



## Post Natal Care services in a rural population near Chennai

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Post Natal Care (PNC) is not universal. Post natal care is neglected among mothers. Quality post natal care is very essential for reducing the morbidity and mortality among mothers. PNC is not uniformly utilised by the mothers in rural areas. Poor illiterate mothers are vulnerable and neglected. There are many socio demographic factors influence the utilisation of post natal care services.

**Material and Method:** This cross-sectional study was done among the mothers who delivered between Aug 2004 and July 2005 in a rural area. Structured questionnaire was prepared and used to collect data. Sample was selected by cluster sampling method.

**Results:** Among 442 mothers, 63% were in age of 18 to 21 years. Mean age of the participants was 24 years. Majority (65%) of mothers did not have any postnatal visits. Literacy and Standard of Living Index (SLI) were major factors affecting post natal care.

**Conclusion:** It is concluded that post natal care is ignored by the mothers. Education and standard of living are major factors in influencing the decision to utilize post natal care services.

**KEYWORDS :** Antenatal, Intranatal, postnatal care, institutional deliveries

### Introduction

Post Natal Care is very critical as health of the mothers need to be regained at fast phase during this period. Most of the mothers are likely to die during post natal period due to complications like haemorrhage, infection. Further it is important to promote health education on aspects like breast feeding, nutrition and immunisation during this period. The main objective of NRHM was to reduce maternal mortality by providing universal access to equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary healthcare services to women in rural areas (National Rural Health Mission, 2011-2012). The importance of the Health of the mothers is reflected by the fact that it is one of the MDG Goals, namely Goal 5 to improve maternal health (United Nations General Assembly, 2002). Post natal care is not neglected mainly in rural areas. Globally education level and socio economic status are key factors in PNC utilisation. Hence this study analyses the pattern and the determinants of the utilization of maternal health care services by the rural mothers near Chennai.

### Aim and objective

1. To know utilization patterns of post natal care in a rural area near Chennai
2. To study determinants for the utilization of post natal care services in a rural area near Chennai

### METHODS

This cross sectional study was done in a rural population near Chennai. Cluster sampling method was used to select randomly from the whole population, 442 mothers who had vaginal delivery during the last one year were considered. A pre tested structured questionnaire was prepared to collect information about antenatal care, place of delivery, who conducted the delivery, post natal care and other baseline information. Informed consent was obtained from the selected subjects. Data was analysed by using SPSS version 10.

### Results

The current study is a population based cross sectional study in a rural area near Chennai.

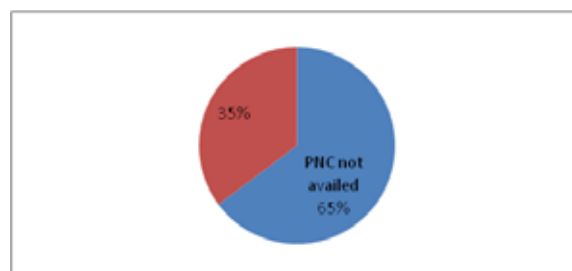
**Table I. Background Information (n=442)**

S.No	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	95%CI
1.	Age			
	<18 years	58	13.12	9.22-14.86%
	18-21 years	280	63.34	52.65-60.67%
	>21 years	104	23.52	17.75-24.82%
2.	Education			
	Illiterate	46	10.4	7-12.19%
	Literate	396	89.6	77.41-82.53%

3	Standard of Living Index (SLI)	Low	119	26.9	20.61-27.99%
		Middle	154	34.8	27.37-35.3%
		High	169	38.2	30.31-38.39%
4	Place of delivery	Home			
		HSC/PHC	23	5.2	3.13%-7.27%
		Private hospitals	91	20.6	16.83%-24.37%
		Others	144	32.7	28.33%-37.07%
5	Person who conducted the delivery	Untrained Dai			
		Trained Birth Attendant (TBA)	14	3.2	1.55%-4.85%
		Nurse	6	1.4	0.3%-2.5%
		Doctor	130	29.4	25.14%-33.66%
			292	66.1	61.67%-70.53%

Table I show descriptive statistics. The mean age of the participants was 24 years. About 64% of the mothers were in the age group of 18 to 21 years. Most of the mothers 396 (89.6%) were literate and only 323 (73%) of mothers belonged to the better standard of living. Majority of them, 418 (94.8%) had institutional delivery, among them 91 (20.5%) mothers had their delivery at HSC and PHC. Nearly 97% of deliveries were conducted by skilled attendant and among them were nurses (29.4%) and doctors (66%).

