



# COVID-19 vaccine behaviour among citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario: A qualitative study

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## BACKGROUND:

- Vaccine behavior is complex, context-specific, and exists on a spectrum (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>
- From work done with Indigenous Nations in Canada and the United States, cultural influences, sovereignty, self-determination and an understanding of culture and history were key to addressing vaccine hesitancy and reducing the impact of COVID-19.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>
- A survey conducted early in the COVID-19 pandemic found that Métis respondents were less willing to accept a COVID-19 vaccine than other populations.<sup>6</sup>
- There continues to be a gap for Métis-specific vaccine behaviour research.

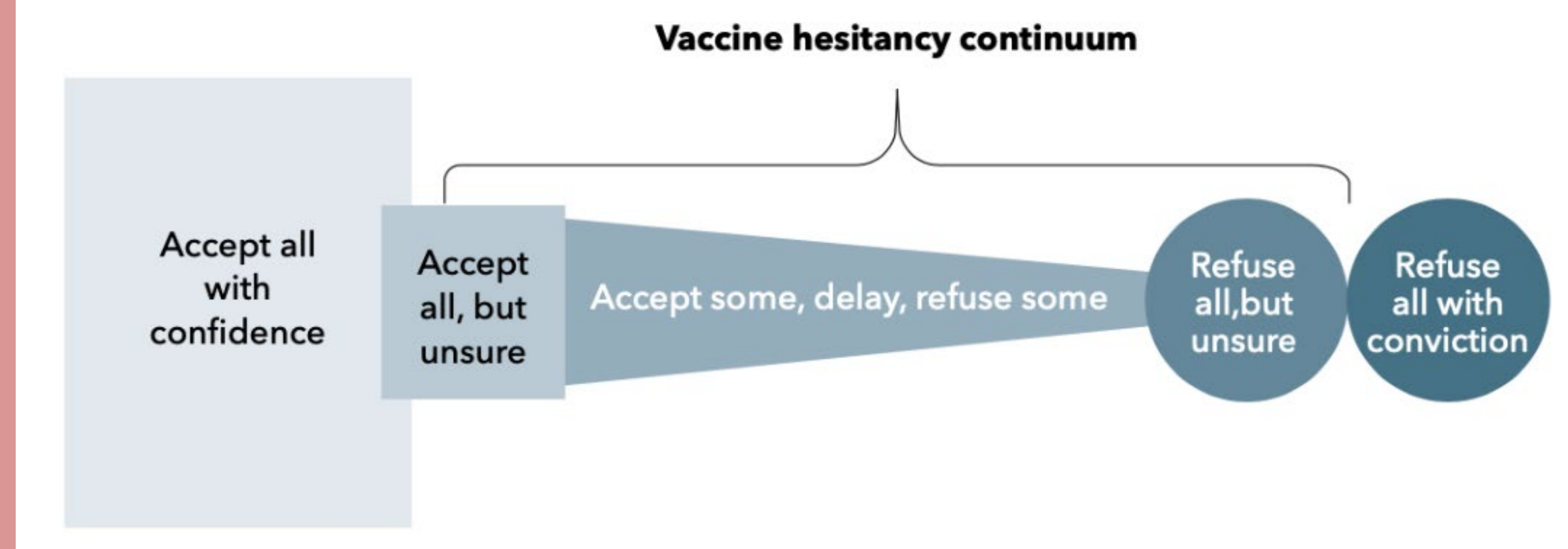
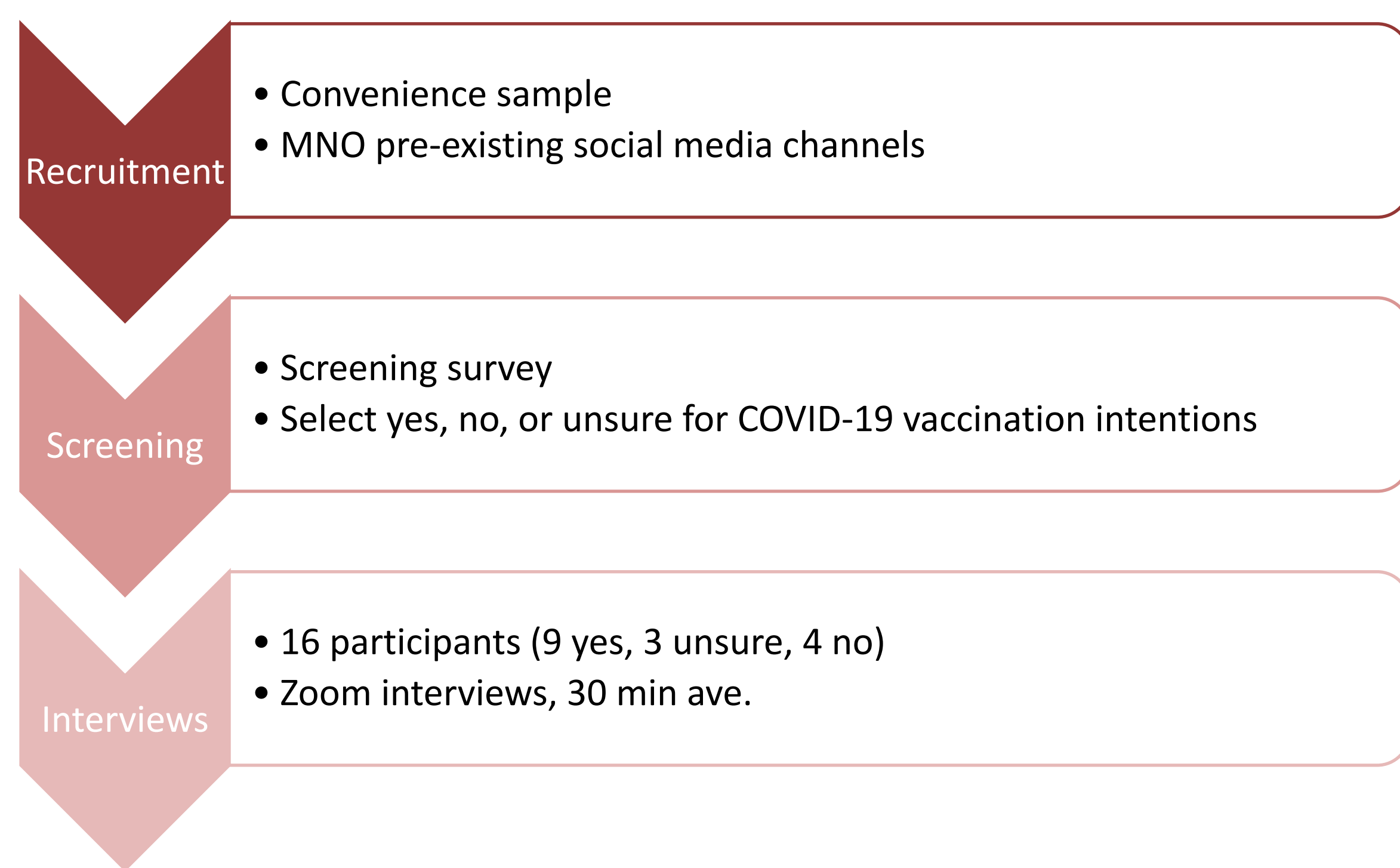


