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ATTITUDE OF EDUCATED AND NON EDUCATED MARRIED PEOPLE TOWARDS FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICES IN ENUGU WEST SENATORIAL ZONE

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Abstract

Family planning is an organized effort of expert for people to live a fulfilled life. This study was carried out to investigate the attitude of educated and non educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west Senatorial zone in Enugu State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of this study comprised 4,260 married people. Stratified random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 426 married people. An instrument developed by the researcher titled "Attitude of educated and non educated Married People towards Family Planning Practice" (AENMTFPP) *was used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation. The reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha. The result gave coefficient value of 0.73 for family planning practices. The researchers administered the instrument with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were trained on how to distribute and collect the instrument. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected on the spot. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research*

question. The findings of the study showed that educated and non educated married people have negative attitude towards family planning practices in Enugu State. Some recommendations were made among which was that government should organize free seminar/workshops in all Senatorial zones in Enugu State on the importance of family planning and the methods to limit the number of children they would have during their marriage.

Keywords: Attitude, educated, non educated, Married People, Family Planning, Family Planning Practices, Enugu State.

Introduction

Family planning in developing countries has attracted the attention of a lot of researchers because of the important role it plays in controlling the population of people, safe guiding their health system and reduction in maternal mortality. According to Bhasin, Pant, Mehta & kumar (2005), family planning is an organized effort essentially to ensure that couples who want to limit their family size or to space their children have access to contraceptive or birth control information and services needed. Correspondingly, Hansen (2005) asserts that family planning is the ability of an individual or couples to decide when to have children, how many children they desire in a family, and how to space their children. Thus, it is a means of helping couples and individual realize their basic right to decide freely and responsibly if and when to have children, as well as how many children to have. The use of contraceptive methods results not only to improvements in health-related outcomes but also advance educational and economic outcomes, especially for girls and women (WFP, 2017). More specifically, the use of contraceptives can save an estimated 2.7 million infant deaths and the loss of 60 million healthy lives globally each year (Dovroch, Singh & Nadeau 2008). Similarly, contraceptive use can prevent at least 25% of all maternal deaths by preventing unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions and also protect against sexually transmitted infections (Weldegerima & Denaken, 2007).

In lieu of the above benefits, World Health Organisation (2015) averred that international community is committed to reducing the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 as per the third sustainable Development Goal. Pregnancy-related complications like abortions account for a large number of deaths amongst mothers and infants, particularly in developing nations (Donavan & Wulf, 2002).

Nonetheless, regardless of its considerable advantages, family planning practices are not being carried out by most of the developing countries (Who, 2018). In Africa, as many as one in five women have an unmet need for family planning practices and just 36% of married or in-union women were using contraception in 2017 (World Family Planning, 2017). Conceptive education is a component of sex education and is one of the proven approaches to prevent risky sexual behaviour and must be introduced on University campuses to guide students' family planning choices (Fred & Jacqudine, 2019). Nigerian married men and women are non contraceptive users. Some of the reasons for the low rate of contraceptive practice according to Ikechebelu, Ikechebeu & Abiajulu (2015), range from factors such as "the fear of side effects, husband's objection, religious and cultural prohibitions, etc". it had been earlier indicated in this study that the use of contraceptives can save an estimated 2.7 million infant deaths and loss of 60 million healthy lives globally each year (Darroch, Singh, Nsdeau, 2008).

Numerous scholars have indicated several reasons for the lack of utilization of family planning practices: lack of accessibility to contraceptive methods, minimal knowledge of contraceptive methods, fear of side effects; approbation based on social and religious sentiments, and provider bias (Who, 2018; Japan, Verma & Gupta, 2017). Oyedokun (2007) reveals that most educated couples have little or incorrect information about family planning methods, even when they know some names of contraceptives, they do not know where to get them or how to use them properly. These couples may also posses negative attitudes regarding family planning practices, whereas, some have heard false and misleading information (Olugbenga, Abodunrin & Adeomi, 2011; Onyedokun, 2007). Attitude towards family planning practices determines whether or not it is practiced (Babatunde, Olusola & Osakinle, 2019). Based on the above assertions, it becomes necessary for the researchers to examine the attitude of educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu West senatorial zone.

