**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the introduction of the project titled Assessment of service, quality of antenatal care delivery in Madonna Hospital Makurdi Benue State under the following; background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, hypothesis, scope of the study, significance of the study and operational definition of terms.

**1.1 Background of the Study**

Antenatal care (ANC) is a critical component of maternal health services, providing essential healthcare to pregnant women to ensure safe pregnancy and delivery outcomes. Quality ANC services are vital for the early detection and management of pregnancy-related complications, health education, and the promotion of healthy behaviors (World Health Organization, 2016). The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a minimum of four antenatal visits to monitor and improve the well-being of both mother and child during pregnancy (WHO, 2016).

In Nigeria, the maternal mortality rate remains high despite various interventions aimed at improving maternal health services. The antenatal period presents critical opportunities for reducing mortality and morbidity of pregnant women in Nigeria. This is more so when one considers the unacceptably high maternal mortality rate (MMR) of 704 - 1,549 maternal deaths/ 100,000 total births, depending on the area of the country (Nigerian Health Review Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria, 2017). This has become even more imperative because about half of maternal deaths occur in Sub Saharan Africa (Ishaku et al.,2017). ANC has a number of interventions that have the potential to improve both maternal and newborn health. This underscores the need to assess the quality of ANC services to identify gaps and areas for improvement (Federal Ministry of Health, 2017). Madonna Hospital in Makurdi, Benue State, serves as a significant healthcare provider for expectant mothers in the region. Understanding the quality of ANC services provided at this hospital is essential for enhancing maternal and child health outcomes.

Maternal health services are important indicators of the quality of health care in any country and utilization of these services correspond with maternal and child health outcomes (Maternal and Child Health. 2015). According to World Health Organization (WHO), maternal health services include care that women receive during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period in order to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality (Ishaku et al.,2017).

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Despite the importance of antenatal care, many healthcare facilities, including Madonna Hospital, face challenges in delivering high-quality services. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited healthcare personnel, and insufficient training can impact the quality of care provided to pregnant women (Adepoju et al., 2018). Additionally, there may be gaps in service delivery, patient satisfaction, and overall outcomes that need to be addressed to ensure effective ANC (Oladapo et al., 2015).

Moreover, the level of satisfaction among pregnant women attending ANC clinics has been questioned, raising concerns about the overall effectiveness of the services offered. This dissatisfaction can lead to poor attendance at ANC appointments, which is detrimental to both maternal and fetal health (Johnson, 2019). The persistent gaps in service delivery underscore the need for a thorough assessment to identify specific areas for improvement and to enhance the quality of care provided to pregnant women in this region.

Assessing the service quality of antenatal care delivery at Madonna Hospital is therefore essential to understand the existing challenges and to develop strategies for improving maternal health outcomes. This assessment will provide valuable insights into the factors affecting service quality and inform policy recommendations aimed at enhancing the delivery of antenatal care services.

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

General Objective: To assess the quality of antenatal care delivery at Madonna Hospital, Makurdi, Benue State.

Specific Objectives:

1. To evaluate the availability and adequacy of ANC services provided at Madonna Hospital.

2. To assess the level of patient satisfaction with ANC services.

3. To identify factors influencing the quality of ANC delivery.

4. To make recommendations for improving ANC services at the hospital.

**1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the availability and adequacy of ANC services at Madonna Hospital?

2. How satisfied are patients with the ANC services provided?

3. What factors influence the quality of ANC delivery at the hospital?

4. What measures can be implemented to improve ANC services at Madonna Hospital?

**1.5 Hypothesis**

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant relationship between the availability of antenatal care services and the overall quality of antenatal care delivery at Madonna Hospital

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a significant relationship between the availability of antenatal care services and the overall quality of antenatal care delivery at Madonna Hospital.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): Patient satisfaction with antenatal care services at Madonna Hospital significantly affects the quality of antenatal care delivery

**1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study will focus on assessing the quality of antenatal care services provided at Madonna Hospital in Makurdi, Benue State. It will cover various aspects of ANC, including service availability, patient satisfaction, and influencing factors. The study will be limited to pregnant women receiving ANC services at the hospital.

**1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as it aims to provide insights into the quality of antenatal care services at Madonna Hospital. The findings will be valuable to healthcare providers, policymakers, and stakeholders in improving ANC services, ultimately contributing to better maternal and child health outcomes in the region (Federal Ministry of Health, 2017). Additionally, the study will add to the existing body of knowledge on maternal health services in Nigeria.

The stakeholders will benefit from this research in the following ways:

**1. Health care Providers:** They will get an insight into the prevailing quality of antenatal care (ANC) services which is expected to give them a clear picture and guide them in working towards better health interventions among pregnant women.

**2. Policymakers:** The conclusions will help policymakers to frame policies that lead towards the better maternal and child health outcome; so that ANC services would become more effective as well available.

**3.Stakeholders**: By identifying gaps in the current ANC services, the study will help stakeholders to make informed decisions that enhance service delivery and maternal health outcomes in the region.

**4. Pregnant Women:** Pregnant women will benefit from improved ANC services, leading to better health for both mothers and their babies. Since better ANC services ensure health of the mother and the infant.

**5.Academicians**: The results from this study will provide further information to enrich the existing knowledge of maternal health services in Nigeria as well as stimulate and create a platform for future research among academicians.

Given these benefits, this study aims to provide healthcare providers and professionals with the necessary insights to develop and implement policies that enhance the quality of ANC services. By identifying areas for improvement and addressing the specific needs of expectant mothers, healthcare providers can ensure that ANC services are both effective and satisfactory. This focus on quality improvement in ANC delivery aligns with global health goals to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and improve overall reproductive health (UNFPA, 2014).

**1.8 Definition of Terms**

**Antenatal Care (ANC):** Healthcare services provided to pregnant women to ensure the health of both mother and baby during pregnancy (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).

**Source:** WHO. (2020). *Antenatal care guidelines: Ensuring positive pregnancy outcomes*. Retrieved from [WHO website](https://www.who.int).

**Service Quality:** The overall assessment of healthcare services based on factors such as availability, adequacy, and patient satisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

**Source:** Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). *SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality*. Journal of Retailing, 64(1), 12-40.

**Patient Satisfaction:** The level of contentment expressed by patients regarding the healthcare services they receive (Donabedian, 1988).

**Source:** Donabedian, A. (1988). *The quality of care: How can it be assessed?* Journal of the American Medical Association, 260(12), 1743-1748.

**Maternal Clinic:** A healthcare facility that provides specialized medical services and care for women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists [ACOG], 2021).

**Source:** ACOG. (2021). *Levels of maternal care*. Retrieved from [ACOG website](https://www.acog.org).

**Maternal Health:** The health of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period (United Nations [UN], 2020).

**Source:** United Nations. (2020). *Maternal health and the Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved from [UN website](https://www.un.org).

**Fetus:** An unborn offspring that develops and grows inside the uterus (womb) of humans (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2020).

**Source:** Merriam-Webster. (2020). *Fetus*. Retrieved from [Merriam-Webster website](https://www.merriam-webster.com).

**Fetal Health:** The well-being of the fetus during pregnancy, encompassing physical and physiological development from conception until birth (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2021).

**Source:** NICHD. (2021). *Fetal health and development*. Retrieved from [NICHD website](https://www.nichd.nih.gov).

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