

Description

Taking a closer look



vitter.

The global COVID-19 outbreak has affected all areas of healthcare in Rwanda, including midwifery practice. However, babies have no regard for emergency situations, so despite the ongoing challenges, midwives must be available to help pregnant women and their newborns in order to safely manage complications and promote healthy outcomes. Interestingly, recent research has highlighted that the pandemic has negatively affected the academic progress of Rwandan midwifery students.

Conducting research



Last month, I designed and conducted a descriptive-analytic study wherein a questionnaire was issued amongst 100 Rwandan student midwives, which recorded respondents' views about the impact of Covid-19 on their academic studies. The questionnaire focused on four areas 1) socio-economic effects, 2) educational impact, 3) the impact of COVID-19 on midwives' scope of practice and 4) Covid-19's impact upon midwifery study in our country.

> I designed and conducted a descriptive-analytic study […] which recorded respondents' views about the impact of Covid-19 on their academic studies.

Interesting findings



The survey results showed that students are concerned that cessation of clinical practice prompted by the pandemic will affect their job prospects, and that they may not be as attractive to employers as candidates that have not had their midwifery education interrupted in the same way. The findings also showed that students are worried that their Grade Point Average (GPA) will be negatively affected.

> Students are concerned that cessation of clinical practice prompted by the pandemic will affect their job prospects

Quality of care

Students also speculated that the quality of midwifery practice during the pandemic may be affected too. Students felt that midwives' fear of contracting the infection in clinical settings may affect the care received by women and their newborns. The study also raised concerns that the outbreak may discourage prospective midwifery students from pursuing careers in midwifery and other healthcare professions, due to fears about future outbreaks. However, some students noted that being removed from practice made them feel that the university prioritised their safety, and they expressed hope that the university's prioritisation of student wellbeing, would encourage aspiring student midwives to take up midwifery studies.

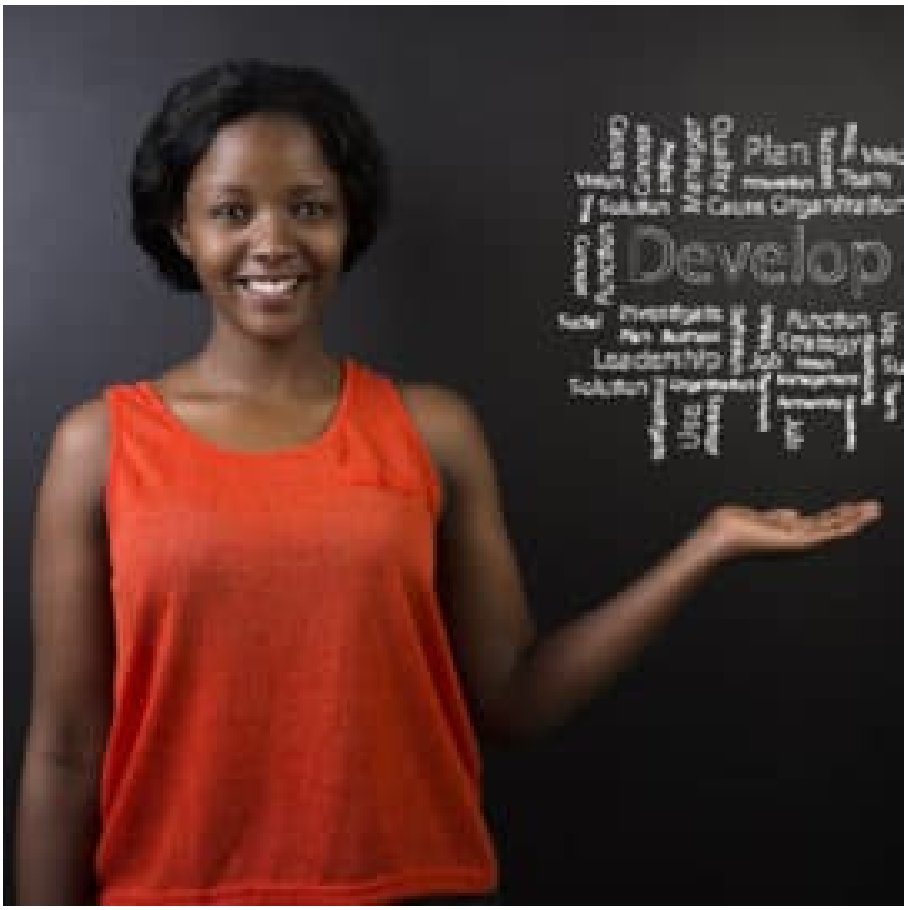
> Students also speculated that the quality of midwife practice during the pandemic may be affected too.

Financial worries



Students also observed that the pandemic has had a financial impact, both on students and members of wider society, due to the closure of places of employment as part of the nationwide lockdown. Students with dependent children anticipate that they will face financial difficulties when face-to-face schooling resumes, because their inability to undertake employment during the lockdown, will affect their ability to pay school fees.

Commitment



Rwandan midwifery students have been provided with online materials to support their learning until they can return to university and clinical practice. Students feel well supported by their lecturers, who are assisting them with revision and supporting those students without internet access. Moreover, the survey highlighted students' overwhelming commitment to improving the quality of midwifery care in Rwanda.

Category

1. All4Maternity Blog
2. Aspiring Students
3. Global Issues
4. Student Midwife Blog
5. Student Midwives

Tags

1. coronavirus
2. COVID-19
3. Rwanda
4. student midwife
5. support our students

Date Created
7th May 2020