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TITLE: Determinants of Utilization of hospital Delivery among Postnatal Mothers in Thika and Kangundo hospitals, Kenya

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ABSTRACT: Maternal mortality rate due to pregnancy-related complications remains high at 488 per 100,000 live births in Kenya. If mothers are treated appropriately and in a timely manner, in a hospital almost all women who develop pregnancy-related complications can be saved from death and disability. In view of this a study was conducted to assess why hospital deliveries in Kenya have remained low despite government strategies on improving health system and human resources. The objective of the study was to assess the determinants of utilization of hospital delivery and the rating of the health care services among postnatal mothers in Thika and Kangundo District Hospitals which are in Kiambu and Machakos Counties respectively. This was a cross- sectional study with an aim of establishing the factors that determine utilization of hospital during delivery. The study population was composed of eight hundred post natal mothers from Thika and Kangundo Districts attending Maternal Child Health Clinics. Structured questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data. In addition, Focus Group Discussions were conducted in each District and Key informants interviewed. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS for windows version 16 and data presented in form of tables and bar charts. The qualitative data from the focus group and Key informants was transcribed and a summary written. From the study Client oriented factors that were found to be associated with hospital delivery in both Kangundo and Thika included occupation ($p = 0.028$, $p = 0.007$), having money to go to the hospital ($p = 0.000$, $p = 0.00$), short distance from the health facility ($p = 0.001$, $p = 0.029$), and client having delivered in the hospital before ($p = 0.000$, $p = 0.000$) respectively among others. On binary regression Client oriented factors that predicted place of delivery in Kangundo were education level, previous delivery in a hospital and number of antenatal clinic attendance while in Thika they included client view of health worker, previous delivery in a hospital and economic factors. Health facility oriented factors that were associated with hospital delivery in Kangundo were lack of privacy ($p = 0.000$) while in Thika the manner in which the mother was handled by the health care worker ($p = 0.001$) and whether the mother received expected care   ($p = 0.017$). Rating of the health care services in terms of acceptability was average with only half of respondents feeling that the services were acceptable in both hospitals. In terms of accessibility 74% could access the hospital through matatus. In terms of availability time taken to be attended was rated above average while availability of health facilities and services required was below average in both districts. Quality of care during delivery was rated high in both districts with 72% of the respondents being assisted during head delivery but in terms of infection control this was above average. The research concludes that mothers do not utilize the health facility for delivery in both areas because of cost of the services, distance from the hospital, negative attitude of the health workers, lack of privacy and poor quality of care. Information generated by this study will be

recommended to the policy makers in the Ministries of Health for use in addressing the challenges facing hospital delivery therefore   promoting it leading to reduction in maternal morbidity and mortality. A model to promote utilization of hospital during delivery was also recommended.