Education is the willingness and ability to learn. Educated persons learn constantly without supervision or external rewards. Arinze (2011) opines that an educated person is one who had retained a large amount of information and someone who could state facts without having to look them up. While Ijeoma (2000), states that uneducated married people agree that the gift of children is from God and that sustenance of children is equally from God. This made some non-educated married people to have myopic ideas as regards family planning (Ugodebe, 2012).

Education has been found to be the key factor influencing the use of contraceptives. Ramesh (1996) & Liefbroer (1997) reported that education is clearly related to the adoption of family planning practices. Education increases the awareness about health, hygiene, civic amenities and knowledge about developmental process. Hence, education not only helps in altering the relative control of couples over fertility and contraceptive views, but also influences their attitudes and abilities (Rajni, 2010). In contrast, the development of less positive or more negative attitude towards family planning among rural married respondents is not properly due to their low educational levels (Baba 1990). Thus, low educational attainments are found to be the impediments and obstacles in the implementation of family planning programmes among married couples in rural areas (Rajini, 2010).

In summary, based on the above literature review with regards to the knowledge of the researcher, there is a shortage of concrete information on the contraceptive knowledge and attitude of married people towards family planning in Enugu state. Therefore, this study was designed to assess the attitudes of educated and non educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.

Statement of the Problem

It is very pertinent to get acquainted with basic knowledge about family planning methods and practices. Sexual health and psycho-social problems of married people in Enugu state seems to be affected by poor knowledge of the available methods and benefits of family planning practices. Many married people appear to have a low level of information as regards family planning methods and many find it difficult to discuss sexual matters. These problems unavoidably lead to poor sexual care and psycho-social problems as a result of stress in trying

to take care of their homes. However, most maternal deaths in Enugu state appear to be as a result of unsafe abortions resulting from unwanted pregnancies, fetal mortality, placental insufficiency, placental abruption, fetal infection, genetic abnormalities of the fetus, fetomaternal hemorrhage and umbilical cord complications among others. All these could be as a result of short birth interval. The poor attitude of most married people towards family planning practices could be as a result of lack of adequate skill, poor knowledge of family planning methods, poor educational background, religious beliefs and poor sensitization on effectiveness of fertility regulation on the part health of workers. Hence, the issue of poor educational background may be the major factor militating against family planning practices in Enugu state. Therefore, the researchers sought to examine the attitude of educated and non educated married people in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the attitude of married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west Senatorial zone in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west Senatorial zone

Scope of the Study

The geographic scope of this study was delimited to married people in Enugu west senatorial zone. Although the investigation has implications for all the Senatorial Zones in Enugu State, only Enugu West Senatorial Zone, was studied. The study in its content investigated the attitude of educated and non educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu State.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research question:

1) What is the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at .05 level of significance;

1) There is no significant difference between the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.

Method

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and was conducted in Enugu state, Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of 4,260 educated married people in Enugu west senatorial zone in Enugu state. The sample for the study consisted of 426 educated married people selected from the population of the study: stratified random and purposive sampling techniques were used to draw the sample. The researchers developed a self structured instruments called "attitude of educated and non educated married people towards family planning practices'' (AENMTFPP) with four point rating scale. The instrument has 11 items and was face validated by three experts, two from Guidance and Counseling and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam

campus. The internal consistency of AENMTFPP was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. A population of 20 educated and non educated married people from Anambra central senatorial zone was used during the pilot study. The data collected from the pilot study was analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate and the reliability coefficient stood at .73, thus, indicating that the instrument was reliable and therefore used for the study. To collect data for the study, the researchers employed the assistance of five research assistants whom they trained in one day consultative meeting. Out of 426 copies of AENMTFPP distributed, the researchers were able to retrieve 402 copies signifying 94.4% return of dully filled copies of the administered instrument. Mean, standard deviation and percentage were used to answer the research questions. The decision rule for the interpretation of the responses was that for any item 2.50 is regarded as agreed, while any item whose mean score is less than 2.50 is regarded as disagreed. In analyzing the data for the null hypothesis, independent t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.5 level of significance. If the calculated t-value is equal or greater than the table value the null hypothesis was rejected. If calculated t-value is less than the table value, null hypothesis was not rejected.

