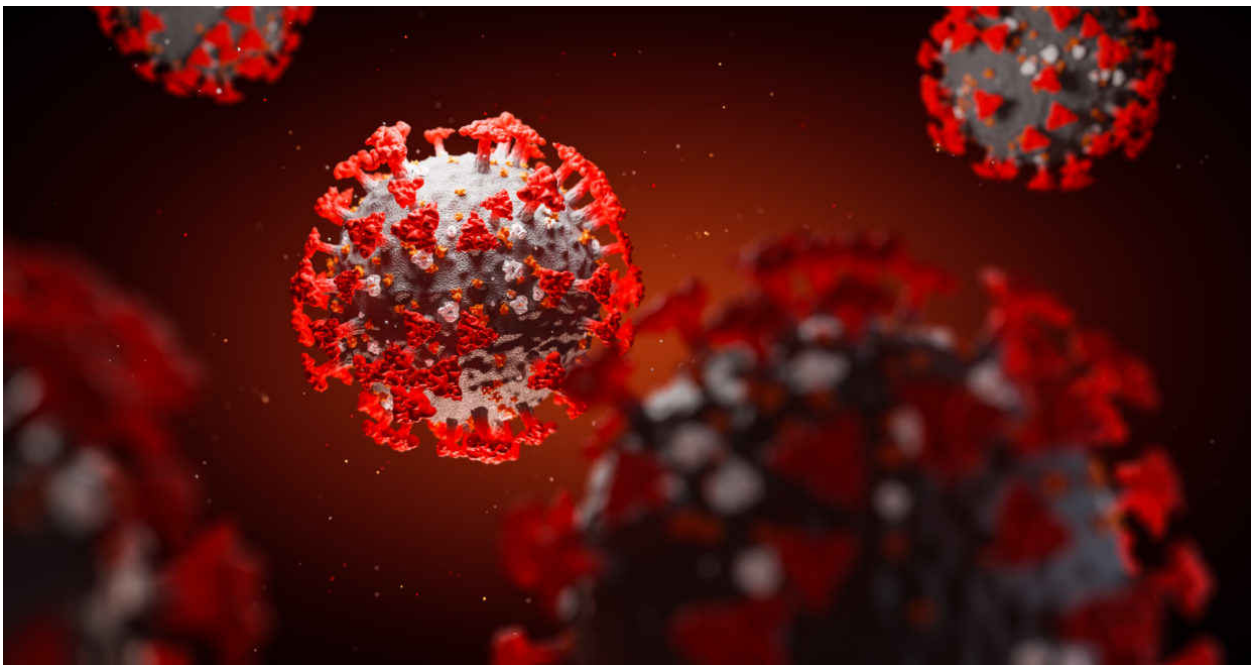
# COVID-19 KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES & BELIEFS, STUDY REPORT



Group 8: Debra Oyedeji, Curie Park & Ruijun Lei

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## Objective

The purpose of this study was to analyze the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of a sample population of adults from the United States and Canada regarding COVID-19, its vaccine, and the participants' perspectives surrounding public health recommendations. Despite the declining threat of COVID-19, new variants, such as JN.1, continue to emerge, underscoring the ongoing significance of this disease.[1] As we continue to learn more about the etiology and transmission of COVID-19, it is important that we also continue to assess the general public's awareness of and attitudes towards the disease. The insights we gain in doing so will be invaluable in our collective efforts to combat this disease.

## Methods

This study was conducted by three New York University students using a quantitative approach. From February 29, 2024 to March 3, 2024, each team member used the "anonymous link" option via the online platform Qualtrics to distribute the survey to a total of 51 potential participants. 30 participants completed the survey, resulting in a 58.82% response rate. The types of questions asked varied from yes/no to select all that apply to Likert scale questions. The questions touched on personal COVID-19 morbidity and mortality statistics, adherence to sanitary measures, perceived levels of preparedness, as well as demographic characteristics such as age, race, and gender. Using the data collected, tables - which can be found in the Appendix- were created and categorized by question type. For each table, the frequency and percentage of respondents for each corresponding variable were calculated.

