



Communication and Spousal Contraceptive Use among Males in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined communication and spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of all 2,239,399 males between the ages of 15-69 years in Rivers State. A sample size of 600 was selected for the study using a multistage sampling procedure. Data was collected using a pretested questionnaire titled "Communication and Spousal Contraceptive Use Questionnaire" with a reliability coefficient of 0.812. Data collected were analyzed using percentages and binary logistic regression at the 0.05 alpha level. The findings of the study showed spousal contraceptive use prevalence of 54.5%. The findings of the study also showed that 68.2% of the study population communicated contraceptive use with their spouse. Significantly communication predicted spousal contraceptive use ($p < 0.05$) and as communication increased or improved spousal contraceptive use also increased ($\beta = 2.365$). It was recommended that Nollywood film producers and short play writers should in conjunction with Information, Education and Communication specialist to write scripts, act dramas and short plays on spousal communication in family planning that will encourage communication and improve spousal contraceptive use.

Keywords: Spousal, Contraceptive Use, Communication, Males, Rivers State

Introduction

Communication is a process of sharing of information through a media and it is instrumental for marital satisfaction. Marital communication allows couples to discuss and share information that predicts and sustain contraceptive use. For instance, studies showed that marital communication significantly influenced and predicted the use of contraceptive (Olawole-Isaac, Oni, Oladosu, Amooet et al., 2017). Spousal communication predicts the use of contraceptives and the willingness of men to adopt or allow partners to use family planning to a large extent determines the pace of fertility reduction (Isiuo-Abanihe, 1994). Effective communication in marriage could enhance joint decision making, participation and gender balance more especially in the area of family planning and contraceptive use specifically. Communication can clear negative perceptions around the use of contraceptive and improves better parenthood and reproductive health outcome thereby increasing positive attitude towards contraceptive use.

Contraceptives are devices used in the prevention of pregnancy by altering the hormone. According to the Planned Parenthood of American (2006), a contraceptive is any device or medication used for reducing the likelihood of fertilization of an ovum by spermatozoa, which could be obtained by temporal or permanent method or device. Contraceptive use according to World Health Organization (2018) is the percentage of women who are currently using or whose partners are currently using at least one of the contraceptive method regardless of the methods used. A spouse is a significant other in a marriage, a person's husband or wife. Contextually, a spouse is the wife of a man in a civil union or common-law marriage. Therefore, spousal contraceptive use is the percentage of wives(women) who are currently using at least one method of contraceptive as reported by their partner. In Nigeria the proportion of women using contraceptives is low. The 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey result showed that only 17% of Nigerians were currently using contraceptive (National Population Commission [NPC], 2019). Low contraceptive use in Nigeria is a pointer to increase the total fertility rate of 5.5 which had also contributed to the increases maternal mortality rate.

Communication could significantly predict spousal contraceptives use. For instance, in the study of Azmat, Ali, Ishaque et al. (2015) on assessing predictors contraceptive use, communication was significantly associated with contraceptive use. Sileo, Wanyenze, Luleet, al. (2015) conducted a study on determinants of family planning service uptake and use of contraceptives among postpartum women in rural Uganda also showed that communication significantly predicted contraceptive use. The study further stressed that respondents who communicated/ discussed with their spouse were about 2times more likely to use contraceptives compared to those who did not communicate with their spouse. In Nigeria, the study conducted by Olawole-Isaac, Oni, Oladosu et al. (2017) on inter-spousal communication as a determinant of contraceptive use indicated that spousal communication significantly predicted contraceptive use. The study further demonstrated that respondents who

communicated with their spouse were 4times more likely to use contraceptives compared to those who had not communicated with their spouse.

The family unit in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa is essentially patrilineal. The male partners make major decisions including those that can stop women from the uptake of contraceptives and other reproductive health issues because the men typically control the family wealth and are known as the head of the household (Ogunjuyigbe, Ojofeitimi&, Liasu, 2009). Bankole and Singh (1998) stressed that failure to involve men in family planning can have serious implications. Even when women are educated and motivated to use contraceptives as some studies documented, male opposition was cited as reasons for not using contraceptives. Evidence has shown that reproductive health programmes are more likely to be effective for women when men are involved than when it is meant for only women (Mistisk, Nacar&Mazicioglu, 2003).

