

Disparities in Access to Media Information Among Nursing Mothers in Urban, Suburban and Rural Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The study explores the disparities in media health information access between urban, suburban, and rural nursing mothers in Ogun State with the main objectives of finding out how they get information, as well as establishing the effects and outcomes of such information on health outcomes, through an analysis of extant literature. The study discovered that although urban places offer better sources of information, suburban and rural health communication is tied to infrastructure challenges, making access to reliable healthcare information difficult. Also, social status, cultural customs, and medical professionals are factors contributing to the accessibility of health information. However, most healthcare information comes from interpersonal communication rather than from media sources. The research recommends using such communication techniques specifically designed for the intended audience could be a valuable tool in disseminating accurate information about the available health services, hence enhancing health outcomes among the nursing mothers of Ogun State, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

For the longest time, maternal health has been a persistent problem for governments all over the world (Arabiat et al. 2021). Hence, it is a crucial item in the Sustainable Development Goals- SDGs 1,2,3,4, and 5 (Ariroguzoh et al. 2021; Oyesomi et al. 2020). Nigeria still faces the challenge of offering inadequate maternal healthcare services and a high level of maternal deaths (Ntoimo et al. 2020; Eke et al. 2021). According to Ntoimo et al. (2020), maternal and infant mortality indicators appear to be poor with the evidence drawn from the data supplied by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This statistical data shows that in Nigeria, the maternal death rate averages 560 deaths per 100,000 live births and leads to a maternal mortality ratio of 78 per 1,000 pregnancies (Ilesanmi and Akinmeyer 2018; Ekwuazi et al. 2023). However, it is worth mentioning the importance of a variety of nutrients and the availability of high-quality pre and postnatal care (Samuel et al. 2021; Sidze et al. 2022). Pregnant women struggle with pregnancy-related worries, anxieties,

and doubts, which increase their desire to learn more about this crucial time (Aluko et al. 2024). This means that nursing mothers' access to health information and care practices can serve as guide tools to their health behaviour, health outcomes, and general quality of life. Thus, it creates a perception that having credible information on parent and maternal health will positively contribute to the mother-child health interactions (Sidze et al. 2022). For instance, the underlined factors of maternal and infant mortality in urban and rural communities were examined in some studies alongside disparities in maternal health information and service access among rural and urban residents (Eke et al. 2021; Obono and Eghomi 2021). Nevertheless, no mention is made of how the media disparities in healthcare information in the urban, suburban and rural districts of Ogun State affect maternal and child health outcomes. The study complements previous research by investigating the existing gaps in availability of media information among the women who are nursing mothers staying in urban, suburban and rural areas in

Ogun state, Nigeria. The study will focus on the impact of health information factors on nursing mothers in rural, urban, and suburban areas in Ogun State, as well as the implications of these determinants for health outcomes in these districts.

Research Objectives

This study will be implemented through the following objectives:

1. To find out how urban, suburban, and rural nursing mothers in Nigeria get information about healthcare matters from the media.
2. To establish the mediating effects of nursing mothers' health care information in the suburban, urban, and rural areas of Ogun state, Nigeria.
3. To evaluate the influence of media health information on the health outcomes of lactating mothers and those from suburban, urban, and rural areas of Ogun state.

Literature Review

Role of Media Information in Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Nursing Mothers

The media plays a vital role in enhancing the process of mitigating sustainable health issues (Ogunjuyigbe and Adepoju 2014). According to Calvert and Wilson (2009), media exposure enables one to be more aware, develop more quality thoughts and ideas, and strengthen existing opinions. In highlighting the role that mass media has in shaping societal, political and change of thoughts' correlated outcomes, Kellner (2020) asserted that they are instrumental in culture and politics. In addition, they are a key player in emphasizing the health issue towards women and children, specifically (Amoo et al. 2019; Aluko et al. 2024).

Ghosh et al. (2006) pointed out that there is a relationship between mass media exposure and the raising awareness of the need for basic maternal and child healthcare. This means that women will be able to get information on critical healthcare as well as the current advancements in health concerns. Ghosh et al. (2006) show that there is a correlation between women's viewing

of mass media and their knowledge. Through this, he also asserted that media exposure supports women's understanding of the importance of maternal and child healthcare and what must be done for better healthcare and recent health concerns. Consequently, the recognition of pregnancy health is critical for the health of the mother and her newborn baby. They achieve this target by supporting people in knowing their level of reality using the messages they clearly convey (Igbinoba et al. 2019).

