

## **The Influence of Linda Mama Programme on Interpersonal Communication between Midwives and Maternal Mothers at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital**

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### **Abstract**

*The study sought to carefully look into the influence of Linda mama Programme on interpersonal communication between midwives and maternal mothers at Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital. A mixed-method approach was used where fifty women filled questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions and 12 were further interviewed. Findings showed challenges in interpersonal communication. Findings showed challenges in interpersonal communication. The relationship between midwives and maternal mothers lacked a holistic approach and ability to address the challenges that arose. Thus, a need for enhanced interpersonal communication. The LMP is not well-publicized and the hospital should use multiple communications, and forums to sensitize the public. Research should be conducted on interpersonal communication strategies that guide the forms of communication which leads to creating a friendship between midwives and mothers. The study was done with a small sample; as the study was limited to one Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. Further research will be necessary to include all other hospitals in various counties with a larger sample size to be able to generalize findings on the health sector. The study further recommends that future studies should be guided by Communication Accommodation Theory and Convergence related to the maternal health should look deeper into the relationship between mid-wives and maternal mothers. The study may further consider researching on how human interpersonal communications influence maternal health to enhance uptake and the sustainability of the Linda Mama programme.*

**Keywords: Linda Mama Programme, maternal morbidity and mortality, interpersonal communication, sensitize.**

## **1.0 Introduction**

Global leaders have made significant international commitments to women's health strategies in recent years (Organization & Policy, 2005). The fifth Millennium Development Goal aims to lower maternal mortality and improve maternal health. The goal of communication strategies is to create awareness and commitment in order to save the lives of mothers and children. Due to the anxiety and distress associated with pregnancy (Roemer, 1993), a breakdown in communication may increase the vulnerability of pregnant women, and they may eventually refuse to use health-care services.

In Africa, effective midwifery interaction with women is critical (Rogoff, 2011). Particularly because good communication, connection, rapport, and professional behaviors can help midwives and women build trusting relationships that lead to improved service quality (Alexander et al., 1995) Midwives must have highly developed interpersonal skills in order to give specialized care and guarantee that the birthing woman's preferences are honored. Giving delivery at a hospital provides a critical window of opportunity for high-impact therapies like eclampsia and hemorrhage care, neonatal resuscitation, and aid with early breastfeeding initiation (Kirkham, 1996).

In Kenya, maternal Health care programmes have been majorly taken care of by the non-governmental organizations and the private sector for quite some time. Linda Mama programme aims at ensuring equity in the uptake of maternity services in Kenya. Improved access to good health care throughout pregnancy and delivery can lower maternal morbidity and mortality. The notion that Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH) program mass implementation means that all communities in a specific intervention region have access to and benefit from services has become a key concern in the continuous execution of MNCH programs under various frameworks.

According to (Tilley & Watson, 2008), health practitioner's attitudes can potentially cause a conflict between users and the program itself, limiting its impact on interpersonal interactions between midwives and expectant mothers. They also suggest that many health-care programs place a heavy emphasis on technical abilities, leaving a deficit in workers' interpersonal skills, which would stimulate interpersonal communication as well. According to (Balaskas, 2013), new

government programs, as well as the availability of services, may influence some women's use of maternal health care services. Low uptake could indicate a lack of interaction between midwives and maternal mothers, obstructing interpersonal communication.

In light of the above, this study investigated the influence of the Linda Mama Program on interpersonal communication between midwives and maternal mothers at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The antenatal services that mothers receive during pregnancy, delivery, and after delivery of their baby is crucial for the survival and wellbeing of the mother. Despite there being free antenatal services through Linda mama programme, a considerable number of women are not aware or made use of these services. This is due to lack of effective communication between the health care facilities and the mothers.

(Tilley & Watson, 2008) agreed in suggesting that the mother-midwife relationship is best described as a partnership ethos, involving the engagement of both the mother and her partner in decision-making and letting the mother to freely voice her needs, expectations, and desires. There have been few studies on the relationship between a midwife and a mother, despite the fact that there have been many studies on the interaction between a physician and a patient. There is a lack of information about health communication behavior; looking into mothers' experiences in the delivery room and the effects of effective midwife-mother relationships.

