

# Assess the Knowledge, Utilization & Barrier of Non-Utilization Regarding Maternal Health Services

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## Abstract

**Background:** Maternal health services refer to the promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative care of mothers. Antenatal care is the care of women during pregnancy the main aim of care is to achieve at the end a healthy baby from healthy mother. Antenatal mothers should be educated regarding regular antenatal checkups, diet, personal hygiene, adequate rest, sleep, exercise, immunization, warning signs of pregnancy and child care.

**Methods:** Descriptive study to assess the knowledge, barriers of non- utilization regarding Maternal Health services. The data was collected using structured knowledge questionnaire and utilization and barriers to non-utilization checklist from 60 postnatal mothers up to 3 months after delivery.

**Result:** The study result showed that women 78.34% had average knowledge and 21.66% had good knowledge regarding maternal health services. Social barriers for non-utilization were family pressure, shyness, poor transportation and illiteracy. Economic barriers for non-utilization were health expenditure perceived as waste, unemployment, low socio economic status and large family size respectively. Cultural barriers for non-utilization were lack of formal education and religious practices respectively, family members disapproved superstition. There was no significant association between knowledge, utilization and barrier on non-utilization of maternal health services and selected demographic variables.

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that postnatal mothers had average knowledge and there is need to create awareness on maternal health services launched by the government of India. Low socioeconomic condition, early marriage and pregnancy, inappropriate antenatal health check-up, and cultural taboos were significant factors affecting the satisfactory utilization of services among mothers. Hence, there is a need to emphasize on utilization and eradicate barriers related to non-utilization of maternal health services.

**Key words:** Maternal Health Services, Utilization, Economic barriers, non- utilization, Cultural barriers

## Introduction

Maternal deaths can be reduced by providing better maternal health care services. Though national programs exist for improving maternal and child health in India, but maternal mortality and morbidity remains still high<sup>1</sup>.

It can be attributed to several factors, an important one being non-utilization or delay in looking for care of maternal health-care services, especially among the rural poor and urban slum population due to either lack of awareness or access to health-care services<sup>2</sup>.

In current scenario depicts that in spite of increased availability and easy accessibility of maternal health care services there is non- utilization of maternal services especially among rural poor and urban slum populations for varying reasons<sup>3-4</sup>. Though on average health indicators in cities score better than in rural areas

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the enormous social and economic stratification with in urban areas results in significant health inequalities.<sup>5-6</sup> In urban areas even though there is increased availability and easy accessibility of health care services there is non- utilization of these services by mothers living in urban slums for various reasons<sup>7</sup>. Hence there is a need to study the factors responsible for the non- utilization of maternal health services by the mothers residing in urban slums.

### Material and Methods

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in selected primary health care center of Gurugram. Total 60 Postnatal mother's upto 3 months after delivery were enrolled in study using Purposive sampling technique. Structured knowledge questionnaire was used to assess maternal health services and utilization questionnaire on maternal health services and barriers to non-utilization of maternal health services. Tools were developed after extensive review of literature and were validated by experts in field. Ethical permission for the study was taken from institutional

ethical committee of SGT University, Gurugram.

### Results

Ø Majority of the sample 14(40%) belong to 23-27 years AND 9(15 %) 28-32 years. 29(48.33%) of the samples have primary education, and 9(15%) have no formal education. 20 (33.33%) had other occupations and 9 (15 %) were private employees. Majority 37 (61.66 %) of the samples belongs to Hindu religion and 5(8.33%) belongs to other religion. Majority 40 (66.66 %) of the samples belongs to nuclear family and 6(10%) belongs to extended family. 34 (56.66%) of the samples had a family income of less than 10000 and 5 (8.33%) had the income of above 20000. Majority of the samples 38(63.33%) were Primi mothers and 22(36.66%) were multi mothers Majority of the samples 38(63.33%) have one child and 10(16.66) have more than 2 children. Majority 21(35%) had information from news papers and 10(16.66%) from health workers. Majority 13 (21.6 %) of the samples had severe headache, 10(16.66%) lethargy and other problem respectively, 8(13.33%) had vomiting, 5(8.33%) eclampsia and edema and 3(5%) had abdominal pain.

