

**THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL IN THE CONTEXT OF TIV
CULTURE**

BY

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(ETHICS)**

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this thesis titled “**THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL IN THE CONTEXT OF TIV CULTURE**” has been duly presented by **GABRIEL TERFA ABIEM (BSU/REL/PHD/12/1758)** of the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Benue State University, Makurdi and has been approved by the examiners.

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I, **GABRIEL TERFA ABIEM (BSU/REL/PHD/12/1758)** do hereby declare that:

- (a) This thesis has been written by me and that it is an account of my research;
- (b) No part of this dissertation, to the best of my knowledge has been presented or published anywhere and at any time for the award of any degree/ higher degree;
- (c) And that all quotations and references herein have been duly acknowledged.

GABRIEL TERFA ABIEM (BSU/REL/PhD/12/1758)

SIGN:.....

DATE:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents: Mr Francis Angbande Anem Abiem, my late father who laid the foundation of scholarship in me and bequeathed me good education as my inheritance and Mrs Monica Nyiwoo Hembra Abiem, my surviving mother, for her responsible motherhood.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focused on the Catholic Magisterium on Birth Control in the context of Tiv culture. It identified the central thesis of the Magisterium and also critiqued its assertions. The research also compared the Catholic Magisterium on birth and the practice of birth control in Tiv culture. The methodology for the collection of data was through primary and secondary sources. The Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control was drawn primarily from Magisterial documents on the subject. The research used a structured questionnaire and oral interviews as primary sources on the practice of birth control in Tiv society. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to randomly selected respondents in five selected local government areas in Tivland of Benue State. These were Makurdi, Gboko, Katsina- Ala, Kwande and Vandeikya. The thesis employed the descriptive, evaluative and comparative methods and analyzed the data collected. It used Natural Law Theory as its theoretical framework. The research found out that the Catholic Magisterium on birth control accepted only the natural family planning methods of birth control as the morally legitimate methods of practicing birth control and rejected all forms of artificial methods of birth control or contraceptives as intrinsically wrong and evil. It also established that in the practice of birth control in Tiv society of Nigeria, couples followed mainly the artificial methods of birth control and only a few followed the natural family planning methods. From the comparison made between the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control and birth control in Tiv society, the research established that only the natural family planning methods could promote human health, the dignity of women and the sanctity of human life which are very important indices of a humane society. The relevance of the research was that it increased understanding of the Catholic teaching on birth control among Catholic Tiv people of Nigeria; thereby providing pastoral resources for leaders and the Church in Tivland. The research recommended that for the Magisterium to be read by many in Tiv society, the corpus of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control be translated into the Tiv language. For a better understanding, a more effective and safe practice of birth control and the enhancement of Tiv society, it also recommended that the teaching office of the Catholic Church should take a further step by making family planning a catechetical issue in the Catholic Church in Tivland.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In Christian tradition, after the creation of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, the book of Genesis has it that God, the creator, blessed them and said to them, “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...” (Genesis 1, 28 NRSV). The blessing expresses God’s establishment of the institution of marriage and also conferring upon it procreative right. Thus, for Christians, marriage and procreation- the bearing of children and education go together. In the Catholic Church for example, the Second Vatican Council (1962- 1965) in one of its documents declared that, “by its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory” (*Gaudium et Spes* No. 48). The Christian view that procreation is central to marriage resonates also in the Tiv culture. Utsua noted that for the Tiv, “marriage is a life generating medium and the rock in which procreation and the family are wrapped” (87).

The procreation that comes with marriage however is not a limitless one because the obligation of parents does not terminate at the procreation of children. They also have the primary obligation to educate and take care of their children. This calls for responsible parenthood and parenting. This refers to the willingness and openness of couples to procreate in proportion to their capacity to adequately educate and take care of their offspring and also meet their other obligations to themselves and to the church and the state. The idea of responsible parenthood leads to the birth control question. The birth control question is formulated by McCarthy as follows:

If a married couple has sufficient reasons to regulate the birth of more children, does it make any significant moral difference whether they do so by avoiding the fertile times in their lovemaking cycle or if they use a contraceptive or sterilizing procedure to eliminate their fertility? (389)

From the formulation of the birth control question, it is evident that the choice of the method of birth control is between the natural family planning (NFP) methods and the artificial methods or contraceptives. There are different responses to the birth control question. For scholars like Karl Barth and James Burtchaell, there is no moral difference in the use of the methods of birth control. Thus, Barth holds that among the methods of birth control none, all things considered, is absolute and exclusively preferred and none also which can be flatly rejected (464). Burtchaell on his part is of the view that couples are free to use any method of birth control and through medical advice and convenience they can be led to the surest and easiest means of birth control (452). However, some scholars maintained that the choice of a method of birth control makes a difference and in the words of Coleman, this is, “critically important from a moral and pastoral viewpoint” (202). For William May, this significance lies in the fact that while the NFP are non-procreative and accept nature, contraceptives are anti- procreative and tamper with nature (16). Thomas Pazhayampallil holds a similar position to that of May and argues that there is a difference because of the, “radical difference in the nature of the actions that bring about the desired result” (1309).

Within Christianity, different denominations have taken different positions on the birth control question. For the Catholic Church, her Magisterium, that is, her teaching authority, holds that the choice of the method of birth control is morally significant. Its significance is rooted in her doctrine of the inseparability of the two meanings and purposes of conjugal love willed by

God and established by Him in the very nature of marriage. These are unitive and procreative purposes. The Magisterium of the Catholic Church thus rejects all forms of artificial means of birth control as intrinsically contrary to the nature and purpose of conjugal love. The Magisterium however, permits only the natural family planning (NFP) method of birth control which is based on the natural fertility cycle of the woman and requires periodic abstinence to practice. She considers other artificial means of birth control like the use of condoms, contraceptives or sterilization as intrinsically wrong (*Humanae Vitae* No. 14). The position of the Catholic Church on the birth control question stated above is well enunciated in her Magisterium in the forms of ecumenical council documents of the Second Vatican Council (1962- 1965), Papal Encyclicals, Apostolic Exhortations, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). The position of the Catholic Magisterium on birth control differs from that of some other Christian denominations. Friday noted that the Church of England or the Anglican Church at the Lambeth Conference of 1930 voted that couples were free to use either the natural family planning methods or contraceptive methods while recognizing the former as the primary and obvious methods (131). According to Resolution 15 of the Lambeth Conference of 1930

Where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, the method must be decided on Christian principles. The primary and obvious method is complete abstinence from intercourse (as far as may be necessary) in a life of discipleship and self-control lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, in those cases where there is such a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, and where there is a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the Conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided that this is done in the light of the same Christian principles. The Conference records its strong condemnation of the use of any methods of

conception-control for motives of selfishness, luxury, or mere convenience (anglicancommunion.org).

This Resolution though it was not explicit on the other methods of birth control that may be used and on the nature of the Christian principles to be followed, we contend that those methods referred to artificial methods and introduced a shift in the teaching of the Anglican Church on birth control that hitherto was against all artificial means of restricting the birth of children. This assertion is based on the fact that at the Lambert Conference of 1908 the Anglican Bishops were alarmed at the growing practice of the artificial means of birth control and they earnestly called upon all Christian people to discountenance the use of all artificial means of birth control as demoralizing to character and hostile to national welfare (churchofengland.org). On her part the United Methodist Church in its “Resolution on Responsible Parenthood” that was adopted in 1976 and amended in 1996 affirmed, inter alia, that, “each couple has the right and duty prayerfully and responsibly to control conception according to their circumstances. They are ... free to use those means of birth control considered medically safe” (umc.org).

The Catholic Church has a significant presence in Tivland with three Catholic dioceses of Makurdi, Gboko and Katsina-Ala. It engages in the mission of evangelization in the respective dioceses guided by her Magisterium. Within the Tiv society, Torkula pointed out that family planning, the regulation of the birth of children, is also practiced, especially because of social and economic reasons (“A Survey of the Marriage and Burial Institutions...” scribd.com). However, in the practice of birth control in Tiv society there seems to be preponderance in the use of artificial methods or contraceptives albeit the natural and traditional methods are also used. This prevalence in the use of contraceptives may be due to the advocacy programmes and activities of the government, non- governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational

organizations and agencies like Planned Parenthood and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that focus on reproductive health services which the provision of contraceptives is a key feature (advancefamilyplaning.org).

Between the position of the Catholic Church and the practice of birth regulation in Tiv society, there is a major difference: while the Catholic Magisterium of the Catholic Church regards only the natural family planning methods as the morally permissible means of birth control, the Tiv society is open to all methods of birth regulation. This openness within the Tiv society to all methods of birth control other than NFP methods can affect others aspects of the lives of couples in Tiv society and beyond like the dignity of women, their health, children and the sanctity of human life. Since the Catholic Church never ceases to interact with the society she evangelizes, it is hoped that when the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control engages the Tiv society in a discourse on the practice of birth control, the former can purify and strengthen the latter and the latter too can provide important elements for deepening the Catholic faith and in the process enhance human dignity and a more humane society. This discourse is even more imperative today, especially in the wake of an increasing advocacy of birth control and family planning methods in Nigeria including within Tiv society by both the government of Nigeria and multinational organizations and agencies like Planned Parenthood and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (advancefamilyplaning.org).

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are different views concerning the choice of the methods of birth control for couples. For example, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control permits only the natural family planning methods as the legitimate methods of birth control and is opposed to all

artificial methods of birth control. Protestant Churches like the Anglicans and the Methodists, accept both natural and artificial methods of birth control. The practice of birth control in Tiv society is also different from what is sanctioned by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. This gives a good ground for comparison between the teaching of the Catholic Church on birth control and birth control systems in Tiv culture. The Catholic Magisterium is chosen here because of its consistency over the years. It has remained the same even in the midst of opposition from within and outside the Church. When the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control is contrasted with practice of birth control in Tiv society, this will reveal areas of agreement and conflict and provide an opportunity for reconciliation in order to enhance the system of birth control in Tiv society. Thus the problem of this thesis is to identify the Catholic Magisterium on birth control and contrast it with the practice of birth control in Tiv culture and society with the view of enhancing the practice of birth control in Tiv society in order to promote the dignity of the human person, marriage and family life and a humane society.

1.3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this thesis is to discuss the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control in the context of Tiv culture and to demonstrate how to enhance the practice of birth control in the Tiv society

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To identify the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control.
- ii. To present the practice of birth control in Tiv culture and society.
- iii. To appraise the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control in the context of Tiv culture and society.

- iv. To recommend ways of enhancing the practice of birth control in Tiv society.

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

There are various religious perspectives on the question of birth control like Christianity, Islam, African Religion and denominational perspectives of the Catholics and Protestants. There are equally other views on birth control that are completely devoid of any religious basis but limited to medical- scientific and other pragmatic considerations. The practice of birth control also varies from one society and religious affiliation to another. However, the study focuses on the views of the Catholic Church on birth control and situates the discussion in the context of Tiv society due to the significant presence of the Catholic Church in Tivland. This has the advantage of providing an insight into how the teaching of the Church on birth control can be reflected in the experiences of the Tiv people. The research covered only the Tiv in Benue State of Nigeria with five selected local government areas in three Catholic dioceses of the Tiv speaking areas namely, Katsina- ala, Gboko and Makurdi that consist of these intermediate areas namely, Jechira, Jemgbagh, Kwande, Sankera and the combination of Lobi and Gwer intermediate areas. The respondents of the research have also been limited only to married Christian couples in Tiv society since they are the only ones that have a legitimate obligation to procreate and hence practice birth control. However, the research is very optimistic that the parts of Tiv society covered will be a reasonable representation of the entire Tiv society, especially considering its homogeneous nature.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

When birth control is mentioned, many people may not really be aware of the moral significance of the different means of practicing birth control. Also within Tiv society there

seems to be a limited knowledge of the teaching of the Catholic Church on birth control. The research is also not aware of any previous work that has articulated the practice of birth control in Tiv culture nor contrasted the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control with the practice of birth control in Tiv society even with the significant presence of the Catholic Church in Tiv society.

Drawing from what has been stated above; this research is significant on different grounds. Firstly, it explicates the concept of birth control with particular emphasis on the teaching of the Catholic Church. Thus there will be an increase in awareness and knowledge within the Church, especially among members of the Tiv society. The increased knowledge will equally influence such members in making decisions about birth control in their families. Secondly, the research is also significant because it has attempted to document the practice of birth control in Tiv culture and society. Such documentation may become a reference point for researchers and anyone with an interest in the subject matter. The third significance of the research is that it has compared the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control and the practice of birth control in Tiv society. This comparison has established the levels of agreement and disagreement between them and aided the proposal of enhancing birth control in Tiv society. The fourth significance of the research is that its findings will guide pastoral agents and leaders in the Catholic Church in their formulation of policies and guidelines on marriage and family life in Tiv society, especially with the renewed commitment by the Catholic Church to the promotion of marriage and the evangelization of the family. Finally, the research is also significant because its findings and recommendations will spur other researchers in the fields of religion, ethics and social sciences to undertake further research in this area.

1.6. METHODOLOGY

The research used primary and secondary sources for the collection of data and then used the descriptive, analytic, evaluative, and comparative methods in analyzing the data collected. The primary materials on Catholic Magisterium on birth control were drawn from relevant Magisterial documents of the Catholic Church such as papal encyclicals and apostolic exhortations, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and ecumenical council documents. The primary sources on the practice of birth control in Tiv society were the responses from a structured questionnaire and oral interviews. A structured questionnaire was administered in five selected Local Government Areas in Tivland. These included Makurdi, Katsina- Ala, Kwande, Gboko, and Vandeikya. Copies of the structured questionnaire were administered to randomly selected respondents. There were a total of 300 hundred respondents of which 90 were males and 210 females. 180 respondents were Catholics and 120 non- Catholics from different Christian denominations. 197 respondents were holders of at least a first degree, 83 had completed their secondary education and 30 had no formal education. Of all the respondents, 130 were civil servants, 55 were health service providers, 40 were into private business, 43 were farmers and 15 were unemployed. For the oral interviews, 25 persons were interviewed; 14 males and 11 females. 15 of them were Catholics and 10 members of non- Catholic denominations. 15 of the interviewees were health service providers, 3 Catholic priests, 3 community volunteers and 4 civil servants. The questions for the interviews were drawn from a list of sampled questions and some items on the questionnaire. Those interviewed were asked the questions by the researcher and they provided an answer to each question as best as they could.