Improved access to good health care throughout pregnancy and delivery can lower maternal morbidity and mortality (Medicine et al., 2020). The notion that MNCH program mass implementation means that all communities in a specific intervention region have access to and benefit from services has become a key concern in the continuous execution of MNCH programs under various frameworks.

## **1.2 Objective of the Study**

To evaluate the influence of information dissemination in the Linda Mama Programme on interpersonal communication between maternal mothers and midwives at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions.

- i) How is information disseminated in the Linda Mama Programme on interpersonal communication between maternal mothers and midwives at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital?
- ii) Which are the factors that influence of maternal mothers satisfaction in the Linda mama programme on interpersonal communication between maternal mothers and midwives at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital?
- iii) What factor that influence the choice of forms of interpersonal communication used in promoting the Linda Mama Programme at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital?

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT)**

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is a broad paradigm that predicts and explains many of the changes people make in their interactions in order to increase, maintain, or decrease social distance. It investigates the various methods in which we alter our communication, as well as the reasons for doing so and the consequences. CAT tackles interpersonal communication challenges while also connecting them to the larger context of intergroup stakes in a conversation.

## **Convergence Theory**

Convergence Theory is important for explaining how information is transferred and perceived in a social system. It emphasizes the importance of information exchange, mutual understanding, and consensus on any group activity that may result in societal change (Chavkin & Maher, 2010). Communication, rather of being considered as a one-way broadcast, according to the theory, should be understood as a sharing or exchange of knowledge.

## **Empirical literature review**

Since the implementation of the Linda Mama Free Maternity Program, the number of pregnant mothers seeking maternal and neonatal health services has increased significantly. The goal of the program was to address the high maternal death rate by increasing access to competent delivery services and thereby improve mother and child health. This has resulted in a significant improvement in maternal and neonatal indices, as well as a decrease in mother and infant mortality (Roach, 2006)

## **Information Dissemination**

The objective of the study was to evaluate the influence of information dissemination in the Linda Mama Programme on interpersonal communication between maternal mothers and midwives at Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. This study objective mainly focused on Linda mama information dissemination, creation of awareness, awareness indicators, approach to awareness and alternative approach to making the Linda Mama program more effective

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The Linda Mama program's purpose is to "provide universal access to maternity and child health services while also contributing to the country's progress toward universal health coverage." The scheme is run by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and provides a package of antenatal, delivery, and post-natal health care services to women based on their need rather than their capacity to pay, putting Kenya on the road to Universal Health Care. As a result, the scheme is for women who are not insured by the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) or any other type of insurance.

