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Spreading Awareness about the importance of getting COVID-19 Vaccine among the Underprivileged People

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to spread awareness about the importance of getting COVID-19 vaccine among the underprivileged community in Lucknow. In this research, the researcher used community survey method for the collection of the data from the underprivileged students and their parents. During the pandemic in 2021, the researcher could manage to collect data from 53 underprivileged students and their parents in Lucknow. For the purpose of data collection, the researcher used google form as a data collection instrument which included open ended & close ended questions. Percentage used for the analysis of data. Following are the major findings identified by the researcher in this research: a) The number of vaccinated people were very low. Despite the fact it is free of cost, b) During the conversation, the researcher found that majority of the people had misconceptions regarding both COVID-19 vaccines, c) The number of female vaccinations was very less as compared to men getting vaccinated, d) People did not care much about their mental or physical health, e) Due to pandemic and to stop the chain of coronavirus almost all people who work somewhere are facing financial issues. Some of them are even struggling to manage their daily requirements. By doing this study the researcher came to know that the people need more awareness regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

Keywords: COVID-19, Vaccine, Underprivileged, Awareness.

Background of the Study

Coronavirus disease (COVID) is a large family consisting of viruses which causes illness that ranges from common cold to severe diseases such as (MERS)- CoV or (SARS)-CoV. COVID-19 is a kind of disease which is caused by coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. According to World Health Organization (WHO), On December 31, 2019, a report of a cluster of cases of viral pneumonia was found in Wuhan, China. COVID-19 came with several different symptoms in which the most common were

fever, fatigue, dry cough, some patients faced symptoms like loss of smell and taste, sore throat, muscle, and joint pain, at times conjunctivitis also. The patients with severe COVID-19 disease also felt shortness of breath, high temperature, loss of appetite, sleep disorders and pain in chest also.

In the beginning everyone thought it affected more to the people who were aged 60 years or above. However, by the passage of time we learnt that anyone could become sick with COVID-19 and the people with underlying medical problems like heart or lung problems, high blood pressure, diabetes or obesity are at a higher risk of developing serious illness and even die at any age. As time passed everyone learnt that we could stay safe by adapting some simple precautions like maintaining 2 feet social distance, wearing mask, gloves or face shield while going outside in a public place, using sanitizers, or washing hands with soap properly. But COVID-19 had different plans for India.

COVID-19 in India

In India, the first case of COVID-19 was found in Kerala when, on 27 January 2020, a 20-year-old female with symptoms like dry cough and sore throat was presented at Emergency Department in General Hospital. She revealed that she returned to Kerala from Wuhan, China on 23 January 2020. According to World meter, 23 June 2021 India has a total number of 30,028,709 cases and 390,691 deaths due to COVID-19. No one even dreamed of this in their dreams that with one case it will rise to such an extent.

So, when the first case was found on 23rd March then Lockdowns were declared in Kerala as well as in the rest of the country. Around mid- May 2020, many cities started reporting cases. But in June India's recovery rate became more than the active cases and in September the rate of cases started dropping. In January it dropped below 15,000 cases. Everyone was kind of relieved that it will end soon, and we will be free from this virus. But who knew it would return soon and will be more deadly? In the beginning of March 2021, India started experiencing huge rush in Coronavirus cases and deaths. On April 10, India became the 3rd leading nation in identified cases. Some of the utmost affected states in India were Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh etc. Although such huge number of cases some national movements were going on.

The second wave was much stronger, larger, and deadlier than the first wave. There was shortage of hospital beds, oxygen cylinders, even vaccines and other important medicines in many parts of the country. During late April, India was leading in new and active cases in the world. Getting worse on 30th April, India became the first country to report more than 400,000 new cases of COVID-19 and 3,500 deaths in just 24-hour time. There were multiple factors which contributed to the unexpected spike in cases such as the national movement like farmers protest, state and local elections in which politicians and the activists held several rallies in many states, then marriages and festivals like Holi and the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar and sports event like the IPL. Due to economic slowdown in the country the government in pressure had to lift restrictions. Also, there was a lack of preparation in the health sector when they saw the cases were decreasing, new facilities were not built, and people started ignoring the safety measures which were poorly implemented or forgotten.

