

# **Impact of large family size on the quality of life among women in Benin metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria.**

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## **The extended version of my abstract**

### **Introduction**

This paper tries to assess the impact of large family size on the quality of life of women in Benin metropolis, Edo State. Family and population studies report that large number of children to cater for limits women access quality health-care services, housing, education nutrition, portable water, employment and other social facilities in the community. Catering and nurturing so many numbers of children has negative affect women's reproductive health, over stretched their capacity, decreases their life span and increases mortality rate in the country. Population studies have disclosed that poor development in Africa and other developing countries could be attributed to high population figures in most part of underdeveloped world.

Today in Nigeria more than ever the before, women's quality of life is extremely low due to socio-cultural and psychological inequities. Many women do not have say in their reproductive health matters, it is always determined by their husbands' decisions on the number of children to have and perceived vulnerability to low quality of life. Current development and social changes in population studies report that women with large number of children is gradually broken down due to economic recession, high employment rate, education, economic adjustment programmes, urbanisation and organisational changes worldwide.

## **Objectives of the study**

This study was set out to assess the impact of large number of children on women's quality of life in the area of:

- (a) Access to health-care services
- (b) Living in a decent accommodation
- (c) Access to high paid employment
- (d) access to high quality education

**Method:** A total of two hundred currently married women with minimum of four children, age ranged between 25-42 years, their mean age was 31 years with standard deviation of 11.4, were randomly selected from two local government of Oredo and Ikpoba Okhae within Benin metropolis. Respondents were selected through local meetings and community unions with informed consent. Data were collected through questionnaire designed by the researcher after focus group survey or pilot study. The questionnaire centered on the focal areas: access to health-care services, access to higher education, better-paid employment and housing or accommodation. It was designed with simple language to enhance easy and better understanding by the respondents in the study. A total of twenty items with each factor containing five items in the questionnaire. However, the psychometric properties of the instrument were determined showing validity coefficient of 0.78 and split half of 0.56 respectively.

**Results :** The results revealed that 80% of the total women are poor or live within low income which invariably affects their ability to access modern hospital health-care services, greater percentage of the respondents had secondary education while 54% showed low knowledge of fertility control measures. Also, the results disclosed that 79% of respondents live in densely

populated areas of the city while 54% of women suffer from gender imbalance relations. Furthermore, 84% of women reported to be fetching water from local well or ponds, as government facilities are not available to them, 67% of women said to be living within one room apartment which has both medical and psychological implications.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion of this study is that having and nurturing large numbers of children is strong determinant for low quality of life among women. Therefore, structured education should be chanelled to educate women to practice fertility control in order to improve their quality of life. Also, men and husbands should be informed of the importance of having fewer children to enable them enjoy better quality of life.

The implication of the study is that fewer children should be encouraged among families to enable them have development and enjoy better quality of life.