In Rivers State, males are the head of households. Men as head of households make decisions that can impact on the lives of the members of the household including decision such as the uptake of spousal contraceptive use. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) advocated the inclusion of males as discreet partners to improve contraceptive use. Twenty-five years after the 1994 international conference on population and development where involving males as a discreet partner in family planning promote contraceptive use, contraceptive use is still low. More recently the Federal Government of Nigeria and Rivers State government made efforts to enhance contraceptive use by making family planning commodities free. However, despite this effort made the Federal Government of Nigeria and the River State Government respectively, non- use, low utilization and discontinuation of contraceptives still existed. Based on this premise, this study was designed to explore the communication and spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State.

Objectives of the Study

The following specific objectives guided the study

1. To determine the proportion of spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State
2. To determine the proportion of men who communicate family planning with their spouse in Rivers State
3. To examine the relationship between communication in family planning and spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State

Research Questions

1. What is the proportion of spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State?
2. What is the proportion of men who communicate family planning with their spouse in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between communication in family planning and spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

1. Communication in family planning is not a significant predictor of spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State ($p < 0.05$).

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study to explore communication and spousal contraceptive use among males in Rivers State. Descriptive research design is aimed at gathering information about a sampled population in their natural setting without manipulation by the researcher. This design is appropriate for the study and availed the researcher time to collect, describe and analysed a pool of data (Bryman, 2012). The appropriateness of the proposed design of the study was that it described characteristics of the respondents in their natural state as it relates to communication and spousal contraceptive use. Also that several other researchers had successfully adopted the design in related studies in various settings (Azmat, Ali, Ishaque, et al., (2015) Olawole-Isaac, Oni, Oladosu et al., 2017).

Population for the Study

The population for the study consisted of all males in Rivers State from 15years to 69years with a population of 2,239,399 (NPC, 2018).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for the study consisted of 576 men aged 15 years to 69years. The sample size was determined using EPI Info 7 Statistical package using the single proportion for descriptive surveys. Epi Info is statistical software for sample size determination among others developed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) for descriptive cross-sectional studies. The software has the following parameters for calculating sample size, 1) Population, 2) expected frequency of the behaviour based on previous studies, Confidence Interval and design effect. The following figures were inputted into the software to determine the minimum sample size: population size = 2,239,399; 25% for the proportion of men involved in family planning based on previous study (Peter-Kio and Inainko, 2014), 95% Confidence Interval, and a design effect of 2. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for the study comprising of clustered sampling technique, systematic sampling techniques, and simple random sampling techniques. The first stage clustered sampling of the State into the 3 senatorial zones (Rivers West, Rivers East and Rivers South-East. One (1) (Rivers West) was randomly selected using a simple random sampling technique. The second stage involved selection of three (3) LGAs in the Rivers West senatorial zones using systematic random sampling technique and balloting with replacement. The LGAs selected included: Asari-Toru, Akuku-Toru and Degema Local Government Areas. The third stage involved a simple random sampling technique with balloting without replacement to select 3 communities each from the three (3) LGAs and 200 samples from each of the communities.

Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire titled “communication and Spousal Contraceptive Use Questionnaire (CSCUQ)” was used for data collection with a reliability coefficient of 0.814. The instrument has 3 sections. Section A addressed socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B addressed communication on spousal contraceptive use, spousal contraceptive use and types of contraceptives used.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were entered and recoded in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 23. Data were analyzed using percentages, Pearson Contingency Coefficient “C” and binary logistic regression. Frequencies and percentages and Pearson contingency coefficient were used to answer research questions. The United Nation Population Department (UNDP) (2018) criterion for contraceptive use was used to measure spousal contraceptive use. In this criterion, a score of 75 per cent and above was considered high, less than or equals to 50 per cent as low while 51 per cent to 74 per cent as moderate. On spousal communication in family planning percentage was used. Pearson contingency coefficient was used to establish the relationship between communication and spousal contraceptive use. Pearson contingency coefficient is a reliability coefficient to analyze count data on a nominal scale. Pallant (2011) interpretation of the “C” value was employed. In the interpretation, scores ranging from .10-.29 was considered to have a low relationship, .30-.49 moderate relationship, .50-.99 high relationship and 1.0 perfect relationship. Binary logistic regression was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Percentage on Spousal Contraceptive Use

Spousal contraceptive use	Frequency	Percentage
Currently using contraceptives		
Yes	317	54.5
No	265	45.5
Contraceptive methods current used		
Coitus interruptus	55	17.3
Condom	144	45.3
Diaphragm	27	8.5
Oral contraceptives	45	14.2
Emergency contraceptive (Postinor)	37	11.6
Others	10	3.1

Table 1 shows the percentage of spousal contraceptive use. The result revealed that the majority (54.5%) of the study respondents spouses are currently using contraceptives. Out of which 45.3% are currently using

condom, 14.2% oral contraceptives, 11.6% emergency contraceptives (Positnor). Therefore spousal contraceptive use is 54.5% (Table 1).

