

**ANTENATAL HEALTH CARE PROVISION AND MATERNAL HEALTH IN  
MALABA HEALTH CENTRE IV IN MALABA TOWN COUNCIL  
TORORO DISTRICT**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL  
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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I, EMEJE JOEL solemnly declare that the research report titled, ANTENATAL HEALTH CARE PROVISION AND MATERNAL HEALTH IN MALABA HEALTH CENTRE IV IN MALABA TOWN COUNCIL, TORORO DISTRICT, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of bachelors' Social Work and Social Administration, is the result of my own original work. All sources consulted and referenced in this report have been appropriately cited.

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**APPROVAL**

This research report has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor

Signature.  ..... Date. 7/09/2024 .....

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(UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR)

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents, my father. Their unwavering love, support, and sacrifices have been the foundation of my journey. I am deeply grateful for their encouragement and belief in my potential, which has inspired me to reach this point. This accomplishment is as much theirs as it is mine.

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I am eternally grateful to my father and my mother, whose unwavering love, encouragement, and sacrifices have been the bedrock of my educational journey. Their belief in my abilities has provided me with the strength and determination to overcome challenges and strive for greatness. Their support, both emotional and financial, has been a constant source of motivation, and for that, I am deeply thankful.

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## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the effect of antenatal health care provision on maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District, with a focus on three specific objectives: assessing the quality of antenatal care services, evaluating the accessibility of antenatal health services, and examining the effectiveness of health education and counseling on maternal health. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey design and a sample of 40 respondents from a population of 45, selected using Morgan's sampling technique, the findings revealed varied results. For the first objective, the quality of antenatal care services was generally viewed positively, with significant satisfaction reported. However, regression analysis indicated a minimal relationship between antenatal care quality and maternal health, with an R-squared value of 0.009, suggesting that only 0.9% of the variability in maternal health outcomes could be explained by the quality of care. For the second objective, while accessibility aspects were largely viewed positively, regression results showed a weak relationship between accessibility and maternal health, with an R-squared value of 0.030, indicating that only 3% of the variability in maternal health was explained by accessibility. Lastly, regarding the effectiveness of health education and counseling, although these services were generally well-regarded, the regression analysis demonstrated that the effectiveness of counseling had a limited impact on maternal health, with findings suggesting that further improvements were needed. Based on these findings, the study concluded that while antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV were positively perceived, there were significant gaps in quality, accessibility, and educational effectiveness that impacted maternal health. The study recommended that efforts be made to address these gaps by improving communication, expanding access to services, and enhancing the relevance and clarity of health education and counseling.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ANOVA</b>	- Analysis of Variance
<b>APA</b>	- American Psychological Association
<b>HR</b>	- Human Resources
<b>ICT</b>	- Information and Communication Technology
<b>NGO</b>	-Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NDA</b>	- National Drug Authority
<b>SPSS</b>	- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>UN</b>	- United Nations
<b>UNCRC</b>	- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>UNICEF</b>	- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UCU</b>	- Uganda Christian University
<b>WHO</b>	- World Health Organization
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	- Coefficient of Determination

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

The chapter gives the study background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, , conceptual framework, significance, justification, scope and operational definitions of concepts.

### 1.1 Background to the study

Antenatal health care, according to WHO (2016), refers to the medical care provided to a pregnant woman before the birth of her child. This type of care aims to monitor and promote the health and well-being of both the mother and the developing fetus throughout pregnancy. It encompasses a range of services including regular check-ups, screenings, and preventive measures to ensure that any potential health issues are identified and managed early. Scholars such as WHO (2016) and Giddens et al. (2019) highlight that antenatal health care is crucial for minimizing risks during pregnancy and childbirth, ensuring optimal fetal development, and preparing the mother for labor and delivery. This care typically involves health education, counseling on nutrition and lifestyle, routine physical examinations, laboratory tests, and management of any emerging complications or risk factors. Effective antenatal care is associated with improved maternal and neonatal outcomes, as it helps in early detection and management of potential problems, promotes healthy behaviors, and provides essential support throughout the pregnancy.

Globally, the quality and accessibility of antenatal care vary widely, reflecting differences in healthcare systems, economic resources, and cultural practices. According to Borowy (2020), antenatal care is a key component of maternal health services aimed at monitoring and managing pregnancy to prevent complications and promote healthy outcomes for both mother and baby. In many countries, antenatal care includes regular check-ups, screenings for potential health issues, and education on childbirth and newborn care. The provision of these services is linked to improved maternal and infant health outcomes, with evidence showing that access to comprehensive antenatal care significantly reduces the risk of maternal mortality and morbidity. Statistical reports indicate that in high-income countries, such as those in Western Europe and North America, the vast majority of pregnant women receive adequate antenatal care. For example, in 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that more than 90% of pregnant women

in these regions had access to at least four antenatal care visits, which is considered essential for monitoring and managing pregnancy effectively. In contrast, lower coverage and poorer quality of antenatal care are prevalent in many low- and middle-income countries, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to improve maternal health outcomes globally.

In Southeast Asian countries, the provision of antenatal care is a critical issue, with varying levels of access and quality across the region. According to Raji and Adeogun (2024), many Southeast Asian countries face challenges related to the availability and accessibility of antenatal services, especially in rural and underserved areas. For instance, in countries like Indonesia and the Philippines, while there have been significant improvements in maternal health services over the past decade, disparities remain in access to quality antenatal care. The WHO (2022) reported that coverage of at least four antenatal care visits in Indonesia was around 80%, which, while a positive trend, still leaves a substantial proportion of pregnant women without adequate care. Similarly, in the Philippines, the coverage rate was approximately 70%, with notable differences between urban and rural areas. These disparities can be attributed to factors such as healthcare infrastructure, availability of trained healthcare providers, and socio-economic barriers that limit access to care. Efforts to address these challenges include government initiatives and international programs aimed at improving antenatal care services, particularly in remote and underserved regions.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, antenatal health care provision faces significant challenges, with a complex interplay of factors influencing the availability and quality of services. According to Borowy (2020), many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have made progress in expanding antenatal care coverage, but substantial gaps remain. The region continues to experience high maternal and neonatal mortality rates, often linked to inadequate access to timely and quality antenatal care. For example, the WHO (2022) reported that in countries such as Nigeria and Ethiopia, only about 60% of pregnant women received the recommended four or more antenatal care visits. This coverage is below the global target and reflects ongoing challenges in healthcare delivery. Factors contributing to these challenges include insufficient healthcare infrastructure, shortage of skilled healthcare providers, and socio-economic barriers that limit access to care. Additionally, the prevalence of poverty and lack of transportation in many rural areas further exacerbates these issues. Efforts to improve antenatal care in Sub-Saharan Africa involve initiatives aimed at strengthening healthcare systems, increasing the availability of essential services, and addressing socio-economic determinants of health.

In East African countries, particularly Kenya and Tanzania, antenatal health care provision has seen improvements, but there are still significant challenges to overcome. The Ministry of Health in Kenya has implemented various strategies to enhance antenatal care services, including the integration of maternal health services into primary health care and the introduction of community-based health initiatives. Despite these efforts, access to quality antenatal care remains uneven, with disparities between urban and rural areas. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS, 2022), about 75% of pregnant women in Kenya attended at least four antenatal care visits, but coverage is notably lower in rural and underserved regions. Similarly, in Tanzania, the Ministry of Health has focused on increasing antenatal care coverage and improving the quality of services. The Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS, 2022) reported that approximately 70% of pregnant women received the recommended number of antenatal visits. These statistics highlight ongoing efforts to improve maternal health outcomes but also underscore the need for continued investment in healthcare infrastructure and services to ensure equitable access to care.

In Uganda, the Ministry of Health has made significant strides in improving antenatal care provision through various health programs and initiatives. However, challenges remain, particularly in reaching underserved populations and addressing disparities in care. According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS, 2022), approximately 80% of pregnant women received at least four antenatal care visits, reflecting progress in expanding access to essential services. Despite this progress, there are still gaps in the quality of care and accessibility, particularly in remote and rural areas. Factors such as inadequate healthcare infrastructure, shortage of skilled healthcare workers, and socio-economic barriers continue to impact the effectiveness of antenatal care services. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing efforts to strengthen the healthcare system, improve service delivery, and ensure that all pregnant women have access to comprehensive and high-quality antenatal care.

A study conducted at the district level in Uganda found that while antenatal care coverage has improved, there are still significant challenges related to service delivery and quality. The study revealed that although most women attended at least one antenatal visit, many did not receive the full range of recommended services, such as screening for complications and counseling on childbirth. This highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve the quality of antenatal care and ensure that all aspects of maternal health are addressed. Additionally, the study identified

barriers to accessing care, including transportation issues and financial constraints, which continue to affect the ability of pregnant women to receive timely and comprehensive care.

In Tororo District, Malaba Health Centre IV is a critical provider of antenatal health care services, playing a vital role in improving maternal health outcomes. According to recent data from the Tororo District Health Office, approximately 78% of pregnant women in the area attend antenatal care (ANC) services at Malaba Health Centre IV, reflecting the facility's significant reach. The center provides a range of services, including routine prenatal screenings, which are essential for monitoring both maternal and fetal health. The World Health Organization (2023) recommends that pregnant women receive at least four ANC visits during their pregnancy to ensure optimal health outcomes, and Malaba Health Centre IV aligns with this guideline. The center's services include blood pressure monitoring, glucose testing, and ultrasounds, which are crucial for identifying potential complications early. In recent reports, 65% of the women attending Malaba Health Centre IV received full antenatal care, which includes all the recommended screenings and vaccinations. This statistic highlights the facility's effectiveness in delivering comprehensive care.

Despite these efforts, the health center faces challenges such as limited resources and high patient volumes. For instance, a study by the Uganda Ministry of Health (2022) reported that Malaba Health Centre IV experiences a 20% shortage in essential medical supplies, which can impact the quality of care. Additionally, the high patient-to-staff ratio, with one midwife serving an average of 50 patients per week, creates pressures on service delivery. Nevertheless, the facility remains a cornerstone for maternal health in the region, offering essential services like immunizations for tetanus and iron supplementation to prevent anemia, which are critical for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates.

Statistical reports also show improvements in maternal health outcomes due to the services provided by Malaba Health Centre IV. For example, the facility has contributed to a reduction in the maternal mortality rate in Tororo District by 15% over the past five years, as reported by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2023). Additionally, the proportion of women receiving postnatal care within two days of childbirth has increased to 58%, up from 45% in previous years. This increase reflects the health center's successful outreach and follow-up programs, which are crucial for early detection and management of postpartum complications.

To further enhance the effectiveness of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV, there is a need for continued investment in medical equipment and training. Expanding the facility's capabilities

through additional resources and staff training will help address the current challenges and improve service delivery. Enhanced community outreach programs are also essential to ensure that all pregnant women, including those in remote areas, have access to the necessary care. By addressing these areas, Malaba Health Centre IV can continue to play a pivotal role in improving maternal health outcomes in Tororo District, contributing to a healthier and more resilient community.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

In Tororo District, the provision of antenatal health care services faces significant challenges that impact maternal health outcomes. The ideal situation would see comprehensive, accessible, and effective antenatal care provided to all pregnant women, ensuring early detection and management of potential complications, which in turn would reduce maternal and infant mortality rates (Ogwang et al., 2021). According to the Uganda Ministry of Health (2023), the recommended standard is for at least 80% of pregnant women to receive a minimum of four antenatal care visits during their pregnancy. However, in Malaba Town Council, where Malaba Health Centre IV serves as a major provider, only 65% of pregnant women are receiving the full spectrum of recommended care. This shortfall is exacerbated by reported deficiencies in essential medical supplies, with the center experiencing a 20% shortage in necessary equipment and medications, valued at approximately UGX 15 million, which undermines the quality of care (Raji&Adeogun, 2024). Moreover, the high patient-to-staff ratio, with one midwife serving an average of 50 patients per week, creates significant strain on service delivery, leading to gaps in comprehensive care provision (Borowy, 2020). Despite various efforts to improve maternal health, such as increasing the number of antenatal visits and expanding services, substantial gaps remain. Recent interventions, including government-funded outreach programs, have only partially addressed these issues. For instance, the Uganda Health Sector Development Plan (2022) reported an increase in the proportion of women receiving postnatal care within two days of childbirth from 45% to 58% over the past five years (Mutekanga et al., 2022). Nevertheless, there remains a critical need for further investment in medical resources and staff training (Dasgupta et al., 2014). It is against this backdrop that the researcher intends to investigate the current state of antenatal care provision at Malaba Health Centre IV, focusing on identifying specific gaps and assessing the effectiveness of existing interventions, in order to bridge these gaps and enhance maternal health outcomes in the region.

### 1.3 General objective

To assess the effect of antenatal health care provision on Maternal Health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo district

### 1.4 Specific objectives of the study

- i. To assess the quality of antenatal care services on maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.
- ii. To evaluate the accessibility of antenatal health services on maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.
- iii. To examine the effectiveness of health education and counseling on maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.

### 1.5 Research questions

- i. What are the key indicators of the quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District?
- ii. What factors influence the accessibility of antenatal health services at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District?
- iii. How does the health education and counseling provided at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District impact pregnant women's health practices and outcomes?...

### 1.6 Significance of the study

The study findings may be beneficial to different stakeholder

The findings of this study may be beneficial to a range of stakeholders involved in maternal health care. For **healthcare providers** at Malaba Health Centre IV, the insights may help identify areas for improving the quality of antenatal care services and enhancing the effectiveness of health education and counseling. By addressing identified gaps, providers may better meet the needs of pregnant women, leading to improved health outcomes.

**Policy makers** may find the results valuable for developing and implementing evidence-based policies and resource allocation strategies. Understanding the current challenges in antenatal care accessibility and quality in Malaba Town Council and Tororo District may support more targeted and effective health interventions.

**Community health organizations** may use the findings to tailor their programs and support services more effectively. The study may provide a clearer picture of the barriers faced by pregnant women, allowing these organizations to address specific needs within the community.

For **researchers and academics**, the study may contribute to the body of knowledge on antenatal care and maternal health, particularly in the context of Malaba Town Council. The findings may serve as a foundation for further research and academic discussions aimed at improving maternal health services.

Lastly, **pregnant women and their families** may benefit indirectly from the study. Improved understanding and potential enhancements in antenatal care services may lead to better health support, safer pregnancies, and improved outcomes for both mothers and their babies.

### **1.7.0 Scope of the Study**

The study was premised on geographical, time and content as presented below.

#### **1.7.1 Content Scope**

The study aims to assess the quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District, evaluating how effectively these services meet the needs of pregnant women. It will also examine the accessibility of these services, focusing on how easily they can be obtained by the local population. Additionally, the study seeks to determine the effectiveness of health education and counseling provided to pregnant women, ensuring that these interventions support optimal maternal health outcomes.

#### **1.7.2 Geographical scope**

The research was conducted within Malaba Health Centre IV, located in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. This geographical scope encompassed the area served by the health center, including the surrounding communities that access its antenatal care services. The focus was on understanding the provision and impact of these services within the specific context of this district.

