

# THE MEASURES FOR MOTIVATING MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN DELTA STATE TO USE FAMILY PLANNING METHODS

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## **Abstract**

The study aimed at investigating into the measures for motivating married workingwomen in Delta State to use family planning methods. The sample consisted of 560 women who were randomly selected. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. Percentage, mean standard deviation were used to analyse the data. Findings show that some of the hindrances to the use of family planning methods by the women are lack of knowledge of how each of the methods works, and fear of possible side effects. Some of the measures for motivating the women to use family planning methods are: explaining the advantages of the use of the methods to the women; correcting wrong assumptions about the use of the methods; Telling the women to go to qualified medical doctors for advice and application of the methods chosen. It was recommended among others that the women should be taught the meaning and importance of family planning.

## **Introduction**

The world population has been increasing very fast. In Nigeria, the increase in population has got to the extent that most parents cannot adequately take care of their children. Family planning methods have been introduced as a means of curbing overpopulation. According to Delano (1990) the decreasing mortality rate is due largely to the improved standards of living and good health standards.

Mothers are more likely to develop unique health problems if they have uncontrolled birth of children. As such the use of family planning methods is important for spacing childbirth.

Family planning has many advantages. Derek "(1971) stated that it is better on medical and social grounds to prevent a pregnancy than to terminate it. Family planning methods can be used to prevent pregnancy. Delano (1988) defined family planning as a means by which individuals or couples space the process of conception, and childbirth at interval mutually determined by both husband and wife in order to have the desired number of children that they can" conveniently take care of. In addition, Hatcher (1989) sees family planning as a way of thinking and living that is adopted voluntarily upon the basis of the knowledge, attitude and responsible decisions of adults, individuals or couples in order to promote the health and welfare of their nuclear family.

According to Hatcher (1983) there are a lot of problems that result due to the lack of use of family planning methods. These are abortion and infanticide. Some women have certain fears about the use of family planning methods. According to Church (1988) family planning can cause problems such as cancer of the uterus, excessive bleeding and toxemia of pregnancy (very high blood pressure during pregnancy that can result to convulsion). Due to the use of family planning methods, prostitution will be on the increase among adolescents in higher institutions (Delano 1988). It was also pointed out that after implantation of the Norplant (implant), a slight discomfort may occur which if it continues, one is advised to see a medical doctor. Delano (1990) noted that the injectable contraceptives cause increase in weight and swelling of the stomach.

The population of Nigeria has been increasing at a very rapid rate. Family planning

methods have been introduced as a means of population control. Some couples use such methods while others do not. Certain reasons could be advanced by such couples for the avoidance of use of the methods. The non-usage of family planning methods have led to giving birth to too many children than such couples can cope with. This results to low standard of education for the children, malnutrition, poor health and many other problems. In order to prevent the occurrence of such problems, it is necessary to seek ways of encouraging women, especially the married ones to use family planning methods. This study is therefore meant to investigate into the measures for motivating married working women in Delta State to use family planning methods.

**Purpose of the Study:** The study aimed at to finding out the measures for motivating married workingwomen in Delta State to use family planning methods.

**Objectives of the Study:** Specifically it was intended

1. To identify the reasons why some married women in Delta State avoid using family planning methods.
2. To identify the measures for motivating married women to use family planning methods.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that make some married women in Delta State to avoid the use of family planning methods?
2. What are the measures that can be utilized to motivate married women in Delta State to use family planning methods?

The findings of the study will be useful to family planning officials as basis for advising married women to use family planning methods. The study shows the factors that hinder some

married women from using family planning methods. The study also identified the measures for motivating married women to use family planning methods. On the basis of this, workshops and seminars can be organized to throw more light on the reasons for using family planning methods, its benefits and the ways of encouraging married women to use such methods. The study can serve as a resource material for those who want to research further on this topic or other related areas.

### **Methodology**

**Design of the Study:** The study is a survey. It is an Ex-post-facto design. The study was meant to investigate into the measures for motivating married working women to use family planning methods.

**Population:** The population of the study included married working women who have up to three children in Delta State.

**Sample and Sampling Method:** Four Local Government Areas were selected for the study. One hundred and fifty six women were sampled from Ethiope East Local Government Area; 99 from Warri South; 85 were from Isoko South Local Government Area and 217 from Isoko North Local Government Area. This made up a total sample of 560 women.

