

Radio Programmes Influence and Public Response to Birth Control Practice in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined the role of radio in the campaign on birth control in Delta State. Through purposive sampling of 60 study participants it was established that the radio has been influential and quite effective in the campaign on birth control in Delta State. Though the rate of compliance is relatively commendable, certain factors, especially in rural area, which include the people's level of education, perception, sociocultural factor, as well as the issue of misinformation about the practice, have affected the high rate of compliance in the State. The study therefore recommends that there should be frequent and proper radio programmes induced enlightenment about birth control, mostly in rural area where there is high level of reproduction, and misinformation about radio campaign on birth control.*

KEYWORDS: Radio, birth control, population growth, culture, compliance, religious beliefs and myths

INTRODUCTION

Birth control has become key to women's reproductive life as it empowers them to plan and contribute to societal development. The increase in planned and unplanned birth has cause rapid growth in population, which has continued to raise concern, globally. While Chan, Sawangdee, Pattaravanich, Umaporn, Charamporn & Aphichat (2020) all attribute lingering strife and conflicts to continual growth in population, due to struggle over limited space and resources, Bish (2020)

attests that the persistent growth in population stands as a threat to both the security and prosperity of a nation. Gupta, Katende and Bessinge, (2003) all assert that increase in population growth does not only decrease life expectancy, but limit the rate of education, impoverish healthcare system and impede on development. Blum (2007) explains that sub Sahara Africa, with a fertility rate of 4.6%, has been found to be one of the major causes in the spike of global population. This spike was linked to misconception and ignorance towards birth control, which has led to its low use (Ugboaja, Oguejiofor, Oranu and Igwegbe, 2018).

With a population of 216.7 million, Nigeria has been ranked the highest populated country in Africa. The country's population has been estimated to double in the next 25 years as 63% of the country's population is made up of young people who are less than 25 years of age, and are reluctant to utilize birth control (Nigeria finders, 2021). World Health Organisation (2017) however, recommends the use of birth control, as a means to regulate the growing population in Africa. Birth control which describes the practice of using any medically approved measures to prevent pregnancy, has been largely linked to societal development. Sohn (2020) attests that birth control does not only help girls to stay longer in school, pursue a career and take up paid jobs, but give them the understanding to invest in the health and education of the children they chose to have. Shoup (2011) submits that the practice of birth control promote societal development as it enables women to hold sensitive managerial position, improve on societal norms, increase strategic coordination and accountability for reproductive health, and also encourage increase demand for family planning.

Realizing the benefits that comes with the practice of birth control, strategies, such as the radio, a channel of mass media which has the ability to simultaneously reach out to people who are heterogeneously located, have been found relevant in promoting campaign, capable of influencing people in matters concerning birth control (Wakefield, Loken, & Hornik, 2010). In recognition of this, both governmental and non-governmental organizations have continued to use the radio for the campaign of birth control and family planning. The two national multimedia communication on family planning and birth control campaign that was launched in Nigeria, during the 90s, is an example of radio campaign geared towards the utilization of birth control. This campaign which was carried out during the Ibrahim Babangida's regime, a one-time military ruler in Nigeria, brought about the popular "four children to a family" slogan on family planning. The two national multimedia communication that targeted married and unmarried people who falls within reproductive age, was simultaneously executed to promote awareness and benefits associated with birth control. Though both campaign made use of more than 1 million pieces of printed materials which include billboards, posters and pamphlets, it was observed however, that Public Service Announcement (PSA) Campaign broadcast on radio became more effective (Kiragu, Krenn, Kusemiju, Ajiboye, Chidi, and Kalu, 1996). In agreement with Kiragu et al (1996), Alemayehu, Fekadu, and Yitayal (2018) write that radio phone-in programme and short advert on family planning has become excellent vehicle for maximum interactivity and audience-driven content which drive home messages on birth control. Similar, the John Hopkins Center for Communication Programme that launched The Challenge Initiative (TCI), a programme built on the success of

Nigerian Urban Reproductive Health Initiatives, since 2017, has collaborated with five States in Nigeria - Bauchi, Delta, Kano, Niger and Ogun States - to further the campaign of birth control (Desmond, 2021). These are among other example of governmental and non governmental efforts to ensure that the practice is utilized.

