



## The Response of Public, Role of Government, Social Media and Medical Specialists towards Covid-19 Vaccination: Descriptive Data Analysis on Bahawalpur, Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to analyze the role of government, social media and medical specialists towards Covid-19 vaccination and to trace out the response of general public towards Covid-19 vaccination in Bahawalpur district during Pandemic period (June 2021). For this purpose, primary data from 445 households has been collected from people of different age groups having different educational & professional backgrounds. Crosstab method has been utilized to analyze the response into percentages. The findings of the study show that general public including youngsters (19-29 years of age) and middle age group (30-59 years) are in favor to be vaccinated and they are agreed with the point that Vaccination may help them to be protected. The public clearly rejected the rumors like death after 2 years or vaccination is haram. The community of Bahawalpur appreciated and acknowledged the policies of Government of Pakistan regarding Social Distancing, enforcement of SOPs during Covid-19 period and Ehsas program relief package provided to poor. Moreover, the contribution of Medical Specialists/ Pharmaceutical Researchers cannot be denied as they invented new and appropriate medicines/ vaccine as the treatment of Covid-19 disease.

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## 1. Introduction

In Pakistan, first wave of Covid-19 came in March 2020 and people were unaware about the disease, its consequences and its treatment. The death rate in all over the world was also rising which frightened the overall world. In that situation, Social media played a significant role in providing awareness to public and Medical Specialists/ Practitioners also faced a lot of risks in that period and few of them were also affected by Covid-19 and they could not survive unfortunately. But still Doctors never left the Covid patients unattended they continuously struggled for the welfare of the community. On the other side, Government of Pakistan provided funds to the hospitals for providing treatment and Quarantine. Government took strict SOPs in order to reduce the gathering of people and closed all School, College, Institutes, Universities or other educational institutes. Public gatherings were restricted by closure of Public Parks, Marriage Halls, Offices, Banks, etc. Permission to say prayer in the Masjid (Mosque) was given under strict SOPs of the Government. However, positive role of PTI Government towards Covid-19 can never be denied.

After provision of vaccines in Pakistan, there were different rumors circulated among the community. Health of people will be poorly affected; they will be died after 2 years after

getting vaccination or vaccination is Haram (Religiously illegal). Such type of rumors made their minds not to be vaccinated. Then Government took different steps to ensure the vaccination of the public like Non-vaccinated persons cannot enter into the Shopping Malls, Masjid (Mosque), public places, marriage halls, School, College, University, etc. They cannot travel domestically or internationally, they cannot do any job or business and their mobile SIMMs will be blocked etc. Such type of threatened policies by the Government enforced them to get vaccination. Moreover, PTI Government also started Ahsas program for low income people in which Rs. 12000/- per month were distributed in poor families of Pakistan.

Keeping in view, this paper examines the role of government, role of social media and the role of medical specialists towards Covid-19 vaccination and also studies the response of general public towards Covid-19 vaccination in Bahawalpur, Pakistan district during Pandemic period (June 2021). Few studies were already conducted on COVID-19 during pandemic period and summary of them is given in this section.

The perceptions about Covid-19 during pandemic created fear among public of worldwide and the people were concerned about their health in the Arab world. To get their response, Faour-Klingbeil, Osaili, Al-Nabulsi, Jemni, and Todd (2021) gathered information through a web-based survey. Most of the respondents believed that corona virus can be transmitted through food. When people go for shopping they may touch the contaminated surfaces and food packages and they can be infected while food shopping. This study concluded that there were many unknown risks, misleading information of social media and psychological factors that adversely affected the health of people in Arab countries.

A paper was written on vaccine hesitancy by Durach, Buturoiu, Craiu, Cazacu, and Bargaoanu (2022) in which they highlighted the role of social media in this regard. Due to rumors, parents were hesitant about their children to be vaccinated. According to the author, the social media spread such news that vaccine was useless, its efficacy was low, it was unsafe so it is necessary to take some measures that can prevent the people from spreading weak information.

