

EXPLORING FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE UTILISATION OF ANTENATAL CARE SERVICES: PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN MABUNGA VILLAGE, MANGWE DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

By

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: There has been an increase in maternal and child mortality as a result of home deliveries. The reasons for home deliveries are not known, however, it has been documented that seeking of ANC services improves maternal and child health outcomes. It is not known whether women in Mabunga village utilise antenatal care services and the actual factors that affect the utilisation thereof.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to explore factors that affect the utilisation of antenatal care services: perceptions of women in Mabunga Village, Mangwe District, Zimbabwe

Method: The study was conducted in Mabunga village which is situated in Mangwe District, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe. A qualitative approach using explorative and descriptive design was adopted for the study. A sample of ten women was chosen from the target population by means of convenience sampling and data was collected through a semi-structured interview. Interviews and discussions were audio-taped, transcribed and coded into larger themes and categories.

Results: The following themes were derived from data analysis; access factors, socio-cultural factors, demographic factors, quality of care and knowledge about antenatal care services. It was discovered that the geographical location of the village to the health care centres has a great impact on utilisation of services. All the women did not initiate ANC as recommended and they also did not adhere to the number of times they were supposed to visit ANC services.

Conclusions: The findings showed that women have the knowledge about ANC and they all attended ANC at least once during their last pregnancy. However, inconsistency in attendance was shown due to access and demographic factors.

Keywords: Antenatal care services, women, utilisation, affect, factors, perceptions