

Factors determining access to and utilization of maternal health care services in urban slums: the case of Kinondoni municipality

Oliver Fulgence Kishenyi

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University of Dar es Salaam, College of Social Sciences, 2017

Inaccessibility to health care services is among the major problems in developing countries including Tanzania. Every pregnancy exposes women to maternal death risks while the risk of dying increases in situations of complications. With this in mind, the study intended to explore the factors that influence one's access to and utilization of maternal health care services in urban slums. The study had two specific objectives namely: (a) To ascertain the influence of individual's level of awareness and knowledge towards access to and utilization of maternal health services in urban slums and, (b) To find out the extent to which one's socio economic status influences one's access to and utilization of maternal health care services in urban slums. The study applied the triangulation method mix research design and was conducted in Kinondoni Municipality. This study also applied the systematic random sampling technique to obtain the quantitative data while purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to obtain qualitative data from the research subjects. In the collection of data, the study applied questionnaire for the quantitative part while in-depth interviews, observation method, and documentary review were used for the collection of qualitative data. Chi-square, percentages and thematic data analysis techniques were used for data processing.

The findings revealed that one's demographic characteristics have significant influence on the awareness and knowledge of different categories of maternal health services, including antenatal, intranatal and postnatal care services. The study results indicate that, women were more aware of antenatal than postnatal care services amongst the maternal health care services. The findings also revealed that the socioeconomic status and demographic characteristics of the individual also influence one's utilization of the said services. In conclusion, the study recommends, among many other interventions, that there must be both strategic and innovative campaigns to raise awareness

of the need for maternal health care services on the part of men since they demonstrated limited knowledge and awareness of the services. Furthermore there must also be campaigns to raise awareness of postnatal care services on the part of women of reproductive age since it was revealed that among all the components of maternal health care services, the postnatal care services are less known and utilized.