

MAKING VACCINATION COMPULSORY: PARENTS VIEWS

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ABSTRACT

Globally, there are few countries that have enforced childhood vaccination as a requirement to enter primary schools. In Malaysia, this idea is being considered as a policy however till today no decision has yet been made. The objective of the study is to explore parents' view regarding this issue. In this qualitative study, 27 parents in Selangor were interviewed from July until September 2017. The informants were identified through a list of vaccine refusal form from selected health clinics and purposive sampling method were utilised. Thematic analysis was used to identify the themes. The four themes are i) freedom of choice, ii) unfair iii) need for proper law and iv) costly. Most parents shared the same views that vaccination should not be made compulsory as it violates their freedom of choice. Beside this, they also agreed that to make vaccination compulsory, a regulatory body should be established with proper regulations such as vaccine court established in other countries. Furthermore, taking such measurements is unfair as entry to primary school is every children's right as vaccination is not a pre-requisite for education. Interestingly, only one highlighted that making vaccination compulsory will incur high cost for Government as the same cycle of vaccination must be repeated every 10 years. In conclusion, all parents in this study disagree with this suggestion to make vaccination compulsory. It is recommended that parents' opinion and views should be taken into consideration before making this crucial decision.

Keywords: vaccine refusal, childhood vaccination, compulsory vaccination, Malaysia