

## **The Use of Contraceptive among Students in Ekiti State Higher Institutions**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the level of awareness of contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions. The study also ascertained their sexual behaviours and use of contraceptives. The study examined the gender effects of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions. Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive research design approach with a sample size of 150 registered students in Ekiti state higher institutions. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages were used to answer the research questions. There is high level of awareness of contraceptives among the study participants. The findings showed that contraceptive use has a positive influence on the sexual behaviour of the students as majority of them have safe sexual behaviour and practices. The study established that the female respondents have more preference for different types of contraceptives than the male. The study may be of importance to students as it will make known to them the importance of contraceptives and effects of their sexual behaviours. Overall, the data generated can serve as the baseline for further research, particularly on contraceptive use among students. Hence, the study recommended that there should be campaign on different media against spread of sexual transmission diseases and policy makers on education should include sex education in curriculum with more focus on the male gender.*

**Key words:** Use, Contraceptive, Students, Higher Institutions.

## **Introduction**

Contraception is the deliberate prevention of conception or impregnation through the use of contraceptives. The approach is often employed for economic, demographic and or medical purposes so as to reduce maternal mortality, youth's pregnancy, over population and sexually transmitted infections prevalence (Fakeye, 2021). One third of Nigeria's total population is youth between the ages of ten and twenty-four (Akinjide, 2019). By 2025, the number of Nigerian youth is estimated to exceed 57 million (Olawale, 2021). Lack of sexual health information and services place these young people at risk for pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (STI), and HIV/AIDS. In addition, early marriage and childbearing limit youth's educational and employment opportunities (Akinjide, 2019).

A study by Oladele (2021), posited that most of the youths male and female, have their first sexual intercourse before the age of eighteen. Therefore, effective and innovative programmes that can provide youths with sound sexual health information and services are needed. Proliferation of the use of various types of contraceptives particularly among the young female has been observed, even when the effectiveness, safety, side effects, contraindications and availability of these methods vary. With such an array of methods to influence the choice of the medical experts, special precaution should be taken with respect to patient suitability and adverse effects of each method. It is therefore the responsibility of health professionals to ascertain that each person who obtains a family planning method has sufficient information on the proposed method and that this person is competent to make a choice. The choice of contraceptive method is often individualized based on a patient's age, profile or need. Thus an opportunity should be given to individuals or couples to make their choices (Adekanye, 2018).

Falade, (2020) opined that a perfect contraceptive would be 100% effective, totally safe, available to everyone, completely without side effects, instantly reversible and easy to use. It would not interfere with intercourse in any way and would require no advice or care from the clinician. However, the choice in recent years have been affected particularly by the emergence of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and a consequent increase in the awareness of the need for the protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Also, according to Falade (2020), the environment in higher institutions of learning is characterized by high levels of personal freedom and social interaction. Thus this social interaction often translates to sexual interaction (Alexander, 2017). Countries have been documented as featuring a high level of risky sexual behaviours such as transactional sex, multiple sexual partners, and unprotected casual sex. (Otaala, 2018).

Global estimates indicate that over 210 million conceptions occur each year worldwide, of which 75 million (or roughly 36%) are unexpected or undesired pregnancies. The largest rates of unintended pregnancies are found in higher institutions. Following this, despite student's great awareness and knowledge of both

regular and emergency contemporary contraception, the rate of unintended pregnancies among them continues to rise annually in higher education institutions (Gbagbo & Nkrumah, 2019).

According to Gbagbo and Nkrumah, (2019) research has generally shown that students in higher education have low levels of knowledge and awareness about contraceptives and its effective use. Students in tertiary institutions are less likely to use contraceptives due to a variety of factors, including age, culture, ethnicity, religion, poor access to contraceptive services, peer pressure, and lack of partner support (Gbagbo & Nkrumah, 2019). Friends, peers, and family are common informal sources of information about contraception and contraceptives. These sources are often incomplete and can lead to sexual exploitation (Gbagbo & Nkrumah, 2019). Therefore, it is important for them to have formal and sufficient knowledge and awareness about contraceptive methods in order to make an informed decision about their reproductive intentions. Hence, comprehending the procedures and advantages of contraception is essential for fostering motivated users. Additionally, it has been observed that motivation plays a significant role in reducing the likelihood of contraceptive failure (Gbagbo & Nkrumah, 2019).