In as much as the campaign of birth control is not new in Nigeria, messages about it was formerly viewed as a taboo. However, the radio according to a media organisation, DKT International Nigeria (2022), has mainly been used to correct and minimize most negative impressions that are linked to the practice. People can now discuss and hold pubic campaign about birth control freely, without facing serious resistance or harassment. Irrespective of the aforementioned efforts in the promotion of birth control, certain factors were found to still affect its practice in Nigeria. Ummulkhulthum, Bajoga, Atagame and Chinelo (2015) state that the people's culture, religion and personal perception were found to be major determinant in the practice of birth control. Zawn (2020) attests that myths and misconception also contribute to the low demand of birth control. This has not only created a significant gap between knowledge and the practice of birth control, but has invariably generated set-back in achieving the millennium development goals. A study carried out in Mexico for instance, explain how a considerable percentage of women ceased to use the contraceptives due to the fear of reported side effects (Orach, 2015). Similarly, Odimegwu (2005) asserts that most women believe they will become sexually promiscuous or infertile if they decide to use any method of contraceptive. This explain the need of more effective mass media channel that can promote the acceptance and adoption of birth control practice. Although studies have linked reference of mass media campaign and birth control campaign, studies, according to the knowledge of the researcher, is deficient in the role of the radio towards birth control in Delta State of Nigeria. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the role of the radio in the practices of birth control in Delta State of Nigeria.

Statement of problem

Myths, misconceptions and ignorance have severally been connected to the low use of birth control in Africa (Ugboaja, Oguejiofor, Oranu and Igwegbe, 2018) and this calls for concern, especially with the continues rise in global population. An average Nigerian woman who for instance, give birth to at least 5.5 children in her life, has made large families to almost become a norm. This practice, according to United Nations (2015), mostly occur in rural settlements which seems isolated from government programmes on fertility reduction.

Subsequently, Meekers and Klein (2002) found that approximately 80% of Nigerian women whose age falls between 20-24 years are sexually-active and their average age of sexual commencement is 17.5 years. Notwithstanding their sexual efficacy, the use of birth control methods among them was found to be low (Igwegbe, Ugboaja and Monago, 2010). This practice according to Fatusi, Wang, and Anyanti (2008), is largely connected to the socio-cultural belief and religious perception of the people. Consequently, results that ought to be achieved in the diffusion of birth control programmes, especially in rural communities, are yet to be achieved. This has made Miller (2010) to write that whatever medium chosen for the campaign of birth control, it must be popular

and accessible so that target audience can easily connect to it. Hence, the relevance of the radio. The radio, according to Lifeline Energy (2020), is found to be more popular, as it has the widest geographical reach.

Habibov & Zainiddinov (2015) however, explain that some women in Post Soviet Central Asia, consider radio message as a communication channel designed for learned people who falls within middle and high class people, as well as young people, owing to the perception that radio messages uses high terminology that require more sense for its messages to be decoded. This perception according to Habibov & Zainiddinov (2015), may yield little or no results when radio campaign on birth control is carried out. To however, ascertain whether this findings collaborate with the people of Delta State of Nigeria and to also examine how well the State has engaged in using radio to promote birth control are among the gaps this study intend to fill.

Study Objectives

Specific objectives of the study are to:

1. find out the influence of radio in the utilization of birth control in Delta states
2. examine the effectiveness of radio in the campaign of birth
3. investigate the extent of compliance to radio campaign on birth control and
4. determine factors that affect the use of radio in the campaign of birth control measures in the State.
- 5.

Arising from the above research objectives, the following research questions were prompted:

- 1 what is the influence of radio in the utilization of birth control in Delta State?
- 2 how effective has the radio been in the campaign of birth control?
- 3 what is the extent of compliance to radio campaign on birth control? and
- 4 what are the factors that affect the use of radio in the campaign of birth control in the State?

Delta State which has its capital in Asaba, was carved out from the former Bendel State in 1991. The state is not only among states in Nigeria with highly literate and influential personalities, but is among the highest oil-producing State in the Niger Delta South-South region of Nigeria. The state is inhabited by the Urhobos who form the major ethnic tribe, followed by the Ukwani, Isoko, Anioma, Izon and Itsekiri tribe. It has an estimated population of 3,256,307 (Projected by Okoye, National Population Commission (NPC), and occupies the geographical size of 16,842 square kilometers (6,503 sq mi). The state is divided into 25 Local Government Areas and has three senatorial districts (Central, North and South).