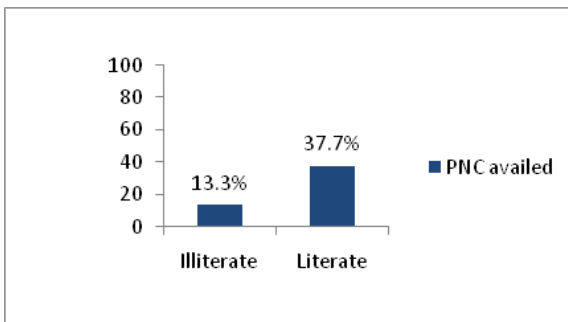
Further 64.5% mothers never had postnatal care. This is shown in Fig 1



**Table II**

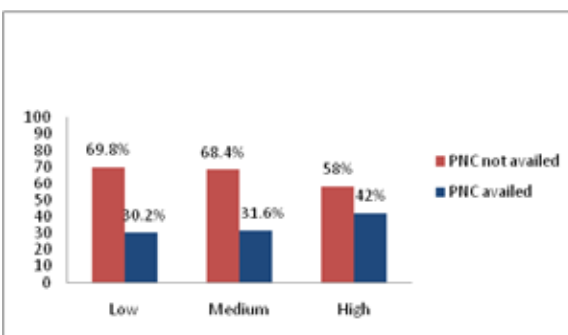
S.No	Full ANC	PNC	
		Not Aailed	Aailed
1	Not used	62(21.8%)	29(18.7%)
	Used	222(78.2%)	126(81.3%)
	P=0.46	OR 1.2 (.74-1.98)	
2	Place of Delivery		
	Home	12(4.2%)	11(7.1%)
	PHC/HSC	60(21.1%)	31(20%)
	Private	85(29.8%)	58(37.4%)
	Others	128(44.9%)	55(35.2%)
	P=0.13		
3	Person conducting		
	UTD	8(2.8%)	6(3.9%)
	TBA	4(1.4%)	2(1.3%)
	Nurse	86(30.2%)	43(27.7%)
	Doctor	187(65.6%)	104(67.1%)
	P=0.896		

Table II shows clearly that mothers who had delivery in private hospitals and mothers who preferred doctors to conduct their deliveries had availed post natal care higher than others, 37.4% and 67.1% respectively

**Fig 2 Literacy and PNC**

P=<0.001

Fig 2 reveals only 13.3% of illiterate mothers had post natal care whereas 37.7% of literate mothers had postnatal care. The difference is statistically significant

**Fig 3 Standard of Living and PNC**

P=0.038

Fig 3 shows more mothers from low standard of living (68.5%) did not avail post natal care when compared to mothers from high standard of living(58%)

## Discussion

### Post natal care

It is alarming to note in the current study that only 35% of the mothers had got the benefit of any postnatal visits. This finding is similar to the study done in Maharashtra (Padhye RP, 2013) and it is higher than the study done by Sheth J K Shah et al in Ahmadabad (Sheth J K, 2012 ). Majority of illiterate(86.7%) in Gujarat (Puwar Bhavna T, 2012) did not have PNC visit. The study by Vishnu Khanal (Vishnu Khanal, 2014), showed that literate mothers were likely to attend postnatal care more than illiterate mothers and this study utilized the data from NDHS 2011. The above finding is similar to the current study. Hence it reveals that there is no improvement in PNC care among mothers for the past ten years. Seventy percent of mothers of low standard of living did not have postnatal care which is more than mothers of high standard of living (58%). This finding is similar to study done by Tej et al (Tej Ram Jat, 2011, ) where rich mothers had PNC 1.5 times higher than poor mothers. High usage of post natal care services was found in mothers who delivered in private hospitals and those who were delivered by doctors.

## Conclusion

Only illiterate and poor mothers seem to have not used post natal care services adequately. This needs to be improved in order to facilitate all mothers irrespective of their economic and education status towards making better use of the post natal care services. Postnatal care is ignored by the mothers. Efforts should be taken to educate the mothers in postnatal care. Now the focus should be on the poor, illiterate rural mothers for the full utilization of postnatal care services. Factors and barriers preventing access to primary health care services among the illiterate and poor mothers need to be studied and rectified.

## Recommendation

Since post natal care is poor, steps to be taken to educate the mothers regarding the dangers in neglecting the post natal care. The Self Help Group (SHG) can be sensitised to give post natal care at homes.

Vishnu Khanal, M. A. (2014,). Factors associated with the utilisation of postnatal care services among the mothers of Nepal: analysis of Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011. *BMC Women's Health* , 14:19.

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