



Nutrition Interventions and Growth Outcomes in Rural South African Pregnant Women: A Qualitative Longitudinal Study

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Abstract

Rural South African pregnant women often face nutritional challenges that can impact fetal growth outcomes. Despite government initiatives, there is a need for more targeted and effective interventions to improve maternal health and child development. The study employed semi-structured interviews with 50 pregnant women from six randomly selected villages, supplemented with community observations and document analysis to capture diverse perspectives on nutrition interventions and their impact. Findings revealed that the majority of participants (85%) reported improved dietary practices after participating in intervention programmes. However, consistent adherence to recommended nutritional guidelines was noted as a significant challenge, particularly among young mothers who faced economic constraints. Nutrition interventions have shown promise in improving growth outcomes for rural South African pregnant women; however, further research is needed on long-term sustainability and cost-effectiveness of such programmes. Communities should be involved in the design and implementation of nutrition intervention programmes to ensure cultural relevance and community buy-in. Additionally, economic support measures should be integrated into future interventions to enhance programme success. nutrition intervention, rural South Africa, growth outcomes, qualitative study

Keywords: Rural, Geographic, Nutrition, Intervention, Pregnancy, Growth, Outcome

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