

Maternal Mortality Reimagined: Saving Lives Through Data Transparency

Research Week

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The Reality of Maternal Mortality *and True Risk*

Fig. 1. "Pregnant woman and mother receive health education."



Note. From "Pregnant woman and mother receive health education." by World Bank Photo Collection, n.d., retrieved from [Pregnant woman and mother receive health education](#) | [Openverse](#) CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



“Every day in 2020, almost 800 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.”

“95% of all maternal deaths” occurred in low and lower middle-income countries

Even in the US, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) has increased to 23.8 deaths per 100,000 live births, in 2020.



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Research Design and Methodology



Research Design

- The research *commenced as a systematic review*
- Later changed to a **scoping review** as it was better fit for our research question
- Lack of evidence and apparent gaps made using a systematic review a challenge.



Methodology

- Articles were selected from PubMed, EBSCOhost, and ProQuest based on inclusion criteria.
- Inclusion Criteria and Terms:
 - "maternal mortality"
 - "maternal mortality ratio"
 - "pregnancy-related mortality"
 - "World Health Organization" OR "WHO"
 - "vital registration systems"
 - "abortion data" AND "abortion risk"
- Material also included **gray literature** for a holistic perspective



What Does This Mean?

Women are suffering from abnormally high fatality rates



Fig. 2. The Gift of Motherhood



Note. From “Close-up mother embraces a foot of the baby.” by tsaiian, n.d., retrieved from [close-up mother embraces a foot of the baby | Openverse](#). CC BY-NC 2.0

Women eager to embrace motherhood are often put at unnecessary risk through insufficient data



How is this?



Common Causes of Maternal Death

Top Five Main Causes of Death (According to the WHO):

- Severe bleeding
 - Infections
 - High blood pressures (eclampsia and pre-eclampsia)
 - Complication from delivery
 - Unsafe abortion (WHO, 2023)
-
- **Each of these causes has been attributed to MMR.**



What Hasn't Been Addressed?

Where this data is coming from

How it is collected

Addressing data that is missing

The impact on MMR and health policy



Why is this?



