

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY PLANNING AND POPULATION GROWTH IN LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between family planning and population growth in Lagos state. The study sort to know if the use of family planning could reduce population growth since one of the dynamic nature of population is birth rate. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The instrument used was a questionnaire which comprised of 50 items on family planning and population growth while the population consisted all married people in Lagos state. The sample was made up of 519 selected through stratified sample. One research question was raised and one hypothesis was generated to guide the study. This was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed that many married people had a favourable attitude to family planning. Also, there was a low relationship between family planning, child spacing and size of the family. Based on the findings, it was recommended that married people should adopt family planning methods as a means of controlling birth rate which could reduce population growth. Also, Government should put up enlightenment programmes that could aid couples to see the need for family so as to enhance better development of the Nation.

Keywords: Family planning, population growth, child spacing, size of the family.

INTRODUCTION

Family planning is an organized effort to assist people to have the number of children they want and to space them as they choose or want to. According to WHO (2015), family planning allows people to attain their desired number of children and determine the spacing of pregnancies. It is the key to slowing unsustainable population growth and the resulting negative impacts on the economy, environment and national and regional development efforts. Page (2013) also sees family planning as the means of controlling if, when and how many children to have. As observed by him, through family planning, couples and individuals may make decisions based on health and the economy that are best for them and their families. Osakinle (2010) in her own opinion believes that family planning helps women to prevent unwanted pregnancies, limit the number of children which will bring healthy reproductive living and healthy sexual relationships among them without fear of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Alade (2004) in her own submission agrees that if couples must enjoy sexual satisfaction, family planning must be put in place to avoid unwanted pregnancies that could lead to abortion and over population. Ikulayo (2003) remarks that if children are spaced between two and two years, the health and welfare of each child as well as that of the mother could be well catered for and managed effectively.

Smith, Ashford, Gribble and Clifton (2009) affirm that family planning increases survival, improves the health of millions of people and helps achieve national goals. According to

them, Governments around the world are focused on combating poverty and achieving a range of health and development goals, such as those outlined in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the same vein, "Return of the population Growth factor" (2007) affirms that family planning can contribute to nearly all of those goals, including reducing poverty and hunger, promoting gender equity and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving material health, combating HIV/AIDS, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Family is the basic unit of the community and of reproduction. In other words, child spacing and family size could contribute significantly to population growth. If married people do not space the children they give birth to, the implication is positive population growth and increase in the size of the family which invariably could take a toll on the health of the mothers and children. The level of fertility according to Aina (2008) is a universally accepted demographic indicator of development because a high level of fertility is a manifestation of poverty and underdevelopment in population growth. Therefore, fertility exerts its effect on development indirectly through its tremendous impact on population dynamics.

Population growth is change in size of the population. It is the increase in the number of individuals in a population. The population growth rate is the rate at which the number of individuals in a population increases in a given time period as a fraction of the initial population. (Wikipedia, 2015). Population growth is a long – term increase in the total number of persons living in an area and this could be due to a situation in which the number of births persistently exceeds that of deaths (Aina, 2008). This is a pointer to the fact that population can never be a static one but rather dynamic. The dynamic nature of population according to her is usually determined by a number of factors which include birth and death rates, migration, social, economic, political and religion factors. These variables could determine the population of any country or city.

Commenting on family planning and population growth, Achem (2015) affirmed that adopting effective family methods nationwide would help to grow the country's economy and enhance development. According to him, it will aid proper planning for future generations. He said men should have the interest of their families at heart by planning how many children they intend to have and advised couples to visit specialized doctors and health centres to educate them on how to space their children.

Family planning is a process of controlling the number of children among couples, therefore the national population could be influenced largely by the individual family's reproductive behavior. It is against this background that the researchers are interested in finding out the relationship between family planning and population growth in Lagos. Lagos state is chosen for this study because it is the most populous city in Nigeria, the largest and second fastest growing city in Africa and 7th in the world (Wikipedia, 2015). Since one of the dynamic nature of population is birth rate, therefore, the researchers tried to find out if the use of family planning could reduce population growth in Lagos state based on the growing rate of the state.

One research question was raised and one hypothesis generated to guide the study.

Research Question

What is the attitude of married people in Lagos State towards family planning?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship among family planning, child spacing and size of the family of married people in Lagos State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between family planning and population growth among married people in Lagos state. Variables like child spacing and family size were looked into under the population growth and family planning.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. This was necessary because it observes and reports state of affairs as they occur. The population consisted all the married people in Lagos state. The samples were made up of 519 respondents selected from churches, mosque, hospitals and local government offices through stratified sampling technique.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire used for the study was designed by the researchers. It consisted 2 sections; A&B. section 'A' contained personal data of the respondents while section 'B' had 40 items on various factors of family planning and population growth. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Guidance and Counseling and Psychologists. Test re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and reliability coefficient of 0.77 was obtained which was found to be adequate for the study.

Data Analysis

Simple percentage and correlation matrix were used to analyse the data. The hypothesis was tested at 0.5 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study were presented below:

What is the attitude of married people in Lagos State towards family planning?

Table 1: Attitude of married people to family planning

| Family planning | Positive | | Negative | |
|----------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|
| Attitude towards Family Planning | N | % | N | % |
| | 314 | 60.5 | 205 | 39.5 |

Table 1 shows 314 (60.5%) of the respondents had positive attitude to family planning while 205 (39.5) had negative attitude to it.

Research hypothesis

There is no significant relationship among family planning, child spacing and size of the family of married people in Lagos State.

Table 2: Correlation matrix of family planning, child spacing and size of the family.

| | Family Planning | Child Spacing | Size of the family |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Family Planning | 1.00 | | |
| Child Spacing | 0.353* | 1.00 | |
| Size of the family | 0.348* | 0.239* | 1.00 |

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 2 shows significant relationship among family planning, child spacing and size of the family.

DISCUSSION

From the descriptive analysis, it shows many married people in Lagos had positive attitude to family planning. This could be due to the level of awareness that people have about family planning in recent years and the advantage it potends for their families. WHO (2015) affirmed that family planning allows people to attain their desired number of children and determine the spacing of pregnancies. Also Osakinle (2010) in her own opinion believes that family planning helps women to prevent unwanted pregnancies, limit the number of children which will bring healthy reproductive living and healthy sexual relationships among them without fear of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Ikulayo (2003) remarks that if children are spaced between two and two years, the health and welfare of each child as well as that of the mother could be well catered for and managed effectively.

Also, the hypothesis revealed that relatively low positive relationship exists among family planning, child spacing and size of the family. This finding is in line with that of Achem (2015), who believes that adopting effective family methods nationwide would help to grow the country's economy and enhance development. According to him, it will aid proper planning for future generations. Ashford, Gribble and Clifton (2009) corroborate this. They affirm that family planning increases survival, improves the health of millions of people and helps achieve national goals. On the other hand, the relationship was low and this could be due to the fact that other factors like migration, death rate, urban area and so on are contributory factors to population growth, not only child spacing and size of the family.

CONCLUSION

From the findings, it was revealed that the attitude of married people in Lagos state was positive and that a relationship was established between family planning and population growth based on the variables of child spacing and size of the family. However, the relationship among them was low.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that more married people should adopt family planning methods as a means of controlling birth rate which could reduce population growth. Also, Government should put up more enlightenment programmes that could aid couples to see the need for family planning so as to enhance better development of the Nation.

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