Meanwhile, India began the vaccination program on January 16, 2021. India allowed the British Oxford-AstraZeneca Vaccine i.e., Covishield, the Indian BBV152- Covaxin and the Russian Sputnik V vaccine for emergency use. According to the Hindu Business Line, 19 June 2021, India administered a total of 27,23,88,783 total doses of the vaccine. Out of which 22,19,01,281 were of first dose and second doses totalled 5,04,87,502. India begins with its vaccination policy with a target of 300 million people being vaccinated in six months by end of August 2021.

The process of vaccination was designed in 3 phases. The first phase started on 16 January which aimed at 10 million health workers and then 20 million frontline workers. The second phase started on 1 March to vaccinate 45+ years old people. Due to shortage of vaccines, it delayed a bit. The Health Minister of India on 19 March stated in the Lok Sabha that "It is not necessary, scientifically, to give each and every person in the country the vaccine. Not each and every person in the world will be

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vaccinated. The prioritization process is a dynamic process.” The third phase of vaccination program started from 1st May, it was opened to all including the adults i.e., 18+ as the cases were at its peak. Due to this increased population, there was prolonged shortage of vaccines. Despite the limited number of vaccines in such a huge, populated country, the Indian government provided around 65.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to 95 countries between 20th January till March. Since the beginning of the pandemic international support also has been provided to India. When Corona was at its peak in April during second wave the international relief which was transported to India increased. Countries like Sweden, France, Belgium, Ireland, Portugal sent pandemic related aids like ventilators, oxygen concentrators and medicines also.

But despite all this there is still of huge population who are hesitant of taking any of the vaccines. Especially the people in rural areas. They do not want to get vaccinated due to fear and myths which people are spreading. So, before the third wave arrives or not people need to get vaccinated. The government is spreading their message, and everything related to vaccines through various posters and videos so that the people should stop trusting rumours and get their vaccination done as it is free of cost also and we cannot afford or tolerate another wave of this deadly virus as already many losses is done and so many lives and families have been shattered. So, it is every one’s responsibility to keep a check to their near ones that they get their vaccination done.

Impact of COVID-19 on Education

Since the COVID-19 pandemic has started it had affected the education system worldwide. It led to the total closure of schools, universities, and colleges. Almost all government decided to shut down the educational institutions temporarily as an attempt to decrease the transmission of COVID-19. Due to this pandemic and closure of educational institutes nearly 825 million learners are affected. No one would have dreamt of this time. This pandemic affected and left no place untouched around the globe. Especially the learners and the educators have a very memorable impact due to this virus.

Although there are so many negative impacts of this virus on the field of education, there are a few positive impacts too which should not be ignored. This virus has taken the level of education system and its teaching methods a step higher. This pandemic has unlocked gates to new and innovative techniques and methods of transmitting knowledge across the world. For a country like India, it was very challenging as its major population lives in rural areas without internet and many attends poorly equipped schools which runs by the government. A lot of efforts were made but to continue their education at all levels in an online mode, but it cannot be made available to every student.

This Coronavirus pandemic hurried the adoption of digital technology to provide education. The educational institutes proceeded towards blended learning and motivated and encouraged the educators as well as the learners to become technology savvy. Virtual classrooms, different types of webinars and seminars, digital exams and assessment methods became familiar and common. If it were not a pandemic, we would not have used them so earlier.

Talking about the negative impacts, this pandemic restricted the educational activities to a great extent. There was so much of confusion and delays in exam and the new academic sessions. Also, there was not any space for co-curriculum. This digital technology world was problematic or a dilemma for the teachers who were only expert in teaching through books and chalk and duster and with the classroom methods. As in a short period of time they had to be ready for online mode of teaching. While some teachers were struggling and trying to cope up with the online mode, the students were also struggling to obtain the basic devices like smartphones, computers, or laptops for their digital learning.

For some students whose parents were educated and blessed with the necessities it was not much difficult but for the students whose parents were not educated or were already struggling to fulfil their basic needs, it became very difficult for them to help their child. Also, the midday meal which was provided in schools was a great blessing to so many students in our country but due to the shutdown of schools many students became deprived and malnourished. Due to the pandemic and lockdown many

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schools with low budget had to face shutdowns. Rest of the schools are teaching through WhatsApp and in that also many families had only one smartphone available, so they had to wait to study for just half an hour or maximum one hour. It is clear by the above-mentioned things that this pandemic has challenged the Education system and has a bad impact on the learner's life.

