

COVID-19 Controversies as Probable Influences on Whatsapp Users' Dispositions to Take the Jab in Anambra State, Nigeria

Gloria Nneka Ono^{1,*}, Odionye Chinwe Mirian², Ogechukwu Okoli Nkiruka¹

¹Department of Mass Communication, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

²Department of Mass Communication, Edwin Clark University, Kiagbodo, Nigeria

Email address:

nne_ka07@yahoo.com (G. N. Ono), odionyechinwe@yahoo.com (O. C. Mirian), Ogechukwuokoli59@gmail.com (O. O. Nkiruka)

*Corresponding author

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Abstract: This study was necessitated by the different dispositions people Nigerians have towards taking COVID-19 jab. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, different sorts of news, both real, fake and even myth, have spread over the social media and in particular, WhatsApp social sharing network, leading to powerful controversies about the disease existence, prevalence, and vaccination. Many myths about COVID-19 vaccination have sprung up instilling fear and influencing opinions about taking the recommended COVID-19 jab. The study sought to use online descriptive survey employing Google form questionnaire instrument to find out whether the controversies surrounding COVID-19 and its jab had influence on WhatsApp users' dispositions to take the jab. The study population comprised all resident literate adults in Anambra State, Nigeria who had access to WhatsApp social network. Major finding was that 85 percent of the participants were negatively disposed to take the jab as a result of the controversies surrounding it. The most prominent controversies observed were that the jab was developed in a hurry and therefore, a weapon of human destruction by Nigerian government to depopulate the masses. The researchers recommended that further vaccination should cease and massive media education/enlightenment campaign on the jab intensified to get favourable disposition towards the jab.

Keywords: Coronavirus, Controversies, Pandemic, Jab, COVID-19

1. Introduction

The global 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak shocked the world greatly amidst the controversies surrounding it. While some people believe that COVID-19 is a man-made virus, others believe that it is a biological virus. There is also a belief especially in some African countries that COVID-19 is non-existence in their countries but a camouflage by some political leaders to loot their treasuries in disguise of containing the pandemic. Commenting on the controversies, Wiley online library [28] notes that despite numerous articles published on COVID-19, many controversies still persist among health care professionals and common people.

Even the common illiterate people play a lot of drama

about the COVID-19's existence and prevalence all because of the presumed insincerity of Nigerian government. COVID-19 is dramatic because of the truths and lies surrounding it to the extent that it becomes difficult to separate the truths from the lies. The virus is no respecter of countries as even high-income countries with sound health-care systems are being affected and more deaths are being recorded in these countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). It became a pandemic through human migration which led to travel bans by almost all countries of the world in the year 2020. That was when the pandemic was at its peak with highest record of its tolls across borders.

The world has come up with a jab (vaccine) to contain

the virus but the controversies and myths surrounding the jab seem greater than the one surrounding the existence of the disease itself. The controversies litter all over the media especially WhatsApp platforms that one cannot resist perusing through them even if it means reading only the headlines. People have different dispositions to taking the jab. While some took the jab amidst the controversies, others reject it with the belief that the jab is not safe. They saw the jab as a weapon in the hands of the distrusted governments to reduce the world population. Vaccines are obviously known for their efficacy in containing infectious diseases.

People also seem to doubt whether the pictures of top government officials seen taking the jab are not propaganda or mere photo shots to entice the common people to crave for the jab. Commenting on the distrust of Nigerian government, Annette Patrick, a journalist, stated that the issue of trust is a major challenge for most Nigerians because leadership has been a major challenge and people tend not to trust the system in place despite the campaigns and enlightenment [5].

The aim of the study was to find out whether the controversies surrounding COVID-19 jab had influences on WhatsApp users' dispositions to take the jab. Specifically, the study had the following objectives:

To find out the level of knowledge of COVID-19 jab among WhatsApp users in Anambra State.

To ascertain the dispositions of the users towards taking COVID-19 jab.

To determine whether COVID-19 controversies are probable influences on the users' dispositions to take the jab.