### **Programme awareness**

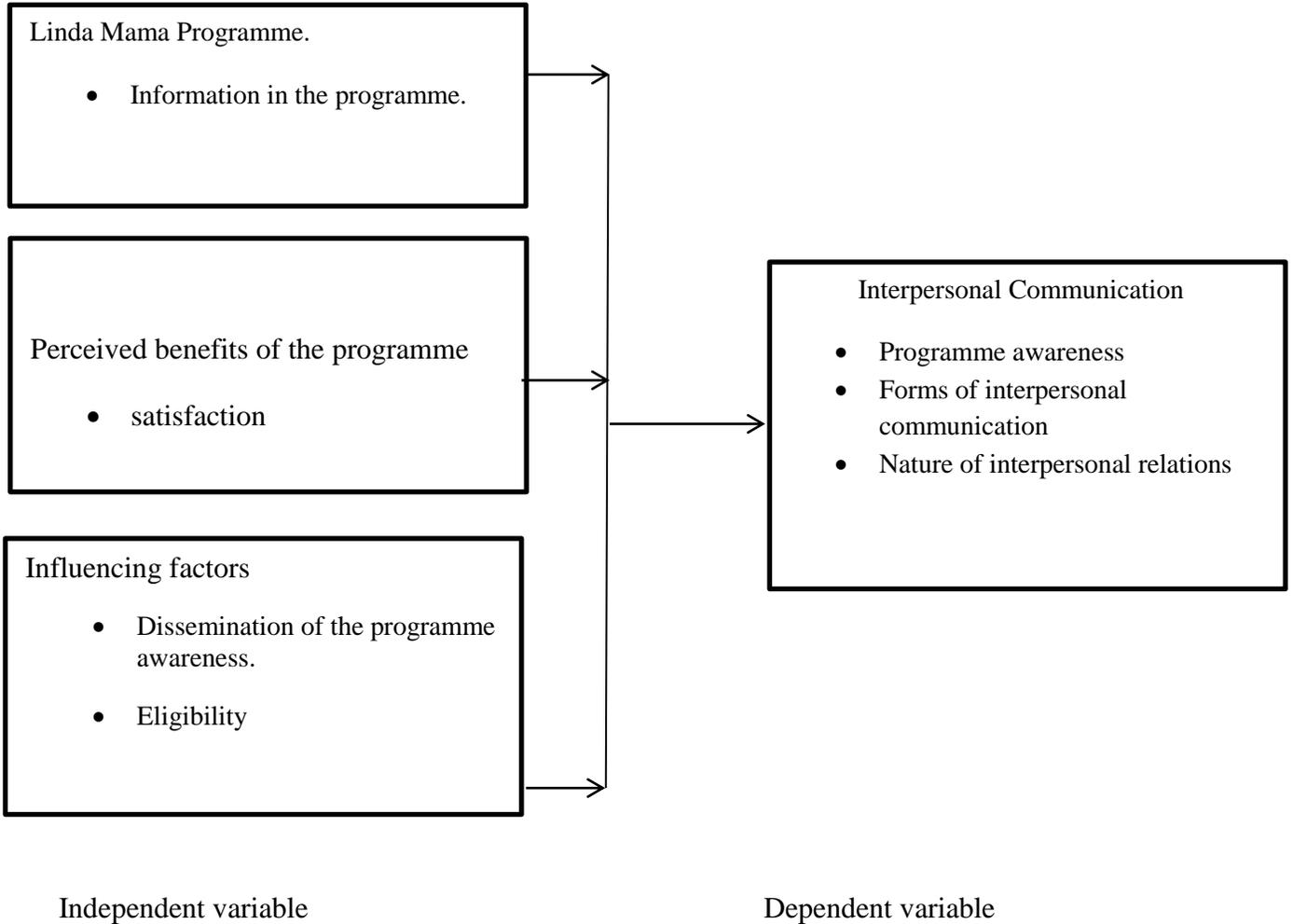
It is often assumed that women's awareness of such programs has a good or negative impact on their decision to use healthcare delivery services. The program's ultimate goal is for every pregnant woman in the country to be registered. Currently, the effort is aimed at the poorest and most vulnerable women who cannot pay the necessary ANC, PNC, and delivery. As a result, anyone covered by the NHIF or private health insurance cannot take advantage of the Linda Mama initiative's current setup (Siegrist, 1992)

The Linda Mama program's awareness, the demographic background of the beneficiaries, the attitude of healthcare providers, and the quality of healthcare services in the health facilities are all factors to consider. It is often assumed that women's awareness of such programs has a good or negative impact on their decision to use healthcare delivery services.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Individual satisfaction with healthcare is determined by a personal evaluation of healthcare services as well as contacts with healthcare professionals. This represents the individual's personal preferences, as well as his or her expectations and experiences with the treatment (Shaw, 2007). Individual expectations are met by the health system and providers through interpersonal communication, ensuring that care is given efficiently. Facility infrastructure, appropriate competent birth attendants, resulting in reduced client waiting time, availability of medications and other critical supplies, readily available equipment, and overall facility cleanliness are all factors that influence use. Clients are satisfied with the service when the quality is seen to be high, which influences the service use rate. A mother's obstetric experience

during childbirth also influences where she delivers her subsequent pregnancies. Because this is their ultimate goal, a successful birth improves a mother's degree of satisfaction. In this scenario, though, the projected pregnant status is more important.



**Figure 1:1 conceptual framework.**

### **3.0 Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The procedures and techniques that were used in the gathering, processing, and analysis of data are presented in this chapter. Research design, target population, sample size, and sampling processes, data collection methods, data analysis methodologies, and ethical considerations are all subsections that must be included.

