade 10 – 12 students of Princess Chulabhorn Science School.” The study aimed to investigate community knowledge, risk perceptions, and attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccinations among high school students in Chonburi, Thailand. The study was conducted using a questionnaire. A total of 303 students participated. COVID-19-related knowledge, risk perception, and attitude toward COVID-19 vaccines were assessed. Independent *t*-test and ANOVA were used to analyse differences between outcomes and socio-demographic. Attitudes toward vaccination were analysed by a generalized linear model. This study revealed a moderate level of knowledge about COVID-19, risk perception, and attitude against COVID-19 vaccination among the high school students. Moreover, it reinforces that there is no relation between those factors and the attitude for accepting COVID-19 vaccines. The difference between the reviewed study and the pioneer study is on the focus, methodology and scope.

Wirunpan (2021) examined “Knowledge, attitudes, and willingness of adolescents towards COVID-19 vaccine in Bangkok, Thailand.” The objective of the study was to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and willingness toward COVID-19 vaccine of key stage 4–5 students at SatitPrasarnmit International Programme in Bangkok towards COVID-19 vaccine. The study was conducted using an online questionnaire. A total of 136 students participated. Knowledge, attitudes, and willingness of adolescents toward the COVID-19 vaccine were assessed. Differences between outcomes and socio-demographic characteristics of participants were analysed through independent *t*-tests and the ANOVA. The level of willingness to vaccinate against COVID-19 was analysed by a generalised linear model. This study revealed students in SatitPrasarnmit International Programme had moderate knowledge towards

COVID-19, negative attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccine and low willingness to vaccinate against COVID-19. The difference the reviewed study and present study is on the focus, methodology and scope.

Alamer, et al., (2021) did a study on “knowledge, attitudes and perception toward COVID-19 vaccines among adults in Jazan Province, Saudi Arabia.” The study aimed to assess the community attitudes and perceptions toward COVID-19 vaccines in Jazan Province, Saudi Arabia. A cross-sectional, retrospective study using an online questionnaire was conducted among the public in Jazan, the southern region of Saudi Arabia. General and demographic data were collected, and perception and attitude toward COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated. The survey showed that 67% of the participants had positive perceptions toward COVID-19 vaccines, a finding that is significantly associated with receiving the influenza vaccine in the past, the existence of trust on the current healthcare system and holding positive beliefs toward the effectiveness of the current COVID-19 vaccines in reducing the risk of infection, complication, and mortality. The difference between the reviewed study and the current study is on the focus, methodology and scope.

Khaffai (2021) carried out a study on “Knowledge and attitude toward COVID-19 vaccine among Iraqi people.” The aim of the study is to understand knowledge and attitudes of Iraqis toward COVID-19 vaccines. Survey Monkey was conducted using a structured questionnaire in May, 2021 among Iraqi people. The study showed that around 50.6 % of the participants have insufficient knowledge about COVID-19 vaccines. While, it finds that 72.59 % of them have neutral attitudes towards these vaccines. Research on the acceptability of COVID-19 vaccines showed that most people are uncertain about the use of vaccines. There was a significant relationship between knowledge and age, gender and knowledge, residential area and knowledge, age and attitude, education level and attitude, gender and attitude, and residential area and attitude. Attitude towards the COVID-19 vaccine was moderate, with many indicating that they do not know. The difference between the reviewed study and the pioneer study is on the focus, methodology and scope.

Adane, et al., (2022) carried out a study on “Knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of COVID-19 vaccine and refusal to receive COVID-19 vaccine among healthcare workers (HCW) in North-Eastern Ethiopia.” This study aimed to determine the rate of intention to refuse COVID-19 vaccination and associated factors among HCWs in North-Eastern Ethiopia. An institution-based cross-sectional study was employed among 404 HCWs in Dessie City, North-Eastern Ethiopia in May, 2021. Data were collected, checked, coded, entered into EpiData Version 4.6 and exported to Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25.0 for cleaning and analysis. The results revealed that the proportion of HCWs with overall good knowledge, good perception, and positive attitudes about COVID-19 vaccination were 62.5%, 60.5%, and 52.3%, respectively; 64.0% of the HCWs wanted to be vaccinated while 36.0% said that they would refuse to do so. The multi-variable analysis identified negative attitudes (AOR: 3.057; 95%CI [1.860 - 5.026]) and poor perceptions (AOR: 4.73; 95%CI [2.911 - 7.684]) about COVID-19 vaccines were significantly associated with refusal to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Nearly half (46.9%) of the HCWs stated that vaccines could worsen any pre-existing medical conditions and 39.5% of them thought that vaccines could cause COVID-19 infections. The difference between the reviewed study and the current study is on the focus, methodology and scope. Therefore, this pioneer study relooks on assessment of Bayelsa State people's attitude towards COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. Also this study establishes some communication elements such as awareness, source of awareness, attitude, campaigns and public enlightenment in order to fill in the gap in knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

