Using Role Model Mothers in Rural Communities to Increase Uptake Of IUCDs among Muslim Women in North West Nigeria

AUTHORS  Alhamdu H, Ayanti J,

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BACKGROUND

Nigeria has a maternal mortality ratio of 565/100,000. In Northwest Nigeria, issues of low contraceptive prevalence (2.5) and high total fertility (7.3) are of serious concern to policy makers and programmers alike. The use of long term family planning methods especially the IUCD is very low in this part of the country due to myths and misconceptions. A way of improving access, piloted by the Society for Family Health in Northern Nigeria, is reviewed in this paper.
Society for Family Health, a non-governmental organization leading in the social marketing of RH/FP products in Nigeria tested an intervention aimed at improving access to FP products. Findings from previous studies revealed misconceptions about the return to fertility after use of modern methods (e.g. IUCD) of family planning as one of the barriers to uptake of modern methods.
The project therefore identified role model mothers at a clinic strategically located in the intervention area for women who were attending antenatal and postnatal clinics.

Some of these women role models had successfully used long term methods of family planning in the past.
These women were recruited as mobilisers to reach other women of reproductive age within their localities.

Another clinic in a similar community was used as the control.
The study was conducted in Yacham and Sanibel clinics which are located in Badawa and Gwagwarwa communities respectively.

Yacham was selected as the intervention site, while Sanbel clinic was used as the control site. Both communities are located in Kano and the clinics and the communities have similar characteristics in terms of demography and cultural setting.
The women were carefully recruited based on strict criteria, including evidence of previous use of a longer term method. These women were to act as change agents within the community, and were to reach women of reproductive age within their locality through peer education and small group meetings.
The results of the study indicate that Yacham clinic, the intervention site that used role model mothers as mobilizers, had an increase in IUCD uptake from 8 women at inception to 147 women over the seven months of the study.

Analysis show that the 147 women came as a result of mobilisation activities. Over 230 women in total visited the clinic within the period.

In the control clinic where role model mothers were not engaged, the increase in uptake was from 3 insertions at inception to 13 women over the seven months period.
PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS/conclusion

☐ The study has shown that use of role model mothers who have used long term methods and successfully resumed fertility can be a catalyst to address a main misconception about the use of FP and this can increase uptake of long term methods of family planning amongst other women.

☐ It is possible to be scale up and replicate the approach in other communities, however further research needs to be done to determine additional factors that can be instrumental to improving uptake in small northern communities.
Policy environment can be influenced via role models who can further create enabling environment for programme in highly sensitive communities besieged by myths and misconceptions on modern FP
A role model mobilizer during a group session with women in an islamiya school
Pictures

- Mobilizer addressing questions from potential client

- Providing details on LTMs to women of reproductive age
Demonstrating how implant procedure is done

Discussing the importance of modern child spacing methods
Questions?