

Knowledge and practices regarding antenatal care and factors associated with practice among pregnant mothers attending antenatal clinics in the Nallur MOH Area

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Background and objective: Antenatal care refers to the care women receive throughout pregnancy in order to ensure the wellbeing of both mother and baby. Good maternal knowledge and practices regarding antenatal care are necessary to improve pregnancy outcomes. This study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices regarding antenatal care and the factors influencing antenatal care practices among pregnant mothers attending antenatal clinics in the Nallur MOH Area.

Methods: A field-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 244 participants who attended antenatal clinics in the Nallur MOH Area from February to March 2020. Consecutive sampling was used to recruit the participants. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Predetermined cutoffs were used to assess knowledge and practice. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25 and the chi-square test was performed to measure the association between variables.

Results: The respondent rate was 95.6%. Majority of the participants (82%, n=200) had good knowledge regarding antenatal care. The percentage of participants who had good practice was lower at 68.9% (n=168). Practice was statistically associated with the type of family ($p=0.03$), health education received from antenatal clinic ($p=0.003$) and the approach adopted by midwives ($p=0.003$). Participants from nuclear families, mothers who received health education, and mothers who received care from a midwife with a friendly approach were more likely to have good practices of antenatal care.

Conclusion: Most of the participants had good knowledge, even though good practices were comparatively lower. These findings can be used by health programme planners to improve maternal health practices in Jaffna.

Keywords: Antenatal Care, Pregnant Mothers, Knowledge, Practice, Nallur