

## **Abstract**

### **Background**

A measure of the proportion of deliveries assisted by skilled attendants is one of the indicators of progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, which aims at improving maternal health. This study aimed at establishing delivery practices and associated factors among mothers seeking child welfare services at selected health facilities in Nyandarua South district, Kenya to determine whether mothers were receiving appropriate delivery care.

### **Methods**

A hospital-based cross-sectional survey among women who had recently delivered while in the study area was carried out between August and October 2009. Binary Logistic regression was used to identify factors that predicted mothers' delivery practice.

### **Results**

Among the 409 mothers who participated in the study, 1170 deliveries were reported. Of all the deliveries reported, 51.8% were attended by unskilled birth attendants. Among the deliveries attended by unskilled birth attendants, 38.6% (452/1170) were by neighbors and/or relatives. Traditional Birth Attendants attended 1.5% (17/1170) of the deliveries while in 11.7% (137/1170) of the deliveries were self administered. Mothers who had unskilled birth attendance were more likely to have <3 years of education (Adjusted Odds ratio [AOR] 19.2, 95% confidence interval [CI] 1.7 - 212.8) and with more than three deliveries in a life time (AOR 3.8, 95% CI 2.3 - 6.4). Mothers with perceived similarity in delivery attendance among skilled and unskilled delivery attendants were associated with unsafe delivery practice (AOR 1.9, 95% CI 1.1 - 3.4). Mother's with lower knowledge score on safe delivery (%) were more likely to have unskilled delivery attendance (AOR 36.5, 95% CI 4.3 - 309.3).

### **Conclusion**

Among the mothers interviewed, utilization of skilled delivery attendance services was still low with a high number of deliveries being attended by unqualified lay persons. There is need to implement cost effective and sustainable measures to improve the quality of maternal health services with an aim of promoting safe delivery and hence reducing maternal mortality.