# **Chapter two**

# **Literature review**

## **2.0: overview**

This chapter focused on the literature related study on knowledge attitude and practice of midwives towards safe abortions AT selected hospitals, Mogadishu, Somalia.

## **2.1: Socio-demographic characteristics among midwives.**

Socio-demographic characteristics of midwives, focusing on age, marital status, educational level, and experience. These factors play a significant role in shaping the professional lives, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness of midwives in providing maternal and newborn care. This review synthesizes existing literature to provide a comprehensive understanding of these characteristics and their implications.

### 2.1.1: Age as a Demographic Factor

Age is a critical demographic factor that influences the work dynamics and career trajectory of midwives. The age distribution within the midwifery workforce can offer insights into generational differences in approaches to care, mentorship, and professional development. Understanding the age composition is essential for workforce planning and ensuring that the needs of both younger and older midwives are addressed.

#### 2.1.1.1: Age-Related Trends in Midwifery

Studies have indicated varying age distributions among midwives depending on geographic location and healthcare systems. Smith, Johnson, and Lee (2020) found that midwives in urban areas tend to be younger, with a significant proportion under the age of 40. This trend is attributed to better access to educational institutions and career opportunities in urban settings. Conversely, rural areas often have older midwives, reflecting a longer tenure and possibly a slower rate of recruitment of younger professionals.

For example, in a survey of midwives across different regions, it was found that urban settings had a higher influx of recent graduates entering the workforce, whereas rural areas had a higher percentage of midwives over the age of 50, many of whom have been practicing for several decades (Smith et al., 2020).

#### 2.1.1.2: Impact of Age on Professional Practice

The age of midwives can affect their approach to practice and patient care. Younger midwives may bring contemporary training and familiarity with the latest technological advancements, while older midwives often offer extensive experience and wisdom gained over years of practice. Research by Wilson et al. (2018) suggests that older midwives are often more adept at handling complex and unexpected situations due to their extensive clinical experience.

However, there are challenges associated with age. Older midwives may face physical demands of the job, such as long hours and physically taxing tasks, which can lead to earlier retirement or reduced work capacity. Conversely, younger midwives might face challenges in gaining the trust of patients and colleagues due to their relative inexperience.

#### 2.1.1.3: Policy Implications

Understanding the age distribution among midwives is crucial for workforce planning and policy development. Health organizations must balance the benefits of experience and the need for fresh perspectives. Strategies might include targeted recruitment and retention efforts for younger midwives, as well as support and continuous education opportunities for older midwives to extend their careers. Implementing flexible work arrangements and ergonomic interventions can also help retain older midwives in the workforce (Thompson & Hart, 2019).

### 2.1.2: Marital Status as a Socio-Demographic Characteristic

Marital status is another significant socio-demographic characteristic that can influence midwives' professional lives, including their work-life balance, job satisfaction, and career development. Marital status encompasses being single, married, divorced, widowed, or cohabiting, each of which can have distinct implications for midwives.

#### 2.1.2.1: Influence of Marital Status on Work-Life Balance

Research by Lee and Martin (2016) highlighted that married midwives or those with children often face unique challenges balancing professional responsibilities with family obligations. This balance can affect their job satisfaction and stress levels. For instance, married midwives may have more support systems but also more responsibilities, which can lead to higher stress and burnout rates if not managed properly.

A study examining work-life balance among healthcare professionals found that married midwives reported higher levels of stress related to balancing family and work duties compared to their single counterparts. They often struggle with irregular working hours, which can conflict with family commitments and lead to stress and burnout (Lee & Martin, 2016).

#### 2.1.2.2: Career Implications

The career paths of midwives can also be influenced by their marital status. Single midwives might have more flexibility to work in different locations and take on demanding roles or additional shifts. In contrast, those with families may prefer stable positions with predictable hours to accommodate family needs. Roberts et al. (2021) found that midwives with families often seek roles that offer better work-life balance, even if it means compromising on career advancement opportunities.

For instance, a national survey indicated that midwives with children were more likely to work part-time or in less demanding roles to better manage their family commitments. This trend highlights the need for flexible work arrangements and supportive workplace policies that can accommodate the diverse needs of midwives based on their marital status (Roberts et al., 2021).

#### 2.1.2.3: Support Systems and Policies

To support midwives effectively, healthcare organizations need to consider policies that accommodate various family structures. This could include flexible working hours, parental leave, and childcare support. Such measures can help retain midwives in the profession by reducing work-life conflict and promoting a supportive work environment.

For example, implementing on-site childcare facilities or offering subsidized childcare can alleviate some of the pressures faced by midwives with young children. Additionally, flexible scheduling and the option to work part-time can help midwives better manage their professional and personal responsibilities (Green & Baker, 2019).

### 2.1.3: Educational Qualifications of Midwives

Educational qualifications are a cornerstone of professional competency in midwifery. Higher levels of education are often correlated with enhanced clinical skills, better patient outcomes, and increased job satisfaction. The educational pathway for midwives can vary significantly across different regions and healthcare systems.

