

CONSTRAINTS TO EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN UNICEF-NUTRITION AND HEALTH PROGRAMME IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the constraints to effective participation of rural women in UNICEF nutrition and health programme activities in the South-East of Nigeria. A multi-stage random sampling was used to source for 288 rural women participants. The collected Data through structured questionnaire and scheduled interview sessions were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, means, and ordinary Least squares regression. Results revealed that the major programme activities the women participated in were Breastfeeding (97.9%), Long lasting Insecticide treated bed nets usage (97%), Delivery by skilled attendants (96%), HIV Counselling and Testing (91%), post-natal care (89.2%), Home gardening (88.9%), Iron and foliate supplementation (86.8%) and others. Results also show that; lack of awareness to the programme and its activities (=3.38), inadequate information on the programme activities (=4.36), inadequate health and nutrition personnel (= 3.22) lack of adequate training of the Community health workers (=3.51) were constraints, lack of proper training of the rural support group (RSG) members (=3.11), Poor service delivery (=3.31), lack of supervision (=3.60), Political interference (= 3.99), long time spent before receiving attention (=3.76) were the major constraints that hindered the women from participating in the programme activities effectively. The regression results show the constraints did affect the effective participation of rural women in the programme activities positively with the F-ratio of 41.64 and significant at 1% alpha level. The study concluded and recommended an extensive advocacy and sensitization of the programme activities, and inclusion of time management skills in training activities for the community health workers, beckoning on the management of the programme to penalize individual state governments that defaults from paying her yearly counterpart funds as it should, to enable the women access and participate in the programme activities to improve their nutrition and health status.

Keywords

