

## **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND WOMEN'S PERCEPTION OF FAMILY PLANNING METHODS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract:** *This study investigated the effect of social media marketing on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State. Research design approach was adopted for this study. The population for the study consisted of women of reproductive age and nursing mothers between the ages of 18 to 45 years and above who are involved in family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State. Sample size for the study consisted of 400 respondents, determined using Taro Yemane formula, since the population was finite. The main source of data used in this study was from primary, gathered with the use of an adjusted 4-point Likert scale questionnaire. Respondents were selected using the convenient sampling technique. Data collected were analyzed using table, frequency and percentage, while hypotheses were tested using simple regression analysis with the help of SPSS 24. Findings revealed that influencer marketing, educative contents and engagement had positive and significant effect on women's perception of family planning. It was concluded that influencer marketing, educative contents and engagement were positive and significant predictors of women's perception of family planning methods. It was therefore recommended amongst others that government and other stakeholders should partner with key influencers to build trust and credibility among women about family planning methods on social media platforms.*

**Key Words:** *Social media marketing, women's perception of family planning methods, influencer marketing, educative contents and engagement*

### **Introduction**

Digital marketing is without a doubt one of the most important technologies that has fully changed the world. The Internet made it possible for digital marketing to become a paradigm shift. Creating

awareness of available products in the past was usually done using traditional methods like radio stations, printing media, and billboards. Still, these changes are the biggest they have been since the onset of the internet in the 1990s. Social media marketing, search engine optimisation, pay per click, content marketing, email marketing, marketing analytics, influencer marketing, viral marketing, and many more have all been used successfully in digital marketing. All of these sites have been very helpful in running business activities. And have impacted the way people shop, get information, and consume. This is something that every marketing company that cares about their job should take very seriously. Many of the ways that internet users and other product buyers talk to each other have changed because of social media marketing. This, in turn, has an effect on the way that these people buy things.

Considering that we live in the digital age now, social media marketing is an important part of our daily lives in all age groups. Making this possible has allowed people to quickly and easily talk to each other, no matter where they are in the world. So, marketers have changed their strategies because it is thought that in the future, marketing to consumers will focus on mobile devices and social media sites (Ziyadin, Doszhan, Borodin, Omarova & Ilyas, 2019). It is observed that, the main idea behind social media marketing is to use people's natural conversational channels to build relationships with them and meet their needs (Hajli, 2015). In 2010, Kaplan and Heinlein said that social media is a group of internet-based programmes that build on the ideas and technologies of Web 2.0. Users can make and share their own content through these apps, which also help businesses connect with customers, build relationships, and keep those relationships strong quickly and cheaply. Social media marketing involves changing and affecting what people think, feel, and do.

A few years ago, marketing was done in person, and many businesses were successful even before the internet and social media ads set in. Today, all of those things have changed, and social media is now an important part of modern business organisations from the point of view of both traditional businesses and their clients. One of the most interesting things about social media is that it can be used in all kinds of areas, like marketing, engineering, medicine, law, education, and more. In the health sector, for example, one common way to promote family planning is through social media marketing. This is done to make people aware of the benefits of using family planning. This is because knowledge has the power to change people's thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and preferences for the better. This kind of communication can also help raise awareness, improve knowledge, and eventually lead to the desired change in behaviour as part of a family planning intervention.

A lot of people can share material quickly, easily, and in real time on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The point of these platforms is to make it easier for people to share information. Because of this, the way we live and do business has been completely changed (Agafa, 2020; Mfon 2021; Akpan, Mfon & Ibok, 2022; Suleiman, 2022). Ekong, Mfon & Ibok, 2023). People

use social media marketing to spread the word about a business. Some of the aspects that are used for this purpose are usability, sociability, participation, trustworthiness, social proof, increased publicity, and influencer marketing. In 2010, Kaplan and Heinlein wrote that social media is a platform that is based on technology and makes it easier for people to share their opinions and user-generated material with communities all over the world. This technology can also be thought of as being based on the internet and built on the mathematical and theoretical underpinnings of Web 2.0. User Generated Content (UGC) can be made and shared with this technology.

People are becoming more and more interested in using social media because it can help build strong, long-lasting relationships between companies and customers. On top of that, social media has a lot of communication power. Social media is very popular all over the world. Although it is a fairly new type of media that has grown over the last few years, 84% of people in both Northern and Western Europe use social media; 72% of people in Eastern Asia do the same; 74% of people in North America do the same; 72% of people in Southern America do the same. This number drops to 41% in Southern Asia, 13% in Western Africa, and 7% in Middle Africa (Global Social Media, 2023). In the present modern world, social media sites are always growing and changing to meet the needs and wants of more and more customers.

People, businesses, and the government all use social media marketing to reach out to potential customers and meet the wants of current customers. A lot of social networking sites, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, are being used by the government of Nigeria and Akwa Ibom State in particular to spread information about safe motherhood and effective ways to plan a family. These issues were brought to the attention of women of childbearing age through this effort. Social media's marketing potential has been shown to be quite large, and it has been especially helpful for women who are trying to plan their families. Because of this, the goal of this study was to look into the different ways that social media marketing could be used to change the views that women in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria have about different methods of family planning.

