

COVID-19 is a deadly infectious disease and a new strain of the corona virus. The outbreak originated from a food market in Wuhan, China. The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets which are too heavy to hang in the air quickly fall on floors or surfaces. One can be infected by breathing in the virus if they are within close proximity of someone who has COVID-19 even though they are asymptomatic, or by touching a contaminated surface and then your eyes, nose or mouth. The main symptoms of the disease are fever, dry cough and weakness (WHO). The arrival of COVID-19 in December of 2019 was not of great concern to most people around the world and especially in Africa. This lack of concern gave room for laxity and led to the eventual uncontrolled spread of the virus across Asia, Europe, the Americas and finally Africa.

On the 18th of March, 2020, the government ordered a suspension of public gatherings and on the 20th of that month enforced a lock down on all schools and businesses in the country. A day later, On a Saturday, the 21 st day of March 2020, Uganda recorded her first case of COVID-19. (Uganda MoH) this led to an immediate lockdown of all international borders in the country to reduce the spread of the disease. Despite those measures, the virus spread slowly at first; slower than most neighboring countries, but has rapidly increased in its transmission and hospitalization rates. This study will highlight one of the many reasons for the continuous spread of the virus as it targets the marketplace which is a lifeline to many during the lock downs that have been enforced and is easily accessed by most Ugandans. Market stalls all over Uganda have little to no social distancing and are hard to regulate because of their general design and arrangement leading to them serving as a possible hotspot for the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in Uganda. Due to the frequent interaction between market vendors and most people living in the country, it is important to understand the knowledge, attitudes and practices of both market vendors and their customers in regards to COVID-19 and reducing its spread. According to the world health organization and Uganda's ministry of health, there have been (at the time of writing) 84,116 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1,966 deaths caused by COVID-19 in Uganda. This number increases every day. Market vendors hold an important position in the fight against COVID-19, because most people living in Uganda would at some point go to the market to purchase items of need. It is therefore necessary to understand the attitudes and practices these vendors and their customers have towards COVID-19 and its prevention because, if they do not adequately adhere to all the guidelines regarding preventing its spread, there is a risk that they would act as a major source in spreading the virus to their customers.

This study therefore assesses the knowledge, practices and attitudes amongst market vendors and how it affects their adherence to the standard operating procedures provided by the government