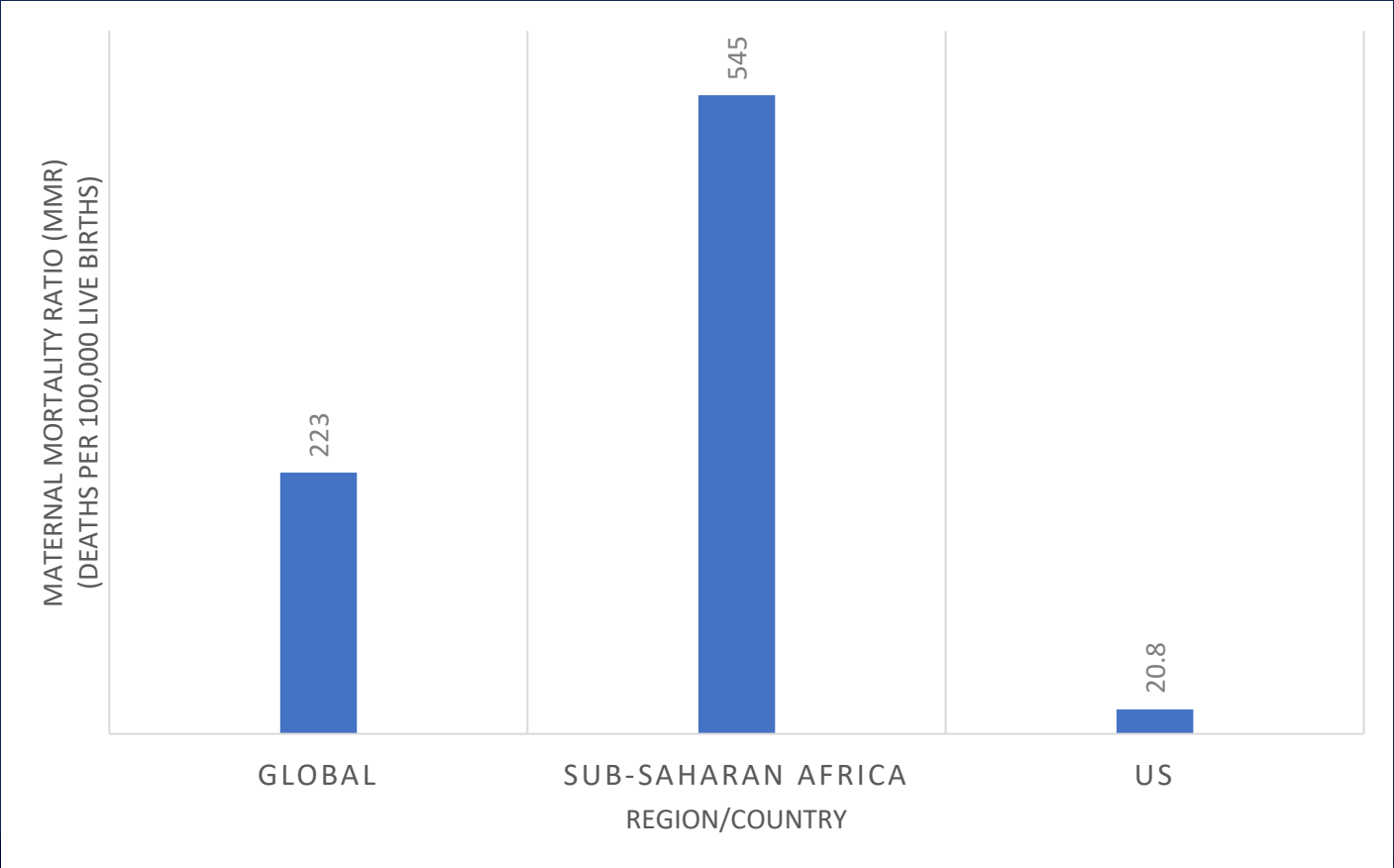
The WHO's Approaches to MMR

- Consideration is needed in how data is **collected and disseminated**.
- Subnational regions are **aggregated into a single national statistic**.
 - The same for WHO region and global data
