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| **Title: A Synthesis on Low Family Planning Usage in Urban and Rural Ghanaian Communities**  *Co-Authors: Anwei Gwan, MS; Dr. Charles Nowobu, MBChB* |

**(Practicum Project)**

**Objectives:** To outline contributing factors to Ghana's low contraceptive prevalence as defined by evidence-based literature and information gathering at PPAG – CC and the PML/FPU.

**Background:** UNFPA defines Family Planning (FP) as the information, means, and methods that allow individuals to decide if and when to have children. Historically, humans have regarded childbearing as a pivotal component for economic and social advancement. However, many have come to realize the prejudicious nature of this viewpoint. Undesired pregnancies have caused many environmental, politico-economic, and socio-cultural impediments. In 2000 the UN named access to universal FPM and SRHR as goals in the MDGs and has since focused on expanding these ideals worldwide. In Africa, however, contraceptive uptake has stalled, with prevalence only at 36% in 2017. Many sub-Saharan African countries have struggled to improve FPM uptake - Ghana is no exception. **Case Description:** Unstructured qualitative interviews were conducted with healthcare workers, peer educators, and patients in rural and urban Ghana. Supplemental information was attained via literature analysis. Despite the governmental expansion, FPM uptake has been low. The contraceptive prevalence among married women only increased from 22% to 38.4% from 1998-2014. Further discrepancies occurred between Ghana's rural (42.1% usage) and urban areas (35.8% usage). Subsequently, TFR has failed to decline as expected, with women having on average 3.9 children (2017) compared to 6.4 (1988) significantly. TFR in urban areas was 3.3 and 4.7 in rural areas. Three factors contributed: 1.) FPM Misinformation; 2.) Access Barriers; and 3.) Societal Childbearing Pressures. **Conclusion:** Investments in FPM are crucial in ensuring global equity. FP is lifesaving, preventing pregnancy-related health risks and opening up opportunities for increased women's societal contributions. Countries have seen improvements in poverty and infrastructure through the expansion of FPM. Ghana can achieve the same by supporting interventions focused on amplifying the voices and needs of women.