**Instrument:** The instrument that was used for data collection was a questionnaire. The first section was meant to obtain information on demographic qualities of the respondents. The second was on the reasons for avoidance of the use of family planning methods. The third section was on the ways of motivating married women to use family planning methods. The fourth section was meant to obtain the opinions of the women on the use of family planning methods on a 4-point scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

**Method of Data Collection:** The copies of the questionnaire were given to the women to respond to after which they were immediately collected.

**Method of Data Analysis:** The data were analysed by using percentage, mean and standard deviation. From the 4-point scale, a mean of 2.50-4.00 is important while below it is not important (for positive items). For negative items any item below 2.50 is important).

### Results

The analysis shows that 75 (13.8%) of the women were between 25-30 years; 71 (9.60%) were between 31-35 years. Some (221) 41.3% were above 40 years. Others 70 (12.9%) were between 36-40years.

Seventy three (13.4%) of the women are involved in business. Forty two (7.73%) are nurses. Majority 420 (77.3%) of the respondents are teachers.

On hundred and fifty (27.6%) of the women are from Ethiopie East Local Government Area; 213 (39.2%) are from Isoko North Local Government Area. Ninety Five (17.5%) are from Isoko South Local Government Area.

It was found that 490 (90.2%) of the women heard about family planning methods. Fifty three (9.76%) have not heard about family planning methods.

Findings indicated that 490 (75.6%) of all the women involved in the study use family planning methods. Others (133) 24.4% do not use family planning methods

**Table 1: Reasons why the Women avoid the use of Family Planning Methods**

S/N	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1	Ignorance of the advantages of family planning methods	75	56.3
2	Lack of knowledge	65	48.8

	of how each of the family planning methods work		
3.	Fear of possible side effects of family planning methods	80	60.0
4	My religion is against the use of family planning methods	66	49.5
5	I have enough money to maintain as many children as I give birth to	77	57.8
6	I need many children to assist me (e.g in farming, trading or other ways)	71	53.3
7	Some of the family planning methods are not reliable	65	48.8
8	I feel the methods are for only rich people	77	57.8
9	Family planning methods are used by those who cannot maintain many children	68	51.0
10	Ignorance of how to use the methods	64	48.0
11	Some of the methods usually hinder sexual pleasure	61	49.5
12	My husband does not want me to use family planning methods.	50	37.5
13	Some family planning methods can lead to heavy menstrual flow	75	56

Table 1 shows that items 1, 3,5,6,8,9 and 13 have their percentage above 50. This indicates that they are the serious reasons why the women who do not use family planning methods avoid the methods. Items 2,4,7,10, Hand 12 are not very serious reasons given for the avoidance of

the use of family planning methods by the women.

**Table 2: Measures for Motivating Married Women to use Family Planning Methods**

S/N	Measures	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Explaining the advantages of family planning methods married women.	350	64.5
2.	Correcting wrong assumptions about the use of family planning methods	420	77.3
3	Teaching the meaning of family planning to women	281	51.7
4	Explaining the functions each of methods to the women	352	64.8
5	Letting them know (he side effects of each methods .	410	75.5
6	Organizing workshops and allowing couples to see various family planning devices	311	57,3
7	Letting couples know dangers of giving birth too many children	409	75.3
8	Telling them to go to a qualified medical doctor for advice and application of the chosen	416	76.6

Table 2 shows that all the item 1-8 each is above 50 percent. This shows that they were all perceived by the women as important measures that can be utilized to motivate the women in Delta State (who do not use family planning methods) to start using them.

**Table 3: Opinions of the Women about the use of Family Planning Methods**

S/N	Opinions	Responses					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Deviation
1	The use of family planning methods is not	4	8	130	401	1.29	0.53
2.	It is risky to family planning methods	142	70	71	62	2.85	1.15
3	Family planning methods are difficult to use	65	-	144	212	1.81	1.04
4	The use of family planning methods is needed by poor people who cannot afford to maintain a large family	5	4	66	282	1.25	0.51

Table 3 shows the opinion of the respondents as regards the use of family planning

methods. Item 2 has a mean of 2.85. This is above the mean of 2.50. This shows that many of the women are of the opinion that the use of family planning methods is risky. Item 1,3 and 4 have their mean each below 2.50. This shows that the negative opinions of the women about the use of family planning methods. The findings shows that the women believe that the use family planning methods is necessary; few stated that the methods are difficulty to use; many feel that the use of family planning methods is not only for those who cannot maintain a large family.

