

RELEVANCE OF BIRTH CONTROL MEASURES IN CHECKING RAPID POPULATION GROWTH IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF EBONYI STATE

Aja Boniface Nwankpuma
Department Of Political Science
Ebonyi State College Of Education
Ikwo
Gsm: 07033571204

Abstract

This study investigates the relevance of birth control measures in checking rapid population growth in Nigeria, focusing on Ebonyi State. The problem lies in the alarming rate of population growth, which strains resources, exacerbates poverty, and hinders sustainable development. The objective of the study is to examine the awareness and utilization of birth control measures among residents of Ebonyi State. To investigate the factors influencing the adoption of birth control measures. And to assess the impact of birth control measures on population growth rates. This study employs a quantitative survey method to gather data from a representative sample of Ebonyi State residents. Findings from the revealed that despite awareness of birth control measures, utilization rates remain low due to cultural, social, and economic barriers. The findings suggest that increasing access to birth control measures, particularly in rural areas, can contribute to reducing population growth rates. The study recommended among other things an improve access to birth control measures, particularly in rural areas and implementation of targeted awareness campaigns to address cultural and social barriers. The study concluded that birth control measures are essential for checking rapid population growth in Nigeria, particularly in Ebonyi State. By addressing the barriers to access and utilization, policymakers can promote sustainable development and improve the quality of life for residents.

Key Words: Birth Control, Population Growth, Family Planning, Demographic Transition Theory, Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

The inhabitants of Ebonyi State are predominantly farmers in both practiced on subsistence and commercial levels.

The 1991 population census gave the Nigeria population as one hundred and Eight Millions, Seventy Six Thousand. (108,076,000).

On the basis of this population of Ebonyi State was estimated to be over 400,000. When it is estimated that the population of development countries grow by about 2.5% annually. This shows that the population of the state as at this year 2010 should be 460,000. Against this background, there had been arisen various measure and Ebonyi State is not an exception.

The problem now is how to determine the extent to which people accept the idea of birth control as a means of checking rapid population growth and to the separation of probable limiting factors against an individual's acceptance of birth control.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Nigerian are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that social and economic development are greatly influenced by several factors. These factors include inter alias.

Magnitude of knowledge, the utilization economic resources, the size, structure and growth rate of population and prospect for employment. This is a pointer to the fact that population variables such as fertility, mort ability and migration are essentially in economic and social development planning. The problem now is how to determine the extent to which people accept the idea of birth control as relevance in checking rapid population growth and to separate probable limiting factor against an individual acceptance of birth control.

Because our fathers and mothers mostly in Ebonyi live in rural areas and as a result they are not developed both socially and academically, they do not understand what is meant by birth control. But because our people are mostly illiterates, they therefore need to be birth control. Many will begin to feel that how one limit the number of children he/she will born whereas he did not know the number that will die or that will not die.

Some do reason and strongly believe that giving birth to many children is a source of respect and prestige to the family whom the child is been born. Even in our society both Christian and pagans are against the idea of birth control.

Because in this case the Christian who has agreed to marry one wife may be trying all his possibility and maximum of ten children at the minimum of ten children. And when planning this they did not know that there would be a time the problem of their children will exceed their available output.

And in a family where this exists, there will be no amount of government credit or poverty eradication programme that can stop or sustain such family from experience such economic and social hardship. And in due course these problems will arise:

- Famine
- Low level of income
- Over population
- Insufficient manpower development
- High rate of crime (i.e vicarious circle of poverty). Still these things are existing but as a result of high rate of illiterate to the extent that is any one happens to approach them with the idea of birth control the person who brought the idea of birth control the idea would be regarded as a poison in the society.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study here is aimed at:

1. Finding out the extent to which people accept the idea of the use of birth control as relevance in checking rapid population growth.
2. Finding out the birth control measures acceptable to most people in Ebonyi State.
3. Finding out probable limiting factors to the individuals acceptance of birth control

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that the study will create awareness in the mind of the government, the mass media and individuals. When this awareness is created, they will proceed to organize campaigns, workshop, and seminars etc. at the grass root level to educate the rural population on the need for birth control.

This becomes pertinent in view of present austere period of the economy.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is concentrated on communities within Ebonyi State in other words, to do otherwise would be outside the scope of the study. What the study consider is how to limit those factors affecting birth control measures. The study therefore, covers the relevance of birth control measures in checking rapid population growth.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The following research hypothesis will be tested in the course of this study

1. The birth control methods that are acceptable to most people are the use of contraceptives.
2. Birth rate is likely to fall with an increase in the education of women in the rural areas.
3. Family preference over male as opposed to female children affects the demand for children.
4. Mothers should be encouraged to raise an average number of five children.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the followings:

Research design, population of study, sampling techniques, instruction for data collection, validity, reliability, procedure for data collection and method of data analysis,

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is designed to investigate the extent to which people accept the idea of birth control measure. The researcher adopted a descriptive design, which aims at collecting data and describing them in systematic manner in relation to the characteristics of given population.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study focuses on the Local Government Areas in Ebonyi State. This is because the greater part of the people of the state do not understand the idea of birth control measure.

