

The study was about the factors influencing male involvement in the practice of safe motherhood in Mitala Maria. The general objective of the study was to investigate the factors that influence male involvement in safe motherhood practices in Mitala Maria; and the specific objectives were to investigate the role of socio-cultural factors on male involvement in safe motherhood in Mitala Maria, to determine the level of knowledge of men on issues concerning safe motherhood and to identify the health facility factors associated with male involvement.

Methodology

This study was a cross sectional study design and a total of 270 respondents was interviewed by purposive sampling; these included all expectant mothers and those with children; and men with expectant wives or those who had at least fathered a child in the last 12 months, who consented to taking part in the study. Data was collected through research administered questionnaires and it was analyzed by use of SPSS.

Results

The study showed that the level of income in Mitala Maria was generally low; only 18.5% of the respondents had a monthly income of more than 200,000shs. It also revealed that the most commonly known pillar of safe motherhood was family planning (37.04%) with a p- value of 0.249 although the biggest percentage did not want to use it, quoting several reasons. The study also showed that 73.7.7% of the respondents were Roman Catholics and their faith hindered them from embracing family planning (p- value= 0.000). 88.1% did not discuss the risks of pregnancy with their partners (p- value=0.396); 99.3% of the respondents did not arrange for skilled care for their partners during pregnancy (p- value= 0.056) and the study also confirmed the fact that women participate more than men in safe motherhood in Mitala Maria. The most frequent barriers to male involvement in safe motherhood that were brought forth by the respondents included; Ignorance, fear of peers' opinions, alcoholism, time aspects, poverty, irresponsibility, traditional practices and unemployment.

Conclusion and recommendations

Men's participation in the proper care of the mother, fetus and infant before, during and after pregnancy is still an issue for discussion as many men continually consider it a feminine affair. The factors that were found to play a key role in influencing male involvement in safe motherhood in Mitala Maria were the level of income of the men, individual attitudes and the level of knowledge on safe motherhood indicators. With all the above prevailing in the area, the government should develop a set of guidelines to cater for the male involvement needs and this should be distributed and implemented all throughout the different health facilities in the country. Additionally, rewards like t-shirts, pens and caps with wordings of family planning, should be put in place to encourage the men to accompany their

wives to the antenatal clinics and also the good cultural practices should be encouraged and the public should be sensitized on those cultural practices that affect male involvement in safe motherhood.