

A Critical Autopsy of the Role and Niche of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA) in African Countries Facing Health Infrastructural Challenges

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ABSTRACT This paper has systematically reviewed literature to elicit debate and discourse on the role, niche and position of the traditional birth attendants in some countries of the developing world. Findings indicate that: TBA are a panacea in counties with a poor health infrastructure; modern and educated women still access their services; TBA services are considered culturally and socially appropriate; their services are not pecuniary motivated; and are an alternative to failed countries with poor health infrastructure. TBA or their services are also considered perfidious in that: they claim their services are spiritually ordained making it difficult to collaborate with biomedical midwives; their services are not scientifically validated; their training/improvement may deny respective countries the opportunity to train modern midwives. The paper advocates and lobbies for the collaboration and working in tandem of the birth attendants and the biomedical midwives; and that their services are monitored and supervised.