

Declaration

I, **Chuma Simbyakula**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work. It is being presented to the University of Zambia for the first time and has never been submitted elsewhere for any academic award. All published work, materials and sources that have been used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Certificate of Approval

This dissertation by **Chuma Simbyakula** is approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Gender Studies by the University of Zambia.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Children Tinashe, Thumelo and Thumbikani Nyirenda and those yet to come. I love you!

Acknowledgments

I am greatly indebted to my *Darling Husband Them bani Joseph Nyirenda, my Adorable Children Tinashe, Thumelo, Thumbikani Nyirenda and those yet to come, my Parents Dr. Ngosa Simbyakula and Mrs. Margaret M. Simbyakula*, for inspiring, giving me a reason to forge ahead to pursue my studies and for putting up resources to finance my Masters' Degree Programme at the University of Zambia (UNZA). May God continue to bless you all. I will always be grateful to *My Entire Family* for the support during my studies.

To you my children, you have been the best during the time that I was away from you to complete my dissertation, meant you being deprived of motherly care. May God richly bless you and grant you good health, long life and peace all the days of your lives. I love and cherish you!

Special thanks go to the Department of Gender Studies with whom I had contact before embarking on this important exercise especially Prof. M. Macwan'gi, Dr A.N. Phiri, Dr T. Kusanthan, Mr P. Sakala, Dr P. Mumbi and Ms M. Inambao. Thank you for assisting and shaping me in one way or another. A special thanks to Dr. A.N Phiri for being a mother, encouraging me to do my work and stay focused, I say thank you and God richly bless you!

Gratitude go to all the other authorities in the respective institutions which I had contact with, to all the officers in-charge of the selected clinics who granted me authority and facilitated the execution of my research in a peaceful manner and to all the participants who contribution to this dissertation. This work would not have been possible without your cooperation.

Many thanks go to my spiritual parents Prophetess and Apostle Mhusambazi, who stood by me in prayers when times were tough! Mrs B. Mukata for assisting edit my work, and many others too numerous to mention. A special thanks to you, I am so grateful for putting this work together.

Lastly but not the least, to **my Lord God Jehovah, my personal saviour Jesus Christ** who has made all things possible, without whose help and that of the **Holy Spirit** that guided me, this research would not have been possible. Glory, Honour and Praise be to you, I will forever be grateful for showing me your goodness, grace, never ending mercy and most of all the steadfast love – Romans 8:28.

Abstract

Background: There have been gaps in research on the level of access and use of Safe Motherhood (SM) and Reproductive Health Service (RHS) by adolescents in Lusaka.

Purpose: To establish the factors that influence access and utilization of Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Services by adolescents in Zambia.

Methodology: An exploratory cross sectional qualitative research design informed by the abductive research strategy incorporating quantitative research approach was chosen to ground this study. Data were collected from three health centres namely, Chelston, Chipata and Ngo'mbe clinics. Theoretical purposive sampling interleaved with maximum variation sampling was used to enlist respondents. In total there were forty (40) participants that participated in the study. In –depth interviews were conducted with thirty-six (36) were adolescents seeking a Safe Motherhood or Reproductive Health Service, three (3) Health Care Providers from the health centres and one (1) key informant from Ministry of Health and (MOH).

Results: The study established that adolescents had unmet behavioural, psychological, emotional, developmental and gender-specific sexual and reproductive health needs and concerns. In addition health care providers faced considerable challenges that hampered their ability to adequately offer SM and RHS.

Conclusions: The study concluded that there was a service gap in the provision of adolescent SM and RHS services. Existing health services emphasized post-exposure SM and RH as opposed to pre-exposure services.

Research Policy Implications: The study recommends undertaking a qualitative survey with a larger number of adolescents to solicit for more usage of SM and RHS. There is need to develop advocacy programmes that could reach out to both the boys and girls on a larger scale throughout Zambia. Other recommendations would include strengthening of out-reach services, regular training and in-servicing of health providers, health care givers and counsellors to effectively serve adolescents. The study further recommends the need to strengthen public-private sector partnership and stake holder participation in adolescent health, continuous gathering of data on SM and RHS. All these have implications for immediate and future reproductive health of adolescents, and for bridging the SM and RHS services gap across the life span.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ANC	Antenatal care
ARSH	Adolescent sexual and reproductive health
CBO	Community based organisation
FBO	Faith based organisations
FP	Family planning
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICPD	International conference on population and development
IEC	Information, education communication
MCDMCH	Ministry of community development, mother and child health
MCH	Maternal and child health
MOE	Ministry of education
MOH	Ministry of health
NAC	National AIDS council
NGO	Non governmental organisation
PLWAs	People living with AIDS
PRHS	Preventive reproductive health services
RHS	Reproductive health services
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
SM	Safe motherhood
STDs	Sexual transmitted diseases
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations programmes on AIDS
UNDP	United Nations development programme
UNFPA	United Nations fund for population
UNICEF	United Nations children's fund
VCT	Voluntary counselling and testing
WHO	World health organisation
ZDHS	Zambia demographic health survey