

Determinants of Unmet Need for Contraception among Currently Married Women in Rural and Urban Communities of Osun State, South-West Nigeria

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Abstract : Introduction: Many women who are sexually active would prefer to avoid becoming pregnant but are not using any method of contraception. These women are considered to have an unmet need for contraception. In an ideal situation, all women who want to space or limit their births and are exposed to the risk of conception would use some kind of conception; in practice, however, some women fail to use contraception which put them at risk of having mistimed or unwanted births, induced abortion, or maternal death. This study, therefore, aimed to assess the determinants of unmet need for contraception among currently married women in rural and urban communities of Osun State, South-West Nigeria. Methods: This was an analytical cross-sectional comparative study, which was carried out among currently married women. Three hundred and twenty respondents each were selected for the rural and urban groups from four Local Government Areas using multi-stage sampling technique. Data were collected using a pre-tested semi-structured interviewer-administered questionnaire and focus group discussion (FGD) guide; data analysis was done with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 and detailed content analysis method respectively. Statistical analysis of the difference between proportions was done by the use of the Chi-square test and T-test was used to compare the means of the continuous variables. The study also utilized descriptive, bivariate and multivariate analytical techniques to examine the effect of some variables on unmet need. Level of statistical significance was set at p-value < 0.05 for all values. Results: Two hundred and ninety-six (92.5%) of the rural and 306 (95.6%) of the urban study population had heard of contraception, 365 (57.0 %) of the total respondents had good knowledge [162 (50.6 %) for rural respondents and 203 (63.4 %) for urban respondents]. This difference was statistically significant (p < 0.001). Five hundred and twenty-one (81.4%) respondents had a positive attitude towards contraception [243 (75.9%) in the rural and 278 (86.9%) in the urban area], and the difference was also statistically significant (p < 0.001). Only 47 (14.7%) and 59 (18.4%) of rural and urban women were current contraceptive users respectively. The total unmet need for contraception among rural women was 138 (43.1%) of which 82 (25.6%) was for spacing and 56 (17.5%), for limiting. While the total unmet need for contraception among urban women was 145 (45.3%) of which 96 (30.0%) was for spacing and 49 (15.3%) for limiting. Number of living children, knowledge of contraceptive methods, discussion with health workers about family planning, couples discussion about family planning and availability of family planning services were found to be predictors of women's unmet need for contraception (p < 0.05). Conclusion: It is, therefore, recommended that there is need to intensify reproductive health education in bridging the knowledge gap, improving attitude and modifying practices regarding use of contraception in Nigeria. Hence, this will help to enhance the utilization of family planning services among Nigerian women.

Keywords : contraception, married women, Nigeria, rural, urban, unmet need

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