These Local Government Areas are: Aniocha North, Aniocha South, Bomadi, Burutu, Ethiope East, Ethiope West, Ika North East, Ika South, Isoko North, Isoko South, Ndokwa East, Ndokwa West, Oshimili North, Oshimili South, Patani, Sapele, Udu, Ughelli North, Ughelli South, Ukwuani, Uvwie, Warri, Warri North, Warri South and Warri South West.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Radio is a distinct personal medium that invokes listener's imagination to fill in mental images around the broadcast sounds. Irrespective of the growth of television, mobile phone and internet over the past years, radio still get through to over 70% of the world's population. In Nigeria for example, 75% of families have access to a radio. Surveys conducted in major cities of the country, establish that more than 57% of Nigerian women get awareness more from radio in matters relating to family planning campaign (DKT international Nigeria, 2022). The 'one-thing at a time,' a United Nations Development programme (UNDP) radio programme which dramatizes family planning messages, usually aired every Saturday morning in Delta Broadcasting Radio, Warri, is an example of one of the many sustainable family planning programmes through which women get awareness about birth control and family planning. The popular radio programme that began in the late 90s, still gain the attention of many Nigerian women whenever it is aired in radio . A family planning phone-in show set up in Vietnam in 1998 is another example of popular radio programme that educate and influence youths in Vietnam till date (Mohammed and Abdu, 2020). Similarly, Martin (2016) submits that 57% of women who became knowledgeable about birth control in Benin City, Ibadan, Illorin, Kaduna and Zaria, all in Nigeria, heard about birth control awareness through the radio.

Often regarded as a veritable medium for grassroots communication, the radio provides avenue into reality by transmitting real time polemic happening as well as breaking news (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), 2012). As an affordable means of communication, when compared to other electronics media and for the fact that does not require its audience to be literate, coupled with its portable form that also give access to real-time information, has made UNESCO (2018) to suggest it as the possibly most important channel of communication in developing countries. This is why Rayudu (2008) believes that most communication experts often use the radio to galvanize behavioural change, act as actor for development, and support the promotion of health communication.

Moemeka (2000) submit that broadcasting programmes in local languages, local radio can effectively communicate birth control matters. Local accent that are used to discuss health issues like birth control, education, gender equality or even disaster risk reduction, has created a unique connection between the people and radio programmes. With this connection, the radio can easily influence the behaviour of its audience. In recognition of the value offered by radio, DKT International media, has implemented over 50 radio programmes across Nigeria. With the aim of reaching different target audience, at least 7 radio stations run their programme daily in English, Pidgin, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo languages (DKT, 2022). In Warri for instance, Kpoko FM and Mega FM constitute examples of radio that broadcast programmes in Pidgin English, the common lingua-franca that the people can easily relate to. An example is the usual "Mega Palace" and "Town Hall" programme, a radio programme usually aired every Thursdays and Fridays respectively in Pidgin English. This programme which give Warri community and its environs the

chance to interrogate, comment and gain knowledge about various issues, including reproductive and health related topics, has strengthened the people's connection with radio programme. People do not hesitate to call-in during phone in programmes to share their thoughts and participate in decision that concern them.

The radio does not only focus on community participation and societal transformation, but help to facilitate the empowerment of vulnerable communities that are isolated geographically, culturally or linguistically by the mainstream media. These are among several others reasons why the radio is popular in establishing its objectives of sustaining a public social sphere where anybody can contribute and be heard (Lifeline Energy, 2020).

Despite the popularity of radio, certain factors were found to limit its campaign on birth control. These factors according to Babalola and Oyenubi (2018) and Solanke (2017), include: marriage, income, residence in urban area, and media accessibility. Similarly, Kana, Tagurum and Hassan (2016) all attest that higher education and membership to certain religious body, such as the Roman Catholic Church, were determinants of utilizing radio campaign on birth control use. Rural residents for instance, were found to be 26% less likely to have used contraceptive than urban residents(Igbodekwe, Oladimeji, Oladimeji, Adeoye, Akpa, Lawson, 2014). While those in the highest wealth category were 66% more likely to use contraceptives than those in the lowest quintile, those who had given birth had a significantly higher chance of using contraceptives than those who had never given birth. This agrees with earlier results which showed that the prevalence of contraceptive use was higher among woman who had given birth compared to those who had not (Ekholuenetale, Olorunju , Fowobaje, Onikan, Tudeme and Barrow, 2021). Women with unmet contraceptive needs had 55% less chance of using contraceptives than women with no unmet contraceptive need.

