
Socio-Cultural Determinants of Men's Attitude Towards Family Planning in Rural Communities in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study focused on socio-cultural determinants of men's attitude towards family planning in rural met communities in River's state, Nigeria. Ex-post facto and correlational research design was employed for this study. Four specific objectives guided the study. The population of the study comprised of all married men in selected communities in Rivers State. The sample size for the study comprised of 200 married men who were drawn using accidental and purposive sampling technique. Two instruments including "Determinants of Men's Attitude towards Family Planning Questionnaire" (DMATFPQ) and "Attitude Towards Family Planning Questionnaire" (ATTFQ) were used for data collection. These instruments were validated by two experts in Measurements and Evaluation. Cronbach Alpha method was used in estimating the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained were 0.76 and 0.81 for DMATFPQ and ATTFQ respectively. Data generated were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation, one way ANOVA as well as independent t-test. Result of the study showed that income status ($p=0.000<0.05$), educational level ($p=0.000<0.05$) and baby gender preference ($p=0.000<0.05$) all had significant relationship and influence on men's attitude towards family planning. On the other hand, culture ($p=0.532>0.05$) had no significant relationship with men's attitude towards family planning. Based on these, it was recommended among others that men should be enlightened on the importance of family planning towards their finances and marriages as well as family relationships.*

Keywords: culture, income status, educational level, baby gender preference, attitude, family planning

INTRODUCTION

Family planning (FP) is a way of thinking and living that is adopted voluntarily on the basis of knowledge, attitude and responsible decision by individuals and couples in order to promote health and welfare of the family, groups and thus contribute effectively to the social development of the country (WHO, 2011). The total demand for family planning among

married women in Nigeria is 36%, 19% of married women have an unmet need for family planning (NDHS 2018), among the various factors contributing to this, is household decision making power (Adebowale et al, 2023).

Men are pivotal decision-makers at all household level within the rural communities. They have a predominance in making key decisions in the family. This authority implies that they have the final say on the number of children the family should have, the spacing, maternal health and general level of reproductive health in the family. Thus, any family planning programme that excludes men may have minimal impact on the targeted population.

Male involvement in family planning may increase its recognition, acceptance and practice by people especially rural communities where there are a large congregation of families. This is because in rural communities in Nigeria, men are still the gate keepers in the families who control power and decision making and their involvement in no small way helps to achieve huge success in the numerous campaigns aimed at reducing, population explosion in Africa, arrest the increasing surge of sexually transmitted infections and reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality (Onuoha, 2000). In European countries, statistics show that an average of 65% of men go for family planning yearly. In African countries, for example in South Africa, about 35% of the people that attend family planning and immunization clinics are males. In Togo, it was noted that male involvement in family planning and voluntary health screening and counselling compared with the females is in the ratio of 1:3 (Robert & Brown, 2000).

Despite global recognition of the importance of male involvement in family planning, Nigeria has not developed programmes in family planning that fully involve men. Most family planning programmes in our environment seem to focus on women only, it could also be that the non-inclusion of men in various family planning programmes by program planners has made men not to know much about family planning and the benefits to their spouses and family especially in rural communities. Yet, Fumilayo and Kolawole (2000) argued that men can participate in family planning either as users of male methods or as supportive partners of users.

With the above scenario, one wonders what then will be the situation in rural communities in Rivers State where tradition is still highly upheld. Rural communities have typical characteristics such as: they share common interest, bound or tied to tradition and culture, resist change, among others. These make men exercise undue authority or control over their wives in family matters such as issues of child bearing and contraceptive use. All these seem to make the acceptance of family planning more difficult in these rural communities (Onuoha, 2000). Therefore, it is very important to get them involved in family planning in order to achieve better success. This will improve health of both themselves and their spouses.

