

POVERTY AND FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICES OF MARRIED WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 Barracks of the Nigeria Police. The correlational research design was used. Volunteer sampling was used to select 537 respondents from the barracks. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structure and validated questionnaire with reliability of 0.74. Simple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level. The hypothesis was rejected. Based on the finding it was recommended, among others that in order to reduce the pervading high level of poverty in Nigeria, a policy of expansion and inclusion of marginalized individuals such as women into the labour force and decision-making process should be put in place.

Keywords: Poverty, family planning practice, married women.

INTRODUCTION

Income has been commonly used as the measure of the overall level of social and economic development of a society, however, empirical studies of the relationship between income and fertility have reached very mixed conclusions. At the macroeconomics level, negative relationships have typically been observed, with low fertility in the richest countries and high fertility in the poorest countries (Simmons & Koenig, 1994). The relationship between poverty and reproductive health and hence uncontrolled population are particularly evident in less developed countries.

Poverty is a state of absolute or relative lack of basic necessities of life (Ighedosa, 1998). Poverty in the broadest sense implies a lack of resources for reasonable comfortable living. According to Okoro (1998) poverty impact on several aspects of human life. This makes it difficult to have a universal acceptable definition of poverty. Instead different criteria are used to conceptualize the concept "poverty".

It is obvious that poverty has great impact on family planning. It is estimated that over 70% of Nigerians including those living in the Nigeria Police Barracks live below the absolute poverty level and cannot afford essential non-food requirement such as contraception and tend to get pregnant frequently, at interval of less than 2 years and at extremes of ages for example less than 18 years and more than 35 years (Ighedosa, 1998; Egboh, 2000 and National Policy on Population (NPP) 2004). There is a strong relationship between poverty and inadequate reproductive health status of married women in these barracks. The poor, Igbudu (2007); Ighedosa, (1998) observed lack access to health information on ways to achieve satisfying and safe sex life; they have poor knowledge of planned parenthood, have inadequate access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice. Ignorance Ighedosa, (1998); Makoju (1999) maintained, also flourishes among the poor due to illiteracy resulting from financial limitations or lack of access to educational institutions or sources of basic information.

Most family planning programme providers stress the right to provide contraceptives to developing world without emphasizing a similar need to offer affordable range of choices. According to Okoro (1998), the lack of such choices limits poor women's basic rights and thus deteriorates family planning effort in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria inclusive. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 Barracks of the Nigeria Police.

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis was postulated for the study:

There is no significant, relationship between poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 Barracks of the Nigeria Police.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Research Design

The correlational research design was used for this study. The choice of this design was made because, it investigates the extent to which variations in one factor, subject or variable correspond with variations in one or more other factors, subjects or variables based on the correlation coefficient. It is concerned with assessing relationship between two or more phenomena for the purpose of predictions about relationships.

Population

The population for the study comprised all married women aged 15 – 49 years in Zone 5 Barracks of the Nigeria Police.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of 537 of the population of 5,579 participated in the study. To achieve this, the simple random sampling technique, employing the ballot method with replacement was used to select 18 barracks. While the systematic sampling technique, using the barracks register was used to select the sample size from the barracks.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire. The researcher visited the barracks personally with 3 trained research assistant to administer the questionnaire after obtaining permission from the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) in charge of Zone 5, comprising Edo, Delta and Bayelsa State command. Comments and suggestions of 5 chosen jurors who are experts in the area of study were used to improve the face and content validity of the instrument. While the reliability of the instrument was established using test-retest method, and reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained which warrant the used of the instrument.

Emanated data were analyzed using simple regression analysis.

RESULT

The results of the data analysis are shown in table 1

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 Barracks of the Nigeria Police.

Table 1. Summary of regression analysis for poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 Police barracks

(Parameter Estimates)					
Variable	B	SE	R	r ²	R ² (adjusted)
(Constant)	13.723	1.50			
Poverty	1.53	.11	.50	.25	.25
ANOVA Summary Table for Poverty and Family Planning Practices					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6063.810	1	6063.810		
Residual	18080.819	535	33.796	179.323*	.000*
Total	24144.629	536			

* Sig. at P<0.5

Note

B = Regression Coefficient
SE = Standard Error of B.

Table 1 reveals that the regression coefficient found for poverty was 1.53, significant at $P < .05$ and coefficient of determination, r of 0.25 and r of 0.25 (adjusted). This value showed that poverty contributed 25% of the variance in family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 police barracks, table 1 also revealed that analysis of variance for the regression produced an F-value of 179.424 which was also found to be significant at $P < .05$ level.

Therefore, the hypothesis was reject at $P < .05$. Thus conclusion was reached that poverty will significantly influence Family Planning Practices of married women in zone 5 police barracks.

DISCUSSION

The result of the study as shown in table 1 revealed that there is a significant relationship between poverty and family planning practices of married women in Zone 5 police barracks. This finding is quite interesting in a number of ways as it corroborated the nearly universal finding in developing countries including Nigerian that the poorer women are, the more children they want. It is therefore not surprising that this finding is consistent with that of Ighedosa (1998), Okoro (1998), Egboh (2000), NPP (2004) who asserted that poor women get pregnant frequently, at interval of less than two years, at extremes of age of less than 18 years or more than 35 years and they tend to have high number of pregnancies. One possible explanation for this is that ignorance flourish among the poor due to illiteracy which result from financial limitations or lack of access to sources of basic information such as radio newspaper, television sets and the internet. This is so, as the aforementioned are not readily affordable by the poor. From the result the poor couples are likely to lag behind in adopting family planning and a small family ethos.

CONCLUSION

The implication of this finding is that uncontrolled population growth is a factor to so many serious problems that affects everyone in such location (barracks) either directly or indirectly such as overstretching or over crowding of organized social institutions and amenities (e.g schools, hospital, accommodation, water, electricity, toilet facilities among others) the reinforcing outcome is environmental degradation and perpetuation of poverty, a kind of vicious cycle.

RECOMMENDATON

Based on the finding of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. A policy of expansion and inclusion of marginalized individuals such as women into the labour force and decision- making process should be put in place. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should adjust their budgets so as to ensure that basic health and social services are made available to poor families with regards to bringing about wanted birth.
2. Population education and propagation of family planning strategies should be embarked upon in the barracks to spell out the meaning concept, methods, purpose, effectiveness and side effects of contraceptives in order to create awareness so that married women can make informed choice.

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