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1.M. Women and health 1

Factors affecting the use of prenatal and postnatal care by women of non-western immigrant origin in industrialized western countries

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Background

In many industrialized western countries immigrants constitute a substantial part of the population, which is also seen in the prenatal and postnatal care client population. Research in several industrialized western countries has shown that women of non-western immigrant origin make inadequate use of prenatal and postnatal care. They do not enter timely and/or do not attend all appointments. Several quantitative and qualitative studies in western industrialized countries have investigated factors affecting the use of prenatal and postnatal care by women of non-western immigrant origin. The quantitative studies focused among others on socioeconomic and cultural factors, and the qualitative studies focused among others on experiences and expectations. By taking both quantitative and qualitative studies into account, this systematic review aims to provide a more in depth understanding of the factors affecting the use of prenatal and postnatal care by women of non-western immigrant origin in industrialized countries.

Methods

A systematic review of literature published between 1995 and August 2010 was performed in 11 databases and resulted in 6295 titles. A three stage screening process consisting of title, abstract and full text screening was conducted. Each selected abstract and article was screened independently by two reviewers. Data were synthesized by use of narrative and tabular methods.

Results

Preliminary results show that cultural factors such as language, accessibility to services such as making appointments and health beliefs such as considering pregnancy not needing special attention, affected the use of prenatal and postnatal care by women of non-western immigrant origin in industrialized western countries.

Conclusion

These preliminary results indicate that different specific types of factors need to be taken into account when developing measures to reduce inadequate use of prenatal and postnatal care by women of non-western immigrant origin in industrialized western countries.