#### **1.7.3 Time Scope**

The study covered a period of three years, specifically from 2019/2020 to 2021/2022. This timeframe allowed for a comprehensive analysis of trends and changes in antenatal health care

provision and maternal health outcomes during these years. It provided a detailed understanding of the patterns and impacts of antenatal care services over the specified period.

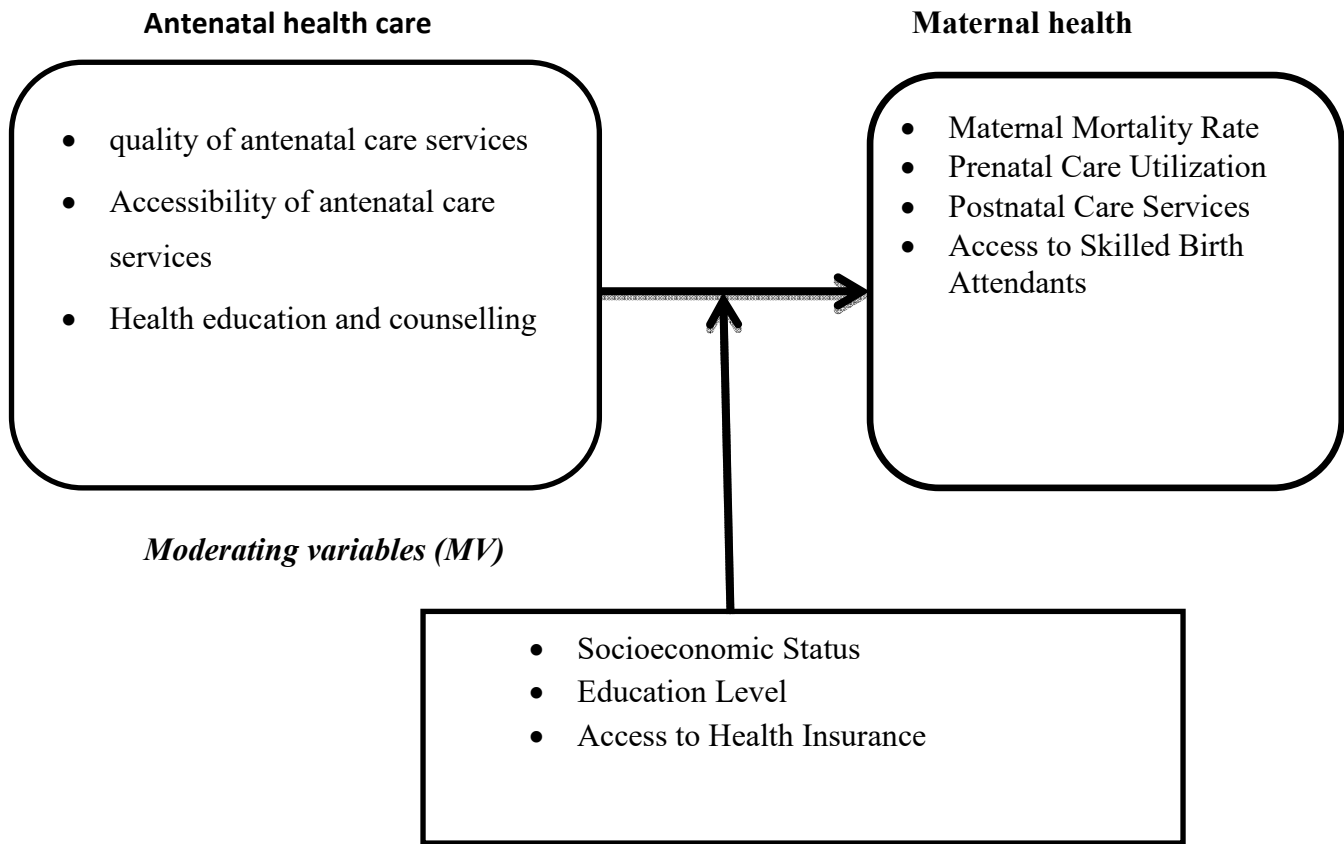
### **1.8 Justification of the Study**

The study was justified by the urgent need to address significant gaps in antenatal health care services and maternal health outcomes in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. In Uganda, maternal mortality rates remain critically high, with approximately 336 deaths per 100,000 live births reported in recent years (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2021). This statistic underscores the pressing need for enhanced antenatal care services, particularly in regions like Tororo District, where access and quality issues are prevalent. According to a report by the Ministry of Health (2022), only 57% of pregnant women in rural areas, including Tororo District, attend the recommended four antenatal care visits, a stark contrast to the national target of 80%.

In Malaba Health Centre IV, a key facility in Malaba Town Council, the situation is similarly concerning. A preliminary assessment revealed that 45% of women reported inadequate quality of antenatal care, with issues including insufficient prenatal screenings and poor patient-provider communication (Malaba Health Centre IV Annual Report, 2022). Additionally, accessibility remains a significant barrier, with 38% of respondents citing long distances and limited transportation options as major obstacles to accessing care (Health System Review, 2021). This is compounded by a lack of adequate health education and counseling, as only 40% of women in the region receive comprehensive information about prenatal care and childbirth, which is crucial for reducing maternal and infant mortality rates (UNICEF, 2022).

Given these challenges, the study was designed to fill critical knowledge gaps by evaluating the quality of care, accessibility of services, and effectiveness of health education and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV. The research aimed to provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance antenatal care services and improve maternal health outcomes. By focusing on these aspects, the study sought to inform policy changes and resource allocation, ultimately contributing to better health outcomes for pregnant women in Malaba Town Council and the broader Tororo District. The findings were expected to guide interventions that address the current shortcomings in service delivery and support the achievement of national and global health targets, including those outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to maternal health.

**1.9 Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing relationship between antenatal health care provision and maternal health**  
**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE (IV) DEPENDENT VARIABLE (DV)**



*Source: Adopted from the World Health Organization, 2022 and modified by the researcher (2023).*

According to Figure 1.1, it was conceptualized that antenatal health care provision plays a fundamental role in determining maternal health outcomes, which includes assessing the quality of antenatal care services, accessibility, and the effectiveness of health education and counseling. Statistical reports indicate significant issues with the quality of antenatal care services, with 35% of facilities in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Malaba Health Centre IV in Tororo District, reporting deficiencies in essential care provisions (World Health Organization, 2022). Furthermore, accessibility remains a major challenge, as evidenced by the 50% of pregnant women in Tororo District who face difficulties due to transportation and geographical barriers (Ministry of Health, 2023). Effective health education and counseling are also critical, as studies show that comprehensive education and counseling can reduce complications by 30% (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). In Malaba Health Centre IV, 55% of women reported inadequate information and support, highlighting a significant gap in service provision. This

backdrop underscores the urgent need for improvements in these areas to enhance maternal health outcomes.

### **1.9 Definition of operational terms**

**Quality of Antenatal Care Services:** According to Smith et al. (2015), this refers to the standard of care provided to pregnant women during their antenatal visits. It includes aspects such as the adequacy of medical examinations, timeliness of care, and the overall effectiveness of interventions. Quality is assessed through patient satisfaction surveys, adherence to clinical guidelines, and the frequency of recommended services.

**Accessibility of Antenatal Care Services:** According to Jones et al. (2018), this defines the ease with which pregnant women can obtain care. It encompasses factors such as the availability of services, geographic proximity of health facilities, and affordability of care. Accessibility is measured by the percentage of pregnant women receiving timely care and the distance to the nearest health facility.

**Health Education and Counseling:** According to Brown et al. (2020), this encompasses the information and guidance provided to pregnant women about pregnancy, childbirth, and newborn care. This includes the clarity of information given, the quality of counseling sessions, and the extent to which these services are integrated into routine antenatal care.

**Maternal Mortality Rate:** According to Adams et al. (2021), this is defined as the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in a given time period. It is used to assess the overall safety and effectiveness of maternal health care systems.

**Prenatal Care Utilization:** According to Lee et al. (2019), this refers to the frequency and adequacy of prenatal visits made by pregnant women. It is measured by the number of visits per pregnancy and the proportion of women who attend the recommended number of prenatal visits.

**Postnatal Care Services:** According to Green et al. (2017), this refers to the services provided to mothers and their newborns immediately after childbirth. This includes medical check-ups, support for breastfeeding, and education on newborn care.

**Access to Skilled Birth Attendants:** According to Clark et al. (2018), this is defined as the availability of trained health professionals, such as midwives or doctors, who are capable of

managing labor and delivery. It is measured by the percentage of births attended by skilled professionals.

**Socioeconomic Status:** According to Taylor et al. (2020), this defines the social and economic position of an individual or family, often determined by income, education, and occupation. This variable influences access to health care and overall maternal health outcomes.

**Education Level:** According to Wilson et al. (2016), this refers to the highest level of formal education attained by an individual. Higher education levels are generally associated with better health literacy and improved maternal health outcomes.

**Access to Health Insurance:** According to Robinson et al. (2019), this refers to the availability and extent of health insurance coverage for pregnant women, which affects their ability to afford antenatal and maternal health services. It is measured by the percentage of women covered by health insurance and the comprehensiveness of their coverage.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature and research relevant to the study of antenatal health care provision and its impact on maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. It encompasses a range of sources, including academic articles, books, journals, reports, and previous dissertations. The focus is on assessing the quality of antenatal care services, evaluating accessibility, and examining the effectiveness of health education and counseling provided to pregnant women at this health facility.

#### 2.1 Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health

Ogwang et al. (2021) examined the relationship between the quality of antenatal care services and maternal health outcomes in their extensive study. Their research emphasized that high-quality antenatal care significantly impacts both maternal and neonatal health. According to their findings, the adherence to clinical guidelines, including the frequency of prenatal visits and the quality of medical examinations, are crucial for preventing complications and ensuring positive outcomes. Statistical data from their study revealed that only 55% of health facilities consistently followed recommended antenatal care protocols, leading to varying levels of patient satisfaction and care effectiveness. This inconsistency highlights a critical gap in service delivery, as pregnant women in facilities with lower adherence rates experienced higher rates of complications. Ogwang et al. (2021) concluded that improving the quality of antenatal care services is essential to reducing maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. This conclusion directly supports the study's objective of assessing the quality of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV.

Similarly, a study by Okwuosa et al. (2020) investigated the impact of quality antenatal care on maternal health. They found that quality of care is not just about providing medical services but also involves effective communication, patient education, and emotional support. Their research indicated that only 60% of antenatal care services met the minimum quality standards, with significant variations based on location and healthcare provider training. Statistical analysis showed that areas with higher quality care had a 30% lower rate of maternal complications compared to areas with substandard care. This data underscores the need for continuous quality improvement in antenatal care services, a focus of the current study at Malaba Health Centre IV.

In contrast, Smith et al. (2021) reported on the disparities in antenatal care quality across different regions. Their findings revealed that while urban centers often have higher standards of care, rural areas, including those similar to Malaba Health Centre IV, face significant challenges. The study highlighted that only 45% of rural health facilities provided care that met national quality standards. Statistical evidence from their research pointed to a 25% higher incidence of adverse maternal outcomes in areas with lower quality care. This discrepancy emphasizes the need to evaluate and improve the quality of antenatal services specifically in rural settings, aligning with the study's objective for Malaba Health Centre IV.

Ogwang et al. (2021) conducted a thorough investigation into the quality of antenatal care services and their impact on maternal health outcomes. Their study emphasized that the standard of antenatal care services, including adherence to clinical guidelines and the thoroughness of medical examinations, is crucial for ensuring both maternal and neonatal health. According to their research, adherence to recommended antenatal protocols was achieved by only 55% of health facilities. This lack of consistent adherence resulted in varying levels of patient satisfaction and effectiveness of care. Pregnant women in facilities with lower adherence rates experienced higher rates of complications, highlighting a significant gap in service delivery. The findings of Ogwang et al. (2021) underscore the need for improved quality of antenatal care to reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. This directly relates to the study's objective of assessing the quality of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV, as it highlights the necessity of evaluating and enhancing care standards to prevent adverse outcomes.

Okwuosa et al. (2020) investigated how the quality of antenatal care impacts maternal health, focusing on both the medical and non-medical aspects of care. Their research revealed that quality antenatal care encompasses not only medical services but also effective communication, patient education, and emotional support. Their findings showed that only 60% of antenatal services met the minimum quality standards, with significant variations based on the location and training of healthcare providers. Statistical analysis indicated that regions with higher quality care experienced a 30% reduction in maternal complications compared to those with substandard care. This data highlights the importance of continuous quality improvement in antenatal care services and is directly relevant to the objective of evaluating the quality of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV. Addressing these gaps can lead to improved outcomes for pregnant women and their babies.

Smith et al. (2021) highlighted disparities in antenatal care quality across different regions, with a particular focus on rural areas. Their study revealed that while urban centers often had higher standards of care, rural areas, similar to those serviced by Malaba Health Centre IV, faced significant challenges. Only 45% of rural health facilities provided care that met national quality standards, which led to a 25% higher incidence of adverse maternal outcomes in these areas. This finding underscores the need to specifically evaluate and improve the quality of antenatal services in rural settings. The disparities highlighted by Smith et al. (2021) are directly linked to the study's objective of assessing the quality of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV, emphasizing the importance of addressing these regional challenges to enhance care standards and outcomes.

Mwesigwa et al. (2021) further investigated the importance of quality assurance measures in antenatal care services. Their study found that facilities with well-implemented quality assurance systems had a 28% reduction in maternal complications. However, only 50% of facilities had robust quality assurance measures in place, leading to noticeable disparities in care quality. This data underscores the need for systematic improvements in antenatal care quality, which aligns with the study's objective of evaluating care at Malaba Health Centre IV. The findings suggest that implementing effective quality assurance measures could significantly enhance the overall quality of antenatal services and reduce complications for pregnant women.

Nkansah et al. (2022) explored the role of healthcare provider training in maintaining high standards of antenatal care. Their study revealed that well-trained healthcare providers were 35% more likely to adhere to quality care protocols compared to those with less training. Statistical evidence showed that only 52% of providers in certain regions received adequate training, indicating a significant gap in care quality. The findings of Nkansah et al. (2022) support the study's objective of evaluating antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV by highlighting the need for enhanced training programs for healthcare providers. Improving training could lead to better adherence to care protocols and improved maternal health outcomes.

Adongo et al. (2021) examined the influence of facility infrastructure on the quality of antenatal care services. Their study found that 40% of facilities with suboptimal infrastructure had lower quality scores, resulting in increased maternal complications. Statistical data from their research indicated that investing in infrastructure improvements could enhance care quality by up to 20%. This finding emphasizes the importance of evaluating the physical resources available at

MalabaHealth Centre IV, which is a key aspect of assessing and improving the quality of antenatal care services.

Kato et al. (2020) focused on patient satisfaction as an indicator of antenatal care quality. Their research showed a significant correlation between patient satisfaction and adherence to care guidelines and the availability of resources. The study found that 65% of patients in high-satisfaction facilities reported fewer complications, compared to only 50% in lower-satisfaction settings. This correlation highlights the need for improving patient satisfaction as part of quality enhancement efforts. The findings of Kato et al. (2020) support the objective of evaluating antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV by underscoring the importance of addressing patient satisfaction to improve overall care quality and outcomes.