The study adopted a mixed method research design. Fifty women were selected using stratified random sampling to fill questionnaires and 12 midwives were purposively chosen for the interviews, while the data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The Target Population was from proactive women who were aged between 15 to 49 years and attended Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital for maternal services. The hospital was chosen since it is one of the few public hospitals in the area that offers the Linda Mama program. The study used a stratified random sampling; which involves the process of segregation, followed by random selection of subjects from each stratum (Staff, 2013). The strata were created based on common qualities and placed in two groups, which involved the Midwives and Maternal Mothers. The study relied on primary data, which was gathered through questionnaires. The responses to interpersonal communication questions were ranked on a 5-point Likert scale in the questionnaires. Research assistants helped with the collection of primary data. They are familiar in various data collection techniques. The data was gathered within a month. The completed questionnaires were entered into an SPSS version 23 database (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The findings of closed ended questions were presented using figures, graphs and tables. The findings of open ended questions were analyzed through content analysis and for interviews through thematic analysis. Ethical Considerations was given by Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital management, through the research committee, as well as the Daystar University Ethical Research Committee. A research permit was given by the National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). The participants were asked to sign a consent form that stated that they had been given full disclosure. The study's risks were explained to the participants, allowing them to make informed decisions.

#### **4.0 Key findings**

This chapter presents the survey findings carried out to assess the influence of the Linda Mama programme on interpersonal communication between midwives and maternal mothers. In consideration of the study's objectives, an analytical report containing the analysis and discussion of the major survey findings was delivered. To acquire data, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The conclusions of the analysis are also presented in the form of tables.

##### **Response Rate**

The target population was made up of women of procreative age who are between 15-49 years visiting Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital for maternal services who have delivered in the health facility and have been discharged, waiting to go home and midwives on duty at the time of the study. A sample size of 41 out of 50 women was obtained. There were 41 valid questionnaires, resulting in an 82 percent response rate. According to (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999) a 50 percent -60 percent answer rate is sufficient, 61%-70 % good, and over 70 % exceptional, hence the 82 percent response rate was sufficient to do analysis.

This study objective mainly focused on Linda mama information dissemination, creation of awareness, awareness indicators, approach to awareness and alternative approach to making the Linda Mama program more effective.

According to the analysis, it was interesting to see that all respondents (100%) were aware of Linda mama program. These findings imply that Mama Lucy Kibaki hospital is making the program known to maternal mothers.

The study went further to sought how respondent knew about the programme concerns, majority of the respondents know Linda Mama as a programme that helps expectant mothers to deliver free of charge in any public hospitals.

### **Linda Mama Programme Awareness**

The study sought to know if the respondents were aware of Linda mama program. The findings are presented in Table below:

Linda Mama Programme Awareness	Frequency	Percent
Yes	41	100
No	0	0
Total	41	100

*Table 4.1: Linda Mama Programme Awareness*

Interpersonal communication should be enhanced between mothers and midwives to minimize conflict. Many respondents felt that there were challenges of communication in health facilities, and the relationship between the midwives and maternal mothers lacked a holistic approach and ability to address the interpersonal communication challenge and Linda Mama programme come in handy, to create unity.

The awareness of the Linda Mama programme should be well publicized since it aims to ensure all mothers' safe delivery irrespective of social or economic status. The hospital should also not limit itself to one approach of communication, whereby mothers receive information when they visit the Hospital, but should use all available ways of sensitizing the public about the programme such as; seminar, social media, TV and radio, newspapers, use of trained experts and workshops to sensitize public about the programme. This way, (Rungapadiachy, 2007) argued that Healthcare providers also are not sure whether the programme will be able to reach all women due to challenges such as; inadequate sensitization in the community and adoption of wait and see attitude. This is an indication that the programme is not well advertised to the public.

The midwives agree that the programme awareness is done on a very low note and no much information is given unless the expectant women ask for more information. The reason low note awareness could be to make expectant women who can pay for services and those unable are enrolled on the programme. On the other hand, the respondents agree that not many women

know about it unless they get second-hand information from the friends who were enrolled or had an experience with it since the information about the programme is given during the antenatal clinics. This lines with what (Arega et al., 2017) posited that some healthcare providers feel low levels of awareness about the programme without adequate sensitization in the community will affect uptake of the programme. Some healthcare providers feel that although many women will gladly enroll while some will adopt a wait and see attitude.

### **Awareness Indicators**

The study sought to find out some of the indicators to confirm that the expectant mother who visits Mama Lucy Hospital were aware of the programme. From midwives interviews, every expectant mother is enrolled on the programme when she is registered in any public hospital.

