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Role orientation of family and friends on continuous labor support: A stepped wedge randomized control trial of effectiveness on labor outcomes and maternal satisfaction in Eastern Uganda.**Eva Wodeya Wanyenze***Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Uganda*

Statement of the Problem: The intrapartum period is an opportune phase to provide women with respectful, individualized, woman-centered, and effective clinical and non-clinical practices to optimize birth outcomes of labor. World Health Organization recommends labor support from a companion of choice during labor. There is low-quality evidence on labor support in low-income settings and it is not clear if orientation birth companions impact effectiveness. The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of labor support-role orientation of family and friends on labor outcomes and maternal satisfaction a sub-region in Eastern Uganda.

Methodology: A 12 months stepped wedge cluster randomized trial [control n=240, intervention n= 235]. The intervention was "midwife-provided orientation of birth companions". Independent t-test and Chi-Square tests were used to assess the differences by study period.

Findings: There were no statistically significant differences in the mode of delivery, length of labor, Apgar score, and the need to augment labor. Mean maternal satisfaction rate was significantly higher in the intervention period compared to the control period ($P > 0.001$). High maternal satisfaction levels from sub-group analysis were noted among the women who were; at the regional referral hospital, younger, first-time mothers, and unmarried ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusion & Significance: Role orientation of family and friends on admission increased maternal satisfaction with experience of labor and had no effect on birth outcomes of labor. Findings could inform the integration birth companions in the admission process of the woman in labor in similar low-resource settings. Reflecting on the staggered introduction of the intervention, we recommended that the study be repeated with larger samples and more clusters to assess the overall effect. An evaluation of the acceptability and perceptions of midwives regarding orienting birth companions is essential for implementation.

Biography

Eva W Wanyenze is a doctoral student in maternal and newborn health with a passion to improve women's experience of care and wellbeing. Her doctoral work highlights what women want in relation to care provided by birth companions and effectiveness of integrating family members in the care of the woman during labor.