### **Statement of the Problem**

A lot more people are using social media to sell their businesses. Different types of people, companies, and the government use social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter to promote their brands in the digital marketing world. To be able to interact with customers on social media, brands and businesses are putting a lot of efforts and money into a wide range of marketing strategies. All of this is done to make customers happier, keep them coming back, and make them more likely to buy something.

Nigeria is one of many developing countries that is having a hard time because their population is growing so quickly. There are a lot of reasons why women in rural places do not have good reproductive health, some of which are personal problems and problems getting to the right health

care services. Some of the things that make this problem worse are obnoxious ideas about family planning, not understanding it, and not having enough knowledge. Family planning is a practice that not only helps keep the population in check but also makes mothers and children healthier.

Reports that can be trusted about how Nigerian country women feel about family planning are hard to come by. One thing that is missing from the research is a clear picture of how influencer marketing, educational material, and engagement on social media may change women's thoughts about family planning options. This is true even though there is a lot of proof that social media marketing changes how customers in many different industries and countries around the world think. According to the researchers, no research has been done on how women in Akwa Ibom State feel about family planning methods in relation to social media marketing. This is despite the fact that many studies have been done on this topic, such as Emeka (2018), and Mikolajczyk, Stanford, and Rauchfuss. (2013). Against this background, this study looked into how women in Akwa Ibom State feel about the different methods of family planning and how they are related to different aspects of social media marketing, such as influencer marketing, educative contents, and engagement.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of social media marketing on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to;

- i investigate the effect of social media influencer marketing on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- ii determine the effect of social media educative contents on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- iii examine the effect of social media engagement on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

### **Research Questions**

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

- i. How does social media influencer marketing affect women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?
- ii. In what way do social media educative contents affect women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the effect of social media engagement on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

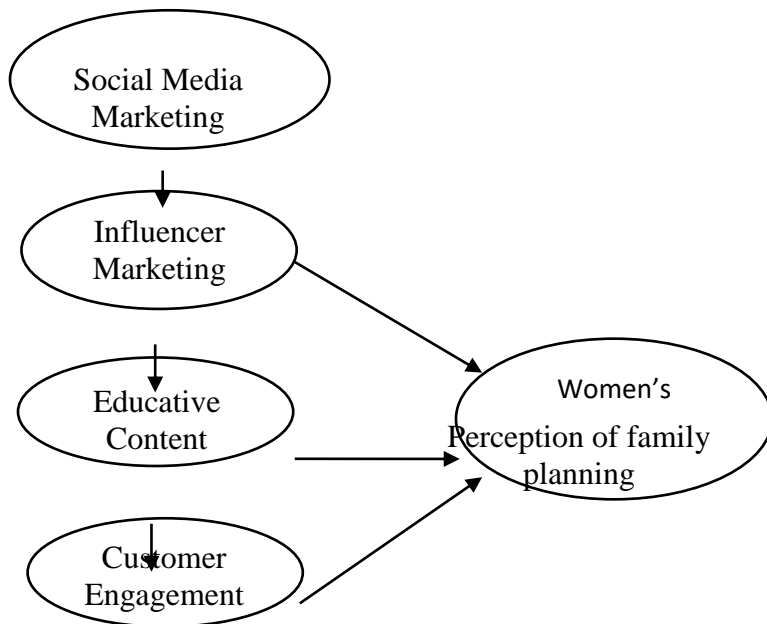
The following null hypotheses were formulated for testing in the study

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** Social media influencer marketing has no significant effect on women’s perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>** Social media educative contents have no significant effect on women’s perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>**: Social media engagement has no significant effect on women’s perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Review of Related Literature**



**Independent variable**

**Dependent Variable**

**Fig 1:** Conceptual Model of Social Media Marketing and Women’s Perception of Family Planning Methods.

**Source:** Researchers’ Conceptualization (2024).

**The Concept of Social Media Marketing**

These researchers see social media marketing as businesses or organizations using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to promote their products, services, or ideas. They create posts, ads, and other content to reach and influence people online. Macaulay and Mfon (2023) define social media as an e-marketing tool that assists a company in promoting its products or services online and also enables the company to communicate with its clients in an effective and efficient manner

through the use of social media channels or handles. It is composed of a number of components, including WhatsApp, Facebook page, Twitter handle, and YouTube, all of which are platforms that facilitate encounters and exchanges of many kinds, including those that are physical, visual, textual, and vocal/audio in nature, with the intention of generating profitable economic transactions.

According to Ravi and Sujaya (2021), social media marketing is a method that enables individuals to promote their websites, goods, or services through online social networks. Additionally, it allows individuals to communicate with a larger audience than would have been feasible through traditional advertising channels. It places more of an emphasis on the group than it does on the individual. Communities can be found on the internet, and they come in a wide variety of forms and sizes. People communicate with one another. In order for social media marketers to effectively interact with members of a group on certain product and service offers, it is their responsibility to utilize these communities in the appropriate manner.

Social media marketing is what companies do to make, talk about, and give online marketing products and services through social media sites, as explained by Yadav and Rahman (2017). The goal of this process is to create and keep relationships with stakeholders that increase the value of customers by making it easier for them to interact, share information, make personalised purchase suggestions, and spread the word about existing goods or services.

