

# You are less likely to get vaccinated if you're religious, conservative, or don't have a degree, finds new research

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You are less likely to accept the COVID-19 vaccine if you don't have a university degree, are more politically conservative, or more religious, finds new research from BI Norwegian Business School (<https://www.bi.edu/>).

There is a general agreement that vaccines are our best weapons against COVID-19, yet not everyone seems willing to take them. Therefore, it is of key importance to understand how to encourage vaccine acceptance.

Adjunct Professor and renowned psychologist Adrian Furnham, alongside PhD candidate Jon Magnus Frostad Haakonsen, examined the characteristics of individuals unwilling to get vaccinated against COVID-19. They collected demographic data and information on political orientation and religiosity from participants, 93% of whom were British nationals, as well as examined the extent to which they endorsed conspiracy theories.

Participants were then asked "have you had the vaccine or intend to have it if it is offered?"

While sex and age did not relate to whether an individual accepted the vaccine or not, those who were more religious, politically conservative, or without a degree were less likely to accept a vaccine. Those who believe more in conspiracy theories were also less likely to get vaccinated.

With millions affected by the economic consequences, restrictions, and lockdowns, vaccines raise hope of an end to the pandemic. However, to be efficient in suppressing the virus, a substantial proportion of the population need to be vaccinated.

Professor Furnham says,

"In order to stop the pandemic, health authorities need to identify people who are hesitant to taking the vaccine. This study can improve the ability to identify groups that are sceptical and better understand the psychological mechanisms underlying vaccine resistance and hesitancy. Health authorities can then better understand how to communicate efficiently with these people in order to influence their attitude towards, and inclination to take, the vaccine."

As the study underlined that political and religious beliefs play a major part in vaccine acceptance, health authorities should influence religious and political leaders to encourage vaccination, even using religious sites as places to deliver vaccines. It could also be valuable to target conspiracy theory groups due to the relationship between vaccine hesitancy and conspiracy theories.

This research has been submitted to a peer-reviewed journal and is yet to be published.

For more information, a copy of the research, or to speak with Professor Furnham, please contact Kyle Grizzell from BlueSky Education at [kyle@bluesky-pr.com](mailto:kyle@bluesky-pr.com)