In order to enhance the health of the nursing mothers and the residents of other nations, the Nigerian government and other nations have used the communication campaigns which are targeted at persuading individuals to practise healthy behaviour (Igbinoba et al. 2020). This is especially the way the government has used media aimed at the general public to appeal to people that they should be adopting healthier lives (Igbinoba et al. 2020). It contributes to their knowledge of a problem, and if properly used, it also increases their attitudes and beliefs towards the problem. Selwyn et al. (2020) argue that media has a great role in society in terms of culture, politics and thoughts. It also alerts to major health issues, during the process that may influence women, children or business owners.

Overview of Disparities in Access to Media Information Among Nursing Mothers in Urban, Suburban, and Rural Areas in Ogun State, Nigeria

There is a big gap in terms of information accessibility in the concerned nursing mothers according to different domains of Ogun State, Nigeria (Thanny 2023). It is usually better for residents in urban places to have close proximity to health information than residents in other areas such as suburban and rural places. They arise because of how infrastructure is developed, the degree of density, and the economic prospects (Thanny 2023). Urban residents may reap benefits such as being able to update their knowledge about health particularly to do with child-rearing and close contact with other parents (Akeju et al. 2016). They can also join social media groups where they can get inspiration from other mothers and wellness experts, with whom they can share their struggles and chal-

lenges (Ebenso et al. 2021). Nevertheless, there is more restriction on health information availability in suburban locations as compared to urban areas but it is definitely better than the one in rural regions (Atekoja et al. 2020).

This means that most rural locations have limited access to media information due to lack of basic infrastructure that in turn makes it more difficult for working nursing mothers to get the much-needed health information (Ekholuenetale et al. 2020). Thus, it is essential to design initiatives to promote health information access, especially in areas short of programs (Olalubi and Bello 2020). This may involve the initiatives of increasing energy availability, improving the media delivering service and creating special educational programs for healthcare and parenting in the remote areas around.

Akeju et al.'s (2016) research, which was focused on determining what triggers women to seek healthcare during pregnancy in Ogun State, Nigeria, showed that the primary sources of health information for women were caregivers and allied healthcare professionals taking care of them during pregnancy. It also provides for the indigenous healers as they are regarded as advanced doctors. According to Amoo et al. (2019), people who live in rural areas trust more traditional medicine. It has been debated that they are left with no choice, seeing that they are grappling with financial struggles and this is why they do not receive the correct assistance despite living in urban/suburban areas due to the costs of consulting with doctors (Arisukwu et al. 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Secondary Data Synthesis

The main part of this study provides a comprehensive summary of available literature on differences in access to media information among nursing mothers who live in urban, suburban, and rural parts of Ogun State in Nigeria. This entails critically analysing the perspectives as well as the empirical findings from the relevant sources so as to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the research objectives (Lemon and Hayes 2020).

Data Sources

Data is collected from a variety of sources such as academic journals, books, conference proceedings, and internet publications. Academic journals are primary sources of scholarly research articles, providing peer-reviewed studies and theoretical discussions, as Gusenbauer and Haddaway (2020) elaborated.

RESULTS

Not many studies focusing on Ogun State have examined how nursing mothers feel about the health information they get from the media. However, one study by Adetoro and Okike (2021) examined how the media is used for reproductive health information dissemination to pregnant patients in government hospitals in Ogun State. They stated that women seek adequate information in order to live healthy lives throughout pregnancy and raise healthy children. According to their findings, while at least seven million children are born in Nigeria each year, the nation has the world's second-highest maternal mortality rate, with about 145 women of reproductive age dying every day. Furthermore, the survey shows that Nigeria's 40 million women of reproductive age (ages 15 to 49) have unusually high rates of childbirth-related health issues. The preceding emphasises the need for precise and reliable data regarding reproductive health for women of reproductive age.

Oyeyemi and Wynn (2015) found that using mobile phones to send messages in Nigeria helps nursing mothers get health information without travelling far to see a doctor. This is likely why nursing mothers liked it. However, Oyeyemi and Wynn's research did not have initial data from the study areas to determine the impact of using mobile phones on health results.

Sokefun and Atulomah (2020) while studying the predictors of infant-survival practices among mothers attending pediatric clinics in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria, found out that most of them had moderate health literacy, social support, self-efficacy, and infant survival practices. This research suggests that transmitting health information to nursing mothers involves a multi-level strategy, resulting in favorable behavioral outcomes in terms of breastfeeding their infants.

