



**A descriptive study of the Covid-19 vaccination governmental
communications: The influence on consumers' attitudes and purchase
intent.**

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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Abstract

An increasing level of consumer consciousness with regards to medical decision making due to Covid-19, has led to greater vaccine hesitancy amongst South Africans. With a rapidly developed vaccine being released vaccine marketing set out to inform and combat consumers concerns. The objective hereof is to influence consumers opinions towards vaccines. Unbeknown to the topic of vaccine hesitancy is how consumer attitude has a formidable impact on purchase intent. In line with this, the study primarily aims to address the matter of Governmental influence over consumer attitudes toward the Covid-19 vaccine are influencing purchase intent through an interpretivism research approach.

This study is developed in a quantitative and cross-sectional nature. The Theory of Planned Behaviour was utilised to develop the foundation of the study as attitude is a key factor throughout. The reviewed literature acknowledged factors that related to vaccine hesitancy, consumer attitude, vaccine marketing and vaccine purchase intent. The study followed an interpretivism approach combined with quantitative data that was evaluated thematically grouping statistical findings. The reason for this was in order to evaluate the extent to which consumer attitude and purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine was effected by governmental communications. From a sample of 258 responses, a positive attitude towards the Covid-19 vaccine was displayed. This study contributes to the understanding of attitudinal factors with regards to governmental communications influencing consumer attitudes towards the Covid-19 vaccine.

Key Words: Attitude, Vaccine Hesitancy, Purchase Intent, Vaccine Marketing, Covid-19, Government, South Africa

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1. Introduction

With the Covid-19 pandemic currently in its third wave in South Africa since its appearance in 2020 it is the topic on the forefront of most minds in the country. The vaccine has been created faster than any other and has been released already in various countries across the globe (Ball, 2020). Although this has been a major feat in the medical world it has given rise to many sceptics and cautious feelings amongst many populations (Solis-Moreira, 2020). It is possible that governmental communications have had a mounting impact on consumer attitudes and their purchase intent of the vaccine, this is what this study hopes to discover. With this the attitudes of consumers with regard to vaccine hesitancy and its increase across the globe as a result of the pandemic these communications have become more critical than ever before (Turner, 2021). There is a lack of understanding with regards to how government should address their people with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine in order to not cause uproar and the feeling that their right to free choice has been revoked, this being a topic that the president has had to address on several occasions already (Shange, 2021).

This problem is addressed throughout this study under the guidance of various themes that are relevant to the topic. The themes encompassed in the study are; vaccine hesitancy, consumer attitudes, vaccine marketing and vaccine purchase intent these also form part of the key concepts highlighted in the study. This study will follow an interpretivism paradigm paired with quantitative data collection methods, although this is an unusual pairing it is that which is best suited to the study. The study is guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour as this work by Ajzen forms the most relevant theoretical framework and background. Overall this study hopes to discover how governmental marketing push affects consumers behaviour in terms of purchase intent towards the Covid-19 vaccine. The quantitative data will be collected through the use of a digital survey with the objective of identifying the themes amongst consumers within the sample thus verifying measurable findings with regards to vaccine marketing and the effect of government communications on the vaccine purchase

intent of consumers. The researcher will then utilise a statistical analysis in order to interpret the data collected in the digital survey and develop the outcome of the study.

It is anticipated that this study will aid the government in terms of their approach to consumers with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine. The way in which this assistance will come to be will be based on the way they communicate with South African consumers in order to do so more effectively and not drive them through the feeling of force. As well as to help consumers make more informed decisions.

As discussed above there is already much controversy on whether or not vaccines will be made mandatory by the government and this has given rise to much speculation and sensitivity to the way the government communicates and the reaction this communication receives. This study will assist the government in realising their faults in this regard and to note whether or not they need to make drastic changes to their methods and approach to communications.

1.1 Rationale

The topic of vaccine hesitancy is relevant as attitudinal changes about receiving the vaccine have led to consumer education on the matter of vaccine safety. In turn vaccine marketing and communications has become a popular discussion amongst consumers and leaders across the globe, these discussions being held on social media, at health facilities, news platforms and through governmental communications (Cooper, van Rooyen, H, Wiysonge, 2021). Thus vaccine hesitancy has been an issue in terms of its hefty influence on the purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine therefore the impact of governmental communications on the attitudes of consumers is of concern.

This study will focus on the connection between governmental communications surrounding the Covid-19 vaccine and consumer attitudes in this regard in order to discover whether or

not government has had an impact on consumer attitudes. This will allow the researcher to assess the reasons why they have developed this attitude and allow government to adjust their tactics and address the issues that arise. Discovering the way these communications are affecting the purchase intent of the vaccine.

This information can be used to generate a greater understanding of how the government should approach their communications considering current reactions. This study is thus relevant in terms of marketing, strategy and consumer studies as it will describe consumer attitudes, concerns in terms of vaccine hesitancy and their influence on consumer behaviour in terms of purchase intent for South African consumers (Dube, 2020).

1.2 Problem Statement

The conversation of vaccine hesitancy in South Africa has increased greatly since the arrival of the Covid-19 vaccine (Turner, 2021). South Africa forms part of the top 10 countries of the world with the lowest immunisations prior to the pandemic (Wiysonge, nd). This study addresses the lack of understanding pertaining to consumer attitudes toward the Covid-19 vaccine in the light of governmental communications between 01 October 2020 to 30 March 2021.

1.3 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the Covid-19 vaccine governmental communications in South Africa. The relationship between consumer behaviour and attitude towards the governmental communications and purchase intent of the vaccine.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Primary Research Question

How does the governmental marketing push affect consumers behaviour in terms of deciding to purchase the Covid-19 vaccination?

1.4.2 Hypothesis

A positive desire for Covid-29 vaccinations from consumers exists due to governmental communication efforts driving desire and need

1.4.3 Objectives

1. This study aims to analyse the attitude consumers are having toward governmental communications during the build-up and release period of the Covid-19 vaccination.
2. This study aims to discover whether or not there is purchase intent for the vaccine within South Africa
3. This study aims to assess the consumers attitudes in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to Covid-19 continuing into the release of the covid-19 vaccine

2. Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework for the research study will be based on Ajzen's, Theory of Planned Behaviour. This theory will be used in order to analyse the different elements that impact consumer behaviour and thus their intent to perform specific actions (LaMorte, 2019). This study will do the same with specific reference to the Covid-19 vaccine and governmental communications.

2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour (THB)

The TPB done by Ajzen (1991), states that predictions of undeniable behaviours can be done through three different elements these being; attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control resulting in strong accuracy. It has not yet been confirmed but it is said that these factors are closely related to personal intentions of consumers and this aligns with the nature of paradigm being applied to this study being interpretivism (Ajzen, 1991: 179). The TPB framework has been implemented (Shmueli, 2021) in order to predict the intention of consumers to receive COVID-19 vaccine among the general population using the TPB model. Again TPB has been implemented (Cordina *et al* 2021: 2) to unpack attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination, vaccine hesitancy and intention to take the vaccine. Both of these studies will be elaborated on in the literature review. The original model of TPB is as described above built of three objective elements of intention these being; attitude subjective norm and perceived behavioural control and will be discussed below (Ajzen, 1991: 182)

Attitude

Attitude plays a vital position in terms of predetermining and describing human behaviour, whilst highlighting specifically intent (Ajzen, 1991:179). Attitude concerning a behaviour or intent refers to the magnitude of favourability or unfavorability toward their assessment of

the behaviour at hand (Ajzen, 1991: 188). Therefore, in relation to this study a person's decision to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine is dependent on their attitude towards vaccines generally as well as their attitude towards the Covid-19 vaccine in particular (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2). Attitude can also be associated to the way in which people are communicated with and the focus in this study is to governmental communications and their impact on the attitudes of consumers towards the vaccine. This will affect their intent to take the vaccine because it has been said that beliefs are developed by people through association and this association has the power to alter and change their attitudes (Ajzen, 1991: 191). Attitude plays a vital role in the process of predetermination of human behaviour, this study is based within the realm of digital media as it plays a vital role in determining and affecting the attitudes of consumers (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2).

Subjective Norm

Subjective norm is based on the perceived pressure that consumers receive socially in terms of choosing to perform or not to perform a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991: 188). Subjective norms can be decided on by various normative beliefs that involve the expectations as well as the concerns of references that are deemed important (Rhodes & Courneya, 2003). The attitudes of consumers as discussed above have a major impact on intent but may not ensure that they behave in a particular manner (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2). It has been discovered that the attitudes of significant others have an important effect on whether or not a behaviour will be performed (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2).

According to Ajzen, (1991) subjective norm is the least impactful in terms of intent and that personal motivation has more impact, and thus for the purpose of this study this element will be included as the influence of peers may affect the opinions of consumers on governmental communications based around the Covid-19 vaccine due to the focus of the study is on how governmental push on digital media affects consumer purchase intent.

Perceived Behavioural Control

Perceived behavioural control (PBC). Refers to the perceived level of control in terms of behaviour for instance the level of ease or difficulty when acting upon certain behaviour this is assumed to depict previous experience as well as anticipated obstacles (Ajzen, 1991: 188). Intentions are described as indications of willingness, and generally the stronger the intention to perform in a certain way the likelihood of it being performed is increased (Ajzen, 1991: 181).

For example; when people are told how the Covid-19 vaccine will benefit them and allow for the lift of restrictions and resumption of normal life it resonates positively with their attitude and thus their drive to purchase increases (Cordina et al, 2021). Intentions can only become expressed in behaviours when it is voluntary, but another factor must be considered as often the execution of behaviours is requisite of non-motivational factors such as resources combined; these represent the actual control consumers have (Ajzen, 1991: 181). Behavioural achievement is obtained when a combination of both intention (motivation) and ability (Behavioural control) are achieved (Ajzen, 1991: 185).

Therefore it can be generalised that the increased favourability of the attitude of consumers towards the Covid-19 vaccine alongside subjective norm driving positive attributes of the vaccine results in the increase of perceived behavioural control and therefore the individuals intention to purchase and take the vaccine should be reinforced when considered (Ajzen, 1991: 188).

3. Literature Review

In this section there will be a general overview of standing bodies of knowledge all of these with reference to consumer attitudes and the influence of vaccine hesitancy on purchase intent. This literature review will highlight three main elements, these being historical vaccine hesitancy as well as Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy, consumer attitudes, vaccine marketing and vaccine purchase intent. These key themes are related to the three dimensions discussed above in the theoretical foundation guided by previous literature.

The Covid-19 pandemic being a new and rising topic does not have a broad range of literature available and the vaccine for this pandemic is newer and therefore there are limited resources in order to assess where people currently are in terms of their stance in taking the vaccine. Seminal authors state that the pandemic itself lies in a paradoxical stage where the vaccine has begun its rollout but still the death toll and infection rate rise (Cordina et al, 2021). Most authors have a positive view of the vaccine and believe that as many people as possible should accept it in order for nations to be able to obtain what is referred to as herd immunity (Cordina et al, 2021).