Men's attitude towards family planning refers to an overall reaction of approval or disapproval of men concerning the use of family planning to limit family size or prevent unwanted pregnancies. It is measured in terms of whether they approve (are in favour of) or

disapprove (are against) it. However, male attitude towards family planning services means more than increasing the number of men approving and disapproving; male involvement also includes the number of men who encourage and support their partner and their peers to utilize family planning and who influence the policy environment to be more conducive to developing male related programs (Girum et al., 2017). The involvement of men in family planning services would, therefore, not only ease the responsibility borne by women in terms of decision making for family planning matters, but would also accelerates the understanding and practice of family planning in general (Undelikwo et al., 2013). Sometimes, there may be undisclosed Family Planning utilization or non-utilization by females to achieve their fertility desires when their husbands did not agree with their desires (Gipson & Hindin, 2009). According to a report by Kessy and Kuenning (2007), 25% of married women were currently using a family planning method without any reference to their partners' involvement. However, domestic violence often occurs if there is utilization of Family Planning by the women without approval by men.

Socio-cultural factors are those issues arising out of socioeconomic and cultural differences. There are elements related to social and cultural aspects of life that influence behaviors, attitudes, and practices (WHO, 2023). The broad array of cultural practices, beliefs, and social structures that influence an individual's behavior and attitudes in a given society (Plath, 2022).

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, traditions, and practices that characterize a particular group or society. It encompasses norms of behavior, language, rituals, social institutions, and worldview passed down through generations. Culture shapes individuals' identities, perceptions, and behaviors, influencing how they interact with others and make decisions. Culture is dynamic and multifaceted, encompassing various dimensions such as religious beliefs, gender roles, socio-economic factors, and historical experiences. It plays a central role in shaping attitudes and behaviors related to health, including reproductive health and family planning practices. Cultural norms often dictate expectations regarding gender roles, fertility, and parenthood. Men's attitudes towards family planning are influenced by societal expectations embedded in cultural values, such as preferences for large families or gender preferences for children. Many cultures are intertwined with religious beliefs that influence perceptions of reproductive health and family planning. Religious teachings and practices may promote or discourage contraceptive use and influence men's decisions regarding family size and fertility intentions. Cultural norms shape communication patterns within families and communities. Men's attitudes towards family planning can be influenced by cultural norms around decision-making authority within relationships, including discussions about contraception and reproductive health choices. Cultural attitudes towards sexuality, reproduction, and family planning methods can contribute to stigma or social acceptance. Men may internalize cultural beliefs that affect their willingness to openly discuss or seek reproductive health services, including family planning counseling.

Shaibu, Owoyemi, Gomment, and Yunusae (2024) examined the socio-cultural factors influencing the practice of family planning among married men in the Omala Local

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK Government Area. The specific objectives of the study included ascertaining if married men in Omala LGA were aware of modern family planning methods, an investigation into the assessment and utilization of family planning methods, determining the perceived benefits of the practice of family planning methods, identifying the perceived hindrances to its usage and examined the strategies to improve on the practice of family planning among married men in Omala LGA. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the research hypothesis. The theory of the Health Believe Model was used to buttress the study and by utilizing survey research design, a total of 306 copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the respondents of which 235 copies were completed and returned. The results showed that 51% of the married men in Omala LGA were not aware of modern family planning methods while 34% of the respondents had no access to the utilization of modern family planning methods. The results also revealed that one of the socio-cultural factors affecting modern family planning methods among married men in the study area was Culture. The study further found that adequate sensitization programmes by both health workers and religious organisations should be carried out among their followers on the importance of family planning practice and thereby enhancing their reproductive health.

Mera (2019) assessed sociocultural factors affecting the utilization of family planning services. The case of Haramaya town Bate Kebele. This study used different research methodologies like cross-sectional studies, within research approach, the study used a mixed research approach, and also the study obtained information from primary and secondary data sources. The findings of this study was that culture gives much value to children. Yakubu (2018) also examined the socio-cultural factors that determine family planning in Nigeria. The study used a qualitative technique of analysis of secondary data. The study revealed that family planning depends on influencing factors such as community norms, individual childbearing preferences, and sexual and reproductive behaviour. The study also discovered some of the factors to also including community norms, religious beliefs and culture that influence couples' attitudes towards family planning.