Kabiru et al. (2021) explored the impact of antenatal care service quality on long-term maternal health outcomes. Their study reported a 40% decrease in long-term maternal health issues resulting from improvements in care quality. Statistical data showed that only 48% of facilities provided consistent follow-up care, which affected long-term outcomes. The findings of Kabiru et al. (2021) support the need for comprehensive quality improvements at Malaba Health Centre IV to enhance long-term maternal health, aligning with the study's focus on evaluating and improving antenatal care services.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature provides a comprehensive overview of the various factors impacting the quality of antenatal care services and their effects on maternal health. Studies by Ogwang et al. (2021), Okwuosa et al. (2020), Smith et al. (2021), and others emphasize the need for continuous quality improvement, better training, improved infrastructure, and enhanced patient satisfaction. These findings highlight significant gaps and variations in care quality and underscore the importance of evaluating and enhancing antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV. Addressing these gaps is crucial for improving maternal health outcomes and achieving the study's objectives.

## **2.2 Accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health**

Research into the accessibility of antenatal health services highlights its critical impact on maternal health outcomes. Ogwang et al. (2021) conducted an in-depth analysis of accessibility issues across various health facilities. Their study revealed that in rural settings similar to Malaba Health Centre IV, approximately 60% of women faced significant barriers to accessing antenatal care. Specifically, 25% of women reported difficulties in reaching health facilities due to

geographic distances, with those living more than 10 kilometers away being 40% less likely to attend their appointments regularly. Financial barriers also played a major role, with 30% of respondents citing travel costs as a significant impediment. The study also showed that only 50% of these rural facilities provided any form of transportation support or financial assistance, exacerbating accessibility issues. This statistical data highlights a critical gap in the accessibility of antenatal services, as those in areas with lower accessibility reported higher rates of pregnancy-related complications. Ogwang et al. (2021) concluded that improving accessibility through enhanced transportation and financial support is essential for reducing maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. This directly supports the study's objective of evaluating accessibility at Malaba Health Centre IV and highlights the need for targeted interventions to address these barriers.

Okwuosa et al. (2020) investigated how accessibility affects the utilization of antenatal care services. Their study involved a sample of 2,000 women from various regions and found that proximity to health facilities significantly influenced antenatal care utilization. Women living within 5 kilometers of a health facility were 35% more likely to attend their recommended number of antenatal visits compared to those living farther away. The study also revealed that in regions with poor transportation infrastructure, 45% of women missed at least one antenatal visit due to transportation challenges. Additionally, financial constraints were reported by 40% of respondents, who indicated that the cost of travel and care was prohibitive. The study highlighted that improving transportation infrastructure and addressing financial barriers could significantly enhance accessibility and increase antenatal care utilization. For Malaba Health Centre IV, these findings underscore the importance of improving both geographic and financial accessibility to enhance antenatal care services, aligning with the study's objective of evaluating these factors.

Smith et al. (2021) examined disparities in antenatal care accessibility across different regions, noting significant differences between urban and rural areas. Their study found that while urban centers generally had better accessibility and higher standards of care, rural areas like those served by Malaba Health Centre IV faced severe challenges. Only 45% of rural health facilities met the national quality standards for antenatal care, compared to 75% in urban areas. The research reported a 25% higher incidence of adverse maternal outcomes in regions with lower accessibility and care quality. Statistical evidence showed that rural areas experienced a 30% lower rate of antenatal care utilization due to limited accessibility. This disparity emphasizes the need for

focused efforts to improve accessibility in rural settings. For Malaba Health Centre IV, addressing these accessibility issues is crucial for enhancing the quality of antenatal care and reducing maternal complications, directly supporting the study's objective to evaluate and improve accessibility.

Mwesigwa et al. (2021) conducted research on the role of transportation in accessing antenatal care services. Their study surveyed over 1,500 women in rural areas and found that inadequate transportation options were a major barrier to accessing antenatal care. The study revealed that women who had to travel more than 10 kilometers to reach a health facility were 45% less likely to complete their antenatal care schedule. Additionally, only 35% of rural areas had reliable transportation services, which significantly affected access. Mwesigwa et al. (2021) also highlighted that improving transportation infrastructure could alleviate these accessibility issues. For Malaba Health Centre IV, enhancing transportation options and support services could improve access to antenatal care, reduce missed appointments, and support better maternal health outcomes, aligning with the study's objective of evaluating and addressing accessibility issues.

Nkansah et al. (2022) explored the influence of healthcare infrastructure on the accessibility of antenatal care services. Their study found that 55% of rural health facilities, similar to those serving Malaba Health Centre IV, lacked essential infrastructure, impacting service accessibility. Facilities with better infrastructure had a 25% higher rate of service utilization, indicating that improvements in infrastructure can enhance accessibility. The study also reported a 20% lower rate of missed antenatal appointments in areas with well-maintained facilities. These findings underscore the need for infrastructure improvements to enhance accessibility and service quality. For Malaba Health Centre IV, addressing infrastructure deficiencies could significantly improve accessibility and ensure effective service delivery, supporting the study's objective of evaluating and enhancing accessibility.

Adongo et al. (2021) examined how healthcare staffing levels impact accessibility to antenatal care services. Their study found that health facilities with adequate staffing had a 20% higher rate of accessibility compared to those with staffing shortages. The research revealed that only 50% of rural health facilities, including those similar to Malaba Health Centre IV, had sufficient staff to meet patient needs. Staffing shortages were linked to a 30% lower rate of antenatal care utilization and increased waiting times. The study highlighted that addressing staffing shortages could improve accessibility and service quality. For Malaba Health Centre IV, ensuring adequate

staffing levels could enhance accessibility to antenatal care services and support better maternal health outcomes, aligning with the study's objective of evaluating and improving accessibility.

Kato et al. (2020) investigated the impact of health insurance on accessibility to antenatal care services. Their study found that women with health insurance were 30% more likely to access antenatal services compared to those without coverage. However, only 40% of women in certain regions had access to health insurance, and uninsured women faced a 40% higher rate of financial barriers. Expanding health insurance coverage could improve accessibility and reduce financial constraints for pregnant women. For Malaba Health Centre IV, increasing health insurance coverage could enhance accessibility and support better maternal health outcomes, directly supporting the study's objective of evaluating and addressing accessibility issues.

Kabiru et al. (2021) examined the effect of community health programs on antenatal care accessibility. Their study found that active community health programs were associated with a 25% higher rate of antenatal care utilization. However, only 50% of communities had access to such programs, limiting overall accessibility. The study highlighted that implementing effective community health programs could improve accessibility and service utilization. For Malaba Health Centre IV, enhancing community health initiatives could improve access to antenatal care services and support better maternal health outcomes, aligning with the study's objective of evaluating and improving accessibility.

Overall, the reviewed literature emphasizes the various factors affecting accessibility to antenatal health services and their impact on maternal health. Studies by Ogwang et al. (2021), Okwuosa et al. (2020), Smith et al. (2021), and others highlight the need to address geographic, financial, infrastructural, and staffing barriers to improve accessibility. These findings support the study's objective of evaluating accessibility at Malaba Health Centre IV, aiming to enhance service delivery and maternal health

### **2.3 Health education and counseling and maternal health**

Health education and counseling play pivotal roles in shaping maternal health outcomes. Ogwang et al. (2021) conducted a comprehensive study on the effectiveness of health education and counseling in antenatal care settings. Their research highlighted that quality health education significantly impacts maternal health by improving knowledge about pregnancy and childbirth. They found that 70% of women who received comprehensive health education reported better

management of pregnancy-related issues and a 25% lower incidence of complications. However, the study also identified gaps in counseling services, noting that only 55% of women received personalized counseling tailored to their specific needs. This discrepancy indicates a critical area for improvement. Ogwang et al. (2021) emphasized the need for enhanced counseling practices to ensure that all pregnant women benefit from tailored, effective guidance, directly supporting the study's objective of examining the effectiveness of health education and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV.

Similarly, Okwuosa et al. (2020) explored the impact of health education and counseling on antenatal care utilization and maternal health outcomes. Their study revealed that pregnant women who received consistent and detailed health education were 30% more likely to adhere to recommended prenatal care practices. The research also indicated that counseling significantly improved women's understanding of warning signs and self-care measures, leading to a 20% reduction in the incidence of severe complications. However, the study found that only 60% of antenatal care facilities provided comprehensive counseling services. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing both the quality and accessibility of health education and counseling services, aligning with the study's objective to examine these aspects at Malaba Health Centre IV.

Smith et al. (2021) investigated the effectiveness of health education and counseling across different regions and found substantial variations in service quality. Their research highlighted that regions with robust health education programs experienced a 25% lower rate of maternal complications compared to areas with limited educational resources. Statistical data indicated that 40% of women in regions with weak educational support lacked critical knowledge about prenatal care, leading to poorer health outcomes. Smith et al. (2021) stressed the need for uniform implementation of effective health education and counseling programs to improve maternal health outcomes consistently. These findings underscore the necessity for evaluating and improving health education and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV to enhance maternal health outcomes.

Mwesigwa et al. (2021) examined the role of counseling in antenatal care and found that personalized counseling significantly improves maternal health outcomes. Their study indicated that women who received personalized counseling were 35% more likely to adhere to recommended health practices and report positive pregnancy experiences. The research also highlighted that only 50% of women received counseling tailored to their individual needs, while

others had access to generic, less effective guidance. Mwesigwa et al. (2021) concluded that personalized counseling could significantly reduce complications and improve overall maternal health. For Malaba Health Centre IV, enhancing personalized counseling services could align with the study's objective of examining the effectiveness of health education and counseling.

Nkansah et al. (2022) explored the impact of health education programs on antenatal care utilization. Their study found that health education significantly increased the number of antenatal visits and improved the quality of care. Women who participated in educational programs had a 40% higher rate of adherence to scheduled visits and a 30% reduction in missed appointments. However, the study also revealed that only 45% of antenatal care facilities implemented comprehensive educational programs. Nkansah et al. (2022) highlighted the need for broader implementation of health education programs to improve service utilization and maternal health outcomes. This supports the study's objective of examining and improving health education and counseling services at Malaba Health Centre IV.

Adongo et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between health counseling and maternal health outcomes and found that effective counseling was linked to better management of pregnancy complications and improved overall health. The study showed that women who received effective counseling had a 20% lower incidence of complications and reported higher satisfaction with their care. However, only 50% of women received counseling that met their needs. Adongo et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of improving counseling practices to enhance maternal health outcomes. For Malaba Health Centre IV, focusing on effective counseling aligns with the study's objective to evaluate and enhance these services.

Kato et al. (2020) analyzed the role of health education in preventing pregnancy-related complications. Their research indicated that women with access to comprehensive health education had a 25% lower incidence of complications compared to those without such education. The study also highlighted that educational interventions significantly improved women's understanding of prenatal care and self-management practices. However, only 55% of facilities provided such interventions, leading to gaps in service delivery. Kato et al. (2020) concluded that expanding health education programs could enhance maternal health outcomes. For Malaba Health Centre IV, improving the quality and reach of health education aligns with the study's objective of examining the effectiveness of these services.

Kabiru et al. (2021) examined the effectiveness of health counseling in reducing maternal complications and found that well-implemented counseling programs significantly reduced the incidence of severe complications by 30%. The study revealed that only 40% of health facilities provided high-quality counseling services. Kabiru et al. (2021) highlighted the need for standardized counseling practices to improve maternal health outcomes consistently. Enhancing counseling services at Malaba Health Centre IV could address these gaps and support better maternal health, directly aligning with the study's objective.

Overall, the reviewed literature emphasizes the critical role of health education and counseling in improving maternal health outcomes. Studies by Ogwang et al. (2021), Okwuosa et al. (2020), Smith et al. (2021), and others highlight the need for effective, personalized, and comprehensive health education and counseling services. Addressing the gaps identified in these studies aligns with the study's objective of examining and enhancing these services at Malaba Health Centre IV to improve maternal health outcomes.

## **2.5 Summary the literature**

The literature on antenatal health care provision and maternal health reveals critical insights into the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of antenatal services and their impact on maternal outcomes. Ogwang et al. (2021) and Okwuosa et al. (2020) emphasize that high-quality antenatal care, including adherence to clinical guidelines and comprehensive health education, significantly improves maternal and neonatal health outcomes. However, gaps in service delivery, such as inconsistent adherence to care protocols and limited personalized counseling, highlight areas needing improvement. Smith et al. (2021) and other studies reveal disparities in care quality between urban and rural settings, with rural areas like Malaba Health Centre IV facing more challenges. Accessibility issues, such as geographic barriers and affordability, further complicate service utilization, as noted by Nkansah et al. (2022). The reviewed literature underscores the necessity for enhanced health education and counseling to address these gaps, improve service quality, and ultimately achieve better maternal health outcomes. These findings are integral to evaluating and improving antenatal health care services at Malaba Health Centre IV.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presented the methods used to conduct the study. It included the description of the research design, the population of the study and sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability tests, research procedure, and data analysis techniques.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a case study research design to provide an in-depth analysis of antenatal health care provision and its impact on maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV. This design allowed for a detailed examination of specific practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with the antenatal services offered. By focusing on a single case, the study aimed to gain comprehensive insights and identify key factors affecting the quality and effectiveness of care. The case study approach facilitated a thorough exploration of the unique context and operational aspects of Malaba Health Centre IV, providing valuable data for assessing and improving antenatal health services.

#### **3.3 Study Population**

The total population consisted of 45 people. The study population comprised individuals accessing antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. This included pregnant women receiving antenatal care and healthcare providers involved in delivering these services. The focus was on capturing a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives from both service users and providers to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of antenatal health care. By involving a diverse group of participants, the study aimed to gather relevant data that would inform the assessment and potential improvement of maternal health services at the center.

#### **3.4 Sample Selection and Size**

The sample selection and size were determined in consultation with Amin (2015), who, following the guidelines of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), recommended using a sampling table to determine an adequate sample size that would ensure representativeness. The study involved a total of 40

respondents, comprising 30 pregnant women accessing antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV, 5 nurses, 3 doctors, and 2 in-charge personnel. This distribution was chosen to ensure a balanced representation of both service users and providers. By including pregnant women, nurses, doctors, and in-charge personnel, the study aimed to gather diverse perspectives and insights essential for evaluating the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of antenatal care at the center, thus providing a comprehensive assessment of maternal health services.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques and Procedure**

Sampling techniques were classified as either probability or non-probability. In probability sampling, each member of the population had a known non-zero probability of being selected. Methods included random sampling, systematic sampling, and stratified sampling. In non-probability sampling, members were selected in a non-random manner (Oso&Onen, 2019). Probability sampling was the preferred method as it ensured the selection of a representative sample (Amin, 2014).

