

Investigation on resources for childhood immunization rates



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Immunization: an Investigation on Resources for Childhood Immunization and Health Professional Immunization Rates

- Zhou Yun Richard Wu
- Website

University of Pittsburgh. (2012). *Childhood Immunization Refusal: The Return of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases* . Retrieved from <http://www.omicsonline.org/2157-7560/2157-7560-3-e115.pdf>

- Journal Article

Koharchik, L. S., Salman, K., Hardy, E., & Mayle-Towns, K. (2012) Influenza immunization status among nursing students. *Journal of Infection Prevention*, 13 (3), 84-87. doi: 10. 1177/1757177412442433

Introduction

Immunization against infectious disease has been one of human's first defenses against pathogens for the past few decades. Measles, mumps, rubella. Vaccinations have saved thousands, if not millions of people from these diseases, and seen the eradication of others, like smallpox, during the 1960's and 70's. Yet with seemingly endless benefits to mankind, in the recent years people have questioned the legitimacy and whether the risks involved with vaccines truly outweigh the benefits. Discussions have risen whether to vaccinate children, whether leaving the natural immune system to fend for itself will lead to an inherently 'stronger' immune system, and whether our own health professionals choose to vaccinate themselves.

I personally find this topic intriguing as I personally chose not to have a vaccine as a child. Raised in a 'let nature take its course' household, and

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having such beliefs like taking the pain, not the painkiller, I chose this topic as I wanted to investigate immunization, learn the true scientific statistics and see how the wider scientific community views what some may call the 21st century wonder [preventative] drug.

Website

Educational Value

The editorial title provides brief expectations on what is to follow. Shimi goes into profuse detail into the subject, and cites highly regarded health organizations for statistics and information to educate her audience. As Shimi explores the consequences of opting against vaccinations, the reader is presented with statistics from three decades ago to the current date. This shows great range of information and informs the reader of many details of how health has changed over time. Each survey, statistic or health information across the US, UK and Canada is supported by respective references to relevant educational institutions or health organizations. The wide range of educational value and the compilation of highly regarded and referenced material gives an impression of a highly credible resource.

As a publically available webpage about vaccines it was important to check on the credibility of the author and editorial itself, as corporation funding or bias may influence the arguments presented. Online-marketing and social media to advertise medication is becoming more prevalent in the 21st century (Liang & Mackey, 2011). Readers looking online must take note of the arguments and consider the true educational value of material on the Internet before deciding credibility. Notably, Shimi studies both sides of the

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spectrum, with respective references, presenting a well-informed perspective on immunization. Thus, one would find her resource highly credible.

Intent

The editorial article was supported by a leading research University (The Center for Measuring University Performance, 2009). The article briefly introduced childhood immunization before delving into the mindset behind opting for or against vaccination, and history behind infectious diseases. Collective information was presented, from surveys completed by parents, to proportion of disease outbreak relative to proportion of children who remained unvaccinated. Though not conclusive, Shimi explored many facets of childhood immunization and gave the reader a broad perspective on what, how and why vaccination exists. Being relatively recent and citing an extensive spectrum of resources, one would find this online editorial to a credible resource.

Internet users have migrated from passive information sources to actively seeking the information they require (Liang & Mackey, 2011). Internet users must continually be mindful of online material, where their funding comes from, why their phrasing is more favored to one drug over the other, and whether the online material exists to educate readers or promote to readers (Liang & Mackey, 2011). This criterion is relevant for investigating online resources, as it is vital to continually question the intentions of publically available material, and why anyone may access it so easily. The article in question is backed by the University of Pittsburgh and cites numerous other

highly respected organization and statistical institutes, and thus one concludes it is a highly credible resource.

Journal Article

Quality

Research from the article was clearly presented and aims were established early. Relevant findings were elaborated under a ' Literature review' section, giving readers a defined perspective on relevant research as well as gaps in the current knowledge. The authors developed an original procedure, which was approved by a university review board (Koharchik, Salman & Hardy 2012), to investigate the subject. This assumed their ideas were supported by informed academics. The authors' original research and findings were consistent with other peer-reviewed studies (Ali, Khakoo, Fisher & Hobbs, 2007; Nichol, D'Heilly & Ehlinger, 2008), giving the impression their arguments and methods were informed and highly credible.

The journal article provided different facets of information for the reader to understand the research that occurred before the study itself. In contrast, other sources failed to grasp the topic with an omniscient perspective (Shepherd, 2011) or giving reference to previous or current research. As an editorial, the author's choice of words and selected details portrayed a strong emotional argument. The reader feels they are being convinced to adopt the author's perspective, as conflicting arguments are neither portrayed nor referenced. Although other sources may have varying purposes to reach out to the audience, students would not use these sources

as their arguments seem much less informed, absent of strong academic support, and consequently of an overall lower quality.

Authority

Streams of references follow every argument or statistic included in the article. The authors had other works published in the same topic, showing they had expertise in the subject and had past experience researching immunization. However, the authors had only published two works including the article in question, within a few months of each other. This could indicate that their knowledge was still budding and possibly lacking in a well-rounded experienced judgment. The study was undertaken at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. The Journal of Infection Prevention is also a leading authority on medical research and development. One should not be excessively impressed by famed academic journals as mistakes do occur (Harzing, 2002), but it does give an indication of the authors and their work to have their work published for the greater scientific community.

The Journal of Infection Prevention is renown in its articles and contributing authors. Commonly referenced, the content published by its authors are backed by other experts and thus act as credible sources for research in the content area. Koharchik, Salman, Hardy & Mayle-Towns references previous research in the area and presents original research consistent with similar studies. One should consider the article, its authors' expertise and whether other experts support the study to determine credibility. Koharchik, Salman, Hardy & Mayle-Towns fulfill all these aspects and as such one would find the article highly credible.

Summary

The website and journal article were generally credible sources to read or use for an academic paper. Both resources are presented neutrally and there is no emotional bias in the writing. Arguments are presented for and against the content. Statistics included in both resources are relevant and are cited accordingly, with both resources providing an extensive range of high-regarded references. The reader is thoroughly informed and there is no obvious bias due to financial sponsor or affiliation. The authors for both resources are clearly stated and contact details are left, and both resources are supported by respected academic organizations renowned for their respective authority in the medical field.

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