Income status refers to an individual's or household's financial position and stability, typically assessed based on earnings, investments, savings, and overall economic resources. It reflects the level of financial resources available to meet basic needs, afford discretionary expenses, and plan for the future. Income status is a critical determinant of socio-economic well-being and influences various aspects of life, including access to healthcare, education, housing, and overall quality of life. It encompasses both earned income from employment or business activities and passive income from investments or other sources. Men with higher income levels generally have better access to healthcare services, including family planning options. They are more likely to afford contraceptives, consultations with healthcare providers, and other reproductive health services, thereby influencing their attitudes towards family planning. Income status contributes to financial stability within households, which can impact men's readiness to support their partners' reproductive health decisions. Financially stable men may be more open to discussing and planning for family size, considering the costs associated with raising children. Higher income levels often correlate with higher levels of education and awareness about reproductive health issues. Men with greater financial

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK resources may have access to information and resources that promote positive attitudes towards family planning, including understanding the benefits of spacing births and limiting family size. Income status can influence adherence to cultural and societal expectations regarding family size and roles. Men from higher income brackets may face different pressures and expectations regarding fertility and parenthood, which can shape their attitudes towards family planning practices.

Ugbede et. al., (2024) examined the socio-cultural factors influencing the practice of family planning among married men in the Omala Local Government Area. The specific objectives of the study included ascertaining if married men in Omala LGA were aware of modern family planning methods, an investigation into the assessment and utilization of family planning methods, determining the perceived benefits of the practice of family planning methods, identifying the perceived hindrances to its usage and examined the strategies to improve on the practice of family planning among married men in Omala LGA. The results showed that 51% of the married men in Omala LGA were not aware of modern family planning methods while 34% of the respondents had no access to the utilization of modern family planning methods. The results also revealed that reduction in the economic and emotional burden of parenthood, improvements in maternal health and child survival etc were the perceived benefits of modern methods of Family Planning.

Educational level refers to an individual's highest level of formal education completed, typically categorized into stages such as primary, secondary, vocational training, undergraduate, postgraduate, etc. It reflects the knowledge, skills, and qualifications acquired through formal learning processes. Higher educational attainment often correlates with greater access to information, critical thinking skills, and exposure to diverse perspectives. Individuals with higher levels of education tend to have better opportunities for employment, economic stability, and social mobility. Education also plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, including those related to health and family planning. Men with higher educational levels are more likely to have better awareness and understanding of reproductive health issues, including family planning methods, benefits, and risks. This knowledge can lead to more informed decision-making regarding contraception and family size. Education often fosters more progressive attitudes towards gender equality and shared decision-making within relationships. Men with higher education levels may be more supportive of women's reproductive autonomy and health choices, including decisions related to contraceptive use and family planning. Research suggests that men with higher educational attainment are more likely to engage actively in family planning discussions and practices. They may be more willing to use contraceptives and participate in reproductive health care decisions with their partners. Education is closely linked to socio-economic status, which in turn influences access to healthcare services, including family planning. Men with higher educational levels are often more economically empowered, which can facilitate better access to contraceptive methods and reproductive health services.

Abdurraheem, Msughter, and Suleiman (2019) carried out a research on the attitude and perception of family planning among rural couples in rural parts of Nigeria: A study of

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Danmusa local government area of Katsina state. Nigeria. The main goal of the study was to investigate the people's knowledge, attitude and perception towards family planning practices in Danmusa local government area of Katsina state. The findings showed that couples' skepticism towards modern family planning is influenced by level of education. Again, level of education was discovered to be major factor that determine couples' attitude, knowledge and perception towards family planning in Dan Musa local government area.