## Results

The study was conducted from February 29, 2024, to March 3, 2024. A sample of 30 participants completed 20 survey questions. The majority, (56.67%), of the sample were between the ages of 25 and 34 (Table 1). Over three quarters (77%) of the sample were non-Hispanic or Latino, with the three racial groups of highest prevalence being Black or African American, Asian, and White. Seventy percent (n=21) respondents were women, and 77% (n= 23) of participants held a bachelor's degree. Lastly, the top three most commonly reported residences included New Jersey, New York, and California.

When exploring the key survey results, 19 individuals, (63.33%), were diagnosed with COVID-19 among the sample surveyed (Table 2). Among these 19, (42%) or eight individuals were diagnosed twice. A majority did not know anyone hospitalized due to COVID-19, nor did they personally know anyone who had died from the virus. When asked what preventative measures were taken before vaccinations, there was a roughly an even distribution across the response choices. 96.67% of the sample was vaccinated. Currently, 56.67% reported being somewhat concerned about getting infected with COVID-19, and the majority still see COVID-19 as the communicable disease with the most significant threat. A majority stated their compliance with public health recommendations was average or excellent and that they continue to practice a variety of recommendations to protect from infection. 34.72% of the sample selected the CDC as the most trusted source for information. Lastly, 46.67% noted they were not confident that the US government was prepared for another pandemic, while the other 43.33% said they were somewhat confident.

## Discussion

The study demonstrated a significant public concern about COVID-19 and future pandemics. Despite the high vaccination rates, many are still somewhat worried about the infection and do not have confidence in the government’s ability to deal with a future crisis. These results show why it's important to keep up public health efforts to fight COVID-19, focusing on clear communication and planning. People have mixed feelings about how the government is handling it, showing a great need for clearer and more effective health actions to keep people's trust and encourage adoption of health guidelines. Considering that some time has passed since the emergence of COVID-19, it is important to acknowledge the potential recall bias for self-reported data. Enhancing public health initiatives based on extensive and reliable data is important to address issues for future pandemic preparedness.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, despite widespread vaccination, concerns about COVID-19 and future pandemics persist. This emphasizes the importance of ongoing public health efforts, particularly in improving communication and trust in governmental responses to health crises. The findings suggest the necessity for continued vigilance and strategic planning in pandemic preparedness, informed by data and public sentiment.

## Appendix:

| Table 1. Demographics | n = 30 | |
|---|---|---|
| | % | # of Responses |
| **Age** | | |
| Under 18 | 0% | 0 |
| 18-24 | 30% | 9 |
| 25-34 | 56.67% | 17 |
| 35-44 | 0% | 0 |
| 45-54 | 3.33% | 1 |
| 55-64 | 6.67% | 2 |
| 65-74 | 3.33 | 1 |
| 75 years or older | 0% | 0 |
| **Ethnicity** | | |
| Hispanic or Latino | 13% | 4 |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 77% | 23 |
| Prefer not to answer | 10% | 3 |
| **Race*** | | |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 6% | 2 |
| Asian | 30% | 10 |
| Black or African American | 39% | 13 |
| Native Hawaiian or Another Pacific Islander | 0% | 0 |
| White | 18% | 6 |
| Prefer not to answer | 6% | 2 |
| **Gender Identity** | | |
| Man | 27% | 8 |
| Woman | 70% | 21 |
| Non-Binary | 3% | 1 |
| Other | 0% | 0 |
| Prefer not to answer | 0% | 0 |
| **Highest education level** | | |
| Less than High School Diploma or GED | 3% | 1 |
| High School Diploma or GED | 3% | 1 |
| Associate's Degree | 0% | 0 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 77% | 23 |
| Master's Degree | 10% | 3 |
| Doctoral Degree or Equivalent (e.g., JD, DO, PhD) | 7% | 2 |
| Prefer not to answer | 0% | 0 |
| **Place of Residence** | | |
| New Jersey | 23.33% | 7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| New York | 20% | 6 |
| California | 16.66% | 5 |
| Pennslyvania | 13.33% | 4 |
| Texas | 10% | 3 |
| Maryland | 6.66% | 2 |
| Somehwere in US* | 6.66% | 2 |
| Canada | 3.33% | 1 |