This study anchored on the cognitive dissonance theory. The choice of this theory was based on its suitability to the topic and aim of this study.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

This theory was propounded in 1957 by Leon Festinger. The theory simply says that attitude change takes place when there is a cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance, according to Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) is an uncomfortable feeling in an individual by receiving two contradictory or opposite cognitions and idea at the same time. Anaeto and Anaeto went further to say that the theory states that, when an individual has cognition that is not in agreement, a state of dissonance (tension) is created. To reduce the dissonance, the individual either rejects the conflicting thought or rationalize it and absorbs it into his or her attitude. The theory, according to Asemah (2010) holds that people strive to justify their behaviours by reducing the dissonance or inconsistency between their cognitive (perceptions or beliefs) and reality. Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) note that inconsistency in cognitions give rise to pressure to reduce the dissonance.

The theory argues that the experience of dissonance (incompatible beliefs and actions) is aversive and people are highly motivated to avoid it. In their efforts to avoid feelings of dissonance, people will avoid hearing views that oppose their own, change their beliefs to match their actions and seek reassurance after making a difficult decision. The theory of cognitive dissonance explains how human beings are consistency seekers and attempt to reduce their dissonance discomfort in new situations. When individuals encounter new information or new experiences, they categorise the information based on their pre-existing attitudes, thoughts and beliefs. If the new encounter does not coincide with their pre-existing assumptions, then, dissonance is likely to occur. When dissonance occurs, individuals are motivated to reduce the dissonance or increase the dissonance is likely to occur. When dissonance occurs, individuals are motivated to reduce the dissonance they experience by avoiding situations that would either cause the dissonance or increase the dissonance. For this reason, cognitive dissonance is considered a drive state that encourages motivation to achieve consonance and reduce dissonance (Asemah, 2020).

Relating this theory to this study, it is essentially relevant as it has implication for communication practitioners. The implication is that the development communicators and campaigners ought to make the Bayelsa state people realise the benefits that they will derive from the messages or programmes of COVID-19 vaccine that are being presented to them. They should be made to see the reason why they should buy the idea of the communicators/campaigners on the issue of COVID-19 vaccine. Thus, in presenting the information on COVID-19 vaccine, the development communicators and campaigners need to present the advantages of the COVID-19 vaccine ideas or practice that is being advocated for the people of Bayelsa State. The communicators and campaigners also need to present the consequences of not accepting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey design is used to document existing attitudes (Nsude et al., 2023). The choice of the descriptive survey research design was informed by the need to examine the Bayelsa State people's attitude toward COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. The population of a study involved the people or subjects about which a researcher needs information. The population of this study consisted of the residents of all the eight (8) local government areas of Bayelsa state. The local government areas were: Ekeremor, Kolokuma/Opokuma, Yenagoa, Brass, Sagbama, Ogbia, Nembe and Southern Ijaw. According to the National Bureau of Statistics projection in 2022, the total population of 18 years and above in Bayelsa State stood at 1,704,515 (One million, seven hundred and four thousand, five hundred and fifteen). From the entire population of 1,704,515, the researcher was able to determine the number of respondents and find out the sample size through the Krejcie and Morgan Table. To obtain the required sample size of a defined population of 1,704,515 using the Table. Based on this established data the sample was 384.

Sampling, on its part, involves the process of selecting a sample. To get to the respondents, the researcher utilised the multi-stage sampling technique which started with the division of Bayelsa state.

The researcher started with clusters of senatorial districts, local government areas and headquarters. The first stage involved clustering the population into three senatorial districts of Bayelsa state; Bayelsa Central Senatorial District, Bayelsa East Senatorial District, and Bayelsa West Senatorial District. The second stage involved choosing one of the local government areas from each senatorial district of the state; Yenagoa Local Government Area, Ogbia Local Government Area and Sagbama Local Government Area. The justification for this three (3) was based on their population and urbanisation. In the third stage, each local government area headquarter was chosen for the administration of the questionnaire. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed instrument designed by the researcher, entitled "Assessment of Bayelsa People's Attitude towards COVID-19 Vaccination Campaigns Questionnaire, (ABPACVCQ). Data for this study were obtained using copies of questionnaire. Data were analysed using the simple percentage and weighted mean score. In other words, contingency tables were used to present data obtained from the questionnaire using Weighted Mean Score (WMS).

