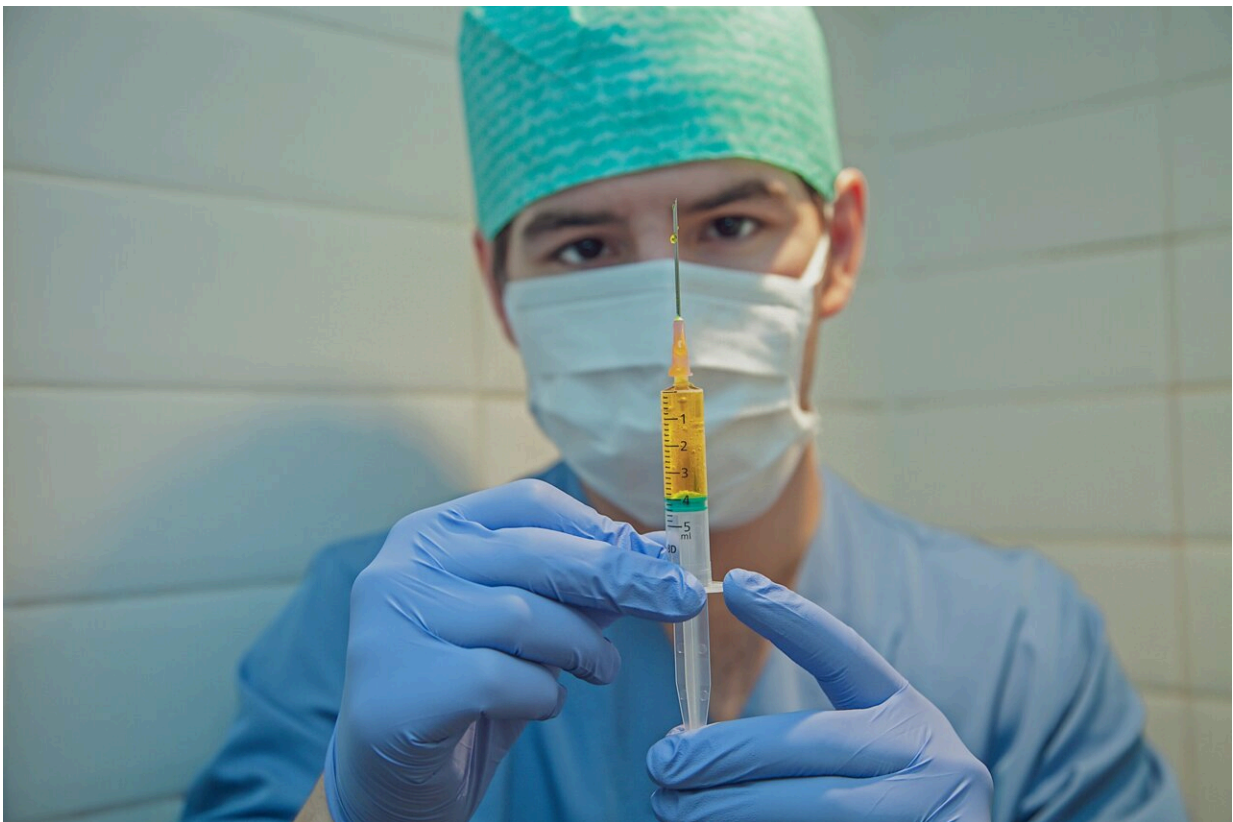


There is no quick fix for COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among UK South Asian communities, find researchers

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Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

The complex, multiple factors influencing COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and skepticism among UK South Asian communities mean "quick fix"

solutions to increase uptake of the vaccines will be ineffective, according to new research published by *JRSM Open*.

The researchers, from Imperial College London and City University of London, interviewed patients and health care professionals to explore views among South Asians on the COVID-19 [vaccine](#), including their decision-making on whether or not to vaccinate.

Dr. Raj Chandok, lead author of the study and a GP working in Southall, London, said, "Before COVID-19, the relationship of all our participants with vaccines seems to have been easy and unproblematic. However, in the COVID-19 era, it was clear from the outset that their concerns and hesitations were specific to these particular vaccines."

A key finding of the research was that a lack of trust operated on multiple levels in perpetuating vaccine hesitancy, with a lack of trust in health care authorities, government and various media platforms present among most of the participants.

The researchers say that the overemphasis by commentators on the terms mis- and dis-information encourages either/or scenarios where people are set up in binary opposition; those who are consuming (correct) information and those who remain misinformed.

"This leaves very little space to entertain the idea that there might be individuals who are neither pro nor anti COVID-19 vaccines, but instead are questioning many of the so-called indisputable 'truths'—and therefore not just one truth such as the safety of COVID-19 vaccines," said Dr. Chandok.

Any dialogue on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, they say, is incomplete without acknowledging the Rashomon Effect, a term used in film, science and law dealing with themes of fractured truths, subjective

realities and unreliable sources, which arguably characterize the postmodern world.

The researchers also say that the overemphasis on ethnicity can be stigmatizing. "It is worth considering the ways in which certain psychographics such as interests, attitudes and lifestyles might also contribute to [vaccine hesitancy](#) and skepticism among South Asian communities," added Dr. Chandok.

More information: A qualitative study of factors influencing COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among South Asians in London, *JRSM Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1177/20542704221123430](https://doi.org/10.1177/20542704221123430)

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