The primary sources above were then synthesized with materials gleaned from books and journals by different authors in Catholic theology, ethics and authors in Tiv culture and society.

Other sources were relevant journals, periodicals, encyclopedias and dictionaries. These materials were sourced from private and public libraries and other materials were gotten from different websites on the internet.

After gathering all the necessary data as outlined above, the research followed the descriptive, analytic, evaluative and comparative methods in analyzing the data. These methods have been adopted because they are more appropriate for a research of this nature that involves the collection of primary data and comparison between two traditions. The analytic method was used in questioning some of the assertions of the Catholic Magisterium on birth control. The descriptive and evaluative methods were used in discussing the practice of birth control in Tiv society and culture. The descriptive was also used in analyzing the oral interviews while the data from the questionnaire was analyzed in percentages. The research also used the comparative method in discussing and appraising the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control in the context of birth control in Tiv society and culture.

1.7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The importance of a theoretical framework to a research of this nature cannot be over emphasized. In the field of ethics, there are many ethical theories that have been propounded as the foundation for the evaluation of human actions. Such theories include: ethical relativism, and Natural Law, to mention only these two. Ethical relativism or particularism is the theory which asserts that morality is a matter for everyone to decide for himself what is morally right or wrong. Dzurgba has noted the claims of ethical relativism as articulated by Andrew Oldenquist to include: “an action that is right in one place or society may be wrong in another; whatever a culture or society thinks is right, is right, for that culture or society; whatever a person thinks is

right, is right for him; everyone ought to do what he thinks is right” (8). Fathothey in explaining ethical relativism averred that for the relativist everything is relative; there are no absolutes and since a last word would be an absolute there is no such thing. Such an assertion, according to Fathothey, if it seems to be too absolute can be softened into an observation that no supreme purpose for man has yet been identified with certainty (35). Ethical relativism breeds only ethical diversity that eliminates objectivity and makes ethical comparison impossible. Natural Law theory asserts that there is a law within the heart of all human beings that enables them to know through reason what is right and wrong and do what is right and avoid what is wrong. In the words of Peschke, Natural Law is, “that law of human conduct which arises from human nature as ordered to its ultimate natural end and which is recognized by the natural light of reason” (97). Natural Law thus aims at protecting the natural order of things at all times and places and applies to all.

From the theories mentioned above, the Natural Law is the more suitable theory to adopt as the theoretical framework for this study. Ethical relativism is not applicable here because it does not have an objective standard of evaluation that is necessary for a comparative study like the present research. The Natural Law, in Latin, *Lex Naturalis*, as mentioned above asserts that there is a law within the heart of all human beings that enables them to know through reason what is right and wrong, and to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. The notion of Natural Law was considered by Greek philosophers like Aristotle and developed by Stoic philosophers who viewed that Natural Law as the objective demand placed on humankind to conform to the givenness of reality (O’ Connell, 150). In the Roman world, the Natural Law was alluded to by jurists like Cicero Gaius and Ulpian. Ulpian, for example asserted that the natural law is the law which teaches all animals, that is, the law common to man and animals apart from any

intervention of human reason (Lobo, 169). Thomas Aquinas, described the Natural Law as, “the participation of the rational creature in the eternal law” (Glenn, 166). Eternal law refers to the law by which God governs the whole of creation, directing each creature to its appropriate end. This law is inscribed in the nature of every creature and enables it to act in a manner that fulfills its purpose of being (Omeregbe, 14). In the words of Peschke, Natural Law is, “that law of human conduct which arises from human nature as ordered to its ultimate natural end and which is recognized by the natural light of reason” (97). Natural Law thus aims at protecting the natural order of things at all times and places and applies to all in equal measure.

The choice of the Natural Law theory lies in its interrelated properties of immutability, universality and indispensability (Pazhayampallil, 148- 156), and how it relates to the birth control debate. The immutability of Natural Law as Peschke explains means that, “as soon as human beings endowed with reason appeared, certain fundamental norms concerning good and evil emerged from their nature, and these will exist as long as human nature exists” (111). He contends that, “there is a constant in human nature which remains throughout all historical and cultural change” (111). Simply expressed, natural law does not undergo changes irrespective of societies and times.

The universality of Natural Law as Pope John Paul II expresses means that, “inasmuch as it is inscribed in the rational nature of the person, it makes itself felt to all beings endowed with reason and living in history. In order to perfect himself in his specific order, the person must do good and avoid evil” (*Veritatis Splendor*, No. 51). The indispensability of natural law, according to Pazhayampallil, is that “nobody may dispense from its observance, because the natural law is necessarily connected with rational nature. As long as rational nature remains what it is, the Natural Law also must remain the same” (153). Natural Law extends to all men and women, it

characteristically binds them and it does not accommodate excuses or immunity in the strict sense.

The concept of Natural Law described by Thomas Aquinas and explicated above by Peschke, Pazhayampallil and John Paul II makes it an appropriate framework for comparative studies because in the diversity of cultures and practices, it unites people by enjoining common principles and insisting that every one lives according to the natural order. Even when the principles of Natural Law are rejected, the law is never destroyed or removed from the human heart and it keeps coming again in individuals and societies (The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 76). Paul posits that even for the so called Pagans, they show that the demands of the law are written in their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even defend them (Romans 2, 15). Conscience creates the awareness in the human heart of the need to always know and do what is right and avoid that which is wrong. Thus conscience, in the words of Lobo, “means that man has the radical capacity to reflect on his being and thereby discern how to act in particular areas of his life and in particular situations” (175). When faced with a conflicting situation, a conscientious heart should continue to search for the truth by consulting experts and Magisterial authorities.

In relation to the birth control question, the Natural Law finds application because the birth control question borders on the natural order of the marriage act which is always aimed at the unity of the spouses and the procreation and education of children. Natural law requires that the unitive and procreative significance of the marriage act are inseparable connections which, being inherent in marriage ought not to be impaired by the free will of human beings. This law is legitimate even when for reasons not left to human will, there is a natural possibility that a particular marriage act will not result in procreation.

1.8. ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

This work is organized into six chapters. Chapter one focuses on the introduction to the study and centres, inter alia, on the background to the study, statement of the problem, the aim and objectives, as well as the significance and the methodology of the study. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter two treats a review of related literature on the study. The review has been done according to themes and authors. It gives both the strengths and limitations of the works and shows how relevant each work is to this research. Chapter three is centred on the Catholic Magisterium on birth control. It highlights the Magisterium on this topic from Pope Pius XI to Pope Francis and also offers a critique of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control. Chapter four of the thesis treats the Tiv people and their thought systems on children and birth control. It gives a general description of the origin of the Tiv people up to their present location. This chapter then establishes the place of children in Tiv culture and also the practice of birth control in Tiv society. Chapter five appraises the Catholic Magisterium on birth control in Tiv culture through a comparison of the two traditions in order to establish areas of agreement and conflict. The last, chapter six consists of summary, recommendations and general conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2. 1. THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL

Pope Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae* (On Human Life), encyclical letter on the Regulation of births, marked a defining moment in the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control. This was because prior to its publication, there were great expectations even within the Church that there was going to be a change in doctrine concerning birth control. The encyclical, *Humanae vitae*, is broadly divided into three major parts and in all consists of thirty one paragraphs. In this document Pope Paul essentially reiterated the teaching on the Church on the question of birth control. However, he averred that, "this kind of question requires from the teaching authority of the Church a new and deeper reflection on the principles of the moral teaching on marriage—a teaching which is based on the Natural Law as illuminated and enriched by divine Revelation" (No. 4). The core of this teaching is that every marital act must of necessity retain its intrinsic relationship to the procreation of human life. (No. 11). Pope Paul VI declared that every form of intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive is intrinsically wrong (no. 14). This assertion of Pope Paul VI is central to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control because after Pope Paul VI, other Magisterial teachings on birth control have taken the views of Paul VI as the point of departure.

In keeping with the traditional position of the Church, Pope Paul VI in this document enunciated the acceptability of natural family planning and encouraged couples to take advantage of it in controlling the birth of their children (No. 16). This work of Pope Paul is very relevant

because it is the high point of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control. This Magisterium will be incomplete without the mention of Pope Paul VI's *Humanae vitae*.

In his article, "The Role of Continence in Conjugal Life," Hamel, Edouard began with the claim that, "spouses are surely aware of the inevitability of periodic continence in their conjugal love" (208). This he says may be as a result of a number of reasons: ill health, separation, religious or spiritual motives, period of physical separation and period of child spacing. At the same time Hamel argues that human sexuality and its dynamics are not restricted to genital activities, insisting that "affective love, which is different from physical genital love, is a basic requirement of marriage, and perhaps its strongest bond"(209). Hamel's book discusses continence, one major practice required in the practice of natural family planning. The author drawing from Pope John Paul II argued that continence is an indispensable condition for both responsible parenthood and conjugal love. He went on to dispel the fear that continence can create tensions and frustrations that can dehumanize the couple, pointing out that these can only occur if the various needs and impulses are simply repressed or forced underground. The research agrees with the views of Hamel on continence although he is also of the opinion that Hamel's work did not adequately highlight on the challenges that are associated with marital continence. This work however is relevant since it deepened the understanding of natural family planning.

In his *Christian Ethics Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II, Volume I: General Moral Theology*, Peschke, Karl H. treats the fundamental principles of Christian ethics that will enhance an understanding of Magisterial teachings in the Catholic Church. Of particular interest here is the question of Natural Law (97-126) which is the adopted theoretical framework for this study. The author discusses in detail the meaning of Natural Law, its properties and applications.

Significantly, he also highlights the theological controversy over Natural Law. In the view of this research, Peschke's treatment of the existential and ultimate bases of Natural Law is instructive because they are insightful responses to those who are opposed to the physicalist approach of the natural law. This work is important to the study because of its depth on the question of the Natural Law, which is the theoretical framework for this study.

Peschke, in the second volume of his book on Christian ethics, *Christian Ethics Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II Volume II: Special Moral Theology* deals with special moral theology. However, it is the chapter on sexuality and marriage (389- 516) that touches directly on the subject matter of our research. Here the author treats marriage and procreation in general, and then treats in detail the whole idea of responsible parenthood where he offered some reasons that could justify the control or limitation of the birth of children like: "danger to the mother's health and life; eugenic considerations; economic difficulties; pedagogical difficulties; and national needs conditioned by limited resources" (500- 501). Following this justification of birth control, Peschke moves on to discuss different methods of birth control like natural family planning, interrupted intercourse, hormonal means and operative sterilization (502- 507). The author further highlights the teaching of the Catholic Church on birth control noting that the question of the lawfulness of the means of birth control had been taken up for the first time by Pope Pius XI in 1930 and developed by subsequent magisterium (507). This book generally articulates very well the methods of birth control and the Catholic Magisterium on birth control. However, for some of the moral questions addressed in the book, the personal positions of the author are not always explicit. The importance of this work is in its analysis of Catholic Magisterium on birth control. Additionally, it is helpful in the understanding of the reasons for birth control.

In his book, *Pastoral Guide Volume 1: Fundamental Moral Theology Virtues IV Revised Edition*, Pazhayampallil, Thomas set out to discuss key fundamental principles of Catholic moral theology. He asserts that, “Christian morality concerns itself about how men called to be Christians should behave and live” (4). Important sections of the book directly related to the present study are those dealing with the concept of Magisterium and the Natural Law. The author defines Magisterium as “teaching authority.” When used with regard to the Church Pazhayampallil says it, “means the power which the Church has to teaching authoritatively the truths connected with the salvation of souls” (46) and goes on to show how this Magisterium is exercised in the Catholic Church. Pazhayampallil describes Natural Law as “a norm or body of norms of human conduct derived from human nature and known or knowable by human reason” (513). This author is generally very passionate about the issues addressed in this book albeit the author sometimes is too apologetic. This book remains relevant to this research because it provides an insight into the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and it also enhances the understanding of the theory of Natural Law which is the foundation theory of Catholic morality.

On the other hand, in the second volume of his book, *Pastoral Guide Volume 2: Sacraments and Bioethics IV Revised Edition*, Pazhayampallil, treats the sacraments and bioethics. However, it is the section on bioethics that is directly related to this research. The authors discusses a gamut of bioethical issues in Book II of this book like population, birth control, sterilization, and an extensive expose on what the Catholic Church teaches on the question of birth control. The author treats in detail all the means of birth control: artificial and natural family planning (NFP), though he leaves no one in doubt that he is an advocate of NFP. He argues for example that NFP is “more than a mere method, it is a way of life that is highly praiseworthy” (1249). Pazhayampallil seems to be at his best in expounding the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on

birth control. He traces its history right from the time of the early Fathers like Origen in the 2nd century up to the popes of the 21st century. It is the author's conviction that the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control has been "proposed with such constancy, with such universality, with such obligatory force, always and everywhere and for many centuries" (1345). This book, *Pastoral Guide Volume 2* shares in the apologetic nature *Pastoral Guide Volume 1* reviewed above also applies to volume 2. The significance of this book is its historical detail in the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control.

Another relevant book here is Eberstadt, Mary's *Adam and Eve after the Pill: Paradoxes of the Sexual Revolution*. The author wrote this book as a counter to the celebration of the so called gains of the sexual revolution that followed the technological revolution of modern contraception: liberation of women from the slavery of their fertility; freedom of men from the bondage of having to take responsibility for the women they had sex with and for the children that result from such sex; and the enrichment of children by making it easier to limit family size (14- 15). For Eberstadt, the renditions of the story of sexual revolution are wrong because they are critically incomplete when measured against the weight of evidence now before us (15). Thus drawing from empirical, literary and other evidence she examined from different angles what really happened once nurture was divorced from nature.