In line with the objectives of the study, three research questions guided the study:

What is the level of knowledge on COVID-19 jab among WhatsApp users in Anambra State?

What are the dispositions of the users to taking the jab?

Are COVID-19 controversies probable influences on the users' dispositions to taking the jab?

2. Statement of Research Problem

The World Health Organization has approved the use of COVID-19 jab (Oxford-AstraZeneca) in the prevention and possible eradication of the disease worldwide. This development brought a lot of controversies doubting the efficacy of the jab especially as it was produced in a hurry.

Developing a new vaccine from scratch takes considerable time. But it traditionally has taken 5-10 years to get a new vaccine. That makes it truly amazing that we already have one authorized vaccine for COVID-19... [22]

The discovery and research phase for a jab is normally two-to-five years and that in total a jab can take more than 10 years to fully develop [3]. Refuting the claimed rush in the development of COVID-19 jab, it was explained that the jab went through the same rigorous testing as all medications and met the same high standards and that the rapid development and testing of jabs does not mean that they are not safe [15].

On 5th March 2021, Nigeria kick-started the vaccination drive for frontline health workers at National Hospital Abuja which many of the health workers [27] saw as a dream come true and of which Premium Times report revealed that even health workers in the same hospital who were expected to be in a rush to take the jab appeared reluctant and hesitant [1]. This leaves one in doubt of which of the reports is more acceptable. The truth is that many Nigerians are hesitant to get vaccinated. Experts say vaccine hesitancy will not only threaten COVID-19 response but prevent Nigeria from achieving 'herd' immunity [5]. This study therefore sought to find out whether controversies surrounding COVID-19 disease and its jab were probable influences on Nigerians' dispositions to take the jab using Nigerian WhatsApp users. Are there factors that are possible influences on the users' dispositions other than the controversies? The study sought to disclose them.

3. Significance of the Study

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this is the first study investigating the dispositions of WhatsApp users towards taking COVID-19 jab and therefore a good reference material or an addition to the already existing literature on COVID-19 and its jab. The outcome of the study would help those in charge of public health to have firsthand information on knowledge level on COVID-19 jab among Nigerians. This would help them to re-assess their COVID-19 education and enlightenment campaigns and re-strategize towards coming up with a more trusted jab that would make people see benefits of taking the jab.

The study would aid Nigerian government to work towards redeeming her image as Nigerians do not trust her as protecting their lives by campaigning for COVID-19 vaccination. Determinants that influenced dispositions to take the jab were identified and can be applied to future health education interventions that should focus on enhanced knowledge. Also, any positive change effected as a result of people's reaction to this research would help the general public to be more out to be granted interviews knowing that their opinions count in this country.

4. Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Health Belief Model (HBM) which is a behavior change theory and Cognitive Dissonance Theory, a social psychological theory propounded by Leon Festinger in 1957. The theories were used to predict the outcome of the research. HBM was developed in the 50s to explain preventive health behaviors. It draws heavily from the psychological and behavioral motivation theory of Kurt Lewin who believed that the world of perceivers determined their actions [16]. The model proposes that perceived vulnerability to disease and disease severity combine to form 'threat' and that threat perception motivates action [17] which can be health related preventive actions. Health Belief Model (HBM) also

posits that people adhere to health preventive actions or behaviors if they receive cues to action. The cues to action as regards COVID-19 are high rate of morbidity and mortality as a result of the pandemic.

HBM predicted the influences COVID-19 controversies had on the respondents' dispositions to take COVID-19 jab. The controversies did not influence some respondents to be negatively disposed to take the jab because of fear of the disease's susceptibility and severity and their reception of cues to action. They saw the controversies as irrelevant because of their pre-conceived belief in general vaccines' efficacy and saw themselves as vulnerable to the disease. They had positive dispositions towards the jab irrespective of whether the controversies are truths or lies.

