

A study exploring public opinion and attitudes towards being vaccinated in a community pharmacy

Federico Zerbinato^{1,2}, Antonella Tonna¹

¹ Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen; ² Farmacia Zerbinato SNC, Pozzonovo (PD)

BACKGROUND

There is growing evidence that vaccination campaigns in Community Pharmacies (CPs) lead to greater awareness of the importance of vaccination and increase vaccination rates [1]. Italian community pharmacists have been administering vaccines since the COVID-19 pandemic [2]. In particular, in Veneto Region, appropriately trained community pharmacists started administering COVID-19 vaccines in July 2021 and the related booster doses in November 2021 [3].

OBJECTIVES

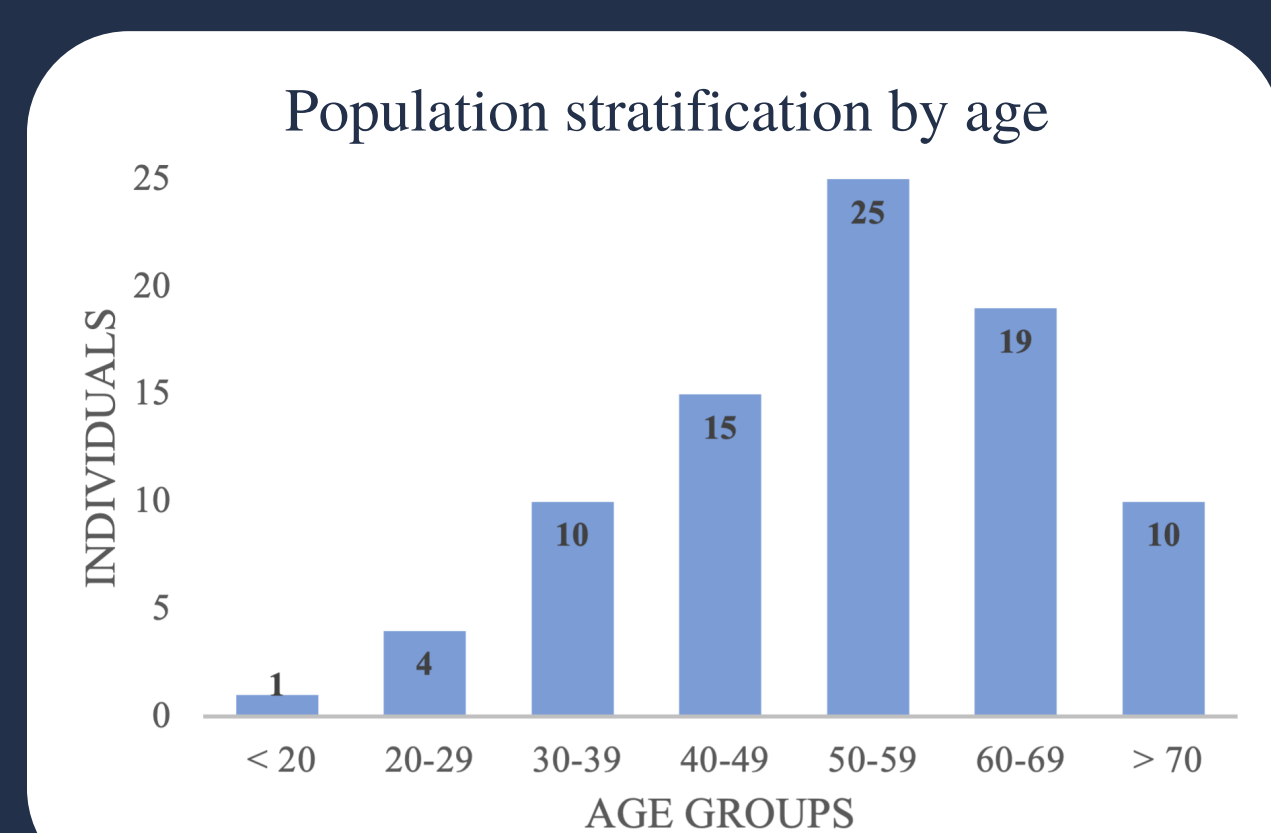
This study explored the public's opinion of attitudes towards being vaccinated in a community pharmacy and aimed to determine whether there is a role for the community pharmacist as a vaccination health educator.

SETTING AND METHODS

The study was conducted at a pharmacy in Pozzonovo (Padova, Veneto Region, ~ 3500 inhabitants), All the patients who have been vaccinated at this pharmacy and could be contacted via email or WhatsApp, were invited to participate. If consenting, they received a short questionnaire which had been piloted for face and content validity with other Italian community pharmacists. Staff members and their relatives vaccinated here were excluded. Participant responses represented the main outcome measures.