There are also minimal opposing views of literature in terms of the vaccine that can affect the consumers' willingness to purchase one thus vaccine hesitancy is mostly developed through subjective norm, dominantly on in the media (Angelmar & Morgon, 2012). Saying that consumers and people are being forced against their will to take it and do not have any choice in the matter as they will then be subdued to living with various limitations such as masks even though other methods of combating the virus have been found and feel as though people should be given the right to live normally should they refuse the vaccine (Dube, 2020). Research that has been conducted shows that newer vaccines have a larger risk of vaccine hesitancy and when a sample group was assessed it said that a quarter of consumers would not be taking the Covid-19 vaccine for this reason (Dube, 2020).

The conversation of mandatory vaccines has come up more often and South Africans are fearful that they will have no option but to take the vaccine (Calitz, 2021). This is why the way in which the government is communicating with their consumers is vital, thus the problem being addressed through this study is the lack of knowledge pertaining to this and consumer reactions to the ways in which the government is addressing the pandemic vaccine. Already there are various mandatory vaccines that are required for the workplace and schools and without them dismissal is allowed these being; the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995; the Occupational Health and Safety Act 95 of 1993; the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998; and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 199 (Calitz, 2021). Although mandatory vaccines have not been set as yet they have not been ruled out completely (Calitz, 2021).

Vaccine Hesitancy

The conversation of vaccine hesitancy in South Africa has increased greatly since the arrival of the Covid-19 vaccine (Turner, 2021). South Africa forms part of the top 10 countries of the world with the lowest immunisations prior to the pandemic (Wiysonge, nd). The way consumers are reacting to governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine is not well understood. Increased vaccine hesitancy has been driven predominantly by the speed at which the Covid-19 vaccine was created because historically they have taken years to develop and test whereas this one has taken only months, leaving consumers to fear for the long-term effects of the vaccine (Chou & Budenz, 2020). This high speed development have given rise to consumers fearing that the vaccine is not safe in general in a study contacted safety was an issue for 60% of women and 23% of men, as well as the belief it will be ineffective is held by 26% of women and 11% of men and lastly 12% of women and 5% of men were antivax prior to the release of the pandemic vaccine (Cordina, 2021). Although these statistics are low they host a large population group and this group could host an effect on the attitudes of other consumers who had the intention of taking the vaccine.

Consumer Attitude

Consumer attitude has a significant influence on the predictions of purchase intention (Ajzen, 1991). By basing the study on digital media where consumers can have their attitudes greatly influenced by peers on the various platforms they can also be influenced by government and the way in which government is communicating to them with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine causing for favourability or unfavorability (Ajzen, 1991), (Angelmar & Morgon, 2012).

Vaccine Marketing

This pandemic has heightened the emotions of society in its entirety through major changes, loneliness, loss of loved ones as well as livelihoods and the various measures that have been put into place to prevent the spread of the virus. The politicization of the pandemic by governments through their communications as well as the constant news thereof has also played a role in consumers being detached as well as having dampened responses to what is an international crisis (Chou, 2020). The Covid-19 vaccine is already being refused by a quarter of people that have access it as explained above and therefore when campaigns are being done to drive people to purchase and take this vaccine they need to be meticulously assessed to ensure they do not in any manner drive further conversation of vaccine hesitancy says, Dube (2020).

The introduction of emotion to vaccine communication may be effective says Chou (2020), as by using emotional communications fear, anger and happiness can all be addressed in the manner that best permits in order to complement large aspects of vaccine dissemination as well as education in order to build trust from nations (Chou, 2020). Governments need to guide their communications in such a way that they are able to frame the vaccine as a solid, actionable strategy that will lower the risk of infections as well as highlight that through this they will obtain self-efficacy and control over their lives (Chou, 2020). Although on the

objecting side this is where anti-vaxxers as described above will feel that they shouldn't have to have the vaccine to have control over their own lives.

Vaccine Purchase Intent

Vaccine purchase intent has been affected by the anti-vaccine movement causing 20% of consumers not to have any intention of purchasing the Covid-19 vaccine (Shmueli, 2021). Purchase intent of this vaccine is highly affected by both consumer attitude as well as subjective-norm. This is because the problem being addressed is a social issue; the consumer's perception is more likely to be based on peers and social influence as well as their current environment (Strizova et al, 2021). This argument is supported by the paradigm interpretivism, which is being applied in this study aligning with the social elements and how the environment and human interaction affect the beliefs of consumers and therefore their purchase intent (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

Therefore, it can be seen from the above how all the elements rely heavily upon one another, the primary elements being the combat of vaccine hesitancy and endorsement of positive consumer attitudes towards the vaccine. These can be achieved through careful articulate communications sent out by the government which can be referred to as vaccine marketing; these will contribute to increased vaccine purchase intent. The paradigm chosen for this study, interpretivism aligns with the literature that has been analysed. This is because it is a social study and it has been highlighted through this literature that the facts are fluid and change according to the beliefs of society and the different environments consumers find themselves in.

4. Conceptualisation

The definitions below are those of key terms that will fall within this study. The terms support and reinforce the above literature review and theoretical framework, I have created a table in order to visually depict the relation of different variables to the others and these relationships will be used when data collection and analysis are done.

Point	Term	Description
A	Vaccine Hesitancy	The effect of point B and point C will be assessed with full consideration of the affiliation between points A and B.
B	Attitude	Points A and B are mutually influential on one another as attitude is inevitable.
C	Purchase Intent	The impact of point A on that of B is measured and attention is paid to the connection between point A and B.

Figure 1: Louwrens, B. 2021. The relationships between key terms.

Vaccine Hesitancy

Due to the aim of this research vaccine hesitancy forms one of the key elements and is considered one of the primary research concepts alongside vaccine marketing. Vaccine hesitancy will be driven by governmental communications if their approach to communications is not done in the correct manner and thus will result in the government receiving negative reactions to their digital media communications as described in the critical review.

Attitude

Attitude is a key element within this study. Attitude plays a vital position in terms of predetermining and describing human behaviour, whilst highlighting specifically intent (Ajzen, 1991:179). Due to attitude forming a pivotal role in terms of predetermining human behaviour it is vital to this study as it will assist the researcher in understanding the attitudes consumers have towards governmental messages regarding the Covid-19 vaccine and thus whether or not they will develop purchase intent from this and the subject norm from government.

Purchase Intent

Purchase intent is a key element within this study. Intent forms the foundation of behaviour as well as greatest predictor therefore, purchase intent is defined as a thought out plan to go out and purchase a particular product or service (Ajzen, 1991: 185). In the context of this study purchase intent refers to the conscious plan of consumers to engage in the purchase and acceptance of the Covid-19 vaccine due to the subjective norm and influence proposed by the government aligning with Ajzen's THB framework (1991).

Vaccine Marketing

Vaccine marketing is a key element of this study and forms one of the primary research concepts of this study. Vaccine marketing refers to the communications sent out from health co-operations as well as leaders of communities and countries that combat anti-vaccination information and have the target of reducing the percentage of people who either refuse or delay taking the vaccination (Angelmar & Morgon, 2012). This is vital to the study as governmental communications are the subject being looked at and the way in which consumers react to these and therefore the manner in which they approach and market the vaccine is vital to the attitudes they will receive from consumers regarding the vaccine.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

Quantitative Design

A quantitative design will be applied due to the fact that this is a social study and that by using numerical data an analysis and description can be drawn up. Statistical knowledge will be used to describe the data and thus analyse the skew of consumer purchase intent to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine as a result of governmental communications. By using Google forms quantitative design will be more effective in obtaining accurate results that clearly represent the view of the average South African population.

Descriptive Approach

The reason for this approach is because the study aims to describe the current status of consumers opinion and therefore their behaviour towards the covid-19 vaccine due to the communications and in reaction to the communications that have been released by the government of South Africa from October 2020 until March 2021

5.2 Paradigm

The term 'paradigm' is used in order to describe the research approach or design being applied to a study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). For this particular study a interpretivism paradigm is being enforced, below the paradigm will be briefly discussed followed by its epistemology, ontology and methodology.

5.2.1 Interpretivism

The primary goal of this study is to describe the way reality is interpreted by individuals in terms of their view on the vaccine due to the way it has been communicated with them through governmental messages.

Interpretivism is guided by the idea of knowledge being fluid according to the environment and positioning that the subject being researched is in as well as the different ways people experience it (Gemma, 2018). This paradigm is best suited to this study and this is because it is based on personal experiences of consumers with these messages and the way they perceive and interpret these within their particular social environment.

Ontology

Reality is not objective, external and experienced in the same way by all but rather reality is both subjective as well as fluid (Levers, 2013). The paradigm goes further to believe that this reality is shaped through human interaction (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Reality is described by interpretivists as a social construction and due to this is dependent on the different connotations that people attach to their personal interactions and experiences (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Interpretivists are of the belief that the social world is what people perceive it to be and therefore it can be adjusted and changed when people change their perception (Levers, 2013). It is believed in this paradigm that reality is dependent on; culture, circumstance, history and experience (Levers, 2013).

Epistemology

Interpretivists challenge the notion of positivism that states that “Knowledge is the only valid form of knowledge” says Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014), by arguing that the daily lives of people are guided by common sense. Interpretivists believe that by understanding what people perceive as common sense their behaviour can then be understood (Levers, 2013). Interpretivists contest the idea of objective knowledge and truth as their belief stands that there is a ‘meaning system’ that holds facts as fluid and thus ever changing, resulting that meaning can only be attached to an action when the social context has been accounted for (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).

Methodology

A subjective research methodology is what is expected for the methodological position of interpretivism. The methods that are adopted by the researcher need to be sensitive to that of the context of the study in order to ascertain an in-depth understanding of those being studied (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Interpretivists aim to empathise with their subjects in order to share in their social values and thus when doing their research they also consume their own point of view as well as their feelings in the process (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Due to this non-numerical qualitative research is more often the instrument of choice for interpretivists (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).

A quantitative method can be used when quantifiable data can be observed and analysed (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). This social study makes use of a quantitative method as it takes the opinions of those in South Africa with regards to various governmental communications regarding the Covid-19. Although the opinions and beliefs of consumers are being analysed through the study by using the non-traditional method attached to this paradigm, quantitative statistics can be used to determine the skew of consumer purchase intent of the vaccine due to governmental communications. This will also provide an answer to the research question; “How does the governmental marketing push affect consumers behaviour in terms of deciding to take the covid-19 vaccination?”.

6. Research Plan

6.1 Population and Sampling

Unit of Analysis:

Consumer attitudes towards governmental communications

The unit of analysis has been based on the sample group from which the data will be collected and where measurements will be made (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014:133). the sampling unit that that data will be collected from throughout this study are individual consumers, thus the consumers are the unit of analysis that will be focussed on. Keeping in line with the requirements of the IIE, the sample size for this study will host a minimum of $n=20$.

Population:

The target population is formed of the total group of consumers that information is required from (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 132). For this study the target population is comprised of all South African individuals between the ages of 18 and 60 years old, male, female and non-binary and who have been exposed to some form of digital governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine. Having a population group that has been exposed to the above communications is critical to the study. The purchase intent of consumers may also be connected to whether or not governmental communications do in fact have an influence on the consumer's decision making process with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine.