A study was conducted in Kerala, India to combat with the vulnerabilities of Covid-19 which highlighted different ways. This study innovated Government Frugal Innovation which was promoted under public – private partnership because it was cheap and its efficacy level was high. This idea was given by Sarkar (2021) to combat with Covid-19 problem.

Due to coverage of Media on Covid -19, there was negative effect on emotions and resilience of the people due to frightening news during pandemic. The study was conducted in India by Giri and Maurya (2021). The study exposed the strong effect of media news on human emotions and resilience and concluded that negative news of media had negative effects on positive emotions and resilience while good news reduced negative emotions and resilience in India during this pandemic situation.

During Covid-19, there was a problem of laundering for Health Care Workers like they had fear whether to launder uniforms domestically or to launder from the employer. For the purpose of analysis, Lucy, Lindsay, Stanulewicz, Andrew, and Laird (2021) collected data from nursing staff of through online and paper survey in 2021 keeping aim to investigate the knowledge and attitude of UK health care workers. It was analyzed that mostly health care workers were used to launder their uniform domestically and 20 percent health care workers did not follow UK National Health Service uniform guidelines.

It was necessary to wear mask to be protected from corona virus but there was no proper mechanism for its disposal after use. As it may be the significant cause of spreading corona if not disposed-off properly. In Saudi Arabia, a study was conducted by Alomari, Aga, El Sahmarany, Hegazi, and Almulla (2021) to give awareness to public. The study revealed that most of the Saudi public was well aware about how to dispose-off these used masks and gloves and their attitude was good for the waste management companies.

Rachmawati, Umniyatun, Rosyidi, and Nurmansyah (2022) arranged In-depth Interviews of Islamic Faith-Based Organization (FBOs) of Indonesia and thematic content

analysis was utilized for analysis of data. It was observed that this Islamic FBOs really contributed in terms of prevention from Covid-19 and they took many measures in this regard like they gave awareness regarding covid-19 and reduced psychological effects on the human minds through Health Education and Psychological consultation. They also supported the community financially and highlighted the positive role of Information technology.

In low income countries, media is the only source of spreading any type of information among the people and during Covid-19 the role of media was very visible. Tune, Sarkar, Uddin, Pinto, and Ahmed (2021) conducted a study to analyze the reaction of newspaper readers that how they react the Covid-19 news in Bangladesh. The readers of newspapers found that there were non-coordination of Government, corruption in health sector of Bangladesh, and late response to Covid-19. The media was responsible of spreading misinformation and rumors.

Mohamed Ibrahim, Ibrahim, Ibrahim, Madawi, and Al Deri (2022) analyzed the role of pharmacists/ medical specialists during Covid-19. Pharmacists/ Medical Specialists provided care and medicines to the society at their priority and their role was significant in combating from Covid-19 disease. Doctors/ Clinical Pharmacists offered intense care to the Covid patients and also gave them awareness. They examined the reaction of medicines in different situations and did evidence based practice during pandemic period.

## **2. Data and Methodology**

The study collects primary data of 445 households belonging to Bahawalpur district. For collection of data two age groups were chosen like young age (19-29 years) and middle age (30-59 years). It is also the purpose of this study to collect data from two education groups i.e. Below Primary and Above Primary. Similarly, different professions were also considered like Farmers, Business, Housewife, Private Job, Government Job and Contractual Job. For the purpose of Analysis, crosstab method has been used which give response into percentages through SPSS. The questions were asked in dichotomous form (Yes/ No).

## **3. Results and Discussion**

The percentage analysis was conducted on this study to explore the objectives of the study and the results are given in tables 1, 2 and 3. In table 1, the response of respondents is given which show that there is more than 80% proportion of parents (Fathers) faced loss in their business or job during the period of pandemic. This loss is less on Mother’s Income as 56.20% respondents reported that they faced any partial/ overall loss having education above primary level. Parents having below primary education are affected less in the period of Pandemic.