## **Influencer Marketing**

Influencer marketing involves collaborating with popular individuals on social media who have a large following. These influencers promote a product, service, or idea to their audience, encouraging them to try or believe in it. Being a person who has a huge number of followers on social media is not the same thing as being an influencer on social media. It is possible that well-known actors, singers, and athletes in the entertainment industry have a sizable following on social media, but they might not engage in any form of influencer marketing. It is possible to characterize a social media influencer as a content producer who builds a following by posting information that is entertaining, informative, and inspirational while simultaneously interacting with their followers.

According to Harvard Business Review (2018), individuals who behave in this manner have the ability to establish trends and create engagement, thereby positioning themselves to collaborate with businesses and brands through the dissemination of sponsored or compensated content. According to Sammis, Lincoln, Pomponi, Ng, Gassmann, & Zhou (2016), influencer marketing is both an art and a science. It involves reaching out to influential people on the internet and encouraging them to share brand messaging with their own audiences.

## **Educative Contents**

These are informative materials shared through media (like videos, articles, or posts) that aim to teach people something new, for example, a video explaining how different family planning methods

work. They constitute instructional or informative contents of social media postings which can be defined as the extent to which they provide readers with knowledge that is both clever and useful (Laryea, 2017). Mosconi, Korn, Reuter, Tolmie, Teli, and Pipek (2017) state that posts in which members inform, notify, or alert other individuals about particular issues are considered informational material. Informational material is created for the purpose of sharing and disseminating useful information with other users and for the purpose of influencing information that can either modify or confirm a person's perspective or position on a specific issue. Simply said, it is all the many kinds of data that are available on social media sites. Egger (2013) argues that the primary motivation behind creating informational material is the desire to facilitate knowledge exchange and dissemination.

According to Gedik (2020), educational content is a compilation of ideas, knowledge on a certain topic, and messages that are disseminated in textual, visual, or audio format and are intended for consumption and further dissemination via the internet. It is important for businesses to create compelling tales in order to connect with their customers, capture their attention, and convert them into listeners. Nevertheless, there are instances when simply telling a fantastic narrative is not enough. It is essential to keep in mind that these narratives are exactly what the audience, which is the target audience, desires to hear and possibly even requires.

## **Social Media Engagement**

This refers to the interactions between media content and the audience. It includes likes, comments, shares, and any other form of response that shows people are paying attention to the content. According to Kumar and Pansari (2016), who define customer engagement as the degree to which a customer is attached to a firm, a higher level of customer engagement is associated with an increase in a company's competitiveness. This is the conclusion that can be drawn from their research. The description that was stated earlier is elaborated upon by Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan (2012), who explain that customer engagement encompass "events and activities engaged in by the customer that are not directly related to search, alternative evaluation, and decision making involving brand choice." This definition allows for a more comprehensive understanding of customer engagement. The alignment between a company's value proposition and the activities that it engages in to offer a great customer experience is the most important component that contributes to increased customer engagement, according to Roberts and Alpert (2010). This is the most essential factor that leads to higher customer engagement.

## **Consumer Perception**

Individuals are able to select, organize, and interpret sensations through the process of perception, as stated by Hanna and Wozniak (2013). Perception can be thought of as a process. The context in which an individual perceives the world around him has an effect on the way that person interprets

that environment. The fact that two consumers can never have the same view about a specific product is something that should be taken into consideration. This is typically due to the fact that their requirements, desires, and preferences are unlike one another. Customers' impressions are extremely significant to business owners since they are the primary factor in determining the level of success, growth, and sustainability that a company enjoys.

The term "consumer perception" refers to the awareness that consumers have regarding a brand, their impressions or opinions regarding the brand, as well as the products and services that the brand offers. Consumer perception does more than influence an individual's purchase; it also shapes the long-term relationship between consumers and brands. As a result, every touch point between a company and its consumers should strive to affect the consumer perception in a positive way in order to result in higher customer retention rates. This is because consumer perception shapes the long-term relationship between consumers and brands. Women's perception of family planning refers to how women view or understand family planning methods. It includes their beliefs, attitudes, and feelings about the use and importance of these methods in controlling when and how many children to have.

### **Family Planning Methods**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), family planning involves determining the number of children one wants to have and the timing of when they want to have them (the timing of pregnancies and the spacing between births). In order to lessen the dangers that are posed to both the mother and the child, it is recommended that a minimum of twenty-four months (2 years) pass before attempting to conceive another child. There is a possibility that a woman could become pregnant within a few weeks of giving birth if she engages in sexual activity and if she is not exclusively breastfeeding her child.

Family planning incorporates all the information, resources, and procedures that enable individuals to determine whether or not to have children and when they should have them. A wide variety of contraceptives, such as tablets, implants, intrauterine devices, surgical treatments that limit fertility, and barrier techniques like condoms, non-invasive methods, such as the calendar method and abstinence, are included in this category. In addition, family planning encompasses the provision of information regarding the treatment of infertility as well as the way to become pregnant when it is desirable, as well as treatment of infertility (UNFPA, 2022).

