

## Abstract

**Background:** There is global increase in cases of maternal mental health (MMH) during pregnancy. Hormonal changes during pregnancy exert increased mental strain to woman (Aishwarya et al., 2025). Some antenatal women are able cope while others develop poor maternal mental health (MMH). There is therefore; need to integrate maternal mental health services in the existing maternal and child health services delivery pathways to bridge the gap. The aim was to determine the maternal mental health status of antenatal women seeking maternal and child health services.

**Study design:** Descriptive cross-sectional study was adopted and systematic random sampling method was used to randomly select 130 “first time visit” antenatal women in Kiambu and Thika County Referral Hospitals maternal and child health clinic.

**Results:** The proportion of antenatal women with poor MMH 45(34.6%) in the county was significantly above the global standards  $Z\ 7.374$ ,  $P < 0.001$

**Conclusion:** There is high Prevalence of poor MMH during pregnancy. Therefore, there is need to adopt routine maternal mental health management strategies which includes screening during pregnancy