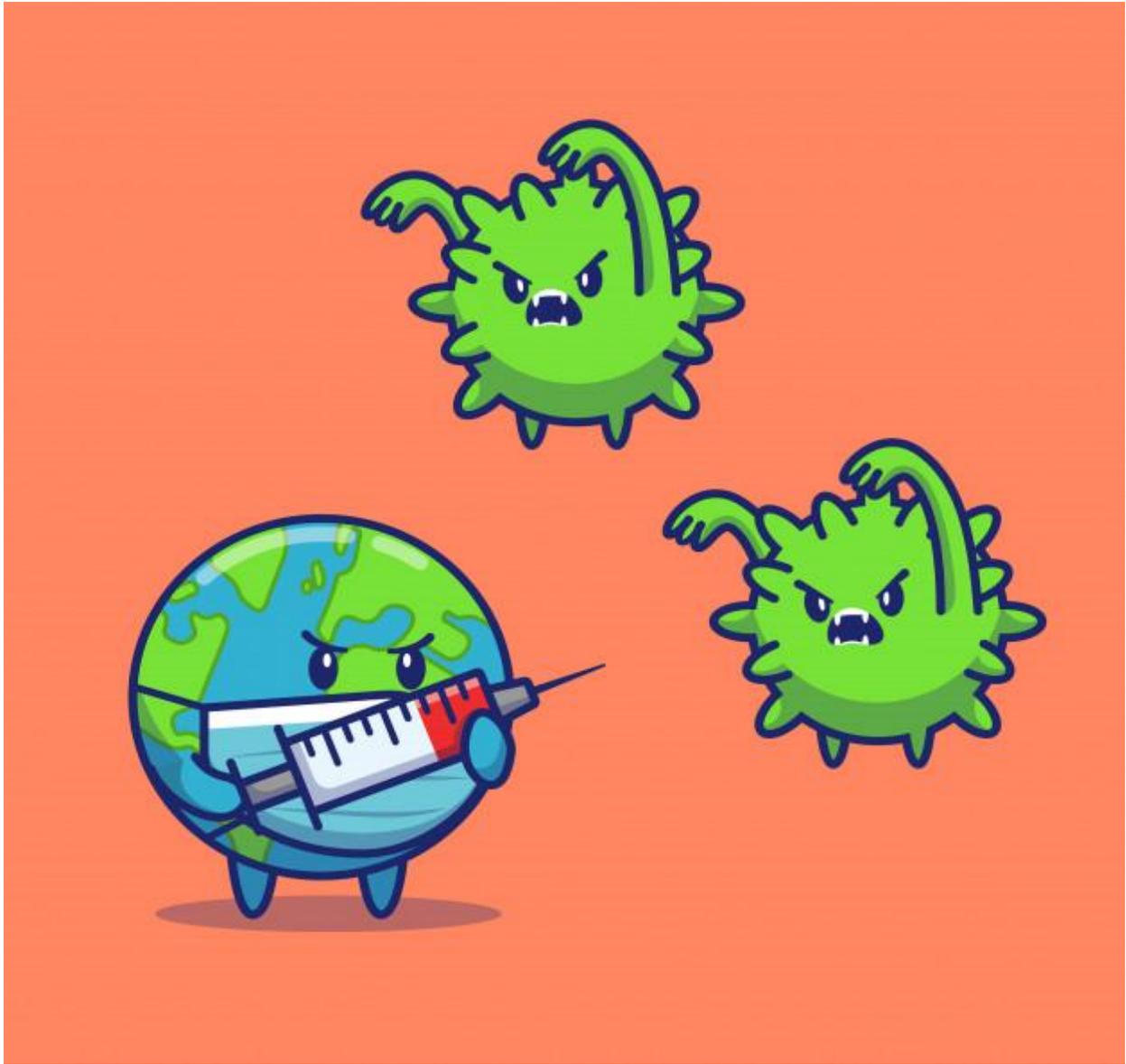


To take or Not Take the Jab!



A survey conducted by Zimbabwe Christian Alliance to ascertain uptake levels of the Sinopharm Covid-19 vaccine amongst Zimbabweans. (2021)

Abstract

The outbreak of the Covid-19 created a huge information gap on how to administer remedial actions. Clinical trials on vaccination programs have been rolled out globally in an effort to combat the spread of the coronavirus. The Zimbabwean government has received 200 000 vaccines which were donated by the Chinese government, Media reports indicate that the GoZ intends to procure more vaccines to cater for at least 60% of the total population to achieve herd immunity.¹

The rollout campaign brings with it a glut of challenges ranging from information gaps, misappropriation of resources and fear amongst citizens.

