

Conjugal Relationship and Reproductive Decision-Making among Couples in Southwest Nigeria

Authors : Peter Olasupo Ogunjuyigbe, Sarafa Shittu

Abstract : This paper emphasizes the relevance of conjugal relationship and spousal communication towards enhancing men's involvement in contraceptive use among the Yorubas of South Western Nigeria. An understanding of males influence and the role they play in reproductive decision making can throw better light on mechanisms through which egalitarianism of husband/wife decision making influences contraceptive use. The objective of this study was to investigate how close conjugal relationships can be a good indicator of joint decision making among couples using data derived from a survey conducted in three states of South Western Nigeria. The study sample consisted of five hundred and twenty one (521) male respondents aged 15-59 years and five hundred and forty seven (547) female respondents aged 15-49 years. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to elicit information from the respondents. In order that the study would be truly representative of the towns, each of the study locations in the capital cities was divided into four strata: The traditional area, the migrant area, the mixed area (i.e. traditional and migrant), and the elite area. In the rural areas, selection of the respondents was by simple random sampling technique. However, the random selection was made in such a way that all the different parts of the locations were represented. Generally, the data collected were analysed at univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels. Logistic regression models were employed to examine the interrelationships between male reproductive behaviour, conjugal relationship and contraceptive use. The study indicates that current use of contraceptive is high among this major ethnic group in Nigeria because of the improved level of communication among couples. The problem, however, is that men still have lower exposure rate when it comes to question of family planning information, education and counseling. This has serious implications on fertility regulation in Nigeria.

Keywords : behavior, conjugal, communication, counseling, spouse

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