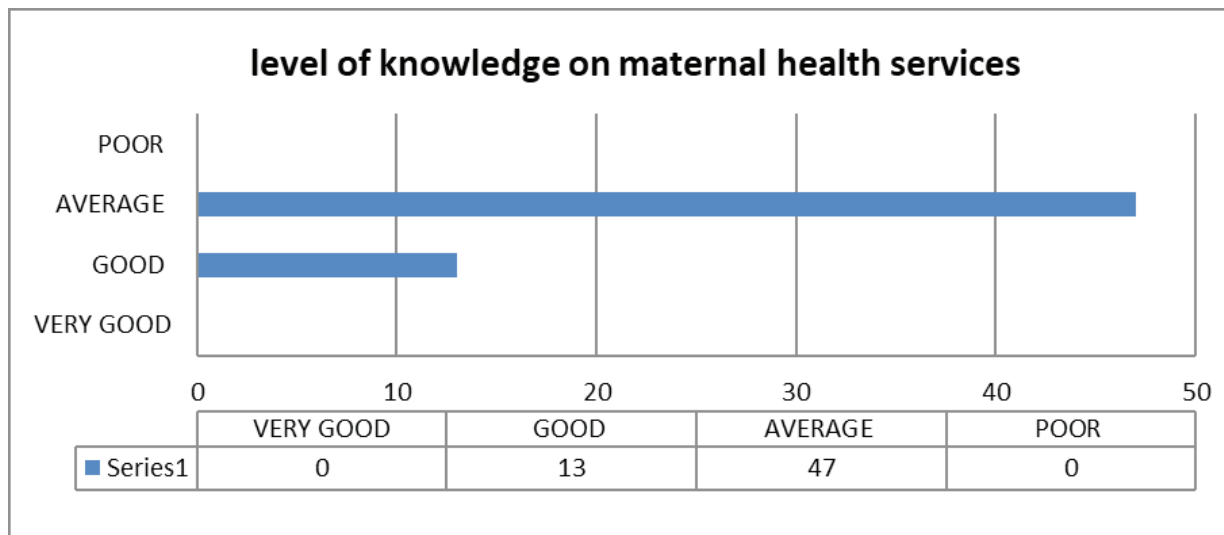
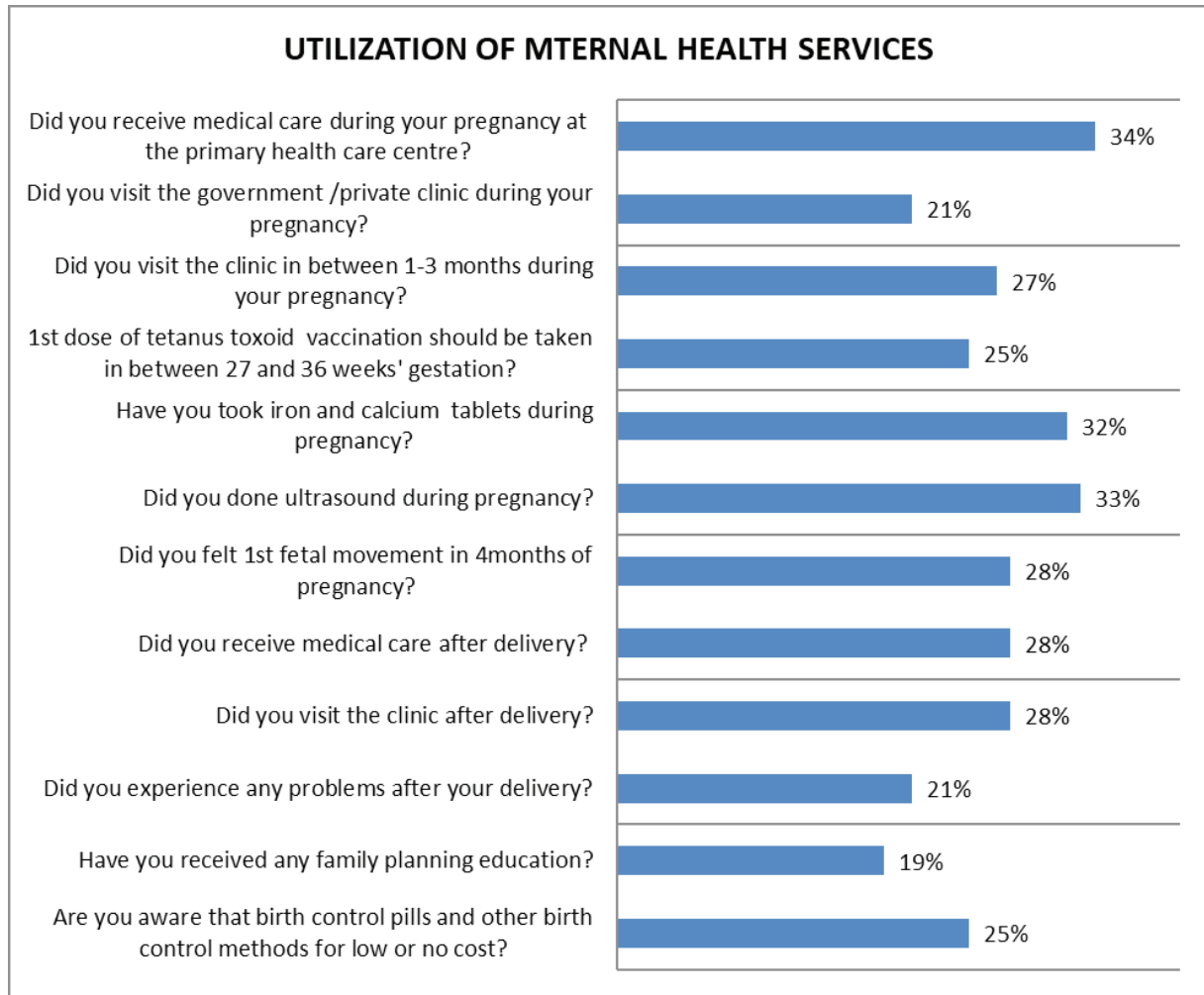