This survey seeks to get a clear understanding on the possible uptake of the Covid-19 vaccine amongst Zimbabweans.

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-zimbabwe/zimbabwe-receives-200000-doses-of-sinopharm-covid-19-vaccines-idUSKBN2AF0HI>

Acronyms

GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
PPEs	Personal Protective Equipment
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZCA	Zimbabwe Christian Alliance

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Background of the survey

The unprecedented misery brought in by the COVID-19 pandemic has inadvertently affected many facets of life. Many lives have been lost, businesses shut down and the pattern of life for many communities altered. The effects of the pandemic have seen many affected persons resorting to crime and in some instances domestic violence as a coping mechanism to the effects of the virus.

All over the world, many governments have imposed unprecedented lockdowns as a measure to curb the spread of the pandemic and its effects.

In response various initiatives to alleviate the plight have been carried out by governments and non-state actors. With no cure in place currently, the focus has been on prevention and awareness. On a global scale, governments have resolved that to circumvent the spread of the virus massive vaccination rollouts have to be implemented. According to media reports Zimbabwe has received its first batch of 200,000 doses of Sinopharm donated by the Chinese government.² Another batch of 600,000 doses purchased by Zimbabwe is expected to arrive early March 2021.

According to the government rollout plan, vaccination priority is being given to frontline workers such as health professionals and immigration agents working at borders, according to the rollout plan in Zimbabwe — which as of Wednesday 24 February 2021, reported 35,960 COVID-19 cases and almost 1,456 deaths.

Currently the Government has started to roll out a nationwide vaccination program which albeit has divided opinions. ZCA Advocacy department carried out a survey to get insights into the attitudes, perceptions and reactions of the populace on the vaccine. Findings of the survey will give insights into the possible uptake of the vaccine by the general populace and ultimately inform the proposed government rollout strategy.

