A qualitative study on cultural beliefs and practices of women influencing home births in rural Northern Ghana

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Objective

The purpose of this study was to explore the cultural beliefs that potentially influenced the choice of home births among rural women in Ghana.

Methods

A qualitative approach was utilised to conduct this study. Twenty participants who delivered at home were purposefully selected and interviewed individually. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the cultural belief patterns that potentially influenced the choice of home births among women in rural Ghana. Thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data.

Results

Four major themes emerging from the data analysis which influenced rural women’s decision to give birth at home are namely: opportunity to access psychological support through family members, opportunity to access culturally acceptable food, opportunity to adopt a birthing position of choice, and opportunity for safe and culturally accepted disposal of placenta.

Conclusion

This study concluded that the cultural beliefs held by these women greatly affected their decision to deliver at home. Hence, there is a need for health care managers to facilitate collaborative practices between the skilled birth attendants and traditional birth attendants. This is because this approach could enhance the integration of the cultural beliefs and practices of women in the orthodox health care delivery system to facilitate the utilisation of skilled birth care.