

Assessing the Multi-faceted impact and outcome of COVID-19 Pandemic Timeline across Stakeholders of Wayanad, Kerala using Fuzzy Cognitive Mapping

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ABSTRACT

Vaccine hesitancy can be held accountable for decreasing vaccine coverage and increasing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases outbreaks and this paper analyses the major reasons for the reception and rejection of COVID-19 vaccines among the people. Lack of confidence in the COVID-19 vaccines are considered as a threat to the current vaccination program. The study explores certain attitudes and behavior that can control and influence the COVID-19 vaccination coverage using the methodology of Fuzzy Cognitive Mapping (FCM). FCMs helps us to model data scarce environments with the use of natural language, perceptions, experiences or beliefs as formulated by the stakeholder. From the study it was concluded that the key concept that influences vaccination is layman's heuristic thinking and trust when it comes to balancing risk and benefit, which will inversely affect herd immunity. The paper also gives relevant policy suggestions. Then the study is extended to a group of vulnerable community. It was paradoxical to find that a socially backward community living in clustered colonies, who are far behind education, health index and hygiene practices were less affected by COVID-19. The study results revealed that their traditional lifestyle and traditional food habits had a significant influence apart from the measures taken by the health sector.

Key Words: Vaccine Hesitancy, Vaccination, COVID-19, Immunity, traditional lifestyle, traditional medicines, ethnobotany.