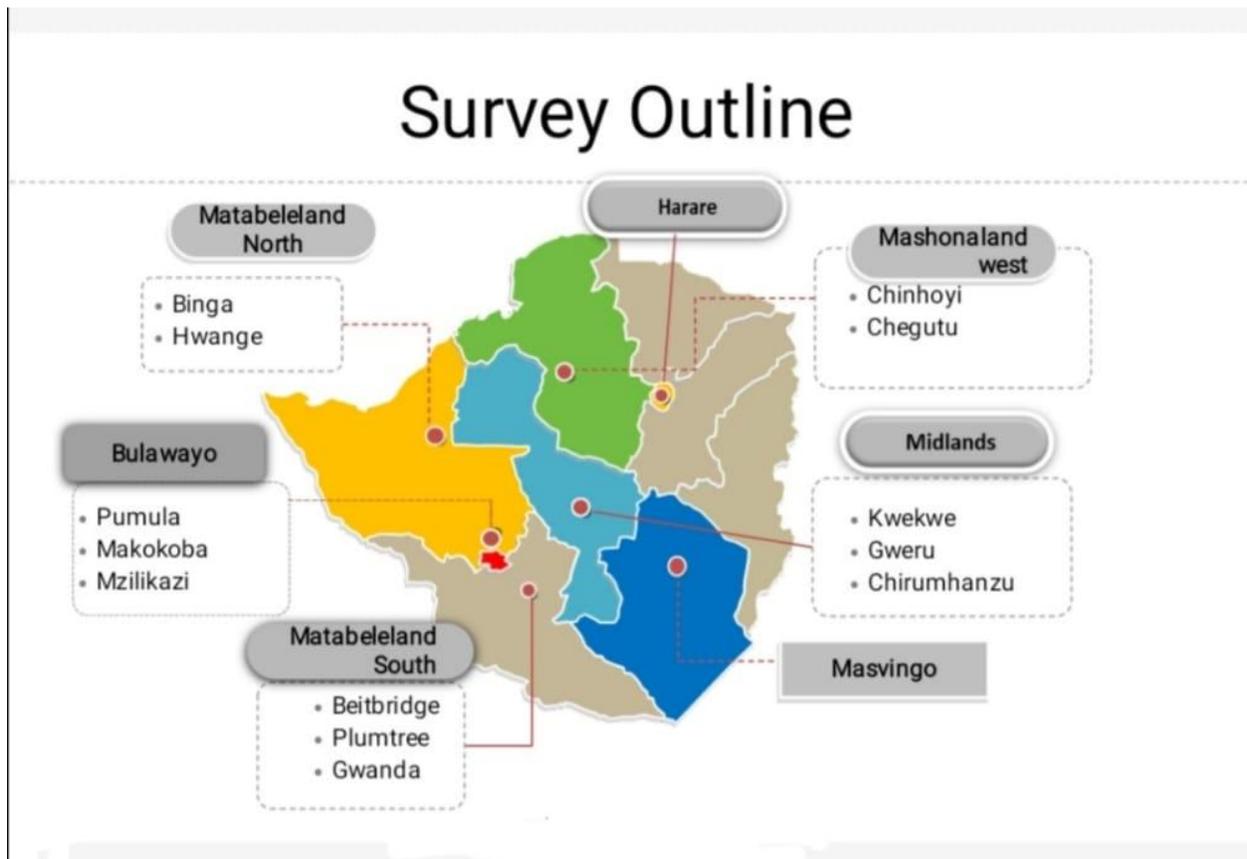
²

<https://www.africanews.com/2021/02/15/zimbabwe-receives-200-000-doses-of-china-s-sinopharm-covid-19-vaccine/>

Methodology

The survey was conducted on Zimbabwe Christian Alliance local structure whatsapp groups. The groups are made up of church leaders, women and youths across the 10 provinces in the country. The survey areas/ groups in which the survey questions were administered include; Chegutu, Gwanda, Chinhoyi, Plumtree, Binga, Hwange, Lupane, Beitbridge, Chirumhanzu, Masvingo, Bulawayo, Gweru, Nkayi, The National hub (all provinces) and the secretariat group.

Survey Areas



To establish the perspectives of the participants, one question was asked to respondents, and an explanation for their response was sought to ascertain the reasons why they had responded in that manner. Below is the question which was administered;

ZCA Advocacy Department is carrying out a short survey on the Covid-19 vaccine:

Question : Are you willing to get vaccinated?

1. YES
2. NO
3. NOT SURE

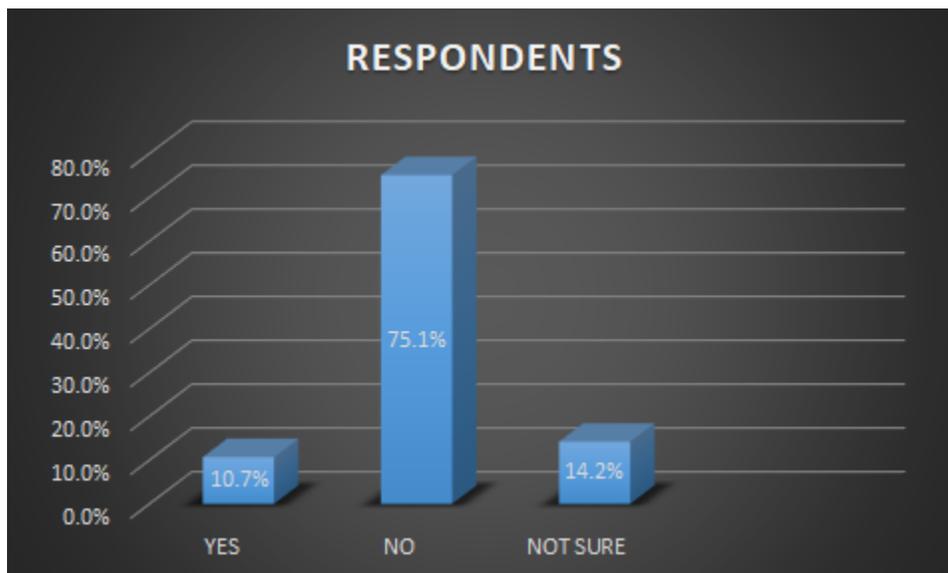
* IF you answered **NO**, may you share reasons on why not.

IF you answered **YES** may you share reasons why.

