

Access and Utilization of Family Planning Services among Women in a Rural Community of Enugu state Nigeria, using a Descriptive Cross-sectional Design

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Abstract : Background: Family planning is one of the most cost-effective ways to prevent maternal, infant, and child mortality. It can decrease maternal mortality by reducing the number of unintended pregnancies, the number of abortions, and the proportion of births at high risk. It has been seen to improve the health and economic well-being of families and communities and ensures women's planned childbearing in order to achieve education and career goals which could raise family income thereby reducing poverty. The choice and use of a particular family planning method and their sources vary globally. Rural Communities often face significant challenges in accessing and utilizing family planning services. Aim: This study set out to assess Access and Utilization of Family Planning Services among Women of Reproductive Age in a Rural Community of Enugu state, Nigeria. Rural communities were chosen for this study because past demographic surveys have shown that women in urban areas are more likely to accept and practice family planning compared to those in rural areas. Method: A Descriptive Cross-sectional Research design was employed to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Data collected from 177 consenting participants using interviewer-administered questionnaires was analysed using Descriptive statistics to summarize the Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants and Access and Utilization of Family Planning Services among the participants including Reasons for using different Family Planning Methods and Barriers encountered in Access and Utilization of these services. A Cross-tabulation between Socio-demographic Characteristics of respondents and the use of Family Planning services was carried out. Result: The findings of this study revealed that majority of the participants (72.9%) have not utilized any family planning service. Out of those (27.1%) that have used any family planning service, majority of them are still currently using a form of family planning service and have access to them in health facilities, patent medicine vendors and others based on multiple responses. Male condoms were the most utilized modern family planning service. Based on multiple responses, inaccessibility, personal beliefs and partner's objection were the most identified barriers encountered in accessing family planning services. Conclusion: Access and uptake of family planning services in rural communities is lower than the national average. Increasing access to family planning is an urgent priority for rural areas Interventions that will scale up Access and Utilization of family planning services in rural communities should be intensified.

Keywords : access, family planning, rural community, utilization

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