ABSTRACT

Antenatal care and skilled birth attendance are crucial in reducing maternal mortality, aligning with the first target of Sustainable Development Goal No. 3, which aims to reduce maternal mortality ratios to less than 70 per 100,000 live births in Pakistan. This study employs the Andersen and Newman framework of health services utilization to explore the determinants of antenatal care and skilled birth attendant utilization among childbearing women in Pakistan. The research combines primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is gathered through semi-structured interviews with Lady Health Workers and Midwives and Focus Group Discussion involving rural women and community members. Secondary data is obtained from the Pakistan Maternal Mortality Survey 2019. A mixed-method approach is used to identify determinants of health services utilization and social challenges and barriers preventing rural reproductive-age women from receiving ANC from skilled health personnel. Thematic analysis is conducted using NVivo, and binary logistic regression is employed for to find out the determinants of ANC and SBA by using STATA. The study's findings highlight that area of residence, women's education level, health complications during pregnancy, and service satisfaction significantly influence antenatal care utilization. Moreover, mass media exposure and gravidity are significant predictors of skilled birth attendants. The study reveals broader challenges and barriers associated with formal primary health facilities that hinder rural women from seeking skilled birth attendants. At the national level, policymakers should focus on expanding the reach and impact of maternal and child health programs while also developing strategies to enhance the accessibility and
availability of primary health facilities. Community-based interventions are vital in rural areas to increase knowledge and awareness of ANC services.

Keywords: Antenatal Care, Skilled Birth Attendant, Maternal Health, Childbearing women, Maternal Mortality Survey