

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF FAMILY PLANNING METHODS AMONG WOMEN ATTENDING AXIM GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL IN AXIM, GHANA

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Background

- Axim is located in the southwestern region of Ghana
- Axim Government Hospital (AGH) is the primary public medical establishment in the Nzema East Municipality serving thousands of Ghanaians annually



- AGH provides 24-hour service in general medicine, general surgery, maternal and child health, family planning, emergency care, public health, counseling and testing, and psychiatry.

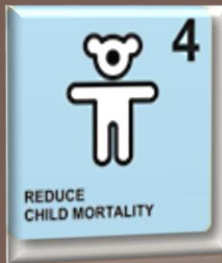




- World Health Organization statement on family planning:

Family planning allows individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births . . . A woman's ability to space and limit her pregnancies has a direct impact on her health and well-being as well as on the outcome of each pregnancy [1].

□ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)



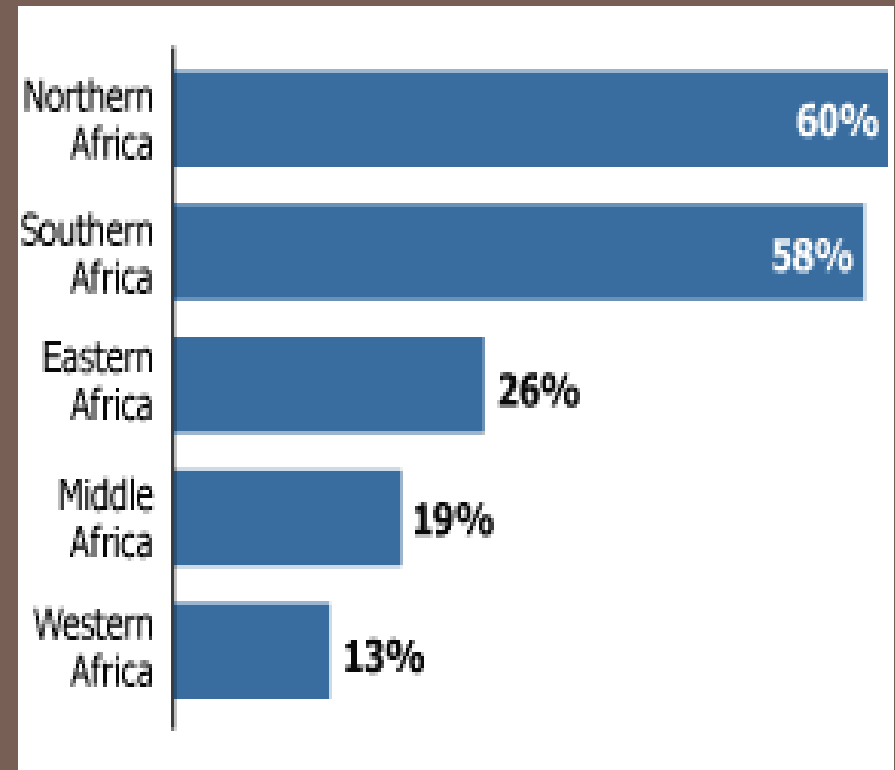
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality



Goal 5: Improve maternal health

Literature Review

- Over the past decade use of family planning among married women in West Africa has increased from 6.3 % to 13.9 % [2].
- The unmet need for FP in Ghana is location dependent [3].
 - Rural 37.6%
 - Urban 32.3%



Objectives

□ **Primary Objective**

- The purpose of this study is to determine the knowledge, attitudes and practices of family planning methods among reproductive age women attending Axim Government Hospital in Axim, Ghana.

□ **Secondary Objectives**

- Determine availability and extent of access to family planning services
- Determine level of utilization of family planning services

Methods

- Cross-sectional survey
- 24-item questionnaire
- Exclusion criteria: females <15 years of age or >44 years of age; females who underwent a sterilization procedure; those too ill to participate; those who did not understand questions as translated by the interpreter
- Informed consent was obtained and collected

Key Demographics

- Sample size (n) = 25
- Age range
 - ▣ 15- 39 years with most women between 20-29 years ($n=14$, 56%)
- Education
 - ▣ Most women had a Junior H.S. education or lower ($n=16$, 64%)
- Ethnicity
 - ▣ 52% of respondents identified with the Nzema ethnic group ($n=13$)
- Occupation
 - ▣ A large majority of women were gainfully employed
- Marital Status
 - ▣ 56% of respondents were married ($n=14$). 40% of respondents were single ($n= 10$)
- Parity
 - ▣ Most women had 1-2 living children ($n=14$, 56%)
- Desire for more children
 - ▣ 80% of respondents desired additional children

Results

- Family Planning Knowledge
 - 96% of respondents heard of family planning
 - Most women cited health care providers as the primary source of FP information
 - FP consists of “child spacing” and “prevention of pregnancy”
 - Most respondents named the injectable contraceptive as a FP method

□ Family Planning Attitudes

- 23 out of 25 women indicated that accessing FP services was convenient
- 92% of women indicated that FP services available when needed
- 20 out of 25 women described FP services as “good” or “excellent”
- 96% of respondents indicated that they would recommend family planning services to others

□ Family Planning Practices

- 48% of respondents used a FP method in the past
- Injectable contraceptives were the most commonly used FP method
- Most common method among current users is the injectable contraceptive
- Barriers to FP utilization included lack of knowledge, concerns about side effects, religious/cultural reasons, partner opposition

Discussion

- Level of awareness of family planning was high (96%)
- An overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they would recommend family planning to other women (96%)
- More than half of the women in this study have never used a family planning method ($n=13$, 52%)
- Only 2 out of 5 women educated at the tertiary level has used a family planning method before

Positive Deviance

- What is positive deviance?

Positive deviance is a development approach that is based on the premise that solutions to community problems already exist within the community . . . it seeks to identify and optimize existing resources and solutions within the community to solve community problems.

Positive Deviance Approach in New Mothers

- In recent times it is not uncommon for young women to forego the natural practice of breastfeeding and provide their infant children with an alternate form of nourishment. Instead some mothers are offering their infant children, some as early as two weeks, adult food (i.e., fufu, a staple West African food made of starchy root vegetables). With the knowledge that “mother’s milk is the best milk,” hospital workers are turning the tide on this practice by offering antenatal and postnatal courses for pregnant women and new mothers. By offering these types of courses breastfeeding rates among community women have increased.

Positive Deviance Approach in Female Adolescents

- Teenage pregnancy is a major concern in Axim. To stem the rise in teenage pregnancy, AGH offers a class each Sunday to young women. Topics discussed include what to expect during puberty, menstruation, family planning options, etc. Health care providers note that they are beginning to see fewer cases of teenage pregnancy.

Recommendations

- Include family planning discussions as a routine part of the medical visit
 - Types of Methods
 - Duration of Use
 - Efficacy
 - Side effects
- Increase levels of female education
- Include adolescents in all decision-making concerning their reproductive lives

Study Limitations

- Small sample size
- Volunteer bias
- Recall bias
- Language Barrier

Lessons Learned



- Knowledge is power
- Female empowerment is critical

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