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Knowledge and Awareness of Parents Towards Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and HPV Vaccines, and Vaccine Acceptability in Northern Cyprus

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The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is one of the most cost-effective public health measures for preventing cervical cancer and other HPV related diseases. However, the vaccine uptake in many countries remains suboptimal. This cross-sectional study aimed to assess the knowledge and awareness of parents towards HPV, related diseases, and HPV vaccines, as well as to examine the effect of brief educational information on parents' vaccine acceptability. We used a structured interviewer-administered questionnaire to collect information from 227 outpatient visitors to a healthcare center who had children under the age of 19 years. We asked parents again about their acceptance of HPV vaccines after being provided brief educational information. Of all the parents, 43% were aware of HPV and related diseases, and 59% of those had sufficient knowledge regarding HPV while 45% of them reported that they were aware of HPV vaccines. Being Northern Cypriot was a predictor of having good knowledge, whilst being a female, having a higher education level, being 35 years or older, and being employed were the significant predictors of having greater awareness of HPV and related diseases. The HPV vaccine acceptance of the parents increased substantially in all sociodemographic groups after the provision of the educational information. The findings demonstrated that the vaccination rates of children of parents who have insufficient knowledge and awareness of HPV and vaccines are also very low. Effective educational interventions based on the specific sociodemographic characteristics of the patients should be given a stronger focus to improve vaccine acceptability among this population.

Biography

Dr. Gulifeiya is a medical doctor with more than 15 years of research and teaching experience in the areas of public health. She has worked in various national and international institutions in several countries including China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Turkey. Her main teaching and research interests are in the areas of women's and child health, adolescents' sexual and reproductive health, family planning and contraceptive methods, epidemiology, and evidence-based medicine. She is currently working as an associate professor in public health department at Near East University.

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