

Determinants of men's participation in maternal and child health care in Kabale district, western region, Uganda

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Male involvement in Maternal and Child Health is crucial for the reduction of infant and maternal mortality. Men may be influential in making health care decisions that may affect their spouse's access to health care services but also as partners whose health status has a significant impact on the health of their spouses and those of their children. However, male participation globally, leaves a lot to be desired. This study thus aimed to identify determinants of male involvement in Maternal and Child Health. The area of study was Rubanda and Rukiga in Kabale district. Primary data was acquired through administered questionnaires, in-depth interviews with key informants as well as from Focus Group Discussions. Both published and unpublished materials were reviewed. Figures and tables are used to present quantitative data analysed by SPSS. Qualitative data was analysed through content analysis. The study reveals that the level of awareness about Maternal and Child Health issues is still poor and confirms low participation of men in Maternal and Child Health. However, men, participate in various ways especially by providing financial support to their spouses. The study also reveals that society views male involvement in Maternal and Child Health as an alien phenomenon and that gender role, lack of interest, low education, lack of awareness, lack of male tailored programmes, and poor attitude of health workers all contribute to men's low participation. The study concludes that male involvement in Maternal and Child Health is critical and is determined by a number of factors and therefore recommends that addressing this challenge requires a participatory holistic and comprehensive approach.