Adam and Eve after the Pill... is divided into eight chapters with an introduction and epilogue opening and closing the book respectively. However, it is in chapter eight of the book, "The Vindication of *Humanae Vitae*," that the author addressed the question that is most related to the present research. In this chapter, the author examined the prediction of the encyclical letter of Pope Paul VI *Humanae Vitae* (On Human Life) about what the world would look like if artificial contraception became widespread. The author pointed out that in this encyclical, Pope

Paul VI predicted four resulting trends: a general lowering of moral standards throughout society; a rise in infidelity; a lessening of respect for women by men; and the coercive use of reproductive technologies by government (136). From her examination of a variety of evidence the author reached a number of conclusions to indicate that these predictions of *Humanae Vitae* have been vindicated by events following the sexual and contraceptive revolution: the weakening of family ties (140); female impoverishment and trouble in the relationship between sexes and single motherhood (141); and the use of contraceptive technology coercively by governments in places like China, India and Indonesia (144- 145). With all the evidence vindicating the position of *Humanae Vitae*, the author concluded by wondering why there is still confusion and even dissent in accepting its teaching. The views expressed by Eberstadt and her arguments are compelling, provocative and convincing. Eberstadt's book is relevant because it provides empirical evidence to support the magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control.

Yet another book that is related to the topic of the research is West, Christopher's *Good News about Sex and Marriage*. The author is a married Catholic marriage educator. This book set mostly in a question and answer format focuses on the teaching of the Catholic Church on sex and marriage. The book is organized in nine chapters that cover the different issues treated by the author. The research generally commends the author for the strength and clarity on the issue addressed in this book, especially the emphasis on the link between conjugal love and procreation and the advantages of the natural family methods of birth control. However, the author failed to adequately take a personal position on the subject. The views expressed are majorly drawn from the thoughts of Pope John Paul II. Still, the book is relevant as it offers a simple and straight forward explanation of the Church's Magisterium on sex and marriage, issues directly linked to the question of birth control.

2. 2. THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

In Wojtyla, Karol's *Love and Responsibility* first written in Polish before the author became Pope John Paul II and the English version appearing later, the author gives us a remarkably eloquent and resourceful defense of the Catholic tradition in the sphere of family life and sexual morality. Wojtyla wrote the book principally out of the need to put the norms of Catholic sexual morality on a firm basis, a basis as definitive as possible, relying on the most elementary and incontrovertible moral truths and the most fundamental values or goods (16). He wrote with the conviction that science, biology, psychology, and sociology can provide valuable information on particular aspects of relations between the sexes, but that a full understanding can be obtained only by the study of the human person as a whole.

Central to Wojtyla's argument is the contrast between the personalistic and the utilitarian views of marriage and of sexual relations. The former views marriage as an interpersonal relationship, in which the well-being and self-realization of each partner are of overriding importance to the other. It is only within this framework that the full purpose of marriage can be realized. The alternative, utilitarian view, according to which a sexual partner is an object for use, holds no possibility of fulfillment and happiness. Wojtyla argued that divorce, artificial methods of birth control, adultery, pre-marital sex, and sexual perversions are all in various ways incompatible with the personalistic view of the sexual self-realization of the human person. The research agrees with this assertion of Wojtyla because the utilitarian view of marriage truly is an aberration of the ends of conjugal love. Such a view ends up only debasing marital love and the couples involved. Perhaps the most striking feature of the book is that Wojtyla has appealed throughout to ordinary human experience, logically examined. He draws support for his views on the proper gratification of sexual needs, on birth control, and on other matters, from the findings

of physiologists and psychologists. His conclusions coincide with the traditional teachings of the Church, which invoke scriptural authority. His approach ensures that non-Christians also can consider his arguments on their own merits. We aver that the support which Wojtyla draws from other fields further grounds the assertions that he has made in this work. It also shows the interconnectivity of object reality which cannot be taken in isolation of other fields.

Wojtyla's work is important here as it offers useful analysis and explanation of some of the technical terms employed in the Magisterium of the Church on birth control. Also, being the work of a former Pope, it forms a direct part of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on issues relating to marriage and sexuality. The research however finds the language of this work too highly technical such that it may appeal to only a specialized audience.

Ajiki, in *Troubling Ethical Waters, A Christian Perspective of Human Sexuality*, addressed different issues concerning human sexuality, marriage and family life, reproductive technologies, the purpose of sexuality and the ethics of sexuality in Christian perspective. The book is arranged in eleven chapters with three appendices. Ajiki began the book with an in-depth discussion on the meaning of marriage and family life according to William E. May. Through this discussion, he highlighted the different moral criteria identified by May as essential when talking about issues of marriage and family life. Some of these criteria include: the family must be rooted in the marriage of one man and woman (27); children, who are persons equal in dignity to their mothers and fathers, are to be begotten in the loving embrace of husband and wife (29); husbands and wives must give each other the gift of conjugal love and deepen it through their lives (33); it is always gravely wrong freely to choose to abort unborn babies (38); and husbands and wives must learn to foster conjugal love by respecting the wife's fertility and abstaining from the marital act when there is good reason to do so (38). These moral criteria in

our opinion are very useful in the objective moral evaluation of certain issues pertaining to marriage and family life and the question of birth control which is the central issue in this research.

On the purpose of sexuality, the author examined the teaching of the Catholic Church as expressed by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (On Human Life) and those of Carl Cohen. He noted that for the Catholic Church, the purpose of sex between the husband and wife is double or two aspects of a single purpose, because the two are inseparable, that is, reproduction and the communion of the two persons, the procreative and the unitive functions (118). Following the Catholic position, Ajiki discussed the views of Carl Cohen who argued against the inseparability of intercourse and procreation because the principle is not supported by respected ethical principles such as the question of utilitarianism and the requirements of Kantian ethics that people should be treated as mere means (119- 120). It is appropriate to argue with the position of the Catholic Church because this position protects the dignity of conjugal love and disagrees with that of Cohen because his views are exposed to moral relativism. His appeal to utilitarianism takes recourse in a morality based on the principle of seeking the greater good or pleasure. This leads to a situation in which there is nothing objectively evil or good, but only that which, from the perspective of efficacy, is better or worse. The consequence here is moral relativism that makes any form of moral evaluation rather difficult if not impossible all together.

Troubling Ethical Waters.... is relevant because it clearly presents the views of the Catholic Magisterium on sexuality, marriage and birth control. The book also offers a balance in its presentation as it has adequately examined views opposed to those of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and this has expanded the scope of the discussion.

Nwamadi, Reginald C. in his *Sexuality and Marriage* has provided a handy reference for students on issues of sexuality and marriage though the author has noted that the relevance of the book goes beyond students to others like priests, doctors, nurses and parents (vii). This book addressed issues of sexuality and marriage in eleven chapters. However, the chapters on human sexuality, marriage and birth control are the most relevant here. In discussing human sexuality, the author noted that it is all embracing and it permeates the whole human person (7). On marriage, Nwamadi stated that it is a natural institution between one man and one woman for the purpose of companionship, prolongation of the human race and the education of children (119). Nwamadi strongly argued in favour of monogamy since it upholds the unity required in marriage albeit he acknowledged the existence of other forms of marriage like polygyny and polygamy. He opposed these other forms of marriage because with them, the perfect surrender required in marriage between the man and the woman is lacking (124).

On the issue of birth control, the author stated that responsible parenthood is a moral act since human reproduction is a responsible act (69). He asserted that responsible parenthood demands that couples should limit themselves to the number of children they can conveniently take care of (69). The author also discussed different types of birth control methods: traditional, artificial and the natural family planning method, stating for each both the advantages and disadvantages. However, he clearly advocated for the natural family planning methods because these methods, inter alia, provide a long term solution to personal and social problems as opposed to artificial methods whose solutions are short lived (115). The book is relevant because of its clarity and simplicity in addressing the issues of sexuality and marriage from the moral, pastoral and canonical perspectives.

2. 3. BIRTH CONTROL

On the question of birth control, McCarthy, Donald G. in “Problems of Sexual Responsibility” noted that though it predates the 20th century, it has been magnified by a number of factors like population growth and the development of contraceptives (388- 389). The author in discussing the position of the Catholic Church on birth control, relied on the teaching of Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Humanae vitae* in which he reaffirmed the constant teaching of the Church that sexual acts must be open to procreation and that contraceptives are intrinsically wrong (389). However, the author still admits though without details that even with the teaching of the Church on birth control, countless articles and books are still written to challenge the Church’s position (390). The author posits that the Catholic Magisterium is still challenged today. However, we argue that the work would have benefited from a more robust interrogation of the Catholic Magisterium by the author, especially by highlighting more on views opposed to the magisterium. Still, the brevity of the work makes it useful to this research as it enabled the research to immediately get to the core of the teaching of the Catholic Magisterium on birth control. It is also useful in locating the birth control question in its historical context and offering a precise formulation of same.

Similarly, Coleman, Gerald D. in *Human Sexuality: An All Embracing Gift* focuses on several issues that face the ethics of human sexuality today. He attempts to answer the questions that have been raised about human sexuality. For each of the topics he treats, he begins by looking at its scientific, historical and psychological background and using the scriptures and the moral teachings of the Church to answer them. The book is divided into nine chapters. This book is valuable to this research because it is very comprehensive and up- to- date in its treatment of

human sexuality including the question of birth control and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

In his article, “The Contraceptive Revolution and the Human Condition,” Curran, Charles E. addressed the issue of contraception. Curran begins this work on a persuasive note stating that, “the fact of the contraception mentality must be admitted by all” (439). He then asserts that, “family planning has replaced biological necessity as the way in which parents bring children into the world.” He continues that, “such family planning has above all freed woman from the biological necessity of spending most of her life as a bearer and nurturer of children” (439). These assertions of Curran are evidently meant to establish some confidence in the use of contraceptive methods of birth control.

Curran noted that the morality of using contraception as a means of family planning has been attacked primarily by the Roman Catholic Church (440). However, he sees no moral problems in using other forms of contraception as a means of exercising responsible parenthood (440). While Curran favours contraception, he is opposed to the use of contraception as power against poor countries, women and as a solution to the population problems in developing countries (442- 443). The research disagrees with Curran’s view that there are no moral problems in the use of contraceptives in the practice of birth control. This position only amounts to a denial or an attempt to wish away the moral issues like the dignity of women and the sanctity of life associated with the use of contraceptives as means of birth control. Curran’s work is important here as it introduces the element of dissent to the Magisterium on birth control amongst Catholic theologians. This assisted the research to appreciate views within the Catholic Church opposed to her teaching on birth control.

On the other hand, Llewellyn- Jones, Derek in his *Everywoman: A Gynaecological Guide to Life 9th Edition*, discusses mainly questions and issues concerning women. However of particular relevance here is the chapter on birth control and family planning (97- 137). The author explains the various methods of birth control like the condom, vaginal diaphragm, hormonal contraceptives (the pill), the intrauterine contraceptive, tubal ligation, periodic abstinence, the temperature and mucus method (100- 127). Unlike Pazhayampallil reviewed below, Llewellyn- Jones does not show any preference for any of the methods of birth control. This research sees the author here is more pragmatic in his disposition towards a method of birth control. Thus to assist women make better choices, he gives a vivid description of the side-effects of all the methods of birth control discussed. For example, Llewellyn- Jones mentions some of the side- effects attributed to the pill to include: acne, blood pressure, headaches, heart attacks, and weight gain. He also mentions painless periods as a beneficial side- effect (116- 118). This research commends the pragmatic disposition of Llewellyn- Jones. However, it is of the view that approaching a moral question like birth control from a purely pragmatic perspective will make an objective moral evaluation difficult and this may result in moral relativism. Llewellyn- Jones' book is relevant because of its elaborate explanation of the methods of birth control including the effectiveness of each method.

McSweeney, Lēonie's *Love and Life Billings Method of Natural Family Planning, 9th Edition* focused only on the Billings method of birth control. This book of McSweeney under review is the 9th edition of a book first written under the title 'Birth Regulation.' The entire book divided into twelve chapters is aimed at enhancing the understanding and practice of the Billings method of natural family planning. The author leaves no one in doubt about her personal preference and conviction about NFP. The conviction and the persuasiveness of the author's

presentation are very evident. However, we opine that other methods of birth control should also have been treated by McSweeney so as to make room for a better comparison of methods. This book though limited to only one method of birth control, is still relevant to this research because of its comprehensive and graphical presentation of its subject matter that has enhanced the understanding of the Billings method of birth control.

Unlike McSweeney Léonie who focused only on the natural method of birth control, Friday Robert article; “Birth Control” touched on different means of birth control. Friday begins this article by defining birth control in its common understanding as “any voluntary or intentional act or calculation designed to prevent the birth of a new person” (129). Like Pazhayampallil and Peschke, Friday mentions the different methods of birth control though he is rather brief in his treatment. We observe that Friday is obviously more interested in the moral evaluation of birth control within Christianity. The author makes a general claim that, “among Christian peoples birth control practices have become increasingly more acceptable in recent times” (130). However, he is quick to add that some theological traditions like the Roman Catholic have maintained a more restrictive ethical position on all methods other than natural family planning (130). Friday follows this assertion with a discussion of the Catholic Church’s position on birth control and gives the background and high point of the Catholic Church’s popular encyclical on birth control *Humane Vitae*. He also notes that the Church of England at the 1930 Lambeth Conference made the first documented and significant break from the traditional Christian rejection of birth control, especially by contraceptive practices. Friday in this work clearly presented the position of the Catholic Church on birth control and seems to suggest that the change in position by the Church of England on birth control led other denominations like the Methodist to also make a shift in their position. The Methodist’s

“Resolution on Responsible Parenthood” in 1976 permitted the use of contraceptives as means of birth control (umc.org). Friday’s article is very useful here because it provides a concise understanding of the position of the Catholic Church on birth control as well as the views of protestant churches. This is good for comparative analysis.

