

Introduction:

According to the Kenya national immunization schedule survey (2012), it was estimated that children whose mothers are visually impaired were 3.02 times more likely not to be fully immunized compared to children whose mothers are non-visually impaired. In Kibwezi division, more than 85% of visually impaired mothers with children below the age of five had not fully immunized their children compared to 38% of non-visual impaired mothers. This study was carried out to investigate the determinants of immunization uptake among children below 5 years of visually and non-visually impaired mothers in Kibwezi division, Makueni County.

Research objectives:

The study contained three major specific objectives; to establish maternally related socio- demographic factors that influence immunization uptake, to examine health system factors that determine immunization uptake among children below five years and to identify community factors that influence immunization uptake among children below five years.

Methodology:

A case control study design was used in conducting the research and it was both descriptive and analytical. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected using researcher administered interviewing questionnaires and key informant interviews.

The target population was visually and non-visually impaired mothers aged between 15-40 years who had children below 5 years and residents of Kibwezi Division.

Quantitative data was entered and analyzed using SPSS while a content analysis technique was used to analyze the qualitative data. The findings were presented according to the specific study objectives.

Results:

Findings confirmed that, marital status, education, income level, provision of healthcare services, immunization campaign and outreach, distance to health facility, Health workers attitude, community perception and stigma were the major determinants of immunization uptake among children below 5 years of visually and non-visually impaired mothers in Kibwezi division.

Conclusion:

This study concluded that necessary that, local interventions should be strengthened to raising awareness of the community on the importance of immunization uptake. Identifying areas or groups that are disadvantaged on immunization uptake are a prerequisite for the efficient allocation of public health resources, and are important for the success of immunization coverage.

Recommendations:

The study recommends that the Ministry of health should encourage visually impaired mothers to comply fully with immunization uptake through immunization awareness, campaigns, outreach, workshops and seminars on benefits of immunization uptake. On job training to health workers should be done on good rapport or client-friendly environment to mothers with special needs. This will yield positive compliance by visually impaired mothers on immunization uptake. NGOs and CBOs working with people with special needs especially visually impaired should review and reintroduce new interventions to curb the challenges faced by visually impaired mothers.