



Methods and Awareness of the Effects of Contraceptive Utilization among Young Female Students in Calabar, Nigeria: Implications for Guidance and Counseling

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Abstract

The study was aimed at examining methods and awareness of effect of contraceptive utilization among young female students in Calabar, Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, two research questions were raised and one hypothesis was stated. The study adopted a survey research design with a purposive sampling technique to select a total of 154 young girls of 15yrs which is 10% of population of 1543 girls. A questionnaire titled "Contraceptive method and Awareness Scale (CMAS)" was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation and the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha and the coefficient of the sub scale was 0.72. Data were collected by the researcher and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and population t-test. The result showed that progestin-only pills, female condom and withdrawal method were the most used methods of family planning and that the level of awareness on the effect of is low. Based on the findings, it was recommended that young girls should be educated on the effect of each of the contraceptive method utilized for whatever purpose and that various methods and their attendant effect should be taught to students. As implication, guidance counselors should ensure that they create an opportunity to help students resolve their personal social problems.

Keywords: Methods, Awareness, Contraceptive, Young, Girls, Implications, Guidance, Counseling.

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INTRODUCTION

The rate of teenage marriage in Nigeria is growing very fast especially in the Northern part of the country where early marriage is a cultural practice and it does not really matter how many women a man can marry. In the south, the level of teenage pregnancy growth is alarming especially for most of the girls in the village who may not understand the menstrual cycling, poverty, low education, high child mortality among others family planning methods can be divided into two categories: traditional and modern. Modern contraceptives are easily classifiable and include oral contraceptives, intrauterine devices (IUDs), female and male sterilization, injections, condoms and the diaphragm. Other practices, which have a direct impact on fertility that have been used include prolonged breast feeding and postpartum sexual abstinence, which are probably used by mothers more for recuperating between births, child survival and child spacing rather than for limiting family size. Thus, these methods have not been considered as contraceptive methods although their fertility inhibiting characteristics are well recognized.

Traditional methods recognized in this study include withdrawal, periodic abstinence, and use of herbs and wearing of traditional beads. Family planning was originally advocated for married women but today, there is a growing contention on the need for young girls to utilize modern family planning method in order to reduce population growth among others. More so, adolescent mothers face considerable socioeconomic disadvantages in later life, including low educational attainment, reduced likelihood of being employed and an increased likelihood of living in poverty (Raj, Rabi & Amudha, 2010). Worldwide, teenage pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of pre-term delivery 6 – 8 and low birth weight 6 – 9, although some studies did not find such correlation (Ukulmez, 2000). Likewise, a link between teenage pregnancy and small-for-gestational-age births among teenage mothers has been reported by some investigators, but not by others. Certain studies (Lausson 2010; Cnattingius 2008; Zabin & Kiragu, 2000) have shown a greater risk of neonatal mortality among infants born to teenage mothers, whereas others found no increase. Teenage childbearing is associated with higher rates of delivery complications, maternal morbidity and mortality. The increased risk of infant death to adolescent mothers in developing countries like Bangladesh, is also associated with physical immaturity, delivery complications and inexperience in child-rearing. However, over the years, it has been observed that the use of contraceptives among young girls have rather created a lot of negative effect on the adolescent girl child. This is evident in the increased rate of teenage premarital sex, infertility, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STDs) and HIV/AIDS.

Most of the girls have decided to utilize the new methods as they are told even without understanding the consequence of it. The researcher thus intends to find out the methods of family planning that, most young girls of reproductive, age utilizes and whether they are aware of the consequences of such methods.