In his *Contemporary Ethics: Theory and Issues* Dzurgba, Akpenpuun focused on ethical theories and ethical issues. Amongst the issues treated in this book is birth control. The author defines birth control as, “the ability or skill of controlling the number of children a husband and wife may have” (84). He classifies views on birth control into two: conservative view and the liberal view. He notes that the “conservative view accepts a form of birth control that is based purely on natural control of births and frequency of pregnancies” (86). The author identifies the Catholic Church as representative of the conservative view. He identifies the protestant religious bodies; the NKST, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Christ Apostolic Church, as belonging to the liberal view. Dzurgba asserts that those in the liberal view “believe that the responsibility of making a decision as to the number and frequency of children has been laid down by God upon the conscience of parents everywhere” (87). Dzurgba observes that birth control is a more difficult issue in other religious like Islam and African religion because of the practice of polygamy that allows a man to marry more than one wife. He sees a problem here because each woman may want to give birth to as many children as possible as “an instrument for securing the best place in the loving heart of the husband” (87). The research sees Dzurgba’s work as introducing another way of classifying birth control methods and also gives more denominational positions on birth control. Hence, it is relevant for deepening the horizon of understanding on this key subject matter.

2. 4. RELIGION AND CULTURE

Omeregbe, Joseph I. in *A Philosophical Look at Religion* treated religion from a philosophical perspective. He argued that religion is essentially a bi- polar phenomenon, a relationship, a link established between two persons, namely the *human person* and the *divine person* believed to exist (3). The author also made a strong case for the relationship between culture and the understanding of religion. He viewed every religion as the product of a particular culture within which it grew. Its doctrines reflect the worldview of that culture, its understanding of reality, and its way of looking at things at that particular time. Omeregbe thus concluded that it is impossible to understand any religion without understanding the culture within which it grew. If the culture of the people is not well understood, they may even be perceived as not having any religion. These submissions articulated above Omeregbe are pertinent because it was the kind of misunderstanding pointed out by Omeregbe that led the western Christian evangelizers to treat Africans as having neither culture nor religion and thus a conversion to Christianity meant the abandonment of the indigenous cultures, values and religion in order to embrace those of the west (Elochukwu, *A Listening Church*, 4). Omeregbe's book is relevant as it provides the philosophical tools for understanding the interaction between religion and culture.

In his book, *An Afro- Christian Vision "OZOVEHE!": Toward a More Humanized World*, Ehusani, George Omake discusses the relationship between religion and culture. In the introduction to this book, Ehusani describes the work as, "an exercise in *inculturation* on the level of Theological Anthropology." He adds that "it is a contemporary reflection on Christian Humanism, using the African traditional humanistic heritage as *text*" (1). The author begins the book by describing the paradox of our age which has experienced technological advancement as well as a frightening human decline (5- 14). Ehusani pays particular attention to the African

predicament, noting that “decades after most African nations gained independence, the socio-political and economic situation of the continent is simply chaotic” (19). On the religious sphere, he asserts that “Africa has not only been the dumping ground of all religious systems, sects and movements from the East and West, but has also been their battle ground” (21). Of particular interest to this research is Ehusani’s treatment of different aspects of human life in African culture. The author notes that, “the way the African society is systematically organized around the propagation, promotion and protection of life is worthy of special note” (210). He also notes that abortion and population control are related challenges to today’s Africans who have grown under the culture of a fundamental option for life (212). We opine that while the views of Ehusani are predominately influenced by his Ebira culture, other African cultures like the Tiv culture also share in some of them like the promotion of life. Ehusani’s book like that of Omoregbe is significant as it provides a framework for the interpretation of Christian values within an African culture.

In a similar approach to that of Ehusani, Wegh, Shagbaor F. in *Between Continuity and Change: Tiv Concept of Tradition and Modernity* looks at the effects of the interaction between African and western cultures. In the introduction to his book, Wegh, a Catholic priest and anthropologist, presents the book as, “an attempt at understanding the extent to which ‘modern’ factors of socio-cultural change... are interrelated with Tiv traditional values” (7). Wegh observes that though all Tiv believe in their common origin in Tiv, there is no agreement amongst authors as to their original home. However, the author seems to agree with the general assumption that the Tiv are of Bantu stock, and thus must have originated from central Africa (25- 26). The author has been able to establish that the social organization of the Tiv rests on kinship: blood kinship, kinship by marriage and secondary kinship (29). Chapter four of the book

deals with Tiv religion. Here, Wegh highlights the fundamental beliefs of Tiv religion: *Aôndo*, as the Supreme Being, *Tsav*, as the power that exists in nature, *Akombo*, as spiritual forces created by God for human well being and procreation and *Adzov*, as spirits that can appear in human form. The Tiv however have no belief in the veneration and incarnation of children.

Wegh's treatment of marriage and the family is very comprehensive (47- 64). For the Tiv, the author notes that marriage is an indication of maturity and the fulfillment of parental and communal aspirations. The author then observes that the primary ambition of the Tiv in marrying is to procreate and form a family; to this end the more wives and children a typical Tiv man has, the better for him. A large family of many wives and children is equally desirable for the Tiv because of the positive economic impact that it will bring. Utsua corroborates the position of Wegh on the centrality of procreation in marriage in Tiv culture (87). However, we contend that while children are desirable in marriage, Tiv couples do not give birth without limits and so there is also the practice of birth control in Tiv society. Wegh's book is valuable, especially on issues of Tiv culture, religion and the consequences of interaction or encounters between cultures. It is this interaction that has facilitated the discourse between the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and birth control in Tiv Society.

In his *Cosmology in Tiv Worldview*, Torkula, Alfred Akawe from his exalted position as Tor Tiv IV discussed some key aspects of Tiv cultural heritage (viii). While most of the issues addressed in this work are similar to those of Wegh, Torkula's book remains valuable because its author until his death was the Tor Tiv and the chief custodian of the Tiv traditional culture. This makes his presentation on Tiv culture very authoritative.

2.5. TIV SOCIETY

James Shagba Moti and Shagbaor F. Wegh in *An Encounter Between Tiv Religion and Christianity* looked at the religious beliefs and practices of the Tiv people and what become of them as the result of the encounter with Christianity. Moti and Wegh began with the stories of the origin and migration of the Tiv which according to these authors are full of intrigues and biblical parallels (9). According to Moti and Wegh the Tiv trace their ancestry to Tiv through his two sons *Ichôngo* and *Ipusu* which are also the basis for political and governmental organization in Tiv society (11). Tiv religion according to these authors is a most engulfing subject though they argue that as presented by its adherents it does not at all pretend to give a single coherent picture (19). Moti and Wegh suggest that to understand Tiv religion one must look for a logical interconnectedness of its different elements (19). They identified the elements of Tiv religion to include: *Aôndo* (Supreme Being), *Akombo* (created spiritual forces), *Tsav* (nature power) and *Adzov* (spirits in human form).

Moti and Wegh note that in Tiv religion *Aôndo* is recognized as the Supreme Being who created the entire universe and man as the crown of creation. Man in turn is made up of material and spiritual elements: *Iyol* (body) and *jijingi* (spirit) respectively (23). These authors further that the Tiv have great respect for the body and thus insist that one must look after one's body, keep it clean and healthy and protect oneself against all forms of supernatural attacks that bring harm to the body (23). *Akombo* are described by Moti and Wegh as mystical forces represented in cultic emblems which has been given to man by God so that the natural order could be made to function for the good of man, the land as well as the fertility of women and the general well being of human beings (25). *Tsav* according to Moti and Wegh is an esoteric subject among the Tiv and there is no one single definition that at once adequately bring out its nature (55).

However, they describe it as a mystical power that is both tangible and intangible which grows on the hearts of human beings or somewhere within the chest (56). Moti and Wegh note that the Tiv distinguish between black *Tsav*, which is good, and white *Tsav* which is evil. The good *Tsav* manifests itself through the individual person's success in farming, hunting and the security of the family. The evil *Tsav* which can be regarded as sorcery can be used to inflict material losses on others or even cause their death (58- 59). Regarding *Adzov* Moti and Wegh say that *Adzov* belong to the ontological category of the spirits and are real to the Tiv. *Adzov*, according to these authors are in constant social interaction with human beings and considered as the unseen counterparts of man that engage in all human activities (73- 74).

Moti and Wegh also discussed the encounter between Tiv religion and Christianity. This encounter according to these authors began in 1854 with the first expedition of the British into Northern Nigeria (80). With time Christian missionaries came to Tivland and established churches. The first to come was the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) which took the name *Nongo u Krsitu u Sudan hen Tiv* (NKST) now called *Nongo u Krsitu u i ser sha Tar*. The second Christian Church to come to Tivland was the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM). According to Moti and Wegh these missionaries came from mainly European socio- cultural background that was different. Unfortunately, they note that this important fact was not taken into consideration in their confrontation with Tiv culture and mode of understanding (81). They result according to these authors was that "Tiv religious beliefs, marriage and family institutions, therapeutic practices, arts and music all had to be dismantled to give way to a superior way of life" (84). Moti and Wegh recommend an evangelization through inculturation as the best approach to evangelize Tivland.

Ushe, Ushe Mike's *Kpôv of Tiv Culture* is concerned with the Tiv socio and cultural practices and customs (4). Like Torkula, the relevant questions Ushe addressed in his book are similar to those of Wegh although with some nuances in terms of emphasis on some questions; while Wegh is more concerned with the impact of modernity on Tiv culture and tradition, Ushe only discussed the significance of the different aspects of Tiv culture. Still, the *Kpôv of Tiv Culture* is still relevant as it provides an alternative insight into the core values of Tiv culture.

In his *On the Tiv of Central Nigeria: A Cultural Perspective*, Akpenpuun Dzurgba responded to the current need for appropriate materials on Tiv cultural thought, behaviour, practices and institutions (xiv). The book is divided into four major sections: Culture and History, Institutions, Religion and Textile and Stereotype. Each of these sections addresses different aspects of Tiv life. Dzurgba began by examining the meaning of culture which he said is made up, inter alia, ideas, beliefs, customs or traditions, institutional organization, general and dissemination of knowledge, production and distribution of food and goods, socialization, rewards and punishments (3). He noted that change also occurs in culture and this change is gradual or sudden, evolutionary or imposed, partial or complete which is induced by a certain factor or a combination of factors (10). On the origins of Tiv, Dzurgba avers that "a historical narrative of the ancestral origins of the Tiv of Central Nigeria are oral traditions or oral accounts which, in turn, rely on memory" (13). Dzurgba notes that mainstream historical traditions all assert that the man named Tiv was the ancestor of the Tiv ethnic group (18). He also discussed the political history and early colonization of Tivland during which greater suppression, oppression, reprisals, conscriptions and dehumanization took place (42).

Dzurgba in this book also highlights the history of the Church in Tivland with particular reference to the missionary works of the Sudan United Mission (SUM) and the Dutch Reformed

Church Mission (DRCM). He further lists the contributions of DRCM to the cultural transformation of Tivland in different areas: global perception, conversion of persons, western medicine, and development of Tiv language and promotion of modern business (92- 97). In discussing marriage Dzugba said that polygyny is the institution of marriage that is practiced in Tivland though he noted that for economy and other reasons, some Tiv men practice monogyny (117). The purpose of marriage in Tivland was bear children who could be a source of manual labour and distribution of goods and services (118). The author also treated Tiv traditional religion and its different elements: *Aôndo*, *Akombo*, *Tsav*, *Adzov*, and sacrifices. According to Dzugba, sacrifice is an oblation or a material gift that is made to *Aôndo* or *Akombo*. Items for sacrifice in Tiv religion include: crops, chickens, ducks, tortoises, goats, sheep and cows (186-187). In the final chapter, the author discussed some racial identity and stereotypes against the Tiv people: warlike ethnic group; the Tiv people are cannibals; savage ethnic group; sexual entertainment for visitors; adultery is not a crime in Tiv society and what do they have in Tivland? Dzugba's book is relevant as it serves as a compendium on the Tiv of central Nigeria.

Ajiki Pius' *Understanding World Religions: Traditions and Cultural Change* was written to provide concise and easy to understand overview of the most important beliefs and some practices of the most important non- Christian and Christian religions in the world- Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, the Confucianism- combination of Chinese religion, Shinto, Islam and African religion (vii). The book however, has a chapter on Christianity to aid its understanding and better explanation (vii). The whole book is divided into eight chapters described by the author as "self- contained" so as to enable readers go straight to their preferred chapters without losing anything important (vii).

The chapter of this book that is directly relevant to the present research is the eighth chapter (334- 371) which is centred on Tiv religion, known as *Kwagh- Aondo*. In this chapter, Ajiki treated the different aspects of Tiv religion. However, he began with an ethnological survey of the Tiv people of Nigeria, the language of the Tiv people, Tiv songs, music and dance, the identity and personality of the Tiv people and Tiv economy. Ajiki then went on to explain in detail the different aspects of Tiv religion: *Aôndo*, *Akombo*, *Tsav*, *Adzov* and the veneration of Ancestors and the human soul in Tiv. In the whole of West Africa, Ajiki posits that the Tiv of Nigeria are a unique people with worship of one God called *Aôndo*.

In Tiv religion, Ajiki points out that *Aôndo* is believed to be the Creator God who habits the sky, the firmament described as the vault of heaven with its clouds and stars (345). He further noted that the Tiv people consider God as the Supreme Creator whom they only address in prayer in moments of intense crisis (345). *Aôndo* is not approached through any divinities as seen amongst other African religion. According to Ajiki, *Akombo* are the supernatural forces in Tivland and are unseen forces and spiritual forces that hover over every sphere of life (347). *Tsav* is described by Ajiki as the power in nature and the unseen force which is used for the interference with life and the function of nature (348). In his discussion of Tiv religion, Ajiki has been able to establish the distinct religious heritage of the Tiv people. Within the general context of Ajiki's book, it is obvious that he has placed Tiv religion among the other non- Christian religions and this will indeed enhance the worth of Tiv religion. This book is relevant to this research as it provides rich insights into an important aspect of Tiv life.