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), two major categories of family planning methods are, the reversible (temporary) methods and irreversible (permanent) methods (Dibaba, 2010; Tsui, McDonald-mosley, & Burke 2015; Olaitan, 2011). Reversible methods are temporary, whereas irreversible methods are permanent. The reversible (temporary) methods are also known as the spacing methods. The irreversible methods are referred to as sterilization. The decision to go with

them requires serious consideration and deliberation. The most suitable candidates for this form of family planning are individuals who have previously finished having children.

In addition to being referred to as periodic abstinence, natural methods of family planning include a collection of techniques that are founded on the principle of avoiding sexual activity during the fertile period, which is the time when a woman is able to conceive. The natural signs and symptoms that are linked with a woman's menstrual cycle can be observed, recorded, and interpreted in order to determine whenever a woman is most likely to get pregnant. The normal day's approach, the calendar (rhythm) method, the cervical mucus (or ovulation) method, and the basal body temperature method are all examples of these procedures.

The withdrawal (coitus interruptus) method is a technique in which sexual activity is halted and the penis is removed from the vaginal canal prior to the ejaculatory process. There is also the lactational amenorrhea (LAM) which has breast-feeding as its foundation and is also a temporary type of contraception. As a kind of protection against pregnancy, sucking during breastfeeding causes the production of natural hormones that delay ovulation and prevent pregnancy from occurring (Dibaba, 2010; Tsui et al., 2015; Olaitan, 2011).

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Health Belief Model**

The Health Belief Model was propounded by Hochbaum in 1950. The model is a conceptual framework that is utilized for the purpose of comprehending and explaining health-related behaviors. Perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, perceived benefits, perceived barriers, cues to action, and self-efficacy are some of the important constructs that are included in this concept. The Health Belief Model can provide a more in-depth knowledge of how individuals make decisions regarding their reproductive health based on their beliefs and perceptions, particularly in the context of social media marketing and women's conceptions of family planning.

Regarding perceived susceptibility and severity, it is clear that social media platforms have the potential to be utilized in order to promote awareness about the risks of unintended pregnancies and the significance of family planning, using engaging material and educational content to bring attention to the risks and potential health repercussions, with the goal of changing women's views of the severity and susceptibility of the situation. By perceived benefits, it is implied that social media campaigns have the potential to bring attention to the good effects of family planning, such as improved health for mothers and children, economic stability, and personal well-being. Reiterating the perceived benefits of family planning can be accomplished through the use of success stories or testimonials from women who have benefited from the practice.

By perceived barriers, it is implied that misconceptions about various techniques of family planning can be addressed and dispelled with the use of social media. It is possible to offer educational

contents and participation in order to lessen the perception of obstacles and to provide correct information regarding the various contraceptive alternatives, their adverse effects, and their effectiveness. Cues to action comes into play when social media marketing serves as a potent signal to action by encouraging women to seek additional information, speak with healthcare professionals, or take measures toward family planning. Users can be encouraged to think and take action regarding their reproductive health through the use of timely and tailored messaging. Self-efficacy suggests that social media platforms have the potential to empower women by providing them with knowledge that boosts their confidence in their ability to make well-informed decisions on decisions regarding family planning. A higher sense of self-efficacy can be achieved through the utilization of educational content, interactive features, and community support.

### **The Two-Step Flow Theory**

The Two-Step Flow theory, which was introduced by Lazarsfeld and Katz in 1948, implies that certain individuals within a social group are not directly influenced by the ideas that are communicated through the media. Opinion leaders or influencers, on the other hand, first take in and make sense of the content that is presented in the media, and then they exert their influence over others within their social network. It is possible to use the theory in the context of social media marketing and women's perceptions of family planning in order to gain an understanding of the role that influencers play in the dissemination of information and the creation of opinions.

It is necessary to identify and work together with influential individuals who are opinion leaders and have a well-established trust and credibility in the field of family planning. As a result of their dissemination of knowledge, personal experiences, and suggestions concerning various techniques of family planning, these influencers have the potential to exert a considerable influence on the impressions that women hold. By utilizing a variety of social media channels, such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, or TikTok, where influencers are active, one can effectively communicate with a wide range of consumers through the provision of contents that are both entertaining and informative.

It is important to encourage influencers to have conversations with their audience about various subjects related to family planning. Within the realm of reproductive health, this communication in both directions enables the sharing of ideas, the addressing of issues, and the formation of a community that is providing support.

### **Review of Empirical Literature**

The influence of social networks on the utilization of family planning among married men and women was the subject of a study that was carried out by Mtae (2021), and focused on the Mvomero district in Tanzania. The research was conducted using a cross-sectional study design, with a total of 128 married men and women participating. The sampling process consisted of multiple stages,

including both basic random and purposive sampling methods. For the collection of quantitative data, a semi-structured questionnaire was used, and for the collection of qualitative data, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. According to the data, the majority of married men and women in Mvomero were still young, had completed at least one primary school level of education, and were in monogamous marriages. A little less than one third of them did not make use of any form of family planning, and among the methods that were utilized, the most common ones were tablets and injectable techniques. The majority of married men and women had social networks that included both males and females; however, the majority of married women had a greater number of females in their networks, while married men had a greater number of males. As a result, it was suggested that interventions should be planned and implemented with the intention of increasing family planning information and, consequently, utilization among married men and women through social networks. These interventions should target both males and females. Given that males are the ones who make decisions in Tanzania, it is essential that they be encouraged to take an active role in family planning, reproductive health, and health-related concerns.