The Principles of Cognitive Dissonance Theory explain what goes on in the mind of an individual when faced with contradictory opinions, beliefs and ideas. People experience discomfort when they hold conflicting beliefs and opinions about a particular thing [14]. When this dissonance occurs efforts should be made to reduce it by adding more consonant beliefs that outweigh the dissonant beliefs.

In line with this work, the conflicting ideas occur because of the already held ideas, beliefs and opinions about COVID-19 and its jab. In order words, people who had negative dispositions to take COVID-19 jab could be said to have experienced cognitive dissonance as a result of the controversies surrounding the jab.

5. COVID-19 Disease and Jab Controversies

Coronavirus also known as COVID-19 and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is one of the deadliest viruses that have resulted in a lot of deaths since its inception in 2019. It is a new strain of virus in the Coronavirus family and everyone is at risk of contracting it. The epidemic has common symptoms of pneumonia, fever, breathing difficulty, lung infection etc. In a study conducted to find out knowledge on COVID-19 jab among Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam, the study revealed that there was relatively good knowledge on the jab among the people with over 80 percent of the respondents responding correctly to question about COVID-19 jab [9].

There are countless theories as to how COVID-19 evolved and where it originated [23]. The theories stem from being a chemical weapon developed by the Chinese to reduce the world population to being of bat's origin. Dr. Vernon Coleman, an English conspiracy theorist and anti-vaccine activist, was quoted to have said that COVID-19 vaccines are weapons of mass destruction that could be used to wipe out the human race [4]. Dr. Coleman was also quoted to have expressed fear that millions of those who had taken the jab are doomed to die when they next come in contact with the virus.

A report revealed that even health workers who were expected to be in a rush to take the jab appeared reluctant

and hesitant because they saw the jab as a tool to depopulate Nigerians and a religious war to contaminate the children of God [1]. The same report also reported that a research firm, SBM Intel, in all the 36 States and FCT found that only 39.9 percent of Nigerians opted to take the jab, 35.9 percent said no while 24.1 percent were unsure of their position. Consequently, the controversies surrounding COVID-19 origin showed that recent studies dispelled myths concerning the origin of the outbreak of COVID-19 which stated that the virus was synthetically created in a laboratory unleashed to cause global crisis and that it is of bat's origin and a transmission to human through an intermediate host [28].

The rush in the development of COVID-19 jab became necessary due to the continued spike in the disease's morbidity and mortality in order to ensure its accessibility but the fundamental question remains whether the jab is efficacious enough to contain the pandemic. The jab presently is not sufficient to go round. COVID-19 has in fact heightened the importance of immunization to the globe. There are also speculations that Nigerian government wants to force every common civilian to take the jab when in sufficient supply.

The urgency in the development of the jab became controversial and calls for serious concern as studies showed that vaccines are expected to be developed in years and not months [13]. Experts maintain that it is risky to have 18 months as timetable for a coronavirus jab [13]. Reacting to the rush in the development of the jab, Dr. Jerome Kim, Director-General of the International Vaccine Institute, maintained that the speed with which researchers and pharmaceutical companies responded to the coronavirus epidemic is unprecedented and doubted its efficacy [3].

Vaccination according is one of the world's most successful health interventions, saving as many as 3 million lives every year [3]. This is affirmed by WHO when it said that vaccination is not only one of the cheapest and most effective ways of preventing disease but it is also critical to achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals by supporting education and economic development [3]. The efficacy of vaccination in diseases prevention and eradication is not in doubt. Success stories have been shared which include vaccination's ability to eradicate smallpox, polio [3].

Nigeria is one of the countries where the pandemic has spread with its shapes and forms. However, many misconceptions and controversies have trailed around the epidemic as to its origin, prevalence, preventive measures, and the approved jab for containing the disease. Many Nigerians are disillusioned taking the jab; many took it with mixed feelings while others willingly took it believing its efficacy. Reasons for the jab's hesitancy include complacency, inconveniences in accessing vaccines, jab's ineffectiveness, inevitable side effects, and lack of confidence. Others expressed concern about the jab being used as guinea pigs for drug trails [1]. Nigerians have minimum trust on their government. Agreeing to this, some

researchers opine that many Nigerians believe the pandemic to be a 'phony' assuming that it is another opportunity for politicians to embezzle public fund because according to the authors, Nigerian government refused to go against the ethics of medical profession to show on National TV people diagnosed with the virus or those evacuated or people being treated in the isolation centers before recovery [2].