2. 6. THE WAY FORWARD

We begin the critique of works reviewed with Pope Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae*. This is because it is the most authoritative document of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control. The publication of this document itself followed a period of study by a special commission on population, family and birth first set up by Pope John XXIII and later enlarged by Pope Paul VI (Genovesi, 190). The Pope presenting this encyclical was thus fully aware of the contemporary issues surrounding family life and birth control. The strength of this magisterial teaching lies in the courage and conviction of the pope in reiterating the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church on birth control, especially when a larger part of the papal commission in its final report recommended a change in the Church's doctrine in this regard. The impact of this document in the Church is such that Pope John Paul II described it as, "a truly prophetic proclamation" (*Familiaris Consortio*, No. 29). In spite of the strength of this document, some scholars have faulted it on its very foundation: the Natural Law Theory. For example, a group of theologians led by Charles Curran criticizing the application of Natural Law in the encyclical said that "the multiple forms of Natural Law Theory are ignored and the fact that competent philosophers come to different conclusions on this very question is disregarded" (25). Perhaps, no single technology has been more consequential in shaping culture than the invention of modern contraception. For the first time in human history, a technology has come onto the scene which enables couples to engage in sexual activity without having to worry about the responsibility of children. This has brought an enormous social change in the Tiv culture and around the world that we are still only just beginning to reckon with.

The two volumes of the "Pastoral Guide" by Thomas Pazhayampallil are very detailed in the treatment of all issues raised in each one of them. The historical approach adopted by the

author enables the reader to appreciate the evolution of each topic within the context of history. These books are also useful materials for educators and pastors, especially those of the Catholic faith because of the useful pastoral recommendations offered by the author. However, these books can be criticized for their apologetic nature. The author is particularly zealous in his defence of the position of the Catholic Church and his presentation of issues follows a predetermined conclusion.

Llewellyn- Jones, Derek's *Everywoman: A Gynaecological Guide to Life, 9th Edition* was also reviewed. The author of this book writes from a professional perspective. Thus the strength of his book is in its authoritative nature. He backs all his claims with scientific findings and authentic figures. This book is also good in graphical pictures that enhance the understanding of the reader. The popularity of this book, especially amongst women, is a testimony that the author has been able to appropriately pass across his message. However, a major limitation of the book lies in its cultural context which appeals more to the west than to Africans.

Karl Peschke's two volumes on Christian Ethics are thoroughly revised and they integrate recent theological developments and Magisterial documents. These books also have an ecumenical dimension as the author is very considerate of the positions of non- Catholic authors. These books are very popular in Nigerian Catholic seminaries and sometimes appear like the de facto standard texts of moral theology. However, a notable limitation of the work is ambivalence in the presentation of conflicting positions in certain areas like sexuality and contraception.

Ehusani, George Omaku's *An Afro- Christian Vision "OZOVEHE!" Toward a More Humanized World* is a valuable book on creating a cultural reawakening in the hearts of readers, especially in Africa. Its strength lies in the confidence it invests in the African cultural heritage

and in advocating an Afro- Christianity. However, the book is limited in its cultural context since the author relies mostly on his Ebira culture in his analysis. This restriction fails to take into consideration the diverse cultures of the people of Africa.

Ushe, Wegh and Torkula in their respective books address the culture of the Tiv people. All of them show an in-depth understanding of Tiv Culture. However, both Ushe and Torkula are limited by their phenomenological approach because they stop at mainly stating what is there within the Tiv society without any cross- cultural comparison. Wegh on the other hand goes beyond the statement of facts to a discourse on the interaction of Tiv culture and the agents of social change.

McSweeney, Lēonie's *Love and Life: Billings Method of Natural Family Planning, 9th Edition* is a book whose strong point can be found from the depth of its treatment of the subject matter: Billings method of birth control. The author also leaves no doubt about her preference for this method. However, the book is limited since it does not treat other methods of birth control in order to provide an opportunity for readers to compare the Billings method with others. The book is also full of unnecessary repetitions.

In Pursuit of Love: Catholic Morality and Human Sexuality, 2nd Edition, a book written by Vincent J. Genovesi was also reviewed. As a second edition, it is thorough in its update of the teaching of the Magisterium on human sexuality and marriage. It is also easy to read because it avoids Latin terminology and legalism which can make a text difficult. Another strong point of the book is that it makes a synthesis of the views of major Catholic moralists on the question of birth control. Hence, it expanded the scope of opinions on moral issues treated.

Wojtyla, Karol's book *Love and Responsibility* was written before he became Pope John Paul II. The strength of the book lies in the fact that it coincides with the traditional Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Even at that, the approach of the author ensures that members of other denominations and even non- Christians could consider his presentations on their merit. The book is also strong on its examination of ordinary human experience. The major challenge of this book is its complex and technical use of language that makes easy comprehension of its contents rather difficult.

Gerald D. Coleman's book, *Human Sexuality: An All Embracing Gift*, is truly a fascinating book. The strength of the book is its scholarly and comprehensive treatment of human sexuality integrating the views of modern science, the scriptures and the teachings of the Church. The major limitation that one finds in this work is the paucity of its pastoral suggestions which are only given on the issue of masturbation.

Good News about Sex and Marriage, by Christopher West has the strength of being thoughtful and thorough in its presentation. The entire book is well organized with each chapter building on the preceding one. The question- and- answer format adopted in the book also gives it a conversational tone that engages the reader. What may pass as a weakness of this book is the over reliance of the author on Pope John Paul II's views which sometimes make it difficult to separate the author's independent views from those of Pope John Paul II.

Hamel, Edouard's article, "The Role of Continence in Conjugal Life," shows a personal conviction on the part of the author who makes a strong case for continence in married life. However, the author failed to adequately articulate the real challenges that come with continence within conjugal life.

Previous researches into the reception of the teaching of the Catholic on birth control seem to overlook the social, cultural and religious heritage of some parts of the Catholic world. There is so much attention given to Europe and America and how people from these places respond to the Church's teaching in this area to the neglect of other places like Africa and particularly, Tiv society. The result of this neglect is that the development and formulation of Church doctrine sometimes does not take into consideration the universal nature of the Church and tends to address the challenges of only a few cultures. This explains why the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church on certain issues may have a limited appeal. It is only by speaking with and listening to all cultures that the Church will be able to adequately contextualize her doctrines.

This research proceeds from the perspective that the Catholic Church is universal and trans- cultural and no single culture can fully epitomize it. This trans- cultural attribute of the Catholic faith means that all cultures of the world have some positive aspects which can serve as authentic means of communicating the Catholic faith. Thus, any Catholic doctrine that is formulated for the entire Catholic world that does not take into consideration the religio- cultural beliefs of other societies may result in multiple beliefs and practices. To avoid this, the teaching authority in the Church, which is the Magisterium, needs to engage her doctrines in a discourse with other cultures in a dialogue, especially of those that the Church evangelizes. It is only this discourse that can highlight areas of cultural compatibility; distrust and conflict with Catholic doctrine and thus enable the Magisterium to propose her doctrines in the manner that will be of greater spiritual and cultural significance to the societies she ministers to. The research filled in the gap in an area of the Magisterium of the Church on birth control by engaging it in a

comparative study with Tiv society, something that within the research's knowledge has previously not been explicitly done.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL

3.1. MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL BEFORE *HUMANAE VITAE* (“HUMAN LIFE”)

The first Magisterial teaching on birth control was the encyclical *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”) written by Pope Pius XI in 1930 on the general question of Christian marriage. However, Gallagher’s observation that “to some extent, this encyclical was a response to the Lambeth Conference of 1930, at which for the first time, the Church of England withdrew its official support against contraception” (72) situates the encyclical in its proper historical context. In the view of this research, internal evidence within the encyclical seems to corroborate this observation of Gallagher because within the encyclical, the Pope while referring to the evil of contraception sadly noted that some Christians have recently openly departed from the uninterrupted Christian tradition (No. 56). In dealing with the specific question of marital intercourse, Pope Pius XI said that the, “conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children” (No. 54). However, he also noted other secondary ends such as “mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love and the quieting of concupiscence...are not forbidden... so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved” (59).

We observe that the classification of the ends of marriage into primary and secondary as Pope Pius XI mentioned is no longer emphasized in Catholic tradition but all these ends are now viewed as equally essential and inseparable to marriage. This is noted in Canon 1055, #1 which states without categorizing that marriage “is ordered by its nature toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.” Thus, we aver that this classification should be

understood within its historical context. The Pope then condemned any deliberate frustration of the primary end of marital intercourse in very strong terms. Firstly, he said, “those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious” (No. 54). He added that, “any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offence against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin” (No. 59).

While the teaching on birth control articulated by Pope Pius XI in *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”) cannot be said to be totally new, the research observes that this was the first time this teaching was articulated in a magisterial document. Another credit for this document is that it clearly sets out the principal argument in support of the Church’s teaching on birth control in the principle of natural law. The Pope argued that, “no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good” (No. 54). He also alluded to some scriptural support, especially in God’s purpose for human sexuality: procreative and unitive ends; and the story of Onan in Genesis 38. However, we hold that this encyclical, perhaps due to the limitation of vocabulary at its time, did not mention any specific method that could deliberately frustrate the procreative purpose of sexual intercourse. Even in this regard, this explanation of Noonan is helpful. Noonan said that at the time of *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”), the term most often used by theologians when talking about contraception was the sin of Onan or ‘Onanism’ (508). While Onanism specifically refers to interrupted sex, Noonan notes that after *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”), the term came to have an expanded meaning to include other forms of contraception (508).

We opine that the explanation of Noonan agrees with the main spirit of the encyclical of Pope Pius XI, to prohibit the deliberate inhibition of the procreative potentials of the conjugal act. Thus the research taking the historical context of the encyclical will generally describe the contraception prohibited by *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”) as ‘Onanism.’ However, in the light of developed terminologies today, it will be anachronistic and obsolete to generally refer to all forms of contraception as ‘Onanism.’

The second Magisterial teaching on birth control before *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life”) is the Address of Pope Pius XII to the Convention Italian Midwives on 29th October 1951. In this address, Pope Pius XII reaffirmed the teaching of Pope Pius XI discussed above. He said, “this precept is in full force today, as it was in the past, and so it will be in the future also, and always, because it is not a simple human whim, but the expression of a natural and divine law. (“Allocution to Midwives.” ewtn.com). The Pope also specifically said the sterilization was wrong. In his words, “Direct sterilization, that is, the sterilization which aims, either as a means or as an end itself, to render child- bearing impossible is a grave violation of the moral law, and therefore unlawful” (Allocution to Midwives.” ewtn.com). But besides repeating the teaching of his predecessor, Pope Pius XII also made a significant impact on the teaching of the Church on the question of birth control. Genovesi highlighting on this notes that the Pope “for the first time gave public, explicit and official approval for the practice of periodic abstinence, whereby married couples refrain from sexual intercourse during the woman’s fertile period and thus limit intercourse to the time of non- fertility in the wife’s cycle” (186).

We hold that it is also a strong point of this address that the Pope in order to avoid indiscriminate recourse to the infertile period offered reasons that could make its use morally permissible. He said such reasons could “arise from medical, eugenic, economic and social

indications.” There is a clear continuity in the development of the Catholic Magisterium on birth control which is an indication of fidelity to the duty of expounding on the revelation of faith that has been entrusted to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. However, the acceptance of periodic abstinence as a morally permissible means of birth control by Pope Pius XII can open up a debate as to why other means of birth control cannot be permissible because when one door is opened, it tends to open other doors.

Another Magisterium relating to birth control prior to *Humanae Vitae* (“Human Life”) is from a document of the Second Vatican Council (1962- 1965) called “Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World,” *Gaudium et Spes* (“Joy and Hope”). This Conciliar document recognized that, “married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring” (No. 48), though unlike *Casti Connubii* (“Chaste Marriage”) it did not set a hierarchy of ends to married love. For a teaching on birth control, *Gaudium et Spes* (“Joy and Hope”) equally did not offer any new teaching. It mainly stated that “in question of birth regulation the sons and daughters of the Church, faithful to these principles, are forbidden to use methods disapproved of by the teaching authority of the Church in its interpretation of the divine law” (No. 51). The document refrained from giving further directives on this question because a footnote in the text just quoted explained that:

by order of the Holy Father, certain questions requiring further and more careful investigation have been given over to a commission for the study of population, the family, and births, in order that the Holy father may pass judgement when its task is completed. With the teaching of the magisterium standing as it is, the council has no intention of proposing concrete solutions at this moment.

We argue that it was truly expedient that the council exercised caution in making pronouncement on a subject that was under such a serious study in order to allow the commission some time to conclude its study. However, by re-affirming the teaching of the Magisterium on the subject of birth control, the council may have tacitly pointed out the direction to which the judgement of the Pope was actually going to take.

3.2. THE MAGISTERIUM OF *HUMANAE VITAE* ON BIRTH CONTROL

3.2.1. Background to *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life)

The background to the publication of the encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life), which is centred on the regulation of birth can be traced to the work of a Papal Commission on the Study of Population, Family and Birth Control established by Pope John XXIII in 1963. The task of the commission as Friday has noted was, “to examine the United Nations’ policies on the population question and to recommend to the Holy See the course of action that the Church should pursue in the light of the increased acceptance of contraceptive birth control in western society” (131). However, Pope John XXIII was not to live to receive the work of this commission because he died on June 30, 1963. Upon the death of Pope John XXIII, Pope Paul VI succeeded him as pope. In 1964, the new pope, Pope Paul VI, expanded the membership of this special commission. The membership of the commission was made up both the clergy and the laity, including experts in medical and social sciences (Genovesi 190).