**Table 1: Partial/ Overall Income/Profits during Pandemic w.r.t. Father’s and Mother’s Education**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Below primary</b>	<b>Above primary</b>
<b>Father’s Education</b>	14.6%	85.4%
<b>Mother’s Education</b>	43.8%	56.2%

Table 2 shows loss of households with respect to their profession like businessmen affected most as 29.20% businessmen respondents did claim of their loss, farmers are affected during COVID-19 period at 2<sup>nd</sup> number as 25% farmer respondents claimed their loss. Retired persons are less affected in terms of Income as they got their pension benefit as per their schedule regularly.

**Table 2: Partial/ Overall Income/Profits loss during Pandemic w.r.t. Father Profession**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Govt. Job</b>	<b>Private Job</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>Retired</b>	<b>Contract Job</b>
<b>Fathers’ Profession</b>	12.25%	14.6%	29.2%	25%	6.2%	12.75%

The result may be explained as 71% of youngsters and 87% middle age persons were in favor of vaccination. The result also shows that 59% youngsters and 87% middle age

persons considered the vaccination safe and has positive effect on human health. It is seen that 55% youngsters and 62% middle age persons did not vaccinated due to their health conditions. However, few people of middle claim that they have other health issues so vaccination may be harmful but response of youngsters was against it. 72% youngsters and 94% middle age persons considered the vaccination as effective but dangerous. On the other side, the young and middle age respondents argue that vaccination is effective but it may have dangerous.

**Table 3: Response to various Questions of Respondents w.r.t. Age (Young & Middle)**

Questions asked to the 446 Respondents of district Bahawalpur in June 2021	Response	Age	
		19 to 29	30 to 55
<b>I favor vaccination; I want to take it</b>	Yes	71.4%	87.5%
	No	28.6%	12.5%
<b>Vaccines are not harmful as it has positive effects on health</b>	Yes	59.5%	87.5%
	No	40.5%	12.5%
<b>I don't take it due to age or health conditions</b>	Yes	54.8%	62.5%
	No	45.2%	37.5%
<b>COVID-19 Vaccine can be effective but it may be dangerous</b>	Yes	71.4%	93.8%
	No	28.6%	6.2%
<b>I was tested negative, I am now no longer sick</b>	Yes	82.1%	100.0%
	No	17.9%	0%
<b>Lack of knowledge, I choose to wait longer and to observe it, over a long time to peer if it's far surely effective and safe</b>	Yes	53.6%	18.8%
	No	46.4%	81.2%
<b>Social Distancing, SOPs, Funds distributed to Poor under Ahsas program are sufficient</b>	Yes	79.8%	87.5%
	No	20.2%	12.5%
<b>I choose to boost my immunity system by taking multivitamins</b>	Yes	86.9%	56.2%
	No	13.1%	43.8%
<b>I trust on Medical Specialists/ pharmaceutical industry and these are working for welfare of the Community</b>	Yes	60.7%	81.2%
	No	39.3%	18.8%
<b>Vaccination is Haram (Religious Effects)</b>	Yes	27.4%	12.5%
	No	72.6%	87.5%
<b>Social media posts /news are saying after 2 years of vaccination, all vaccinated person will be died</b>	Yes	56.0%	56.2%
	No	44.0%	43.8%
<b>Vaccination starts Blood Clotting in the Human Body</b>	Yes	46.4%	25.0%
	No	53.6%	75.0%
<b>I didn't get vaccination because anyone in family died after being vaccinated</b>	Yes	15.5%	0%
	No	84.5%	100.0%
<b>I don't need to be vaccinated, I can do my care without it</b>	Yes	60.7%	12.5%
	No	39.3%	87.5%

Note: This table is prepared by the Authors using M.S. Excel.

