

## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** The postnatal period, defined as the time immediately after the birth of the baby and up to six weeks (42 days) after birth, is critical for the newborn and the mother. Immediately after birth, bleeding and infection pose the greatest risk to the mother's life, while preterm birth, asphyxia and severe infections pose greatest risk to newborn. Two thirds of all neonatal deaths arise from such complications, while inappropriate feeding and cultural practices during the postnatal period may pose further risks to the life of the newborn. All these maternal and neonatal problems could be reduced if women receive appropriate postnatal care. The timing of postnatal care is also crucial to the well-being of the mother and baby. (Khanal, 2014).

**Aim:** To determine the factors affecting utilization of post-natal care services by mothers in Kawaala health center III, KCCA-Uganda.

**Methodology:** The study was carried out from Kawaala HC III, in Kampala district. A cross-sectional survey design was used. From the health center birth registers, a list of all the names of mothers who delivered in January, February and March, 2018 at Kawaala health center III along with their contact addresses were obtained. Out of these lists, a convenient random sample of 138 mothers was obtained.

**Results:** Majorities (79.7%) of respondents knew about postnatal care services, and 20.3% were not aware. Majorities (71%) of respondents utilized some postnatal care services and 29% did not.

**Conclusion:** The utilization of postnatal services in Kawaala HC III was relatively high. 71% of the mothers utilized postnatal services. Child immunization and Family planning ranked high, well as Growth monitoring and Assessment of mother and baby ranked least among the postnatal services utilized in the health facility. The significant factors that were found to influence utilization of postnatal services in Kawaala HC III include: age of mother, level of education, parity, occupation of mother, occupation of husband, distance from the health facility, awareness of postnatal services and decision-making powers by the women.