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Maternal Mortality: Related to Obstetric Service Availability in Rural Settings versus Urban Settings

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Maternal Mortality: Relationship of Obstetric Service Availability in Rural Settings versus Urban Settings

Abstract

Background: Women in rural areas continue to experience life-threatening complications during pregnancy and childbirth, despite advances in medicine and technology. Access to regular prenatal care and obstetric services during delivery are important aspects to a non-life-threatening delivery. We sought to further the knowledge and comprehension of the increasing maternal mortality rates linked to accessible obstetric services and rural versus urban locations.

Methods: We conducted a systematic review by using EBSCO and PubMed databases and using search terms such as “maternal mortality or maternal deaths or pregnancy related deaths”, “rural areas or rural communities”, “urban areas or cities or urban communities.” We appraised various sources of evidence and compiled diverse findings.

Results: The research yielded twelve articles that suggested a strong relationship between maternal mortality rates being higher in rural areas with less obstetric services than in urban areas with greater obstetric services.

Conclusion: Women in rural areas lack access to prenatal care and obstetric services. Additionally, maternal mortality rates are higher in rural areas than urban areas. Improving access in rural communities will reduce disparities in care delivery and maternal outcomes for childbearing women.

Keywords: maternal mortality, rural communities, urban communities, obstetric services, prenatal care, pregnancy