Table 2: Spousal Communication on Contraceptive Use

Spousal communication	Frequency	Percentage
Communicated	397	68.2
Did not communicate	185	31.8

Table 2 reveals communication on spousal contraceptive use. The result of the study showed that the majority (68.2%) of the study respondents reported communicating contraceptive use with their spouse while 31.8% did not communicate with their spouse. This implies that men do communicate with their spouse on contraceptive use.

Table 3: Pearson Contingency Coefficient on Relationship between Communication and Spousal Contraceptive Use

Communication	Spousal contraceptive use		Total	C	Decision
	Yes	No			
Communicated	283(71.3)	114(28.7)	397(100.0)	.49	MR*
Did not communicate	35(18.9)	150(81.1)	185(100.0)		
Total	318(54.6)	263(45.4)	582(100.0)		

*MR= Moderate Relationship

Table 3 shows the relationship between communication on family planning and spousal contraceptive use. The result of the study showed that among those who had communicated family planning with spousal, 71.3% reported spousal contraceptive use while 18.9% of males who had, did not communicate family planning with spouse reported spousal contraceptive use. The result revealed a positive moderate relationship between communication on family planning and spousal contraceptive use among males.

Table 4: Logistic regression on the relationship between communication and spousal contraceptive use

	β	S.E	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio	95% CI for Odds Ratio	
							Lower	Upper
Did not communicate	Ref							
Communicate	2.36	.218	117.59	1	.000	10.64	6.93	16.31

Binary logistic regression was performed to the likelihood of communication of family planning and spousal contraceptive use. The predictor variable communication of family planning was statistically significant, $\chi^2(df=1, N=582)=146.27, p<0.05$ on bivariate analysis. Indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who reported spouse contraceptive use. Communication of family planning significantly predicted the likelihood of spousal contraceptive use ($p<0.05$), recording an odds ratio of 10.64. This indicated that males who communicated family planning were 10.64 times more likely to spousal contraceptive use compared to those who did not communicate. The result of the study also showed that an increase in communication of family planning will increase spousal contraceptive use ($\beta=2.36$).

Discussion

The result of the study indicates that spousal contraceptive use prevalence in this study was 54.5%. This implies that spousal contraceptive use was on the average and not optimal. This is worrisome because average spousal contraceptive use might lead to an increase in population that may not be sustainable in Nigeria with the current prevailing economic situation. Non-optimal use of contraceptive might also be attributable to a future increase in unwanted and unintended pregnancies, an increase in unsafe abortion which could lead to an increase in maternal morbidity and mortality. Secondly, non-optimal use of contraceptive could also lead to household food insecurity amid the prevailing economic situation in Nigeria. Although the prevalence of spousal contraceptive use in Rivers state is higher than the national prevalence of 17%, the finding is quite encouraging and had given hope to future contraceptive behaviour and could be attributable to increase media presence on family planning and free distribution of family planning commodities adopted by the State government.

The result of this study in Table 1 is comparable to the findings of Mustafa, Afreen and Hashmi (2008), Muema (2016) and of Hossain, Khan, Ababneh, et al. (2018) with contraceptive use rates of 53%, 54.7% and 54% respectively. However, the finding of this study is higher than the finding of Asakitikpi and Simbi (2015) on knowledge, attitude and practices regarding contraceptive use among female students in a private university in South Africa which indicated a contraceptive prevalence rate of 21.9%. The finding of the study differs from the findings of Achana, Bawah, Jackson et al. (2015) on spatial and socio-demographic determinants of contraceptive use in the Upper East region of Ghana which indicated a contraceptive prevalence rate of 13.0%. The finding of the study of Alemayehu, Lemma, Abrha, et al. (2016) on the Family planning use and associated factors among pastoralist community of afar region eastern Ethiopia also indicated a contraceptive prevalence rate of 8.5%. The finding of the study differed from the finding of Bifato (2016) on an assessment of male involvement in family planning use in Loka Abaya District, Southern Ethiopia which recorded a contraceptive prevalence rate of 22.0%. Also, the finding of the study differed from the finding of Medhanye, Desta, Alemayehu, et al. (2017) on factors associated with contraceptive use in Tigray, North Ethiopia which indicated a contraceptive prevalence of 35.6%. The finding of the study differ from the findings of Alemayehu, Fekadu, Yitaya et al. (2018) on prevalence and determinants of contraceptive utilization among married women at Dabat Health and Demographic surveillance system site, northwest Ethiopia which showed a contraceptive prevalence of 32.5%.