Figure 1: Vaccine hesitancy spectrum adapted from MacDonald and the SAGE Working Group on Vaccine Hesitancy (2015)

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

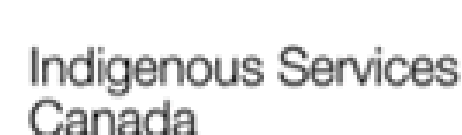
The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in collaboration with ICES (formerly the Institute for Clinical and Evaluative Sciences) sought to understand the thoughts, opinions, and feelings of MNO citizens toward the COVID-19 vaccines and the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, which included the prioritization of Métis people to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

## METHODS:



## ANALYSIS:

- Deductive analysis using a Social Ecological Model (SEM) for vaccine behaviour adapted from Driedger et al. (2015) viewed through a Métis health lens.<sup>7</sup> COVID-19 public health measures added as a factor to the framework.
- Coding was done independently and then compared by two coders who are also Métis citizens using NVivo 12.<sup>8</sup>
- Power of information was used to determine what results to report.



## CONTEXT:

- The Métis are a distinct Indigenous Nation whose citizens are descendants of mixed First Nations and European heritage that formed communities with a distinct language and culture with links to the fur trade and various resistances.
- The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) holds the only recognized registry for Métis in Ontario. The MNO provides many social, justice, and education programs for its citizens and conducts research on their behalf.
- MNO citizens were interviewed during the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, during a province-wide stay-at-home order, which was followed by Ontario declaring a third state of emergency. This period was also within the first 6 months of COVID-19 vaccine roll-out.