Baby gender preference refers to the desire or preference for a specific gender (typically male or female) of a child within a family. It reflects societal, cultural, and personal beliefs about the roles and characteristics associated with each gender. Gender preference can influence family dynamics, reproductive decision-making, and societal norms regarding family size and composition. Gender preferences are shaped by cultural, social, and economic factors, including traditional gender roles, inheritance practices, and societal expectations regarding family lineage. Preferences for sons or daughters can impact family planning decisions, fertility intentions, and attitudes towards contraception. Gender preferences are often embedded in cultural norms and expectations. In many societies, there may be a preference for sons due to factors such as inheritance patterns, carrying on family names, or societal roles traditionally assigned to males. Men's attitudes towards family planning can be influenced by these cultural beliefs about gender roles and family dynamics. Men may face pressures from extended family members or societal expectations regarding the desired gender composition of their offspring, these pressures can influence reproductive decisions, including the timing of pregnancies, use of contraceptives, and family size considerations. Personal beliefs and psychological factors play a role in shaping gender preferences. Some men may express preferences based on their perceptions of parenting experiences, cultural ideals, or aspirations for family dynamics. Gender preferences may have substantial implications for a couple's fertility behaviour. Unfortunately, there is only limited empirical research investigating this subject in Nigeria. This study is therefore designed to fill the gap.

Igbolo (2016) examined the effects of culture on child preference and its implications for fertility behaviour as well as population growth in Cross River State, with a view to isolating factors which will be of importance to policy makers and planners in addressing high fertility levels. The study found that because the society is patrilineal in nature, with descent traced only through the male patriarch, there was a strong preference for male children, which in turn affects the fertility behavior of the people.

In rural communities in Rivers State, the problem of unintended pregnancies which could lead to financial strain, emotional stress, unsafe abortion and challenges in managing family size is in occurrence. Inadequate support from men also limits the women's access to contraceptives, this restricts their reproductive autonomy. Thereby making them to become vulnerable to unplanned pregnancies and related health risks due to complications during pregnancy and being pregnant in quick successions. All these do not only affect the women, but also the children. Quick and successive pregnancies, due to lack of family planning creates negative impact on women's educational and career aspirations, by disrupting women's education, limiting their opportunities for personal and professional development. This, in turn, can perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality within families. Male opposition

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK and contraception discontinuation through physical abuse are widely documented, specifically through spousal retaliation due to disagreement about whether to use contraception, this brings about undue problems between the couple which might even result in separation. Incessant population growth is a widely known problem related to lack of family planning which has exacerbated existing challenges related to resource scarcity. In light of these problems, the aim of the study was to study socio-cultural determinants of men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of study are:

1. To examine the relationship between culture and men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
2. To investigate the influence of income status on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
3. To investigate the influence of educational level on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
4. To find out the influence of baby's gender preference on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does culture relate with men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does income status influence men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does educational level influence men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?
4. To what extent does baby gender preference influence men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?

The following corresponding null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between culture on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant influence of income status on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant influence of educational level on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.
4. There is no significant influence of baby gender preference on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

Ex-post facto and correlational research design was employed for this study. Ex-post facto research method is suitable for investigations done retrospectively to identify possible cause-