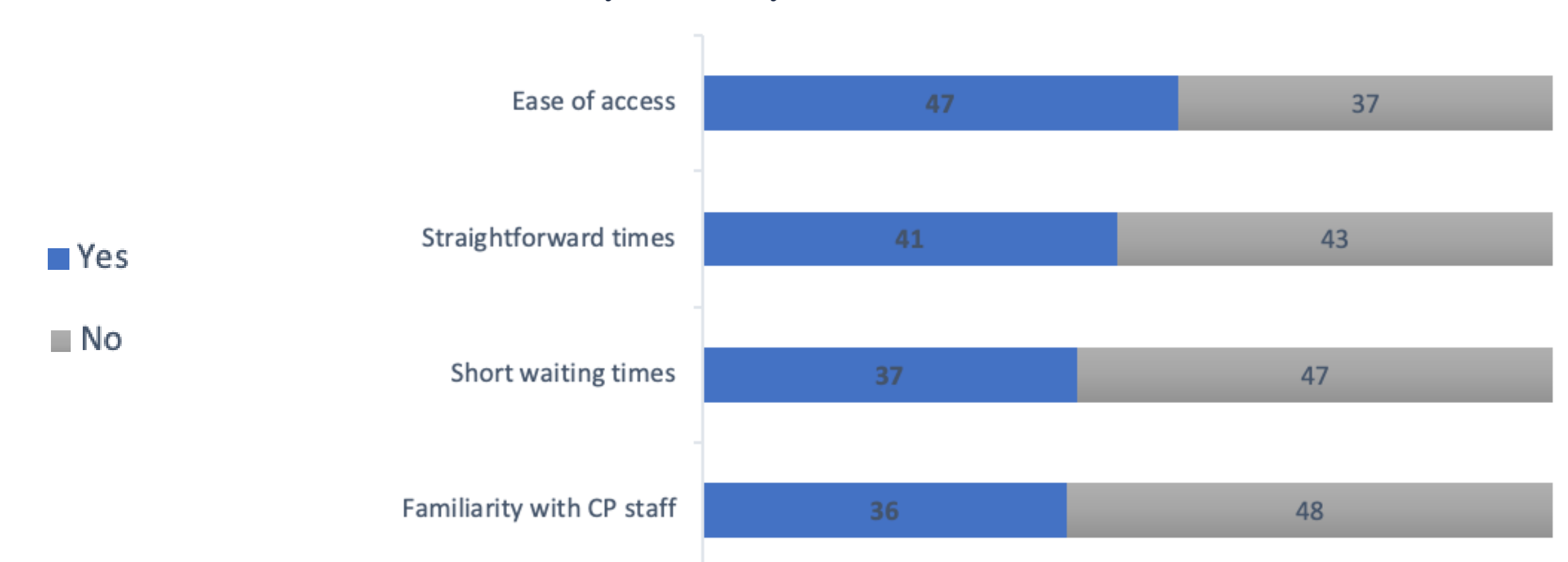
RESULTS

84 questionnaires were returned out of 171 sent (49% response rate). Participants were mainly 50 to 59 years old (29.8%).



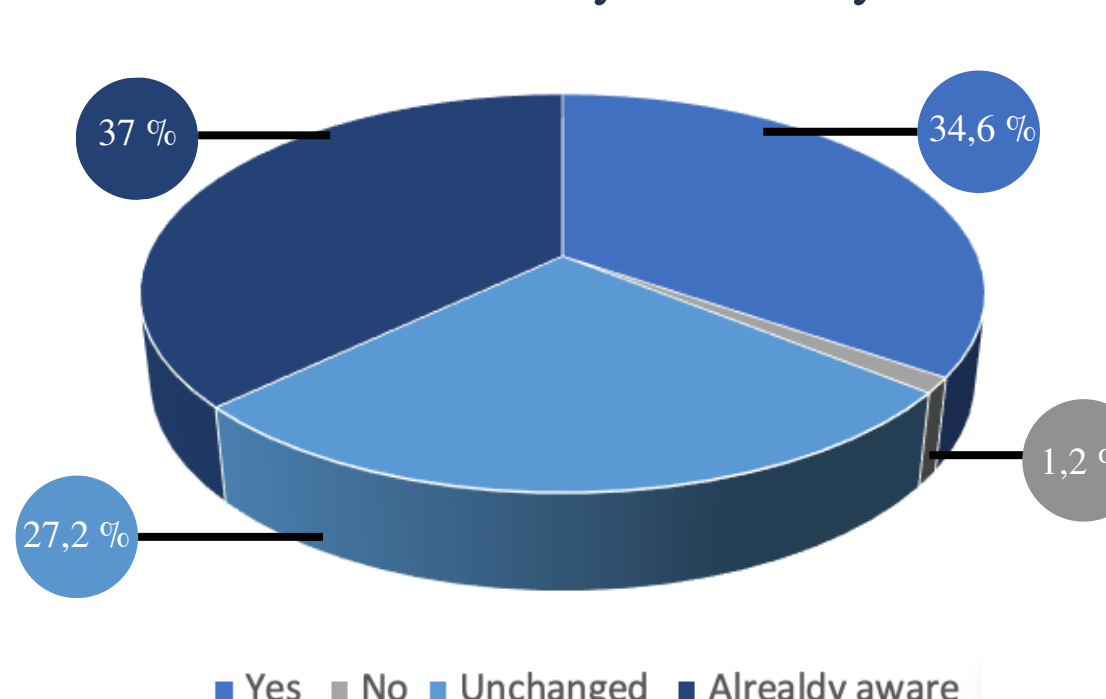
“Ease of access” was chosen by 47 participants (56%) as main motivation for vaccination in a CP. Other reasons included straightforward system (48.8%), short waiting times (44%) and familiarity with pharmacy staff (42.9%). All participants showed high degrees of satisfaction towards the pharmacy staff and the CP as a vaccination hub.