A research project was conducted by Taiwo, (2017) to investigate the impact of social media on family planning among nursing mothers. The research was conducted at LAUTECH Teaching Hospital in Oshogbo. Utilizing data obtained from social media platforms, the objective of the study was to investigate the level of understanding and utilization of family planning methods of contraception among moms living in the Oshogbo metropolitan area. Using instruments such as other-administered structured interview schedules, in-depth interviews, and informal talk, a cross-sectional study of one hundred and twenty nursing moms was conducted in order to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. According to the findings, the situation is not different in Nigeria, where a considerable proportion of young people who engage in premarital family planning or contraceptives either lack fundamental information about contraception or are uneducated about the practices of contraception. By utilizing a variety of contraceptive techniques, it was suggested that it is possible to avoid unintended pregnancies that are then followed by abortions that are not safe. In addition, information regarding the knowledge, attitude, and practice of contraceptives among young people is of utmost significance due to the high rates of unintended births as well as the rising prevalence of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

Among partnered women in Northern Nigeria, Okunlola, Alawode, Awolaye, and Ilesanmi (2023) conducted research on the use of the internet, exposure to digital family planning messaging, and sexual agency. Among partnered women, the purpose of the study was to investigate the relationships between Internet use, exposure to digital family planning messages through text messages or social media, and sexual agency. Sexual agency was defined as the capacity to refuse sexual activity and to request that a male partner use a condom. The study also aimed to investigate

the differences between rural and urban areas on this front. Both descriptive and multinomial logistic regression analyses were performed on the data collected from the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey to examine the data of partnered women, which totaled 18,205 individuals. According to the findings, 44.6% of women are able to deny sexual activity, and 31.4% are able to request that a male partner use a condom as requested. In the northern region and metropolitan regions, women's ability to deny sexual activity was positively connected with their usage of the internet. Across the region, women were more likely to ask their male partners to use a condom. Additionally, it was found to have a positive correlation with women's nervousness about approaching a male partner with the request to use a condom. It was shown that women's ability to ask a male partner to use a condom was positively associated with their exposure to digital family planning messages across the region, in both urban and rural locations. The exposure of women in metropolitan areas to digital family planning messaging, on the other hand, was found to be negatively associated with their confusion regarding their ability to resist sexual activity. The findings of this study have implications for the implementation of digital family planning interventions

Zinke-Allmang, Hassan, Amiya, Krittika, Amy, Ogolla, Shirly, Kees, and Cislighi (2022) conducted a qualitative study in Peri-urban Nairobi to investigate the ways in which women and their social networks in Kenya use digital media to obtain information about family planning. Within the context of their paper, social norms theory was utilized to investigate the manner in which young women and their social networks receive information regarding family planning through digital media platforms such as WhatsApp and websites. Forty participants, including young women, their spouses, and significant influencers, were interviewed over the phone using qualitative methods. The interviews were performed in seven different Peri-urban wards in Nairobi, Kenya. Thematic analysis was utilized in the study of the data. Based on the findings, it was determined that young women, their partners, and key influencers primarily accessed family planning information online through their informal networks. However, healthcare workers were regarded as the most trusted sources of family planning information. In digital environments, participants reported feeling more at ease when it came to sharing information about family planning. This was due to the fact that digital spaces provided for greater privacy and lessened the discomforts associated with openly discussing family planning.

During the COVID 19 Pandemic, Attya and Aboualhuda (2022) conducted a study to investigate the impact of media exposure on women's utilization of family planning methods and their attitude toward planning their families. Within the context of COVID 19, the purpose of this study was to investigate the impact that exposure to the media has on women's utilization of family planning methods and their attitude towards those methods. An investigation that was descriptive and cross-sectional was carried out on a total of 334 married women. The method of sampling known as the

snowball was utilized. The findings indicated that 53.3% of women have a low desire to avoid pregnancy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, 64.7% of the women who were studied reported that they did not use family planning methods after being exposed to a family planning message in the mass media. The majority of women (76.6%) highlighted holding positive attitudes towards the utilization of family planning methods after being exposed to media. Furthermore, there was a weak positive correlation found between the mass media and the use of family planning for traditional media messages. It was shown that women who were exposed to various forms of media had a good impact on their attitude, despite the fact that they did not use family planning methods throughout the COVID-19 study because they had a low desire to avoid becoming pregnant. As a result, it was suggested that additional quantitative research should be carried out.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The research design adopted for this study was the survey design and in-depth interview. The method used questionnaire as instrument for collecting data.

#### **Population of the Study**

For the purpose of the study, the population consisted of women of reproductive age and nursing mothers who went to General Hospital Ikot Ekpene, UNIUYO Teaching Hospital, Uyo, and General Hospital, Eket for either antenatal, neonatal, or postnatal care. It was anticipated that there were around 247,353.50 women of reproductive age who are now utilizing the modern technique of family planning, as stated by the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) in the year 2022.

