

OCTOBER 2023

Evaluating the Impact of an mHealth Platform on Postnatal Care Attendance Among Primiparous Women in Mwanza, Tanzania: A Comparative Study

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18531749>

| Abstract

Postnatal care attendance is often low in resource-limited settings, increasing risks of preventable illness for mothers and newborns. Primiparous women are especially vulnerable due to their lack of prior experience. Mobile health (mHealth) interventions offer a potential avenue for improving service use. This study evaluated the impact of the 'Mama na Mtoto' mHealth platform on the completion of recommended postnatal care visits among primiparous women in Mwanza City, Tanzania. A comparative study was undertaken with primiparous women attending public health facilities. Participants were allocated to an intervention group, which received automated SMS reminders and access to a voice information line via the platform, or a control group receiving standard care. Postnatal care completion was assessed at six weeks postpartum using clinic records and telephone follow-up. The intervention group showed a statistically significant higher rate of completing all recommended postnatal visits. Specifically, 68% of women in the intervention group completed the full schedule, compared to 42% in the control group. The 'Mama na Mtoto' platform was associated with improved postnatal care attendance among primiparous women in this urban Tanzanian setting. This indicates mHealth strategies can improve adherence to postnatal care guidelines. Programme managers and policymakers should consider integrating structured mHealth reminder

systems into routine maternal health services. Further research should assess long-term sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and applicability in rural areas. mHealth, postnatal care, primiparous women, Tanzania, comparative study, SMS reminders This study provides empirical evidence from a low-resource setting on the efficacy of a simple mHealth platform in improving postnatal care completion, contributing to the literature on feasible digital health interventions for maternal care.