Praveen, et al. (2021) conducted a study on "Analysing the attitude of Indian citizens towards COVID-19 vaccine- A text analytics study." According to the study, not long ago, the Indian government planned to begin the process of mass vaccination to end the COVID-19 crisis. Yet, the process of vaccination was not made compulsory and there was a lot of aspects that created doubts in the minds of common people related to COVID-19 vaccines. In this study a machine learning technique analyses the main concerns or doubts Indian people have voiced out about the Coronavirus vaccines in social media. For doing this study the researcher used social media posts as data. They used Python to scrap the posts on social media of the Indian citizens which discussed about the COVID-19 vaccines. The researchers performed their study in two sections. In the first study they carried out a sentimental analysis for determining how the general perception of Indian people changed regarding the COVID-19 vaccine over different months of this crisis. In the second study they executed topic modelling to understand the main issues and problems that bother the public related to the COVID-19 vaccines.

By doing this study they got a result that nearly 47% of the posts on social media discussing about the vaccines were in a neutral tone and almost 17% of the posts on social media were discussing about the COVID-19 vaccines in a negative tone. The people were afraid of their health and allergic reactions due to the vaccine were the two well-known issues that bothered the Indian people regarding the vaccines. This study concluded that as there was only 35% positive opinion related to the vaccine, the Indian government should focus on giving complete knowledge about the vaccine and then implementing the process of mass vaccination.

Gautam, et al. (2020) conducted a study on "A digital survey on the acceptance and affordability of COVID-19 vaccine among the people of West Bengal, India- A survey-based study." According to the study, during that time there were various vaccines for COVID-19 which were going through clinical trials. During October-November 2020, there were 1078 individuals in West Bengal which participated in the survey to evaluate the possible rate of acceptance, rates of affordability and the aspects that affect the taking of COVID-19 vaccines. The result of this study showed almost 77.27% of the people who responded would be very likely to take the COVID-19 vaccines. There were 5.3% people who did not want to take the vaccine for COVID-19. Around 58% of the people who responded wanted to get Indian vaccine. About 19% wanted to get foreign vaccine for COVID-19. Almost 40% people who responded wanted a vaccine which would be below 500 INR. The method of this study was survey based and was done in west Bengal, a state in India. For conducting this survey, a questionnaire was prepared on the acceptance and affordability of COVID-19 vaccine in India. The questionnaire was made in a google form which was circulated digitally among the people. Then the data was taken in Excel Sheet and the statistical data was prepared based on the results.

The study concluded that people were eagerly waiting for the vaccine of COVID-19. Although the survey was done digitally the people who responded were privileged people who had basic education and availability of smart phone. Because of the pandemic they could not collect and reach to people living in the slum area community. There is a huge majority of people who knew nothing about the COVID-19 vaccine, this means that there is an educational gap and a proper awareness related to the vaccine should be done.

Suresh, et al. (2021) conducted a study on "Public awareness and acceptance of COVID-19 vaccine: An online cross-sectional survey, conducted in the first phase of vaccination drive in India." This study stated that, on 16th January 2021, India began its vaccination program. In the first phase the healthcare and frontline workers were included. The second group included the people over the age of 60 years. From 1st April the people above 45 years could also get the vaccine. The Covishield and the Covaxin were the two vaccines which were granted authority for the emergency use. Both

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the vaccines were given free of cost to who so ever registered for it on the Co-WIN Portal. Regardless of the efforts made by the government, the response from the people was no less than dismal in the first phase. According to The Hindu, 2021, in the first 3 days only 6,31,417 people were fascinated which was far below then the expected figure. This showed that either the people were unaware or afraid and hesitant towards the vaccine. This study was done during the first phase of vaccination program through online survey on knowledge and attitude of acceptance for COVID-19 vaccine. The result showed that majority of the participants has a positive acceptance and good information about the vaccine. But there was a considerable number of people who were apprehensive about the safety of these vaccines. So, the conclusion is that providing knowledge and education about the vaccine and promoting health is the need of the hour.