The target population for this study is extremely broad and therefore the accessible population being that of the target population that the researcher has access to will the group that is included in this study (du Plooy-Cillers *et al.*, 2014: 133). The accessible population for this study are South African consumers who have profiles on the social media

platforms; Instagram, Facebook and Whatsapp. The reason these consumers formed part of this study's accessible population is because they are easily reachable for the purpose of participating in this study. This also forms a parameter for the population of the study as consumers who do not have access to social media will be unable to contribute to the outcomes of the study.

Sampling:

Unit of Analysis:

Consumer responses to governmental communications

Sampling Method:

Probability sampling was employed for the purpose of this study and the method being used is simple random sampling. The reason for this type of sampling is due to this being a quantitative study as well as the need for the sample to fit within parameters of the research, drawn randomly from the population, influence from the researcher is not required and the findings need to be generalised (du Plooy-Cillers *et al.*, 2014: 136)

This study used a simple random sampling method, meaning that the researcher made use of a random selection of the population and there was an equal opportunity for selection (du Plooy-Cillers *et al.*, 2017: 144). This was done by distributing the questionnaire through various social media platforms and allowing all those who fell within the population of the study to have equal opportunity to partake in the study.

In accordance with the IIE's policy the sample size for this study will be no less than $n=20$ but the target of the study was to have a sample size of between 200 and 250 respondents. All respondents are all within the ages of 18-60 and people of all genders were included in the study. Respondents had to indicate which group of consumers they belonged to, according to these generational age groups 18-24 (GenZ), 25-40 (Millennials), 41-56 (GenX)

and 57-66 (Boomers), in order to give the researcher further insights regarding the impression that governmental communications have had on consumers that are younger or older.

6.2 Data Collection

Consent form can be found under Appendix A and layout of the questionnaire can be found under Appendix B.

A quantitative method was adopted for the data collection in this study, this was done through the use of a digital survey created on Google Forms. The survey was presented as a closed-ended questionnaire, making use of a combination of inventory, multiple choice and close-ended questions. The reason behind using a digital survey was because it is inexpensive, the identities of respondents are kept anonymous, the respondents are able to participate at their desired pace and respondents can partake at any time or place that is convenient to them (du Plooy-Cillers *et al.*, 2014: 160).

This data collection method aligns with the interpretivism paradigm as it addresses the feelings and way consumers perceive the messaging from the government and how they perceive reality. The survey addresses how governmental communications are influencing the realities that consumers are perceiving and find where the general population stands in terms of this, this addresses the research question at hand as well as the objectives of the study.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A will comprise of four close-ended screening questions to ensure that all participants meet the required criteria in order to be relevant to the study (Maree, 2020). The participants will be required to select their gender, age group and indicate whether or not they have been exposed to any governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccination.

Section B addressed the first objective: “This study aims to analyse the attitude consumers are having toward governmental communications during the build-up and release period of the Covid-19 vaccination” and consisted of eight; close-ended, inventory, multiple choice questions that required the respondent to select the options which best reflect their personal opinions and their attitudes towards the Covid-19 vaccine.

Section C addresses the third objective of the study: “This study aims to discover whether or not there is purchase intent for the vaccine within South Africa”. In this section participants were asked six; close-ended, inventory, multiple choice questions and scaled questions that aimed to discover if there was a purchase intent for the vaccine in South Africa as well as whether or not their communities have had any effect on these decisions.

In section D the second objective was addressed: “This study aims to assess the consumers attitudes in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to Covid-19 continuing into the release of the covid-19 vaccine”. Throughout this section participants were asked six; close-ended, inventory, multiple choice questions and scaled questions about vaccine hesitancy and their history in this regard. Participants were also asked about elements surrounding them that could have had an impact on their decision based on vaccine hesitancy as well as whether or not government has had any effect on this in the eyes of consumers.

The chosen data collection method is in line with the paradigm of the study as discussed above and is thus relevant to the nature of the study. The nature of questions being asked produced quantitative data which will made possible for the ease of a descriptive data analysis as well as determining whether or not to accept or reject the hypothesis. Therefore making it possible for the researcher to describe the problem being addressed as it is expressed in the purpose statement.

6.2.1 Data Collection Method Procedure:

Step 1: Development

The survey was generated via the online survey generator; *Google Forms*. The reason for the choice of this method is due to the ease of distribution online (du Plooy-Cillers *et al.*, 2014: 160). The data was then collected over the duration of two weeks. The survey was comprised as discussed above of four sections each aiming to achieve different objectives of the study and overall the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.

Step 2: Ethical Clearance

Ethical clearance was obtained for the questionnaire (Appendix B) the data collection was carried out, this document can be found under Appendix C this was done in order to ensure the ethics of the study.

Step 3: Distribution

The survey was distributed via the researcher's social media platforms namely; Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp. All participants were provided with the relevant information with regards to the study and were provided with the consent form (Appendix A), whereby if he/she/other agreed to participate in the study they were able to continue with the survey.

Step 4: Collection

As discussed above participants were asked questions that were divided into four sections each section with the goal of meeting one objective of the study. 253 people entered the survey of which 241 were able to continue with the survey as they met all the prerequisites of the population group and thus were able to form part of the sample.

Step 5: Further distribution

The survey was then further shared and distributed by various participants of the study to others that fall within the population of the study. This was in order to generate reach and diversity ensuring that the sample of the study was extended beyond that of the community of the researcher to ensure that respondents all had various different communities and views. This further element of distribution also increased the validity and reliability of the study.

Step 6: Organisation of collected data

The researcher has exported an excel spreadsheet that holds the answers of the various respondents and therefore all gathered information of the study and prepared it for the analysis process.

7. Data Analysis

The data analysis and testing employed academic research methods that required the data to be grouped into themes and followed this by analysing the 253 respondents. This analysis was done through the use of numerical comparisons that are illustrated through a series of charts. The sections for the measurement of the data are aligned with the literature review and key concepts. The collected data has been divided into the following sections; vaccine hesitancy, consumer attitude, vaccine marketing and vaccine purchase intent.

The strategy employed for the analysis of this quantitative data is a deductive analysis. This is because this type of analysis is well suited to both the quantitative nature of the study as well as the interpretivism approach. Prior to the analysis the data was divided and categorised into a series of groups these aligning with the different sections of the questionnaire. These groups were then analysed according to the themes of the literature review that were named above and this was in order to ensure that the data and findings were measured according to previous studies.

To start the data was analysed according to each group; consumer attitudes (group 1), purchase intent (group 2) and vaccine hesitancy (group 3). By utilising these categories or groups the researcher was able to develop insights into the relationship that resides amongst them. Once this was done the researcher could also identify possible connections amongst the concepts that could have an impact on the purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine.

Firstly the data was summarised into terms of centrality thus making use of mean, median and mode. This was then used to analyse and identify the possible connections amongst the data groups. This gave the researcher insight into the influence that the values held in each factor have as well as how they impact the purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine. This relationship was utilised to guide the researcher in identifying connections amongst the key concepts of this study that may affect the purchase intent towards the Covid-19 vaccine which addresses the purpose of the study. Following this the researcher divided the data according to gender in order to identify significant trends and differences between these data groups. Data was also divided according to age groups and the significant differences and similarities were too captured. The data was then summarised in the form of a data spread utilising range, standard deviation and variance (Maree, 2020).

This data collected in the survey was captured in an excel spreadsheet in order to determine descriptive statistics, these were done in numerical values that summarize the data (Maree, 2020). The use of descriptive statistics aligns with the descriptive nature of the study as well as the purpose of the study in describing the relationships that reside amongst the relevant constructs (Maree, 2020). The data analysis will be presented through graphics, therefore the researcher will interpret the various findings aligning with the relevant data sets. The interpretation of the data will be guided by a process of analysing the results from the digital survey and tabulating the numerical values.

The raw data was also analysed using Google Forms analytics. This programme allows for the data to be displayed in the form of both pie and bar graphs. These graphs allowed for the researcher to obtain the overall outcomes of each question at a glance and they are automatically gathered from the survey as responses were obtained. The reason for this data analysis method is in order to support the descriptive nature of this study as well as meet the objectives and determine whether or not to accept or reject the hypothesis.

After the data analysis was conducted the data was graphically represented through both pie and bar charts, allowing for the researcher to easily identify the spread of the data as well as the median and mode of the data (Maree, 2020). The data was unpacked through the use of both a text and graphic format and this was in order to ensure that the reader is able to understand the data with ease ((Du-Plooy Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 226).

Descriptive statistics were utilised for the purpose of analysing and summarising the collected quantitative data which has been obtained in the form of numerical values (Maree, 2020). During the first phase the data was analysed in terms of centrality thus adopting mean, mode and median. The researcher did their analysis in order of each data group as discussed above. The researcher also analysed and calculated the various measures of centrality for the sample as a total within each grouping (Maree, 2020). The descriptive statistics utilised various formulas that are available through the platform on which it was conducted; Microsoft Excel.

8. Findings

Studies based on consumer attitude are of increasing relevance in terms of allowing for the estimation of consumer's responses toward the marketing efforts made towards certain products and services, in the case of this study it is inclusive of the Covid-19 vaccine. Therefore for the purpose of this study attitude is relevant and of high importance as by understanding the processes consumers undergo in forming an attitude towards a product they will be shown how they will be able to go about changing this evaluation, they will do this through influencing their desires, actions and preferences that drive them to perform certain behaviours (Arguriou & Melewar, 2011: 431). Therefore it can be said that the cognitive thoughts of consumers in terms of their purchasing behaviours and habits should be assessed as this effects their attitude and therefore their intention to purchase/accept the Covid-19 vaccine (Bleize & Antheunis, 2016: 407).

Below the findings that have been found as a result of a statistical analysis are unpacked and discussed. The data that was collected has been separated into three sections guided by the literature review, conceptualisation and objectives of the study: consumer attitudes, purchase intent and vaccine hesitancy. Within these sections there are sub-sections which cover the general opinion of consumers and this is then followed by the impact of governmental communications on the consumer opinions. The research question, objectives and hypothesis were answered by initially reviewing the individual responses obtained in the survey in order to obtain an understanding with regards to trends in the data amongst consumers who have been exposed to governmental communications.

Following this the researcher then unpacked the stance held by respondents in terms of their attitudes towards the Covid-19 vaccine through analysing the Linkert scale, multiple choice, checkbox and short answer questions. The short answer question was coded according to high impact, low impact and no impact in order to determine the skew of the data. Microsoft

excel was utilised for the process of the data analysis in order to observe the extent that consumer attitude towards the vaccine and vaccine hesitancy effect the purchase intent of the vaccine.

This was done by assessing and making comparisons between consumers attitudes towards the vaccine based on governmental communications, attitudes being effected by negative social media messages, followed by consumers purchase intent in general, governmental effect on the purchase intent as well as community effect on purchase intent and finally vaccine hesitancy was assessed as prior to the pandemic, the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on vaccine hesitancy and how government has had an impact on vaccine hesitancy.

8.1 Consumer Attitudes

Objective addressed: This study aims to analyse the attitude consumers are having toward governmental communications during the build-up and release period of the Covid-19 vaccination.