#### **Sampling and Sample Size Determination**

Due to the fact that it was not possible to cover the entire population, a sample size was determined using the Taro Yamene Method as shown below;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Required sample size

N = Total population

e = Acceptable tolerance level of error, which is 5% or 0.05

Thus;

$$n = \frac{247,353.50}{1+247,353.50(0.05)^2} = \frac{247,353.50}{1+247,353.50(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{247,353.50}{1+618.38375} = \frac{247,353.50}{619.38375}$$

$$n = 399.60$$

$$n = 400$$

### **Sampling Technique**

For the purpose of gathering information from respondents, a non-probability sampling methodology known as the handy sampling technique was utilized on the basis that it allowed the researchers to simply select individuals who were handy. Copies of the questionnaire were given to the respondents with the assistance of two trained nurses during their visit to the various hospitals in the selected Local Government Areas for prenatal, neonatal, or postnatal care. These copies were retrieved nearly soon after the visit.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument that was utilized for the research was a survey questionnaire, which was divided into two sections: Section A comprising the demographic information of the respondents, and Section B comprising twelve items that were based on a four-point Likert scale that ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

In order to determine the degree of dependability that the research instrument possessed, it was put through the Cronbach Alpha reliability test. The outcome was significantly high enough to warrant the utilization of the study instrument, as shown below;

**Table.1: Cronbach Alpha Pre-test Result**

S/N	Variables	No of Items	Coefficient
1	Influencer Marketing	3	0.734
2	Educative Contents	3	0.677
3	Engagement	3	0.799
4	Perception	3	0.801
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0.752</b>

**Source:** The Researchers' Computation (2024).

The Cronbach coefficients that were calculated for each item were found to be 0.6 or higher, which served as an indication of the reliability or internal consistency of the items that were examined.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Frequency and percentile analyses were done on the data. Analyses, tabulations, and reports were prepared in accordance with the data.

### **Decision Rule**

The decision rule that applied was; reject the null hypotheses if the probability value (p-value) is less than 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ). Alternatively,

accept the null hypotheses if the probability value (P- value) is greater than 0.05 ( $P > 0.05$ ).

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

Table 2 shows the questionnaire administration and response rate

**Table 2: Questionnaire Administration and Response rate**

Local Govt. Areas	Questionnaire administered	Questionnaire returned	Response rate (%)
Uyo	159	148	41.7
IkotEkpene	128	105	29.6
Eket	113	102	28.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Out of the 400 copies of the questionnaire administered, 355 (88.75%) copies were returned and ascertained to be in usable form.

**Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
18-24 years	125	35.2
25-34 years	150	42.3
35-44 years	51	14.3
45-above years	29	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	100	28.2
Married	240	67.6
Divorced	15	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
No formal education	10	2.8
FSLC	100	28.2
WASCE/NECO	65	18.3
HND/BSc	30	8.4
MSc and Above	150	42.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Employed	250	70.4
Not employed	105	29.6

<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Source:** Field Survey Data (2024).

As shown on Table 3, 125 (35.2%) women were between the ages of 18 and 24; 150 (42.3%) women were between the ages of 25 and 34; 51 (14.3%) women were between the ages of 35 and 44 while 29 (8.2%) women were beyond the age of 45. This analysis indicates that more women of reproductive age were included in the sample, implying that they were mature enough to comprehend the requirements of the study and could give valid responses. As regards marital status, the percentages of people who were single, married, and divorced were as follows: 100 (28.2%), 240 (67.6%), and 15 (4.2%) respectively. This analysis shows that a greater percentage of the women were married and suited for the requirements of the study.

In terms of educational qualifications, 150 (42.3%) women, had MSc and higher qualifications; 100 (28.2%) were FSLC holders; those with WASCE/NECO were 65 (18.3%); BSc/HND holders were 30 (8.4%); while 10 (2.8%) had no formal education. This shows that the majority of the women had formal education which indicates that they could understand and address the issues raised in the questionnaire they filled. The vast majority of the women (250; 70.4%) did have jobs while 105 (29.6%) were not employed indicating that the majority of the respondents were engaged and financially independent to go for what they wanted.

**Analysis of Research Statements and Responses**

**Table 4: Summary of Response on Influencer Marketing as a Social Media Marketing**

<b>Variables/Statements</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (%)</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (%)</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
<b>Influencer Marketing</b>					
I find influencer recommendations on family planning methods to be credible.	203 57.2%	97 27.3%	22 6.2%	33 9.3%	355 100%
Influencers play a significant role in shaping my decisions related to family planning	34 9.6%	68 19.2%	126 35.5%	127 35.8%	355 100%
I trust information about family planning methods if it comes from a social media influencer.	198 55.8%	95 26.8%	37 10.4%	25 7.0%	355 100%
<b>Educative Contents</b>					

