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Influence of antenatal education on birth preparedness and complication readiness among women of childbearing age in the rural communities of cross river state, Nigeria

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Maternal morbidity and mortality remains a huge health problem in developing countries including Nigeria. Majority of Nigerians (women) live in rural areas where the burden of this reproductive ill health is higher. Evidence indicates that promoting birth preparedness and complication readiness has important role in tackling maternal mortality, likewise women who are exposed to antenatal education tend to prepare for birth and are complication ready when pregnant. The study was conducted to explore birth preparedness and complication readiness, and the influence of antenatal education among women of childbearing age in the rural communities of Cross River State, Nigeria. A community-based study using a qualitative descriptive approach that applied a semi-structured one-on-one interview was conducted among eighty (80) women of child bearing age, selected from two (2) rural communities of Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Non-probability purposive sampling was used. Knowledge about danger signs, saving money for transport and delivery, decision on place of delivery, delivery by skilled birth attendant and the outcome were accessed. Thematic qualitative data analysis was done from which themes emerged. The study revealed poor understanding of birth preparedness and complication readiness among the rural women of the study communities. Out of the 80 respondents, 61 of them could not list any danger sign, and their preferred places for delivery was a traditional birth attendant homes while their knowledge of birth preparedness was buying babies' wears and pampers. The other 19 respondents had a fair knowledge of danger signs as they had attended antenatal education at various primary health care facilities while pregnant, made adequate plans towards delivery, although due to some associated factors, some ended up under the care of traditional birth attendants during delivery. The study revealed a positive influence of antenatal education on the understanding of birth preparedness and complication readiness among the women of the study communities, hence recommended that improving awareness of women, families and the entire community both at the community and institutional levels, and reinforcing ante natal education on obstetric danger signs, birth preparedness, complication readiness and the importance of utilizing skilled care during pregnancy, delivery and after delivery, for the early detection of maternal health complications thereby preventing maternal mortality was recommended.

Biography

Alberta David Nsemo has completed her BNSc degree in Nursing, Postgraduate Diploma in Education, a Master's degree in Medical Sociology, and a PhD in Medical Sociology, all from the University of Calabar. She also has a second PhD in Advance Midwifery and Neonatology from the University of the Western Cape, South Africa in 2016. She is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Calabar, Department of Nursing Science. She is a Fellow of West Africa College of Nursing, an Associate Member of Industrial Administration of Nigeria, a Member of African Women in Leadership Organization (AWLO), a Member of Nurses in Aids Care. As a Seasoned Academia and a Researcher, she has attended and presented papers in Conferences at home and abroad, she has also earned over 40 publications in both local and international learned academic journals.

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