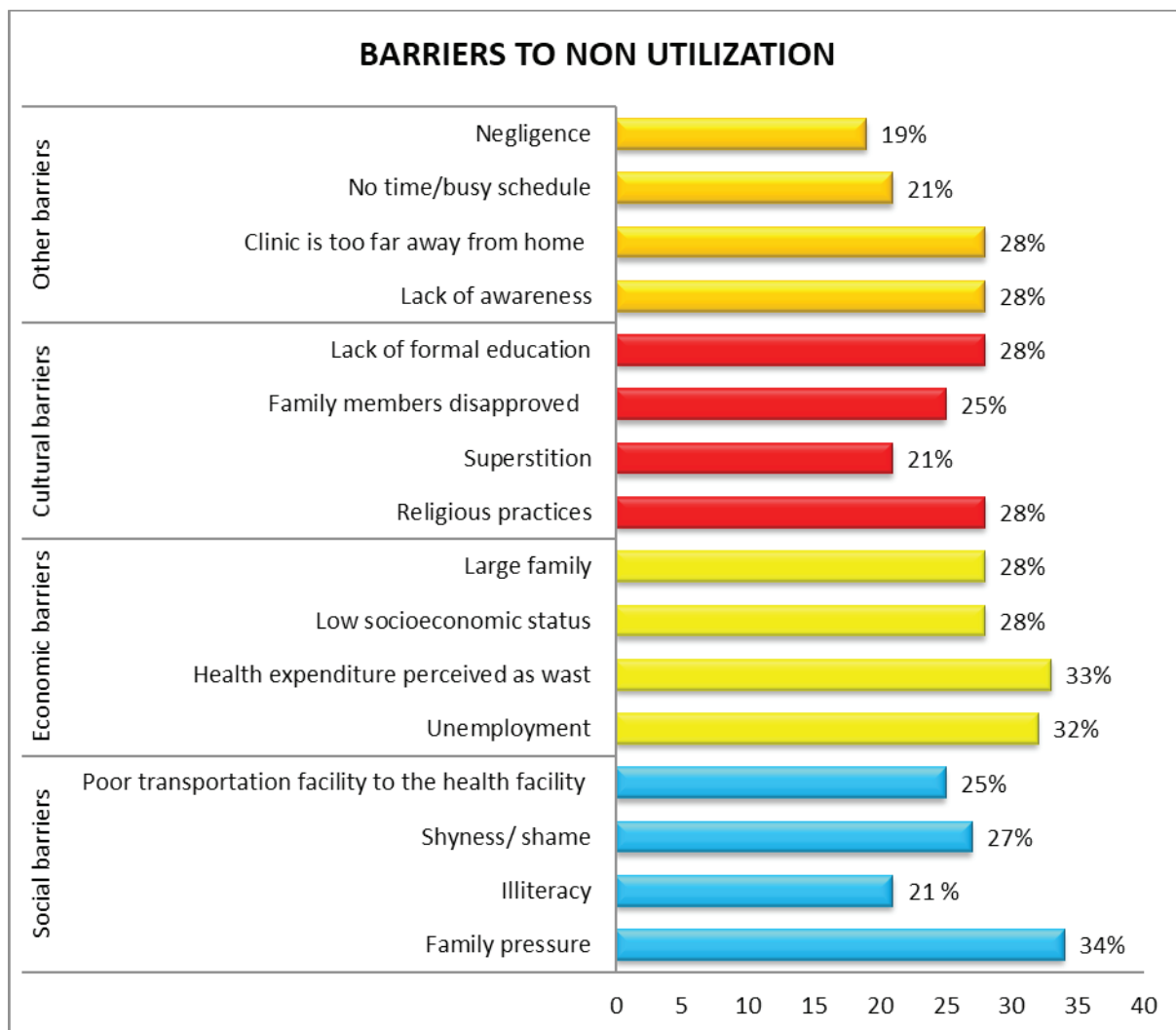
Fig.: Bar diagram showing level of knowledge score of women on maternal health services