4:34 PM ✓✓

Key Findings

561 participants took part in the survey. The findings from the survey indicated that 10.7% of the respondents were willing to be vaccinated, whilst 75.1% were unwilling to be vaccinated. 14.2% of the total respondents were not sure if they were ready to be vaccinated.



Analysis of responses

The major reasons indicated by respondents for selecting either YES, NO or NOT SURE in the survey are outlined below.

Reasons for YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Have been vaccinated against other ailments before● Confidence in the scientific process● No other alternatives available to curb infections
Reasons for NO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Inadequate information about the vaccine, its side effects● Religious convictions● Medical reasons (side effects & chronic diseases)● Mistrust
Reasons for NOT SURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Decision to be made after receiving adequate information about the vaccine● To assess the effectiveness of the vaccine● Need to assess the possible side effects of the vaccine <p><i>Respondents in this category are scared of the virus but are also afraid of the above mentioned points.</i></p>

Information Gap

A major finding that was captured during the survey is that a lot of people are ignorant about a plethora of issues around acquisition, administration and side effects about the vaccine. This is a cause for concern as the Covid-19 pandemic has had dire effects globally. One respondent to the survey had this to ask; *“Sorry to ask is this vaccine compulsory or its by choice?”* illustrating the need for intensive information dissemination by the responsible authorities.

Conclusion

The survey concluded that there is generally a low uptake to the Sinopharm vaccine. Many people are not willing to take it as yet, despite that the GoZ is working towards procuring as many vaccines as possible to ensure that at least 60% of the population is vaccinated against the coronavirus.

Recommendations

1. Intensify awareness raising initiatives on the covid 19 vaccine
2. Partner with other key stakeholders to augment government efforts in the fight against the coronavirus
3. Ensure that covid 19 resources are managed in a transparent and accountable manner

Annexes

Why did they said YES to the jab?



Source: <https://www.istockphoto.com/photos/>

Stated below are some of the excerpts of the conversations which respondents highlighted as their primary reasons for choosing **YES** to the vaccine.

“Guys there isn't any drug that can be distributed by any health care organization without a green light from WHO and before that WHO does a lot of tests to check if it's safe for humans.”

“YES: if the vaccine is laboratory proved to be useful in preventing this covid-19 then there is no reason to reject vaccination. My measured opinion.”

“Vaccine are always there and in our country we don't manufacture them since we were kids we got vaccine and no harm has been done to us so since traditional we used to have them and up to now BCG is given so I will go for the vaccine”

The major reason highlighted by the respondents who voted yes, indicates that due processes (scientific & medical) are done before any vaccine is administered to the public.

Why did they say NO to the Jab?



Image by John Hughes (2018) in Business

A significant number of the respondents said they were not willing to be vaccinated. Below are some excerpts of conversations to show why they were unwilling.

“VP Chiwenga got vaccinated, but myself can't risk because I don't know the duration of these vaccines in the body of a person. I need a 5year observation. Maybe they operate like other family planning methods. Some they go for 5 years. Means the effects will be seen after 5years”

“To come up with a vaccine, it takes a minimum of 5 years, going through tests and trials, so with this current vaccine I'm not yet sure if it really works, Even the manufacturer of this vaccine, isn't even sure about their vaccine. There are a lot of questions around this vaccine. People aren't feeling safe to go for this”

“I think people need more education concerning the Vaccine because munhu haungango pihwa chinhu chausingazive.” (...a person can not be given something they do not know about.)

“If you don't show a certain level of care to your people they are bound to mistrust you when you come with vaccines that are questionable and more so from a questionable source worse enough when they have not been tested for the virus you intend to fight.”

“Vaccine is the foundation of the mark of the beast.”

“We don't want to be a testing ground. Let them vaccinate themselves 😊. If it really works will see nekupera kwayo Covid in those develop countries. Why is it still there in those countries. Those guys they don't love Africans . So they always use Africa as a testing ground. As for me I'm out whether WHO says it has no effect or it has. I'm safe without vaccination.”

“No. Am not inclined due my religious convictions”

“No. I am suspicious of the Chinese. They were not open with the origin and time of the outbreak. Even the recent visit by WHO scientists was not so independent in my opinion. Besides I am convinced the Chinese wants to deflate their population through Africa. How can I entrust my only life to their vaccine. Their disposition towards us is hostile. Generally all vaccines were hurried and God is enough for me, He has a proven record in my life but vaccine zero.”