However, the finding of this study is lower than the finding of Nansseu, Nchinda, Katte, et al. (2015) on Assessing the knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning among women living in the Mbouda health district Cameroon were 65.3% prevalence was recorded. Also, the finding of the study is lower than the findings of Tekelab, Melka and Wirtu (2015) on predictors of modern contraceptive methods among married women of reproductive age groups in western Ethiopia which recorded prevalence of 71.9%.

Findings of studies on contraceptive use prevalence had been inconsistent and not optimal this is worrisome. These might lead to an increase in population that may not be sustainable. Inconsistencies might also be attributable to a future increase in unwanted and unintended pregnancies, an increase in unsafe abortion which could lead to an increase in maternal mortality. Secondly, inconsistencies found in the study could also lead to household food insecurity amid the prevailing economic situation in Nigeria.

The result of the study in Table 2 showed that a majority of the study respondents communicated family planning with their spouse. This finding is comparable to the finding of Iranu, Speizer and Fotso (2014) where a majority of the study respondents had discussed family planning with their spouse. The finding of the study is similarly in keeping with the finding Orach, Otim, Aporomon, Amone, Okello, Odongkaraabd, Komakech (2017) on perception, attitude and use of family planning services in post-conflict Gulu district, Northern Uganda where a majority had discussed family planning with their spouse.

The finding of the study further revealed that spousal communication significantly predicted spousal contraceptive use ($p < 0.05$). As spousal communication increases, contraceptive use also increases ($B = 2.365$). The finding of the study in line with the finding of Azmat, Ali, Ishaque, Mustafa, Hameed, Khan, Abbas, Temmerman, and Munroe (2015) on assessing predictors of contraceptive use and demand for family planning services in an underserved area of Punjab province, Pakistan. Sileo, Wanyenze, Luleet et al. (2015) on the determinant of family planning service uptake and use among postpartum women of rural Uganda, Muema (2016) on predictors of family planning service uptake among women of reproductive age in Moyale sub-county, Kenya, Bifato (2016) on the assessment of male involvement in family planning use in Loka Abaya, Southern Ethiopia, Medhanya, Desta, Alemayehu et al. (2017) on factors associated with contraceptive use in Tigray and Olawole-Isaac, Oni, Oladowu et al. (2017) on interpersonal communication as a determinant of contraceptive use in Nigeria where spousal communication predicted contraceptive use. Spousal communication plays a vital role in influencing fertility reduction role. This is so because most decisions on family planning are made jointly by a couple and partners in a relationship. No wonder Islam, Alam, and Hassan (2014) stressed that couple who discussed family planning were more likely to use contraceptive as there is mutual understanding and shared agreement on fertility preference of method choice. This implication of this on the health and welfare of the family cannot be overemphasized. Effective communication could increase bonding between couples, shared responsibility in fertility regulation hence reduction in the number of children that the family can take care of thereby increasing the effective use of family resources as they will only give birth to the number of the children the family resources can take care of.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Men communicate family planning with a spouse about spousal contraceptive use as reported by men was moderate. However, result of the study revealed that communication significantly predicted



spousal contraceptive use and that increased communication in family planning resulted in increased spousal contraceptive use.

Recommendations

1. Ministry of Health should adopt integrated strategies in the improvement of contraceptive use prevalence. For instance, integrating health promotion alongside the free distribution of family planning commodities in the communities
2. Policymakers should evaluate the implemented free contraceptive commodities in Rivers state to identify the gap in the distribution and use of contraceptive.
3. The Nollywood film producers and short play writers should in conjunction with Information, Education and Communication (IEC) specialist to write scripts, act dramas and short plays on spousal communication in family planning that will encourage communication and improve contraceptive use.

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