<https://ebscoeijer.org/>

SAMPLE AND SAMPLEING TECHNIQUES

Sample random sampling was employed in this study. The names of all the Local Government Areas were written on piece of paper and folded to pick thirteen Local Government Areas in Ebonyi State were selected to be visited and in each Local, ten Local Government Areas were randomly picked which include. (1) Ebonyi (2) Abakaliki (3) Izzi (4) Ezza South (5) Ezza North (6) Afikpo North (7) Ikwo (8) Ohaozara (9) Ishielu and (10) Ivo.

Table: Distribution of Local government Areas and sample use for the Acceptance of birth control measure.

The names of the Ten Local Government Areas and people totally selected as a sample of the study in Ebonyi State

S/N	NAME OF LGA	MALES	FEMALE	TOTAL	SAMPLE SELECTED
1.	Ebonyi	50	60	112	
2.	Abakaliki	50	80	140	
3.	Izzi	50	85	130	
4.	Ezza South	65	90	120	
5.	Ezza North	70	80	110	
6.	Afikpo North	75	85	115	
7.	Ikwo	55	70	145	
8.	Ohaozara	45	95	150	
9.	Ishielu	65	100	110	
10.	Ivo	70	90	120	

In the above, out of the ten LGA Ebonyi State only were chosen for the study. In each of 40 people were selected. The 40 selected were made up of the people who had were the knowledge of birth control measure and those who did not have the knowledge of birth control measures. Then out of the 40 persons, 16 people had the knowledge of birth control measure and 24 had no knowledge of birth control measures. Out of the 16 people, 7 were adult male, while 9 were adult females. In the five chosen communities 200 were interviewed.

INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

The instrument used for the study is questionnaire and it covers mostly the areas in the communities where people show their responses toward the acceptance of birth control measures.

VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENT

In order to validate the instrument for data collection, the questionnaire was constructed in relation to the research question. This is designed to help in order to achieve the objectives.

The supervisor looked into the possibility of the questionnaire being adequate to achieved to achieve the aims and objectives. Some of the item that were not appropriate were connected and his suggestions were included in the final draft of the questionnaires

RELIABILITY

In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument for the study, a test and retest procedure was used. The instrument (questionnaire) was submitted to the supervisor who assessed the instrument and confirmed its reliability as it measure what it set out to measure it was used for the first and second time, while the objective was achieved in high measures.

PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

This data is obtained through use of questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the communities visited and their responses were collected after filling them. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The analysis was done on the bases of the question that guided the study. The research questions were analyzed using data collection from four point rating scale responses.

The mean of the responses was calculated using the stated rating scale.

4 points for strongly agree.

3 points for agree.

2 points for disagree.

1 point for strongly disagree.

The mean was computed using the formula.

$$X = \frac{\sum RN}{N}$$

Where R is the rating scale for each opinion and taking the average of computed number of persons responding to each opinion. The mean of means was also calculated for each research question. The acceptable level of mean is 2.5 or above that, while any mean that is not up to that is reject.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF DATE

This chapter presents the analysis and the result of the study. The data were presented according to the order of the research hypothesis.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

<https://ebscoeijer.org/>

Birth control that is acceptable to most people is the use of contraceptive.

The data collection with respect to research hypothesis one were analyzed descriptively and finding reported on table one.

TABLE ONE: RESPONDANTS: Observation on the relevance of birth control measure and how it is used.

SN	ITEMS	F	SA	A	D	SD	X	DECISION
1.	Birth control method that is acceptable to most people is the use of contraceptive.	200	21	38	78	60	2.1	rejected
2.	Do people mostly accept the idea of birth control measure?	200	21	50	60	74	2.1	rejected
3.	Most people practice birth control because it serves as a prestige and respect	200	21	50	60	74	2.1	rejected
4.	People should adopt method of birth control in order to promote the standard of our living	200	23	38	82	58	2.8	rejected

5.	The use of birth control should be taken to only the educated people	200	21	38	78	60	2.1	rejected
	Mean of means						2.2	

This study identified 5 items associated with the birth control measure in Ebonyi State.

Four items were unacceptable by the criterion measures, while one accepted.

RESEACH HYPOTHESIS TWO

What should be done to birth control measure so that the people from rural area shall accept it as an important practice in Ebonyi State?

The data collection with respect to research questions, two were analyzed descriptively and results were reported on table two below.

TABLE TWO: Responeded opinion on various suggestions to make birth control measure acceptable to the people in rural area in Ebonyi State.