Consumer attitude is vital in predetermining and describing human behaviour as discussed in the TPB (Ajzen, 1991:179). Therefore it is vital to understand the consumer attitude toward the vaccine and for the purpose of this study Governmental effect and negative communications effect are vital in order to determine how governmental communications can be changed or utilised to establish a positive attitude and correspondingly a higher purchase intent (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2).

Governmental Effect on Attitudes

When the President speaks about the vaccine do you feel that getting the vaccine is optional or do you fear that it will be made mandatory?
246 responses

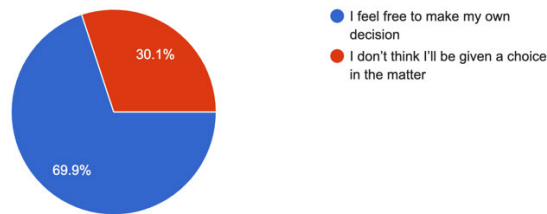


Figure 2: Louwrens, B. 2021. Feelings toward the vaccine as a result of presidential communications.

Mode: I feel free to make my own decision

It can be seen from the above graph that the sample feels free to make their own decision in terms of the Covid-19 vaccine what aligns positively with the TPB that this study is guided by as it requires consumers to feel free to make their own decisions (Cordina *et al*, 2021). There is a significantly large group of people that believe that they will not be given a choice in the matter and this gives rise to concern as people feel forced and this could place government and their efforts to vaccinate the country at risk. The increasing belief of mandatory vaccines discussed by Calitz (2021), coming up again significantly in this research represents its relevance and need for clarity because as it was further discussed through the work, mandatory vaccines have not been excluded and have in the past been implemented.

This also then highlights an area that government needs to address through their communications in future as people may believe that their human right of free choice is being infringed upon and thus unpacking the laws behind this and whether or not it is within the future path of the country is vital as to allow consumers to understand as well as process the information and form attitudes towards this and the way in which government is addressing the situation.

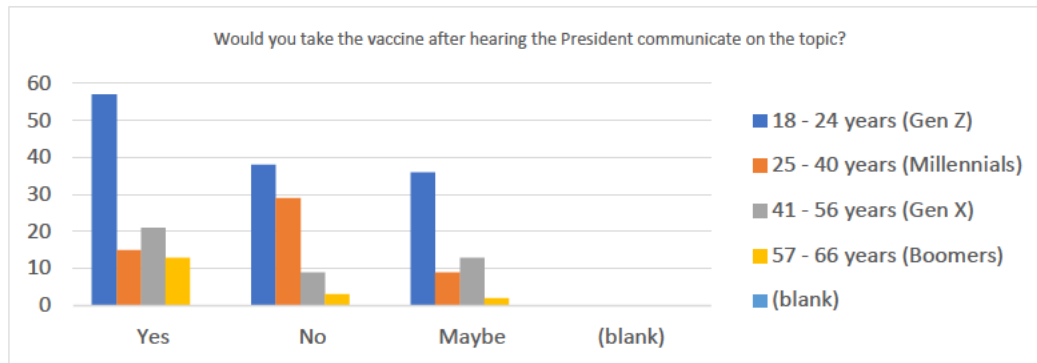


Figure 3: Louwrens, B. 2021. Age based assessment of consumers purchase intent of the vaccine.

Mode: Yes

Mean: Yes

It can be seen from the above that consumers within the different age groups are effected differently in terms of their attitude toward taking the Covid-19 vaccine, being influenced by speeches made by the president. It can be seen that consumers within the Gen-Z age group would more likely take the vaccine after hearing the president speak but millennials would opt not to take the word of the president when making their decision. The Gen-X and Boomers are more likely to be persuaded by the president alongside the Gen-Z sample consumers. This shows that by having the president communicate with the people of South Africa through positive communications there is a definite impact on the attitude of these consumers toward the vaccine. This positive attitude can be seen through the above graph to drive purchase intent of the vaccine.

Therefore the president and governmental communications can be seen to be fostering a positive attitude amongst the majority of consumers in different age groups through the release and build up period of the vaccine. This data also shows that government needs to approach millennials in a different manner in order to influence their attitude towards the vaccine as presidential speeches will not be effective to this generation.

Negative Communications about Covid on Social Media

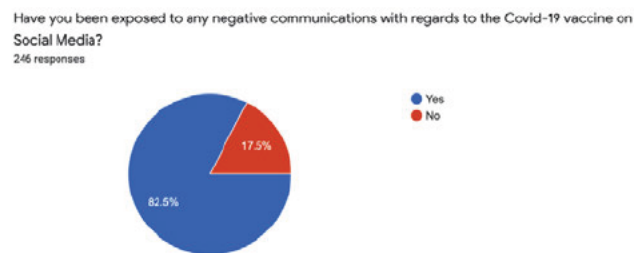


Figure 4: Louwrens, B. 2021. Exposure of consumers to negative Covid 19 vaccine communications.

Statistically this graph depicts that the average group of consumers has answered yes.

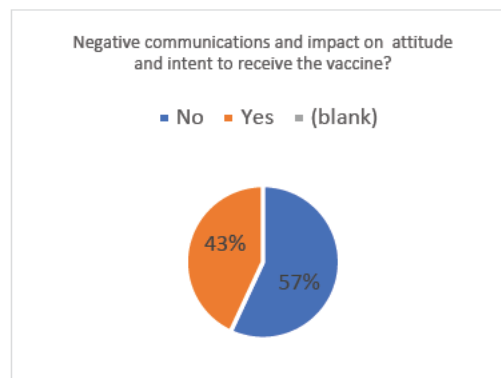


Figure 5: Louwrens, B. 2021. Impact of negative Covid 19 vaccine communications on South African consumers.

From the above two graphs it can be seen that 82,5% of consumers have been exposed to negative communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine. The second graph analyses those whom have been exposed to negative communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine and it can be seen that most people's attitudes and intent to receive the vaccine were not affected by the negative communications but almost half of the people were effected. Those shows that almost all the people in the sample group have been exposed to negative communications based on the vaccine through social media platforms and these negative messages have had an impact on the decisions of almost half their opinions.

Through the question in the survey: “How have these negative or anti-Covid vaccine communications impacted your attitude towards the vaccine?” a short answer question the effects that these communications had were unpacked and the most predominant effects had were that; these communications have given rise to health concerns, given people doubt about the effectiveness and safety of the vaccine, increased vaccine hesitancy of Covid-19 vaccine, with several answers stating “I will not be getting the vaccine”, “Makes me scared and unsure”. This shows that consumers do not feel safe taking the vaccine and communications about this need to be attended to by government in order to reinforce a positive attitude toward the vaccine. Consumers also highlighted that possible negatives regarding the vaccine have been hidden from them and they feel that they are being shown propaganda when it comes to the vaccine. This is extremely vital to attend to as if consumer’s believe this the negative communications will continue to have such a great impact on the attitudes and intent of consumers.

This reinforces the statement made by Dube (2020) as discussed in the literature review, that people feel forced to take the vaccine and that their livelihoods will be threatened if they do not conform. With 43% of consumers being effected within the 82% of consumers that have been exposed to the negative communications. This number also exceeds the one quarter of people that would be hesitant to receive the vaccine due to these reasons as stated by Dube (2020), and were again highlighted through this research thus showing their prominence and requirement for attention as a matter of urgency by governmental communications.

8.2 Purchase Intent

Objective addressed: This study aims to discover whether or not there is purchase intent for the vaccine within South Africa

General Purchase Intent

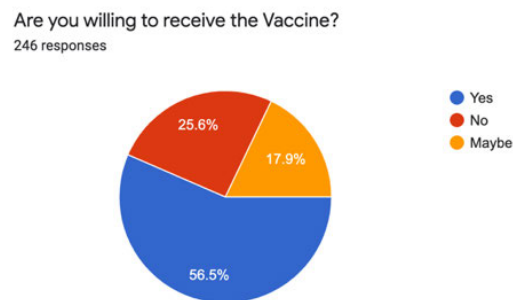


Figure 6: Louwrens, B. 2021. General purchase intent of Covid-19 vaccine.

As seen in the above graph just over half of consumers are willing to receive the vaccine, with 17, 9% being hesitant and more than a quarter rejecting the vaccine entirely. This shows that the estimation made by Dube (2020), is almost entirely accurate without the inclusion of hesitant consumers. South Africa is already within the top 10 countries in the world with the lowest immunisations (Wiysonge, n.d), therefore addressing vaccine hesitancy and rejection is vital for government. Many reasons for consumers not taking the vaccine is due to the fear of the safety of the vaccine as well as the long term effects of the vaccine as discussed above as well as through research done by Chou and Budenz (2020). The people outright rejecting the vaccine may have an effect on the attitudes of people who are hesitant as well as willing to receive the vaccine as they form a large portion of the population in its entirety, and therefore could pose damage to the vaccine rollout programme laid out by government.

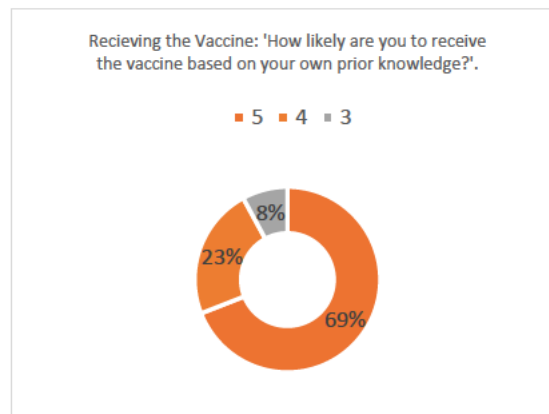


Figure 7: Louwrens, B. 2021. Likelihood of vaccine purchase intent as a result of own prior knowledge.

139 participants

Mode: 5

Mean: 4,6

Median: 3

How likely are you to receive the vaccine based on your own prior knowledge: 1 Unlikely – 5 Likely

The graph above shows that most people who have decided to receive the vaccine have done so based on their own knowledge and therefore their own research. 8% Apply predominantly their own prior knowledge but there is still room for influence and over 23% of people are most likely to be influenced by external sources. This means that their communities, peers, social media platforms, government and other sources still have the ability to impact the decisions of this portion of the sample. 23% Forms a large portion of the population and thus this creates a gap for government to fall into and take over through their communication channels in order to positively affect their purchase intent.

Governmental effect on Purchase Intent

With government driving positive messages about the benefits of the vaccine they are improving the favourability and attitude of consumers towards the vaccine alongside the subjective norm they are increasing the purchase intent through obtaining increased perceived behavioural control, through motivation and ability (Ajzen, 1991: 181-185).

1 Unlikely – 5 Likey

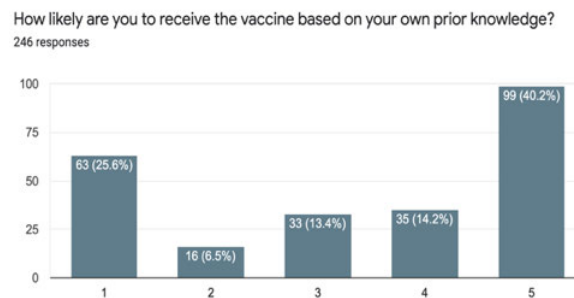


Figure 8: Louwrens, B. 2021. Likelihood of vaccine purchase intent as a result of own prior knowledge.

