

## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the factors which influence contraception decision-making among Grade 9 or Form 3 students attending secondary schools within Kingston and St. Andrew (Corporate Area). A cross-sectional study which involved a random sample of 220 students drawn from six schools, (one all-female, one all-male and four co-educational) was carried out during the month of March 1997.

The results showed that there was a significant difference between the number of females and males who were attending school. It was observed that the students did not have good knowledge on fertility but indicated that they were well aware of the condom and the pill. Closer examination to validate this knowledge, proved to be the corollary of what they had indicated, concerning the use of the pill.

Generally, students had good attitude toward fertility and contraception but seemed to be unclear about the difference between abortion and contraception. Only a small percentage of them used a contraceptive, of which more males than females used a method, hence the condom was found to be used most popularly among this sub-group.

The pharmacy remained the main source of providing teenagers with contraceptives, but students' preferences were the Doctor's Office and the Family Planning Clinic. The level of counselling was average and students main reason

for their choice of method was related to health reasons.

A significant number of males than females indicated that they had sufficient information to choose a method and 58% of them had been exposed to FLE, and 84% had good to fair knowledge on fertility and contraception. A fairly large percentage of students were dissatisfied with the FLE programme in their schools. Students suggested various sources from which they obtained information and cited the media (1st) and youth group as the most acceptable place where sex education information should be made available.

A large majority of the respondents (96,7%) did not want to have a child now. The reasons for their choices were based on their perception of predisposing and enabling factors. The majority of students, least considered educational and future job benefits as part of their decision-making concerning contraception.

The majority of the students did not want to enter into motherhood or fatherhood, at this stage of their lives. But the results showed that they were lacking in several of the essential requirements, necessary for making sustained contraception decision-making.