Sequel to this is fear of corruption risks in its distribution and procurement systems. Commenting on the corruption risks, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes [25] has this to say:

These risks include the entry of substandard and falsified vaccines into markets, theft of vaccines within the distribution systems, leakages in emergency funding designated for the development and distribution of the jab or vaccines, nepotism, favouritism, and corruption procurement systems.

Entry of substandard and falsified vaccines into markets should be the greatest fear because human life is involved. Consumption of substandard and falsified vaccines is sure to increase the morbidity and mortality rate of the disease. There is also an alleged fear that COVID-19 jab uses microchip surveillance technology created by Bill Gates-funded research which Bill Gates himself has debunked but whether people believe him is a factor. One of the myths which is still causing a lot of controversy is alleged fear that COVID-19 jab affect people's DNA and is therefore dangerous [15]. COVID-19 jab is also alleged to contain aborted human fetal tissue and also cause infertility in 97 percent of its recipients. Scientists have debunked these myths but its acceptance is still not proven. The reality is that these myths and the controversies influence people's opinion on COVID-19 and its jab.

6. Social Media and WhatsApp Access in Nigeria

The Internet has come to stay globally and it is now part of everyday life to the extent that it is often abused. Nigerians are not left out in the struggle to use the technology as both young and old compete on who should outshine the other on social media visibility. Youth are noted to be more visible on the internet than the old as they continue to fuel wide internet adoption although the gap is still wide to be filled [10]. According to Pew Research Center, social media users tend to be younger and about 90 percent of them are between the ages of 18 and 29 [6].

Social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thought, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities [6]. Virtual networks imply online or internet networks against physical interactions. Social media is any digital tool that allows users to quickly create and share content with the public [8]. It is all the social sharing networks we have on the Internet. They are designed as means of interacting with friends but businesses later adopted them having seen that

social media networks are good outlets for reaching out to customers. Social media are good information sharing and career opportunities sites which people engage in to reach out to friends, colleagues, and families especially with smart home devices.

Social media networks include: WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, FB Messenger, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tiktok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Skype, Google Hangouts etc. Social media usage is globally increasing rapidly that it is projected that 4.41 billion people would be using the social media in 2025 against 3.6 billion using the site in 2020 [24]. Facebook is the largest social media platform in the world with 2.74 billion users followed by YouTube and WhatsApp with 2.29 billion and 2 billion users respectively [6].

The most used social media platforms in Nigeria as of the 3rd quarter of 2020 is WhatsApp [26] and the number of Nigerian social media users reached roughly 28 million. In 2021, the number of users spiked to 33.00 million [11] with WhatsApp still the most popular platform with over 90 million users. This explains why the researchers decided to study WhatsApp users.

7. Methodology

Online descriptive survey design using Google form questionnaire instrument was used for the study. Research assistants helped in distributing the copies of the questionnaire via WhatsApp social network to as many literate adult WhatsApp users as possible who accessed WhatsApp interactive platform. The well-structured questions contained issues relating to respondents' demographic data, access to internet, knowledge on the existence of COVID-19 disease and COVID-19 jab, and respondents' dispositions to take COVID-19 jab. Their demographic variables included age, sex, educational level, marital status, and occupation.

Area of study is Anambra State because the State is believed to have many educated and informed persons who have access to WhatsApp social network. Besides, the study was a sectional one since every State of the Federation could not be studied simultaneously. The population for the study was all Anambra State resident literate adults who had access to WhatsApp platform. The population was an infinite one. Non-probability convenience sampling method where respondents were recruited through invitations to complete copies of questionnaire placed on their WhatsApp platforms was used to determine the appropriate sample size from the infinite population.