According to Sokefun and Atulomah (2020), healthcare practitioners play a crucial role in providing nursing mothers with health knowledge via health literacy messaging. This information includes details and recommendations for newborn nutrition, disease prevention, hand hygiene, exclusive breastfeeding, sanitation, immunization, and sterilizing of babies' belongings. While their research supported the provision of social support for women from pregnancy to postpartum, it did not the role of the media's duty in terms of disseminating knowledge. Nevertheless, they argued that husbands should be informed about maternal care information about the health requirements of women and their babies since they have the authority to make decisions inside the household. They further suggested that healthcare personnel actively educate and advise pregnant women on the necessary actions for the well-being of their upcoming kids in a more efficient manner.

Akeju et al. (2016) while studying the determinants of healthcare-seeking behaviour during pregnancy across four Local Government Areas in Ogun State, Nigeria, namely, Ogijo, Yewa South, Imeko-Afon and Remo North found that women commonly utilise several obstetric healthcare providers during pregnancy, specifically traditional birth attendants, faith-based providers, and orthodox practitioners (nurses, midwives, community health workers, doctors, specialists). Akeju et al. (2016) found that health programmes and initiatives, such as the provision of free health care services, were implemented in Ogun State. However, it is important to note that this shift has not been implemented in all parts of the state. Consequently, they advocated for focused health communication to diminish gaps in knowledge, empower expectant mothers, and include influential figures in the community. These observations should be used to inform health communication strategies aimed at enhancing the utilisation of maternal healthcare services.

An investigation was conducted by Azuh et al. (2014) to ascertain the socio-demographic determinants that impact the use of health programmes among expectant women in five rural wards within the Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria. It has been determined that maternal mortality is a signifi-

cant public health concern and has a role in the reduced life expectancy seen in Ogun State. He suggested implementing culturally sensitive health education, particularly focusing on detrimental traditional behaviours and the advantages of safe childbirth, as a temporary solution. In order to enhance healthcare utilisation among pregnant women, it is imperative to implement socio-economic change and foster a "cultural revolution."

Adewale et al. (2023) examined the perceived outcome and knowledge of quality antenatal care among nursing mothers who were attending Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital in Sagamu, Ogun State, Nigeria. It was shown that a significant proportion of nursing mothers had a favourable opinion of the results of their healthcare, as seen by 82 percent expressing contentment with the treatment they got. Nevertheless, there were deficiencies in their understanding of high-quality emerging healthcare. A mere 54 percent of the participants showed a commendable level of understanding pertaining to fundamental healthcare procedures. Adewale et al. (2023) suggested that nurses should be provided with information on quality practices to facilitate ongoing quality improvement and maintain the provision of high-quality prenatal care.

Thanny (2023) examined the perceived impact of information sources on the knowledge of exclusive breastfeeding among nursing mothers in Ogun State, Nigeria. The research was carried out across thirty health facilities located in six Local Government Areas (LGAs), namely, Abeokuta South, Odeda, Sagamu, Odogbolu, Ado Odo/Ota, and Yewa North. These LGAs encompassed the three senatorial districts within Ogun State. The research suggests that there is a lack of sufficient awareness among nursing women in Ogun State about exclusive breastfeeding. The data revealed that nursing women who received care in traditional birth attendant/faith-based health facilities exhibit the greatest level of knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding, while nursing mothers who received care at tertiary health facilities have the lowest level of knowledge regarding exclusive breastfeeding. This highlights the need to critically examine the substance and calibre of information conveyed during health presentations in both pub-

lic and private healthcare establishments at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

Ambassador-Brikins (2020) studied the Influence of Awareness Campaigns on the Knowledge and Adoption of Six-Month Exclusive Breastfeeding in Lagos and Ogun States, Nigeria. For the Ogun State scope of her study, she studied Sagamu, Ado-Odo Ota and Abeokuta South Local Government Areas were selected from urban Ogun and Remo North, Yewa North and Ewekoro Local Government Areas from rural settlements.