#### 2.1.3.1 Impact of Education on Clinical Practice

According to the World Health Organization (2019), midwives with advanced degrees or specialized training demonstrate greater proficiency in managing complex obstetric cases. A study by Johnson and Brown (2018) supported this, finding that midwives with bachelors or master’s degrees reported higher confidence and competence in their clinical practice. These midwives were also more likely to engage in evidence-based practices and continuous quality improvement initiatives.

For instance, midwives with higher educational attainment are better equipped to handle emergencies and complications during childbirth, leading to improved maternal and neonatal outcomes. Their advanced training enables them to make informed clinical decisions, enhancing the overall quality of care provided (Johnson & Brown, 2018).

#### 2.1.3.2 Continuing Education and Professional Development

Continuous professional development is essential in midwifery, given the evolving nature of healthcare practices. Midwives who engage in ongoing education are better equipped to adopt new technologies and methodologies, thereby improving patient care (García et al., 2017). Such development also fosters a culture of lifelong learning and professional growth within the field.

For example, participating in workshops, conferences, and advanced certification programs allows midwives to stay updated with the latest advancements in maternal and neonatal care. This continuous learning process is crucial for maintaining high standards of practice and ensuring that midwives can respond effectively to emerging health challenges (García et al., 2017).

#### 2.1.3.3 Educational Disparities and Access

Despite the benefits, access to advanced education and training opportunities can be uneven. Factors such as geographic location, economic barriers, and institutional support play significant roles in determining educational attainment among midwives. Addressing these disparities is crucial for ensuring that all midwives have the skills needed to provide high-quality care.

For instance, midwives in rural or low-resource settings often face challenges in accessing advanced training programs due to financial constraints or lack of local educational institutions. Policy interventions aimed at providing scholarships, online learning opportunities, and regional training centers can help bridge these gaps and promote equitable access to education (Thompson & Hart, 2019).

### 2.1.4 Experience as a Socio-Demographic Characteristic

Professional experience refers to the duration and breadth of practice that a midwife has accumulated over their career. This includes not only the number of years in practice but also the variety of clinical settings, types of cases handled, and additional responsibilities undertaken, such as teaching, research, and administrative roles. Experience is a crucial factor that influences the competency, confidence, and decision-making abilities of midwives.

#### 2.1.4.1 Impact of Experience on Clinical Practice

Extensive professional experience is often associated with higher levels of clinical proficiency and better patient outcomes. Experienced midwives tend to have honed their skills through years of practice, allowing them to handle a wide range of scenarios more effectively. Research by Harrison et al. (2019) demonstrated that midwives with over 15 years of experience showed significantly higher confidence in managing complicated births and emergency situations compared to those with less experience.

For instance, experienced midwives are adept at recognizing early signs of complications and can intervene more swiftly and effectively. Their extensive practical knowledge and refined clinical skills contribute to lower rates of adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes (Harrison et al., 2019).

#### 2.1.4.2 Mentorship and Knowledge Transfer

Experienced midwives often play a critical role in mentoring and training less experienced colleagues. This mentorship is essential for the professional development of junior midwives and for maintaining high standards of care within healthcare institutions. Johnson and Roberts (2018) found that structured mentorship programs led by experienced midwives not only improved the clinical skills of new midwives but also increased overall job satisfaction and retention rates.

For example, a mentorship program in a large urban hospital demonstrated that junior midwives who received guidance and support from senior colleagues were more confident and competent in their practice, which in turn enhanced patient care quality (Johnson & Roberts, 2018).

#### 2.1.4.3 Experience and Job Satisfaction

Professional experience can also influence job satisfaction and career longevity. Midwives with extensive experience often report higher job satisfaction due to their established expertise and confidence in their roles. They are more likely to feel valued and respected within their professional community, which contributes to a positive work environment. Conversely, midwives with limited experience may face challenges such as high stress levels and uncertainty, which can affect their job satisfaction and overall well-being.

A study by Thompson et al. (2020) highlighted that midwives with more than 20 years of experience reported higher levels of job satisfaction and a stronger sense of professional identity compared to those with fewer years in the field. This satisfaction is linked to their ability to navigate complex clinical situations with ease and to the fulfillment derived from mentoring the next generation of midwives.

#### 2.1.4.4: Challenges and Support for Less Experienced Midwives

Despite the benefits of experience, less experienced midwives often face significant challenges, including high workloads, stressful environments, and the pressure to perform. Support systems such as comprehensive orientation programs, continuous professional development opportunities, and access to experienced mentors are crucial for helping new midwives transition smoothly into their roles.

For example, implementing a structured preceptor ship program can provide new midwives with the necessary guidance and support to develop their skills and confidence. Regular feedback, continuous education, and opportunities for professional growth are essential components of such support systems (Green & Baker, 2019).

#### 2.1.4.5: Policy Implications

Recognizing the importance of experience in midwifery practice has several policy implications. Healthcare organizations should focus on strategies to retain experienced midwives while also supporting the development of less experienced ones. This includes creating career pathways that allow for professional growth, providing adequate mentorship and training programs, and ensuring a supportive work environment.

Policies that promote work-life balance, professional development, and career progression can help retain experienced midwives in the workforce and support the growth of less experienced ones. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning and mentorship within healthcare institutions can enhance the overall quality of maternal and neonatal care (Thompson & Hart, 2019).