



THE CLOCK IS TICKING: MIDWIVES' UNDERSTANDING OF IMMEDIATE POSTPARTUM AND NEWBORN CARE IN UGANDA

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Background

- ☞ The immediate postpartum period (first 24 hours after birth) is critical for mothers and newborns
- ☞ A large proportion of maternal (48.9%) and neonatal (two-thirds) deaths occur during this time
- ☞ Timely, integrated and cost-effective interventions for mothers and newborns, designed to suit existing healthcare systems and maximise available human resources, have an impact on reducing these mortalities
- ☞ The study explored the midwives' understanding of the components of the immediate postpartum and newborn care provided within the first 24 hours after birth in Uganda

Methods

- ☞ A qualitative descriptive study conducted among 15 purposively sampled midwives and four midwifery ward managers at a District Hospital in central Uganda
- ☞ Three (3) focus group discussions and four (4) key informant interviews conducted
- ☞ Data analysed using Colaizzi's inductive thematic approach
- ☞ Ethics approval and administrative clearances obtained from the relevant institutional review boards
- ☞ Informed consent was obtained from the participants

Results

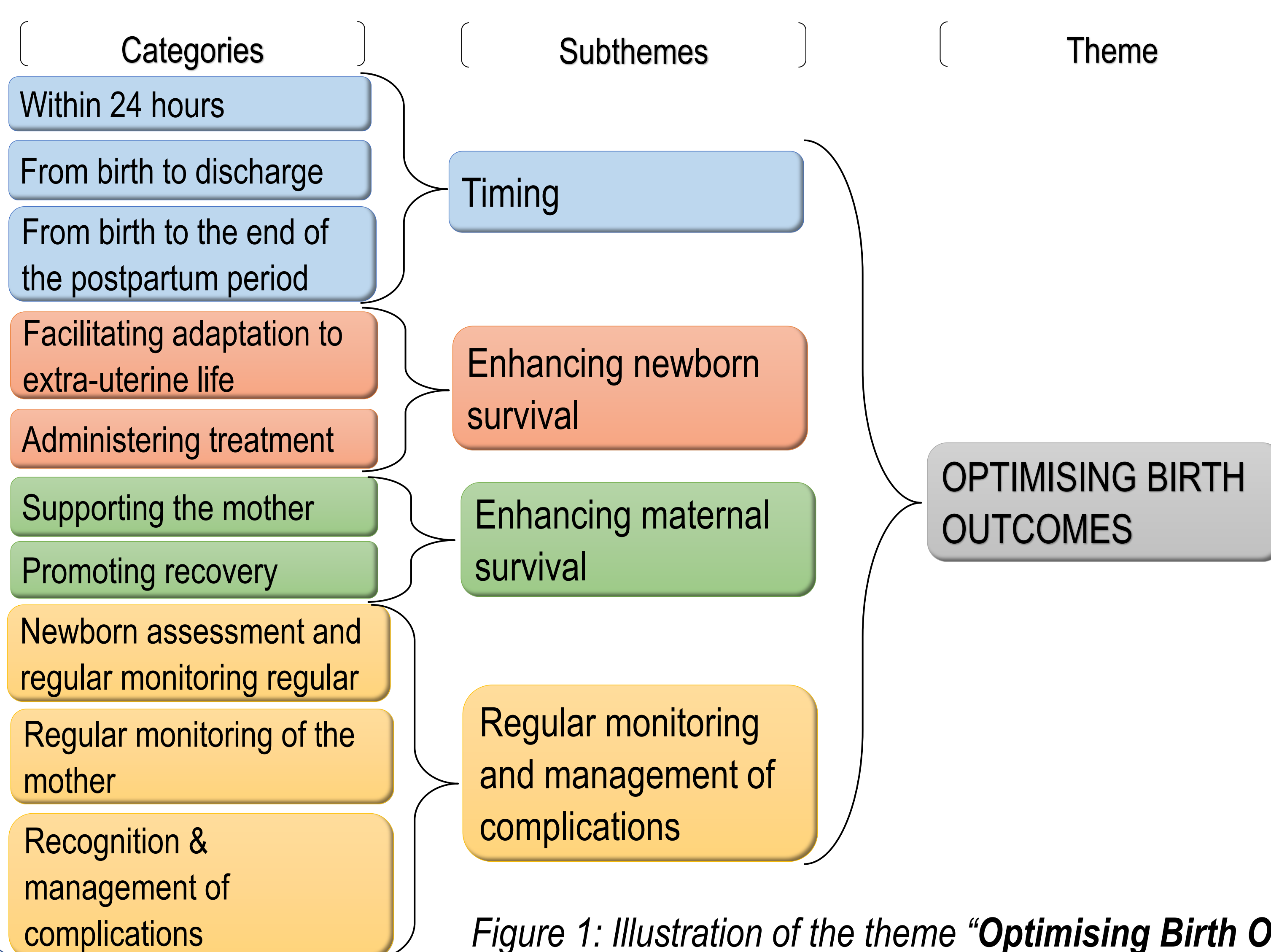


Figure 1: Illustration of the theme "Optimising Birth Outcomes"

- ☞ All participants were female aged between 23 & 59 years
- ☞ The theme "**Optimising birth outcomes**" emerged
- ☞ It included subthemes;
 - ✓ Timing
 - ✓ Enhancing newborn survival
 - ✓ Enhancing maternal survival
 - ✓ Regular monitoring & management of complications
- ☞ These reflect the midwives' understanding of the components of immediate postpartum and newborn care.
- ☞ Midwives understood the value of immediate postpartum and newborn care
- ☞ However, their views demonstrated varying understandings of the components of immediate postpartum and newborn care

Conclusions

- ☞ Some participants provided incorrect information about certain practices, which may reflect gaps in clinical practice and the implications for clinical diagnosis and management.
- ☞ There was some uncertainty about the timing and duration of the immediate postpartum period

Key message



The care interventions identified in this study were not exhaustive compared to the standard WHO care recommendations. This may indicate missed opportunities for providing comprehensive, quality maternal and newborn care during the immediate postpartum period.

Limitations:

- ☞ The findings were from a study in a single site which may not capture the diversity of experiences and practices that exist across different healthcare settings and contexts. However, the study utilised a maximum variation sampling technique to allow for diversity in the sample and to ensure that information-rich individuals were invited to participate.

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