SN	ITEMS	F	SA	A	D	SD	X	DECISION
1.	Birth control is likely to fall with an increase in the education of women in the rural areas.	200	80	59	21	40	2.9	rejected
2.	The only factor that can effect birth rate is death	200	21	38	78	60	2.1	rejected
3.	The decrease in birth rate increase our income level							

		200	74	59	64	28	3.2	rejected
4.	The high rate of birth in our societies leads to famine and low saving	200	72	50	21	40	2.6	rejected
5.	The traditional birth control or family planning measures are still adhered to by people because modern birth control is relatively expensive to finance,	200	80	60	29	21	2.9	rejected
	Mean of means						2.7	

This study identified things worth doing if birth control should be adequate used and make some accepted to people.

As shown on table two and guided by the criterion measure out of the items used in the investigation only one was rejected and 4 were accepted according to responding to respondent opinion.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS THREE

Family reference over male as opposed to female children affects the demand for children.

The result of the data collected with respect to research question three were analyzed descriptively and findings were reported on table three.

TABLE THREE: Respondent opinion in relation to the family preference over male and its effect on demand for children.

SN	ITEMS	F	SA	A	D	SD	X	DECISION
1.	Family preference over males as opposed to female, children affect the demand for children	200	72	50	21	40	2.6	accepted
2.	Population of any country is likely to increase if there is early marriages	200	80	59	21	40	2.9	accepted
3.	With an increase in family income parents tend to substitute child quality for quantity investing in more educated children	200	82	60	45	20	3.1	accepted
4.	The birth control measure which the native doctor or herbalist uses herbs and plant to control fertility produces desired effects	200	68	54	30	25	2.6	accepted
5.	The expanded public health programme and better nutrition status for both parent parents and child helps to increase population							

		200	80	60	25	21	2.9	accepted
	Mean of means						2.8	

This study identified 5 items, which according to the respondent opinion in relation to research questions it had proved that all the items used accepted because both the Christians and pagans adopted the practice.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS FOUR

Mothers should be encouraged to raise an average size of 1 – 4 children.

The data collected with respected to research question four were analyzed and result obtained were reported on table four.

SN	ITEMS	F	SA	A	D	SD	X	DECISION
1.	Mothers should be encourage to raise an average size of 1-4 children.	200	70	62	59	45	3.1	accepted
2.	The population of Nigeria is moving at the same pace with her economic development.	200	80	60	25	21	2.9	accepted
3.	Various debate on birth control have not produced a desired result because government have not made is issue of concern.	200	21	50	60	74	2.1	accepted

4.	The spacing of pregnancies ensure the health of child and mother	200	80	59	21	40	2.9	accepted
5.	The fertility level of our women could be reduced through breast feeding for longer period say at least three years.	200	72	50	21	40	2.6	accepted
	Mean of means						2.7	

This study identified 5 items associated with the encouragement of mothers to raise a given number of children in the rural area. As shown on table four and guided by the criterion measure, 4 out of the items were accepted and one was rejected according to the respondent opinions.

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

DISCUSSION

The study is designed to investigate the relevance of birth control measure in checking rapid population growth in Nigeria. A case study of Ebonyi State. The remedial approach to the birth control acceptable in all and sundry in Ebonyi State. This is considered due to the problems created in Ebonyi State by birth control measure. The problem ranges from the limiting number of children one can have while he/she could not know who will survive, limiting pressing and respect the family could enjoy if the population grows much labourably by the family. The effect is that society is unstable society, as they cannot practice birth control method for the sake of the economic, social and political development of our societies.

In the first place, it was necessary to identify that it is how the primitive and rural people see birth control measure that made some families reject it as contained in research question one.

The findings as presented on table one shows a mean of

2.2 meaning that, the respondents rejected the birth control method in such way that most people refuse to be part of it. 5 items were used in testing this 4 items were rejected and one is accepted. It is not very important to mention that the people in Ebonyi State both the Christians and pagans do not use birth control on regular basis. From the respondent opinion above the research question one with mean of 2.1, item two, item three and item four. All these items question had the mean of 2.1 showing that the respondents are not conversant with the idea of birth control method secondly, the reason why reason most people refuse to accept birth control is that it reduces the number of children one could have.

In the second place, research question two concentrated on the remedial approach in making birth control acceptable to people four items out 5 items were accepted and one was rejected. The items has it in mind that birth rate would fall if the education of women increases and it has that affects birth rate is death rate is not the only factor that affect birth rate, because we still have other factors such as famine, war emigration and what have you.

The item three of it opines that the decrease in birth rate increase the income level and it is accepted with the mean of

3.2. The item four say that the high rate of birth in our societies lead to famine and low savings, this is very true and that is why it is accepted with the mean of 2.6.