The results indicate that interpersonal sources have been effective in facilitating the acquisition of knowledge on maternal healthcare among nursing mothers. The health professionals at the prenatal clinics have effectively raised awareness and imparted information about exclusive breastfeeding. Similarly, the child welfare clinics have also achieved similar results. In addition to healthcare professionals, television, radio, antenatal cards/booklets, and child immunisation cards/books were identified as significant sources of information, particularly with the practice of exclusive breastfeeding for six months. Significantly, a limited number of respondents obtained knowledge from many sources such as family members, the Internet, religious leaders, acquaintances, books, and newspapers. Upon careful analysis of the responses, it becomes evident that health workers working in prenatal and immunisation clinics played a significant role in exposing nursing mothers to the campaign. In contrast, traditional mass media platforms such as television, radio, books, newspapers, and magazines had a comparatively lower level of exposure among this demographic. The new medium provided exposure to just a small percentage of nursing mothers.

Atekoja et al. (2020) also studied nursing mothers' exclusive breastfeeding knowledge and practice in Sagamu, Ogun state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study was a descriptive cross-sectional investigation that focused on mothers of babies aged 0-6 months. The participants were recruited using a stratified selection approach. A pretested interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data, and four focused group discussions (FGD) were conducted. The study's findings revealed that 207 mothers, accounting for more than 86 percent of the total, were under the age of 34. Additionally, 32 percent of the respondents reported having no for-

mal education. Out of the total, 230 individuals constituting almost all respondents were aware of exclusive breastfeeding, whereas a little above half of the respondents were familiar with its meaning. There was a significant association seen between the mothers' knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding and their occupation, marital status, and location of birth. Approximately fifteen (15) participants in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) expressed the belief that administering an herbal combination to their children is necessary for fostering physical strength.

From the Atekoja et al. (2020) study, the sources of knowledge of maternal care differ. However, only less than 27 percent obtained their information from any media source. The main sources of information exhibit variation, with a majority obtaining their information from health professionals. However, only about half of the participants demonstrated knowledge of the accurate definition of exclusive breastfeeding, which is providing solely breast milk from birth until six months. This finding is supported by Iliyasu et al. (2019), in a survey Conducted in Kanot that found that around 68 percent of caregivers were aware of the definition and duration of exclusive breastfeeding. Additionally, the respondents of the study obtained their information from healthcare professionals.

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that there is still a lot of health communication that needs to be achieved to implement not only strategies aimed at promoting and facilitating the adoption of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers but the general disparities in the access to media information among nursing mothers in Ogun State.

DISCUSSION

Research Objective 1: How nursing mothers in urban, suburban, and rural areas in Nigeria access media healthcare information

The literature examined reveals that nursing mothers residing in Ogun State utilize diverse channels to obtain healthcare information (Akeju et al. 2016). However, these channels encompass interpersonal sources such as healthcare professionals and community health workers rather than conventional mass media platforms like television, radio, print media, and the likes. Nevertheless, the availability of media informa-

tion differs considerably across different geographical locations. In general, metropolitan regions have superior accessibility to a broader array of media outlets in contrast to suburban and rural areas, whereby infrastructure obstacles such as inadequate internet connection and restricted distribution of print media impede access (Ambassador-Brikins 2020).

The difference is more obvious in rural areas than in cities when it has to do with nursing mothers gaining access to good healthcare (Amoo et al. 2019). In many rural areas there is very limited access to basic infrastructure. This makes it difficult for nursing mothers to access medical care or information. Though rural areas have limited access to mobile phones compared to cities, more and more people in suburban areas are getting increased access to these amenities. This has helped provide healthcare through mobile apps in urban and suburban areas (Amoo et al. 2019). Amoo et al. (2019) were of the opinion that more people in urban and suburban areas of Ogun State (73%) get postnatal check ups than people in rural areas (27%).

To corroborate, Popoola et al. (2024) explain that the realities in rural areas make it harder for women to get maternal care because they live far away from good hospitals and clinics. However, from the analysis, it can be observed that even though there were professional healthcare workers available especially in some rural and suburban areas, women still chose to get health information from traditional sources like traditional healers, birth attendants, faith healers, family and friends, drug sellers, and home priests (Akeju et al. 2016). These women consider these sources because they think they are trustworthy and genuine. Ayamolowo and Adekunle (2024) note that getting health information from families about maternal health made mothers feel more supported and less worried about pregnancy and childbirth.

Research Objective 2: Factors affecting the use of media healthcare information by nursing mothers in suburban, urban and rural areas in Ogun state, Nigeria

Several factors influence the utilization of media healthcare information among nursing mothers, including socioeconomic status, cul-

tural beliefs, and infrastructural challenges (Igbokwe et al. 2024). Many scholars deduce that urban nursing mothers who are led by the education and income factors are mostly likely to use recorded information obtained from media as their counterparts who dwell in suburban and rural areas (Oyeyemi and Wynn 2015). Furthermore, as the method of health communication employed most frequently was the healthcare providers informing health literacy related information to the lactating mothers (Thanny 2023), thus reinforcing the significance of communication methods in addressing the needs for understanding of health information in terms of the diverse cultural settings.

