

## Abstract

Globally, approximately 295,000 women die annually as a result of pregnancy and childbirth-related complications. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 66 % of the estimated maternal deaths. Maternal death occurs during the first 24-48 hours up to 42 days post-delivery. The major causes are haemorrhage, sepsis, and hypertensive complications, which can be prevented by effective utilisation of postnatal care services. To improve maternal, new-born and infant health and reduce mortality ratio, which reciprocates the quality of services received during the early postnatal period. The objective of the study was to determine the factors influencing the utilisation of postnatal care among mothers attending St. Joseph Mission Hospital, Taita/Taveta County. A descriptive cross-sectional study design was adopted, and a convenient sampling technique was used to sample 145 postnatal mothers. The findings showed that the majority of mothers who utilised postnatal care were between the ages of 21 and 32 years; their parity was between 2(25.2%) and 3(24.4%) children. Inferential analysis revealed that education and occupation  $p=0.00$ , religion  $p=0.008$ , knowledge  $p=0.001$  when to start PNC  $p=0.000$ , decision maker  $p=0.008$  and importance  $p=0.001$  were significantly associated factors in the utilisation of postnatal care. The study concluded that most postnatal mothers attended postnatal care visits at 2 weeks post-delivery and only attended one or two visits during the entire postnatal period. The study recommends that more awareness of postnatal care should be emphasised at a facility level, community level, and the entire county level to ensure that mothers are given updated information on PNC services during the ANC