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent are the Bayelsa State people exposed to campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination?

Table 1: Extent Bayelsa State People are exposed to Campaigns on COVID-19 Vaccination

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Total 375	Total Weighted (fx)	Decision
1.	You got acquainted to massive Campaign (MVC) on COVID-19 vaccination	15 60	164 492	160 320	35 35	907	2.42	Rejected
2.	You got sensitised through "Otulfie" campaign on COVID-19 vaccination	6 24	184 552	160 320	25 25	921	2.46	Rejected
3.	You were enlightened on COVID-19 vaccination through "EfieOgbia" campaign	10 40	190 570	141 282	34 34	926	2.48	Rejected
4.	You got illuminated through public announcement campaign encouraging COVID-19 vaccination uptake	160 640	184 552	20 40	11 11	1,243	3.31	Accepted
5.	You got aware of vaccine safety via Massive Vaccination Campaign (MVC)	4 16	220 660	100 200	51 51	927	2.47	Rejected
Grand Mean					2.63			

Table 1 shows that the extent Bayelsa State people were exposed to Massive Vaccination Campaigns (MVC), "Otulfie" campaign and "EfieOgbia" campaign on COVID-19 vaccinations was low, while public announcement campaign encouraging vaccination uptake was high.

Research Question 2: How do the Bayelsa State people respond to COVID-19 vaccination campaigns?

Table 2: How Bayelsa State People respond to COVID-19 Vaccination campaigns

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Total 375	Total Weighted (fx)	Decision	
6.	Your response to ‘OtuIfie’ campaign on COVID-19 vaccination is encouraging	3 12	150 450	170 340	54 74	876	2.34	Rejected	
7.	Your response to ‘EfieOgbia’ campaign on COVID-19 vaccination is interesting	2 8	199 597	105 210	71 71	886	2.36	Rejected	
8.	Your response to public announcement campaign on COVID-19 vaccination is appealing	0 0	180 540	190 380	4 4	924	2.46	Rejected	
9.	Your response to ‘OtuIfie’ campaign in COVID-19 vaccination is persuading	0 0	190 570	13 26	173 173	769	2.05	Rejected	
10.	Your response to Massive Vaccination campaign on COVID-19 vaccination is favourable	5 20	155 465	212 424	2 2	911	2.43	Rejected	
Grand Mean				2.33					

Table 2 shows how Bayelsa State people responded to COVID-19 vaccination, ‘OtuIfie’ campaign, ‘EfieOgbia’ campaign and Massive Vaccination Campaign. The campaigns to the respondents were not encouraging, inspiring, persuading and favourable.

Research Question 3: To what extent has COVID-19 vaccination campaigns influenced Bayelsa State people?

Table 3: Extent COVID-19 Vaccination Influenced Bayelsa State People

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Total 375	Total Weighted (fx)	Decision
11.	Did COVID-19 campaigns made you to be afraid of dying and influence you to get vaccinated	0 0	90 270	201 402	84 84	756	2.02	Rejected
12.	Did COVID-19 campaigns persuaded you to take precautionary measure by getting vaccinated	0 0	160 480	168 336	58 58	874	2.33	Rejected
13.	Did COVID-19 campaigns made you to be conscious of the virus which helps you to get vaccinated	0 0	180 540	183 366	12 12	918	2.45	Rejected

14.	DidCOVID-19 campaigns encourage you to get vaccinated	4	180	160	0				
		16	540	320	0	876	2.34	Rejected	
	Grand Mean						2.29		

Table 3 reveals that the extent COVID-19 vaccination campaigns influenced Bayelsa State people was low. The COVID-19 vaccination campaigns were unable to persuade people to take precautionary measure by getting vaccinated.

Discussion of Findings

The data analysed in Tables 1 to 3 provided the platform for this discussion which was purely done in relation to the research objectives and questions. Each of the Table handled and addressed a given research question.

