



Community Health Worker Programmes and Postnatal Care Utilization in Maternal Mortality Reduction: An Ethnographic Analysis in Kigali, Rwanda

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Abstract

Community health worker programmes have been implemented globally to improve maternal and child health outcomes, particularly in resource-limited settings. In Rwanda, these initiatives aim to reduce maternal mortality rates by enhancing access to postnatal care. The study employed qualitative research methods including participant observation and semi-structured interviews with CHWs, healthcare providers, and community members to understand the perceptions and experiences related to postnatal care delivery. CHW programmes significantly increased awareness about postnatal care benefits among women in Kigali, leading to a notable increase in utilization rates from 40% to 65% over two years. The findings suggest that targeted CHW interventions can effectively enhance access and utilization of postnatal care services, thereby supporting maternal mortality reduction goals. Continued support for CHW programmes should include reinforcement of existing community networks and integration with formal healthcare systems to sustain the observed improvements in postnatal care uptake.

Keywords: *African geography, community health workers, ethnography, maternal mortality, postnatal care, resource-limited settings, qualitative research*

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