Statement of the problem

Over the years, it has been observed that due to the rate of unwanted pregnancies in most communities, young girls have resulted to so many means of protecting themselves from early pregnancies especially those ones that may not have definitive parents. Most girls have decided to abstain; most of the girls encourage their boyfriends to apply the withdrawal method among others. Of recent, the most trending area is that that of the use of contraceptives. It is not out of place for a woman to utilize contraceptive but the issue is that contraceptives were not made for young girls who are not married and who may not have given birth to children. Thus, many young girls have been exposed to a lot of complication

during child birth; some have, lost fertility, exposed to STDs and HIVs, among others. This state of affairs has raised a lot of concerns among health practitioners and medical personnel. Government effort to sensitize the communities about the use of contraceptive and other family planning methods have not yielded the right outcome among married women, but is grossly abused by young unmarried girls. The researcher thus attempts to find out the 'methods of contraceptives use and their awareness of the effect of contraceptives used in order to provide guidance and counseling.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used for the study

- What are the contraceptive methods used by secondary school girls in Calabar Municipality?
- What is the level of awareness of the effect of these contraceptive among secondary school girls in Calabar?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was stated to guide the study:

- The extent level of awareness of the effect of contraceptive used by secondary school girls in Calabar is significantly high

LITERATURE REVIEW

Abmad, Joshua, Reyer and Nobuyuki (2012) carried out a topic on factors influencing contraceptive use among women in Afghanistan: secondary analysis of Afghanistan health survey 2012. It was reported that the increase in contraceptive use in Afghanistan has been frustratingly slow from 7.0% in 2003 to 11.3% in 2012. Data on contraceptive use and influencing factors were obtained from Afghanistan Health Survey (AHS) 2012, which had been collected through interview-led questionnaire from 13,654 current married women aged 12-49 years. Odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI) of contraceptive use were estimated by logistic regression analysis. When adjusted for age, residence, region, education, media, and wealth index, significant OR was obtained for parity (OR of 6 or more children relative to 1 child was 3.45, and the 95% CI 2.54—4.69), number of living sons (OR of 5 or more sons relative to no son was 2.48, and the 95% CI 1.86—3.29), wealth index (OR of the richest households relative to the poorest households was 2.14, and the 95% CI 1.72—2.67), antenatal care attendance (OR relative to no attendance was 2.13, and the 95% CI 1.74—2.62), education (OR of secondary education or above relative to no education was 1.62, and the 95% CI 1.26—2.08), media exposure (OR of at least some exposure to electronic media relative to no exposure was 1.15, and the 95% CI 1.01—1.30), and child mortality experience (OR was 0.88, and the 95% CI 0.77—0.99); as well as age, residence (rural/urban), and region. This secondary analysis based on AHS 2012 showed the findings, similar to those from the previous studies in other developing countries.

In another study on factors influencing the use of contraceptives through the lens of teenage women: a qualitative study in Iran by Afrouz, Abbas, Shirin and Sara (2015). It was noted that one out of seven teenage girls in developing countries marries before the age of 15. While the fertility rate of teenage girls is high, the rate of contraceptive use remains low; therefore, this group of teenagers needs reproductive healthcare. This study was undertaking

to explore factors influencing the use of contraceptives from the perspective of teenage women living in the city of Ardabil in Iran. This qualitative study was conducted with 14 married women aged 13–19 years who attended in urban-rural healthcare centers in Ardabil. Eligible women were recruited using purposive sampling and were invited to take part in individual in-depth semi-structured interviews. The duration of the interviews varied from 45 to 90 mm with an average of 55 mm. Sampling continued until data saturation was reached and no new data was collected. Each interview was tape-recorded after obtaining the participant's permission, transcribed verbatim and analyzed for identifying categories and themes using conventional content analysis. Three themes and eight subthemes were developed. The themes were as follows: "insufficient familiarity with contraceptive methods", "pressure to become pregnant" and "misconceptions".