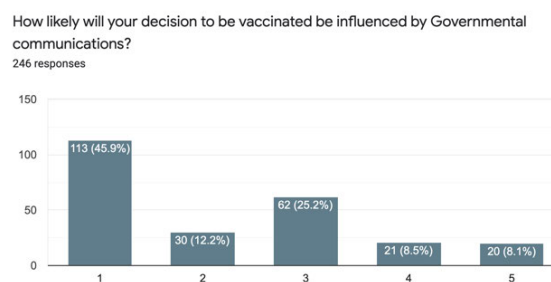


Figure 9: Louwrens, B. 2021. Likelihood of vaccine purchase intent being influenced by governmental communications.

Figure 8:

Mode: 5

Median: 3

Mean: 3,4

Figure 9:

Mode: 1

Median: 3

Mean: 2,2

From the above two graphs it can be seen that consumers are more likely to receive the vaccine based on their own prior knowledge about the Covid-19 vaccine as opposed to being

influenced by government with regards to their decision. Government can utilise this by providing consumers with information about the vaccine and the benefits of the vaccine in order to increase their knowledge thereof and improve the favourability of the vaccine as discussed above. This may seem like a weakness to the government in terms of their power over the consumer decisions but this gives rise to education and government can utilise this to their advantage and give consumers the perception that they are making their own decisions.

By educating consumers government is educating their communities and therefore through subjective norm they are gaining the ear of their consumers and sharing the benefits of the vaccine in this way by generating increased behavioural control through motivation by sharing positive messages and ability through allowing consumers to make their own decisions (Ajzen, 1991: 185).

Community effect on Purchase Intent

Community has an effect on how consumers perceive and interpret the world and what they perceive to be true which aligns with the paradigm of this study; interpretivism. It is also seen through the TPB that the attitudes and purchase intent of consumers is highly effected by the attitudes and purchase intent of their significant other and their peers through the subjective norm element of the theory (Cordina *et al*, 2021: 2).

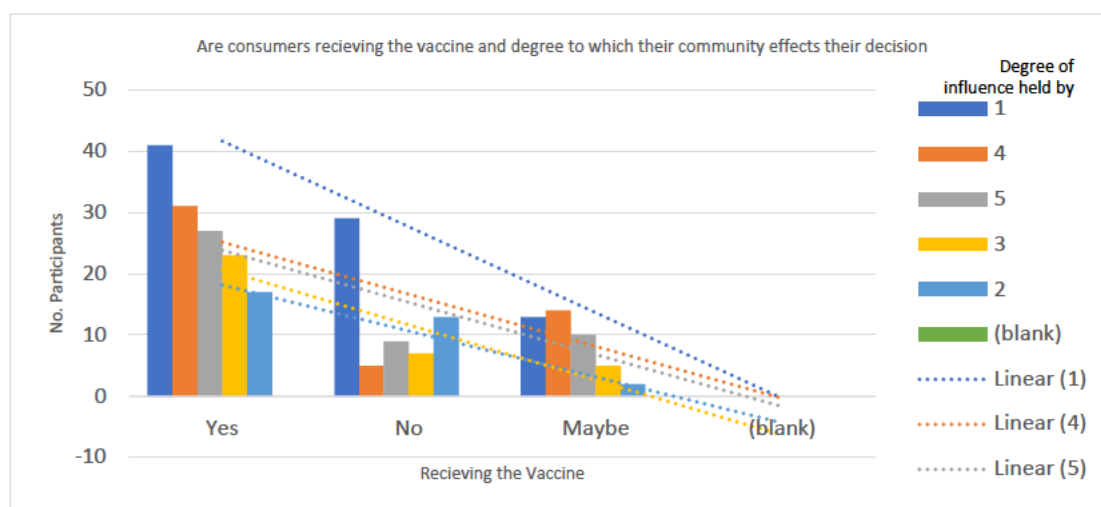


Figure 10: Louwrens, B. 2021. Effect of community on Covid-19 vaccine purchase intent.

Do you feel that your community has a strong influence on your decision when deciding to get the vaccine or not? : 1 Low Influence – 5 High Influence

The “yes” area of the graph being close to the greatest % of the sample group. The graph above shows that less than half the people receiving the vaccine are likely to base their decision without the impact of their community but the community of participants have some form power over the decisions of the consumers. Therefore this area shows the researcher that most people are influenced by their communities and these communities are correspondingly also positive about the Covid-19 vaccine driving consumers toward this decision.

The second area of the graph being the “No” area shows that most people who have decided against the vaccine have done so on their own accord as the graph represents dominantly low influence in this area. Therefore these consumers are less likely to be effected by their communities and the stance of their communities in terms of the vaccine will not affect their decision.

The third area of the graph holding the smallest group of consumers in the sample; “Maybe” this group represents those who are hesitant to receive the vaccine and have not yet decided. The graph shows that this group is heavily impacted by their communities and therefore the stance taken by their communities will heavily impact their ultimate decision in deciding to receive the vaccine or not. The government can utilise this and move into the communities of people and educate them in order to increase the perceived behavioural control and therefore the purchase intention and reinforce the decision to receive the vaccine (Ajzen, 1991: 188).

8.3 Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

Objective Addressed: This study aims to assess the consumers attitudes in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to Covid-19 continuing into the release of the covid-19 vaccine

Did the pandemic influence your opinion/ approach to vaccines for rapidly spreading, potentially deadly and life altering diseases?
244 responses

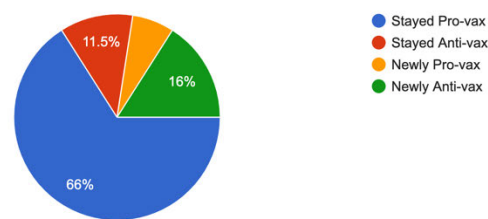


Figure 11: Louwrens, B. 2021. Influence of the pandemic on vaccine hesitancy.

Mode: Stayed Pro-vax

Did governmental communications have any effect on this decision?
246 responses

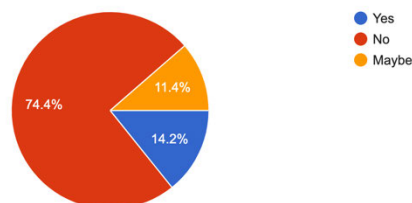


Figure 12: Louwrens, B. 2021. Impact of governmental communications on vaccine hesitancy as a result of the pandemic.

Mode: Not effected

The first graph shows that a significant number of consumers (16%) within the sample of the study have become anti-vax since the Covid-19 pandemic started and 11% of consumers held that stance prior to the pandemic, this shows that vaccine hesitancy within the country

is increasing and as stated above South Africa already resides within the top 10 lowest immunised countries in the world, therefore this is a threat to the vaccine rollout plan set out by government. The graphs also show that 14,2% of the people have been influenced by government either positively or negatively showing that government does in fact have an influence over the decisions made by a large group of consumers in the population.

With consumers stating that their decision with regard to vaccinations in the first graph “maybe” being influenced by government shows that government needs to ensure that the communications they are sending out do reflect positively on the vaccine as well as are impactful because this then shows that 25,6% of consumers are and could potentially make their stance based on government communications.

The researcher then followed this by asking consumers how government has affected their decisions with regard to the Covid-19 vaccine. This further research found that consumers felt that they were affected by the governmental messages in various ways: negatively, positively or not at all. Consumers who were negatively affected by governmental messages stated that the government is corrupt and untrustworthy as well as that they were hiding the negatives regarding the vaccine and sharing propaganda that has deterred them from receiving the vaccine. This shows that government needs to adjust the approach they are taking towards what information they are sharing in order to show consumers transparency.

The consumers who have been influenced positively stated that government has clearly depicted the urgency required for consumers to receive the vaccine, driving consumers toward the common goal of herd immunity in order to relieve restrictions and the way they are sharing statistics publicly is motivational, government has also shown consumers that they could save others by taking the vaccine which is also driving them to take the vaccine. Therefore it can be seen that the efforts made by government are having an effect on consumers and their decisions in terms of the vaccine and the pros and cons of their

communication are clearly evident through this research depicting where government needs to address changes.

9. Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of this study was supported by the use of well-established tools of measurement which have been used in various previous studies as well as published authors (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 254). It was ensured that the data that was collected by the researcher is measurable as well as aligned with the study and the content at hand (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 256).

Reliability

This refers to the consistency amongst the data when a research medium is applied at any given time and by various different researchers (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 254). Due to this being a relatively new pandemic and vaccine there is not masses of research but in previous research close ended and multiple choice type questions have been employed and similarly in this study the same have been applied, thus this study holds reliability and validity through the replications of studies of a similar nature. Alongside this, this study has analysed its findings against those of previous researchers in order to discover whether or not there are similarities that will further highlight the level of reliability the study is host to (Maree, 2020).

Validity

This study is of a nature that allows for it to be repeated more than once therefore ensuring its validity. The methodology of the study has been carefully curated in such a way that ensures that the research questions can be tested, analysed and concluded continuously. The probability of faults in the research has been significantly reduced through the use of various different forms of questions which have been used in previous research of the same nature (Maree, 2020). The data has been collected in a cross-sectional manner which also

lowers the possibility that consumers would experience a major alteration in their perception or attitude through their participation. The study has also ensured that more than twenty respondents partake in the study in order to ensure attrition is attended to.

10. Conclusion

The focus of this research paper was to address the insufficient understanding pertaining to consumer attitudes with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine in light of governmental communications. In order to address this the study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of governmental communications with regards to the vaccine and to unpack the relationship between consumer behaviour and attitude toward governmental communications and vaccine purchase intent. The findings which were presented answered the primary research question, hypothesis and objectives. The results cannot easily be compared to previous studies sufficiently due to the Covid-19 vaccine still being a new development but in terms of previous vaccine hesitancy a sharp spike can be seen as a comparison amongst consumers with more than the previous 10% of consumers being vaccine hesitant as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The results also depicted that there is a relationship that exists between consumer attitudes and behaviour toward the vaccine being influenced by governmental communications.

Concluding answers to research objectives:

Objective 1:

This study aims to analyse the attitude consumers are having toward governmental communications during the build-up and release period of the Covid-19 vaccination.

The data analysed the attitude of consumers toward governmental communications during the build-up and release of the vaccine, it was found that consumers have a mostly a positive attitude towards governmental communications, with areas that need to be addressed by government in order to combat vaccine hesitancy. The researcher found a large portion of the sample had a negative attitude toward governmental communications and as a result this

often did impact their attitude toward the vaccine making this area a plausible to be addressed.

Objective 2: This study aims to discover whether or not there is purchase intent for the vaccine within South Africa

Following this the purchase intent of the vaccine was assessed and it was discovered that there was a more than 50% purchase intent for the vaccine in South Africa. Which shows that more than half of consumers are willing and do intend on obtaining the vaccine but a vast group do not and this could potentially be an issue for government in terms of obtaining herd immunity.

Objective 3: This study aims to assess the consumers attitudes in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to Covid-19 continuing into the release of the Covid-19 vaccine

The study then assessed vaccine hesitancy within the country and how the pandemic has effected vaccine hesitancy amongst consumers with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was found that consumers have been impacted by the pandemic in terms of their stance with regards to vaccine hesitancy. 16% of consumers have become vaccine hesitant as a result of the pandemic and this number is frightening and shows that the topic needs to be addressed and the fears of consumers need to be unpacked and dissolved through governmental communications.