On the whole, a total of 393 respondents completed the copies of the questionnaire and this number was found appropriate to serve as the sample size based on the ranking of sample sizes by Meyer (1973) for populations ranging from 1000 to infinity at 95 percent confidence level. The sample size was also found appropriate by looking at the different ranking of sample sizes by Comrey and Lee (1992) as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Populations and sample sizes.

S/N	Population Size	Sample Size
1	Infinity	384
2	500,000	384
3	100,000	383
4	50,000	381
5	10,000	370
6	5,000	357
7	3,000	341
8	2,000	322
9	1,000	278

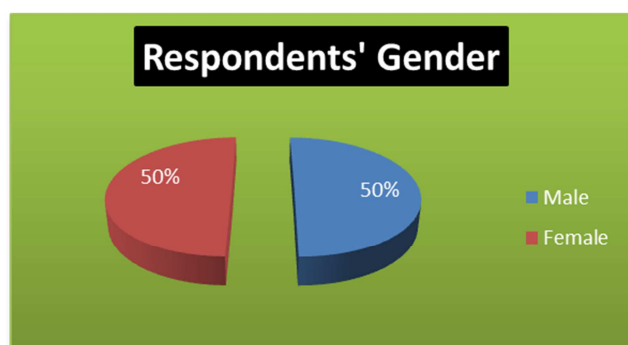
Source: Meyer (1973)

From the calculations of Meyer (1973) in Table 1, the suggestion is that a sample size of 384 could do for an infinite population. To Comrey and Lee, the sample sizes are categorized as: 100=poor, 200=fair, 300=good, 400=very good, 500 and above=excellent.

The researchers purposively studied all the 393 participants since authoritatively; the number could do for an infinite population. For data analysis, simple percentages and pie charts were used.

8. Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents

Respondents' Gender

**Figure 1.** Respondents' gender.

The Figure 1 shows an equal percentage of both male and female respondents (50% each) giving a total of 100 percent. This implies that gender is well represented.

Table 2. Respondents' Age.

Variables	No. of Students	Percentage Response
18-27	100	25%
28-37	101	26%
38-47	96	24%
48-57	60	15%
58-67	27	7%
68-77	7	2%
78 and above	2	1%
Total	393	100%

Table 2 shows that respondents within 28-37, 18-27, and 38-47 were predominant at 26, 25 and 24 percent

respectively. Less than one-fifth were within the other age brackets: 48-57 (15%), 58-67 (7%), 68-77 (2%) and 78 and above (1%). This implies that majority of the respondents were younger people who were within 28-37 and 18-27 age brackets.

Respondents' Level of Education

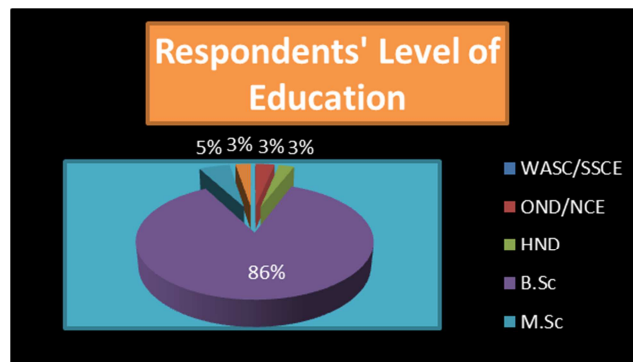
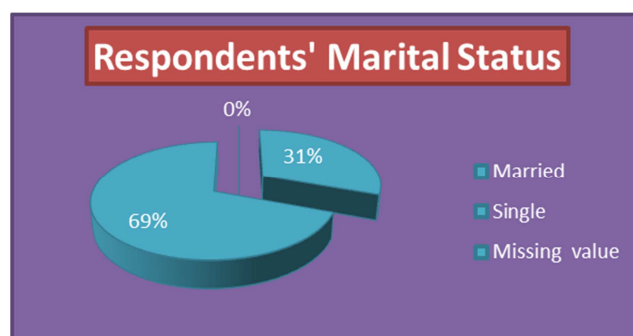
**Figure 2.** Respondents' level of Education.

