FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH UTILIZATION OF MATERNAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN WESTERN PROVINCE, KENYA

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Q50/60220/2010
2013

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Population Studies, University of Nairobi.
ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the determinants of utilization of maternal health care services among women of reproductive age in Western Province with focus on the continuum of care for pregnant women during pregnancy and delivery, that is, the use of antenatal care services and skilled assistance during delivery.

This study used data from 2008-09 KDHS for women with a last birth in the five years preceding the survey. Descriptive methods of analysis and multivariate ordinal regression method of analysis were used to determine the significance of independent variables on the utilization of antenatal care and delivery services. Independent variables for this study include: age, marital status, level of education, type of place of residence and household wealth index.

Descriptive and multivariate analysis show that the independent variables affect utilization of maternal health care services; women who are married, young and rich are likely to utilize maternal health care services compared to women who are not married, older and are poor. Therefore, more effort is needed to be put to educate the general public on the importance of maternal health care services. Moreover, efforts should be channeled to encourage seeking a continuum of maternal health services by pregnant women. Finally, research should focus into understanding the various factors that influence utilization of maternal health care services.

The data analysis shows that the most important factors associated with utilisation of maternal health care services are age and marital status.