

**FACTORS AFFECTING UTILIZATION OF
POSTNATAL CARE IN RUKUNGIRI DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

Background: All pregnant women need good quality maternal health services, Post Natal Care inclusive, so as to ensure their well being and that of their infants.

The MMR and IMR in Rukungiri District are 500/100,000 and 88/1000 live births respectively. Maternal complications rank tenth and contribute 1.9% to the burden of disease in the District (BOD study, 1995). In 2005/2006, PNC utilization at 6 weeks after delivery was very low at 6.7% of all the new ANC attendances. This study was conducted in order to identify the factors associated with PNC service utilization so as to enable the DHT to design appropriate interventions in Rukungiri District.

Methodology: This study employed a cross sectional study design and was conducted in 29 villages (clusters). Eight households were selected from each cluster and a total of 232 mothers were interviewed. A check list was used to collect the data concerning health facilities. In-depth interviews of 8 mothers; 4 that attended PNC and 4 that never attended PNC were also conducted. Quantitative data were then analyzed using EPINFO 3.2.2 version and SPSS. A master sheet technique was used to analyze qualitative data.

Results: A total of 232 respondents were enrolled in the study, with the mean age of 26.9 years. At bivariate analysis, the employment of the mother and spouse, the type of house lived in, time to health facility and knowledge of PNC services were the factors found to be associated with utilization of PNC services. After logistic regression, being aware of the of PNC services was found to enhance the utilization of PNC services (OR=12.12,

CI: 6.12—24.02) and living in a permanent house was established as a predictor of non utilization of those services (OR=0.32, CI: 0.13—0.80). Poor attitude of mothers towards the health providers and lack of integration of PNC services were also found to hinder utilization of such services.

Conclusion: Mothers lack awareness of the existence of PNC services which contributes markedly on the low utilization of those services in Rukungiri District. Opportunities do exist through which mothers can be sensitized to utilize the PNC services and these include ANC visits, outreaches during immunization and radio Rukungiri.