

## **DETERMINANTS OF FIRST ANTENATAL CARE VISIT AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING TENWEK HOSPITAL, BOMET COUNTY, KENYA**

Every pregnant woman is at risk of complications and hence Antenatal Clinic (ANC) is recommended to identify these complications early and adequately managed through timely ANC visits. Late attendance of first antenatal visit is a common problem throughout sub-Saharan Africa posing difficulty in accomplishing the targeted maternal mortality ratio of less than 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births and newborn death to 12 per 1000 live birth by 2030. This study aims to investigate the determinants of the first ANC visit among pregnant mothers attending antenatal clinics in Tenwek Hospital. The objectives of this study are to explore maternal individual reasons, to explore hospital factors, and to investigate maternal cultural beliefs and practices that affect when to make the first antenatal visit. This is a qualitative study that has utilized a phenomenological study design to understand the experiences of pregnant women in seeking ANC service. Homogeneous purposive sampling was used to sample mothers coming to the clinic for the first time during the index pregnancy. In-depth interviews were used to gather data from the participants. Analysis of the data was completed using the Braun and Clarke framework for thematic analysis to reach thematic saturation. NVivo coding was done. From this study, it is notable that the findings were in agreement with the study objectives and that the impacts of various demographic data were explored. The following themes came out of this data: economic reasons, fear, knowledge deficit, and service provision. This knowledge can be translated to the pregnant and none pregnant women in the community, healthcare providers as well as policymakers. The need for further research was also appreciated in this study.

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**Track Classification:** The Role of Nutrition, Food Safety, Medical Education & Healthcare Technology