In June 1966, this Papal Commission on Birth Control reported to Pope Paul VI. Four documents eventually came from it. One was the ‘Theological Report of the Papal Commission on Birth Control.’ The document, which has since become known as ‘the majority report’, was signed by 19 of the theologians and by a number of other experts on the commission. It

represented the view of a substantial majority of those on the commission. A second document, ‘Pastoral Approach’, was in agreement with the majority report. They both advocated a change in the church’s official teaching in order to allow artificial contraception in some cases. A third, the so- called ‘minority report’, was signed by four theologians in the commission who did not agree with the majority report and who advised that no change be made in the church’s teaching. A fourth document was a working paper by some of the theologians who advocated change in the church’s teaching. It defended their position against arguments in the third document (Gallagher 83- 84). There arose from the different and conflicting reports that came out from this Papal Commission a disturbing situation at the time in the Church that presented an urgent need for the Magisterium to act and give her members an authentic guide in the fulfillment of their conjugal love. Pope Paul VI rose to the occasion. Pope Paul VI’s reply to the work of the Papal Commission on Population, Family and Birth Control came two years later in his now famous encyclical on birth regulation, *Humanae Vitae* (“Human Life”) issued on July 29, 1968.

3.2.2. A Synthesis of the Teaching of *Humanae Vitae* on Birth Control

In *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life), Pope Paul VI essentially reiterated the teaching of the Church on the question of birth control though as he said, “this kind of question requires from the teaching authority of the Church a new and deeper reflection on the principles of the moral teaching on marriage—a teaching which is based on the Natural Law as illuminated and enriched by divine revelation” (No. 4). The pope as a prelude to his teaching on birth control discussed married love as something derived from God, is faithful and exclusive and is ordered for the procreation and education of Children (No. 8- 9). Internal evidence shows an influence from *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope) on this teaching. The pope also treated responsible parenthood where he highlighted the functions of the couples in the choice of the size of their

families. The pope treated these concepts bearing in mind that, “in the attempt to justify artificial methods of birth control, many appeal to the demands of married love or of responsible parenthood” (No. 7).

The core of the teaching of this encyclical states that, “the Church, nevertheless, in urging men to the observance of the precepts of the natural law, which it interprets by its constant doctrine, teaches that each and every marital act must of necessity retain its intrinsic relationship to the procreation of human life” (No. 11). The basis of this teaching in the words of Pope Paul VI is, “the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act” (No. 12). While inseparability of the unitive and the procreative dimension of marital love lies at the heart of this teaching, the research is mindful that this cannot be interpreted as if all marital intercourse must be open to procreation.

A contextual interpretation of the text is that if a couple should engage in sexual intercourse when conception is indeed possible, then they must not deliberately forestall it by any means. The pope himself warned that, “it is a serious error to think that a whole married life of otherwise normal relations can justify sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive and so intrinsically wrong” (No. 14). However, the Pope did not regard as, “illicit the use of those therapeutic means necessary to cure bodily diseases, even if a foreseeable impediment to procreation should result there from—provided such impediment is not directly intended for any motive whatsoever” (No. 15). There is clearly here an application of the principle of double effect, a principle necessary to reduce if not totally excuse one from moral culpability in a difficult situation with two contemporaneous effects: one good, the other evil. Pope Paul VI, very significantly, warned against or rather predicted the grave consequences of accepting

artificial means of birth control. According to him, artificial means of birth control could lead to the way being wide open for marital infidelity and a general lowering of moral standards; a lessening of the reverence due to women by men and a disregard for the woman's physical and emotional equilibrium which will reduce her to a mere instrument for the satisfaction of men's desires; and the coercive use of contraceptives by public authorities (No. 17).

After declaring that a deliberate inhibition of the procreative dimension of marital love was an intrinsic evil, Pope Paul VI went on to teach married couples how to regulate birth if the need was there without moral violation. In his words, "married people may then take advantage of the natural cycles immanent in the reproductive system and engage in marital intercourse only during those times that are infertile, thus controlling birth in a way which does not in the least offend the moral principles...." (No. 16).

In all, we opine that *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life) may not have expounded on anything totally new in the position of the Catholic Church albeit it went beyond doctrinal teachings and also gave some pastoral directives and appeal to different groups including the couples, the state and the scientists. Very significantly, the Pope never denied the challenges that may be experienced in following the Church's teaching. Thus he encouraged couples to:

implore the help of God with unremitting prayer and, most of all, let them draw grace and charity from that unfailing fount which is the Eucharist. If, however, sin still exercises its hold over them, they are not to lose heart. Rather must they, humble and persevering, have recourse to the mercy of God, abundantly bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance. (No. 25)

From the Magisterium of Pope Paul VI expressed in *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life), the research finds something very significant in the fact that the position that the pope took in the encyclical went against the recommendations of the majority report from the Papal Commission and sided with the minority report. The significance of this is that the role of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church is not to validate the opinions of the majority in the Church or to arrive at its teaching on a particular subject through an opinion poll. Its role is to instead confirm and strengthen the faith of the people in the light of divine revelation animated by the Holy Spirit. It also indicates that the views of the majority are not always right and thus the Magisterium is there to guard against error as Mother and Teacher.

3.3. THE MAGISTERIUM AFTER *HUMANAE VITAE* (“HUMAN LIFE”)

The doctrine on birth control enunciated in the encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life), were on different occasions reiterated by Pope Paul VI himself, Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and today by Pope Francis. Only a few examples of such post *Humanae vitae*’s teachings on birth control are noted here. Two days after the publication of this encyclical, Pope Paul VI at his weekly General Audience, which took place at Castle Gandolfo, the papal summer residence, made the following remarks in reference to *Humanae Vitae*:

It is not merely the declaration of a negative moral law, in other words, the exclusion of every action the purpose which is to render procreation impossible. It is all, a presentation of conjugal morality in reference to its mission of life and fruitfulness, “in the light of an integral vision of man and his vocation, not only his natural and earthly, but also his supernatural and eternal vocation.”(Anderson 7-8)

On March 13, 1974, while addressing the Committee for the Family, Pope Paul VI said:

there is no question in fact of artificially deviating the act of procreation from its purpose, far less taking life away from the human being that has been conceived. Christians must remain very firm on these points. Happy are those who thus endeavour to respect love and life as gifts from God. (qtd in Pazhayampallil 1337)

In the teachings of Pope Paul VI after the publication of *Humanae Vitae* expressed above, there was a strong desire not only to promote and sustain the Magisterium on birth control but at the same time to highlight on the gains of following such teaching and indeed make the message appealing and acceptable to many others. Pope Paul VI desired that couples should see the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control not just from a negative perspective of a prohibition of artificial methods of birth control but more so as a positive teaching that promoted not only the natural purpose of conjugal love but also the supernatural end.

Pope John Paul II, who described the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* as “a truly prophetic proclamation” strongly identified with its teaching while addressing the bishops of the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America on October 15, 1979. He asserted thus, “and myself today, with the same conviction of Paul VI, ratify the teaching of this encyclical which was put forth by my predecessor by virtue of the mandate entrusted to us by Christ” (Pazhayampallil 1338).

In his Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, *Familiaris Consortio* (“The Fellowship of the Family”), November 22, 1981, Pope John Paul II repeated in part the very words Pope Paul VI used in *Humanae Vitae* that there must be excluded as intrinsically immoral “every action which, either in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its

accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible” (No. 32). Beyond the objection that contraceptive methods offend against the procreative significance of the marital act, as demonstrated by Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul II gave a second objection in that they compromise the value of a total self- giving. According to him:

When couples, by means of recourse to contraception, separate these two meanings that God the Creator has inscribed in the being of man and woman and in the dynamism of their sexual communion, they act as ‘arbiters’ of divine plan and they ‘manipulate’ and degrade human sexuality- and with it themselves and their married partner- by altering its value of ‘total’ self- giving. Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self- giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality. (*Familiaris Consortio* No. 32)

We contend that the words of Pope John Paul expressed in the quote above clearly highlight both the inappropriateness of contraceptives and the negative effects they have on conjugal love and they come out as a strong appeal and persuasion to couples to see the intrinsic evil of contraceptives and avoid them. When couples follow artificial means of birth control, the Pope warns they act against the nature of their sexuality, especially conjugal love. Through contraceptives couples manipulate their bodies and forfeit the right given to them by God to become procreators of life through the mutual self giving of their sexuality.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has also highlighted on the core teaching of the Magisterium on birth control. It teaches that, “for just reasons, spouses may wish to space the births of their children.” It however adds that, “it is their duty to make sure that their desire is not motivated by selfishness but is in conformity with the generosity appropriate to responsible parenthood” (No. 2368). It praises the natural methods of birth control because, “these methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them and favour the education of an authentic freedom.” Finally, the Catechism reiterated the Magisterial position that every act that whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, during the act or after it makes procreation impossible is intrinsically evil (No. 2370).

The next Magisterium to be considered is that of Pope Benedict XVI. Pope Benedict XVI, like Pope John Paul II, upheld the Magisterium on birth control before him. His major views were expressed in an address at an international congress to mark forty years after the publication of *Humane Vitae* (Human Life) in 2008 (Vatican.va). A summary of Benedict XVI’s views is made here. He began by saying that “forty years after its publication this teaching not only expresses its unchanged truth but also reveals the farsightedness with which the problem is treated.” It was the pope’s conviction that, “the truth expressed in *Humanae Vitae* (“Human Life”) does not change; on the contrary, precisely in the light of the new scientific discoveries, its teaching becomes more timely and elicits reflection on the intrinsic value it possesses.”

The Pope further argued that, “if the practice of sexuality becomes a drug that seeks to enslave one’s partner to one’s own desires and interests, without respecting the cycle of the beloved, then what must be defended is no longer solely the true concept of love but in the first place the dignity of the person.” He also pointed out that the truth on natural family planning is rooted in natural law, stating that the, “transmission of life is inscribed in nature and its laws

stand as an unwritten norm to which all must refer. Any attempt to turn one's gaze away from this principle is in itself barren and does not produce a future” finally, while admitting that the, “teaching expressed by the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life) is not easy,” Pope Benedict XVI however made it clear that, “yet it conforms with the fundamental structure through which life has always been transmitted since the world's creation, with respect for nature and in conformity with its needs” (Vatican.va).

The last Magisterium to be considered will be that of Pope Francis. Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (“The Joy of Love”) draws attention to the fact that there is a growing mentality that tends to reduce the generation of human life to one variable of an individual’s or couple’s plan. He insists that the Church’s teaching is meant to help couples to experience in a complete harmonious and conscious way their communion as husband and wife, together with their responsibility for procreating life (*Amoris Laetitia* No. 82). Pope Francis then advocates a return to the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* (Human Life”) and *Familiaris Consortio* (“The Fellowship of the Family”) which highlight the need to respect the dignity of the human person in morally assessing methods of regulating birth (*Amoris Laetitia* No. 82). He insists that these should be taken up anew in order to counter a mentality that is often hostile to life (*Amoris Laetitia* No. 222).

In fulfilling their duty of responsible parenthood and parenting, Pope Francis holds that the use of methods based on the law of nature and the incidence of fertility are to be promoted because these methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them and also favour the education of an authentic freedom (*Amoris Laetitia* No. 222). It is evident that the Magisterium of Pope Francis is in keeping with the Magisterium of all his predecessors and is thus consistent with the overall Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control.

3.4. BIRTH CONTROL METHODS IN THE MAGISTERIUM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

From the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control, it is evident that the only methods of birth control sanctioned by this Magisterium are those that are described as natural family planning methods. Ashley and O' Rourke have noted that Natural Family Planning or NFP, "is a name for modern technologies of conception control based on the uniquely human character of the woman's sexual physiology by which she is fertile only for five or six days of her monthly cycle" (138). But a more elaborate description of NFP is made by Pazhayampallil. According to him, NFP:

is planning the birth of children based on in- built indicator of fertility and infertility in a woman's body. There is a period of sterility during the menstrual cycle of each woman, i.e., a number of days during which there is no ripe ovum present in the female genital tract, and so intercourse will not result in conception (*Pastoral Guide.... Vol. 2* 1238).

The two descriptions of NFP noted above give us the concise meaning of NFP. However, the research avers that they do not clearly spell out how birth control can be achieved through them. The missing link here is the question of sexual abstinence during the fertile period of the woman's menstrual cycle for the purpose of birth control. Thus, one can say that NFP is a method of birth control based on the fertile and infertile periods of the woman's cycle during which sex is only limited to the infertile. This method is termed 'natural' obviously because the fertility and infertility of the woman's body are part of her original biological composition that can be clearly figured out.

The following methods of NFP will be considered here: Rhythm, Basal body temperature, and Ovulation methods respectively.

3.4.1. The Rhythm or Calendar Method

This method, Peschke pointed out, is based on the independent findings of the physicians Knaus from Austria (1929) and Ogino from Japan (1930). They discovered that a woman is not equally fertile at all times, but has fertile and infertile periods (*Christian Ethics Vol. 2* 502). On his part, Clowes has given us the pattern of these researches into the menstrual cycles of different women.

- i. Conception is seldom possible from 20-24 days before the next menstruation
- ii. Conception is possible from 12- 19 days before the next menstruation; and
- iii. Conception is possible during the 11 days before the next menstruation (94).

It is pertinent to note that in using this method, a woman needs to keep a record of menstrual calendar for a period of six menstrual cycles to record the duration of each cycle. She also can determine her own safe period by calculating the date of ovulation in each cycle and then subtracting three days from that day in the shortest cycle and adding three days in the longest cycle (Llewellyn- Jones, 105- 106).

The rhythm method, though it appears plausible and effective, may be difficult for some women, especially those with a very irregular menstrual cycle because they will find it challenging to locate the longest or shortest cycles. Additionally, the research agrees with the warning of McSweeney that no woman should try to use this method together with the Billings method as confusion and pregnancy may easily occur (58).

