

Primary goal: SDG 3

Research

Towards to the Development Agenda: Factors Associated with Maternal Health in Myanmar.

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Abstract

Background: Reducing maternal mortality and improving maternal health represent global priorities, as illustrated by the Sustainable Development Goals. The global maternal mortality ratio in 2017 was estimated at 211 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The study objective was to examine barriers and facilitators of maternal health services utilization in Myanmar with the highest maternal mortality ratio in Southeast Asia. **Methods:** Data for 258 mothers with children under five were extracted from a community health survey administered between 2016 and 2017 in Mandalay, the largest city in central Myanmar, and analyzed for associations between determinants of maternal health care choices and related outcomes. **Results:** The study showed that late antenatal care was underutilized (41.7%), and antenatal care attendance was significantly associated with geographical setting, household income, education, and access to transportation ($p \leq 0.05$). Less than one-third of women gave birth at home and 18.5% of them did so without the assistance of traditional birth attendants. Household education level was a significant predictor for home delivery ($p < 0.01$). Utilization of postnatal care services was irregular (47.9%–70.9%) and strongly associated with women's places of delivery ($p < 0.01$). **Conclusion:** Efforts geared towards improving maternal health outcomes should focus on supporting traditional birth attendants in their role of facilitating high-quality care and helping women reach traditional health facilities, as well as on maternal health literacy based on culturally appropriate communication. Myanmar needs further efforts contributing to the reduction of global mortality ratio to less than 70/100 000 live births by 2030.

Keywords: Maternal health, health care utilization, Myanmar

Relevant goals: SDGs 1, 3, 4, and 5