

## Abstract

**Background:** Postpartum family planning (PPFP) is a key strategy for purposes of spacing and limiting childbirths in 2 years after delivery which also reduces maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality. Ethiopia is far away from a set target to meeting the PPFP demand by 2020 and Harari region is one of the country's settings with the highest unmet need of PPFP. Therefore, this study was aimed to examine the effect of proactive counseling on PPFP utilization among women who gave birth at two public hospitals in Harari region, eastern Ethiopia.

**Methods:** We conducted interventional study on 188 postpartum women enrolled as intervention at Hiwot Fana Specialized University hospital (HFSUH) and 145 postpartum women as controls from Jugal hospital during April to September, 2020. All women who gave birth at HFSUH received a proactive family planning counselling before they were consented for the study. The collected data were analyzed by STATA, version 16.0. We executed a prevalence estimate and a multivariable logistic regression analysis to compare proportion of PPFP use and its predictors, respectively. A 95% confidence level was considered to declare significance for all tests.

**Results:** The prevalence of PPFP use at six months of follow-up were 40.4% (95% CI: 34%-48%) for intervention and 34.5% (95% CI: 27%-43%) for control groups. The common family planning methods used were implants (60%), injectable (22%) and IUCD (15%). PPFP utilization was increased by 88% higher among women who received proactive counseling (AOR: 1.88; 95% CI: 1.05-3.33) as compared to control group.

**Conclusion:** Our study portrayed a positive effect of proactive counseling on PPFP utilization by postpartum women and those women with positive attitudes of FP. Therefore, proactive

contraceptive counselling can positively shape behaviors of postpartum women which in turn can raise their acceptance to PPFP use.

**Keywords:** postpartum, family planning, women, institutional delivery, Ethiopia.

### **Effect of proactive counseling on postpartum family planning utilization among women who gave birth at health institutions, eastern Ethiopia: Control trial**

Proactive contraceptive counseling increases postpartum family planning utilization by 88% among intervention group as compared to control group.

#### **Key finding**

- proactive contraceptive counselling can positively shape behaviors of postpartum women which in turn can raise their acceptance to postpartum family planning use.
- It was feasible to implement proactive counselling using national family planning counseling guideline.

#### **Key Implication**

- Proactive contraceptive counseling can be implemented in each health facility to enhance post-partum family planning utilization
- To minimize the missing opportunity of post-partum family planning utilization, and achieve SDG programmer should focus should focus on proactive contraceptive counseling.