The fifth is accepted with mean of 2.6. that the traditional birth or family planning measure are still adhere to people as a result of modern birth control. In the third place the research question three, five items used in testing the suggested approach were all accepted. The first item, which suggested that the family preference over male as opposed to female children affect the demand, was accepted with a mean of 2.6 because traditional, Ebonyi people place emphasis on male that is male that would replace them after their death and take over their compound and inherit their death and take over their compound and inherit their wealth. Anything short of this is curse. The second item had it that there are population of any country is likely to increase if there are early marriage, this is true and was accepted with a man of 2.9 because people mostly in Ebonyi State do not wait and marry in due course and that is why if they marry too earlier, they will begin at that point to give birth and that is why population of any country increase. The third item stated that with an increase in family income parents tend to substitute child quality for quantity investing in more education of children, with this the respondents show it that if it is true and accepted with a mean of 3.1 because most parents like educating their children rather than holding or investing money in business. The fourth item says that

birth control measure by which native doctors or herbalist plan to control fertility level in women could easily be achieve.

The fifth item was accepted with a mean of 2.9 that the expanded public health programme and better nutrition for both parent and child help to increase population in research question four. Our of the five item used in testing the suggested approach, 4 were accepted and one was rejected. The item one says that mothers should be encourage to raise an average size of 1-4 children. This was accepted with a mean of 3.1 because parents could enjoy with what they have if they would reduce the number of their children from 1-4. The item two stated that the population of Nigeria is moving at the same pace with economic, social development, this is accepted with a mean of debate on birth control has made it an issue of concern. This rejected with a mean of 2.1 because government to limit the number of children on could have but it is the responsibility of the parent to decide it.

The fourth item, the spacing of pregnancies ensures the safety of the child and the mother and it was accepted with a mean of 2.9 because the pregnant women suppose to space their pregnancies for the safety of their children that the production age range between 17 to 45 years in female. Early marriage contracted at 15 years gives greater chance for producing more children than marriage contracted at 30 years of age.

The fifth item suggest that the fertility level of our women could be reduced through the breast-feeding for longer period at least three years and this is accepted with a mean of 2.6

SUMMARY

The birth control methods that are acceptable to most people are the use of contraceptive. The questionnaire conducted has proved this it is rather unfortunate that a greater percentage of the populations do not have the contraceptive knowledge application and practice.

According to Encyclopedia Americana (1979r vol 4 p. 4), this has intended to make parents more comfortable with an average of 1-4 children. The inadequate or complete lack of basis education of male vis-à-vis female children as limiting factor to an individual acceptance of birth control.

CONCLUSION

The reason for this research work is to investigate the adoption of birth control in Ebonyi that is how the people of Ebonyi see the effect of birth control measure that makes to be unacceptable to most of them both Christian and pagans.

To conclude, people mostly living in the rural areas rejected birth control because:

- i. It reduces the actual number of birth one can have.
- ii. It reduces prestige and respect to the family.
- iii. High rate of labour is experienced by the family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Various governments should recommend the following area of birth control measure Ebonyi State for further research work.

- i. The acceptance of birth control measure in Ebonyi State
- ii. The effects of birth control on people (i.e) both the Christians and pagans in the rural areas.
- iii. The improvement of birth control among the elites of Ebonyi State.

REFERENCES

- Agbugbaeruleke, A. Parents and 1986 Budget. Nigeria statement (Enugu), 23 January 1986 p.5.
- Ajiyi, O. Limiting family size. Time international (Ibadan), 6-12 May, 1985 p.17.
- Collins, C. (1977), population Growth and land use. London: Macmillan Ltd.
- Kirk, I. (1973), Factor Affecting Moslem Nativity. London McGraw.
- Berelson, et al (1967) family planning and population and population programme. Chicago: University of Chicago press.
- Mabagunje, A. L (1972), Urban Land Policy And population in Nigeria. Heineman Educational Book Limited. London: Ominde S. H.
- Obi, L "Nigeria. Abortion Debate" in concord weekly (Ibadan), 4 March 1985 p. 4.
- Lawal, O. A. (1982), population problems. Nigeria: First published by Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.
- Olaloku, F.A et al (1979), structure of Nigerian Economic. London and Basing Stoke, Macmillan Press Limited.
- Olusaya, P.O. (1970), Rural Fertility Differential in western Nigeria: Ibadan University press.
- Piere, P. Family planning programme in Africa. A paper presented at expert group meeting held at the Development Centre, (Enugu) 6-8 April 1970 p. 17.
- Freedman, R. The Transition Low High to Low Fertility, Challenge To Demographers population index (London) 3-4 October 1965 p. 417.
- Tadaro. M P. (1977), Economic For a Developing, London: Longman Group Limited.
- Umoh, E, O. (1972) Demographer's Static's in Nigeria Fed. In Ominde S. H. and Ejiogu C.N population Growth and Economic Development in Africa. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Limited.