

**FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION AND PRACTICES AMONGST RURAL NON-
LITERATE WOMEN IN THE REPRODUCTIVE AGE: THE CASE OF MBAARE SUB-
COUNTY, ISINGIRO DISTRICT.**

By

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2012/HD04/1140U

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND
GRADUATE TRAINING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER DEGREE IN ADULT AND COMMUNITY
EDUCATION OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

November 2014

Abstract

This study aimed at finding out about the family planning education and practices of rural non-literate women in the reproductive age in Mbaare Sub-County Isingiro District. It specifically intended to assess the attitude of non-literate women towards family planning; to determine how non-literate women acquire family planning knowledge; to identify the different family planning practices used by non-literate women in the reproductive age and to find out family planning education needs of non-literate women if they are to effectively use family planning. In trying to understand the above objectives, the researcher employed an exploratory study design in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the responses regarding family planning education and practices of rural non-literate women of Mbaare. In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were the main data collection methods used amongst thirty four (34) rural non-literate women.

Findings from the study showed that rural non-literate women in Mbaare Sub-County acquired family planning knowledge and information through friends, peers, relatives, Traditional Birth Attendants, the local radio and very few from health centers. This information was mainly acquired informally and through experience and this greatly influenced their attitudes which were negative towards family planning utilization. They used the information and experience from friends, relatives and peers to make their own family planning choices and decisions than relying experts' knowledge. This knowledge that was acquired informally was inadequate, lacking in scientific evidence and therefore could not favorably allow women to utilize modern family planning services effectively considering many challenges they faced including lack of sexual feelings, prolonged bleeding, loss and gain of body weight among others.

This research concludes that experiential and informal learning processes through which rural non-literate women acquire knowledge and information on family planning methods are never organized and planned by family planning experts an issue that has greatly created a knowledge gap between the family planning practitioners and consumers in this case the non-literate rural women. These knowledge gaps negatively influence the attitude of women towards family planning use, creating the unmet need as is the case for Mbaare S/c. This study therefore recommends that specific Village Health Teams be trained to identify and train those mothers and peers to disseminate adequate family planning information, and that the Functional Adult Literacy that teach non-literate women how to read, write and numeracy skills should be utilized to make the women access FP information. Also, a variety of media can be adopted rather than depending on just informal learning approaches.