“No .Because our Country is not Politically.stable ,i am afraid this maybe used as a Political weapon to areas where certain Political Parties doesnt have support. Also the reason why we Should Keep on exeecising or adhering to the regulations when i Recieve the vaccine ,this shows me that the Ministry is not Sure whether this will work or not.”

“No, statistics show that they exported 200 000 vaccines to Zimbabwe while they have only tested 60 000 people which is 0.02 percent of their own population.”

“But what is the use of being vaccinated, because many people sebayigula bazebasila, because imzimba yabo yayenelisa ukunqoba this virus.” (...Many people have contracted the virus and healed because their antibodies were able to fight off the virus)

“No the reason being that even if you get vaccinated It doesn't guarantee that you won't get the Covid.”

“I don't trust that what if they use different medicines for them and us 😞”

“There is of vaccine is debatable, but above all I don't see the reason why so fast and why Africa, when death rate is higher in European countries.”

“No because I have heard Billy gates' attitudes and intentions towards us Africans.”

“In Zim we have high qualified personnel so let them test it.”

“Even if we follow our national FM news, we are given Chile, Egypt and other countries as examples who have used the vaccines, but there is non from southern Africa.”

“No

1.Many conflicting reports on this vaccine

2. Not scientifically tested locally

3.No one knows the after effects of the vaccine in the years to come”

“Dei 75k doses dzeku India daikurumidza kuuya ndidzo dzandaida kubaiwa from.” (If only the 75 000 vaccines from India would arrive early , those are the ones I want)

“Yeku China handisati ndaziva efficacy yayo. But judging from how China handled the Covid-19 I would rather take their vaccine even though I am not too sure.” (I am not aware of the efficacy of the Chinese vaccine.)

“I trust umsuzwane. Sakhula ugogo esifutha ngawo” (I trust African traditional herbs. As I was growing up, my grandmother used to steam me with these to cure ailments)

“No. Result of clinical tests done so far are not positive enough to convince me to take the jab. Also the manipulation of data since covid started and puts a big ? mark to the end game of this whole thing.”

“No. There has not been a full explanation as to the protection from virus. After injection you still mask up, keep distance, continue with the covid protocols. So it means there's very little difference, if any. Again, since it's not guaranteed to protect, it may disturb my body's immune system.”

“Okungenza ngithi hatshi yikuthi abantu siqale sifundiswe njalo iqale kutesitwe embuzini siyibone ukuphila kwayo.” (The reason I am saying no is that I need proper education on the vaccine first. There is need to test the vaccine on animals first to ascertain its efficacy)

“No. I am not willing to be vaccinated, why ? Because I have seen the healing hand of God through and through even if the kings of this world are trying to cease his glory, but at last it won't work”

“I am also praying for the families that lost their loved ones during this time where the devil has gone astray in the world tormenting, initiating and killing people in all the ways”

“NOoo I Personally have the feeling that when a white men says something about none whites they make sure it comes to pass, unless and until we are given concrete evidence that our local scientists have taken time to check on the vaccine”

Most respondents were sceptical about the vaccine and the motive behind its administration on citizens. They indicated that they needed assurance that it is going to be clinically effective before they can take it. Other respondents also indicated their unwillingness to take the vaccine due to religious and cultural beliefs. Some of the respondents were cynical about the political motives of administering the vaccine.

Reasons for Not Sure



At least 33 of the total respondents were uncertain about whether to take the vaccine or not. Their uncertainty can largely be attributed to the dynamics of either taking or not taking the vaccine. Both options are seemingly difficult to choose between as the pros and cons are similar.

“Scientists tell us that vaccines have been made before for other corona viruses but they have not worked.”

“I’m undecided, wat if I react badly to the vaccine. Whilst I really want to vaccinated coz I’m scared of the virus”

Information Gap

A major finding that was captured during the survey is that a lot of people are ignorant about a plethora of issues around acquisition, administration and side effects about the vaccine. This is a cause for concern as the Covid-19 pandemic has had dire effects globally. One respondent to the survey had this to ask; *“Sorry to ask is this vaccine compulsory or its by choice?”* illustrating the need for intensive information dissemination by the responsible authorities.

This survey was conducted by Lynnete R. Dube & Nqobizitha Donga (February 2021)

Zimbabwe Christian Alliance Advocacy Department