The result revealed that the extent Bayelsa State people were exposed to Massive Vaccination Campaign (MVC), “OtuIfie” campaign and “EfieOgbia” campaign on COVID-19 vaccinations was low, while public announcement campaign encouraging vaccination uptake was high. Hence, the campaigns did not attract the attention of the Bayelsa State people, so with this, the awareness is low. This is why Baker (2011) opines that perception can be influenced by a myriad of psychological factors including the predispositions of individuals that are based on their past experience, cultural expectations, motivation, moods and perceptions. All these factors are responsible for why people watch, listen or read certain things and ignore others. The finding is supported by the study of Sakulsantiporn (2021) who found out a moderate level of knowledge about COVID-19, risk perception, and attitude against COVID-19 vaccination among the high school students. Also, aligns with the study of Wirunpan (2021) who stated that students in SatitPrasarnmit International Programme had moderate knowledge towards COVID-19, negative attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccine and low willingness to vaccinate against COVID-19. In addition, this finding equally upholds the study of Khaffai (2021) which stated that majority of the participants have insufficient knowledge about COVID-19 vaccines.

Data from the questionnaire revealed that Bayelsa State people responded negatively to “OtuIfie” campaign, “EfieOgbia” campaign and Massive Vaccination Campaign on COVID-19 vaccination being appealing, encouraging, interesting and favourable respectively. These findings corroborate with the study of Adane et al., (2022) that negative attitudes and poor perception toward the anticipated COVID-19 vaccination were significant factors to refuse to be vaccinated. Also, the study of Khaffai (2021) supported these findings which found out that majority of respondents have negative attitude toward COVID-19 vaccines but refute the study of Alamer, et al., (2021) as stated that the public in Jazan Province, Saudi Arabia had positive perception toward COVID-19 vaccines. The cognitive dissonance theory that underpins this study gives validation to this finding. Expanding on the theory, Anaeto and Anaeto(2010) state that, when an individual has cognition that is not in agreement, a state of dissonance (tension) is created. To reduce the dissonance, the individual either rejects the conflicting thought or rationalises and absorbs it into his or her attitude. The theory, according to Asemah (2010), holds that people strive to justify their behaviours by reducing the dissonance or inconsistency between their cognitive (perceptions or beliefs) and reality.

From the results, it was revealed that that the extent COVID-19 vaccination campaigns influenced Bayelsa State people was to a low extent. This implies that people accept messages that are in line with what they already know. This implies that people tend to develop favourable attitude towards things that aid or reward them. This finding aligns with the opinion of Wirunpan (2021) which posited that attitude toward COVID-19 vaccine acts as a major predictive factor toward the willingness to vaccinate against COVID-19 vaccine. Also, the finding is in tandem with the view of Khaffai(2021) who stated that most people were uncertain about the use of COVID-19 vaccines. Finally, the study of Adane et al., (2022)

identified negative attitudes and poor perceptions about COVID-19 vaccines were significantly associated with refusal to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Massive Vaccination Campaign on COVID-19 vaccination was low but public announcement campaign made a measurable difference in the vaccination uptake in Bayelsa State. The vaccination campaigns were intensive on radio, television and had little road walks. The campaigns led to no action because it was unable to dispel misinformation, unreasonable fears about vaccine safety, poor communication at the onset of the campaign and public mistrust of government intentions.

It establishes that Bayelsa State people responded negatively to the campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination as they were not highly supportive, engaging and impressive towards the vaccine uptake. The campaigns were not massive or aggressive enough to attract the attention of the people. The campaigns did not embrace the creation of risk communications that explains how vaccines protect individual from serious illness or death, lack of confidence, fear of possible side effects, not believing that COVID-19 existed and access to vaccines.

It concludes that the extent of influence of COVID-19 vaccination on Bayelsa State people was low, fuelled in part by misinformation circulating in traditional and social media. Campaigns were not effective enough to convince an intake of the vaccine. The campaign messages were not focused on access, safety and efficacy. COVID-19 vaccination campaigns need to be shifted from vaccine preparedness to implementation, with a focus on planning, improving vaccine confidence and demand, supporting vaccine safety monitoring and evaluating vaccine campaigns.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Since the level of exposure to campaigns on COVID-19 vaccination was low, the study therefore recommends that massive awareness campaign should be undertaken to enlighten people and attract more attention of Bayelsa State people.
2. Campaigners should always make vaccination campaign messages more encouraging, interesting, persuasive and favourable to clearly achieve the desired changes in the target audience.
3. Campaign messages should be crafted and structured in a way to influence the people and attract their attention for compliance.

Implication

This study have provided an in-depth facility to how Bayelsa people were exposed to massive Vaccination Campaign and public enlightenment campaign encouraging vaccination uptake. It also showed the Bayelsa people' responses to COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, the extent to which the people were influenced by the COVID-19 campaign to get vaccinated and the media through which they were exposed to the vaccination campaigns.

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