

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Maternal healthcare services utilisation and its associated risk factors: A pooled study of 37 low- and middle-income countries

Original Article, Int J Public Health

Reviewer: Gobopamang Letamo

Submitted on: 06 Jul 2023

Article DOI: 10.3389/ijph.2023.1606288

EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

The study set out to investigate the prevalence and factors associated with maternal health utilization (MHU) in 37 low- and middle-income countries. The overall prevalence of MHU was 33.7% but varied from one country to the other, ranging from 7.7% in Benin to 95.8% in Armenia. The key findings were that the key factors positively influencing MHU were urban residence, women's autonomy in healthcare decision-making, and media exposure. However, large family sizes and families with 7 or more children were significantly associated with no maternal health utilization.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

The study used a large pooled data set of 37 countries which increased the sample size and therefore reduces bias in the estimates. The main limitations are that no causal relationships can be drawn from the cross-sectionally collected data and that the data is self-reported which could introduce bias.

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

The article is well-written and properly structured such that I have very few editorial comments that the author needs to address. The article has clearly identified the research problem and stated the objective of the research. The literature reviewed is recent and relevant. The statistical methods adopted are valid, appropriate, and correctly applied. The pooled sample size is large enough and the study can easily be replicated. The results are correctly presented and data interpretation is correctly done.

However, two minor corrections are needed and these are in Line 103 the author has not correctly presented that the other category of the outcome variable is "not properly" utilized. in Line 166-167 the author refers to Table 1 instead of Table 2. So kindly make those corrections.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes it is appropriate. concise and attractive

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

Yes

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality



Q 10 Rigor



Q 11 Significance to the field



Q 12 Interest to a general audience



Q 13 Quality of the writing



Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study



REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.