Concluding answer to Research Question

It has been shown through the research that government needs to reassess elements of their marketing strategy because it has effected large groups of consumers in different ways both positive and negative and therefore the negative elements need to be addressed and acted upon thus governmental push does affect consumers behaviour and attitude in terms of deciding to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine.

Concluding Answer to Hypothesis

Therefore the hypothesis of the study has been proven correct as there is a positive desire for Covid-19 vaccinations impacted by governmental communication driving desire and need for the vaccine.

Implications of findings for future practises:

It is anticipated that this study will aid the government in terms of their approach to consumers with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine. The way in which this assistance will come to be will be based on the way they communicate with South African consumers in order to do so more effectively and not drive them through the feeling of force and thus resulting in vaccine hesitancy. The study hopes to guide government in communicating effectively and calling consumers make more informed decisions. As discussed above there is already much controversy surrounding the vaccine and how consumers fear they will be mandatory giving rise to sensitivity toward governmental communicates and the reaction and attitudes of consumers toward their communications. This study will assist the government in realising their faults in this regard and to note where drastic changes to their methods and approach need to be made in order to address the apparent high levels of vaccine hesitancy.

Final Conclusion

The findings of this study to a certain extent represent the phenomenon of consumer attitudes toward the Covid-19 vaccine and the influence of governmental communications thereof. The utilisation of a thematic grouping of data that was used to develop these findings has proved enough to understand the relationship and thus has shown that there is an influence and relationship between these two factors.

The statistical analysis that was employed was able to show the existence of the relationship between the relevant concepts and evaluated the strength of this. This study clearly demonstrates a key relationship and influence held from the position of government communications over the attitudes and behaviour of consumers in terms of their purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine and thus there is clear correlation between the concepts.

11. Ethical Concerns

This research study has been conducted in-line with the IIE's policy. All the research participants have given their consent to willingly participate in this study as set in the consent form. The participants of the study have not been provided with any incentives as to provide insincere participation that could have an effect on the distortion of the data. Participants of the study are given the option to withdraw from the study at any given point in time and their identities have remained anonymous. Participants were able to complete their survey in the setting of their decision and at a time that suits them. The researcher has not deliberately altered, falsified or distorted any data that is collected and the statistics will be accurately captured.

12. Limitations

The study is not subject to a vast number of limitations. The first limitation is the assessment criteria which provides parameters on word count and time thus providing a restriction to the amount of depth and detail that may be provided in the study. Secondly the lack of previous research studies on the topic is due to the fact that global pandemics do not happen frequently. Resulting in information on the attitudes of the South African public in relation to governmental communications during pandemics scarce and the information that can be found is new and limited.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

To whom it may concern,

My name is Brenna Jade Louwrens and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Cornelis Coetzee about the effectiveness of governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine on consumer purchase intent in South Africa. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of consumer attitudes towards the vaccine and purchase intent once being exposed to governmental communications.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because you fall within my target and accessible population. If you decide to participate in this research, the following section includes a questionnaire comprising of various questions that should take about 10 minutes of your time.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Honours in Strategic Brand Communications. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Brenna Jade Louwrens

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Cornelis Coetzee

[REDACTED]

I give my consent to participate in this study:

I do not give my consent to participate in this study:

Appendix B: Questionnaire Template

For the following questions, select the option that is most applicable to you.

1. Please indicate your age

18 - 24 years (Gen Z)	
25 - 40 years (Millennials)	
41 - 56 years (Gen X)	
57 – 66 years (Boomers)	

2. Please indicate your gender

Male	
Female	
Prefer not to say	
Other	

3. Which of the following do you have access to? Select all options applicable to you.

TV	
----	--

Radio	
Social Media (Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram etc)	
Newspaper	
Email	

4. Have you been exposed to any form of Governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine in South Africa?

Yes	
No, if no please do not continue	

Section B:

Consumer Attitudes toward governmental communications during the build-up and release of the Covid-19 Vaccine

1. How do governmental communications regarding the vaccine make you feel? Select any of the options that are most applicable to you.

Protected	
Excited	
Unsure	

Pressured	
Scared	

2. Would you take the vaccine after hearing the President communicate on the topic?

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

3. Would you be more likely to take the vaccine after seeing governmental communications on the various social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Unlikely						Likely

4. Has the way the government communicated their messages regarding the vaccine inspired you to get vaccinated or deterred you from getting it? Select one of the following options.

Inspired	
Deterred	

Neutral	
---------	--

5. When the President speaks about the vaccine do you feel that getting the vaccine is optional or do you fear that it will be made mandatory?

I feel free to make my own decision	
I don't think I'll be given a choice in the matter	

6. Have you been exposed to any negative communications with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine on Social Media?

Yes	
No	

7. If so have these negative communications had an impact on your attitude and intent to receive the vaccine?

Yes	
No	

8. How have these negative or anti-Covid vaccine communications impacted your attitude towards the vaccine?

Type short answer	
-------------------	--

Section C:

This section hopes to discover whether or not there is consumer purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine within South Africa

1. Are you willing to receive the Vaccine?

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

2. How likely are you to purchase the vaccine based on your own prior knowledge?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Unlikely						Likely

3. How likely will your decision to be vaccinated be influenced by Governmental communications?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Unlikely						Likely

4. When influenced by governmental communications, how definite is your intention to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Fluid						Definite

5. Do you feel that your community has a strong influence on your decision when deciding to get the vaccine or not?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Low influence						High Influence

6. Why does your community have this strength or weakness over your opinion?

Type short answer	
-------------------	--

Section D:

This section aims to assess the attitudes of consumers in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to the Covid-19 pandemic continuing into the release of the Covid-19 vaccine

1. How likely are you to purchase the vaccine based on your attitude towards the vaccination?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Unlikely						Likely

2. Prior to the pandemic, were you aware of vaccines available for specific illnesses?

Please select your level of awareness from a level of unaware to aware.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Unaware						Aware

3. Have you been vaccinated for any of the following diseases prior to the release of the Covid-19 vaccine?

None	
Polio	
Hepatitis B	
Tetanus	
Rotavirus	
Measles, mumps, rubella	
HPV	

4. Did the pandemic influence your opinion/ approach to vaccines for rapidly spreading, potentially deadly and life altering diseases?

Stayed Pro-vax	
Stayed Anti-vax	
Newly Pro-vax	
Newly Anti-vax	

5. Did governmental communications have any effect on this decision?

Yes	
No	

6. How did government have this effect?

Type short answer	
-------------------	--

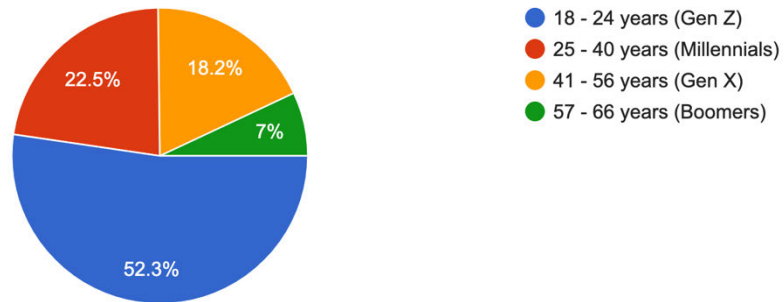
Thank you so much for participating in this study. It is greatly appreciated!

Appendix C: Results Per Question

Section A: Screening Questions

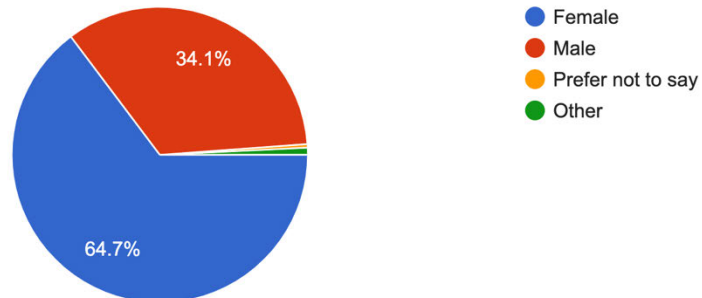
Please indicate your age

258 responses



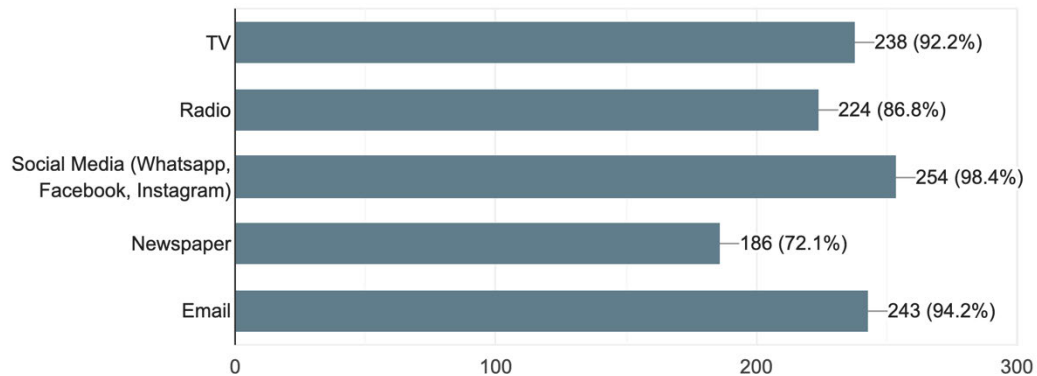
Please indicate your gender

258 responses



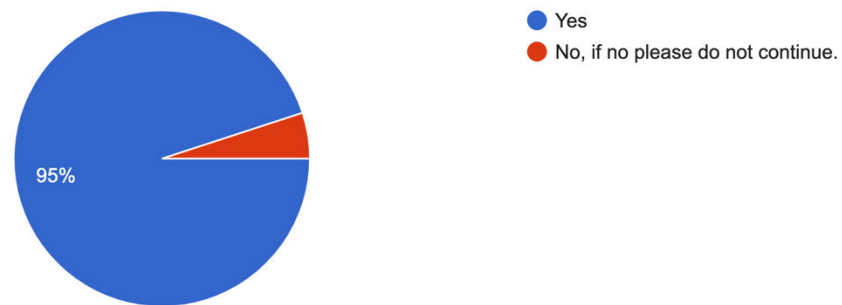
Which of the following do you have access to? Select all options applicable to you.