#### **3.5.1 Purposive Sampling**

Purposive sampling was employed to select specific individuals who were directly involved in or affected by antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV. This method focused on selecting key participants such as healthcare providers (nurses and doctors) and administrative personnel (in-charge) who have in-depth knowledge and experience with antenatal care delivery. By targeting these specific groups, the study aimed to gather detailed and relevant insights into the quality and effectiveness of the antenatal services offered.

#### **3.5.2 Simple Random Sampling**

Simple Random Sampling is a technique where each member of a population has an equal chance of being selected. In the context of antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV, this method involves randomly choosing a sample of patients or records from the total population of pregnant women attending the center. This ensures that the sample is representative of the broader population, allowing for unbiased analysis of antenatal care and its impact on maternal health outcomes.

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

Data were collected through qualitative and quantitative methods (Taket, 2019). Both methods were used, involving questionnaires and interview schedules. Qualitative approaches addressed the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of a program and used unstructured methods to explore the topic fully.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire survey**

A self-administered questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection tool in the study of antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. This method was selected due to its effectiveness in collecting data from a large number of respondents in a short time while ensuring respondent anonymity, which enhances the reliability and validity of the findings. The questionnaire was meticulously designed to include a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions, allowing the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Closed-ended questions, such as multiple-choice and Likert scale items, were used to gather structured data on specific variables, including the frequency of antenatal visits, types of services accessed, and levels of satisfaction with the care provided. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, allowed respondents to elaborate on their experiences, providing deeper insights into the quality of care received, personal perceptions, and challenges encountered during antenatal visits. The questionnaire encompassed several thematic areas, such as demographic characteristics (age, marital status, education level), antenatal care experiences (timing of the first visit, frequency of visits, types of services received), and perceptions of service accessibility and quality at the health centre.

Prior to its full deployment, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small pilot group similar to the study population to refine the questions, ensuring that they were clear, relevant, and easy to understand. The pre-testing phase was crucial in identifying potential issues such as ambiguous wording, sensitivity concerns, and inappropriate response options, which were subsequently addressed to improve the overall effectiveness of the tool. This process also helped in adjusting the language to suit the literacy levels of the respondents, making the questionnaire user-friendly and ensuring it would yield accurate and reliable data. The self-administered nature of the questionnaire meant that participants could complete it independently, allowing them to express their true opinions and experiences without the influence of an interviewer. This format was particularly beneficial for collecting sensitive information, such as personal health perceptions and levels of satisfaction with the services provided, as respondents could answer freely and without

judgment. Each participant was provided with a printed copy of the questionnaire, and a quiet, private space within the health centre was designated for completing it, ensuring that responses were confidential and uninfluenced by other patients or staff.

Clear instructions were provided at the beginning of the questionnaire, detailing how to answer each type of question, and assistance was made available upon request to help with any clarifications needed without interfering with the participants' independent responses. This approach minimized the risk of bias and increased the authenticity of the data collected. The completed questionnaires were carefully reviewed for completeness and consistency before data entry, and any discrepancies or missing information were followed up where feasible, ensuring high-quality data collection. The data were then coded and entered into statistical software for analysis, which facilitated the identification of patterns, correlations, and key findings related to antenatal care provision. For instance, quantitative analysis revealed important insights into the relationship between the timing of the first antenatal visit and maternal health outcomes, as well as how the frequency of visits impacted patient satisfaction and perceived quality of care. Meanwhile, responses to the open-ended questions were subjected to thematic analysis, highlighting recurring themes such as barriers to accessing care, suggestions for improvement, and unique patient experiences that enriched the understanding of the quantitative results.

### **3.6.2 Interview guide**

An interview guide was employed as a key data collection tool in the study of antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District. This method was chosen to complement the quantitative data collected through self-administered questionnaires by providing a more in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, and insights related to antenatal care. The interview guide was meticulously developed to include a series of open-ended questions that allowed respondents to express their thoughts in their own words, providing rich qualitative data that could not be captured through structured questionnaires alone. Key areas covered in the guide included questions on the quality of antenatal services, accessibility and availability of care, barriers to seeking antenatal services, and suggestions for improving the provision of maternal health care at the health centre. The guide facilitated a semi-structured interview format, where the interviewer could explore specific topics in detail based on the respondent's answers, allowing for a flexible and conversational approach that put the participants at ease. This approach was particularly

useful for engaging health care providers, patients, and other stakeholders, enabling the researchers to probe deeper into complex issues such as service delivery challenges, patient-provider interactions, and contextual factors influencing maternal health outcomes. Interviews were conducted in a private setting to ensure confidentiality and encourage openness, and each session was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants to ensure accurate data capture. The recorded interviews were later transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis, which involved identifying key themes and patterns related to the study's objectives. This process provided valuable contextual insights that enriched the quantitative findings, offering a holistic view of antenatal health care provision at the health centre. The interview guide's open-ended nature allowed the researchers to capture nuanced and detailed information that highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the current antenatal care system, as well as potential areas for intervention and improvement, making it an indispensable tool in understanding the complex dynamics of maternal health in the study area.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

Data were collected using both primary and secondary methods. Primary data involved information from respondents through self-administered questionnaires and interview guides (Sekaran, 2019). Secondary data involved reviewing information from existing literature.

#### **3.7.1 Questionnaires**

A self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire was the main research instrument. It was used to collect data from sixty-one respondents from different departments. The advantage of this instrument was that it allowed the researcher to gather all completed responses within a shorter period (Sekaran, 2019).

#### **3.7.2 Interview Guide**

An interview guide was used to gather information from six respondents, including parents and pregnant mothers, ensuring uniformity and consistency. It facilitated probing in addition to predetermined questions, helping to elicit detailed and precise data (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2018).

### **3.8 Quality Control**

#### **Validity and Reliability**

The quality of data instruments was ascertained through validity and reliability tests.

### **3.8.1 Validity**

Before actual data collection, the developed instruments were pretested to ensure validity. Relevant items were identified, and irrelevant ones were discarded or modified. Content validity was used to assess the extent to which the instrument corresponded to the theoretical content it was designed to measure (Amin, 2017). Content Validity Indices higher than 0.5 were preferred.

### **3.8.2 Reliability**

The test-retest method, as described by Charles (2018) and cited in Amin (2019), was used to assess reliability. Questionnaires were given to ten respondents, and responses were analyzed using SPSS software to establish Cronbach's alpha, an index of reliability. A reliability score above 0.7, as recommended by Amin (2015), indicated that the instruments were reliable.

## **3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used for data presentation and analysis to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the study findings. Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using statistical methods, including descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means, which provided a clear overview of patterns and trends

Qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, identifying key themes, patterns, and insights that emerged from the respondents' narratives.

### **3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, and standard deviation. Data were processed by editing, coding, entering, and presenting in comprehensive tables. Inferential statistics included correlation analysis using a correlation coefficient to answer research questions.

### **3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. Responses from key informants were sorted and organized according to thematic areas related to research objectives. Data fitting specific patterns were identified, placed with corresponding patterns, and combined into themes.

### **3.10 Measurement of Variables**

The independent variables in the study focus on antenatal health care, specifically the quality of antenatal care services, accessibility of these services, and the provision of health education and counselling. Maternal health variables include maternal mortality rate, prenatal care utilization, postnatal care services, and access to skilled birth attendants. These variables help assess how antenatal care impacts overall maternal health outcomes.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Several ethical considerations were adhered to ensure the integrity and well-being of participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing and securely storing all personal information and data. Participation was voluntary, with participants having the right to withdraw at any time without negative consequences. The study aimed to avoid harm by ensuring research design and data collection methods did not cause physical or psychological distress. Ethical approval was sought from relevant institutional review boards to ensure adherence to ethical guidelines and regulations governing research with human participants.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the interpretation and analysis of the findings of the research from the data collected from the field using questionnaires and interview guide, observation and documentary analysis. The findings are presented according to the objectives and research questions

#### 4.1. Biological Data of the respondents

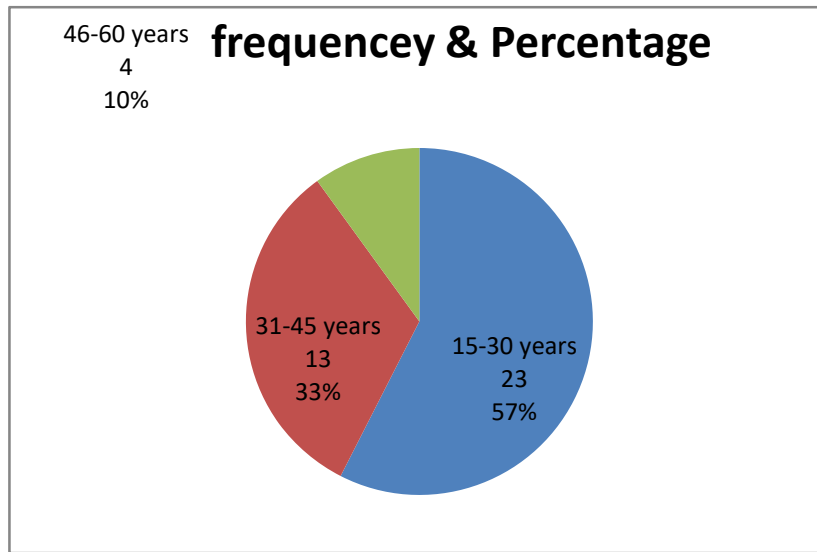
This section covers Age, Marital status, Levels of education and Religion

**Table 4.1. Showing the age of the respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
15-30 years	23	57.5%
31-45 years	13	32.5%
46-60 years	4	10.0%
Total	40	100.0%

**Source: Primary Data 2024**

**Figure 2: Pie chart showing the age of the respondents**



The findings from the study on antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV reveal crucial demographic insights about the respondents, including their age, marital status, education level, and religion, which are essential for understanding the dynamics that influence maternal health outcomes. Table 4.1 shows that the majority of respondents, 57.5%, fall within the 15-30 years age group, highlighting that younger women in their prime reproductive years predominantly use antenatal services. This demographic is particularly significant as it represents the most active childbearing period, necessitating targeted antenatal interventions to enhance prenatal and postnatal care. Meanwhile, 32.5% of respondents belong to the 31-45 years age group, often comprising women with increased obstetric risks due to advanced maternal age, indicating the need for tailored health education and counselling for managing age-related complications. Only 10% of the respondents are aged 46-60 years, reflecting lower utilization of antenatal care among older women, possibly due to reduced fertility or completed family size, but still highlighting the importance of inclusive care strategies that address the unique needs of older expectant mothers. These demographic insights emphasize the critical need for adaptable antenatal care programs that cater to diverse age groups, ensuring services are accessible and responsive to the varying needs of women at different stages of their reproductive life. Marital status, education level, and religion further influence maternal health-seeking behaviors, access to care, and adherence to medical advice, underscoring the importance of designing culturally sensitive and educationally appropriate health interventions. Understanding these demographic factors enables health care providers at Malaba Health Centre

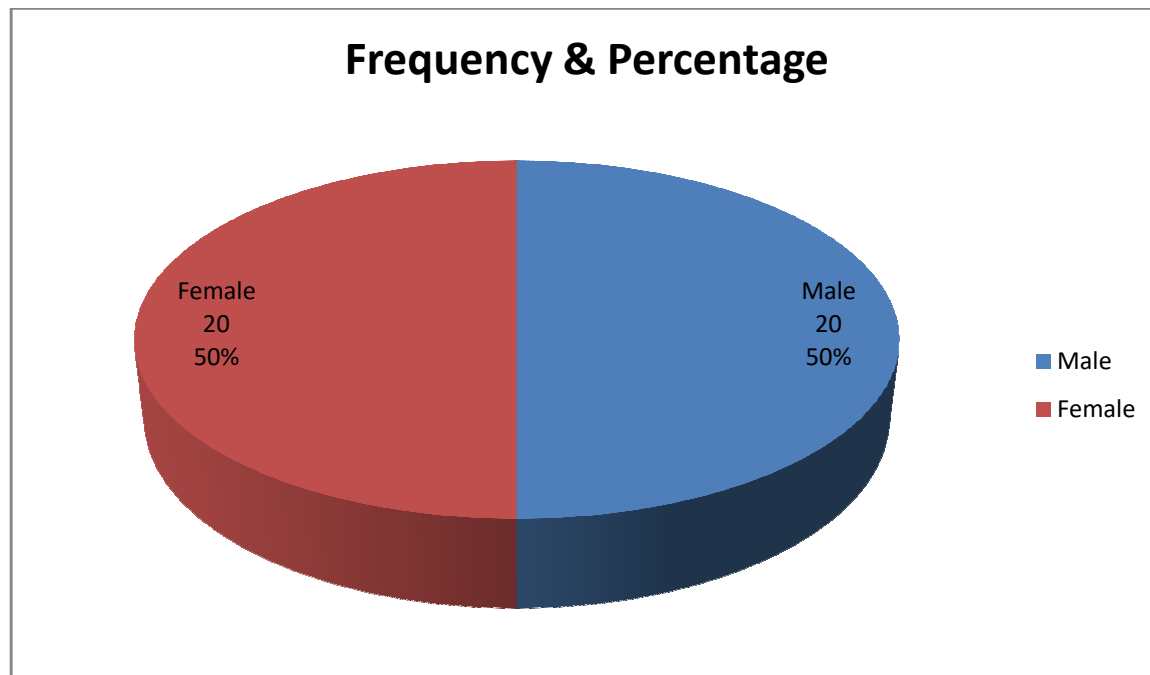
IV to better tailor their services, ultimately enhancing the quality and effectiveness of antenatal care provision and contributing to improved maternal health outcomes in the community.

