

## **Maternal Empowerment Indicators Predict Health Care Seeking Behavior during Pregnancy: Evidence from Ethiopian National Data**

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**ABSTRACT** The purpose of this study was to examine the leverage of women's empowerment status and their living context in healthcare-seeking behavior during pregnancy. The study used the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Surveys (EDHS). In addition, the frequency of Antenatal Care (ANC) was used as an outcome variable to gauge women's health seeking behavior. The negative binomial regression analysis results showed that the expected mean number of ANC visits was lower for mothers with lower education levels and for women living with husbands having poor education. On the other hand, the expected mean number of ANC visits was much higher for younger women, working women, for those with some household decision making autonomy, women living in better household wealth category, women living in smaller households, and those who had reasonable access to media (radio). Given the significant contribution of women's status and living contexts, aggressive moves should be made to reduce the demand-side barriers to health care services, mainly promoting women's education and participation in decision-making at household and community levels.