* Out of 33 responses, question was a select all that apply

* Marked as N/A on survey

**Table 2: Key Survey Results of COVID-19 Qualtrics Survey Conducted in 2024**

| Survey Questions | Total N (%) |
|---|---|
| **Q1 - Have you ever been diagnosed, either by a health professional or home testing kit, with COVID-19?** | |
| Yes | 19(63.33) |
| No | 11(36.67) |
| **Q2 - How many times did you have a known infection with COVID-19?** | |
| 1 time | 7(36.84) |
| 2 times | 8(42.11) |
| 3 times | 4(21.05) |
| **Q3 - Do you personally know anyone who was hospitalized due to infection with COVID-19?** | |
| Yes | 13(43.33) |
| No | 16(53.33) |
| Don’t remember | 1(3.33) |
| **Q4 - Do you personally know anyone who died from COVID-19?** | |
| Yes | 10(33.33) |
| No | 20(66.67) |
| Don’t remember | 0 |
| **Q5 - Before the COVID-19 vaccine was available in the U.S., what public health recommendations did you follow to protect yourself from infection? (Please select all that apply) - Selected Choice** | |
| Distanced from others | 24(22.86) |
| Washed hands/used hand sanitizer after making physical contact | 28(26.67) |
| Wore face masks/coverings | 25(23.81) |
| Avoided crowds | 26(24.76) |
| Other | 2(1.90) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Q6 - Have you been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?** | |
| Yes | 29(96.67) |
| No | 1(3.33) |
| Don't remember/Decline to answer | 0 |
| **Q7 - At this time, how concerned are you about getting infected with COVID-19?** | |
| Not at all concerned | 7(23.33) |
| Somewhat concerned | 17(56.67) |
| Concerned | 5(16.67) |
| Moderately concerned | 1(3.33) |
| Extremely concerned | 0 |
| **Q9 - How would you rate your overall compliance with public health recommendations to limit the spread of COVID-19?** | |
| Excellent | 9(30.00) |
| Above Average | 5(16.67) |
| Average | 14(46.67) |
| Below Average | 2(6.67) |
| **Q10 - As the threat of COVID-19 decreases, what public health recommendations do you continue to follow to protect yourself from infection? (Please select all that apply) - Selected Choice** | |
| Distanced from others | 9(10.98) |
| Washed hands/used hand sanitizer after making physical contact | 27(23.92) |
| Wore face masks/coverings | 15(18.29) |
| Avoided crowds | 11(13.41) |
| Other | 0 |
| Receive vaccine boosters | 20(24.39) |
| **Q11 - Which of the following communicable diseases do you currently view as the biggest threat to your health in 2024? - Selected Choice** | |
| COVID-19 | 11(36.67) |
| Ebola | 3(10.00) |
| Measles | 1(3.33) |
| Seasonal Influenza (Flu) | 9(30.00) |
| I do not feel threatened by any of these diseases | 6(20.00) |
| Other | 0 |
| RSV | 0 |
| **Q12 - Who are your most trusted sources for public health information? (Please select all that apply)** | |
| My healthcare provider | 19(26.39) |
| Friends & family | 5(6.94) |
| The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) | 25(34.72) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Local Public Health Department | 12(16.67) |
| Personal social media and/or knowledge research (e.g., Google) | 11(15.28) |
| **Q13 - How confident are you that the U.S. government is currently prepared for another pandemic?** | |
| Not at all confident | 14(46.67) |
| Somewhat confident | 13(43.33) |
| Confident | 2(6.67) |
| Very confident | 1(3.33) |
| Extremely confident | 0 |

## References

1. Katella K. 3 things to know about JN.1, the new coronavirus strain. Yale Medicine. Published January 31, 2024. https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/jn1-coronavirus-variant-covid