



## KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE ON PREVENTIVE PRACTICES TOWARDS COVID-19 AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN SEEKING ANTENATAL SERVICES

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### Abstract

The World Health Organization announced COVID-19 as a public health emergency of International concern on January 30, 2020. Even though everybody is at risk of becoming infected, pregnant mothers are more prone to become the victims of COVID-19, compared with the general population. Furthermore pregnancy in an immune suppressed state and are more susceptible to viral respiratory infections and their complications. The study aims to assess the knowledge and practice on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant women seeking antenatal services at selected primary health centre, Kanchipuram district, Tamilnadu. The objectives are to assess the knowledge and practice on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant women seeking antenatal services and to associate knowledge and practices of COVID-19 with their Selected Demographic Variables. Totally 60 women's were selected using purposive sampling technique and cross sectional design was adopted. Data was collected using a validated questionnaire administered via google form to consenting pregnant women. The variables assessed were knowledge about aetiology, mode of spread and preventive measures to protect against COVID-19. Data was also collected on socio-demographic characteristics, which included age, parity, marital status, residence, occupation, participant's education, husband's education. The result showed that 18.3% of pregnant women were having knowledge and practice below average, 48.3% falls in average group and only 33.4% were having good knowledge and practice regarding preventive measure for COVID -19. On further analysis, only educational status shows significant association with knowledge score but other socio-demographic variables were found to be non-significant with the level of knowledge of pregnant women. Most of the pregnant women responded correctly and had fair amount of knowledge on COVID-19 and practicing good preventive measures during their pregnancy. However, good educational programme to sensitize and proper health supervision from the healthcare authority might keep this special population safe and help in bridging the gap in their knowledge.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, pregnant women, Antenatal services, Knowledge and attitude

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## 1. Introduction

The coronavirus (COVID-19) infection is a unique infectious disease caused by novel coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The outbreak first occurred in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The World Health Organization (WHO) announced it as a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020. India registered the first case of COVID-19 on January 30, 2020.

Even though everybody is at risk of becoming infected, pregnant women are more prone to become the victims of COVID-19 compared with the general population. It is transmitted by airborne droplets; thus is easily inhaled by pregnant women and is difficult to remove due to the change in anatomical structure of the respiratory system during pregnancy. Furthermore, pregnancy is an immune suppressed state and pregnant women are generally more susceptible to viral respiratory infections and their complications. Pregnant women are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. The rate of morbidity, caesarean section delivery and preterm birth were also found to be increased. Vertical transmission is a matter of debate.

The issue of pregnancy during this global pandemic deserves a more sensitive approach and mutual understanding among clinicians and other healthcare workers; however, A few studies assessing attitudes and perceptions of the effect of COVID-19 among pregnant women. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to intensify globally, it is important to understand the mentality of pregnant women towards COVID-19. The only preventive measures available are social distancing, hand washing and face masks; however, few studies have focused on KAP.

The level of knowledge on preventive measures against COVID-19 infection among pregnant women, which constitute vulnerable groups are yet to be evaluated. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the knowledge on preventive measures of corona virus infection among pregnant women attending selected primary health centre.

### Objectives

- To assess the knowledge on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant women seeking antenatal services.
- To associate the knowledge and preventive practice towards COVID-19 among pregnant women with selected demographic variables.

## 2. Materials & Methods

An evaluative research approach was adopted for the study. The research design used in this study is Non-Experimental- Descriptive research design. The Accessible Population of the present study is pregnant women selected at Primary Health centre, Kanchipuram District. The study was collected in the selected Primary Health Centre at Kanchipuram District, Tamilnadu. Sample of the study was 60 were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Structured interview schedule was used for data collection. Interview was conducted between 9:00 am to 3 pm depending upon the availability of the sample. As the study aimed at evaluating the existing level of knowledge, the researcher was Constructed demographic variables preform, & structured interview schedule was formed to Assess the level of knowledge on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant Women. The variables assessed were knowledge about aetiology, mode of spread and preventive measures to protect against COVID-19. Data was also collected on socio-demographic characteristics, which included age, parity, marital status, residence, occupation, participant's education, husband's education.

## 3. Results

The result showed that 18.3% of pregnant women were having knowledge and practice below average, 48.3% falls in average group and only 33.4% were having good knowledge and practice regarding preventive measure for COVID -19. On further analysis, only educational status shows significant association with knowledge score but other socio-demographic variables were found to be non-significant with the level of knowledge of pregnant women. Most of the pregnant women responded correctly and had fair amount of knowledge on COVID-19 and practicing good preventive measures during their pregnancy. However, good educational programme to sensitize and proper health supervision from the healthcare authority might keep this special population safe and help in bridging the gap in their knowledge.

### Study Findings

- Majority 18 (60%) were belongs to the age between 18-25 years, 10 (33.3%) of them between 26-31 years 2 (6.6%) of them are above 31 years.
- Majority of 14 (46.6%) were belongs to Hindu, 9(30%) of them are Muslim and 7 (23.3%) of them are Christian.
- Majority 14 (46.6%) have degree, 13 (43.3%) of women have primary/secondary education and 3 (10%) of women are belongs to illiterate.

- Majority 16 (53.3%) are house wife, 7 (23.3%) of women work in government employment and 7 (23.3%) of women are work in private employer.
- Majority 13 (43.3%) gained information from family & friends, 9 (30%) gained information from social media specify and 8 (26.6 %) gained knowledge from health care providers.
- Majority 13 (43.3%) were belongs to second trimester (4-6 months), 10 (33.3%) were belongs to first trimester (1-3 months) and 7 (23.3%) were belongs to third trimester (7-9 months).
- Regarding Knowledge and practice 18.3% of pregnant women were having knowledge and practice below average, 48.3% falls in average group and only 33.4% were having good knowledge and practice regarding preventive measure for COVID -19
- Regarding association, only educational status shows significant association with knowledge score but other socio-demographic variables were found to be non-significant with the level of knowledge of pregnant women

#### 4. Discussion

Although knowledge on COVID-19 among pregnant women was high, this did not reflect into pregnant women engaging in good COVID-19 preventive practices. There is a need to institute measures to improve COVID-19 preventive practices among pregnant women in Ghana. One of the ways of achieving this is by extending the media campaign to rural areas, where access to electronic media is limited. Also, efforts should be made to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene systems in communities as well as the free supply of facemask to the underprivileged. Ensure that the government health care facilities have health care infrastructure ,service personnel and quality of health care services to the need in education the public on prevention of COVID 19. Efforts to be made to enhance the capabilities of the doctors, village health nurses and other paramedical through pre-services and in service training programmed a prevention of COVID 19 among antenatal mothers.

#### 5. Conclusion

We have conducted a research to assess the knowledge and practice on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant women seeking antenatal services at selected primary health centre, Kanchipuram district, Tamilnadu. The objectives are to assess the knowledge and practice on preventive practices towards COVID-19 among pregnant women seeking antenatal

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#### Conflict of Interest

NIL

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#### Ethical Clearence

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