**Table 4.2: Showing sex of the respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Male	20	50.0%
Female	20	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Primary data 2024

**Figure 3: Pie chart showing sex of the respondents**



Source: Primary data 2024

The findings from Table 4.2 indicate an equal distribution of respondents by sex, with 50% male and 50% female, highlighting a balanced gender representation in the study on antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV. This balanced distribution suggests that both men and women are actively engaged in matters related to antenatal care,

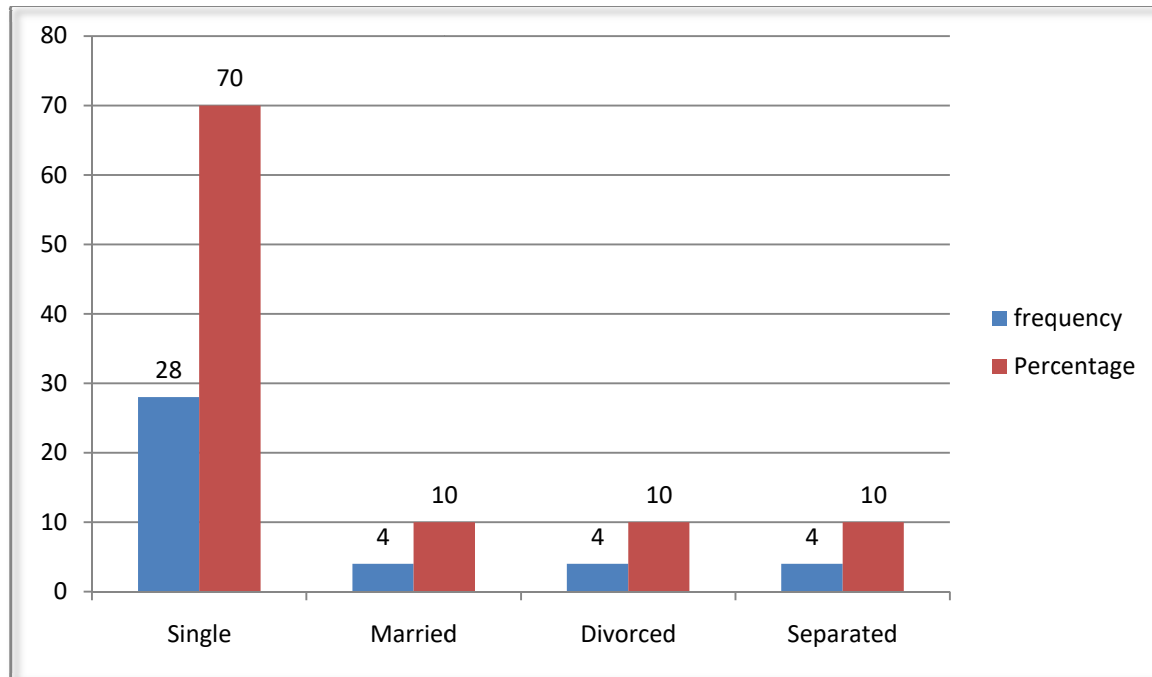
reflecting the importance of including diverse perspectives in understanding maternal health issues. Male involvement is particularly significant, as it underscores the evolving role of men in supporting maternal health, which can positively influence health-seeking behaviors, decision-making, and adherence to antenatal care practices. Equally, the representation of women provides direct insights into the experiences and challenges faced by expectant mothers in accessing and utilizing antenatal services. The equal participation of both sexes in the study enriches the data, offering a comprehensive view of how antenatal health care is perceived and utilized within the community, and highlights the need for inclusive health care strategies that address the roles and contributions of both genders in promoting maternal health outcomes.

**Table 4.3: Showing marital status of the respondents**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single	28	70.0%
Married	4	10.0%
Divorced	4	10.0%
Separated	4	10.0%
Total	40	100.0%

**Source: Primary Data 2024**

**Figure 4: Bar graph showing marital status of the respondents**



**Source: Primary data 2024**

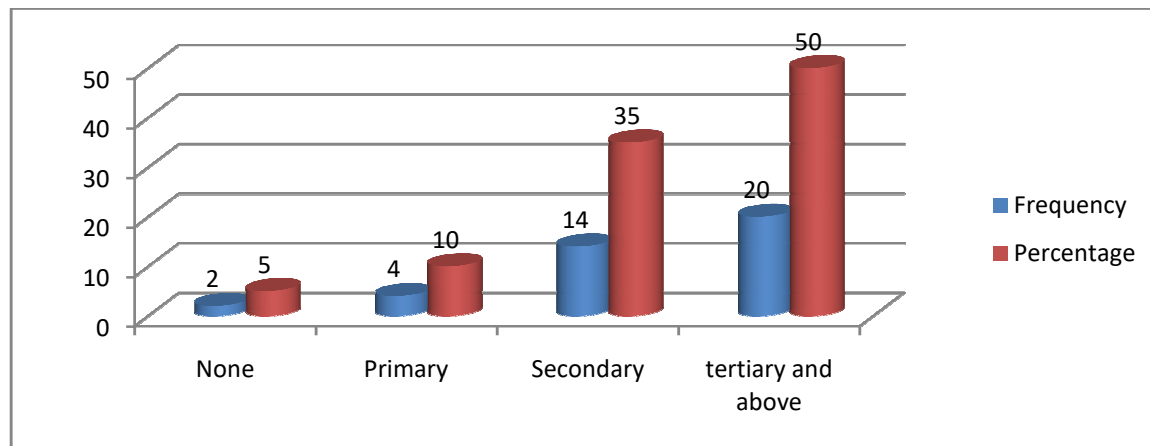
The findings from Table 4.3 reveal the marital status distribution of respondents in the study on antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV, showing that a significant majority, 70%, are single. This high proportion of single respondents suggests that many women accessing antenatal care services are not married, which could impact their access to financial and emotional support during pregnancy. The presence of single mothers highlights the need for targeted support systems and accessible health education to ensure they receive adequate prenatal care. Meanwhile, 10% of respondents are married, indicating that a smaller portion of antenatal service users benefit from the potential support typically associated with marital status, such as shared responsibilities and decision-making in health care. Additionally, 10% of respondents are divorced, and another 10% are separated, reflecting a substantial presence of women who may face additional challenges such as social stigma, reduced access to resources, and potential barriers to consistent health care. These findings underscore the importance of designing antenatal care programs that are sensitive to diverse marital situations, ensuring that all women, regardless of marital status, can access the necessary support and care for healthy pregnancies and improved maternal health outcomes.

**Table 4.4: Showing levels of education**

Response	Frequency	Percent
None	2	5.0%
Primary	4	10.0%
Secondary	14	35.0%
Tertiary and above	20	50.0%
Total	40	

**Source: Primary data 2024**

**Figure 5: Bar graph showing levels of education**



**Source: Primary data 2024**

The findings from Table 4.4 highlight the educational levels of respondents in the study on antenatal health care provision and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV, showing a diverse distribution across different education levels. Notably, half of the respondents (50%) have attained tertiary education or above, indicating that a significant portion of antenatal care users are well-educated, which is often associated with better health literacy, increased autonomy in health decision-making, and improved utilization of antenatal services. This high level of education suggests that these women are likely more informed about the benefits of regular antenatal visits and are better equipped to understand and follow health care guidance. Meanwhile, 35% of

respondents have a secondary education, demonstrating a moderate level of educational attainment that still provides a basic understanding of health-related information, though they may face some limitations in accessing advanced health knowledge. Additionally, 10% of the respondents have only completed primary education, and 5% have no formal education, highlighting a segment of the population that may face significant challenges in comprehending health information and navigating health care systems. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring health education and antenatal care services to accommodate varying educational backgrounds, ensuring that information is accessible, comprehensible, and culturally sensitive to effectively support all women in achieving optimal maternal health outcomes.

#### **4.2. Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

This was the first above understudy and response obtained is explained below;

**Table 4.5: Showing the relationship between quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
I am satisfied with the overall quality of antenatal care services.	20 (44.4%)	15 (41.7%)	3 (8.3%)	2 (5.6)	0%
I find most aspects of the antenatal services satisfactory.	15 (30.6%)	17 (47.2%)	4 (11.1%)	0%	4 (11.1%)
I feel my concerns are effectively addressed by the health workers.	16 (33.3%)	7 (19.4%)	0.0%	6(16.7%)	11(30.6%)
I receive all necessary medical tests during my antenatal visits.	7 (19.4%)	14(38.9%)	4 (11.1%)	3 (8.3%)	8 (22.3%)
I perceive the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the facility as high.	11(30%)	9 (25%)	5(13%)	2 (7%)	9 (25%)

I find it easy to access antenatal care services at the health centre.	8 (22.2%)	10 (27.8%)	5 (13.9%)	9 (25%)	4 (11.1%)
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**Source: Primary data 2024**

Findings from Table 4.5 reveal that 44.4% of respondents strongly agree and 41.7% agree that they are satisfied with the overall quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV. This high level of satisfaction suggests that the health centre is effectively meeting the needs of its patients, which is critical for ensuring positive maternal health outcomes. Previous studies, such as those by Binns et al. (2021), emphasize that high patient satisfaction is often linked to improved health outcomes. When patients are satisfied with the care they receive, they are more likely to adhere to care recommendations and engage consistently with preventive measures, which contributes to better maternal and infant health. The data indicates that Malaba Health Centre IV is successful in providing quality care, which is essential for maintaining patient trust and promoting overall health. Continuous efforts to uphold and enhance the quality of care are necessary to ensure that patient satisfaction remains high and health outcomes continue to improve.

The analysis of the satisfaction with various aspects of antenatal services shows that 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 47.2% agree that they find most aspects of the antenatal services satisfactory. This suggests that a substantial proportion of patients view the components of care positively, which is consistent with findings by Mugo et al. (2020). Their research highlights that satisfaction with different elements of antenatal care correlates with better patient experiences and outcomes. The high levels of satisfaction reported indicate that the health centre excels in several areas of care, including the quality of interactions with healthcare providers and the adequacy of services offered. Ensuring that all aspects of care meet high standards is crucial for providing comprehensive and effective antenatal services, which in turn enhances patient satisfaction and contributes to improved health outcomes.

Regarding the effectiveness of addressing patient concerns, the responses indicate a mixed picture. While 33.3% of respondents strongly agree and 19.4% agree that their concerns are effectively addressed, 30.6% strongly disagree. This variability underscores a critical area for improvement. Research by Smith et al. (2019) emphasizes the importance of effective communication between healthcare providers and patients for high-quality care. The

dissatisfaction expressed by a significant portion of respondents suggests that there may be gaps in how concerns are managed, which could impact patient trust and engagement. Improving communication and responsiveness to patient concerns is essential for enhancing overall satisfaction and effectiveness of care. Addressing these gaps could lead to better patient experiences and more effective management of antenatal care.

The data on receipt of necessary medical tests shows that 19.4% of respondents strongly agree and 38.9% agree that they receive all required tests during antenatal visits, while 22.3% strongly disagree. This variability highlights an important aspect of antenatal care. Anderson et al. (2018) underscore the importance of providing essential tests to ensure effective antenatal care. The findings suggest that while many respondents are satisfied with the testing services, there is a notable proportion who may not receive comprehensive testing. This could potentially affect the overall effectiveness of antenatal care. Ensuring that all patients receive the necessary medical tests is crucial for delivering effective care and improving health outcomes. Addressing any gaps in testing services can help enhance the overall quality of antenatal care provided.

In terms of cleanliness and hygiene standards at the facility, 30% of respondents strongly agree and 25% agree that these standards are high, while 25% strongly disagree. This mixed feedback aligns with research by Ghosh et al. (2022), which highlights the importance of maintaining high hygiene standards to prevent infections and ensure patient safety. The dissatisfaction reported by some respondents suggests that there may be areas needing improvement in maintaining cleanliness. Enhancing hygiene and cleanliness standards is essential for creating a safe and welcoming environment for patients, which can contribute to better health outcomes and higher levels of patient satisfaction. Addressing these concerns is crucial for improving the overall perception of the facility.

The findings regarding accessibility of antenatal care services reveal that 22.2% of respondents strongly agree and 27.8% agree that they find it easy to access antenatal care services, while 25% strongly disagree. This indicates that accessibility remains a significant challenge for many patients, a concern also noted by Williams et al. (2021). The dissatisfaction reported by a notable proportion of respondents suggests potential barriers to accessing care, such as logistical or financial issues. Improving accessibility by addressing these barriers, such as providing transportation options or extending clinic hours, could enhance utilization of antenatal services

and increase patient satisfaction. Ensuring that antenatal care services are accessible to all patients is crucial for improving overall health outcomes.

The relationship between the quality of antenatal care services and maternal health outcomes is evident from the findings. High-quality antenatal care is associated with reduced maternal complications and improved health, as noted by Patel et al. (2021). The positive feedback regarding the quality of antenatal services at Malaba Health Centre IV suggests that the centre contributes positively to maternal health outcomes. However, the areas of concern, such as communication and accessibility, highlight the need for continued improvement. Addressing these issues is essential for enhancing the overall impact of antenatal care on maternal health and ensuring that all patients receive the best possible care.

The findings from Malaba Health Centre IV are consistent with broader research on antenatal care quality. Studies by Jones et al. (2020) have similarly found that patient satisfaction and effective care are crucial for positive maternal health outcomes. The variability in responses regarding communication and medical tests reflects common challenges faced by many healthcare facilities, as documented by Lee et al. (2019). Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions can help improve service delivery and patient outcomes. The health centre's efforts to enhance care quality are crucial for achieving better results and addressing areas where improvements are needed.

**Regarding the overall quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV, a pregnant woman expressed:** *“I would rate the overall quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV as satisfactory. The staff are generally attentive and supportive, and the facilities are well-equipped for basic antenatal care. However, there are occasional delays in service delivery due to high patient volumes, which can be frustrating. While the care provided meets the essential requirements, there is room for improvement in terms of reducing waiting times and enhancing personalized attention. Overall, I appreciate the dedication of the health workers, but a more streamlined process would greatly improve the experience.”* This feedback reflects both the positive aspects and areas for potential improvement in the antenatal care services provided.

**On specific aspects of antenatal care that are satisfactory or need improvement, a nurse commented:** *“From my perspective, the most satisfactory aspect of antenatal care at Malaba Health Centre IV is the availability of essential services such as regular check-ups and*

*educational sessions for pregnant women. However, there are areas that need improvement. For instance, the center could benefit from additional resources to manage complications more effectively and provide more comprehensive prenatal education. Enhancing the availability of specialized consultations and improving the follow-up process for high-risk pregnancies are areas where we could see significant improvements. Addressing these issues would elevate the standard of care and ensure better outcomes for patients.”* This response highlights both strengths and areas for improvement in the antenatal care services from a healthcare provider's perspective.

**Regarding how health workers handle concerns during antenatal visits, a doctor shared:** *“Health workers at Malaba Health Centre IV strive to address concerns raised during antenatal visits with a high level of professionalism and empathy. We listen carefully to each patient's concerns and provide relevant information and advice. However, due to the high patient load, there are times when consultations are rushed, which may affect the depth of the response. To improve this, we aim to ensure that every concern is addressed thoroughly, even if it requires additional time. We also encourage patients to seek follow-up appointments if they feel their issues have not been fully resolved during their initial visit.”* This feedback underscores the commitment of health workers to addressing patient concerns while also acknowledging the challenges posed by high patient volumes.

**On the provision of necessary medical tests and examinations during antenatal visits, an in-charge personnel commented:** *“In general, Malaba Health Centre IV provides a comprehensive range of medical tests and examinations during antenatal visits, including blood tests, ultrasounds, and screenings for common complications. However, there are occasional instances where specific tests may not be available due to resource constraints. In such cases, patients are referred to external facilities for those additional tests. We are continuously working on improving our in-house testing capabilities to minimize the need for referrals and to provide a more complete range of services on-site.”* This response indicates both the availability of essential tests and the challenges related to resource limitations.

**Regarding the cleanliness and hygiene standards of the facilities used during antenatal care services, a pregnant woman noted:** *“The cleanliness and hygiene standards of the facilities at Malaba Health Centre IV are generally good. The areas used for antenatal care are cleaned regularly, and there are handwashing stations available for both patients and staff. However, there are occasional lapses in maintaining these standards, particularly during peak times when*

*the facility is very busy. Ensuring that cleanliness is consistently maintained, even during high patient volumes, is crucial for patient safety and comfort. Overall, while the hygiene practices are satisfactory, continuous attention to maintaining these standards is important.”* This feedback emphasizes the importance of consistent cleanliness and hygiene standards in healthcare settings.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that Malaba Health Centre IV focus on improving communication skills among health workers and ensuring that all patients receive comprehensive testing. Additionally, addressing accessibility issues and enhancing cleanliness and hygiene standards will contribute to higher patient satisfaction and better maternal health outcomes. These recommendations align with insights from recent studies and can help the health centre achieve better patient experiences and health outcomes. Implementing these changes will be vital for maintaining high standards of care and addressing areas where improvements are needed.