- Women's health needs are overlooked through these methods.



The Issue with Data Aggregation: 2020 Trends

Fig. 3.
Comparing Global, Sub-Saharan Regional, and National US MMR.



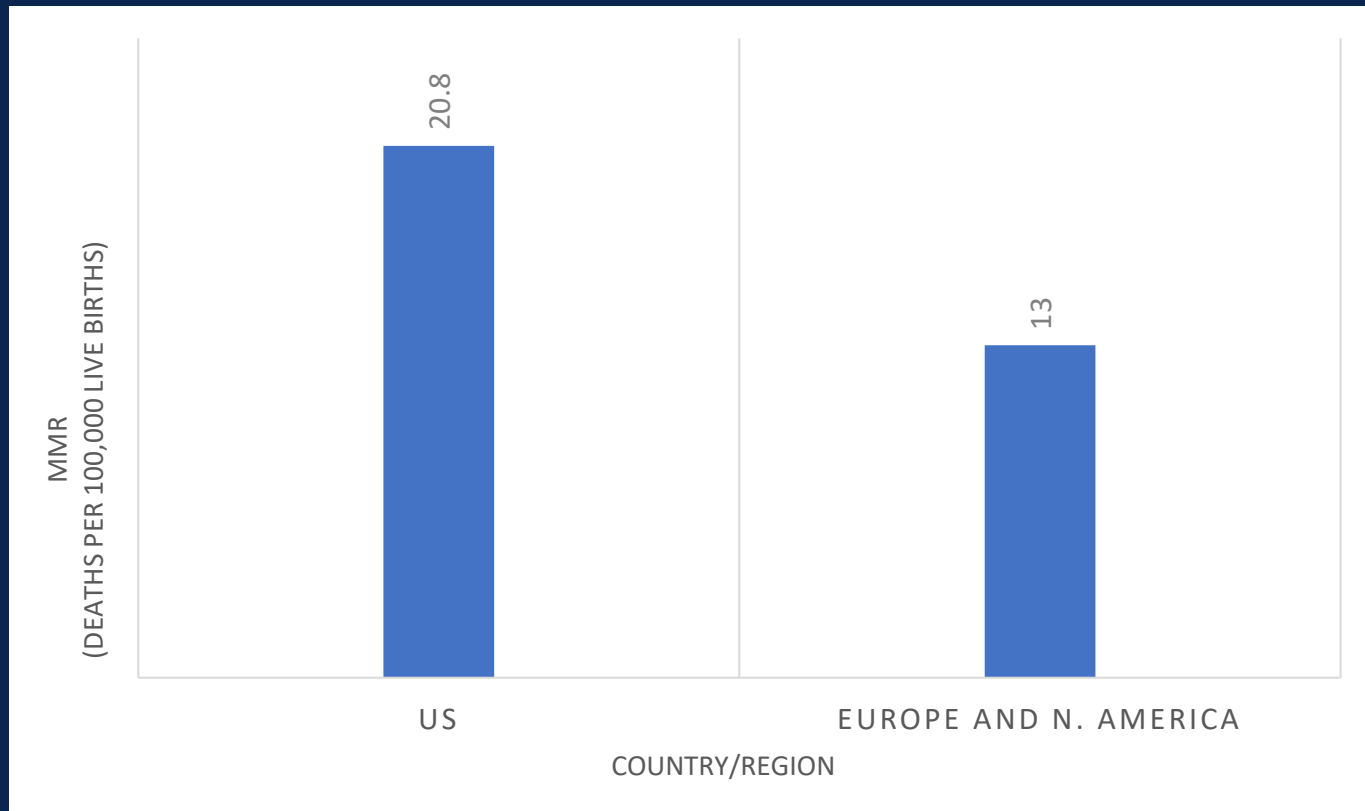
Note. Depicts the various MMRs by rel. organization level. Created in Excel.