Pokhrel, & Chhetri (2021) conducted a study on “A literature review on impact of COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning.” This article focuses to provide a comprehensive report on how this pandemic has affected the education system and introduced digital learning. The coronavirus pandemic has made a huge disruption of the education system in human history. Due to this pandemic almost 1.6 billion learners were affected in more than 200 countries. More than 94% of the world’s student population was affected due to the closure of educational institutions. Because of social distancing the traditional way of teaching has been totally disturbed. Almost all schools and colleges and universities have stopped to continue face to face teaching. It is the need of the hour to develop and innovate new alternative educational system. This pandemic has opened the gates of digital learning. But there are certain hurdles in this road too. As the internet bandwidth is slightly low with lesser access points. The costs of the data packages are also very high, which a low-income family will think twice to afford. More investigation and exploration should be done to develop effective online teaching methods. It should also be affordable and accessible to learners of all economic background. Also, the online teaching should be innovative, creative, and interactive through user friendly tools. This would also help the education system for any kind of uncertainties in future. This study concluded that teachers and learners both should be aware of the use of different educational tools offline as well as online.

Need of the Study

The researcher has chosen this topic because it is the need of the hour to be aware and make as many people as possible aware so that everyone can be safe from this virus. It is very important to make the people aware so that everyone will be safe.

Objectives

- 1) To spread awareness about the importance of getting vaccinated among the underprivileged community in Lucknow.
- 2) To motivate the students so that they convince their parents to get vaccinated.

Research Method

In this study the researcher used community survey method for collection of information from participants. The primary concern of this type of research is present not the past and future. However, information for surveys conducted in the past may be used for comparison with the surveys conducted in the present. So, for this research the researcher had used the community survey method for data collection from the respondents.

Target Group

The target group for this community survey was the underprivileged students and their parents in Lucknow. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the researcher was not able to collect data from the respondents through face-to-face mode. Therefore, the data collection was done over telephonic conversation & through WhatsApp. A total of 106 underprivileged student’s detail including their parents

WhatsApp number were provided by the Ankur Yuva Chetna Shivar (NGO in Lucknow) and Out of 106 students the researcher could manage to reach only 53 students and their parents through phone call and WhatsApp.

Google form Questionnaire

In this study, the researcher used Questionnaire, which was in the form of Google form as a data collection instrument which consists of both open ended and closed ended questions. A total of 10 questions were there in which parent can answer. All the questions were framed in Hindi language only later it translated to English for data analysis and interpretation, so that the parents of underprivileged students may not have any difficulty while answering them.

Data Collection Procedure

Due to this Pandemic COVID 19, the researcher was not able to collect data from the respondents through face-to-face mode. Therefore, she collected data from the parents of underprivileged students over telephonic conversation and WhatsApp. All the respondents' contact number were provided by the NGO. It would have been much better, if the researcher personally meets all the respondents and collects the data through face-to-face mode. But due to pandemic it was better to be at home and stay safe.

Data Analysis Technique

Interpretation of data for current research has made in conformity of objectives as formulated by the researcher. The statistical method depends on the nature of the data. As the problem under study was analysed by the percentage as a statistical data analysis technique.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Q.1) What is the present condition in family during COVID 19?

After asking the first question to the respondents, 23% students said the present situation in family is normal and fine whereas, 77% of the students said that their family condition is very bad due to lockdown. While asking the same question to the parents, 74% replied that they are facing problem and not getting any kind of job or work and only 26% parents were neutral by their answer.

Q.2) Due to COVID 19, is there any effect on the source of income in family?

Only 11% students said that their father or mother's work is still going on. While 89% students stated that there no work or earnings in family due to lockdown. Whereas 87% parent responded that due to pandemic and lockdown their entire work has been stopped, but only 13% parent's work was going on.

Q.3) Is there any smartphone available in the family and it is used by the students for online classes?

77% of the parents and their children responded that there is no smartphone available in family and used for their online classes, but only 23% parents and their children agreed that they have smartphone and their children sometime used it for their online classes when their parents are not in workplace.

Q.4) What kind of problem that your family was facing during lockdown?

While asking the question to the parents, around 100% of the parents said that they were facing problems of getting ration and other required things, proper platform for online education for their children and sources of income. As per the opinion of the parents, most of them faced health issues and medical problem during COVID 19.

Q.5) Does anyone in your family vaccinated COVID-19 vaccine? If yes, then how many of them vaccinated so far?

