

The perceptions of mothers regarding **INTRAPARTUM CARE SERVICES** at a local clinic in the Limpopo Province

INTRODUCTION

A number of pregnant mothers still give birth at home under unfavourable conditions and without skilled attendance, despite free maternal and child health care services in South Africa. Home births contribute to maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. South Africa has failed to meet its Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs), especially goals 4 and 5 related to mother and child respectively, due to continued maternal and perinatal mortality (Tuladhar, et al., 2009).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Pregnancy is a physiological process and period of potential risk, with potential complications during intrapartum and postnatal period. Women at a local clinic attend the clinic for antenatal and postnatal care service, but during intrapartum period they either go to the nearby hospital or give birth at home (Clinic Statistics 2011). Van Rensburg (2004:267) reported that women in Africa are at greater risk of dying from maternal causes than elsewhere in the world.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions of mothers regarding intrapartum care services at a local clinic in the Limpopo Province.

METHODOLOGY

- Qualitative research design and methods were used.
- Population were postnatal mothers between the ages 18 and 40.
- Pilot study was conducted.
- Purposive and convenience sampling used.
- Focus group discussion with the aid of a tape recorder and field notes.
- Tesch method of data analysis was used.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Table 1: Categories, sub categories and themes on the perceptions of mothers regarding intrapartum care.

CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES	THEMES
1 Perceptions of labour and child birth	1.1 Associates labour with severe pain	1.1.1 Labour pain is painful
	1.2 Associates child birth with intrapartum complications and means to resolve them	1.1.2 Complications
	1.3 The role of midwives	1.1.3 Student midwives more active and kind
2 Relationship between healthcare services and child birth	2.1 Associates child birth with clinic/hospital managing complications of child birth	2.1.1 Referral system
		2.1.2 Loss of blood
3 Feelings with regard to recent child birth	3.1 Experienced negative feelings during intrapartum care and positive feelings during postpartum care	3.1.1 Feel neglected
		3.1.2 Feel healthy
4 Problems during child birth	4.1 Problems identified includes ante partum, intrapartum and postpartum complications	4.1.1 Labour pain
		4.1.2 Hypothermia
5 Suggestions for utilisation of the clinic in future	5.1 Needs identification	5.1.1 Increase in the number of nurses
		5.1.2 Availability of staff members
6 Role played in child birth	6.1 Pregnant mother plays a role with regard to choice of place of birth	6.1.1 Pregnant mother's own decision
		6.1.2 Rely on doctor's opinion

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that 24hr services should be implemented at local clinics. The structure of the clinic should be developed to cater for maternal services. Midwives at local clinics should be efficient for providing better intrapartum care service.

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