According to Eze, Ndu, and Edelu, (2018) use of contraceptives and knowledge of them is a key determinant of sexual health, particularly among young people. Despite the fact that birth control techniques have changed over many centuries, a variety of techniques are still in use; some have been shown to be clearly successful by science, while others lack adequate data to justify continued usage. The safe period/calendar approach, condom use, exclusive breastfeeding, stopping sex, tubal ligation, vasectomy, oral contraceptive pills, hormone injections, and intrauterine devices are among the appropriate birth control methods used in our area (Eze, Ndu, & Edelu, 2018).

The pronatalist culture that still exists in Nigeria, religious beliefs that forbid using contraception, the lack of accessibility and distribution of contraceptives, and worry about the negative effects of contraception are some of the factors contributing to the low rate of contraception use in the country (Eze, Ndu, & Edelu, 2018). Nigerian women have consistently given the belief that using effective contraception could result in infertility later in life as one of their main justifications for refusing it. This confirms that a large number of people are still unaware of the numerous advantages of using contraceptives correctly and consistently. Unwanted births brought on by poor contraceptive methods may result in school dropouts and future financial dependence on both young fathers and moms (Eze, Ndu, & Edelu, 2018). Despite these gender-specific knowledge gaps, girls still faced more negative outcomes, such as being held responsible for getting pregnant, having to deal with the fallout from unsafe abortions, having a higher biological risk of STIs, having to deal with the burden of advanced childcare, and being more likely to face stigma and isolation if they give birth before marriage (Mkwanaenzi, 2022; Bawah, Sato, Asuming, Henry, Agula,

Agyei-Asabere, Canning, & Shah, 2021). This indicates that the majority of female youth learn about contraception primarily from their families and peers, whereas young men learn about contraception from the media, peers, and pornography. These sources of information tend to spread myths about the efficacy and side effects of different forms of contraception. This speaks to the importance of awareness, campaigns and knowledge transfer that promotes modern contraceptive use aimed at men specifically (Mkwanaenzi, 2022; Oyedele, 2021). Men should be the focus of awareness campaigns rather than women since they are more likely to be aware of modern contraceptives without using them. In order to increase the uptake and use of family planning, it is crucial to determine how men as partners encourage and support adherence and use of contraceptives. Additionally, these insights should be incorporated into policy (Mkwanaenzi, 2022).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions. The specific objectives are to:

1. determine the level of awareness on contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions
2. ascertain the sexual behaviours and use of contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions
3. examine the gender effect of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of awareness on contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions?
2. Does the use of contraceptive affect the sexual behaviour of students in Ekiti State higher institutions?
3. Is there any significant gender effect of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions?

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive research design with quantitative strategy. Descriptive research design is the assignment of subjects of interest to different groups without interference from the researcher. Descriptive research design was adopted because the researcher is interested in examining the use of contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions without changing any of the variables. The target population for this study consisted of all the registered students in Ekiti State higher institutions. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the study sample. Ekiti State consists of 3 Senatorial Districts namely: Ekiti North, Ekiti South

and Ekiti Central. Stage 1: One (1) of the three (3) Senatorial District was selected using lottery method of simple random sampling. Namely Ekiti Central.

Stage 2: One (1) Local Government Area was selected using lottery method of simple random sampling. Namely Ado Ekiti.

Stage 3: Two (2) higher institutions were selected from the selected Local Government Area using lottery method of using simple random sampling. The selected higher institutions are; Ekiti State University Ado Ekiti and Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State

Stage 4: Five (5) Departments were selected from each of the higher institutions using lottery method of simple random sampling. Ekiti State University Ado Ekiti: Entrepreneurship; Accounting; Political science; Statistics and Guidance and Counselling. Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti: Marketing; Business Administration; Accounting; Food technology and Mass Communication.

Stage 5: Purposive random sampling was used to select Fifteen (15) students from each departments.