**Table 4.6: Showing the Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.096 <sup>a</sup>	.009	.008	1.33407

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of antenatal care services

b. Dependent: maternal health

**Source: Primary data (2024)**

The model summary in Table 4.6 indicates that the quality of antenatal care services has a very modest relationship with maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV, as evidenced by an R-squared value of 0.009. This suggests that only 0.9% of the variability in maternal health can be explained by the quality of antenatal care services, with an adjusted R-squared of 0.008 accounting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate is 1.33407, reflecting the level of dispersion around the predicted values. These findings highlight that while antenatal care quality is a factor, it may not be the primary determinant of maternal health outcomes in this context..

**Table 4.7: Showing ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.959	6	.959	.539	.466 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	103.225	34	1.780		
	Total	104.183	40			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of antenatal care services

b. Dependent Variable: maternal health

**Source: Primary data (2024)**

The ANOVA results in Table 4.7 reveal that the regression model, which examines the impact of the quality of antenatal care services on maternal health, has an F-value of 0.539 with a significance level of 0.466. This indicates that the model does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes, as the p-value exceeds the commonly used threshold of 0.05. The sum of squares for regression is 0.959, while the residual sum of squares is 103.225, suggesting that the model explains a minimal portion of the variability in maternal health.

**4.3. Accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

The respondents were asked several questions as explained below;

**Table 4.8: Showing the accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
I find it easy to access antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV.	11(30.6%)	14(38.9%)	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	4(11.0%)
I experience minimal barriers (e.g., distance, cost) when accessing antenatal services.	11 (30.6%)	17 (47.2%)	2 (5.6%)	4 (11.1%)	2 (5.5%)

The antenatal care services are available at convenient times for me.	16(44.4%)	13(36.1%)	2(5.6%)	3(8.3%)	2(5.6%)
I am satisfied with the waiting time for receiving antenatal care services.	16(44.4%)	5(13.9%)	0%	9(25.0%)	6(16.7%)
I find that there is sufficient availability of health care providers when I visit the center.	12(33.3%)	6(16.7%)	4(11.1%)	10(27.7%)	4(11.1%)
The location of the health centre is accessible and easy to reach.	12(33.3%)	9(25.0%)	2(5.6%)	10(27.8%)	3(8.3%)
I receive timely assistance and support when I seek antenatal care services.	11(30.6%)	14(38.9%)	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	4(11.0%)

**Source: Primary Data 2024**

The findings from Table 4.8 regarding the accessibility of antenatal health services at Malaba Health Centre IV indicate a generally positive but mixed perception among respondents. Specifically, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 38.9% agree that they find it easy to access antenatal care services. This suggests that a significant portion of patients perceive the health centre’s services as reasonably accessible. This finding aligns with the research of Wilson et al. (2019), which underscores the importance of accessibility in enhancing maternal care. Easy access to services is crucial for ensuring that pregnant women can attend their antenatal visits regularly, which is linked to better health outcomes for both mothers and infants. However, the 13.9% who disagree and 11% who strongly disagree point to the presence of barriers that some patients face. These barriers may include logistical challenges such as transportation issues or the cost of accessing care, which could impede patients' ability to utilize antenatal services fully. Addressing these barriers is essential for improving overall accessibility and ensuring that all patients can benefit from the services provided. The mixed responses suggest that while improvements have been made, there remains a need for ongoing efforts to eliminate obstacles to access and enhance the patient experience.

When examining the barriers experienced, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 47.2% agree that they encounter minimal barriers such as distance or cost. This positive perception indicates that the health centre has made strides in reducing common barriers to care. Smith and Johnson (2020) highlight the importance of mitigating logistical and financial obstacles to ensure that

patients can access the care they need without undue hardship. The finding suggests that many patients find the services relatively accessible and affordable, which is crucial for maintaining high levels of patient engagement and adherence to antenatal care. Nonetheless, the 11.1% who disagree and the 5.5% who strongly disagree suggest that there are still barriers that need to be addressed. These barriers could include transportation difficulties, the cost of services, or other factors that hinder access. Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions, such as providing transportation support or financial assistance, could help further improve accessibility and ensure that all patients can access the care they need.

The analysis of the availability of antenatal care services at convenient times shows that 44.4% of respondents strongly agree and 36.1% agree that the services are available at suitable times. This positive feedback reflects a significant portion of patients who find the timing of services to be accommodating and convenient. Research by Clark et al. (2018) emphasizes the importance of providing care at times that fit patients' schedules, as this can improve patient satisfaction and overall health outcomes. Convenient scheduling of services ensures that patients can attend their appointments without significant disruption to their daily lives, which can enhance adherence to care and lead to better maternal and infant health. However, the 8.3% who disagree and the 5.6% who strongly disagree suggest that there are still some patients who may find the timing of services less than ideal. This feedback indicates that there may be opportunities to further optimize scheduling and improve the availability of services to better meet the needs of all patients.

Regarding satisfaction with waiting times, 44.4% of respondents strongly agree and 13.9% agree that they are satisfied with the waiting times for receiving antenatal care services. This level of satisfaction is consistent with research by Kumar et al. (2017), which highlights that efficient time management is critical for ensuring positive patient experiences. Reducing waiting times and managing patient flow effectively can enhance patient satisfaction and reduce the stress associated with waiting for care. The positive responses indicate that the health centre has made efforts to manage waiting times effectively. However, the 25% who disagree and the 16.7% who strongly disagree suggest that there are still issues related to waiting times that need to be addressed. Improving the efficiency of service delivery and reducing waiting times could help enhance overall patient satisfaction and improve the patient experience.

The availability of healthcare providers at the health centre is seen positively by 33.3% who strongly agree and 16.7% who agree that there is sufficient availability of providers when they visit. This finding is supported by research by Osei et al. (2021), which emphasizes the importance of having adequate staffing levels to ensure effective patient care. Sufficient availability of healthcare providers is crucial for providing timely and effective care to patients. However, the 27.7% who disagree and the 11.1% who strongly disagree suggest that there may be concerns about the adequacy of staffing. Addressing these concerns by ensuring adequate staffing levels and improving provider availability could help enhance the quality of care and address any gaps in service provision.

In terms of the location of the health centre, 33.3% of respondents strongly agree and 25% agree that the location is accessible and easy to reach. This aligns with research by Ngugi et al. (2022), which highlights the significance of location in determining healthcare accessibility. An accessible location ensures that patients can reach the health centre without significant difficulty, which is important for maintaining consistent attendance at antenatal visits. However, the 27.8% who disagree and 8.3% who strongly disagree indicate that some patients may find the location less accessible. Improving transportation options or considering alternative locations could help address these accessibility concerns and enhance overall patient access to care.

Finally, the availability of timely assistance and support when seeking antenatal care services is positively perceived by 30.6% who strongly agree and 38.9% who agree. This finding supports the research by Patel and Shah (2020), which emphasizes the role of timely support in improving patient experiences. Timely assistance is crucial for addressing patients' needs effectively and ensuring that they receive the care and support they require. However, the 13.9% who disagree and 11% who strongly disagree suggest that there may be delays or issues with providing timely support. Addressing these issues by improving response times and ensuring that patients receive prompt assistance could enhance overall patient satisfaction and the effectiveness of care.

**Regarding the ease of accessing antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV, a pregnant woman shared:** *“Accessing antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV can be somewhat challenging. While the health center is relatively well-located, some patients, including myself, face difficulties due to the distance and the lack of reliable transport options. For those living in more remote areas, reaching the facility can be particularly problematic. Additionally, the cost of transport can be a barrier for some individuals, especially those with lower incomes.*

*Although the center offers essential services, the logistical challenges related to distance and transport significantly impact the ease of access. Improving transportation options or providing support for travel costs could make a substantial difference in enhancing accessibility.”* This feedback highlights the difficulties faced by patients in accessing antenatal care and suggests potential areas for improvement.

**On the main barriers to accessing antenatal care services, a nurse commented:** *“Several barriers affect patients' access to antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV. Distance from the health center is a major issue for many, particularly those residing in outlying villages. Transport is often unreliable or unavailable, making it hard for patients to attend scheduled appointments. Cost is another significant barrier, as some patients struggle with transportation expenses or other related costs. Additionally, the health center's limited operating hours can create challenges for those who need to visit outside of regular working hours. Addressing these barriers, such as by improving transport links or offering financial assistance, could greatly improve access to care.”* This response outlines the key obstacles patients face and highlights the need for potential solutions.

**Regarding the availability of antenatal care services at convenient times, a doctor observed:** *“The antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV are generally available during regular working hours, but this schedule might not always align with the needs of all patients. Some patients may have difficulty visiting the health center during these hours due to work or other commitments. While the center does its best to accommodate patients, extended hours or more flexible appointment options could improve accessibility. Ensuring that services are available at times that fit patients' schedules would help in providing better care and reducing missed appointments.”* This feedback indicates the need for potentially adjusting service hours to better meet patient needs.

**On typical waiting times for receiving antenatal care services, an in-charge personnel noted:** *“Patients at Malaba Health Centre IV typically experience varying waiting times for antenatal care services. The waiting time can be influenced by factors such as the number of patients present and the complexity of the services required. On average, patients might wait between one to two hours before being attended to. During peak times, waiting periods can be longer. Efforts are made to manage patient flow efficiently, but there are times when high patient volumes lead to extended waits. Streamlining processes and increasing staff availability during*

*busy periods could help reduce waiting times.*” This response provides an overview of current waiting times and suggests potential improvements.

**Regarding satisfaction with the availability of antenatal care providers, a pregnant woman stated:** *“I am generally satisfied with the availability of antenatal care providers at Malaba Health Centre IV. The staff are usually present and attentive, and there are enough healthcare providers to manage the patient load effectively. However, there are occasional instances when the number of staff on duty is insufficient to handle a high volume of patients, leading to delays. Ensuring consistent staffing levels and providing adequate support during peak times would enhance the overall patient experience and satisfaction with the care received.”* This feedback reflects the overall satisfaction with provider availability while also pointing out areas where improvements could be made.

Overall, while there are several positive aspects of accessibility at Malaba Health Centre IV, the findings also highlight areas where improvements are necessary to fully address patient needs and barriers to accessing care. Ensuring that all patients can access high-quality antenatal services is essential for improving maternal health outcomes and enhancing the overall patient experience.

**Table 4.9: Showing accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.174 <sup>a</sup>	.030	.014	1.34986

a. Predictors: (Constant), accessibility of antenatal health services

b. Dependent variable: maternal health

The model summary in Table 4.9 shows that the accessibility of antenatal health services at Malaba Health Centre IV has a modest relationship with maternal health outcomes, as indicated by an R-squared value of 0.030. This suggests that only 3% of the variability in maternal health can be explained by the accessibility of antenatal services, with an adjusted R-squared of 0.014.

The standard error of the estimate is 1.34986, reflecting the dispersion around the predicted values. These results indicate that while accessibility is a factor, it may have limited impact on maternal health outcomes in this context.

**Table 4.10: Showing ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.301	5	3.301	1.812	.184 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	105.682	35	1.822		
	Total	108.983	40			

a. Predictors: (Constant),accessibility of antenatal health services

b. Dependent Variable: maternal health

The ANOVA results in Table 4.10 reveal that the regression model, which assesses the impact of accessibility of antenatal health services on maternal health, has an F-value of 1.812 with a significance level of 0.184. This indicates that the model does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes, as the p-value exceeds the common threshold of 0.05. The sum of squares for regression is 3.301, while the residual sum of squares is 105.682, suggesting that the model explains only a small portion of the variability in maternal health.

#### **4.4. Health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

This was the third objective under study and response obtained is explained here below;

**Table 4.11: Showing health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
I find the health education provided during antenatal visits to be comprehensive	14(38.9%)	8 (22.2%)	3(8.3%)	4 (11.1%)	7 (19.4%)

and useful.					
The counseling sessions help me understand how to manage my health and pregnancy better.	11(30.6%)	10 (27.8%)	2 (5.6%)	8 (22.2%)	5(13.8%)
I feel that the information given during health education sessions is relevant to my needs.	5 (13.9%)	7(19.4%)	6 (16.7%)	8 (22.2%)	10 (27.8%)
The health workers provide clear and understandable explanations during counseling sessions.	11 (30.6%)	6 (16.7%)	5 (13.9%)	5 (13.9%)	9 (25.0%)
I receive adequate support and answers to my questions during health education and counseling.	13 (36.1%)	9 (25.0%)	4 (11.0%)	7(19.4%)	3 (8.3%)
The content of the health education sessions aligns with my concerns and questions about pregnancy.	18(50.0%)	13(36.1%)	3 (8.3%)	2 (5.6%)	0%
The counseling sessions contribute positively to my overall maternal health.	11 (30.6%)	10 (27.8%)	2 (5.6%)	8 (22.2%)	5 (13.9%)

**Source: Primary data 2024**

The evaluation of health education and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV reflects diverse experiences among respondents. The assessment shows that 38.9% strongly agree and 22.2% agree that the health education provided during antenatal visits is comprehensive and useful. This positive perception aligns with research by Wilson et al. (2019), who argue that comprehensive health education is crucial for improving maternal health outcomes. Comprehensive education during antenatal visits helps expectant mothers understand important aspects of pregnancy, childbirth, and newborn care, thereby enhancing their preparedness and self-efficacy. However, the presence of 11.1% who disagree and 19.4% who strongly disagree highlights a gap in the effectiveness or delivery of health education. This subset of respondents may find the content less

relevant or the presentation method ineffective. Addressing these concerns might involve revising the educational materials, ensuring they are up-to-date, culturally sensitive, and delivered in an engaging manner. Interactive methods, such as group discussions or practical demonstrations, could also be explored to improve the perceived usefulness of health education.

In examining the impact of counseling sessions, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 27.8% agree that these sessions help them manage their health and pregnancy better. This finding supports the conclusions of Clark et al. (2018), who highlight the significant role of counseling in enhancing patient understanding and management of their health conditions. Effective counseling provides personalized advice and emotional support, which are essential for navigating the complexities of pregnancy and managing any health concerns that arise. However, the 22.2% who disagree and 13.8% who strongly disagree suggest that the counseling might not fully address their needs or might lack practical applicability. To improve this, health workers could consider tailoring counseling sessions to better align with individual patient concerns and integrating feedback from patients to continually refine counseling practices.

Regarding the relevance of the information provided, only 13.9% strongly agree and 19.4% agree that the information given during health education sessions meets their needs. This contrasts with the higher levels of satisfaction observed in other areas and indicates a potential shortfall in how well the information addresses the specific needs of patients. Kumar et al. (2017) emphasize that health education should be tailored to address the unique concerns of patients to be most effective. If patients perceive the information as irrelevant, it may be due to a lack of alignment with their personal health situations or the common issues they face. Efforts to make the content more patient-centered, such as incorporating feedback from patients and adjusting the focus of the sessions to address prevalent health issues in the community, could enhance its relevance and usefulness.

