

Safe motherhood

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SAFE MOTHERHOOD

Determinants of the utilization of maternal healthcare services in rural Zambia

1. Early marriage and socio-cultural norms pose a serious threat to maternal and newborn health in developing countries.
2. A positive attitude and a high intention to use maternal healthcare services do not necessarily result in optimal utilisation of maternal healthcare services among women in rural Zambia, nor do lack of information and low risk perception (this dissertation).
3. Women's low perceived quality of maternal healthcare services provided in health centres and the negative opinion of important referents, such as friends and family members, are important reasons for the low use of maternal healthcare services in rural Zambia (this dissertation).
4. Decision-making autonomy regarding child birth and greater husband involvement might be the way forward for improving maternal healthcare service utilisation among women in rural Zambia (this dissertation).
5. Policy change which stopped traditional birth attendants from providing delivery services might not provide the way forward for improving maternal and newborn health outcomes in sub Saharan Africa, including Zambia (this dissertation).
6. Systematic interventions which are developed based on theory and evidence, using a protocol such as *Intervention Mapping*, are more likely to result in desired maternal health outcomes.
7. Maternity waiting homes could be a useful intervention in improving access to and utilization of facility-based skilled birth attendance services by mitigating long distances to healthcare services in rural area (this dissertation).
8. Collaboration and mutual respect between traditional birth attendants and nurse/midwives in the formal health system could be a solution to improved quality of maternal health care services (this dissertation).
9. Community-centred health interventions such as a Safe Motherhood Action Group (SMAG) programme have potential to lead to desired maternal health behavioural change and favourable health outcomes (this dissertation).
10. Lack of structured enumeration on housing units in rural areas and socially desirable responses pose methodological challenges to conducting research based on scientific sampling methods.
11. Early departure does not necessarily result in early arrival (Zambian proverb)..... My difficult up-bringing and taking education late did not necessarily hinder my academic career. I strongly believe that "where there is a will there is always a way".