It is found that 82% youngsters and 100% middle age persons considered themselves as healthy after taking negative Covid test report. The vaccination safe and has positive effect on human health. They have fear due to death rate in all over the world when they got negative Covid-19 result so they become more confident that they are healthy. 54% youngsters and 19% middle age persons had lack of knowledge and they waited long to be vaccinated and majority of them did not wait and they got vaccination immediately. 80% youngsters and 88% middle age persons understood the benefits of Social Distancing and SOPs made by Government of Pakistan during Covid period.

During media campaigns in Covid-19 period, 87% youngsters and 56% middle age persons have already chosen Multivitamins to boost up their immunity and to protect them from this disease. 61% youngsters and 81% middle age persons were impressed by the positive contribution of Medical Specialists/ Pharmaceutical research to tackle this Covid-19 disease. The respondents acknowledged their contribution in this regard. 73% youngsters and 88% middle age persons was assured that this vaccine is purely halal and it is made to protect the people from this disease. There are no any other underlying objectives of this vaccine. People were also having good understanding that this is not truth that after 2 years all vaccinated persons will be dead.

The people considered this argument floated by someone on media that after two years all the vaccinated people will be died. The study found mixed response about this argument. There was another rumor on the news that vaccination starts Blood clotting in the human body but response of people shows that people of middle age did not have any fear of blood clotting. There were few deaths in the families after being vaccinated but the people had no fear about that they got vaccination and protected themselves from this disease. People of middle age were more agreed with the positive effect of vaccination in terms of protection from disease as compared to youngsters.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The objective of the study is to analyze the role of government, social media and medical specialists towards Covid-19 vaccination and to trace out the response of general public towards Covid-19 vaccination in Bahawalpur district during Pandemic period (June 2021). For this purpose, primary data from 445 households has been collected from people of different age groups having different educational & professional backgrounds. Crosstab method has been utilized to analyze the response into percentages.

The results show that respondents of middle age are relatively more in favor to be vaccinated as compared to youngsters but there is minor difference. People of middle age group claimed that they were facing other health issues (Blood pressure, Sugar etc.), so vaccination may be harmful but response of youngsters was against it. On the other side, the young and middle age respondents argue that vaccination is effective but it may have dangerous. They have fear due to death rate in all over the world when they got negative Covid-19 result so they become more confident that they are healthy. There were initially negative comments about vaccination due to lack of knowledge. They middle age people thought for a long time whether to be vaccinated or not due to rumors spreading all around. Once the people realized that vaccination is safe so they travelled to vaccination centers to be vaccinated and they also tried to maintain Social Distancing and respondents were quite satisfied with the SOPs taken by the Government of Pakistan during Covid-19 vaccination.

During Covid-19, there were so many media campaigns for awareness of people that how to protect from Covid-19 so majority of youngsters tried to take multivitamins as the safe side and to boost up their immunity. The people of Bahawalpur also trusted on the Medical Specialists/ Pharmaceutical industry as they have played a significant role to come up with the solution of Covid-19 disease. They invented new medicines to overcome this problem and they invented Covid-19 vaccine in few months. The respondents acknowledged their contribution in this regard.

On the media, few rumors were moving that Vaccination is Haram so people should not take it. The response of people shows that they totally rejected this idea that Vaccination is Haram or may be Haram. The people totally rejected this rumor and were against this news and considered this vaccination as Halal and felt that this vaccination is really helpful to cope up with the problem of Covid-19. The people considered this argument floated by someone on media that after two years all the vaccinated people will be died. The study found mixed response about this argument.

There was another rumor on the news that vaccination starts Blood clotting in the human body but response of people shows that people of middle age did not have any fear of blood clotting. There were few deaths in the families after being vaccinated but the people had no fear about that they got vaccination and protected themselves from this disease. People of

middle age were more agreed with the positive effect of vaccination in terms of protection from disease as compared to youngsters.

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