Motivation for vaccination in Community Pharmacy

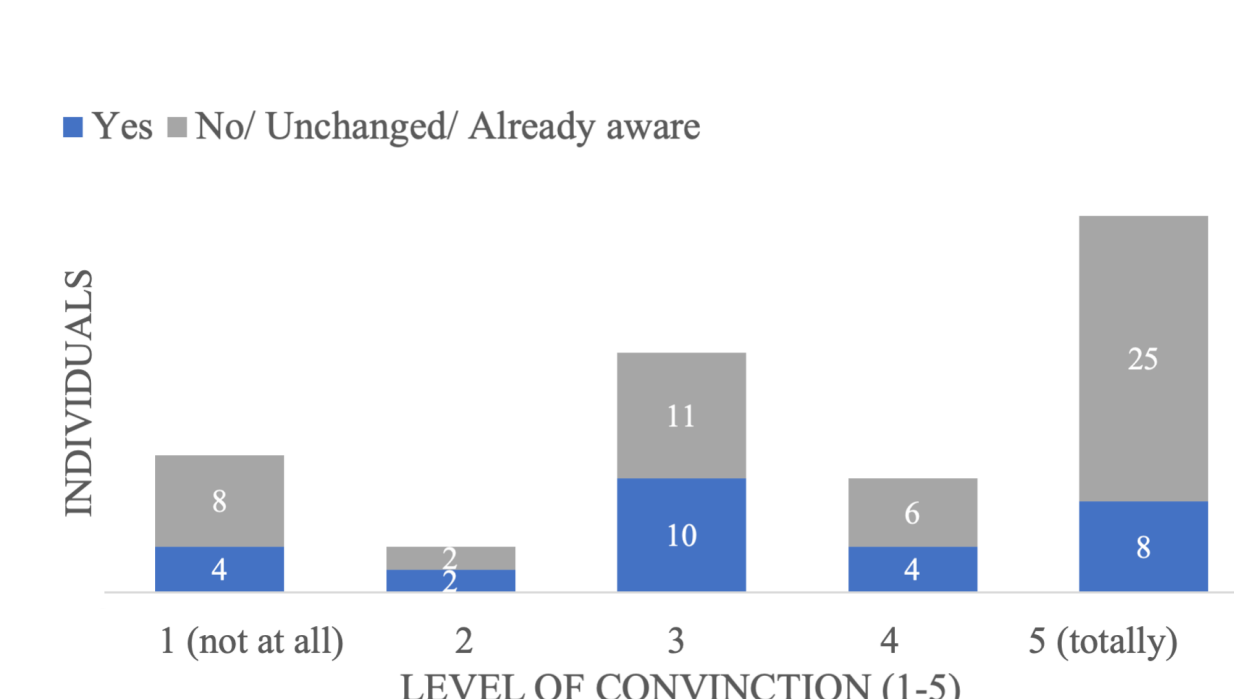


All participants would choose a CP again for future vaccination. 28 participants (34.6%) stated their awareness of the importance of being vaccinated increased following vaccination in the CP; 16 of these said they were uncertain about the importance of vaccination on first attending the CP.

Increased awareness following vaccination in Community Pharmacy



Distribution of "increased awareness" based on conviction before 1st dose



CONCLUSIONS

This study is limited by the fact that it is conducted only in one pharmacy but gives important pilot data in a rapidly developing area of pharmacy practice. In conclusion, the CP is accepted by the patients as a potential vaccination hub. Increased participant awareness of the importance of vaccination may have been due to factors such as opportunities to discuss vaccination with the pharmacy staff indicating a role for the community pharmacist as a vaccination health educator.

REFERENCES

1. Poudel, A., Lau, E., Deldot, M., Campbell, C., Waite, N. and Nissen, L., 2019. Pharmacist role in vaccination: Evidence and challenges. *Vaccine*, 37(40), pp. 5939-5945.
2. GOVERNO ITALIANO, REGIONI E PROVINCE AUTONOME, FEDERFARMA and ASSOFARM, 2020. Legge di Bilancio 2021. Art.1 Comma 471 edn. Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana.
3. REGIONE VENETO, 07/05/2021. Deliberazione della Giunta Regionale. 61 edn. Bollettino Ufficiale della Regione Veneto.