Only 29% of adult in their family have taken the first dose of COVID 19 vaccine, while 71% of parents are not vaccinated due to the fear of side effects and other rumours. But surprisingly, out of 29% of people who are vaccinated, most of them are male who are above 45 years, but the number of females vaccinated

was negligible is number. Only 6% of male parent had completed their both doses, but rest of the 61% parents did not take any dose. The researcher tried to motivate and convince to the parents of the underprivileged students to get their vaccination done. The researcher tried clear their doubts and myths related to COVID-19 vaccine over telephonic conversation.

Q.6) Did you receive any help from the government during Pandemic?

Only 47% students and their parents agreed that they got free ration from the government which was very less in quantity, whereas 53% of the students and their parents were not aware about these facilities. But most of the people had more expectations from the government, and also they agreed that it was not properly managed by the government officials who were responsible for the distribution of ration and other required things during pandemic.

Q.7) At present, are you feeling helplessness and not overcome from your difficulties, or you are under stress?

Around 43% parents responded that right now they are not under stress but are having major concerns for fulfilling the basic needs of their family. As there is very less opportunity to get a job or work, but still they are struggling to manage their life up to some extent.

Q.8) How do you manage your life and overcome from stress during pandemic?

82.3% of the students said that they spend time with their family members and invest their time in household work. 17.7% students replied that they watch television and spend time in family. When the researcher asked this question to the parent, 69% of the parents said that they try to engage themselves in other works to forget about any kind of stress. Rest 31% parent did not bother to answer this question. The researcher tried to tell more ways of being stress free like doing yoga or watching positive news, spending time in indoor games with family members or reading books, etc. during pandemic.

Q.9) What measures you take to protect yourself from Corona virus?

Around 73.92% students who take the safety precautions like wearing mask, not visiting outside, using sanitizers, etc. Whereas 26.08% students stated that they drink warm water with lime daily to stay fit during COVID-19. When asked the same question to the parent, 19% of the parents said they use double mask to protect themselves. 32% of the parents said they visit outside when necessary. 49% of the parents stated that they take bath after coming from outside and drink Kadha and do gargle to prevent this disease.

Q.10) Have anyone in your family became unemployed due to COVID-19?

73.8% parents opined that, no one has become unemployed in family, yes, the work was currently stopped but they were not unemployed. While 26.2% respondents did not have any idea about this question.

Findings of the Study

Based on the data analysis and interpretation of results, the researcher drawn the following major findings:

- 1) The number of vaccinated people was very low. Despite the fact it is free of cost.
- 2) During the telephonic conversation, the researcher found that majority of the people had misconceptions regarding both COVID-19 vaccines.
- 3) The number of females vaccinated was very less as compared to men getting vaccinated.
- 4) People did not care much about their mental or physical health. They do not think or give importance to mental health specially.
- 5) Due to pandemic and to stop the chain of coronavirus almost all people who work somewhere are facing financial issues. Some of them are even struggling to manage their daily requirements.

Conclusion

COVID-19, a virus which has shaken the world in so many ways which nobody imagined. For India it was even worse in the form of second wave. It destroyed so many lives, so many families, it shook the roots of India. For a country with second largest population, it was, difficult to prevent such a virus through social distancing. The people of India somehow managed and controlled the first wave but after the relief in cases everyone became so careless that we only welcomed the second wave. Then we didn't have many options to be safe and prevent this disease but now we have proper vaccines, which are free of cost. But still India being India, not ready to cooperate and be on their own terms will risk themselves with a third wave of COVID-19.

By doing this study the researcher came to know that the students and their parents are not much in favour of getting vaccinated. It has been observed that they were trusting on the myths and focusing on the side affects more than the fact that it will prevent us from such a deadly virus. So, it is the duty of the government to first provide clear information about any mass programme and then apply it. Also, it is the duty of everyone who are vaccinated not to spread false rumours about it. Also, the teachers in the school should give the students the right information and to make sure that the students motivated and convinced their family members to get their vaccines on time. During these COVID-19 lockdown, the teachers could share posters and videos to make them aware. When the students will start talking about such things then only their parents will also get encouraged to do. So, by this everyone can get vaccinated and become healthy and safe during COVID-19 and we all can be free from this for our entire life.

Talking about the Education system during COVID-19 and everything shifting from traditional classroom mode to total online mode, the researcher found that the students who are well equipped with the electronic devices are going smoothly in this online method, but it is a struggle for them who are not able to manage the basic requirements of studying online like a smartphone, a computer or a laptop, proper internet connection and digital literacy.

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