

# **Cultural Impediments and Antenatal Care Utilization among Reproductive Age Women in Wushishi and Zungeru Communities in Niger State, Nigeria**

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It been reported that more than 33% of Nigerian pregnant women do not use Antenatal Care service during pregnancy. For instance, World Health Organization (WHO) world health statistics revealed that in 2015 only 61% of Nigerian pregnant women had attended ANC at least once during their pregnancy period and only 51% met the WHO standard of a minimum of 4 visits. This is undoubtedly lower than the WHO African region average of 77%. A meta-synthesis conducted to examine why women do not use ANC in Low and Medium Income countries have found that cultural barriers such as superstitious belief concerning disclosure of pregnancy and shame associated with it because of its obvious relationship with sexual activities are major factors. Others have reported that in some places husbands are often not willing to pay for cost of attending health services. Some also reported unprofessional conduct brought about by conflict or poor communication among formal and informal health care providers with health service seekers including failure to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the pregnant woman. This paper aims to determine the cultural impediments to accessing ante natal care services among reproductive aged women in Wushishi and Zungeru Communities of Niger State using a Multivariate Logistic Analysis. A total of 150 subjects were involved in this study comprising 83 from Zungeru and 67 from Wushishi. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which consists of 17 items. The results indicated that ethnicity and preference for traditional birth attendant are major influences to accessing ANC in these communities