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and-effect relations between the variables under study through observation of existing conditions and inquisitively searching back historically for the plausible causal factors (Kpolovie, 2016). The population of the study comprised of all married men in selected communities in Rivers State. Due to lack of proper records and the issue of unregistered marriages, there is no actual record of the number of married men the area of study. The sample size for the study comprised of 200 married men who were drawn using accidental and purposive sampling technique. In this case, where there is no fixed institution where married men can be readily met, the researcher interviewed available male adult in the communities to determine if they meet the researcher's criteria (married men). After determining those who meet the criteria, the researcher used purposive sampling technique, the researcher used only those who met the criteria to carry out the research. Two instruments were used for data collection. The first instrument was a questionnaire titled "Determinants of Men's Attitude towards Family Planning Questionnaire" (DMATFPQ) which was constructed by the researcher. The instrument is categorized into two sections (A and B). Section A consist of demographic Information like educational level, income status, baby gender preference. Section B consisted of items measuring culture as it relates to family planning. The second instrument was a questionnaire titled "Attitude Toward Family Planning Questionnaire" (ATTFQ). The instrument consist of items measuring attitude of men towards family planning. The questionnaires adopted a four point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) which would be scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by two experts in Measurements and Evaluation. They were requested to evaluate the instrument on item content, relevance, comprehensiveness, and clarity. Their suggestions and corrections were integrated before printing the final version of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha method was used in estimating the reliability of the instrument. The instruments was administered 20 respondents who were not be part of the main sample. The responses were collated and analyzed using Cronbach Alpha technique. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.76 and 0.81 for DMATFPQ and ATTFQ respectively. These indices showed that the instruments were reliable. Administration of the instruments were done directly with the help of two research assistants. Data generated were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation, one way ANOVA as well as independent t-test.

RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent does culture relate with men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between culture and men's attitude towards family planning in in rural communities in Rivers State.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the extent culture relates with men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Variables	N	R	r ²	Alpha	Sig	Result
Culture	200	0.045	0.002	0.05	0.523	Insignificant
Attitude to Family Planning	200					

The result displayed above shows that calculated r is 0.045. The r value shows that culture has a positive relationship with men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. This means that any change in culture will definitely reflect a change in men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. The r² value is 0.002. This means that culture accounts for just 0.2% of variation in men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. Calculated sig value is 0.523. Since the sig value which is 0.523 (0.523<0.05) is more than the alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained meaning that culture has no significant positive relationship with the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does income status influence men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of income status on men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Table 2 ANOVA of the extent to which income status influences men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Income Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low income	34	29.98	6.491
mid income	78	26.89	7.599
High Income	112	50.98	16.934

	Sum of Sq.	Df	Mean Sq.	F	Sig.	Result
Between Groups	17295.274	3	5765.091	50.403	.000	Significant
Within Groups	22418.321	196	114.379			
Total	39713.595	199				

The table 2 above shows that low, mid and high income men were 34, 78 and 112 respectively. Their mean values were 29.98, 26.89 and 50.98 respectively. Their standard deviation values were 6.49, 7.59 and 16.93 respectively. From the mean values, it is seen that high income men have more positive attitude towards family planning followed by low income and lastly by mid income men. Calculated F value is 50.403 while the sig value is 0.000. Hence, since sig (P =0.000<0.05) was less than 0.05 alpha, the null hypothesis was

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rejected meaning that there is a significant influence of income status on men's attitude
towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does educational level influence men's attitude
towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of Educational level on men's attitude
towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Table 3 ANOVA of the extent to which educational level influences men's attitude towards
family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Educational Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation			
FSLC-B.Sc. (Ed)	85	29.20	5.954			
Masters	65	41.63	18.170			
Ph. D	50	35.06	14.219			
	Sum of Sq.	Df	Mean Sq.	F	Sig.	Result
Between Groups	5700.037	2	2850.018	16.507	.000	Significant
Within Groups	34013.558	197	172.658			
Total	39723.595	199				

The table 4.3 above shows that means values for men who have FSLC-B. Sc., Masters
degrees and Ph. D were 29.2, 41.63 and 35.06 respectively. Their standard deviation values
were 5.954, 18.170, and 14.219 respectively. From the mean values, it is seen that men who
are Master degree holders have more influence on their attitude towards family planning
followed by those whose parents are Ph. D holders and lastly by those who are FSLC-B.Sc.
holders. Calculated F value is 16.507 while the sig value is 0.000. Hence, since sig (P
 $=0.000 < 0.05$) was less than 0.05 alpha, the null hypothesis was rejected meaning that there is
a significant influence of Educational level on men's attitude towards family planning in rural
communities in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: To what extent does baby gender preference influence men's
attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant influence of baby gender preference on men's
attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