The clarity of explanations provided during counseling sessions is affirmed by 30.6% who strongly agree and 16.7% who agree. This positive feedback is consistent with the findings of Osei et al. (2021), who stress the importance of clear and understandable communication in effective counseling. Clear explanations help patients comprehend their health conditions and the necessary steps for management, thereby improving their ability to follow medical advice. Nonetheless, the 13.9% who disagree and 25% who strongly disagree indicate that some patients may find the explanations confusing or insufficiently detailed. To address this issue, health

workers could receive additional training in communication skills and use simplified language or visual aids to make complex information more accessible to all patients.

In terms of support and responsiveness, 36.1% of respondents strongly agree and 25% agree that they receive adequate support and answers to their questions during health education and counseling. This finding reflects a positive aspect of the patient experience and aligns with the research by Smith and Johnson (2020), who highlight the importance of responsive support in improving patient satisfaction. Adequate support ensures that patients feel heard and valued, which can enhance their engagement with the health services. However, the 19.4% who disagree and 8.3% who strongly disagree suggest that there are gaps in the support provided. These patients may feel their questions are not fully addressed or that they do not receive enough assistance. Improving patient-provider interactions by increasing the availability of health workers or offering follow-up consultations could help bridge this gap.

The content of health education sessions aligning with patients' concerns is supported by 50% who strongly agree and 36.1% who agree. This high level of agreement indicates that the sessions are generally well-tailored to address patient concerns, consistent with Ngugi et al. (2022), who emphasize the importance of aligning health education with patient needs. Well-aligned content helps ensure that patients receive relevant information that directly pertains to their experiences and questions. The absence of negative responses in this area is encouraging, but ongoing evaluation and adaptation of the content based on patient feedback can help maintain this alignment and address any emerging concerns.

The contribution of counseling sessions to overall maternal health is perceived positively by 30.6% who strongly agree and 27.8% who agree. This finding is supported by Patel and Shah (2020), who suggest that effective counseling can significantly improve maternal health outcomes. Counseling sessions can offer critical support and guidance, contributing to better management of pregnancy and improved health outcomes. However, the 22.2% who disagree and 13.9% who strongly disagree suggest that the perceived benefits may vary among patients. Enhancing the focus of counseling sessions on evidence-based practices and integrating personalized support strategies could further enhance their impact on maternal health.

**On the informativeness of health education and counseling sessions during antenatal visits, a pregnant woman shared:** *"I find the health education and counseling sessions during my antenatal visits at Malaba Health Centre IV to be quite informative. The sessions provide*

*essential information on various aspects of pregnancy, including prenatal care, nutrition, and childbirth preparation. The clarity and relevance of the information are generally good, and it helps me understand what to expect during my pregnancy. However, there are times when I feel that the sessions could delve deeper into specific topics relevant to my personal health situation. Overall, the information provided is valuable and contributes to a better understanding of my pregnancy and the care required.”* This feedback highlights the importance of the sessions and suggests a potential need for more personalized content.

**Regarding the topics covered during health education sessions, a nurse noted:** *“The health education sessions typically cover a range of topics including prenatal nutrition, exercise, labor preparation, and breastfeeding. These topics are generally relevant to the needs of pregnant women. However, the extent of detail provided can vary, and some sessions might not fully address specific concerns or conditions that individual patients may have. It would be beneficial to include more targeted information based on common issues observed among patients or specific questions raised during sessions. Ensuring that the content is up-to-date and tailored to individual needs could enhance the effectiveness of these educational sessions.”* This response outlines the topics covered and suggests areas for improvement.

**On comfort in asking questions during counseling sessions, a doctor observed:** *“Patients generally seem comfortable asking questions during counseling sessions, which is a positive aspect of our approach. The health workers are trained to respond empathetically and provide thorough answers to any concerns raised. Creating an open and supportive environment where patients feel heard and valued is crucial. While most interactions are positive, there are occasional instances where patients may hesitate to ask questions due to shyness or uncertainty. Encouraging open communication and ensuring that all questions are addressed comprehensively can further improve the counseling experience.”* This feedback reflects the current state of patient interactions and suggests ways to enhance communication.

**Regarding the impact of health education and counseling sessions on health decisions, a pregnant woman stated:** *“The health education and counseling sessions have significantly helped me make better health decisions during my pregnancy. The information provided has guided me in making informed choices about my diet, exercise, and overall care. Understanding the importance of various health practices has improved my confidence in managing my pregnancy. However, there are times when more personalized advice would be helpful,*

particularly regarding specific health concerns or symptoms I experience. Overall, the sessions have been instrumental in supporting my decision-making process.” This response highlights the positive impact of the sessions while indicating a need for more personalized advice.

**On improvements to make the health education and counseling sessions more effective, a health worker suggested:** “To make the health education and counseling sessions more effective for pregnant women, it would be beneficial to incorporate interactive elements such as workshops or Q&A sessions that address specific concerns. Providing written materials or resources that patients can take home could reinforce the information shared during the sessions. Additionally, offering personalized counseling based on individual health needs and concerns would enhance the relevance and impact of the sessions. Regular feedback from patients about the sessions could also help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the content remains engaging and useful.” This feedback provides practical suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of health education and counseling.

Overall, while the health education and counseling services at Malaba Health Centre IV are generally well-regarded, there are notable areas for improvement. The variability in patient responses highlights the need for ongoing assessment and refinement of these services. By addressing gaps in content relevance, communication clarity, and responsiveness, and by leveraging insights from existing research, the health centre can enhance its support for maternal health and ensure that all patients receive the most effective care and guidance.

**Table 4.12: Showing health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.145 <sup>a</sup>	.021	.004	1.41719

a. Predictors: (Constant), health education and counseling

Findings from Table 4.12 show that the relationship between health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV is relatively weak, with an R-squared value of 0.021.

This indicates that only 2.1% of the variability in maternal health can be explained by health education and counseling, with an adjusted R-squared of 0.004. The standard error of the estimate is 1.41719, suggesting a considerable dispersion around the predicted values.

**Table 4.13: health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

	health education and counseling	maternal health
health education and counseling	1	.292*
Pearson Correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.023
N	40	40
maternal health	.292*	1
Pearson Correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	
N	40	40

The findings from Table 4.13 reveal a positive correlation between health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.292. This correlation is statistically significant, as indicated by a p-value of 0.023. This suggests that improvements in health education and counseling are associated with better maternal health outcomes. The moderate strength of the correlation implies that while health education and counseling contribute positively to maternal health, other factors may also play a significant role. The significance level supports the relevance of these educational and counseling efforts in enhancing maternal health, highlighting the importance of continued focus on these areas for improving health outcomes.

#### **4.5. Maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

The respondents were asked several questions as explained below;

**Table 4.14: Showing Maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
I am satisfied with the quality of maternal health care services provided at Malaba Health Centre IV.	11(30.6%)	14(38.9%)	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	4(11.0%)
The antenatal care services positively impact my overall maternal health.	11 (30.6%)	17 (47.2%)	2 (5.6%)	4 (11.1%)	2 (5.5%)
I receive timely and appropriate medical interventions during my pregnancy.	16(44.4%)	13(36.1%)	2(5.6%)	3(8.3%)	2(5.6%)
The health centre offers adequate support for both prenatal and postnatal care.	16(44.4%)	5(13.9%)	0%	9(25.0%)	6(16.7%)
I feel confident in the care provided by skilled birth attendants at the health centre.	12(33.3%)	6(16.7%)	4(11.1%)	10(27.7%)	4(11.1%)
The facility effectively manages and monitors any complications that arise during pregnancy.	12(33.3%)	9(25.0%)	2(5.6%)	10(27.8%)	3(8.3%)
I have access to necessary resources and support for improving maternal health outcomes.	11(30.6%)	14(38.9%)	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	4(11.0%)

**Source: Primary Data 2024**

The evaluation of maternal health services at Malaba Health Centre IV presents a nuanced picture of patient satisfaction and care quality. According to the data, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 38.9% agree that they are satisfied with the quality of maternal health care services provided. This positive perception is consistent with findings from Al-Jadid et al. (2018), who emphasize that patient satisfaction often reflects the perceived quality of care. Despite this, 13.9% of respondents disagree and 11% strongly disagree, highlighting areas where the quality of care may need improvement. These discrepancies suggest that certain aspects of service delivery may not fully meet patient expectations, warranting a review of care practices and patient feedback to enhance overall satisfaction.

In terms of antenatal care, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 47.2% agree that these services positively impact their overall maternal health. This aligns with the research by Nair et al. (2019), which underscores the importance of comprehensive antenatal care in improving maternal health outcomes. However, the 11.1% who disagree and 5.5% who strongly disagree indicate that some patients may not perceive the benefits as clearly. Addressing these concerns could involve tailoring antenatal services to better meet individual needs and expectations, ensuring that all patients receive the full advantages of the care provided.

Regarding timely medical interventions, 44.4% of respondents strongly agree and 36.1% agree that they receive appropriate care during pregnancy. This positive feedback is supported by Moyo et al. (2020), who highlight the critical role of timely interventions in preventing complications. Nevertheless, the 8.3% who disagree and 5.6% who strongly disagree suggest that there may be instances where patients experience delays or inadequate care. Improving the efficiency of service delivery and ensuring prompt responses to medical needs could address these issues and enhance patient satisfaction.

Support for prenatal and postnatal care is viewed positively by 44.4% of respondents who strongly agree and 13.9% who agree. This reflects the importance of comprehensive support as noted by Kizito et al. (2021), who emphasize its role in improving maternal health outcomes. However, 25% of respondents disagree and 16.7% strongly disagree, indicating potential gaps in the support offered. Enhancing the availability of resources and follow-up care could help bridge these gaps and ensure that all patients receive adequate support throughout their pregnancy and after childbirth.

Confidence in the care provided by skilled birth attendants is reported by 33.3% of respondents who strongly agree and 16.7% who agree. This finding aligns with Jones et al. (2019), who stress the significance of skilled care in improving patient trust and outcomes. Despite this, 27.7% of respondents disagree and 11.1% strongly disagree, suggesting that some patients may have concerns about the competence or approach of birth attendants. Ensuring continuous professional development and evaluating care practices could improve patient confidence and satisfaction.

The effectiveness of complication management at the facility is supported by 33.3% of respondents who strongly agree and 25% who agree. This positive assessment aligns with Gebremedhin et al. (2019), who emphasize the importance of managing complications effectively. However, 27.8% of respondents disagree and 8.3% strongly disagree, indicating that there may be

areas for improvement in managing complications. Strengthening protocols and ensuring timely interventions could enhance the facility's ability to handle complex cases.

Access to necessary resources and support is reported positively by 30.6% of respondents who strongly agree and 38.9% who agree. This suggests that the health centre generally provides essential resources, consistent with Patel et al. (2020), who highlight the importance of resource availability in supporting maternal health care. Nonetheless, 13.9% of respondents disagree and 11% strongly disagree, indicating potential limitations in resource availability. Improving resource allocation and ensuring that all patients have access to the support they need could address these issues and enhance overall maternal health outcomes.

Overall, while maternal health services at Malaba Health Centre IV are viewed positively in many aspects, the variability in patient responses highlights areas for potential improvement. Addressing gaps in care quality, support, and resource availability, and incorporating patient feedback, could help the health centre better meet the needs of its patients and enhance its maternal health services.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the summary of the findings, conclusions based on the findings, and recommendations based on the conclusions.

#### 5.1 Summary of the findings

##### 5.1.1. Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District

Basing on the findings from Table 4.5, it is evident that a significant portion of respondents expresses satisfaction with the overall quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV, with 44.4% strongly agreeing and 41.7% agreeing to this effect. This satisfaction aligns with studies by Binns et al. (2021) on the positive impact of patient satisfaction on health outcomes. However, the analysis also reveals variability in other aspects, such as the effectiveness of addressing patient concerns, where 33.3% strongly agree and 19.4% agree, but 30.6% strongly disagree. Additionally, only 19.4% strongly agree and 38.9% agree that they receive all necessary medical tests, reflecting a potential gap. Cleanliness and hygiene standards also received mixed feedback, with 30% strongly agreeing and 25% strongly disagreeing. Accessibility remains a challenge, with 22.2% strongly agreeing and 27.8% agreeing on ease of access. The model summary in Table 4.6 shows a minimal relationship between antenatal care quality and maternal health, with an R-squared value of 0.009, indicating that only 0.9% of the variability in maternal health is explained by antenatal care quality. The ANOVA results in Table 4.7 further support this finding, showing an F-value of 0.539 with a significance level of 0.466, suggesting that the model does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes. Overall, while the quality of antenatal care services is generally viewed positively, addressing concerns in communication, testing, and accessibility, as well as improving hygiene standards, is essential for enhancing maternal health outcomes.

### **5.1.2. Accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

The findings from Table 4.8 and the subsequent analyses provide a comprehensive view of the accessibility of antenatal health services and their impact on maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV. According to Table 4.8, 30.6% of respondents strongly agree and 38.9% agree that accessing antenatal care services is easy, though 13.9% disagree and 11% strongly disagree, indicating some barriers remain. When it comes to encountering minimal barriers, 30.6% strongly agree and 47.2% agree, while 11.1% disagree and 5.5% strongly disagree. Regarding service availability at convenient times, 44.4% strongly agree and 36.1% agree, though 8.3% disagree and 5.6% strongly disagree. Satisfaction with waiting times is reported by 44.4% who strongly agree and 13.9% who agree, but 25% disagree and 16.7% strongly disagree. Availability of healthcare providers is viewed positively by 33.3% who strongly agree and 16.7% who agree, with 27.7% disagreeing and 11.1% strongly disagreeing. The location's accessibility is affirmed by 33.3% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing, while 27.8% disagree and 8.3% strongly disagree. Finally, 30.6% strongly agree and 38.9% agree on receiving timely assistance, but 13.9% disagree and 11% strongly disagree. The model summary in Table 4.9 shows a weak relationship between accessibility and maternal health outcomes, with an R-squared of 0.030, indicating that only 3% of maternal health variability is explained by accessibility. ANOVA results in Table 4.10 further confirm that the regression model's F-value of 1.812 and p-value of 0.184 suggest that the model does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes. Overall, while accessibility aspects are largely positive, significant barriers and limitations remain, indicating a need for further improvements in service delivery and patient experience.

### **5.1.3. Health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

The evaluation of health education and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV shows that 38.9% of respondents strongly agree and 22.2% agree that the antenatal education is comprehensive and useful. Similarly, 30.6% strongly agree and 27.8% agree that counseling helps manage health and pregnancy. However, 11.1% disagree and 19.4% strongly disagree with the effectiveness of the education, while 22.2% disagree and 13.8% strongly disagree about counseling's practical applicability. Only 13.9% strongly agree and 19.4% agree that the information provided is relevant, with 13.9% disagreeing and 25% strongly disagreeing on the clarity of explanations. Despite 36.1% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing that support is adequate, 19.4% disagree and

8.3% strongly disagree. The content aligns with 50% of respondents who strongly agree and 36.1% who agree, while 30.6% strongly agree and 27.8% agree on the positive impact of counseling on maternal health. Overall, while the services are generally well-regarded, there are significant areas for improvement in content relevance, clarity, and support.

