

Knowledge, acceptance and perceptions towards the use of COVID-19 vaccines among Malaysians: A web-based survey

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is a highly contagious viral illness caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The Malaysian government has planned to procure the COVID-19 vaccine in order to vaccinate at least 70% of the population. This study aimed to determine the knowledge, acceptance and perception of Malaysian adults regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. **Methods:** We conducted an online survey for one month in March 2022. A bilingual, semi-structured questionnaire was set up using Google Forms and the generated link was shared on social media. The questionnaire consisted of questions on knowledge, acceptance and perception of the COVID-19 vaccine. The association between demographic factors with scores on knowledge about the COVID-19 vaccine were analysed using an independent samples t-test for two categorical variables, and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for more than two categorical variables. **Results:** A total of 386 respondents participated, with a mean age of 34.43 years (SD=10.14) years, and among them 210 (54.4%) were male. Thirty-eight percent of respondents had poor knowledge about the COVID-19 vaccine (mean knowledge score 5.56; SD=2.30) and 92% were willing to get a COVID-19 vaccine. High knowledge scores are associated with living with those who are at higher risk of getting severe COVID-19, family members or friends who have a history of COVID-19 infections and those from lower age groups. **Conclusion:** Knowledge about vaccines was good and the acceptability rate was high. This finding can help the Ministry of Health to plan for future efforts to increase the second booster dose vaccine uptake and relevant barriers need to be addressed.