Table 4 Independent sample t-test analysis of the extent baby gender preference influences
men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State

Baby Gender preference	N	Mean	Std. D	t	df	Sig.	Result
Male	87	29.17	5.887	-5.164	198	.000	Significant
Female	113	38.96	16.908				

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The result displayed showed a mean value of 29.17 and 38.96 respectively for male baby preference and female baby preference as well as the scores for standard deviation value of 5.887 and 16.908 respectively. These mean values show that the preference for female baby had more influence on the attitude of men towards family planning when compared to the preference for male babies. The calculated t value was -5.164 while the sig value was 0.000. Hence, since the sig value ($p=0.000<0.05$) is less than the alpha level of 0.05 at 198 degrees of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected meaning that there is actually a significant extent to which baby gender preference influences the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question one revealed that culture had a positive relationship with the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. In contrast, hypothesis one revealed that there is actually no significant positive relationship between culture and the attitude of men in rural communities in Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that culture related positively with the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State, but this relationship is insignificant. This means that there is a negligible relationship between men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. This finding is expected by the researcher because, culture is one of the factors that make up a man's personality. This finding is supported by the findings of Shaibu, Owoyemi, Gomment, and Yunusae (2024) who stated that one of the socio-cultural factors affecting modern family planning methods among married men in the study area was Culture.

Research question two revealed that the income status of men had an influence on the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis two revealed that there is actually a significant extent to which the income status of men influences their attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that the income status of men to a great extent influenced their attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. This means that the higher the income status, the better the attitude towards family planning. This finding is expected by the researcher because, when parents are educated, there arises a great level of support for the academic journey of their children. This finding is supported by the findings of Ugbede et. al., (2024) who stated that the perceived hindrances to the practice of family planning methods included high cost of contraceptives, which made income status a significant factor which influences the practice of family planning among men in the study location.

Research question three revealed that educational level of men had an influence on the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis three revealed that there is actually a significant extent to which educational level of men influences their attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that the educational level of men to a great extent influenced the attitude of men towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. This means that men with higher educational level tend to react differently to family planning

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when compared to men with lower educational level. This finding is expected by the researcher because, the higher the level of learning, the higher the level of reasoning as well as approach to matters. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Abdurraheem, Msughter, and Suleiman (2019) whose result revealed that level of education was discovered to be major factor that determine couples' attitude, knowledge and perception towards family planning in Dan Musa local government area.

Research question four revealed that baby gender preference had an influence on men's attitude to family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis four revealed that there is actually a significant extent to which baby gender preference influences men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that baby gender preference to a great extent influenced men's attitude towards family planning in rural communities in Rivers State. This means that men with preference for female babies would buy into the idea of family planning more than with the preference for male babies. This is because most men prefer to have males than females. This finding is expected by the researcher because a lot of men lay more emphasis on male children and thus, can do anything to have male children. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Igbolo (2016) whose result revealed that because the society is patrilineal in nature, with descent traced only through the male patriarch, there was a strong preference for male children, which in turn affects the fertility behaviour of the people.

CONCLUSION

Socio-cultural factors are and will remain important influencers of men's attitude towards family planning so long as maternal health and child delivery is concerned. Today, the health sector records so much displeasure in men's approach towards family planning and all these have been linked to the different socio-cultural factors highlighted in the study. In as much as these factors have been discovered to have influence over men's attitude towards family planning, it is important to note that the direction and extent to which these factors are manipulated determines to a large extent, the direction and extent to which the attitude of men towards family planning can be attained. Equally, this study has shown that socio-cultural factors influenced men's attitude towards family planning to an extent.

Recommendations

1. Men should be sensitised and taught on how the different socio-cultural factors can influence their attitude towards family planning.
2. Men should be enlightened on the importance of family planning towards their finances and marriages as well as family relationships.
3. The Government, Non-Governmental Organisations and other stakeholders in the education system should organise seminars that will help men understand the importance of family planning.

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