Indongo (2007) carried out a study contraceptive use among young women in Namibia: Determinants and Policy Implications. The present study examines social, demographic and behavioural factors that influence contraceptive use and method choice among young Namibian women. The study also explores ways to improve the accessibility of health facilities and family planning services for young women. The research is based on both quantitative and qualitative data provided by the 2000 Namibian Demographic and Health Survey and focus group discussions with young women (15-24 years) respectively. The data have been used to analyse the factors affecting contraceptive use and method choice among young women in Namibia. The logistic regression method has been applied to examine the determinants of contraceptive use and method choice. The study examines knowledge of contraceptive methods and sources of supply, decisions leading to contraceptive use and views about service delivery and the availability of contraceptive methods. The study reveals that whilst there is provision, the accessibility of existing reproductive health services for young women is poor in rural areas. There is a lack of support from parents, nurses, and the broader community. Part of the problem here is that older people are not fully aware of the sexual rights of young women, which leads to misunderstandings with regard to sexual and reproductive health issues. Nurses, especially in rural areas, are deemed to be judgmental and reluctant to provide contraceptives to young female scholars. Health facilities are also ranked by young women as user-unfriendly as most of them, as public spaces, lack confidentiality and privacy.

These negative experiences of young women impact on their utilization of reproductive and health services and their use of contraceptives. Levels of contraceptive use among all age groups, including young women, in Namibia are still low. The choice of contraceptive method is restricted to injectable and to some extent, condoms. Uninformed and unsupportive parents are identified as major barriers to young women's sexual health and their ability to use contraception consistently. Apart from this, individual use of contraception is greatly influenced by individual and community characteristics. The education level, marital status, number of children and work status are important individual factors affecting whether and what kind of contraception young women will use. Other issues related to the individual women concern whether she discusses family planning with her partner or parent, and whether she has access to the media and to health facilities. For example, findings from the multivariate analysis showed that increased education was significantly associated with a greater likelihood of using contraception. Unmarried young women were more likely to use condoms than married women. Higher condom use was also reported among young women of 15-19 years old than among 20-24 year olds. Furthermore, young women in urban areas had more positive attitudes towards using contraceptives, as well as more forthcoming friends and parents than those in the rural areas.

The actual use of contraceptives at the household level depends besides on the availability of accessible FP services in the local environment, on the knowledge people have

of FP measures, and their attitudes towards (acceptance of) these services (Emens, 2008; Mahmood & Ringheim 1996). A lack of knowledge of FP sources and methods often cited as a key variable in determining contraceptive use (Casterline & Sinding, 2000; Korra, 2002). It is expected that the more people know about and accept modern contraceptives, the more they will use them (see Figure 1). Knowledge of contraceptives is considered one of the essential factors associated with effective use of these methods. Biney (2011) observed that lack of knowledge about contraceptives among Ghanaian women led to failure of contraceptive use which in turn led to unintended pregnancies and induced abortions. Similarly, Lindstrom & Hernandez (2006) found that limited knowledge of contraceptive methods among recent rural-urban migrants in Guatemala was associated with unmet need and limited choice of contraceptives. Knowledge about contraceptives and their side effects may affect their actual use also indirectly, through its effect on the attitudes people have regarding contraceptive use (Chipeta, 2010; Smith, 2002). Nigerian women with positive attitudes towards contraception (i.e., those who approved FP and those who discouraged early marriages) were found to use contraceptives more than other women. Zabin (2003) further showed in their study on the relationship between attitude and behaviour among adolescents in Baltimore that positive attitudes towards contraception had a significant effect on contraceptive use. Davidson and Jaccard (2009) also provide evidence that married women's attitudes towards birth control are positively correlated to their actual use and author's reference found district-level use of contraceptives to be positively affected by knowledge and acceptance of contraceptives in African countries.

Kamial (2012) carried out a study on childbearing and the use of contraceptive methods among married adolescents in Bangladesh. The study sought to investigate the socioeconomic determinants of childbearing and contraceptive use among married adolescents in Bangladesh. The study used the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2007 data. Both bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses were used to examine the association between the socioeconomic factors and childbearing and contraceptive use among married female adolescents. Overall, 69% of the married adolescents initiated childbearing and 25% of the most recent pregnancies were unintended. The current contraceptive prevalence rate was 42%. The multivariate logistic regression yielded a significantly increased risk of childbearing among adolescents with no formal education, those who were married-off before age 16, the poor and those who had ever used any contraceptive method. Inter-spousal communication on family planning (FP) appeared as the most single significant determinant of any contraceptive use. Number of living children, working status and visitations by FP workers are also important determinants of contraceptive use among the married female adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design with a purposive sampling technique to select a total of 154 young girls of 15 yrs which is 10% of population of 1543 girls. A questionnaire titled "Contraceptive method and Awareness Scale (CMAS) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation and the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha and the coefficient of the sub scale was 0.72. Data were collected by the researcher and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and population t-test. The result is presented below.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Evaluating the Common Contraceptive Methods adopted by secondary school girls in Calabar

