

Exploring Factors That Affect the Utilisation of Antenatal Care Services: Perceptions of Women in Mangwe Rural District, Zimbabwe

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Abstract : Use of health care services is an effective way of improving maternal and child health outcomes, especially in the rural areas. The study aimed to find out the perceptions of women on factors that affect the utilisation of antenatal care services (ANC) in Mangwe Rural District, Zimbabwe. The study was conducted in Mabunga village which is situated in Mangwe Rural District, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe. A qualitative approach using explorative and descriptive design was adopted for the study. A sample of ten women were chosen from the target population by means of convenience sampling and data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviews and discussions were audio-taped, transcribed and coded into themes and subthemes. The study results showed that access factors, socio-cultural factors, demographic factors, quality of care and knowledge about antenatal care services were the major factors affecting utilisation of ANC services in Mangwe Rural District. 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 services as recommended and they also did not adhere to the number of times they were supposed to visit the health care centres. The findings concluded that women have the knowledge about ANC and they all attended at least once during their last pregnancy. However, inconsistencies in attendance were shown due to access, socio-cultural and demographic factors.

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

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