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The attitudes and activities of pastors and faith leaders in Zimbabwe on the use of family planning methods among their members

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Faith pioneers being the essential gatekeepers in disseminating reproductive health messages as well as influencing change in positive behavior within communities. Faith pioneers are seen as the most powerful, visible and reachable form of authority even trusted more than governments or non-profit organizations. In addition to providing counsel and advice aimed at enhancing health and well-being of the worshippers, faith leaders also play an important role in advocating and influencing what is taught in schools and what services are provided in healthcare facilities. Due to this impact, faith leaders mostly have an unparalleled opportunity—indeed, an ethical obligation—to prioritize discussion about family planning, advocating and closing the contraception gap.

Objectives: The overall objective of this study was to ascertain the attitude and activities of pastors and faith leaders in Zimbabwe on the use of family planning methods among their members.

Methodology: Methods like qualitative studies being used to understand better about the attitude and activities of pastors and faith leaders in Zimbabwe on the use of family planning methods among their members. The participants of this survey were drawn from 8 of 10 provinces in Zimbabwe. In personal face to face meetings paper-based questionnaires were answered by 24 pastors and 26 faith leaders in Zimbabwe, with few selected pastors and faith pioneers interviews were conducted. The samples were drawn from randomly selected churches in Zimbabwe. Data were analyzed using Epi info 7 and Microsoft Excel.

Results: The result of this study revealed some faith leaders believed that spreading information about family planning education was the responsibility of the government and tended to avoid such responsibility. However, through training in family planning advocacy much can be achieved.

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