This is a one variable question involving the method of contraceptives used by young girls. **tp** answer this question, frequencies and bar graphs were used and the result as presented in Table 1 and Figure 1 showed that injectable, Progestin—only pills, Female condom and Withdrawal method were the most used contraceptive methods by young girls

Table 1: Simple percentage analysis of the responses to most used contraceptive methods

s/n	Method of contraception: do you use any of the following method	Yes	%	No	%
1	Implant	45	29.22	109	70.78
2	Injectable	134	87.01	20	12.99
3	Progestin-only pills	121	78.57	33	21.43
4	Contraceptive path	68	44.16	86	55.84
5	Virginal ring	76	49.35	78	50.65
6	Female condom	143	92.85	11	7.14
7	Contraceptive sponge	12	7.79	142	92.21
8	Withdrawal method	151	98.05	3	1.95
9	Spermicide	15	9.74	139	90.26
10	Diaphragms	16	10.39	138	89.61
11	Cervical caps	42	27.27	112	72.73

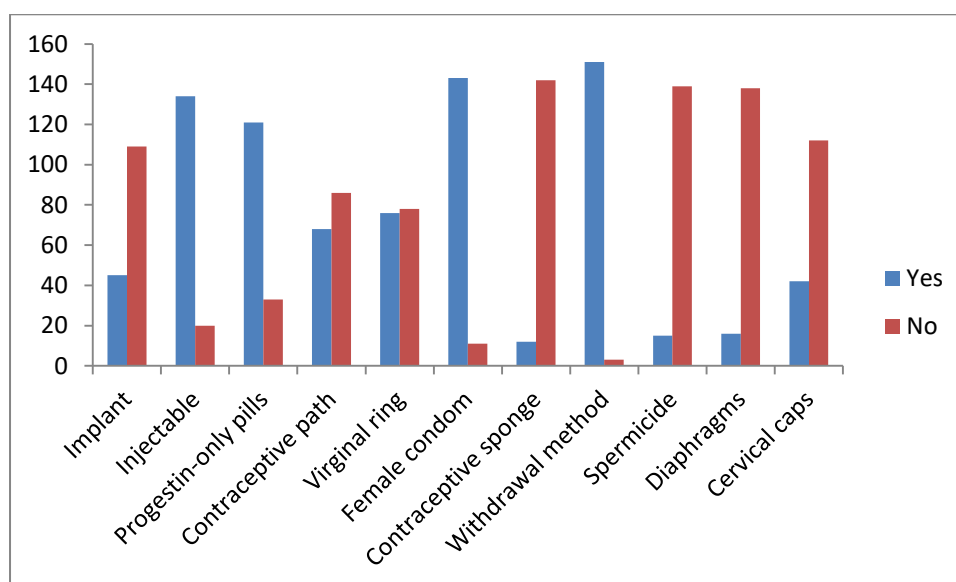


Figure 1: Bar graph of responses to method of contraceptive used among young women

Evaluating the Level of Awareness of the Effect of these Contraceptive among Secondary School Girls in Calabar

This is a one variable question involving level of awareness of the effect of these contraceptive by young girls .to answer this question, frequencies and bar graphs were used and the result as presented in Table 2 and Fig. 2 showed that they are only ware of the effect in terms of it causing nausea, breast enlargement and missed period. Other effect are not known as revealed by their responses