3.4.2. The Basal Body Temperature Method (BBTM)

Llewellyn- Jones has argued that the Basal Body Temperature Method is “a more accurate method [than the calendar method] of pinpointing ovulation” (106). Peschke offers a concise description of how this method works. In his words:

it is based on the discovery that at the time of ovulation the basal temperature of the woman rises to a higher level and maintains that level until the onset of the next menstrual cycle. Then it falls to the original level. When the high temperature continues through three days, the safe days begin in the evening of the third day. (*Christian Ethics Vol. 2* 502)

We submit that while the description of the basal body temperature method given above in principle looks quite simple, we argue that in reality it may present some challenges. Since this method requires the use of a thermometer to take the temperature, not every woman may have access to one or may be able to effectively use it. Secondly, some women may forget to regularly take and chart the temperature rise, especially in our ever busy world of today. Lastly, the temperature of the woman may be affected by some other conditions like the health of the woman or the time of the day. Thus, those who desire to use this method should take these observations into consideration in order to obtain a reliable and effective result with the use of this method.

3.4.3. The Ovulation or Billings Method

The ovulation method is also called the mucus or Billings method after the couple Dr John and Evelyn Billings who developed the method and did much to propagate it (Peschke, *Christian Ethics Vol. 2* 503). For the reason given in the preceding sentence, this research prefers

the name Billings method for this method. The Billings method as McSweeney points out is “based on a woman’s ability to recognize in her body one sign, the mucus sign, which tells her that her ovulation is coming soon (62). The occurrence of ovulation which happens only once (on one full day) in every cycle marks the fertility of women. Hilgers has given a basic description of the Billings method for discovering the time of ovulation (fertility) as follows:

- i. The menstrual period at the start of each cycle is considered to be fertile. The reason for viewing the time of menstruation as fertile is that if a woman should have an unusually or unexpected short cycle such that the ovulation process were to begin toward the end of menstruation, she would have no warning of this fact since the presence of the menstrual flow would make it difficult for her to examine her vagina mucus. Thus, as a precaution, women are advised to regard the menstrual period as fertile.
- ii. After menstruation, there is a noticeable absence of any vagina discharge of mucus, and a woman experiences a definite sensation of dryness. During these days of dryness, the woman is infertile.
- iii. At the conclusion of this period of dryness, cervical mucus begins to be discharged from the vagina. At first, this mucus is a kind of cloudy, sticky discharge, but it gradually becomes a clear, egg- white, stretchy and lubricative substance. The “peak” or main sign of ovulation is the last day on which this clear and stretchy mucus is present. The women’s period of fertility, however, is defined as starting with the first day of the cloudy mucus discharge and continuing up until three days past the peak symptom of ovulation.

- iv. From the fourth day after the peak symptom until the start of the next menstrual cycle, a period of infertility occurs (383- 387).

The woman who uses this method is required to use a chart and enter her finding at night every day using different colours for the different types of mucus (sign of fertility). The question of irregular menses is not a problem for the Billings method since “Billings method works well even if the menses are completely irregular” (McSweeney, 64).

In Nigeria the Billings method is the most common of NFP methods. In fact, it seems to be synonymous to NFP, thanks to the promotion of this method by the Prolife Association of Nigeria (PLAN). For the purpose of instruction and the learning of the Billings method, Lèonie McSweeney’s “Love and Life: Billings Method of Natural Family Planning” and its video compact disc (VCD) companion are definitely very useful. Both of these resources are readily available at PLAN offices across Nigeria and other bookshops.

The natural family planning methods are generally effective. However, there is no consensus amongst scholars as to the percentage of effectiveness of these methods. Billings has pointed out that recent research by the World Health Organization attributes NFP a use effectiveness rate of 94.6% and methods effectiveness rate of 97.99% (219). Billings and Westmore on their part peg the method effectiveness of NFP methods at 99% (78). Other scholars have expressed the effectiveness of NFP methods in failure rates. Accordingly, while Golden says NFP methods have a failure rate of 1- 1.5%, Trussel and Grummer- Straun put their failure rate at 1- 3% (70). From the above statistics it is evident that whether in methods’ effectiveness or failure rates, NFP methods have an excellent rating. Kippley suggests that where significant differences in effectiveness rates are found between groups using essentially the same

natural family planning methods, the differences say more about the makeup of the different groups or their training than it does the method (5- 6).

There are so many advantages of NFP both on the subjective and objective levels. Ashley and O' Rourke have pointed out some of the subjective (psychological) advantages of NFP. These include: a reported enhanced sense of personal dignity for many women who use NFP methods; abstinence aids couples to learn to have confidence in the strength of their mutual love and express it in a variety of ways besides "total orgasm"; periodic abstinence also lessens sexual routine and enhances the experience when it is actually decided on (141). NFP methods enhance the dignity of women because, as Nwamadi, explained they place the responsibility of accepting the fertility cycle of the woman on both spouses and thus the woman is no longer reduced to a sterile object that can be manipulated at will by her husband as is the case with contraceptives (114). Finn and Finn a couple that has practiced NFP for many years have corroborated the advantages mentioned above. According to them:

after using NFP for eleven years [at the time of writing in 1993], we have experienced in ourselves an improved awareness of how our bodies work. We recognize a greater appreciation and acceptance of how we can work with God to bring new life in the world, and a greater ability to be self- disciplined. Put these together and the resulting sense of self- worth and mutual respect spills into everything we do. (69)

The subjective advantages of using NFP that have been noted above are by no means exhaustive. The research contends that not every couple may experience them or at least not at the same level. It will therefore be helpful if those who use NFP methods should take note of the particular

subjective advantages that they experience in using NFP and share with other couples within the same environment.

On the objective advantages of NFP, the Natural Family Planning Teachers Association of Ireland (NFPTAI) hold that the natural family planning method of birth control is healthy since there is no interference with the normal physiology of the menstrual cycle of the woman, and therefore it protects future fertility. Other advantages of NFP identified by NFPTAI include: it is eco- friendly because no hormones or chemicals are used that pollute the environment or that may harm the body; Highly effective and can be used to achieve as well as avoid pregnancy, and it can be used at all stages of the woman's reproductive life; free from all side effects since there are no drugs used; Easy to learn and use. After three cycles each woman can confidently undertake self observation and apply it to regulate her fertility; more independent since it enables couples to have control of their fertility without depending on outside agencies for prescriptions and devices; intuitive since it helps women become more familiar with the natural patterns of their menstrual cycle and can readily notice any unusual change from the normal (naturalfamilyplanning.ie)

Some disadvantages of NFP include the following: Abstinence may be a problem to some couples, and may require a change of life style; fertility is shared, therefore the practice of NFP requires that both partners be motivated and agree to use this method of birth control; it requires training from a qualified NFP teacher, and it usually requires charting for about three cycles for the woman to become completely familiar with mucus symptom and cycle pattern (naturalfamilyplanning.ie).

3.5. A CRITIQUE OF THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL

The critique of the Catholic Magisterium on birth control will begin with some positive observations. This Magisterium has developed over the years along a definite pattern. The observation of Noonan is relevant here and corroborates this assertion. Noonan has observed that “Catholic teaching has consistently opposed sterilization and contraception since the days of the Fathers of the Church as acts destructive of the procreative potentials of conjugal love” (650). This consistency goes to show the level of conviction with which the Magisterium of the Catholic Church has formulated her teaching on birth control. It has also been pointed out by various scholars like Billings, Westmore and Golden that the natural family planning methods endorsed by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church as the only legitimate means of birth control when duly followed guarantee an effective and efficient birth control practice. Billings has pointed out that recent research by the World Health Organization attributes NFP a use effectiveness rate of 94.6% and methods effectiveness rate of 97- 99% (219). Billings and Westmore on their part peg the method effectiveness of NFP methods at 99% (78). Golden has expressed the effectiveness of NFP methods in their failure rates which he says is between 1-1.5% (6). From the above statistics, it is evident that whether in methods’ effectiveness or failure rates, NFP methods have a desirable and excellent rating.

Following the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on the practice of birth control also has advantages at the subjective and objective levels. Ashley and O’ Rourke have pointed out some of the subjective advantages of doing so. These include: a reported enhanced sense of personal dignity for many women who use NFP methods; abstinence aids couples to learn to have confidence in the strength of their mutual love and express it in a variety of ways besides “total orgasm”; periodic abstinence also lessens sexual routine and enhances the experience when it is

actually decided on (141). These authors Finn and Finn a couple that has followed this magisterium and practiced NFP for many years corroborate the advantages mentioned above. Finn and Finn noted that they experienced an improved awareness of how their bodies work and also a greater ability of self- discipline (69). There is in Finn and Finn a sense of strong satisfaction for a couple who had come to appreciate the benefits of NFP. The account of this couple is also a good example of how the teaching of the Catholic Church on birth control when diligently adhered to can bear positive fruits.

On the objective advantages of NFP, Pazhayampallil succinctly highlights them thus: “natural planning is scientifically sound and free from any bad side effects. Natural methods are ethically acceptable in all cultural, ethnic and religious contexts and raise none of the moral problems or health problems [of contraceptives].” He continues that NFP is “safe, healthy, effective, aesthetic, inexpensive, and life -long” (1248). Ashley and O’Rourke (141- 142), and Finn and Finn (68- 69) largely agree with these advantages that have been pointed out by Pazhayampallil.

Another scholar, Mary Eberstadt, offered a very compelling defence for the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control, especially as expressed by Pope Paul VI in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (On Human Life). Eberstadt based her defence on the assertion that the warnings or predictions of Paul VI about what the world would look like if contraceptives became widespread have all come to pass. She noted that *Humanae Vitae* had warned of four resulting trends if artificial contraception became widespread: a general lowering of moral standards; a rise in infidelity; a lessening of respect for women by men; and the coercive use of reproductive technologies by governments (136). From her examination of a variety of evidence, the author reached a number of conclusions to indicate that these predictions of *Humanae Vitae*

have been vindicated by events following the sexual and contraceptive revolution: the weakening of family ties (140); female impoverishment and trouble in the relationship between sexes and single motherhood (141); and the use of contraceptive technology coercively by governments in places like China, India and Indonesia (144- 145). The findings of Eberstadt and the conclusions she reached in the view of the research are a demonstration of the fact that the birth control question is not just a matter of how to regulate the birth of children but that this question has consequences in a variety of ways that may even be unknown to couples who engage in birth control practices.

Recently, Christopher Roberts wrote an article: “Contraceptive and Catholic Identity: NFP” (commonweal.org) in which he argued in favour of the teaching of the Catholic Church on birth control. He argued that NFP is part of the church’s mission and it requires couples to place their sexual desires in the context of their wider vocational discernment. He also asserted that like any road to holiness, suffering is part of NFP because the periods of abstinence can sometimes be an agony. But he insisted that NFP leads to the cultivation of virtues and is potentially a source of freedom, self-knowledge, and spiritual depth (“Contraceptive and Catholic Identity: NFP” commonweal.org).

In spite of the above positive observations, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control has also not gone unchallenged. Scholars have challenged and criticized this Magisterium on different grounds: objections against the Natural Law Theory on which the Magisterium of the Catholic Church is built; philosophical objections; contradiction in this Magisterium and dissent from members of the Church. We are now going to highlight some of the major objections raised against the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control.

On the objection raised concerning the Natural Law, this study shall consider the physicalist objection to the Natural Law. It was first advanced by David Hume and used by other scholars like Josef Fuchs and Charles Curran. The thrust of Hume's objection which has become known as the principle of "no ought from an is" is that one cannot conclude from what actually is to what ought to be (Peschke 123) or "one cannot logically derive a moral imperative or value judgement simply by observing the facts of nature" (Rachel 60). In explanatory terms, the research sees this principle as being, for example, opposed to drawing a general moral law from a simple observation of the function of sex as the Magisterium of the Catholic Church has often proceeded from the purpose of sexual intercourse as reproduction to a prohibition of any form of sexual intercourse that willingly inhibits reproduction as morally wrong including pre-marital sex and other forms of unnatural sexual intercourse like homosexuality and masturbation. Lobo has noted the views of Josef Fuchs on the difficulty of arriving at moral norms through the observation of nature. In the words of Fuchs, "what can be read in man's biological nature is only the manner in which nature works spontaneously if man does not intervene, or also the possible results man can achieve if he wishes to make use of nature in this manner." Fuchs continued that, "the norm of conduct of moral behaviour cannot simply be found in the fact of its conformity with physical nature as such, but rather in its conformity with the human person taken in his totality" (Lobo 179).

The criticisms of Charles Curran of the physicalist approach to natural law have been summarized by Gula. First, the physicalist approach reflects the naïve realism of the classicist worldview, that is, it is based on a static and essentialist definition of human nature which considers change and historical process to be only of secondary importance, and supports a static view of the moral order. Physicalism also gives an exaggerated importance to the human and

biological nature in determining morality and so separates the action from the totality of the moral reality. It claims too many negative moral absolutes based on the action taken in itself, and does not make room for historical development and the creative intervention of reason to humanize the given patterns of nature (*What are They Saying About Moral Norms*, 40). In line with Charles Curran, Lisa Fullam argued against the physicalist dimension of conjugal sex. According to Fullam, “human sex should never be reduced to its physiological features. While the vast majority of human sex acts do not result in procreation, they are naturally ordered to the forging of ties between partners.” Fullam added that, “to understand human sex is to focus first on its effects on whole persons, not on its biological outcome” (“Contraception and Catholic Identity: Unnatural Vision?” commonweal.org). Fullam considered the vision of sex in *Humanae vitae* (“*Human Life*”) as unnatural because its criteria for acceptable methods of spacing children were described in terms not of the people involved, but of the physical act only. The whole person’s development as a sexual being in relationship with others was counted as less important than where and when a man ejaculates (“Contraception and Catholic Identity: Unnatural Vision?” commonweal.org).

