

**ABSTRACT**  
**Risk Factors Analysis of Malaria Infection Among Pregnant Antenatal Women  
of Abau District in Papua New Guinea.**

**Abstract:** Malaria significantly impacts Papua New Guinea (PNG), particularly pregnant women. The country has one of the highest rates of malaria in the Asia Pacific region according to WHO (2023). The high neonatal and maternal mortality rates in PNG are a major concern. PNG reported a maternal mortality ratio of 192 per 100,000 live births and a neonatal mortality rate of 21 per 1,000 live births (WHO, 2023). This research calculates risk factors associated with malaria infection among pregnant women in PNG and aims to understand the influence of various variables such as healthcare-seeking behavior, prevention of malaria, knowledge of malaria, maternal age, marital status, occupation, education level, and residential location on malaria infection among pregnant women in Abau district in PNG. The study involved a cross-sectional survey of 200 pregnant women who underwent a Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) for malaria and completed a survey questionnaire between January and March 2024. The results from the study revealed that while most pregnant women in PNG use bed net insecticides (89.5%) and have good knowledge of malaria (67.0%), misconceptions and poor healthcare-seeking behavior persist. Despite high ITN usage, only 64.5% maintain their nets. Misconceptions include beliefs that malaria-carrying mosquitoes don't bite at night (23.5%) and that malaria can be self-treated (39.5%). Alarming, 74% would consider buying anti-malarial drugs from the black market. The study found that poor healthcare-seeking behavior and inadequate malaria prevention make pregnant women four times more likely to contract malaria. The study highlights the need for interventions to improve healthcare-seeking behavior and prevention practices among pregnant women in PNG. The goal is to protect expectant mothers, reduce adverse pregnancy outcomes, and promote the birth of healthy children.