

# Journal Pre-proofs

## Short Report

Factors Influencing COVID-19 Vaccination Intention among University Students: A Cross-Sectional Study in Malaysia

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## **Title of Manuscript**

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**Abstract**

Vaccination is crucial in controlling the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that triggered the pandemic, but herd immunity can only work with high vaccination coverage in the population. This study aims to measure the COVID-19 knowledge level and determine the factors influencing COVID-19 vaccination intention among university students in Malaysia. A cross-sectional online survey was carried out with 1,274 Malaysian university students in July 2021. Univariate and multivariate analyses were employed to examine the relationships between the study variables. Results showed that the majority of university students had an acceptable level of knowledge of COVID-19. The knowledge, risk perception of COVID-19, social norms, and perceived benefit of COVID-19 vaccination were positively associated with vaccination intention. However, perceived trust in information sources of COVID-19 vaccination and the government's response to COVID-19 did not affect the university students' desire to receive the vaccination. These findings are essential for health policymakers and healthcare providers to implement evidence-based interventions to increase COVID-19 vaccination uptake among university students.

**Keywords**

Behavioral intention, COVID-19, influencing factor, SARS-CoV-2, university student, vaccination.

**1. Introduction**

*"No one will ever be truly safe until everyone is safe."* This was a loud and clear message from the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed, on handling the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic crisis [1]. This message is not limited in its use to describe the global economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic but can also describe the progress of the COVID-19 vaccination program [2]. A high-level action is urgently required to increase the vaccination rate to control the spread of COVID-19 caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Although preventive measures of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs), such as social distancing, personal protection, and environmental and travel measures, can suppress the spread of COVID-19 [3], herd immunity is frequently cited as the desired panacea to stop the COVID-19 pandemic [4]. Many countries' regulatory affairs agencies have authorized or approved several vaccines for emergency use against COVID-19 [5, 6]. However, a sizeable population across the globe is still undecided about whether to receive the vaccine or not. For example, a global survey reported that only 71.5%