

Health information-seeking patterns of mothers of preschoolers: A case study

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Information is an indispensable commodity for the day to day activities of anybody. Health information is specific to various types of human groups. Children are exposed to various illnesses when they start attending pre-schools. For the parents of a preschooler, having access to health information is important for good health as well as prevention and treatment of different kinds of health conditions. This can be considered as an advantage for the well-being of the children. Different people have different information needs and information-seeking patterns according to their necessities. This is grounded in their socio-cultural lifestyles. The intention of this study is to identify health information seeking patterns of mothers of preschoolers. It was carried out as a case study using a selected pre-school in the Kesbewa urban council area, with the participation of the mothers of these preschoolers. The total population was 150. A survey method was adopted to collect primary data for this research, using questionnaires. A printed questionnaire was used and the responses from the mothers were collected on-site. This study found that the majority of the mothers need information related to nutrition (75%), food (78.1%) and child psychology (34.4%). Most respondents (81.3%) resort to the television for health information. The secondary and tertiary information sources are their parents (71.9%) and midwives (68.8%). Further, this study indicated that the majority (93.8%) of the respondents are not using any library for their health information needs. The highest number of respondents (84.4%) have the habit of searching for health information using their smartphones. It was discovered that most of the mothers are not aware of trustful sources and that they believe the information on the television. The study recommends some suitable awareness programs for these mothers, to facilitate their children's well-being. The training responsibilities could be assumed by the Municipal council with the collaboration of the family health service officers and information professionals.

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