Purpose

Framing Risk and Shaping Trust

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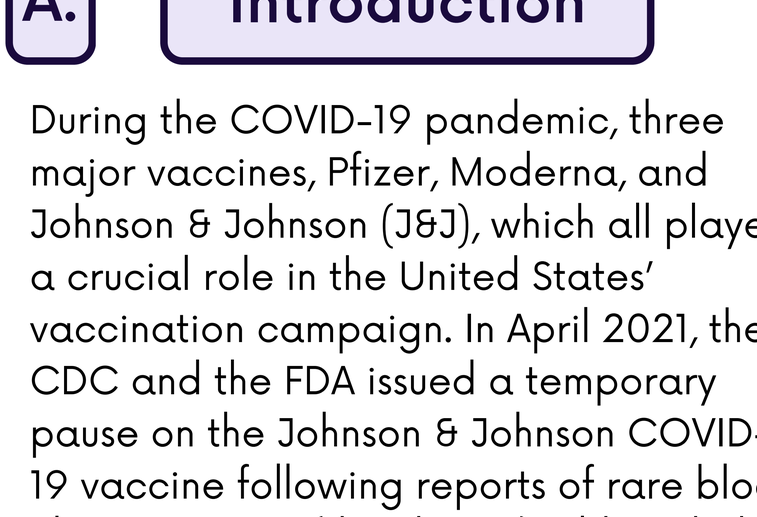
RESEARCH QUESTION: How did the CDC and FDA's communication during the Johnson & Johnson vaccine pause impact public trust and vaccine confidence?

A. Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, three major vaccines, Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson (J&J), which all played a crucial role in the United States' vaccination campaign. In April 2021, the CDC and the FDA issued a temporary pause on the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine following reports of rare blood clotting events (thombrosis). Although the pause lasted only ten days, it seems to have had a notable impact on public trust and overall vaccine confidence.



Data collected from KFF Covid-19 Vaccine Monitor [1]

B. Methodology

We understand that there are a lot of nuances that impacted peoples perceptions towards covid -19 vaccines. So, we began by analyzing general public sentiment toward the CDC and FDA and then went on to pause-specific reactions to the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine announcement.

We anlayzed both primary and secondary sources from the event from, gathering information on perceptions before, during, and after the vaccine announcements.

D. Our Analysis of Their Communciations

The Actual Announcements

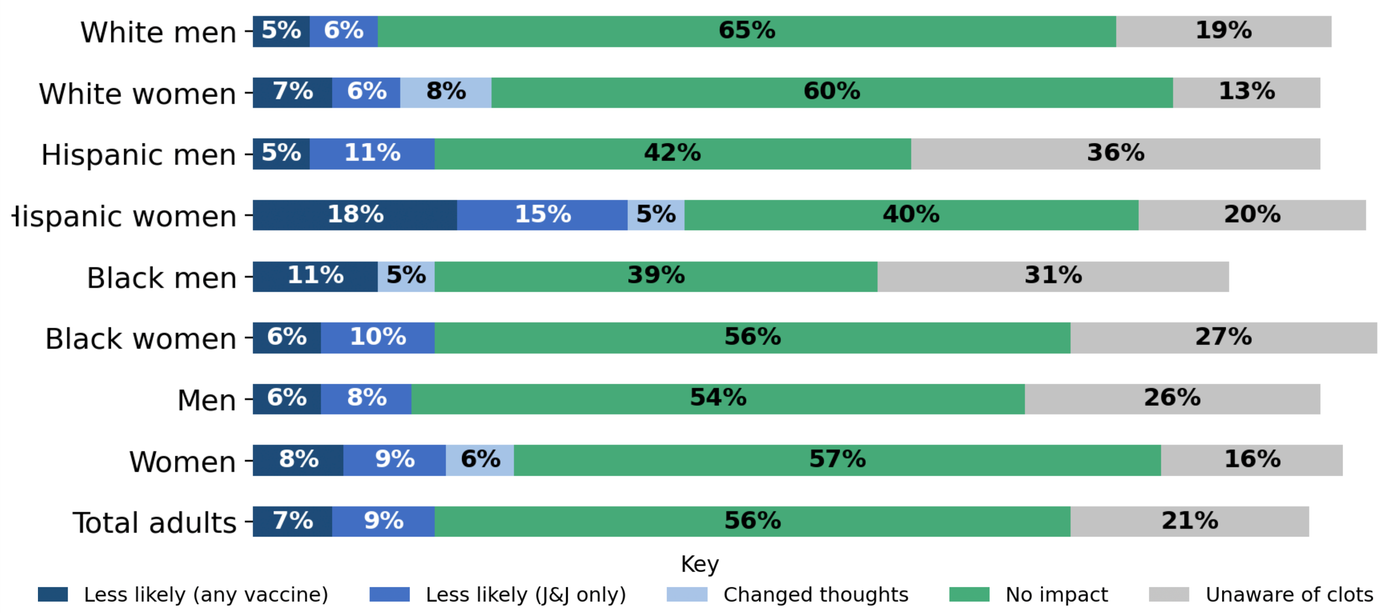
Initial Announcement Key Details: [2]

