

EDITORIAL

VACCINATION IN PAKISTAN: A CORNERSTONE OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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In the twenty-first century, the world has become a global village due to simple access and unimaginable travel capabilities. But the drawback of this has now surfaced, as wave after wave of the corona virus has wreaked havoc. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic- industries, healthcare facilities, big companies, airlines, etc., have suffered greatly. All throughout the world, governments urged for drastic measures to stop the spread, such as total lockdowns of thriving megacities. However, this kind of approach is not long-term viable. In addition to being a practical and cost-effective approach, vaccination may also help to prevent the spread of viruses.¹

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic was caused by the new severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which spread around the world in less than six months and carried a high death rate among the elderly and those with related comorbidities. The global economy has been badly impacted by the outbreak. Other than lockdowns, the other control methods have been a number of restrictive and ineffective mitigation techniques like mask wearing, self-distancing, travel limitations, and avoiding crowds.² Infectious illnesses have been avoided in large numbers throughout the last century, mostly because to vaccinations. Diseases including diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella, and pertussis that may be prevented by vaccination are now mostly under

control. However, the road to eradicate these infectious illnesses is paved with obstacles, therefore maintaining a high level of vaccine coverage is crucial to preventing resurgences.³ An “infodemic,” which is defined as the dissemination of inaccurate, deceptive, or biased information about vaccinations, happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this situation, disseminating factual and evidence-based information is crucial to achieving widespread community acceptance and comprehension of vaccinations.⁴ As a vital component of public health, vaccinations protect communities from dangerous illnesses and save lives. The difficulties caused by vaccination hesitancy, which were particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlight the need for an all-encompassing strategy. The inability to effectively immunize Pakistan’s population has affected the nation’s child mortality rate and is a crucial subject of study for the advancement of paediatric healthcare. Fifteen percent of Pakistan’s population is under five years old. Regretfully, 50% of the nation’s death rate is attributed to this group. In contrast, the global average for mortality among children under five is around 8% of total mortality. To combat false information and promote trust, community involvement, education, and clear communication are crucial. Healthcare practitioners are essential in encouraging vaccination uptake via continuous training and candid communication, while legislation and policy are crucial in guaranteeing fair

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access to vaccines. Technology may help counteract disinformation and improve communication efforts, while research and innovation are crucial in tackling reluctance, particularly among vulnerable populations. We can clear the path for a robust future based on immunization and community resilience by working together and remaining steadfast.⁵

There are still several basic problems in Pakistan that prevent the development of immunization programs. Like, the healthcare infrastructure’s constraints

are the source of some of these issues. From the standpoint of global health players, Pakistan is at a disadvantage because of its poor pace of objective achievement. Nevertheless, it is the duty of both international health players and the Pakistani government to resolve this by tackling the issues raised that are impeding the execution of vaccination campaigns.⁶

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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All the authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.



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