

**Does the trust placed in leaders explain the acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccine?
Perspective on the management of health crises in West Africa**

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Abstract

To address the COVID-19 pandemic, the African governments resorted to COVID-19 vaccines.

However, vaccination campaigns did not achieve the expected success, initially due to vaccine

availability issues and subsequently due to population reluctance.

The aim of this article is to determine the impact of the trust that populations in West African countries place in their leaders or institutions in general, on their reluctance to get vaccinated against COVID-19. We utilized data from the 8th wave of the Afrobarometer survey

conducted

in African countries. The method of generalized ordered logit models more precisely the partial

proportional odds model was used to test the effect of population trust on their willingness to get vaccinated.

The results showed that trust in governments has a significant impact on the population's willingness to get vaccinated against COVID-19 in the studied countries. This effect increases as the level of trust increases. Post-secondary education, religion, access to information about COVID-19, and residential environment also have a significant effect on the population's willingness to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The trust of populations in their leaders or institutions, in general, constitutes one of the priority areas on which African leaders must work

to improve their management of future health crises.