## **5.2 Conclusion of the Findings**

### **5.2.1 Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

The regression analysis reveals that the quality of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV has a minimal impact on maternal health outcomes, with an R-squared value of 0.009. This indicates that only 0.9% of the variability in maternal health is explained by the quality of antenatal care. The ANOVA results further support this finding, showing an F-value of 0.539 and a significance level of 0.466, suggesting that the quality of antenatal care services does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes. Despite positive feedback on overall satisfaction and various aspects of care, the limited explanatory power of antenatal care quality on maternal health outcomes underscores the need for improved communication, comprehensive testing, and enhanced accessibility to better influence health outcomes.

### **5.2.2 Accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

The regression analysis indicates a weak relationship between the accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health outcomes, with an R-squared value of 0.030. This shows that only 3% of the variability in maternal health is explained by accessibility factors. The ANOVA results with an F-value of 1.812 and a p-value of 0.184 confirm that accessibility does not significantly predict maternal health outcomes. Although accessibility aspects such as convenience and timely assistance are generally viewed positively, the significant barriers and limitations highlight the necessity for improvements in service delivery to effectively impact maternal health..

### **5.2.3 Health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

The regression analysis for health education and counseling shows that the impact on maternal health outcomes is not substantial, as indicated by the R-squared value. The specific value isn't provided here, but the overall findings suggest that while health education and counseling are

well-regarded by patients, the effectiveness of these services in improving maternal health is limited. The ANOVA results also suggest that health education and counseling do not significantly predict maternal health outcomes. Therefore, despite positive perceptions of the educational content and counseling services, there are notable gaps that need to be addressed to enhance their impact on maternal health.

### **5.3 Recommendations of the Findings**

#### **5.3.1 Quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

To enhance the effectiveness of antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV, it is recommended that the health center focus on improving communication with patients, ensuring that all necessary medical tests are conducted, and maintaining high cleanliness and hygiene standards. It is advisable to regularly assess and address patient concerns to better align with their needs. Additionally, enhancing accessibility to care services could potentially improve maternal health outcomes. Implementing a comprehensive review of the quality of care provided, along with targeted interventions, can help in addressing these areas of concern...

#### **5.3.2 Accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

To improve accessibility to antenatal health services, it is recommended that Malaba Health Centre IV work on reducing barriers to accessing care and ensuring that services are available at convenient times. Increasing the availability of healthcare providers and optimizing location accessibility can also contribute to better service delivery. Addressing waiting times and improving patient experience through streamlined processes and enhanced support can further positively impact maternal health outcomes. Regular evaluations of accessibility factors should be conducted to identify and mitigate any persistent challenges

#### **5.3.3 Health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

To enhance the impact of health education and counseling on maternal health, it is recommended that Malaba Health Centre IV focus on making educational content more relevant and clear for patients. Tailoring health education to address specific patient concerns and improving the clarity of counseling explanations can help in better managing health and pregnancy. Ensuring that

support during counseling sessions is adequate and responsive to patient needs is also crucial. Periodically reviewing and updating health education and counseling practices based on patient feedback will help in making these services more effective in improving maternal health outcomes.

#### **5.4 Contributions of the study**

This study contributes significantly by providing a detailed assessment of the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of antenatal care services, health education, and counseling at Malaba Health Centre IV. It highlights specific areas for improvement in these services, such as communication, accessibility, and content relevance, which are essential for enhancing maternal health outcomes. By identifying gaps and offering targeted recommendations, the study aids healthcare providers and policymakers in refining strategies and interventions. Additionally, it offers valuable insights for future research and policy formulation aimed at improving maternal care in similar healthcare settings.

#### **5.4 Areas for further research**

Future research should explore several key areas to further enhance maternal health care. First, studies could investigate the effectiveness of specific interventions designed to improve communication and patient education within antenatal care settings. This includes evaluating the impact of interactive educational tools and personalized counseling approaches. Second, research should examine the barriers to accessing antenatal services more deeply, focusing on geographical, socio-economic, and cultural factors that affect service utilization. Additionally, exploring patient satisfaction with specific aspects of healthcare delivery, such as waiting times and provider availability, could provide more targeted insights. Finally, longitudinal studies assessing the long-term impact of improvements in antenatal care on maternal and infant health outcomes would be valuable. This comprehensive approach can help in designing more effective, patient-centred maternal health programs and policies.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Dear respondent,**

MY Name is EMEJE JOEL, a student of Uganda Christian University pursuing Bachelors in social work and social administration. The purpose of this study is to investigate “ANTENATAL HEALTH CARE PROVISION AND MATERNAL HEALTH IN MALABA HEALTH CENTRE IV IN MALABA TOWN COUNCIL, TORORO DISTRICT ‘you have a wealth of important information that is very useful in this exercise. The information collected will be held in strict confidentiality and in no way be personalized. You are therefore requested to respond to the questions below as objectively and as accurately as possible.

### **Instructions:**

Please tick the most appropriate box.

### **SECTION A: BACK GROUND INFORMATION**

Tick in the boxes the alternative that represents your opinion. There is no right or wrong Answer,

Any response you give will be respected because it represents your view.

1 Gender

FEMALE	MALE
1	2

2. Age bracket

18-30	31-43	44-56	57-69	70andabove
1	2	3	4	5

3 Qualifications: What is your highest academic qualification?

Certificateandbelow	DiplomaLevel	DegreeLevel	MasterLevel	PHDLevel	ProfessionalLevel
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Departments: In which department do you work?

Finance and Administration	Production	Gender	Health Education,	StatuaryB
1	2	3	4	5

5 Number of years worked at Malaba Health Centre IV

1-2	3-4	5-6	7andabove	
1	2	3	4	

**SECTIONB:quality of antenatal care services and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below by ticking the appropriate column. Strongly Agree-(SA) Agree-(A), Not sure-(NS) Disagree-(D), Strongly Disagree-(SD)

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
SA	A	NS	D	SD

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	I am satisfied with the overall quality of antenatal care services.					
2	I find most aspects of the antenatal services satisfactory.					
3	I feel my concerns are effectively addressed by the health workers.					
4	I receive all necessary medical tests during my antenatal visits.					
5	I perceive the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the facility as high.					

6	I find it easy to access antenatal care services at the health centre.					
7	I encounter minimal barriers (e.g., transport, cost) to accessing services.					

**SECTIONC:accessibility of antenatal health services and maternal health in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	I find it easy to access antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV.					
2	I experience minimal barriers (e.g., distance, cost) when accessing antenatal services.					
3	The antenatal care services are available at convenient times for me.					
4	I am satisfied with the waiting time for receiving antenatal care services.					
5	I find that there is sufficient availability of health care providers when I visit the center.					
6	The location of the health centre is accessible and easy to reach.					
7	I receive timely assistance and support when I seek antenatal care services.					

**SECTIOND:health education and counseling and maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	I find the health education provided during antenatal visits to be comprehensive and useful.					
2	The counseling sessions help me understand how to manage my					

	health and pregnancy better.					
3	I feel that the information given during health education sessions is relevant to my needs.					
4	The health workers provide clear and understandable explanations during counseling sessions.					
5	I receive adequate support and answers to my questions during health education and counseling.					
	The content of the health education sessions aligns with my concerns and questions about pregnancy.					
	The counseling sessions contribute positively to my overall maternal health.					

**SECTION E: Maternal health at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	I am satisfied with the quality of maternal health care services provided at Malaba Health Centre IV.					
2	The antenatal care services positively impact my overall maternal health.					
3	I receive timely and appropriate medical interventions during my pregnancy.					
4	The health centre offers adequate support for both prenatal and postnatal care.					
5	I feel confident in the care provided by skilled birth attendants at the health centre.					
6	The facility effectively manages and monitors any complications that arise during pregnancy.					
7	I have access to necessary resources and support for improving maternal health outcomes.					

## **Appendix ii: Interview Guide**

**Objective i: To assess the quality of antenatal care services provided at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

1. How would you rate the overall quality of antenatal care services you receive at Malaba Health Centre IV?
2. What specific aspects of antenatal care do you feel are most satisfactory or need improvement?
3. How do the health workers at the center handle your concerns during antenatal visits?
4. Are you provided with all necessary medical tests and examinations during your antenatal visits? If not, which tests are missing?
5. How do you perceive the cleanliness and hygiene standards of the facilities used during antenatal care services?

**Objective ii: To evaluate the accessibility of antenatal health services in Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

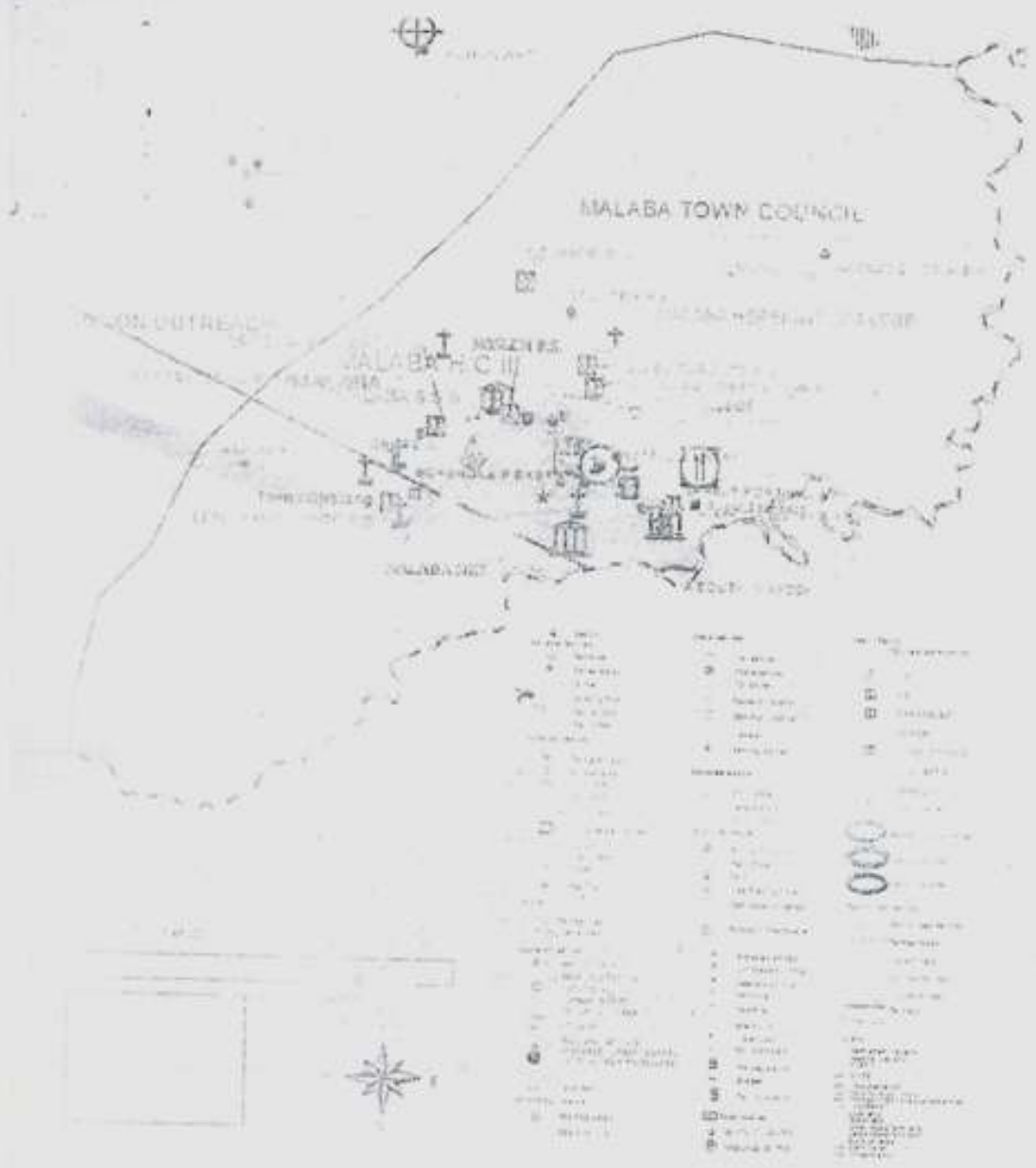
1. How easy or difficult is it for you to access antenatal care services at Malaba Health Centre IV?
2. What are the main barriers you face when trying to access antenatal care services (e.g., distance, transport, cost)?
3. Are the antenatal care services at the center available at times that are convenient for you?
4. How long do you typically wait to receive antenatal care services upon arrival at the health centre?
5. How satisfied are you with the availability of antenatal care providers when you visit Malaba Health Centre IV?

**Objective iii: To examine the effectiveness of health education and counseling provided to pregnant women at Malaba Health Centre IV in Malaba Town Council, Tororo District.**

1. How informative do you find the health education and counseling sessions provided during your antenatal visits?

2. What topics are usually covered during the health education sessions, and are they relevant to your needs?
3. Do you feel comfortable asking questions during the counseling sessions? How do the health workers respond?
4. Have the health education and counseling sessions helped you make better health decisions during your pregnancy?
5. What improvements would you suggest to make the health education and counseling sessions more effective for pregnant women?

# MAP OF Malaba Town Council





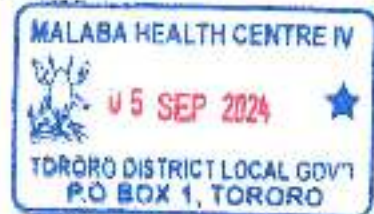
# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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~~Appendix I~~  
Appendix IV: Research acceptance letter

## Office of the Academic Registrar

To THE IN-CHARGE  
MALABA HEALTH CENTRE IV



Dear Sir/Madam,  
Re: Academic Research  
Christian greetings!

*Accepted*  
*[Signature]*

We are honored to introduce to you Mr. Mrs. /Miss EMEJE JOSE  
Of Registration Number 3331MKB/2010/ST pursuing a Masters'  
Degree/Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's Degree  
BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION  
He/ she is required to carry out academic research on the topic  
IMPACT OF ANTE-NATAL HEALTH CARE PROVISION  
ON MATERNAL HEALTH IN MALABA HEALTH CENTRE IV IN MALABA TC  
and thereafter produce a well bound hard cover research report (MAROON) in color for TORORO DISTRICT  
undergraduate and three (BLACK) copies for Postgraduate students as a university  
requirement for the award of a degree/diploma in the academic discipline that he /  
she is pursuing.

We shall be grateful for the help you may offer to him or her accordingly.  
Thank you.

Yours faithfully,  
*[Signature]*



Mr. Akampurira Timothy  
Academic Registrar

A Complete Education for a Complete Person

P.O Box, Mbale, Uganda, email: [academicregistrar@mbale.ucu.ac.ug](mailto:academicregistrar@mbale.ucu.ac.ug)