**A critical social theory approach to understanding the barriers to implementing and adhering to patient safety (PS) guidelines in Sub-Sharan Africa.**

Introduction

In patient safety research (PSR), iatrogenic harm constitute one of the top four or five public health problems in the developed world based on the record of 10,000 deaths per day in acute settings. More so, global PS concern is that there is little evidence about the burden of unsafe care in developing countries where there may be a greater risk of patient harm.

Research Objectives

This research aims to explore the barriers to PS policy implementation in healthcare service delivery in a number of acute healthcare settings in Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Research Methods and Methodology

Qualitative PSR methodologies appears generally dominated by models of human factors and ergonomics and socio -technological systems theories. This work uses the critical social theory lens of Actor Network theory (ANT) to explore and understand drivers and barriers to policy processes and their influence(s) on patients’ outcomes through in-depth-interviews and participant observations in hospitals in the countries of study.

Research Findings

The study and health projects focused on processes of health policies development and implementation in acute health settings. Although, health policies exist, there are distinct disconnect between policy and practice as is illustrated in a wound care case study.

Conclusion and next steps

There is a great need to establish PS department in the ministries of health of the affected countries and a concerted effort should be focused on closing the gap between health policies and practice through the establishment of a national clinical policy and guidelines department; educating clinical practitioners on patient safety science; and improvement in dissemination and implementation of PS health policies in practice.

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