One of the mid wives had this to say “The expectant mother visiting hospital must produce a registration card on every visit and those who are not aware of the programme are encouraged to register and are given a card.”

Based on the analysis, 58.5 % said that the approach which was used to disseminate Linda Mama information was effective while 41.5% said it was not effective. Thus the hospitals should find other ways most appropriate ways of disseminating the programme information so as every expectant woman has the correct information about the programme. Awareness of such programs is commonly believed to positively or negatively influence the decision making process of women to use up healthcare delivery programmes (Awareness), 1999) Lack of awareness on the importance of a certain healthcare delivery program or even their existence could influence the uptake of the healthcare delivery programme among women.

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### **Alternatives Ways of Creating Awareness**

The development of health communication for promoting health has mainly taken place outside the health care services (Medicine et al., 2017). When health communication does occur within the health care services, it lacks a broad socio-ecological health promotion approach, needed to tackle lifestyle-related ill-health and health inequalities. The study sought to find the views of alternatives approach in creating Linda Mama programme awareness. From the response, there are many ways that the hospitals are not using such as; seminars, social media, TV and radio, newspapers, use of trained experts and workshops to sensitize the public about the programme.

The nature of influence can be positive or negative; some of the positive influences brought by the programme are that it has created a friendship between mothers and midwives. The interaction that is brought by a frequent visitor to clinic and guidance from midwives to mothers on how to take care of infants leads to the positive relationship while the negative relationship can be brought by midwives not motivated as there is no cash transfer hence leading them to feel exhausted hence their emotion may be high and the language changes from soft to rude with attitude when giving instructions to mothers.

With regards to the embrace of the Linda Mama programme, some drivers make mothers embrace the programme. Poverty, financial instability, early pregnancies are some of the drivers that have to led the Linda Mama programme to be embraced by many mothers. Despite these drivers, better services such as assurance of free delivery service, free food products to the newborn and proper care to malnourished and underweight newborns motivate mothers and their families to embrace the programme.

### **Summary**

The study focused on the aspects; information dissemination, creation of awareness, awareness indicators, and alternative approach to making the Linda Mama program more effective. The study revealed that 100% of respondents were aware of the Linda Mama programme. This

implies that Linda Mama information is disseminated well to expectant mothers who visit the hospital during clinics. The respondents have information that they only need to register and be given a card that confirms they are enrolled in the programme hence when they visit the clinic they just need to produce a card and they are exempted from clinic charges.

### **Limitation of the study**

This research experienced a challenge in collecting data. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunity to collect data in the Mama Lucy hospital where the researcher was planning to initiate data collection physically was coupled with delays. However, several researchers have embraced online data collection which has been successful despite the challenges of people who tend not to do it immediately or forget. Sometimes participants just ignore the message asking them for participation because there is no pressure to finish it or they cannot see the worth of doing it. Thus researchers should embrace online data collection putting good guidelines

### **Significance of the study**

Women seeking maternal services through the Linda Mama Program will benefit, and the study will identify what needs to be done through research, as well as the areas of the program that need strengthening and support to improve positive results through interpersonal communication. The findings of the study will be useful for strategies to improve communication between health providers and pregnant women, for positive maternal health outcomes.

### **5.0 Conclusion**

This chapter describes the summary of the study including research objective, the research methodology, and its major findings. It also discusses the results of the objective in this study with comparison to empirical studies reviewed. Conclusions are then provided from the study, recommendations for improvement and further studies are also clearly stated on the relationship to the influence of Linda Mama programme on interpersonal communication between the midwives and maternal mothers.

This study has contributed to raising awareness regarding the influence of the Linda Mama programme on interpersonal communication between the midwives and maternal mothers at

Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital. The respondent recommends the use of Linda Mama programme information to sensitize the public about the programme which of more beneficial to many mothers but there lacks enough information on the public domain. The research revealed that having a better way of information dissemination leads to lower fear and anxiety and mothers will have confidence when enrolling in the programme. These findings suggest the importance of proper information dissemination which leads to customer satisfaction hence creating a good relationship between mothers and midwives. Some mothers are reluctant when there is no proper interpersonal communication by midwives hence creating a conflict between maternal mothers and midwives. As this research showed, proper information dissemination and interpersonal communication will create a good communication environment that will help the successful implementation of the Linda Mama programme to benefit all parties.

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