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## Attitudes and Perceptions Regarding COVID-19 Vaccine Intention and Hesitancy among Dentistry and Pharmacy Students in Northern Cyprus

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**Objective:** This study was designed to assess the attitudes and perceptions about COVID-19 vaccine intention and hesitancy of dentistry and pharmacy faculty students in a university of Northern Cyprus.

**Methods:** The dentistry and pharmacy faculty students comprised the universe and study group of the survey. A questionnaire of four components consisting of 50 questions in compliance with the questionnaire developed by the WHO was prepared. The four components included socio-demographic features, COVID-19 history and vaccination status, perceptions and attitudes of the vaccines and knowledge of the vaccines. The data were analyzed using the SPSS 18.0.0 statistical program, p<0.05 set as significant.

**Results:** Of all the participants, 15.8% had acquired the COVID-19 infection previously. The majority (98.4%) had been vaccinated at least once and 85.1% had received two vaccine doses. Comirnaty was the preferred vaccine type (73.6%). Of the participants, 77.4% agreed or strongly agreed that vaccination should be mandatory for all healthcare providers. The main reasons of vaccine hesitancy were stated as concern about side effects (26.8%), doubts about the efficacy of vaccines (23.6%) and hasty development of vaccines (14.6%). Regarding trust in the information about COVID-19 vaccines, positive responses were 66.6% for public health experts and 33.4% for government representatives and politicians. The knowledge level of the students about COVID-19 and vaccines was suboptimal. **Conclusions:** The vaccination rate was high among the students. However, there is a need for informing and training the healthcare students about vaccination to increase their capacity for guiding the community, considering the hesitancy issues described by the participants.

### Biography

Dr. Gulifeiya is a medical doctor with more than 15 years of research and teaching experience in the areas of public health. She has worked in various national and international institutions in several countries including China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Turkey. Her main teaching and research interests are in the areas of women's and child health, adolescents' sexual and reproductive health, family planning and contraceptive methods, epidemiology, and evidence-based medicine. She is currently working as an associate professor in public health department at Near East University.

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