

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background to the Study

The practice of contraception is old as human existence. Ancient writings noted on the Leahun Papyrus (1800 BCE) that the old Egyptians practice contraception by using a vaginal pessary of crocodile dung and fermented dough which may create an hostile environment for sperm.

During the early second century in Rome, Soranus of Ephesus created a highly acidic concoction of fruits, nuts and wool that was placed at the cervical OS to create a spermicidal barrier (Wikipedia.com, 2010).

Over the years, issues related to sexuality and contraception, have been taken with great reservation by Nigerians, as a result of increase in sexual expressions and experimentation among adolescents. Studies conducted among female students in Nigeria indicate an overall awareness rate of 70.9%. Among sexually exposed students, there was contraceptive usage rate of 40.1% and an unwanted pregnancy rate of 30.5% (Adinma and Okeke, 1995).

Most adolescents who are sexually active and do not use contraceptive face the increasing risks of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions. Induced abortion currently accounts for 20,000 of the estimated 50,000 of maternal death occur in Nigeria each year (Akingba, 1977; Okonfua and Liunok, 1992).

Many unwanted pregnancies by adolescents arise out of ignorance, because they receive inadequate education on sexual and reproductive health, and the source of information available on contraception are often dubious, unreliable and misleading because the information is less motivated by healthcare providers than their peers. The 1990 Demographic and Health Survey indicated that only 11% of sexually active women age 15 – 19 ever used any modern contraceptive methods.

The utilization of modern methods of contraceptive has always been shown to be poor among Nigerian adolescents. Studies from Western and Southern Nigeria have found the rates of contraceptive use among sexually active adolescents to be about 30% (Arowaju, Adekunle, Okpani and Okpani, 2000).

Although, societal and cultural inhabitation has been a great influence on the use of contraceptive, among adolescents because the use of contraceptive had been the prerogative of married women and adults in most African societies.

Fueye, Castle and Konate (2001) indicated that previously in many African societies, sexual information among adolescents is seen as sexual taboo. In general, the voluntary control of fertility is a

paramount importance to a reproductive health of a woman, which can be essential to her ability to achieve her sense of well-being. The use of contraceptive to prevent unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion is especially important (Nuleo and Pool, 1997; Adedoyin and Adejoke, 1995; and Oladepo and Brieger, 1994).

Furthermore, contraceptive use among sexually active adolescents would be very important, since it saves them from high risk of unwanted pregnancies, embarrassment and disgrace. Although, there are some constraints that may affect the use of contraceptives. It is this premise that this present study seeks to examine the level of acceptance of contraceptive use among female students of University of Benin, Benin City.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The promotion of effective contraceptive use among female students of University of Benin is very important, if their reproductive health is to be improved, because many female students are oblivious of the adverse health consequences of ineffective contraceptives.

It should be noted that despite the wide knowledge and campaign about the use of some contraceptives such as condom, most female students still dislike such use, therefore, exposing themselves to unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions.

### **Research Questions**

The study will therefore provide answer to the following questions:

1. What proportion of female University of Benin Students use contraceptives?
2. What are the commonly methods of contraceptives used among female students of University of Benin?
3. What are the constraints to the use of contraceptives among female students of University of Benin?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the use of contraceptives among the female students of University of Benin, Benin City. To identify common contraception and constraints to the use of contraception among the students.

### **Significance of Study**

Over the years, the rate of contraceptive use among adolescents is low, because contraceptive use has been the prerogative of married women, therefore, leaving the youngsters to face the high risks of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions.

The study will help the curriculum planners to know the level of knowledge of contraception among

adolescents, thus, the issues on pregnancy, contraceptive use should be a major part of educational programmes designed for students. Discussions regarding methods of contraceptive must be acknowledged and accurate information should be available to match the methods with specified choice.

This study will also help students to understand the benefits and limitations of the various contraceptive methods and to also know that efficacy of any contraceptive method can be impaired if they have access to health care professionals who will give them appropriate education on contraception.

### **Delimitations**

This study was carried out among female students residing in the halls of residence in Ugbowo Campus of the University of Benin, Benin City.

### **Limitations**

The major limitation to the study was that some female students were reluctant and hesitant to give correct answers to questions particularly when sex and contraceptives are sensitive issues. And some were not willing to talk about their sexual lives. Thus, which adversely affected the authenticity and accuracy of the information on this study.

### **Definition of Terms**

1. **Fertile Period:** This is the time when contraception can occur and one might likely to become pregnant.
2. **Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR):** A measure of extent of contraceptives use among a defined population group at a point in time.
3. **Sexuality:** Sexuality is the development of sexual attitude and practices that creates room for sexual intimate relationship.

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