258 responses



Have you been exposed to any form of Governmental communications regarding the Covid-19 vaccine in South Africa? (Presidential speeches, social media posts, on the news channels)

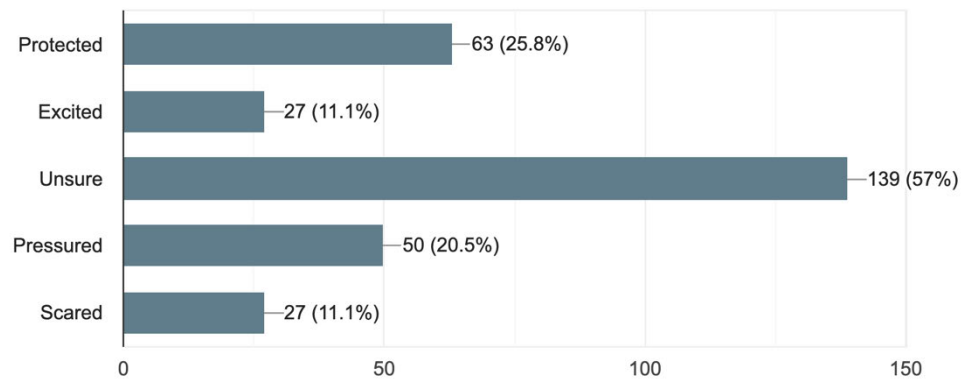
259 responses



Section B – Consumer Attitudes toward governmental communications during the build-up and release of the Covid-19 Vaccine

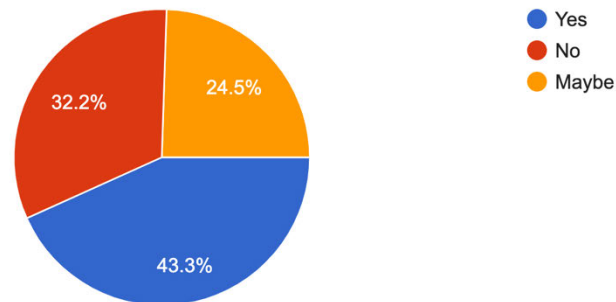
How do governmental communications regarding the vaccine make you feel? Select any of the options that are most applicable to you.

244 responses



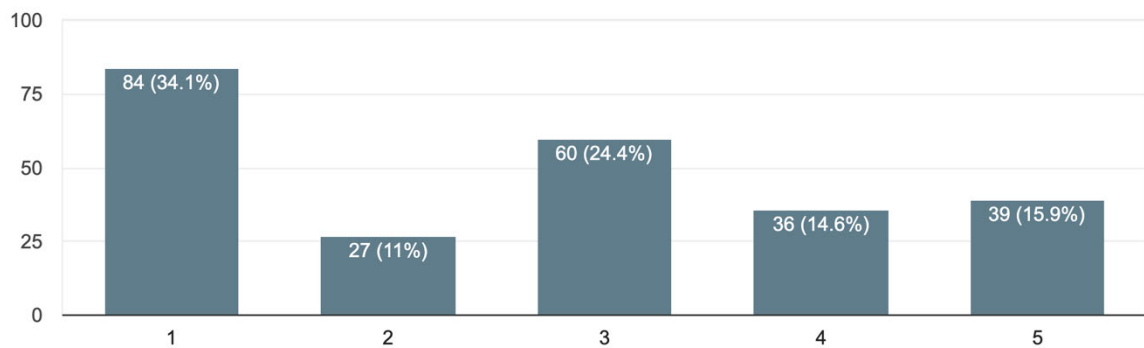
Would you take the vaccine after hearing the President communicate on the topic?

245 responses



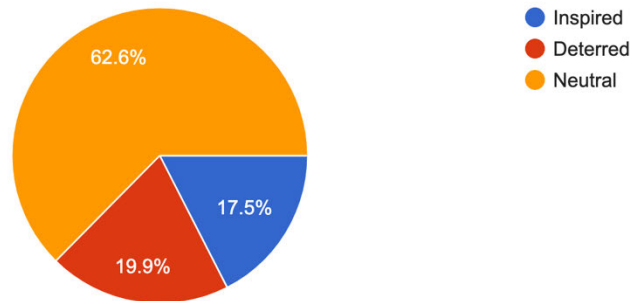
Would you be more likely to take the vaccine after seeing governmental communications on the various social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok?

246 responses



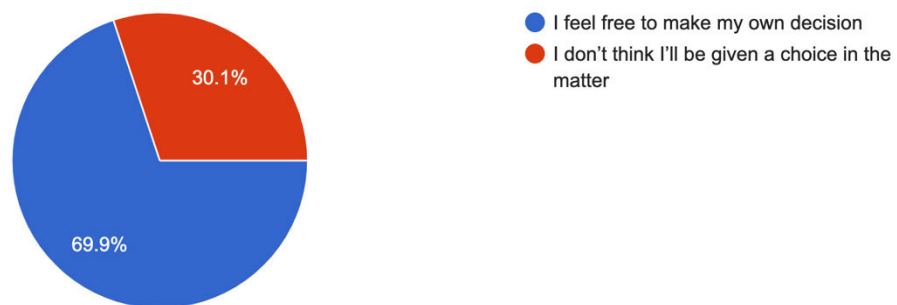
Has the way the government communicated their messages regarding the vaccine inspired you to get vaccinated or deterred you from getting it? Select one of the following options.

246 responses



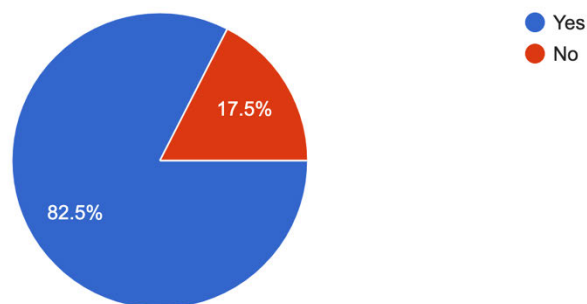
When the President speaks about the vaccine do you feel that getting the vaccine is optional or do you fear that it will be made mandatory?

246 responses



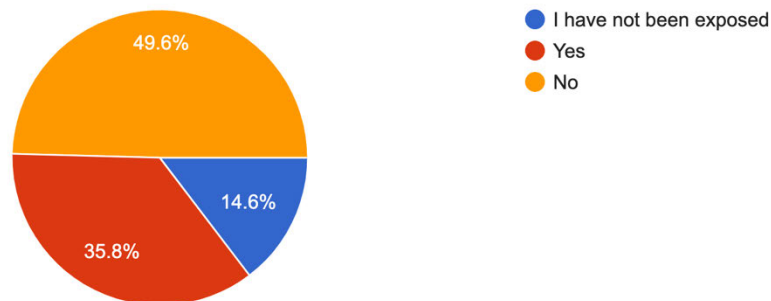
Have you been exposed to any negative communications with regards to the Covid-19 vaccine on Social Media?

246 responses



If so have these negative communications had an impact on your attitude and intent to receive the vaccine?

246 responses



How have these negative or anti-Covid vaccine communications impacted your attitude towards the vaccine?

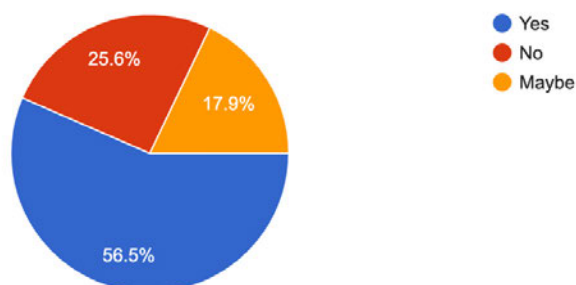
222 responses

Not wanting to get it
They have rendered me unsure as to whether the vaccine will have serious long term and short term effects
It has not
Yes
Clarified my decision on never taking it
They have made me scared and concerned about getting the vaccine.
Yes
I generally don't take everything that I read on social media at face value so it hasn't really changed my attitude towards the vaccine
Negatively

Section C - This section hopes to discover whether or not there is consumer purchase intent of the Covid-19 vaccine within South Africa

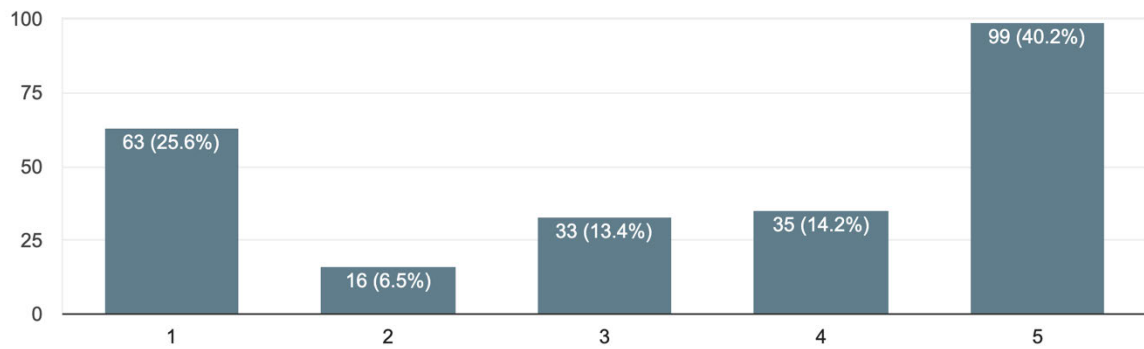
Are you willing to receive the Vaccine?

246 responses



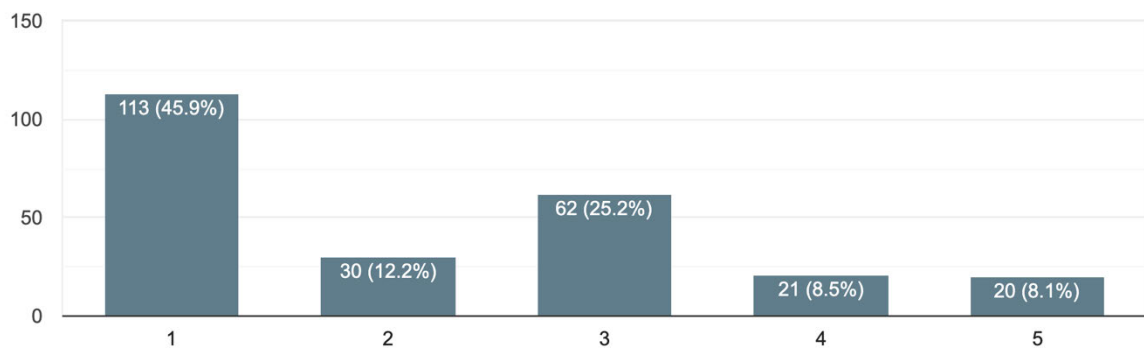
How likely are you to receive the vaccine based on your own prior knowledge?

246 responses



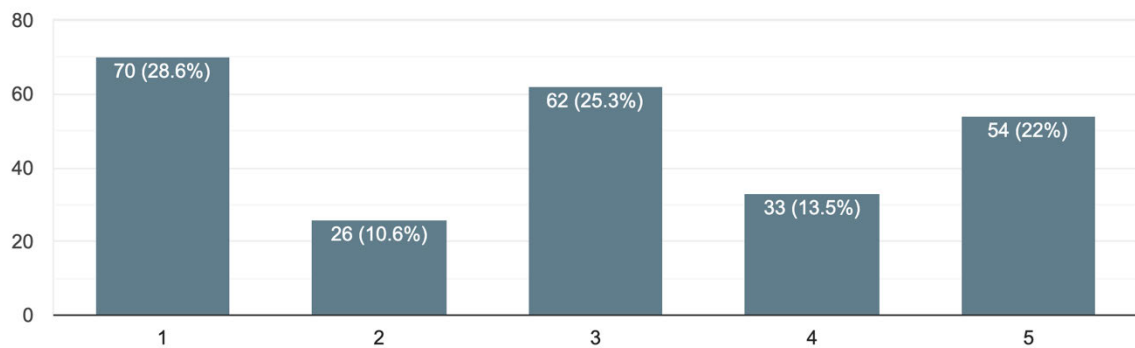
How likely will your decision to be vaccinated be influenced by Governmental communications?