Figure 2 shows that out of the 393 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 264 (86%) had B.Sc while the rest fall within 5 percent and below. The data show that the respondents were mainly B.Sc holders.

Respondents' Marital Status

**Figure 3.** Respondents' Marital Status.

For marital status, we had 389 responses out of 393 respondents who responded to the question meaning that 4 respondents did not indicate their marital status and hence the missing value as seen in the figure. The figure shows more single respondents (270 out of 389) than the married ones (119 out of 389). While single had 69 percent, married had 31 percent.

Table 3. Respondents' Occupation.

Variables	No. of Students	Percentage Response
Civil Servants	166	42%
Self Employed	197	50%
Students	30	8%
Total	393	100%

Table 3 shows that 197 out of 393 (50%) of respondents were self-employed while 166 out of 393 (42%) were civil servants. Less than 10 percent (30 out of 393) were students. The data imply that there were more self-employed

respondents than there were civil servants and students.

Analysis of Research Questions:

Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge of COVID-19 jab among WhatsApp users in Anambra State?

In answering this question, the respondents were first asked whether COVID-19 is in Nigeria and Anambra State before they were asked their knowledge level on COVID-19 jab and their responses were as recorded in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

Is COVID-19 in Nigeria?

Table 4. Respondents' believability of COVID-19 existence in Nigeria.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
Yes	365	93%
No	28	7%
Total	393	100%

Table 4 shows that 365 out of the 393 (93%) respondents believed COVID-19's existence in Nigeria while 28 out of the 393 (7%) did not believe the disease existence. The data imply that majority of the respondents believed COVID-19 existence in Nigeria.

Is COVID-19 in Anambra State?

Table 5. Respondents' believability of COVID-19 existence in Anambra State.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
Yes	273	69%
No	120	31%
Total	393	100%

Table 5 shows an interesting result. It shows that many of the respondents who believed COVID-19's existence in Nigeria, as shown in Table 4, did not believe its existence in Anambra State, a difference of 92 respondents. The data show that 273 out of 393 (69%) respondents believed COVID-19 existence in Anambra State while 120 out of the 393 (31%) did not believe the disease existence in the State even though it is in Nigeria. The implication is that majority of the respondents believed COVID-19 existence in Anambra State.

Table 6. Knowledge level on COVID-19 jab.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
High knowledge	393	100%
Low knowledge	-	-
Total	393	100%

Table 6 shows that all the respondents had high knowledge on COVID-19 jab. This represents 100 percent knowledge.

A follow up question was asked to find out the respondents' major sources of knowledge on COVID-19 jab since they all claimed to have high knowledge level on the jab. Their responses are recorded in Figure 4.

Figure 4 shows that WhatsApp option has the highest number and percentage of the respondents, 200 out of 393 and 51 percent respectively followed by Facebook which has 79 (20%) respondents out of 393. Television has 72 out of 393 (18%) while radio has 24 out of 393 (6%) respondents. Newspaper and magazine have 3 and 2 percents respectively.

The implication is that majority of the respondents were knowledgeable on COVID-19 jab mainly through WhatsApp.

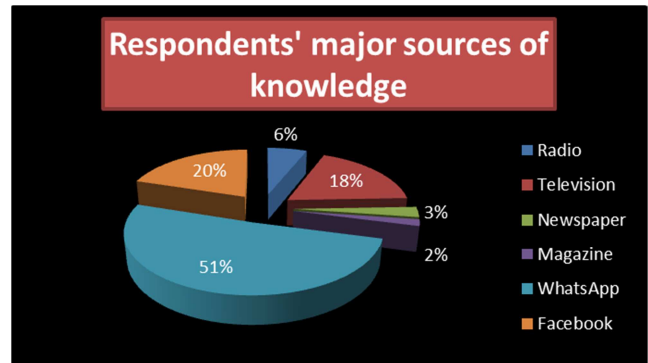


Figure 4. Respondents' major sources of knowledge of COVID-19 Jab.