Table 2: Level of awareness on the effect of contraceptive among young women

s/n	Awareness level. Do you know that the use of contraception method can cause any of the following:	Yes	%	No	%
1	Inter menstrual bleeding	62	40.26	92	59.74
2	Nausea	123	79.87	31	20.13
3	Breast enlargement	151	98.05	3	1.95
4	Headaches	144	93.50	10	6.49
5	Weight gain	16	10.39	138	89.61
6	Mood changes	32	20.78	122	79.22
7	Missed period	134	87.01	20	12.99
8	Decreased libido	12	7.79	142	92.21
9	Vaginal discharge	19	12.34	135	87.66

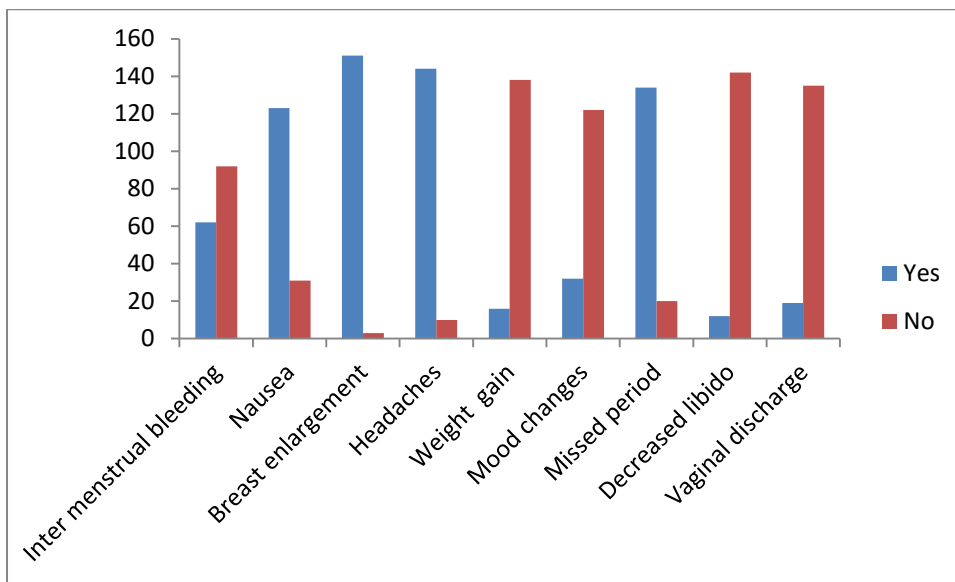


Figure 2: Bar graph showing the level of awareness of contraceptive use among young girls

DISCUSSION

Research question one was aimed at determining the usage of contraceptive methods among women young women in Calabar metropolis. The result showed that injectable, Progestin only pills, female condom and withdrawal method were the most used contraceptive methods by young girls. This could be due to the fact that these methods are commonly emphasized in the area and these are the methods that are ease for the girl child to use. However, the injectable and the Progestin—only pills may have effect that they may not know. It is common to see young married couple without children and this could be traced to the use of these pills and methods. The findings were in line with that of Gregory (2012) that carried out a study on methods, of contraceptives accessible to women of reproductive age in Benue State. The findings of the study showed that progestin—only pills, female condom, withdrawal method, IUD are the most used methods.

The findings of the study also revealed that the level of awareness on the effect of these methods is not significantly high. This could be due to the fact that most of the girls were only told of the different methods of family planning but were not told of the consequences of each of the method. This could be the reason why most of them abuse. The findings were in line with that of Adegoke (2011) that carried out a study on assessment of level of awareness, knowledge and practices of family methods among women of

reproductive age in Kogi State. The findings of the study showed that the level of knowledge of the effect of contraceptive method is low.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that progestin—only pills, female condom and withdrawal method were the most used methods of family planning and that the level of awareness on the effect is low.

Recommendations/Implication for Guidance and Counseling

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:

- Young girls should be educated on the effect of each of the contraceptive method utilized for whatever purpose.
- That various methods and their attendant effect should be taught to students implications for guidance and counseling.
- Guidance and counselors should be able to ensure that they organize periodic counseling services in order to help students learn about the various methods of contraceptive.
- Guidance and counselors should ensure that students are helped to understand the negative aspect of utilizing any of the contraceptive methods they chose.

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