

## **Of vaccines, biopower, subjects and governmentality: an ethnographic enquiry into the Zimbabwean Covid-19 vaccination drive**

Talent Moyo

### **Abstract**

The article highlights the politics of the Covid-19 vaccination drive in Zimbabwe. It interrogates questions of individual agency and institutional power in the administration of the vaccine. It is framed within Foucauldian scholarship, particularly that concerning the role of biopower, subjects and governmentality in the politics of vaccination. The article uses virtual ethnography to understand the politics of vaccination and contends that the vaccination drive highlights how power is played out within the Zimbabwean context. Individuals perceive their agency as constrained through explicit and implicit coercion, since vaccination is exercised through a form of governmentality that uses biopower. The article argues that the vaccination initiative presents a new form of governmentality that is premised on policing individual agency by other individuals as opposed to the dominant notions of governmentality that are shaped by political institutions.

**Keywords:** biopower, Covid-19, governmentality, vaccination, virtual ethnography