Navigating the Midwifery Landscape in the UAE: A narrative Review of Education, Regulation, and Practice

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Abstract (300 word limit)

Background. The midwifery profession in the UAE remains under-researched, presenting challenges in delivering the best midwifery practices and education. Current efforts to adapt midwifery to local needs are not fully aligned with the UAE's unique context. Therefore, evidence-based midwifery research is needed to enhance services and improve maternal health outcomes nationwide. This study aimed to provide an overview of the existing publications and documents on midwifery education, regulation and practice within the UAE context.

Methodology. This narrative review, guided by frameworks from the International Confederation of Midwives and World Health Organization, analyzed midwifery literature and data. The search, conducted in June-July 2024, covered databases like PubMed, Ovid, Scopus and Science Direct. Sources included peer-reviewed articles, grey literature, and institutional reports. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis to categorize the findings.

Results. A total of 25 published and unpublished sources were included in this review. Five key domains were generated: education and professional development, regulation, midwifery workforce, leadership, and women's perceptions of reproductive health services. The findings reveal scarcity for midwifery research conducted across the UAE. It underscores the need for targeted research and strategic improvements to align midwifery practices with the UAE's healthcare priorities. This includes scaling up services, enhancing maternal health outcomes, and establishing an educational framework tailored to the UAE. Additionally, the analysis identified the necessity to improve data collection, increase the midwifery workforce, especially among Emiratis, strengthen leadership within the profession to support its development as a distinct field within the national healthcare system, and expand research on sociocultural influences and stakeholder perceptions.

Conclusion. The review highlights gaps in understanding midwives' profession and education. Targeted research is essential to develop core competencies framework specific to the UAE's context, aligning midwifery education with the ambitious nation's Vision 2071 and improving maternal and neonatal outcomes.

Recent Publications (minimum 5)

1. **Santina, T.**, Alzeyoudi, A., Alzeyoudi, F., Almehrzi, L., Aldhanhani, M. (In Press). Examining the Nexus of Academic Self-Efficacy and Cognitive Load Among Nursing Students in the UAE: A Cross-Sectional Quantitative Stud. BMC Nursing Journal.
2. **Santina, T.** (2024). Toward a Framework for Emirati Midwifery Competency-based education: A Narrative Review. 1st UAE International Midwifery Conference, UAE, 10 October.
3. **Santina, T**. (2024). Exploring Academic Self-Efficacy & Cognitive Load among Undergraduate Students in the UAE: A Cross-Sectional Study. Mediclinic Middle East International Nursing Conference. UAE, 16 May.
4. **Santina, T.**, Beaulieu, D., Gagné, C., and Guillaumie, L. (2022). Mediators and moderators of physical activity change in an effective school-based intervention targeting childhood obesity. Journal of Health Psychology. 27(12):2671-2684.
5. **Santina, T.**, Beaulieu, D., Gagné, C., and Guillaumie, L. (2021). Tackling childhood obesity through a school- based physical activity programme: a cluster randomised trial. International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 19(3): 342-358.
6. **Santina, T.**, Beaulieu, D., Gagné, C., and Guillaumie, L. (2019). Using the Intervention Mapping protocol to promote school-based physical activity: A demonstration of the step-by-step process. Health Education Journal, 79(5), 529-542.
7. **Santina, T**., Lauzier, S., Gagnon, H., Villeneuve, D., Moisan, J., Grégoire, J., and Guillaumie, L. (2018). The Development of a Community Pharmacy-Based Intervention to Optimize Patients' Use of and Experience with Antidepressants: A Step-by-Step Demonstration of the Intervention Map-ping Process. Pharmacy, 6(39).

Photograph



Biography (150 word limit).

Dr. Tania Santina is a midwifery expert with extensive experience in education, legislation, and research, dedicated to advancing maternal and newborn healthcare. With over two decades in midwifery teaching, program accreditation, and competency-based curriculum development, she integrates evidence-based strategies with stakeholder engagement to enhance midwifery education and practice. Currently an Assistant Professor at the Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE, she leads the HEALTH's Midwifery Research Group and spearheads the development of a midwifery competency model tailored to the UAE. Her contributions extend to global initiatives with UNICEF and UNFPA, emphasizing sustainable healthcare improvements. Her research, published in top international journals, focuses on strengthening midwifery regulation, education, and workforce development to align with national healthcare priorities. Through her leadership, she continues to shape midwifery as a distinct profession, fostering innovation and advancing women's health on both national and international levels.

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