- "more than 6.8 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine have been administered in the U.S...reviewing data involving six reported U.S. cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot...occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48"
- "...recommending a pause in the use of this vaccine out of an abundance of caution"
- "Right now, these adverse events appear to be extremely rare."

Announcement After Ban Got Lifted: [3]

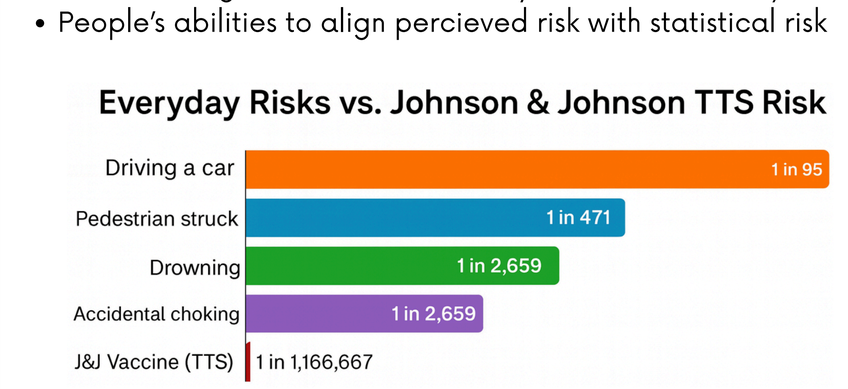
- The FDA has determined that the available data show that the vaccine's known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risk
- We are confident that this vaccine continues to meet our standards for safety, effectiveness and quality.

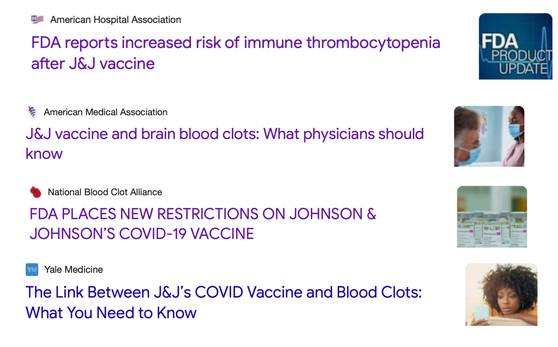
Before,During, and After J&J Vaccine Ban [1]



Other Considerations

- News Headlines exacerbate risk
- Fewer than four in ten adults report having a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the National Institutes of Health (37%), the Food and Drug Administration (37%), the National Academy of Medicine (34%)
- Those not trusting CDC were far more likely to lose willingness to vaccinate (63.8% vs. 22.4%)
- Those trusting CDC were more likely to switch to Pfizer/Moderna instead (44.4% vs. 12.7%)
- People's abilities to align percieved risk with statistical risk





F. Conclusion

The CDC and FDA's communication during the Johnson & Johnson vaccine pause wasn't necessarily a failure in thier ability to technically communicate. By being transparent and responsive, the agencies demonstrated accountability and a commitment to public safety. However, this communication unfolded amid an ongoing infodemic, an environment saturated with misinformation, amplifying public fears and skepticism. While some groups remained more hesitant than others, much of this hesitancy stemmed from broader issues of trust and information access rather than the pause itself. Overall, to combat this we reccomend heightened focus on proactively combating misinformation as essential for maintaining public trust in health agencies during times of crisis.

References