

Investigating Resistance to Covid-19 Vaccines and Its Underlying Causes: A Descriptive Study of Young Adults in Sri Lanka

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The coronavirus disease has posed a significant threat all over the world. Vaccination has been identified as the most effective and safest solution to recover from the pandemic. However, vaccine hesitancy stands out as the foremost barrier to global vaccination coverage. The purpose of this study is to explore prevalence of the Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy among young adults in Sri Lanka. This research was carried out as a quantitative cross-sectional survey, which is majorly based on five districts in Sri Lanka. An online questionnaire collected data from 601 young adults aged 15 to 35 years, who were selected through crowdsourcing and a simple random sampling technique. According to descriptive statistics, Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy has gradually increased over three phases of hesitancy: initial doses (37%), booster doses (59%), and response to future vaccination (60%). Females, married respondents, and Sinopharm recipients were the most hesitant, with side effects and allergy issues being the most common concerns. In terms of vaccine awareness, the majority show less awareness, owing to their increased exposure to social media information (60%). Furthermore, 34% of respondents, the vaccine was prescribed because it was mandated by a third party. Besides, this study provided extensive information about the Covid-19 immunisation programme and its impact on vaccine hesitancy and refusal. The study's findings are concerning, and stakeholders must consider the identified gaps in order to execute mitigation plans in future vaccination programmes.

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