Research Question 2: What are the dispositions of the users to taking the jab?

This question sought to investigate the dispositions of the respondents to taking COVID-19 jab having claimed to have high knowledge on COVID-19 jab. Their responses were recorded in Table 8.

Table 7. Respondents' dispositions to taking COVID-19 jab.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
Positive	124	32%
Negative	269	68%
Total	393	100%

The Table 7 shows that 68 percent (269 out of 393) of the respondents had negative dispositions to taking COVID-19 jab while only 32 percent (124 out of 393) of the respondents were positively disposed to take the jab. The implication is that greater number of the respondents were negatively disposed to taking COVID-19 jab.

Research Question 3: Are COVID-19 controversies probable influences on the users' dispositions to taking the jab?

To be assured of respondents' answer on the influences of COVID-19 controversies, they were first asked whether they had taken COVID-19 jab and their reasons for doing so. Their responses were as presented in Table 9 and Figure 5 respectively.

Have you taken COVID-19 jab?

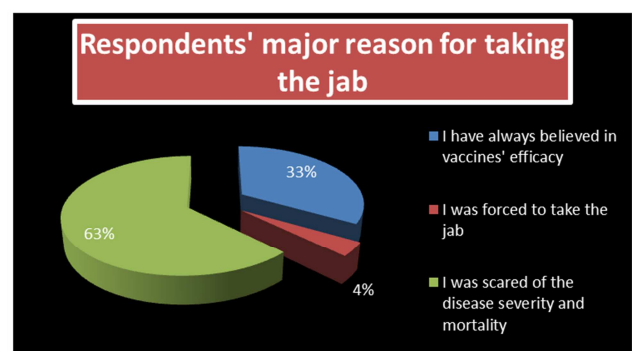


Figure 5. Respondents' major reasons for taking the jab.

Table 8. Respondents' COVID-19 vaccination.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
Yes	129	33%
No	264	67%
Total	393	100%

Table 8 shows that 129 out of 393 (33%) respondents had taken COVID-19 jab against 124 who were positively disposed to taking the jab as shown in Table 8. Also, 264 out of 393 (67%) had not taken the jab. The implication is that majority of the respondents were yet to take the jab.

What was your major reason for taking the jab?

Interestingly, the reasons given above were as written by the respondents themselves in answer to the semi-structured question. It can be observed that 5 out of the 129 (4%) respondents who had taken the jab said they were forced to take it when they had wanted to travel abroad. Those who gave reason of the disease's severity and mortality were 81 out of the 129 (63%) while 43 out of the 129 (33%) took the jab because they had always believed in vaccines' efficacy. Majority of the respondents took the jab for fear of the disease's severity and mortality.

On reasons why some respondents had not taken the jab, they responded as stated in Table 9.

Table 9 Reasons for not taking the jab.

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage Response
I do not trust Nigerian government on the safety of the jab.	199	76%
I do not have access to the jab.	14	5%
I do not believe that COVID-19 exists anywhere in Nigeria.	51	19%
Total	264	100%

Table 9 shows a high percentage (76%) representing 199 out of 264 respondents who did not take the jab because of lack of trust on Nigerian government on the jab's safety. While 51 out of 264 (19%) gave non-existence of the disease in the country as their reason, 5 percent (14 out of 264) did not take the jab because they were yet to have access to the jab. The data imply that majority of the respondent did not trust Nigerian government and therefore had not taken the jab.

On whether COVID-19 controversies had influences on respondents' dispositions to take the jab, the respondents reacted as shown in Figure 6.

