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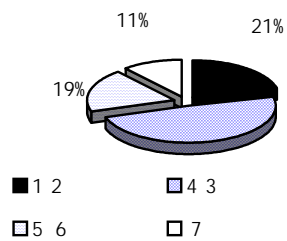
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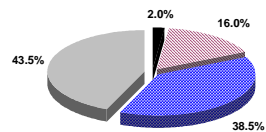
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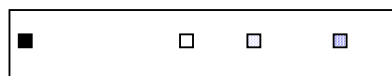
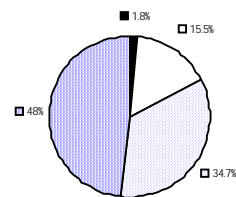
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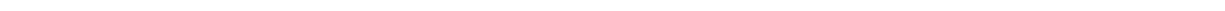
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Prenatal Care Utilization and Factors Affecting to Receive Prenatal Care from Clients' Perspectives

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Abstract

Prenatal care utilization is a very important factor in improving pregnancy outcomes and maternal health infant. In fact, barriers to prenatal care utilization have been linked to inadequate prenatal care and poorer health outcomes.

The purposes of this study were to assess prenatal care utilization and factors affecting to receive prenatal care. The aim was to examine the relationships between demographic variables and other selected variables to the adequacy of prenatal care utilization (APNCU) among women.

The design of study was descriptive cross-sectional study. The population of the study was recipient of prenatal care that attending to the two Health Centers of Iran University of Medical Sciences. The samples size was 400 women that were selected consecutively from the year of 1383 to 1384. The age of children of the subjects was maximum 1 year old.

In this study, the prenatal care utilization (APCU) was assessed by Kotelchuck's index.

The finding indicated that 83% of the women had inadequate or intermediate utilization of prenatal care services. According to the factors affecting the prenatal care utilization, women who agreed that prenatal care was important, utilized the services significantly more than other women (P=0.005). There were significant relationships between utilization of the services with women age (P=0.001), husbands' age (P=0.016), job (P=0.000), number of family members (P=0.002), number of children (P=0.006), income level (P=0.053) and gestational age (P=0.000).

Despite improvements in prenatal services, a great number of women do not receive prenatal care adequately. Some of the factors from the subjects perspectives were, lack of information concerning how to obtain care, time of providing care and lack of confidence of care providers. Barriers to prenatal care varied by demographic group; therefore, identifying the characteristics of the recipients (clients) who need prenatal care seems important, regarding to reduce barriers of utilization prenatal care.

Key Words: Prenatal care, Prenatal care utilization, Pregnant women

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