**Table 1: Mean, median, standard deviation of knowledge of women on maternal health services  
n=60**

MEAN	MEDIAN	SD	df
13.31	13	1.610	59



**Fig.:2: shows that 34% women received medical care during pregnancy, 21% women visited government facility during pregnancy, 28% received care after delivery and 19 % received family planning education.**



**Fig: 3 Social barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were family pressure (34 %), shyness (27%), poor transportation (25%) and illiteracy (21%). Economic barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were health expenditure perceived as waste (33%), unemployment (32%), low socio economic status and large family size (28%) respectively. Cultural barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were lack of formal education and religious practices (28%) respectively, family members disapproved (25%), superstition (21%). Other barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were lack of awareness and clinic is too away from home (28%) respectively, busy schedule (21%), and negligence (19%).**

There is no significant association between knowledge score, utilization and barrier of non-utilization regarding maternal health services and selected demographic variables.

### Discussion

To assess the knowledge regarding Maternal Health services, the researcher was used structured knowledge questionnaire. It was found that majority of the women 47(78.34%) had average knowledge and 13(21.66%)

had good knowledge and none of them had very good and poor knowledge on maternal health services .The result is consistent with the research study conducted by **Ray S, Bhandari P, Prasad B (2018)** conducted a study on Utilization pattern and associated factors of maternal health care services in Haryana. The study concluded that empowering women through the encouragement of mother’s education should be one of the most fundamental strategies to promote maternal health care services and reduce inequalities<sup>5</sup>.

To assess the barriers of non- utilization regarding Maternal Health services , researcher used barriers to non-utilization checklist .The frequency and percentage revealed that Social barriers were family pressure (34%). Economic barriers were health expenditure perceived as waste (33%). Cultural barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were lack of formal education and religious practices (28%) respectively, family members disapproved (25%), superstition(21%). Other barriers for non-utilization of maternal health services were lack of awareness and clinic is too away from home (28% ) respectively, busy schedule(21%), negligence(19%). The result is consistent with the research study conducted by **Vidler M, Ramadurg U, Charantimath , Katageri G , Karadiguddi C** .(2012) conducted a study on Utilization of maternal health care services and their determinants in Karnataka State. Antenatal care was typically delivered at the periphery by non-specialized providers. Participants reported that sought was care women experienced danger signs of complications. Postpartum care was reportedly rare, and mainly sought for the purpose of neonatal care. Factors that influenced women’s care-seeking included their limited autonomy, poor access to and funding for transport for non-emergent conditions, perceived poor quality of health care facilities, and the costs of care<sup>13</sup>.

### Conclusion

The present study assessed to assess the knowledge, utilization & barrier of non-utilization regarding maternal health services among women in selected Primary Health Centers of Gurugram with view to develop pamphlets. After the assessment it was found that there was optimal knowledge of mothers on maternal health services. The utilization level of mothers on maternal health services is abysmally low. There are many socioeconomic factors associated with non-utilization of maternal health services. The study concluded that development of pamphlets would help in improving the knowledge of mothers on maternal health services and its utilization.

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**Conflict of Interest -** Nil

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