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The factors associated with vaccine hesitancy in children

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Introduction

Vaccination supports many health and economic benefits to both individuals and society. Needless to mention, that public support for immunization programs are generally high in Saudi Arabia. However, the benefits of vaccines are often not fully treasured when public discussions on vaccine safety, quality or efficacy emerge, and the extent of misinformation through the internet and other media has the ability to weaken immunization programs. Vaccine hesitancy is a concept frequently used in the discourse around vaccine acceptance it is defined as late vaccine acceptance or total refusal regardless of vaccine availability.

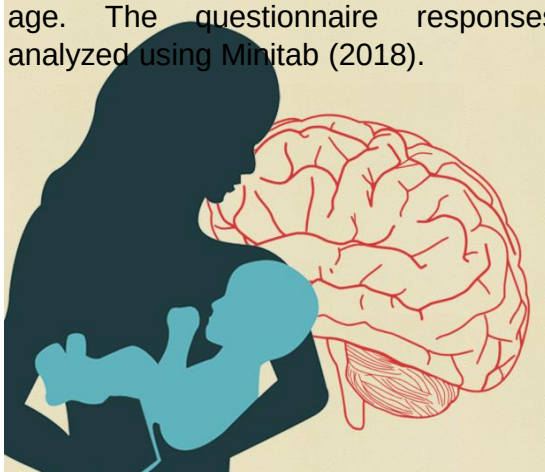
Objective

This study aims to contribute to the ongoing reflections of factors associated with vaccine hesitancy by providing results of the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs conducted among parents.

- Receive feedback regarding parent's knowledge of vaccines safety and effectiveness.
- Analyze relevant factors relating to vaccine hesitancy.
- Evaluate Immunization Rates of children in Saudi Arabia.

Methodology

Data were collected in 2017 through a computer-survey administered to a sample of parents of children aged between 2 months and 17 years of age. The questionnaire responses were analyzed using Minitab (2018).



Result

The majority of the parents (68.7%) reported that their child had received all doses of recommended vaccines and (31.3%) of parents indicated having hesitated to have their child vaccinated (Figure 1). The lack of vaccines in the primary care centers, the fear of adverse events and safety of the vaccines were the most frequent reasons mentioned by these vaccine-hesitant parents. In addition to some parents who believe that vaccines become a business and a profit rather than for the children safety. Other parents were complaining about the increasingly 'crowded' vaccination schedules. A minority of parents doesn't believe in the importance of vaccines to prevent the spreading of diseases in the community (Figure 2).

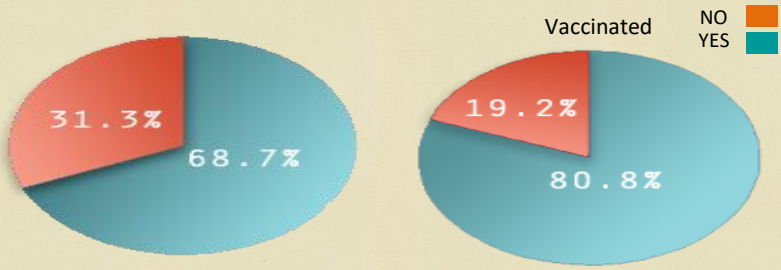


Figure 1: Pie-Chart reflecting the percentage of vaccinated and unvaccinated children. n= 292 children

Figure 2: Pie-Chart reflecting the percentage reflecting parents believes towards vaccination. n= 100 parents

It was found that a high percent of parents (59.6 %) do not have enough information about adverse events that might follow vaccination (Figure 3) a reason that may drive their hesitancy towards child vaccination.

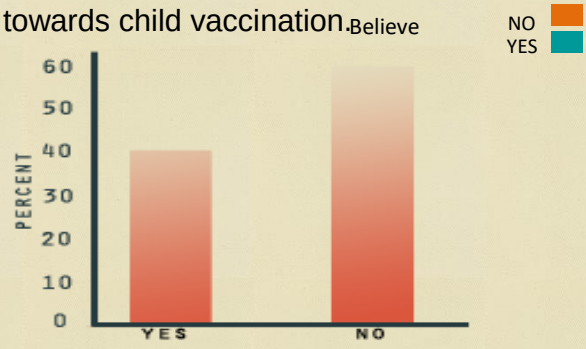


Figure 3: Percentage of parent's knowledge towards vaccination adverse effects. Yes, refers to having the knowledge; No, refers to not knowing. n= 100 parents

Conclusion

Vaccine hesitancy is a common problem in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. Further researches will be needed to better understand when, how and why these beliefs are formed in