Table 1: Social Ecological Model (SEM) of vaccine behaviour

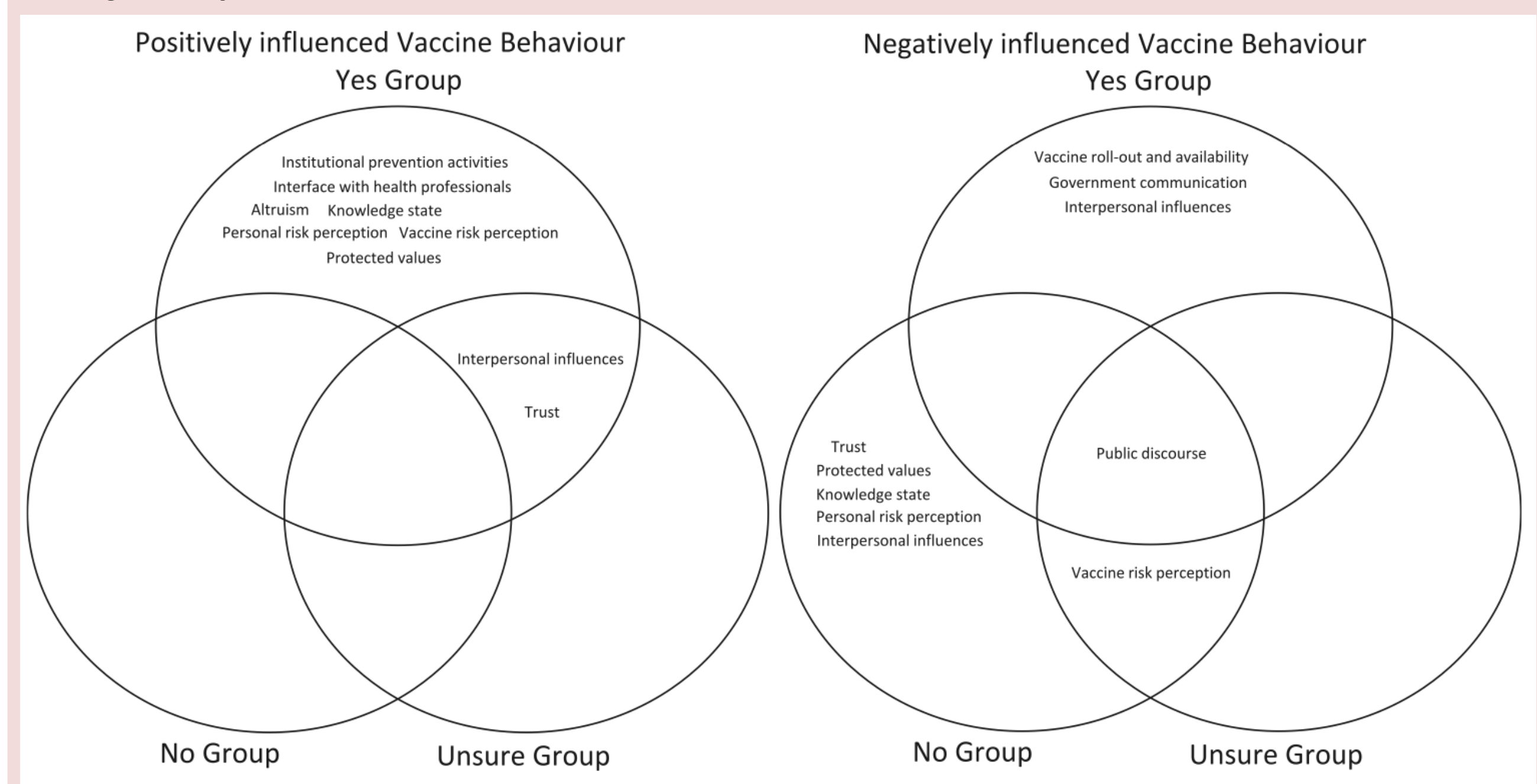
Categories	Factors
System and institutional level factors	Vaccine roll-out and availability, Government communication, Institutional prevention activities, Organization of the public into priority groups, COVID-19 public health measures
Social context factors	Public discourse, "Bandwagoning"
Interpersonal level	Interpersonal influences, Interface with health professionals
Intrapersonal factors	Habitual behaviour, Altruism, "Free-loading", Vaccine risk perception, Personal risk perception, Knowledge state, Trust, Protected values, Past experiences, Perceived alternatives

\*modified from Driedger et al. (2015)<sup>7</sup>

## RESULTS:

- The factors with the greatest number of references coded are Vaccine roll-out and availability, Organization of the public into priority groups, Public discourse, Interpersonal influences, Interface with health professionals, Knowledge state, Trust, and Vaccine risk perception.
- Bandwagoning and Freeloading were not discussed.
- A couple 'no' and 'unsure' participants had received a COVID-19 vaccination or booked an appointment for one before their interview with us.
- Concerns regarding the historic and contemporary oppression of Indigenous people by the Canadian government were brought up by all groups but was typically not a deciding factor to decline a COVID-19 vaccine.<sup>5</sup>
- Our sample was predominantly MNO citizens wanted a COVID-19 vaccine.

Figure 2: Venn diagram showing the intersections of factors that positively and negatively influenced vaccine behaviour



## CONCLUSION:

- MNO citizens' COVID-19 vaccine behaviour was influenced both negatively and positively by a number of factors.
- The thoughts, feelings, and opinions shared by citizens we interviewed will inform the MNO and public health units to better tailor their COVID-19 messaging to increase uptake and inform future pandemic responses.
- We thank the MNO citizen, MNO leadership, and Senators, as well as our collaborators for making this study possible.

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