The Issue with Data Aggregation: 2020 Trends

Fig. 4.

Comparing National US to Regional North American/Europe MMRs.

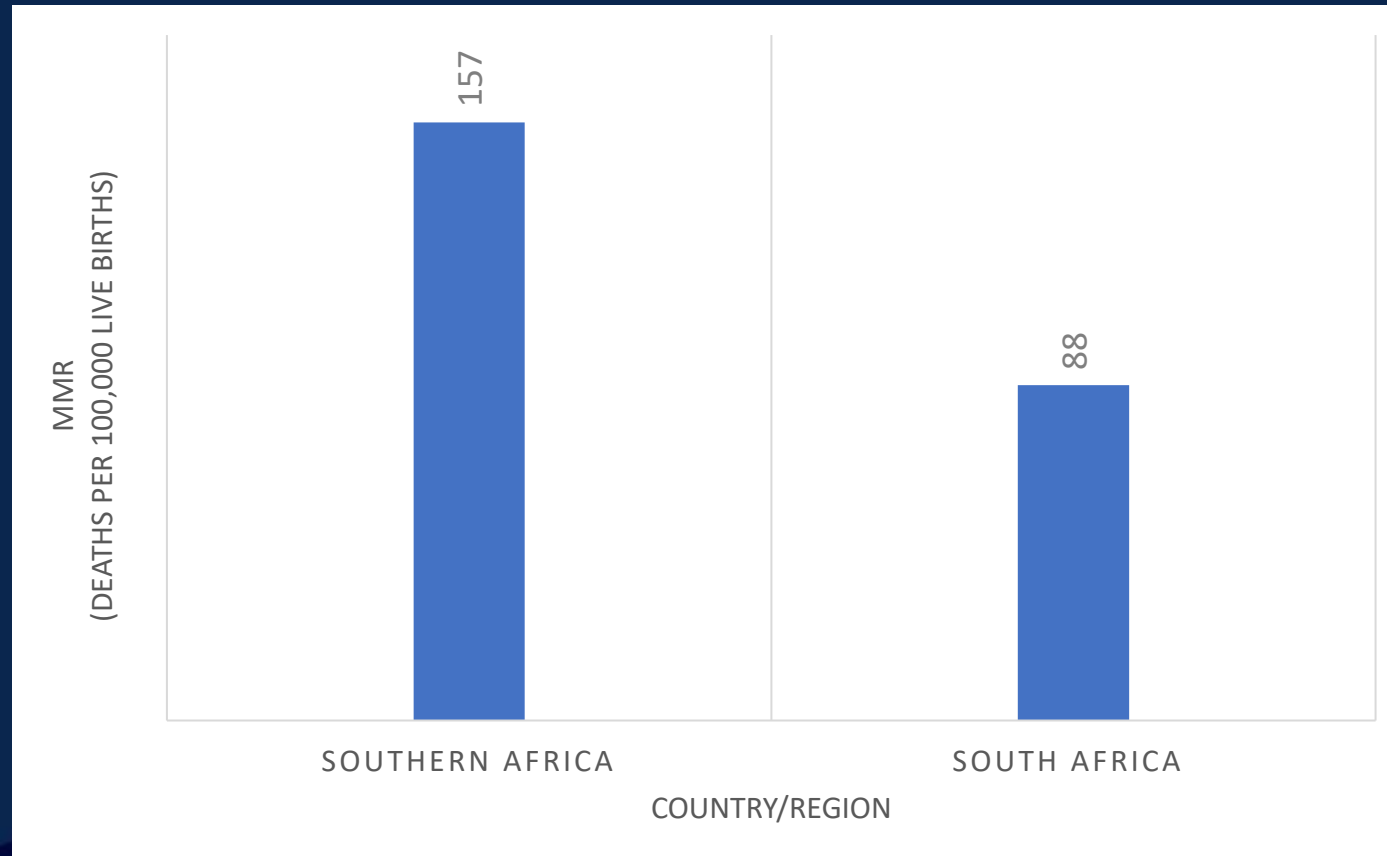


Note. Depiction includes two separate regions with varying political systems into a single statistic. Created in Excel.



The Issue with Data Aggregation: 2020 Trends

Fig. 5.
Comparing National to Regional MMRs in Africa.



Note. This a regional/national comparison. Although South Africa has a very low MMR, compared to surrounding countries. Created in Excel.



What Do These Comparisons Reflect?

MMR is **not a one-size-fits-all**

A country's context, environment, social determinants of health, and economy **will impact a mother's health.**

Subregional, national, regional, and global data **must be stratified and well interpreted.**



The Fatal Risk of Aggregation on Women's Health

- Relationship between *data and policy*
- Data aggregation *puts a woman's well-being at risk.*
- Data that is **partial, inaccurate or conglomerate** impacts women's health.
 - **How?**



The Risks of Ideology and Assumptions: Abortion and Missing Data

Major issue: MMR excludes abortion-related mortality.

*There is currently no standardized measurement or statistic for
abortion-related deaths on a global scale.*

What does this indicate for risk?



The Risks of Ideology and Assumptions: Abortion and Missing Data

- Findings show that abortion carries *significant long-term health complications*, such as:
 - An increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD).
 - A mother's increased risk of complications for later pregnancies
- MMR *calculates from live births*, so fatalities from the following are excluded:
 - Abortions
 - Miscarriages
 - Stillbirths



Call to Action

Fig. 6. Protecting Our Mothers



Note. From “Mother and baby cassava farming.” (2017, Feb. 19). Retrieved from [woman carrying baby on back photo – Free Mum and son Image on Unsplash](#). Unsplashed License.



Data Transparency and Disaggregation

- Reveals women's health must be prioritized ***without***:
 - Assumptions
 - Presuppositions
 - Ideologies
- Reflected in ***how data is collected and shared***.
- Context and environment have a major impact upon a woman's health.



What Can We Do?

Data transparency

Disaggregation of data

Honest discourse

Holistic view of women's health



The Impact of a Biblical Worldview: Transparency Through Spreading Light

The Bible calls on every disciple to follow the steps of Christ, to bring light and honesty to the places where it is lacking.

- Scripture:
 - John 3:21
 - John 8:31-32
 - Ephesians 5:13 (King James Bible, 1769/2023)
- Bearing the light, is upholding the duty of the disciple.



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Thank You!