Theoretical Framework

Attribution theory: The Heider's Perspective

The attribution theory propounded by Heider (1958), is concerned with how and why ordinary people explain events as they do. People who are less willing to adopt birth control and family planning practice are quick to attribute their behaviour to their tradition, religious beliefs and myths towards the practice of it. The fact that people's traditions supports large families where many children are perceived to be wealth, has further impinged on the practice of birth control. Any activity that is therefore aimed at limiting the birth of many children to these people, becomes an aberration to their tradition. Fiske and Taylor (1991), who both expand on the theory, assert that "attribution theory deals with how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at casual explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a casual judgement.

Though Heider (1958) was the first to propose a psychological theory of attribution, but Weiner and Jones (1972), further developed a theoretical framework of the theory, making it a major research paradigm of social psychology (Kassin 2010). Heider identifies three stages that underlie

the attribution theory. These stages explain the fact that behaviour must be “perceived”, determined to be “intentional” and attributed to an “internal or external” cause. He explains that people who are naive psychologically, were like amateur scientists who try to make sense of the social world, by piecing together information until they arrived at a reasonable explanation or cause. Heider further attests that people tend to create cause and effect relationships, even where there is none. Heider who uses the Internal and External attribution concept to expand on the theme of the theory, explains that the internal attribution describes how people assign the cause of behaviour to some internal characteristics rather than outside forces. The attribution of the non-utilization of birth control practice to cultural and religious beliefs, give a clear example of the internal aspect of attribution theory. This is why people often attribute the behaviour of a person to their personal belief.

The external attribution on the other hand, entails the process of assigning the cause of behaviour to some external influence or events outside a person’s control. In Delta state, having many children is viewed as the criteria that secure the marriage of a woman. Since no woman is willing to lose her marriage to another woman, especially those that completely depend on their husband and are yet to have male children, strive to give their husbands as many children as they so desire, so as to secure her marriage

Similarly, Ibeawuchi (2013) writes that many illiterate and unexposed people who do not have intentions to give birth to many children, may be influenced to have more, when people around them do not only have many children, but link their behaviours to obeying the wish of a superior being or spirit (of their ancestors or God to multiply and replenish the earth) who in turn blesses and protect them.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey method of research. With a population of 3,256,307 (projected by Okoye, National Population Commission, NPC, (2016), the purposive sampling method was used to select three Local Government Area from Delta State, bearing in mind the geographical spread that is more convenient to the researcher. Two (2) communities each were further selected from each of the earlier picked three (3) Local Government Area. Furthermore, 10 study participants each, that are within reproductive ages, were randomly picked from each of the six (6) communities, which amounted to 60 study participants. The structured questionnaire was used as the instrument of data gathering.

Data Presentation and analysis

The researcher administered and waited to collect a total of 60 copies of the questionnaire that were administered at different time intervals, to women and men within reproductive age. Twenty (20) each were distributed among the purposively selected three Local Government Areas while 10 each were managed among six community, two communities each from the three Local Government Areas that was chosen for the study. The Local Government Areas that were chosen

for the research include: Warri South Local Government Area, Udu and Uvwie local government Area respectively, all from Delta State of Nigeria.

Influence of Radio in the campaign on birth control

Regression

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.970 ^a	.941	.921	.44480

a. Predictors: (Constant), influence of radio campaign

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.406	1	9.406	47.543	.006 ^b
	Residual	.594	3	.198		
	Total	10.000	4			

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

b. Predictors: (Constant), influence of radio campaign

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	-.484	.543		-.891	.439
	influence of radio campaign	.174	.025	.970	6.895	.006

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

R-VALUE: The R-value (0.970) shows that, there is a strong and positive correlation among the variables.

R-Squared: The R-squared values shows that about 94.1% changes in birth control can be explained by influence of radio campaign, which shows that the model is significant for prediction. **DECISION:** The result confirms that the overall regression model is significant for the data, and this was captured by the ANOVA F-statistics value of (47.543) and its associated probability value (0.006) that was found to be significant at 5%.