Results

The results of the study are presented in the tables according to the research question and hypothesis.

Research Question 1

1) What is the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone?

Table 1: Mean Score of Educated and Non-Educated Married People towards Family Planning Practices

Source of variation	Educated (N=185)			Non-Educated (N=217		
	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
Attitude Family planning practices	2.31	.24	Negative	2.39	.30	Negative

Result in Table 1 shows the mean score of 2.31 and 2.39 for educated and non-educated married people. The mean scores indicate that educated and non-educated married people have a negative attitude towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.

Table 2: t-test Comparison of the Difference between the Attitude of Educated and Non-educated Married People Towards Family Planning Practices

Source of variation	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Educated	185	23.1	.24				
				400	3.02	1.96	Significant
Non-educated	217	2.39	.30				

The result in Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value (3.02) is greater than the critical value (1.96) at alpha level of .05 and degree of freedom (df) 400. This is an indication that the difference between the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone was significant. The null hypothesis therefore was rejected.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Married people have a negative attitude towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.
2. Educated and non-educated, married people have a negative attitude towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.
3. There is a significant difference between the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone.

Discussion of the Findings

The discussion was done in accordance with the research question and hypothesis that guided the study.

The findings of the study as shown in table 1 revealed that educated and non-educated married people have negative attitude towards family planning practices. However, this was further tested using a null hypothesis. The result of the null hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference between the attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices. The findings of the study could be as a result of their strong attachment to religious beliefs, which affect the willingness of the partners to discuss, consider or use contraceptives as methods of family planning .The present study is in line with the findings of Amobi (2001), which showed that non-educated married people have negative attitude towards family planning. However, the findings of this study did not agree with the study by Babbie (2003) who found that educated and non-educated married people have positive attitude towards family planning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Government should organize free seminar/ workshops in all political wards of Enugu Senatorial Zones in Enugu State on the practical information about family planning methods, there is need to increase the level of sensitization not only on "why birth control is essential" but on how small families can be achieved by methods less drastic than operation.
2. Sex and family education should be impacted from school years. Sex education should also be made a compulsory subject in all schools in order to teach children the importance of family planning in the society. Rural schools should also be helped to transmit modern concepts by organizing field trips to outside area. For these women, modern ideas and methods must be proven relevant and acceptable with in village.
3. Men should be included in programmes for family planning sensitization as they usually show nonchalant attitude to that effect. Therefore, a more balanced approach to couples is needed in which husbands also have equal participation in couple's contraceptive practice.

4. Family planning education could form part of health education. This could be given to pregnant mothers attending the antenatal clinics. All health officers should actively participate in family planning education in their communities.
5. Direct family planning services clinics and multipurpose community centers should be opened by the government in rural and semi-urban areas. These should also be methods of reaching married people at their door steps.
6. Much attention should be paid to discouraging people on early marriage as there is high coital frequency among newly married couples, early marriage should be discouraged by providing young people with opportunities to learn the benefits and need for family planning practices irrespective of their religious differences and income disparity because health is wealth.

Limitations of the Study

The limitation of this study is that some respondents were reluctant to complete the questionnaire. The result was that some copies of the questionnaires were not returned at the initial visit. The researchers assured the respondents of the confidentiality of the information. Several visits and appeals were made by the researchers and research assistants to retrieve the questionnaire.

Conclusion

Worried by the dwindling level of awareness and practices of family planning as prevalent in contemporary Nigeria societies, this study investigated attitude of educated and non-educated married people towards family planning practices in Enugu west senatorial zone. Whereas the study projected the essence and importance of family planning practices especially with regards to population control and family size management, it was observed that in the study area both educated and non-educated married people have remained oblivious and aloof of such practices due to certain factors such as lack of adequate awareness, religious beliefs and the conviction that children are gift of God.

It is on that grounds of the above that the study concludes by emphasizing the need and urgency of more effective public enlightenment and awareness campaign through seminars, conferences and workshops to further bring to the fore the need for family planning practices among educated and non-educated married people not only in Enugu West Senatorial Zone but Enugu State in general.

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