Educative content on social media platforms has enhanced my knowledge about various family planning methods.	112 31.5%	58 16.3%	88 24.8%	97 27.4%	355 100%
I find educational posts or videos on family planning methods informative and helpful.	206 58.0%	70 19.7%	46 13.0%	33 9.3%	355 100%
Social media platforms are effective channels for disseminating accurate information about family planning.	113 31.8%	116 32.7%	43 12.1%	83 23.5%	355 100%
<b>Engagement</b>					
I actively engage with posts or discussions related to family planning methods	191 53.8%	117 32.9%	30 8.5%	17 4.8%	355 100%
Social media platforms provide me with opportunities to interact with healthcare professionals or experts regarding family planning	116 32.7%	135 38.0%	83 23.4%	21 5.9%	355 100%
I feel empowered to ask questions and seek advice about family planning topics through social media channels	81 22.8%	61 17.2%	128 36.1%	85 23.9%	355 100%
<b>Women's Perception of Family Planning</b>					
Social media platforms have influenced my perception of different family planning methods.	198 55.8%	109 30.7%	37 10.4%	11 3.1%	355 100%
I find social media content about family planning	185 52.1%	116 32.7%	20 5.6%	34 9.6%	355 100%

methods to be informative and useful.					
Social media marketing has played a significant role in raising awareness about various family planning options.	166 46.8%	102 28.7%	46 13.0%	41 11.5%	355 100%

**Source: The Researchers’ Compilation (2024).**

When presented with the statement as to whether respondents believe that recommendations from influencers were credible, 203 (57.2%) had a strong agreement; 97 (27.3%) had an agreement; 22 (6.2%) disagreed; while 33 (9.3%) strongly disagreed. Regarding whether the influencers played a significant role in shaping respondents’ decisions on family planning, 34 (9.6%) and 68 (19.2%) of respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively, while 126 (35.5%) and 127 (35.3%) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Despite the fact that the majority of women, 198 (55.8%) and 95 (26.8%) trusted information about family planning methods if it came from a social media influencer, 37 (10.4%) and 25 (7.0%) of the women did not trust influencers.

Responding to the statement whether educative contents on social media platforms enhanced their knowledge about various family planning methods, 112 (31.5%) and 58 (16.3%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the statement, while 88 (24.8%) and 97 (27.4%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. On whether they found educational posts or videos on family planning methods informative and helpful, 206 (58.0%) and 70 (19.7%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively, while 46 (13.0%) and 33 (9.3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. On the statement whether social media platforms are effective channels for disseminating accurate information about family planning, 113 (31%) and 116 (32.7%) of the women strongly agreed and agreed respectively whereas 43 (12.1%) and 83 (23.5%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

The majority of the women, 191 (53.8%) and 117 (32.9%), indicated that they actively engaged with posts or discussions related to family planning methods while 30 (8.5%) and 17 (4.8%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the statement. One hundred and sixteen (32.7%) and 135 (38.0%) of the women strongly agreed and agreed respectively, with the statement that social media platforms provided them with opportunities to interact with healthcare professionals or experts regarding family planning while 83 (23.4%) and 21 (5.9%) thought otherwise. The women that felt empowered to ask questions and seek advice about family planning topics through social media channels were 81 (22.8%) and 61 (17.2%) while 128 (36.1%) and 85 (23.9%), felt otherwise.

Three hundred and seven (86.5%) of respondents agreed with the statement that social media platforms have influenced their perception of the various methods of family planning, while 48 (13.5%) of respondents disagreed with the statement. There were 301 (84.8%) women who agreed that they found the social media contents about family planning methods to be informative and useful, whereas 54 (15.2%) women disagreed with this statement. The majority of women, 268 (75.5%), were in agreement that social media marketing has played a significant role in raising awareness about various family planning options. However, 87 (24.5%) of women were not in agreement with this statement.

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis One

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Social media influencer marketing has no significant effect on women’s perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State.

**Table 5:** Summary of simple linear regression showing the effect of influencer marketing on women’s perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State.

	<b>B1</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Significant (2 tailed)</b>
Content	0.837	0.278		0.006	0.003
Influencer Marketing	0.929	0.024	0.933	38.998	0.000
Dependent variable- women’s perception					
R=	0.933				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.870				
Adjusted R-Square	0.870				
Std error of estimate=	0.83859				
F-statistics=	520.813				
Probability (Significance p-value=	0.000				

\*Significantly related at 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error

**Source:** The Researchers’ Computation (2024).

A regression coefficient of  $R^2 = 0.870$  is displayed on Table 5. This indicates that the independent variable, influencer marketing ( $X_1$ ), was responsible for 87% of the variation in the dependent variable, which was women's perception of family planning methods. Furthermore, the significant F-ratio, which was calculated to be 520.813, and the p-value, which was calculated to be 0.000, indicate that the outcomes of the regression model could not have been the result of random chance. Furthermore, the results of the study indicate that influencer marketing, which is an indicator of

social media marketing, significantly predicted women's perceptions of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State.

The values of the beta coefficients for Influencer marketing had a statistically significant unstandardized coefficient of  $\beta_{X_1} = 0.929$  and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a positive significant relationship with women's perception of family planning methods. This was done in order to evaluate the degree of change that occurred between the independent variable and the dependent variable. One possible interpretation of this result is that for every unit change in influencer marketing, there will be a 0.929 percent increase in the overall perception that women have regarding family planning. Thus, following the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected due to the fact that the p-value that was obtained, which was 0.000, is less than 0.05 ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). As a result, there is a considerable favorable influence between influencer marketing and the perception that women in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, have of the many various techniques of family planning.

**Hypothesis Two**

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** Social media educative contents have no significant effect on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**Table 6** Summary of simple linear regression showing the effect of social media educative contents on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State.