Since the p-value (0.006) is less than the alpha value (0.05) we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that radio campaign significantly influence birth control.

Effectiveness of Radio I the campaign on birth control

Regression

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.914 ^a	.834	.779	.74278

a. Predictors: (Constant), effectiveness of radio campaign

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.345	1	8.345	15.125	.030 ^b
	Residual	1.655	3	.552		
	Total	10.000	4			

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

b. Predictors: (Constant), effectiveness of radio campaign

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	-4.586	1.979		-2.318	.103
	effectiveness of radio campaign	.379	.098	.914	3.889	.030

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

R-VALUE: The R-value (0.914) shows that, there is a strong and positive correlation among the variables.

R-Squared: The R-squared values shows that about 83.4% changes in birth control can be explained by effectiveness of radio campaign, which shows that the model is significant for prediction.

DECISION: The result confirms that the overall regression model is significant for the data, and this was captured by the ANOVA F-statistics value of (15.125) and its associated probability value (0.030) that was found to be significant at 5%.

Since the p-value (0.030) is less than the alpha value (0.05) we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that radio campaign is significantly effective in the control of birth.

*Extent of compliance to Radio campaign in birth control***Regression**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.988 ^a	.977	.969	.27726

a. Predictors: (Constant), extent of compliance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.769	1	9.769	127.084	.001 ^b
	Residual	.231	3	.077		
	Total	10.000	4			

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

b. Predictors: (Constant), extent of compliance

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.248	.274		.906	.432
	extent of compliance	.138	.012	.988	11.273	.001

a. Dependent Variable: birth control

R-VALUE: The R-value (0.988) shows that, there is a strong and positive correlation among the variables.

R-Squared: The R-squared values shows that about 97.7% changes in birth control can be explained by compliance to radio campaign, which shows that the model is significant for prediction.

DECISION: The result confirms that the overall regression model is significant for the data, and this was captured by the ANOVA F-statistics value of (127.084) and its associated probability value (0.001) that was found to be significant at 5%.

Since the p-value (0.001) is less than the alpha value (0.05) we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant compliance to radio campaign in the control of birth.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings were presented and discussed in accordance to the specific objectives of the study. Objective one which seek to determine the influence of radio in the utilization of birth control in Delta State, found that the radio have relatively gain some level of influence over the people of Delta State, especially in the area of birth control messages on radio. This finding is in accordance

with the assertion of Wakefield et al (2010) who all submit that the radio have been found relevant in promoting campaign, capable of influencing people in matters concerning birth control.

Findings as regards to objective two which examine the effectiveness of radio in the campaign of birth control in Delta State, found that the radio has been quite effective in the campaign of birth control in the State. Some of the respondents attest that the effectiveness of the radio can be associated with its inexpensive and portability attribute. This finding is in agreement with Alemayehu et al (2018) who writes that radio phone in programme and short advert on family planning, when compared to other expensive mass media source, has become excellent vehicle for maximum interactivity and audience-driven content which drive home messages on birth control.

Furthermore, objective three which investigate the extent of compliance to radio campaign in the control of birth, reveals that though the people tend to comply with birth control messages on radio to an extent, certain factors such as their perception, misinformation, sociocultural and level of educational factors, does impinge on the high compliance of it. An interview for example, conducted on the perception of radio campaign on birth control, found that many people believes that birth control is foreign to their culture. Others who have experienced some level of side effect from the use of birth control, view it as a trick by developed countries to drastically depopulate the black race and introduce fatal illness on women's reproductive system that will render them infertile or even lead to their death. It is believed that the use of birth control method are the causes of ailments such as breast cancer, uterine cancer and other fatal diseases. This finding is in line with that of Zawn (2020) who attest that myths and misconception does contribute to the low demand of birth control.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

The study investigate the relevance of radio in the campaign of birth control in Delta State. Findings show that the radio has been influential and quite effective in the campaign of birth control in Delta State. Though the rate of compliance is relatively commendable, certain factors, especially in rural area, which include the people's level of education, perception, sociocultural factor, as well as the issue of misinformation about the practice, have affected the high rate of compliance in the State. The study therefore recommend that compliance can be achieved when there is frequent and proper enlightenment about birth control, mostly in rural area where there is high level of reproduction, and misinformation about radio campaign on birth control.

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