Stage 6: Stratified sampling method was used to get the total One Hundred and fifty (150) students selecting 50 males and 100 female students. The difference in proportion of the female to the male respondents is following the findings that female are mostly concerned with the use of contraceptive and they are mostly the victims of unwanted pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire named: the use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions (UCSESHIQ). The instrument was developed by the researcher. It consisted of sections, A and B. Section A dealt with the demography of the respondents and their preferred methods of contraceptives while section B dealt with information on the level of awareness and contraceptive use among students in Ekiti State higher institutions namely; Ekiti State University Ado Ekiti and Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.

The instrument was duly validated by an educator and a midwife. To ensure the reliability of the instrument the validated instrument was tested on ten male and ten female secondary school students. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, the Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the internal consistency of the instrument, the result obtained was 0.83 showed a strong reliability of the instrument.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of awareness on contraceptives among students in

Ekiti State higher institutions?

**Table 1: The Level of awareness on contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	I am aware of different forms of contraceptive methods	78 (52%)	57 (38%)	14 (9.3%)	1 (.7%)
2	There is enough awareness on contraception for students	45 (30%)	90 (60%)	15(10.0%) )	
3	I have used contraceptives in the last 6 months	45 (30%)	72 (48%)	15 (10%)	18 (12%)
4	Use of emergency contraceptive is most preferred	73 (48.7%)	77 (51.3%)		
5	Students who engaged in cohabiting use contraceptive	105 (70.0%)	15 (10.0%)	15(10.0%) )	15 (10.0%) )

As shown in Table 1, 78(52%) of the respondents strongly agreed that I am aware of different forms of contraceptive methods, 90(60%) of the respondents agreed that there is enough awareness on contraception for students, 72(48%) of the respondents strongly agreed that I have used contraceptives in the last 6 months, 77(51.3%) of the respondents agreed that Use of emergency contraceptive is most preferred, 105(70%) of the respondents Strongly agreed that Students who engaged in cohabiting use contraceptive. Based on the result of this table which showed high level of awareness of contraceptives, it can therefore be concluded that there is adequate level of awareness on contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions.

**Research Question 2:** Does the use of contraceptive affect the sexual behaviour of students in Ekiti State higher institutions?

**Table 2: Use of contraceptive affect the sexual behaviour of students in Ekiti State higher Institutions**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Contraceptives helps prevent users from contacting sexually transmitted diseases	60 (40%)	45 (30.0%)	15 (10.0%)	30 (20.0%)
2	Contraceptives can help prevent unwanted pregnancy	77 (51.3%)	73 (48.7%)	.....	.....
3	Modern contraceptive methods are easy to access	15 (10.0%)	105 (70.0%)	15 (10.0%)	15 (10.0%)
4	Contraceptive services are readily available	45 (30.0%)	43 (28.7%)	58 (38.7%)	4 (2.7%)
5	Contraceptive methods are 100% effective	62 (41.3%)	88 (58.7%)		

From Table 2, it is shown that 60(40%) of respondents agreed that Contraceptives helps prevent users from contacting sexually transmitted diseases, 77(51.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Contraceptives can help prevent unwanted pregnancy. Also, 105(70%) of the respondents agreed that Modern contraceptive methods are easy to access, 45(30%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Contraceptive services are readily available, and 88(58.7%) of the respondents agreed that Contraceptive methods are 100% effective. Based on the results from this table which showed that contraceptive use has a positive influence on the sexual behavior of the students as majority of them have safe sexual behavior and practices, it can therefore be concluded that use of contraceptive affects the sexual behavior of students in Ekiti State higher institutions.

**Research Question 3:** Is there any significant gender effect of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions?

