

**THE ROLE OF MEN IN FAMILY PLANNING
A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE**

A Project Report

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Abstract

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of women aged 15-49 years inclusive regarding the role of men in family planning.

Design: Cross-sectional study

Subjects: Women attending Duhaney Park Health Centre and Health Plus Associates Private Practice. (n=200)

Methods: Quantitative surveys and focus group discussions were conducted among women aged 15 to 49 years attending the Duhaney Park Health Centre and the Health Plus Associates Private Practice. The women were clients registered for care held at both health institutions.

Results: Most women (95%) believed that men had an emotional role to play in family planning. The intellectual and physical roles followed with 84.5% (169) and 83% (166) respectively and only 55.5% (111) of the women believed their role should be financial. Older, professional, educated women were the least interested in men playing any kind of role. Women who practised clandestine contraceptive use were older with a mean age of 30.87 ± 8.78 years, with 40.4% (21) of these women being unemployed and 23.1% (12) unskilled. 1.5% (2) of the women from the Health Centre and 16.7% (10) of the women from the Private Practice admitted having an abortion in the past with half giving their youth as the reason.

Conclusion: The majority of women believe that men's role is a combination of financial, physical, intellectual and emotional aspects. Older, professional, educated women were the least interested in men playing any kind of role. Many factors may contribute to how women view the role of their partner in family planning and the most significant were socioeconomic status, parity and age of women and the education level of the partner. Couple's perceptions and beliefs can be used by programme planners to develop effective family planning services which in time will slow the growth of the world's population.