	<b>B1</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Significant(2-tailed)</b>
Constant	4.145	0.324		12.776	0.000
Educative contents	0.664	0.028	0.841	23.377	0.000
Dependent variable- women's perception					
R=	0.841				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.707				
Adjusted R-Square=	0.705				
Std error of estimate=	1.26060				
F-statistics=	546.466				
Probability( significance p-value=	0.000				

\*Significantly related at 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

**Source:** The Researchers' Computation (2024).

The regression coefficient for the independent variable, educational contents ( $X_2$ ), is shown to be 0.707 on Table 6. This indicates that the independent variable was responsible for roughly 71% of the variation in the dependent variable, which was women's impression of family planning policies. Also,

the fact that the F-ratio was significant at  $F = 546.466$  and the p-value was 0.000 indicates that the outcomes of the regression model could not have been the result of random chance. Furthermore, the findings of the study indicate that educational contents, which are an indicator of social media marketing, substantially influenced women's perceptions of family planning.

In order to assess the extent of change between the independent variable and the dependent variables, the  $\beta$  coefficients for educational contents were found to have a statistically significant unstandardized coefficient of  $\beta X_2 = 0.664$  and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between women's perception of family planning and the  $\beta$  coefficients. The implication of this result is that for every unit change in social media educative contents, there will be a 66.4% increase in the sense that women have regarding family planning. Therefore, is a rejection of the null hypothesis due to the fact that the p-value that was obtained, which was 0.000, is less than 0.05 ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Thus, social media educative contents have a major positive influence on the way that women in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, perceive family planning.

### Hypothesis Three

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Social media engagement has no significant effect on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Table 7:** Summary of simple linear regression showing the effect of customer engagement on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State.

	<b>B1</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Significant(2 tailed)</b>
Content	4.736	0.371		12.772	0.000
Customer Engagement	0.604	0.032	0.781	18.821	0.000
Dependent variable- women's perception					
R=	0.781				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.609				
Adjusted R-Square=	0.608				
Std error of estimate=	1.45421				
F-Statistics=	354.215				
Probability(significance p-value)=	0.000				

\*significantly related at 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

**Source:** The Researchers' Computation (2024).

A regression coefficient of  $R^2 = 0.609$  is displayed in Table 7. This indicates that the independent variable, Engagement ( $X_3$ ), was responsible for roughly 61% of the variation in the dependent variable, which was women's impression of family planning. In addition, the fact that the F-ratio was found to be significant at  $F = 354.215$  and the p-value was found to be 0.000 indicates that the outcomes of the regression model could not have been the result of random chance. Furthermore, the results of the study demonstrated that engagement as an indicator of social media marketing significantly predicted women's awareness of various methods of family planning.

For the purpose of assessing the extent of change between the independent variable and the dependent variable, the beta coefficients for Engagement exhibited a statistically significant unstandardized coefficient of  $\beta X_3 = 0.604$  and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between women's perception of family planning and the value of the beta coefficients. Therefore, for every unit change in engagement, there will be a 0.604 increase in the overall perception that women have regarding family planning. There is a rejection of the null hypothesis due to the fact that the p-value that was obtained, which was 0.000, is less than 0.05 (p-value =  $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Thus, engagement has a major positive influence on the way that women in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, see family planning.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study indicated that there is a substantial relationship between each of the three aspects of social media marketing (influencer marketing, educational material, and customer engagement) and the way in which women in Akwa Ibom perceive family planning. The first hypothesis was tested, and the results showed that influencer marketing has an effect on women's perceptions of family planning in Akwa Ibom State. The regression coefficient for this hypothesis was 0.929, which indicated a high and positive effect. This result is supported by the findings of Zinke-Allmang et al. (2022), who determined that key influencers are the most reliable sources of information for family planning.

The second hypothesis also had a regression coefficient of 0.664, which indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between educational contents and women's perceptions of family planning in Akwa Ibom State. This association is significant since it indicates that there is a substantial correlation between the two. This result is supported by Attya and Aboualhuda (2022), who also found out that there is a favorable association between educational contents and women's perceptions of family planning.

A regression coefficient of 0.604 indicates that there is a significant positive association between customer engagement and women's opinion of family planning in Akwa Ibom State. This finding is supported by the work of Okunlola et al. (2023), who discovered that there is a connection between

customer involvement and women's perceptions of family planning methods in the state of Akwa Ibom.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the discussion of findings, the following conclusions were made:

- i That there is a positive and significant effect of influencer marketing women's perception of the methods of family planning in Alwa Ibom State..
- ii That, social media educative contents have a significant effect on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- iii That, social media engagement has a significant effect on women's perception of family planning methods in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researchers made the following recommendations:

- i. It would be beneficial for the government and other stakeholders to collaborate with influential individuals in order to establish trust and credibility among women regarding family planning methods on social media platforms.
- ii. Educational posts, videos, and articles should be created by government and non-governmental groups. These should be visually appealing, easy to understand, and be customized to a wide variety of family planning difficulties.
- iii. Stakeholders could establish online forums or fora on social media platforms, where women may share their experiences, seek advice, and provide support to one another in the area of family planning methods. This would benefit all parties involved.

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