**Table 3: Significant Gender effect of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions**

Gender	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Male	I prefer Condoms	40 (26.7)	10 (6.6)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Female		70 (46.7)	20 (13.3)	7 (4.7)	3 (2)
Male	I prefer Pills	30 (20)	15 (10.0)	5 (3.3)	0 (0%)
Female		66 (44)	24 (16.0)	6 (4.0)	4 (2.6)
Male	I prefer Diaphragms	20 (13.3)	25 (16.6)	3 (2.0%)	2 (1.4)
Female		20 (13.3)	75 (50)	0 (0%)	5 (3.3)
Male	I prefer Injectable	30 (20)	15 (10)	5 (3.4)	0 (0%)
Female		60(40)	15 (10)	15 (10)	10 (6.6)

From Table 3, 40(26.7%) of the respondents were male and 70(46.7%) of the respondents were female who strongly agreed that I prefer condoms, also 30(20.0%) of the respondents were male and 66(44.0%) females strongly agreed that I prefer Pills. In addition, 25(16.6%) of the respondents were male and 75(50.0%) of the respondents were female agreed that I prefer Diaphragms. Likewise, 30(20.0%) of the respondents were male and 60(40.0 %) were female who strongly agreed that I prefer Injectable. Based on the result of this table which showed that the female has more preference for different types of contraceptives than the male, it can therefore be concluded that there is significant gender effect of use of contraceptive among students in Ekiti State higher institutions.

### Discussion of Findings

The study examined contraceptive use among students in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The first findings from Table 1 revealed high level of awareness of contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions. This finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Adewumi, (2017) among adolescents living in Lagos which evaluated their awareness about contraceptive. The study adopted quantitative and qualitative methods in order to understand the depth of contraceptive awareness among adolescents in Lagos, Nigeria. The study sampled 150 respondents randomly selected. Results of the study showed that majority of the adolescents have heard about contraceptives from mediums such as hospitals, media, friends and schools. This increase in awareness of contraceptive among the study population may



be due to increased access to health information through various social media platforms operated by students in tertiary institutions which is in line with other studies which revealed mass media as a major way of promoting awareness of contraceptive.

The findings from Table 2 showed that the use of contraceptive has a positive influence on the sexual behaviour of students in Ekiti State higher institutions. This is in agreement with Oyewole, (2017) who examined Anxiety and Risky Sexual Behaviour among Undergraduate Students in Nigeria, Three hundred (300) undergraduate students were randomly selected from among the students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State. The study employed descriptive design. Finding of the study revealed contraceptives influence risky sexual behavior of the students. However, the study conducted by Babatunde, (2021) is not in agreement with this findings as it reported increase in prevalence of unplanned pregnancy among undergraduate students in a study conducted in Oyo State despite the increase in the universal awareness of contraceptive. The positive influence of contraceptive use on the sexual behavior of the study population through safe sexual behavior may be due to the transfer of their awareness and knowledge of contraceptive to practice while those with who demonstrated negative influence of contraceptive use on sexual behavior as seen in increase prevalence of unwanted pregnancy may be due to peer influence and effect of the social media that glamorize sex.

The findings from Table 3 which revealed that there is significant gender effect of contraceptive use among students in Ekiti State higher institutions, is in contrast with Faleye, (2019) who examined effect of gender on the use of contraceptive among undergraduate students in Oyo State. The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey using semi-structured self-administered questionnaire. Female undergraduates from two tertiary institutions central districts were selected using a multistage sampling technique and a sample of 374 students was drawn from both institutions. The study concluded that there is no significant gender effect of use of contraceptive among undergraduate students in Oyo State. The significant gender effect of contraceptive use shown in this study may be due to the inherent gender inequality, sociocultural and religious constructions of gender and contraceptive use and also due to female being the major recipient of the outcome of unwanted sexual practices.

This findings from this study are of importacet to students as they will know the importance of contraceptives and the effects on their sexual behaviours. The results of findings in this study will help the family to make adjustment on the personality and sexual behavior of their children. It will further help the health care providers involve in contraception on the creation of awareness on reproductive health and contraception while also protecting the confidentiality of students who seek such services.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is high a level of awareness of contraceptives among students in Ekiti State higher institutions, and the use of contraceptive has effect on their sexual behaviour. Also, there is significant gender effect of contraceptive use among students in Ekiti State higher institutions.

### **Recommendations**

1. There should campaign on different media against spread of sexual transmission diseases
2. Policy makers on education should include sex education in curriculum with more focus on the male gender.

## **References**

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