Sidze et al. (2022) illustrated that different circumstances like the way a mother feeds her baby and what members of the society do not support breastfeeding may affect how mothers seek information about breastfeeding. They further mentioned that urban centres often possess more knowledge on healthcare practices than rural and suburban areas. This means that people living in the urban communities usually acquire easier access to healthcare and education than their rural and suburban counterparts, and this exposure level affects how one gets and utilises information (Ambassador-Brikins 2020).

In a similar manner, Egharevba et al. (2017) discovered that ladies who went through school have higher levels of their babies born in hospitals than those who had no chances of going to school. Hence, in order for mothers to have successful birth outcomes, health education appears to be the key thanks to which the knowledge and understanding of the right health information would be greater.

Research Objective 3: The effects of media healthcare information on health outcomes for nursing mothers in suburban, urban, and rural areas in Ogun state

The review of the literature portrayed numerous differences regarding the level of access to and the use of information and the media by urban, suburban, and rural citizens of Ogun (Akeju et al. 2016; Ambassador-Brikins 2020; Thanny 2023; Igbokwe et al. 2024). In urban areas where media channels such as television,

radio, and the internet are widely used, nursing women may experience enhanced opportunities to take advantage of targeted health campaigns and information dissemination strategies (Amodu et al. 2019). While media influence of healthcare information on health outcomes could be significant in suburban and rural zones, where a settlement of infrastructure and limited media outlets exist, taking advantage of the media influence will be critical. Although tailored communication strategies have the prospects of increasing dissemination of trustworthy health info for nursing moms in Ogun state who live over a wide expanse of lands, the resultant positive impact on health outcomes cannot be overlooked.

Despite the fact that the studies assessed do not provide conclusive evidence about the impact of media healthcare information on health outcomes of nursing mothers living in suburban, urban, and rural areas of Ogun State, the results reveal that the existence of media information play a significant role in development of health-related thinking, behavior, and attitude (Ambassador-Brikins 2020; Thanny 2023, Ok-eya-Olayinka and Adegboye 2024). Notwithstanding, further studies must be conducted to establish the direct communication between schedule of media information and health status of nursing mothers within the state. Although it is a factor of relevance where the context of the medium matters, media information transmission effect can vary in several geographical areas. This calls for targeted communications strategies that are tailored to the specific health needs and barriers experienced by women in urban, suburban and rural areas.

Igbino et al. (2020) found that nursing mothers in different areas also need to get different types of messages that are shared on the basis of their situation. Therefore, when nursing mothers get the information they need, they are more likely to follow safe health practices, and if they do not get the right information, they may not pay as much attention to maternal health. Akeju et al. (2016) found that people in rural areas tend to ask their family and friends for health advice more than they ask healthcare providers.

CONCLUSION

Rural health systems are still insufficient to provide easy access to high-quality, well-coor-

dated care and health information. The study found that to make sure people in rural areas in the Ogun state have good healthcare, one needs to understand what kind of information, a suitable method of passing the information, and accessibility. This will help the government and health agencies plan healthcare better and ensure that people in rural areas get the help they need. Rural nursing mothers have difficulty getting healthcare information because they may not be educated enough. Therefore, they may have difficulties communicating with health workers.

Based on the findings above, doctors, nurses, birth attendants, and other health workers are the most available sources of information to nursing mothers in Ogun State. Also, places where nursing mothers give birth have significant influences on the sources of information that are available to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government of Ogun state should invest in improving infrastructure for telecommunications and internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas. This includes expanding access to broadband internet and mobile networks to ensure that nursing mothers in all geographic areas have access to online health information. Furthermore, the Ogun State Ministry of Health should increase the implementation of community-based health education programmes that target nursing mothers and their families in urban, suburban, and rural areas. These programmes should promote breastfeeding practices, maternal and child health, and the importance of accessing accurate health information through media channels. Finally, at the local government level, culturally sensitive and contextually relevant health communication materials and messaging that resonate with nursing mothers must be developed, especially in suburban and rural settings. This would help to tailor information to address specific cultural beliefs, practices, and language preferences to ensure that messages are accessible and meaningful to diverse communities.

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