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Acceptability of the coronavirus disease-2019 vaccine among medical students in Uganda: a cross sectional study

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Background: COVID-19 is a major global threat continuing to affect millions of people and livelihoods. With the current employed public health measures unable to curb spread and absence of definitive curative agent, vaccination remains the long-lasting solution. As promising vaccine candidates are being discovered, unanimous uptake of the vaccine is required to subsequently avert the spread of SARS-cov2. **Objective:** To assess COVID-19 vaccine acceptability, hesitancy and associated factors among medical students in Uganda.

Methods: This study employed an online descriptive cross-sectional survey among medical students across 10 medical schools in Uganda. A structured questionnaire as a Google form was sent to participants via whatsapp. Data was extracted and analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2016 and STATA 16. Descriptive statistics, bivariate and multivariable analyses were performed.

Results: We surveyed 600 medical students, 377 (62.8%) were male. COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and acceptability were 30.7% and 37.3%, respectively. Factors associated with vaccine acceptability were being female (aor = 1.9, 95% CI: 1.3-2.9, p=0.001), being single (aor= 2.1, 95% CI 1.1-3.9, p=0.022). Very high (aor= 3.5, 95% CI 1.7-6.9, p<0.001) or moderate (aor=2.2, 95% CI 1.2-4.1, p=0.008) perceived risk of getting COVID-19 in the future, receiving any vaccine in the past 5 years (aor= 1.6, 95% CI 1.1-2.5, p=0.017), Pentecostal religion (aor 0.5, 95% CI 0.3-1.0, p=0.042) and COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy (aor 0.6, 95% CI 0.4-0.9, p=0.036).

Conclusions: This study revealed low levels of acceptance towards COVID-19 vaccine among medical students, low

self-perceived risks of COVID-19 and many had relied on social media that furnished them with negative information about the COVID-19 disease. This surely poses an evident risk on the battle towards COVID-19 in future especially when we are seeing third waves in some countries as these students are expected to be influencing decisions of the general public towards the same.

Recent Publications

1. Andrew Marvin Kanyike, Ronald Olum & Jonathan Kajjimu Antimicrobial resistance and rational use of medicine: knowledge, perceptions, and training of clinical health professions students in Uganda Antimicrobial Resistance & Infection Control (2022) Nov 25;11(1):145
2. Andrew Marvin Kanyike, Ronald Olum, & Jonathan Kajjimu Perspective of Medical Students on the COVID-19 Pandemic: Survey of Nine Medical Schools in Uganda JMIR Public Health Surveill 2020 vol. 6 iss. 2
3. Andrew Marvin Kanyike, Linda Atulinda, & Daphine Ninsiima Factors Associated with Medical Students' Career Choices Regarding Internal Medicine in Uganda Advances in Medical Education and Practice 2022:13.

Biography

Andrew Marvin Kanyike is currently working on Busitema University, Faculty of health sciences, Mbale Uganda. Peer Educator in the Mbale region under the SHE Decides project where we dealt with empowering girls to take charge of their bodies, embrace their sexual and reproductive rights and make informed and formidable decisions about their sexual life. Doing project support supervision, data analysis and making reports. Coordinating EMS-ECHO attendance for health workers from Hoima region of Uganda.

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