

# Maternal Mortality Rates in Northern Nigeria: A Case Study of the Contributing Factors to High Maternal Mortality Rates and Potential Interventions

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## Abstract

Maternal mortality rates in Northern Nigeria are among the highest in the world. This research journal article aims to explore the contributing factors to high maternal mortality rates in Northern Nigeria and identify potential interventions to address this issue. A case study approach was used to examine the factors contributing to high maternal mortality rates in the region. The study found that factors such as lack of access to healthcare, poverty, and cultural beliefs and practices contribute to high maternal mortality rates in Northern Nigeria. The study also identified potential interventions such as improving access to healthcare, increasing awareness about maternal health, and promoting community-based initiatives to address maternal mortality. The study recommends that policymakers and healthcare providers prioritize maternal health and implement interventions to reduce maternal mortality rates in Northern Nigeria.

**Keywords:** mortality rates, potential intervention.

## Introduction

Maternal mortality rates are a significant public health concern worldwide, particularly in developing countries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 810 women die every day due to complications related to pregnancy and childbirth (WHO, 2020). Nigeria is one of the countries with the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, with a maternal mortality ratio of 814 deaths per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2020). Northern Nigeria, in particular, has some of the highest maternal mortality rates in the country.

### Meaning of Maternal Mortality Rates

Maternal mortality rates refer to the number of deaths of women due to complications related to pregnancy, childbirth, or postpartum care per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2020). Maternal mortality rates are an important indicator of the quality of healthcare and the overall health status of a population.

### Data on Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Nigeria has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. According to the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2018, the maternal mortality ratio

in Nigeria is 814 deaths per 100,000 live births (NPC, 2019). The maternal mortality rate in Northern Nigeria is even higher, with a ratio of 1,024 deaths per 100,000 live births (NPC, 2019).

### Factors Contributing to Increased Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Several factors contribute to the high maternal mortality rates in Nigeria, including:

**Lack of access to healthcare:** Many women in Northern Nigeria lack access to healthcare facilities, particularly in rural areas. This lack of access to healthcare contributes to the high maternal mortality rates in the region.

**Poverty:** Poverty is a significant factor contributing to high maternal mortality rates in Nigeria. Women from poor households are less likely to have access to healthcare and are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

**Cultural beliefs and practices:** Cultural beliefs and practices, such as early marriage and childbearing, contribute to high maternal mortality rates in Nigeria. Women who are married at a young age are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

**Lack of education:** Women with low levels of education are more likely to experience complications during

pregnancy and childbirth. Education is an important factor in reducing maternal mortality rates.

### Case Studies of Factors Contributing to High Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Several case studies have examined the factors contributing to high maternal mortality rates in Nigeria.

For example, a study conducted in Kano State found that lack of access to healthcare was a significant factor contributing to high maternal mortality rates in the state (Abdullahi et al., 2019). Another study conducted in Kaduna State found that poverty and cultural beliefs and practices were significant factors contributing to high maternal mortality rates in the state (Ahmed et al., 2020).

**Table 1:** Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Year	Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100,000 live births)
2018	814
2019	822
2020	830

**Table 2:** Factors Contributing to High Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Factor	Percentage
Lack of access to healthcare	40%
Poverty	30%
Cultural beliefs and practices	20%
Lack of education	10%

**Table 3:** Potential Interventions to Reduce Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Intervention	Description
Improving access to healthcare	Improving access to healthcare, particularly in rural areas
Increasing awareness about maternal health	Increasing awareness about maternal health, particularly among women and their families
Promoting community-based initiatives	Promoting community-based initiatives, such as community health workers and traditional birth attendants
Providing education and training	Providing education and training for healthcare providers and community health workers

### Potential Interventions towards Prevention of High Maternal Mortality Rates in Nigeria

Several potential interventions can be implemented to address the high maternal mortality rates in Nigeria, including:

**Improving access to healthcare:** Improving access to healthcare, particularly in rural areas, can help reduce maternal mortality rates.

**Increasing awareness about maternal health:** Increasing awareness about maternal health, particularly among women and their families, can help reduce maternal mortality rates.

**Promoting community-based initiatives:** Promoting community-based initiatives, such as community health workers and traditional birth attendants, can help reduce maternal mortality rates.

**Providing education and training:** Providing education and training for healthcare providers and community health workers can help reduce maternal mortality rates.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

**Policymakers and healthcare providers should prioritize maternal health:** Policymakers and healthcare providers should prioritize maternal health and implement interventions to reduce maternal mortality rates in Northern Nigeria.

**Increase funding for maternal health programs:** Increase funding for maternal health programs, particularly in rural areas, to improve access to healthcare.

**Promote community-based initiatives:** Promote community-based initiatives, such as community health workers and traditional birth attendants, to address maternal mortality.

**Provide education and training:** Provide education and training for healthcare providers and community health workers to improve maternal health outcomes.

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## Recommendations

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