Reviewer’s report

Title: Postnatal Care Utilization and Associated Factors Among Women of Reproductive Age Group in Halaba Kulito Town, Southern Ethiopia

Version: 1 Date: 27 Jul 2017

Reviewer: T Degefie

Reviewer's report:

General comment and recommendation: the manuscript address is an important maternal and newborn health strategy- postnatal care (PNC).

Abstract

The finding of this study does not lead to this conclusion highlighted yellow. I suggest deleting it.

This study showed the importance of women economic improvement, creating awareness on postpartum danger sign, creating enabling women to use ANC and delivery services because ANC is an important entry point to increase the utilization PNC services and addressing cultural adversity that limits women decision making.

Background: the most recent WHO recommendation on PNC needs to be included

Method:

Study setting and period

− Suggest to enrich the discretion of the settings in terms of urban, rural, road access, transportation, communication, health facility, and number of health workers, availability of EMONC and BEMOC services and the policy of PNC visit-place( home visit by health workers and or health extension workers or mothers return to health facility) and timing of PNC service. Authors need to describe how and why this site was selected. The year the town is established is irrelevant information so I suggest deleting it.
Study design and population

− A statistician need to look at the sample size calculation. I have not done that. However the sample size estimate used prevalence of PNC coverage in a region that usually has higher PNC coverage compared to SNNPR and this might have given a smaller sample size. This needs to be indicated in the limitation section

− Since there was little information in description of the study area; I could not understand how the authors managed the systematic random sampling. I could not understand how eligible respondents were identified. I recommend detail description of the methods

Data collection

− Description of the tool-was it open ended, structured, semi structured? What was the training of data collectors included? What are the dependent and independent variables?

− The data collection process and quality assurance mechanism are not described. Except checking for completeness there has not been any data quality check such periodic observation of interviews, re-interviews, review meetings, questionnaire review, and hand tallies of selected indicators were done in the field. If these were done it needs to include in method section. If not; this needs to be pointed out in the limitation

Discussion:

− The authors need to refine and focus the discussion in such a way that policy makers and program managers can use it to improve use of PNC services. Cultural beliefs are identified as the major reason of not using PNC services. The authors have not discussed this issue sufficiently. To minimize the repletion authors need to consider discussing only the major findings.

− I suggest to delete the HSDP reference-as this is old and is not informing programming anymore; I recommend authors to use the current targets

− Postnatal care is not an intervention but a delivery strategy for the interventions. It is presented as an intervention mothers "utilize". Throughout the document consider revising these statements

− Danger sign during post-partum period needs to be for both the mother and the newborn. If the authors have the data; I suggest to include the analysis

− There is major error in the following operational definition: I have noted in italics
Postnatal care utilization: Women have at least one check-up by the skilled health professional within 42 days after birth at the health facility. PNC utilization should be for the newborn as well.

Postpartum danger sign: Obstetrics complication occur after birth such as vaginal bleeding, fever, edema etc… danger sign for both mother and newborn should have been included.

Postnatal care awareness: If the respondents mention at least one service from postnatal services (counseling on breastfeeding, child care, immunization, etc…) care for the mother is omitted.

Line 43-58 is strength and limitation of the study. Consider having subtitle.

Reference: There are population based survey as well as qualitative studies from SNNPR. I recommend the authors to consult those publications.

Conclusion

Line 6-19 are repetition of findings. Consider deleting it.

Ethical approval

Authors report that support letter was obtained. Is this from ethical review board?

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited
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