

Mothers' Perception of the Child Vaccine Communication Practice: The Case of Amhara Region of Ethiopia

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Abstract : Childhood vaccination communication is an important strategy to promote child immunization. This study was conducted with the objective of examining mothers'/caregivers' perceptions of the child vaccine communication practice in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia. The researchers employed a quantitative research design to achieve the objective. A pretested questionnaire was used to collect the required data. The quantitative method was used to analyze the data. To this end, the result of the one-sample t-test revealed that mothers/caregivers perceive that child vaccine communication is irrelevant, indicated by the average mean of $13.11 < 15$ of the expected mean. The finding also indicated that interpersonal health communication principles were not applied, which is indicated by the average mean of $16.82 < 18$ of the ideal mean. The independent sample t-test underscored that knowledge about vaccines has an impact on the perceived relevance of child vaccine communication (Yes: $M=16.55$ $SD=6.323$; No: $M=9.24$, $SD=4.087$) ($F=97.150$ $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$), and the implementation of interpersonal health communication principals ($M=18.65$, $SD=5.517$; No: ($M=9.81$, $SD=4.491$) ($F=11.015$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). The analysis of variance showed that mothers /caregivers' education level has an impact on the perceived relevance of child vaccine communication ($F=3.844$ $p=0.004$, $p<0.05$) and to the implementation of interpersonal health communication principles ($F=6.334$ $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Besides, the post-hoc test showed that the respondents' in the "Other" education level category have a positive perception to the relevance of child vaccine communication ($M=4.2$ $p=0.006$, $p<0.05$) and to the implementation of interpersonal health communication principles ($M=3.5$ $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). The correlation analysis shows that education level has a positive correlation with the perceived relevance of child vaccine communication ($r=0.198$, $p=0.00$, $P<0.01$) and with the perceived implementation of interpersonal health communication principles ($r=0.250$, $p=0.000$ $p<0.01$). Furthermore, one-to-one, one-to-group, and door-to-door communication were the most preferred strategies used to communicate about child vaccines. What is more, health workers were the most trusted sources of child vaccine information. In conclusion, the study highlighted that mothers/caregivers did not have a positive view of the child vaccine communication. Hence, efforts have to be made to improve mothers'/caregivers' knowledge about child vaccines. Besides, the education level of mothers/caregivers should be taken into consideration during the implementation of child vaccine communication interventions.

Keywords : mothers'/caregivers' perception, child vaccine communication, preferred communication strategies, trusted sources

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