### **Discussion of Results**

Majority of the women have heard about family planning methods. Not all of them usually use the methods. The major reasons advanced for non usage of family planning methods are as follows: Ignorance of the advantages of family planning methods and fear of possible side effects. The sense of ignorance of the advantages may make the women to feel that the methods are not necessary and so avoid their usage. The fear of possible side effects is obvious. Church (1988) noted that the use of some family planning methods could result to cancer of the uterus, excessive bleeding and toxemia of pregnancy. One of the problems put forward by Hatcher (1983) as arising from the use of family planning methods is abortion. Other reasons for avoiding the use of family planning methods are the claim that they have enough money to maintain their children; Some feel the methods are for only rich people. This shows some level of ignorance because family planning methods /devices are relatively cheap. Other minor reasons given by the women for not using family planning methods are: My religion is against the use of family planning methods; Some of the family planning methods are not reliable; Ignorance of how to use the methods. Some of the methods usually hinder sexual pleasure. This is true of the withdrawal method. Some women

complained that their husbands did not want them to use family planning methods.

The followings were regarded as useful measures for motivating married women to use family planning methods. Explaining the advantages of the use of family planning methods to the women and correcting wrong assumptions about the use of the methods. This will prevent ignorance and fears about the use of family planning methods. Teaching the meaning (or explaining the concept) of family planning to the women is very important. According to Delano family planning is a means by which individuals or couples space the process -of conception and childbirth at interval mutually determined by both husband and wife in order to have the desired number of children that they can conveniently take care of. Hatcher (189) also threw some light on the advantages of the use of family planning methods. He sees family planning methods as way of thinking and living that is adopted voluntarily upon the basis of the knowledge, attitude and responsible decisions of adults, individuals or couples in order to promote the health and welfare of their nuclear family.

Explaining the functions of the family planning methods can make the women see the ease of the use of the methods. Lack of knowledge of how to use the methods can even be a hindrance to using them. Organizing workshops to let the women see the devices and their uses can serve as motivating measures to the women in wanting to use the methods. Letting couples know the dangers of giving birth to too many children is important. They need to know that mothers who give birth to too many children are more likely to develop unique health problems.

Most of the women are of the opinion that the use of family planning methods is necessary. Only a few women feel the use of the methods is not necessary. Many of the women expressed their minds that the use of family planning methods is risky. Hatcher (1989) had

similar findings. This is due to the side effects of some of the methods and their failure rate. Many of the women disagree with the view that family planning methods are difficult to use. Others also do not believe that the use of family planning is needed by poor people who cannot maintain a large family,

### **Conclusion**

The study shows that some of the reasons why some of the women avoid the use of family planning methods is ignorance of the advantages of the methods; fear of possible side effects; unreliability of some of the methods, ignorance of how to use some of the methods. Some of the measures for motivating married women to use family planning methods are as follows:- Explaining the advantages of use of family planning methods to the married women; correcting wrong assumptions about the use of the methods; organizing workshops and allowing couples to see the various family planning devices. In order for the identified measures for motivating married women to use family planning methods to be effective, the individual women and their husbands, family planning units staff must cooperate. If the measures are adopted, it is very possible that those women who do not use family planning methods will be motivated to use them.

### **Recommendations**

Married women who have successfully used family planning methods should be made to educate other married women on the need to adopt the methods by involving them in the campaign for the use of the family planning methods.

The government should educate the married women in the area of study on the advantages of the use of family planning methods.

The government through the mass media should clarify the risks involved by mothers in bearing too many children.

The disadvantages of uncontrolled birth rate e.g population explosion and its attendant problems by non-usage of family planning methods should be publicized.

### **Implications of the Study**

The continuous non-usage of family planning methods by married people will lead to large family sizes and inadequate maintenance of health of family members. In order to prevent such problems, couples need to be advised to meet a well qualified medical officer (doctor) for advice and adoption of appropriate family planning method(s).

When married women do not use family planning methods there is the risk of giving birth to too many children. This has adverse effects on the health of the mothers. This can lead to high maternal mortality rate. Infant mortality rate could also be high.

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