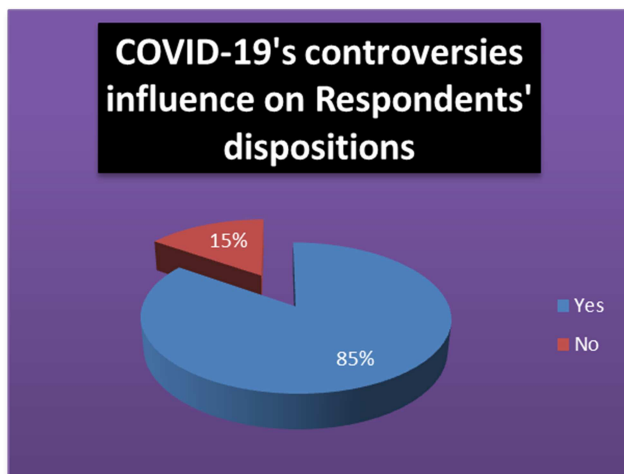
**Figure 6.** COVID-19's controversies influences on Respondents' dispositions.

Figure 6 shows an impressive number of respondents whose dispositions to take COVID-19 jab were influenced by the jab's controversies. They were 333 out of 393 (85%). Those whose dispositions to take the jab were not influenced by the disease controversies were only 60 out of 393 (15%).

9. Discussion of Findings

The study sought to find out the probable influence of COVID-19 controversies on people's dispositions to take COVID-19 jab. WhatsApp users in Anambra State were understudied because they were well informed and had access to internet where COVID-19 information are daily reported. The objectives of the study were to find out the knowledge level of COVID-19 jab among the WhatsApp users, to ascertain the users' dispositions to take COVID-19 jab, and to determine whether COVID-19 controversies influence their dispositions to take the jab following the confirmed hesitancy of people to take COVID-19 jab.

The study design was online descriptive survey and Google form questionnaire served as data collection instrument. Data were analysed using frequency tables and pie charts. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed online through WhatsApp platforms of the respondents with the help of research assistants and 393 participants completed the questionnaire.

Expectedly, the study found out that all the users (100%) had high knowledge of COVID-19 jab and WhatsApp was the major source of the knowledge. This is in consonance with the findings that knowledge of COVID-19 was good [9] and that Nigerians access WhatsApp more than any other social media platforms [26, 11]. The study also found that majority of the users (68%) had negative dispositions to taking COVID-19 jab concurring the finding that people were reluctant and hesitant to take the jab [1] and in disagreement with the report that frontline health officers expressed happiness that they had taken the jab [27].

The study further revealed that 333 out of 393 (85%) of the users' dispositions were influenced by the controversies implying that even some respondents who had positive dispositions to take the jab were also influenced by the controversies probably to prove the controversies wrong. Major reason given was distrust on Nigerian government on

the disease's prevalence, severity and safety of the jab. This agrees with the findings that the jab was another opportunity for politicians to embezzle public fund [2] and that the jab is not safe [4, 1].

HBM and Cognitive Dissonance theory actually predicted the result of this study. Those who had positive dispositions and took the preventive action (taking COVID-19 jab) did so because they were scared of the disease's severity, saw themselves as vulnerable and believed in the preventive action. Those who had negative dispositions did not take the preventive action (taking the jab) because they experienced cognitive dissonance as a result of the controversies surrounding the jab.

10. Conclusion/Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that the controversies surrounding COVID-19 jab were great influences on people's dispositions to take the jab. People were scared of the rush in the development of the jab and therefore doubted its safety and efficacy especially as they do not have trust in Nigerian government who had approved of the jab. People believed that the Nigerian government saw the jab as a good opportunity to depopulate the hapless poor Nigerians who are in the majority in order to curtail seemed population explosion and its negative consequences.

The researchers recommended that further vaccination should cease and massive media education/enlightenment campaign intensified to get favorable dispositions towards the vaccination. The current jab produced in a hurry should be stepped down and more time given to production of a more believable jab. For the problem of mistrust, Nigerian leaders should begin to act right in order to redeem the distrust Nigerians have on them by disclosing the details of people who had contracted COVID-19 and died, video of their treatment, and what are being used to treat them just as they disclosed the video of sick President Buhari on hospital bed in London.

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