246 responses



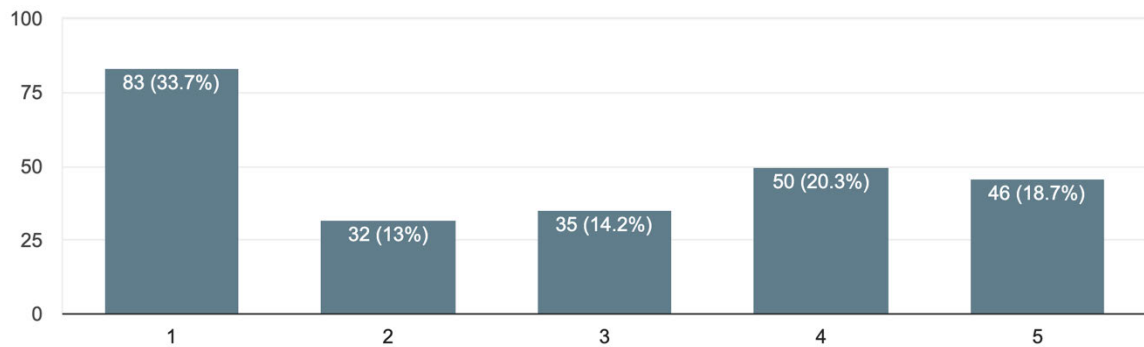
When influenced by governmental communications, how definite is your intention to purchase the Covid-19 vaccine?

245 responses



Do you feel that your community has a strong influence on your decision when deciding to get the vaccine or not?

246 responses



Why does your community have this strength or weakness over your opinion?

233 responses

They don't

I keep my choices private

I have people in my life that are immune compromised and/or older than I am who are more vulnerable to Covid. The strength the community has with me is more for me to protect them.

It depends on which community. My local community of where I live may not be pro-vaccine and therefore has no influence over my opinion, whereas my more tight knit communities that I'm a part of over social media, who are definitely pro-vaccine, have a larger influence. Although, in the end it's ultimately my decision through and through.

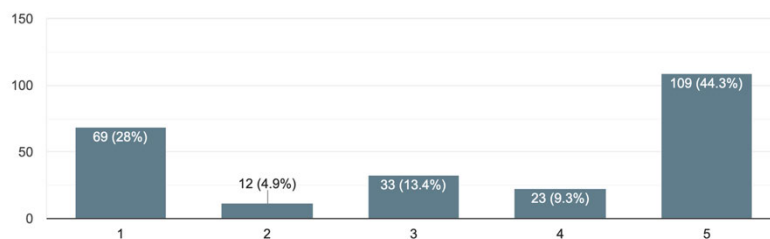
I read between the lines

If no one in the community is getting the vaccine then that makes you question if you should get it or not. That is a part of human nature. (It also works the other way, if majority of people get it). I feel like in my community a lot of people are getting the vaccine which makes me feel more comfortable and safe receiving it.

Section D – This section aims to assess the attitudes of consumers in terms of vaccine hesitancy prior to the Covid-19 pandemic continuing into the release of the Covid-19 vaccine

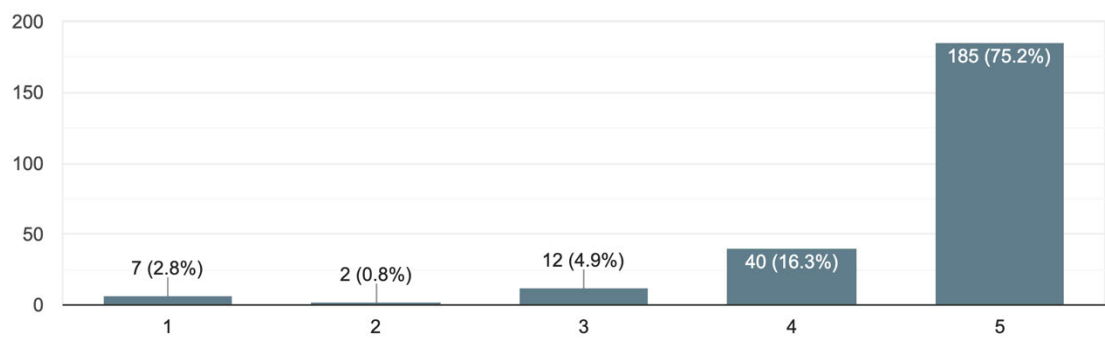
How likely are you to purchase the vaccine based on your attitude towards the vaccination?

246 responses



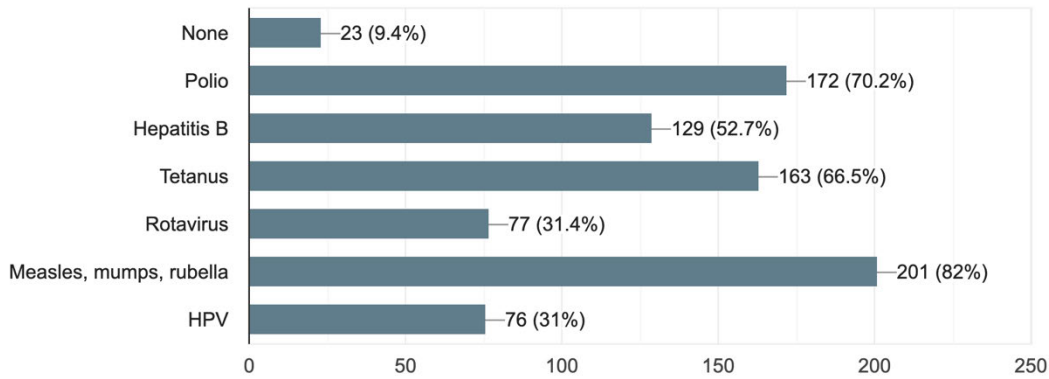
Prior to the pandemic, were you aware of vaccines available for specific illnesses? Please select your level of awareness from a level of unaware to aware.

246 responses



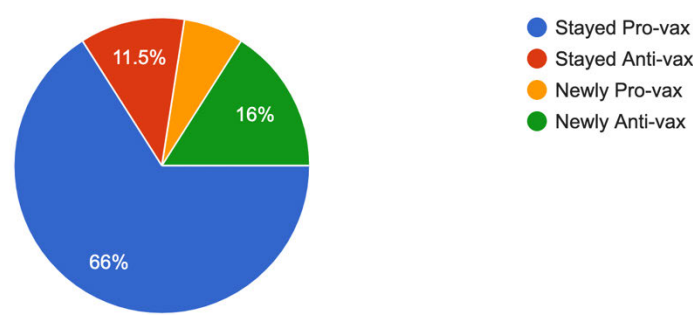
Have you been vaccinated for any of the following diseases prior to the release of the Covid-19 vaccine?

245 responses



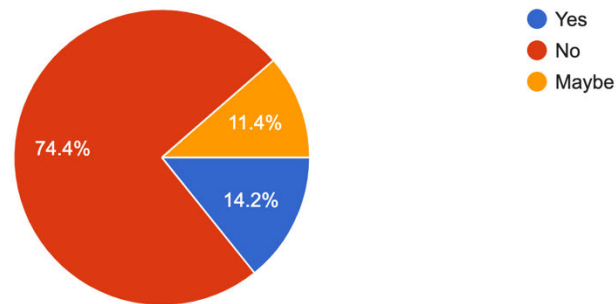
Did the pandemic influence your opinion/ approach to vaccines for rapidly spreading, potentially deadly and life altering diseases?

244 responses



Did governmental communications have any effect on this decision?

246 responses



How did government have this effect?

204 responses

Ive received one SMS about the vaccine, not enough information or after effects published etc.

Government validation and accuracy to developing and novel illnesses is key to educate, advocate and seek action to ensure no negligence /lower risk of mass expansion of the illness and fake news

Tjey didnt

The corruption surround government makes it hard to trust them

Never trust the government - they will do or say things for their benefit. Also, the ANC just do what their told and follow in other countries footsteps.

Vaccinations are the way we eradicate infectious diseases. The government are trying their best to help the public understand that.

Government had no effect, however the question asking about anit vax or pro vax on this page. Im pro vax however pro to the vaccines that have been researched long enough, polio vaccine etc

Appendix D: Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets can be located through the following link:



Appendix E: Ethical Clearance



Date: 07 July 2021

Student name: Brenna Louwrens

[REDACTED]

Campus: IIE Vega Pretoria Campus

Re: Approval of RESE8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.

4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.



Supervisor name: Cerneels Coetzee

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC) name: Dr SC Engelbrecht



Signatur

Appendix F: Originality Report

SafeAssign Originality Report

Report Summary

High risk

There is a very high probability that text in these papers was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and need to be reviewed for plagiarism.

Overall Text Similarity

Average Match

90 %

Highest Match

90 %

Research Report working doc.p...

Originality Reports (1)



Attachment 1

Research Report working doc.pdf

90 %

Appendix G – Research Report Summary Document Table

Research Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors	Critical Review	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
Discover the effect that governmental push has over consumers decision to take or reject the covid-19 vaccine	How does the marketing and governmental push affect consumers attitudes in terms of deciding to take the Covid-19 vaccination?	This study is relevant and vital because it has the aim to discover the effectiveness of marketing alongside governmental push	Kapexhiu, 2015 Agarwal, 2014 Marti, 2017	Theme 1: Vaccine Hesitancy Theme 2: Consumer attitudes Theme 3: Vaccine Purchase intent Theme 4: Vaccine Marketing	Interpretivism: Epistemology: Facts are fluid and ever-changing No single external reality Ontology: Reality is shaped through human interaction	Quantitative	Digital Survey: Cross-sectional	Research will be conducted in-line with the IIE s policy.	A positive attitude and desire for Covid-19 vaccinations from consumers due to governmental communications	Conner, 2020 du Plooy-Cilliers <i>et al</i> , 2014
						Population	Inventory, multiple choice, scaled and close-ended questions	Insurance and respect of participants privacy		
						All individuals who live in South Africa between the ages of 18-60		Reliability and validity is collected data is respected		
Research Problem	Hypothesis	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Methods	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	Ropeik, 2013
Insufficient understanding of how consumers attitudes will change toward the Covid-19 vaccine when being pushed by the government	H1: A positive desire for covid-29 vaccinations from consumers exists due to marketing efforts and governmental and societal drive	Vaccine Hesitancy Attitude Purchase Intent Vaccine Marketing	Theory of Planned Behaviour		Anxiology: Concentrates on understanding and interpretation	Purposive, Simple Random Sampling	Unit of Analysis: Consumer responses to governmental communications Google Forms: Google forms analytics and graphs Excel Spreadsheet	Lack of previous research	Aiding the government in terms of their communication approach to consumers on Twitter.	Rider University, nd Tanner, 2020