The criticisms above of the approach of Natural Law adopted by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church in articulating her position on birth control are helpful in broadening the debate in this area. However, we argue that these criticisms do not invalidate the position of the Magisterium all together. The principle of “not ought from an is” has not taken into consideration that the use of things according to their intrinsic laws and purposes guarantees their serviceable and effective use while a contrary use frustrates and destroys it (Peschke 125). Thus, this research contends that it is reasonable and justifiable to proceed from the knowledge of the purpose of something to the moral obligation of a corresponding, good use of that thing. The

research argues further that if voiding the intrinsic purpose of something is permissible in one instance, the domino effect will set in and demand that voiding such intrinsic purposes should be permissible all the time. Thus if contraceptive acts are permitted today even as they contradict the nature of conjugal love, an opening will be made for other deviate forms of sexual expressions like homosexual acts and masturbation.

The views of Peschke on man's existential and ultimate ends as insightful in responding to the criticisms of the physicalist approach to Natural Law. For Peschke, the realization of man's existential ends is the reason why a purposeful use of beings and things is demanded. A contrary use will impair these ends. The existential ends include: self- preservation, self-perfection, procreation and education of children, concern for others, promotion of the common good and communion with God (125). Peschke has insisted that the existential ends must be respected and valued because through their furtherance the ultimate end is promoted, that is, God's glory, His kingdom and the unfolding of His creation. Drawing from this, Peschke concluded that the ultimate end is thus the ultimate end for the appropriate use of beings and things and this use is obligatory; this obligation is favoured by presumption; it does not demand a special proof in each case (125).

The view of Peschke concerning ultimate end introduces the elements of faith and revelation in the discourse of nature and the norms that are derived from it. Human beings were created by God and he has willed that they should live in a particular manner so as to enter into his Kingdom and be saved. That human beings are destined for salvation means that they will need to be assisted by divine revelation to follow the path that God desires for them and this includes the norms derived from the very nature of man created in the image of God as Lobo has pointed out (178). The Magisterium of the Catholic Church has the competency to interpret

moral norms derived even from nature because she has been entrusted by Jesus Christ with the task to teach all nations (Matthew 28, 18- 20) and she is being assisted by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the fulfillment of this duty.

Objections have also been raised against the Magisterium of the Catholic by a philosophical examination of its claims, especially as enunciated in *Humanae vitae* ("Human Life"). Ajiki has pointed out that such an examination has revealed two problems: the concept of purpose and the claim that the unitive and reproductive function of sex must be inseparable (*Troubling Ethical Waters*...., 119). On the rejection of the inseparability of the unitive and reproductive functions of sex, Ajiki has noted some of the objections raised against this assertion by Carl Cohen (119- 121). This research has only summarized the major assertions of Cohen that Ajiki has noted. Cohen objects to the principle of inseparability because it is not supported by respected ethical approaches like utilitarianism which shows it to be false. Cohen is of the view that the moral test of a sexual practice like the use or non-use of birth control, is the emotional and physical pleasure that is the consequence of the behaviour and its moral rightness has nothing to do with fulfillment of an organic function; the practices that benefit the people involved are worthy in themselves (Ajiki, *Troubling Ethical Waters*...., 120).

This principle for Cohen is also not supported by the requirements of Kantian ethics that people not be treated as merely means. He contended that if preventing conception is an expression of disrespect, it is so only because of the attitude of the people involved and, possibly, some flaw in the relationship since others can express concern and respect by not risking an undesired conception (Ajiki, *Troubling Ethical Waters*...., 120). For Cohen, the claim that the use of contraception shows a lack of respect indicates a negative view of sex and he described the concept of the inseparability principle as an unwelcome, instrumental view of sex. Cohen

concluded that the instrumental view of sex and the more negative view that sex is shameful unless it is redeemed by childbirth are prejudiced views that no longer dominate thinking in any society (Ajiki, *Troubling Ethical Waters*...., 120- 121).

The objections raised by Cohen are exposed to moral relativism. His appeal to utilitarianism is recourse to a morality based on the principle of seeking the greater good or pleasure. This leads to a situation in which there is nothing objectively evil or good, but only that which, from the perspective of efficacy, is better or worse. The consequence here is moral relativism that makes any form of moral evaluation rather difficult if not impossible all together. The objections of Cohen may even strengthen the position of the Magisterium that provides objective criteria for making a moral evaluation of the means of birth control.

Some scholars like Richard McCormick and John Noonan find the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control, especially as expressed in *Humanae Vitae* ("Human Life"), to be self contradictory. The views of McCormick have been reported by Genovesi. He pointed out that by accepting that couples could engage in sexual intercourse during the infertile period even when it is known that these acts cannot be productive, the Magisterium as expressed in *Humanae Vitae* ("Human Life") has contradicted its earlier assertion that sexual intercourse between spouses must always have a procreative intent (Genovesi 194). Similarly, Noonan asserted that the Magisterium of *Human Vitae* suffers from inter inconsistency because its central teaching that every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life is in direct contradiction to its teaching that NFP may be used for appropriate reason (Shannon, 186). The claim of self contradiction has led Burtchaell to argue that there is no intrinsic ethical difference between artificial means of birth control and natural family planning and to conclude that all are obviously artificial (451).

The objection to the Magisterium based on self contradiction as observed by McCormick and Noonan has not fully taken into consideration a major difference in the manner in which the prevention of conception is achieved using artificial methods of birth control and NFP. The former deliberately inhibits the procreative potentials of the conjugal act while the latter merely restricts the conjugal act to the times of infertility. In this way, couples express the unitive dimension of the conjugal act without doing anything to inhibit the act of intercourse from resulting in conception. The sexual act in itself is non-procreative and during the fertile period, couples choose to abstain from sex. This is not contradictory because the non- procreative nature of the conjugal act is not intentionally willed by couples but is an integral nature of the fertility cycle of the woman. This is different from the anti- procreative nature of artificial means of birth control that willfully and intentionally acts to eliminate the procreative potentials of the conjugal act. There is no necessary contradiction in the position of the Magisterium as raised by McCormick and Burtchaell.

Another objection that has been raised against the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control hinges on dissent. Here, Ajiki observed with specific reference to *Humanae Vitae* (“Human Life”) that “the lack of assent to *Humanae vitae* (Human Life) from bishops, priests, and laity alike continues to undermine the authority of the papal Magisterium which holds fast to this encyclical” (*Troubling Ethical Waters*...., 188). For example, a group of Washington DC’s theologians argued that the Magisterium of Pope Paul VI was not an infallible teaching of the Magisterium. The group thus dissented from it and recommended that spouses could decide according to their conscience to use artificial contraceptives in some circumstances (Curran and McCormick, 137). Concerning dissent, we contend that while the assent of many Church members to any Magisterial teaching no doubt deepens the strength of the Magisterium, the

dissent of others from certain teachings of the Magisterium neither weakens the strength nor the competence of the Magisterium. According to Lobo the role of the Magisterium is neither a form of ecclesiastical brainwashing nor that of merely authenticating the mind of the majority in the Church but that of service of truth to the faithful and humanity at large under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (191). Moreover, the Magisterium of the Church also recognizes that her teachings will not always be accepted by all. Pope Paul VI, for example, had anticipated that not everyone would easily accept his teaching on birth control pointing out that it should cause no surprise that the church, any less than her divine founder, is destined to be a sign of contradiction (*Humanae Vitae*, No. 8).

The truth which the Church serves is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ who is both “the truth and the life” (John 14, 6) and “a sign of contradiction” (Luke 2, 34). It is also the position of the research that since the witness of the Magisterium is to the truth revealed in Jesus Christ, this truth is self subsisting and self sufficient and therefore it does not necessarily require any human assent to be valid. It remains so even if no one assents to it. However, since it is also the mission of the Church and the Magisterium to bring all to the knowledge of the truth, including dissenters, the Magisterium should continue to find ways of expressing her teachings that will find a wider appeal to everyone without comprising on her core teachings.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TIV PEOPLE AND THEIR THOUGHT SYSTEMS ON CHILDREN AND BIRTH CONTROL

4.1. HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE TIV PEOPLE

The Tiv people are predominantly found in Benue State of Central Nigeria with an estimated population which Ushe (21) and Ajiki (*Challenges of Christian Apostolate in Central Nigeria...* 54) noted has been placed at six million (6,000,000) according to the 1993 census making them the fourth of the over 250 ethnicities in Nigeria. The historical origins of Tiv society are going to be treated under the following subunits: the origin, migration and present location of Tiv people,

4.1.1 The Origin of the Tiv People

Yuhe (1) and Dzurgba (*On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 13) asserted that the ancestral origin of the Tiv is to be found in their oral traditions and history. The word Tiv itself has a triple meaning as Wegh has pointed out. Firstly, it is the name of the Tiv race; secondly, it also refers to their language; and thirdly, it is the name by which the Tiv know and call their ancestral father (24). The entire Tiv race traces its descent from one single ancestor, Tiv who is said to have been the son of *Takuruku*. *Takuruku* on the other hand is thought to have been the first man (Yuhe 1). Dzurgba, however, has drawn attention to the fact that some allusions have led some contemporary Tiv historians to suggest that *Awange* was the father of the man, Tiv. But after further inquiry, Dzurgba reached the conclusion that the, “*Awange’s* ancestorship is extremely remote, doubtful and debatable” (*On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 15).

The ancestral link of Tiv with *Takuruku* has been reiterated by the submission of Dzurgba above. However, “many writers are puzzled that *Takuruku* has no prominence in Tiv genealogy” (Wegh 25). Wegh offered a possible explanation to this neglect of *Takuruku* when he observed that while, “*Takuruku* may not be accorded daily relevance, nonetheless, he has not disappeared from Tiv genealogy.” Wegh continued that being the first man, “*Takuruku* is assigned a supernatural role. Being close to Aôndo, he assumes the role of a forefather akin to that of Abraham” (25). This ancestral role of *Takuruku* is manifested at the death of a prominent Tiv man. At such, a death *indyer* (tree- drum) is beaten to announce it. The sound of the *indyer* carries the message as provided by Moti and Wegh (10): “*Takuruku Anyamazinga tile jighjigh keghen waningo, waning ngu koondon sha kumun u tamen- Takuuku Anyamazinga stand upright and wait for kin, kin is ascending kumun u tamen (great beyond).*” From this role that *Takuruku* plays, he is seen as a great ancestor that awaits and welcomes future ancestors into the great place (Wegh 25). We see a relationship in this invocation of a great ancestor at the death of a Tiv man with the invocation of the saints at the death of a Catholic faithful. The saints who are akin to ancestors are asked to welcome and lead the dead person to the presence of God in heaven.

As a result of the transcendental nature of *Takuruku*, the Tiv trace their origin to Tiv and this is accepted by all mainstream historical traditions (Dzurgba, *On the Tiv of Central Nigeria*.... 18). This ancestor, Tiv, is also tied up with the socio-cultural and political experience of the Tiv people and they also draw their identity and sense of solidarity from this same ancestor (Wegh 25). The ancestor of Tiv had two known sons: *Ipusu* and *Ichôngo*. *Ipusu* (uncircumcised) was the first son and *Ichôngo* (circumcised) was the second. It was from these two sons and their descendants that the entire Tiv race evolved. The Tiv people through their process of genealogical linkages are able to show their common ancestral origin (Wegh 25).

Ushe (7- 8) has attempted a graphic representation of the family tree of Tiv through the descendants of *Ipusu* and *Ichôngo*. However, the research for the purpose of simplicity and clarity has only highlighted here the immediate offspring of the respective sons. Thus the first son of Tiv *Ipusu* gave birth to: *Shitile*, *Ukum*, *Kparev* and *Tongov*. Similarly, the second son of Tiv, *Ichôngo*, gave birth to: *Turan*, *Ikyurav*, *Nongov*, *Iharev*, *Ugondo* and *Masev*. It was from these descendants of Tiv that other clans evolved.

4.1.2 The Migration of the Tiv People

Moti and Wegh observed that “there is no consensus among writers as to the original home of the Tiv from where they may have started their migration” (12). However, Torkula is of the view that the version that commands popularity and currency is that which trace the origin of Tiv to the Bantu people who once inhabited the central African continent in the Shaba area in the present Democratic Republic of Congo (1). A linguistic approach has been advanced to demonstrate the Congo origin of Tiv. Wegh noted that this approach was adopted by Abraham R. C. who based his thesis of a Congo origin of the Tiv on a 67 word- list. The list demonstrated some similarity between Tiv language and the language of the Banta Nyaza in present Malawi (27). A conclusion is drawn from this similarity that the Tiv language is a Bantu related language. A few of such Tiv- Bantu related words have been sampled from Ushe (13).

English	Bantu Nyaza	Tiv
Animal	<i>Nyama</i>	<i>Nyam</i>
Bone	<i>Kuha</i>	<i>Kuhe</i>
Meat	<i>Mnyam</i>	<i>Nyam</i>
Eye	<i>Iso</i>	<i>Ishe</i>

Rain	<i>Gula</i>	<i>Wura</i>
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Table 1 Showing Bantu related words to Tiv

Ushe also made an additional assertion that since the Bantu Nyaza's fathers were at the River Congo Basin and lived in Congo Kinshasa, it is highly probable that the Tiv were staying with them (13).

It was from this Congo area that the Tiv began their migration. Moti and Wegh are of the view that while the movement of the Bantu speaking people out of central Africa may have been caused by economic reasons and population growth, the account of the Tiv suggests that at some point they were being pursued by their enemies (13). This suggestion is further given credence by the myth of the miraculous crossing of the Tiv across the River Congo. Legend has it that when the Tiv arrived at the River Congo with their pursuers closing in on them, and without knowing what to do, a small snake called *Ikyalem* transformed itself into a wooden bridge, and the Tiv crossed over to the other side (Moti and Wegh 13). The salvific role that *Ikyalem* played brought it into a permanent friendship with the Tiv. The Tiv people neither kill nor eat this snake even today (Dzurgba, *On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 27). While the story of *Ikyalem* may be a myth, Dzurgba has insisted that "it has historical, religious and moral significance and implications for contemporary Tiv men, women and children (*On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 28).

After crossing the River Congo, the Tiv settled at a place called *Swem* before migrating to their present place. Ushe averred that the Tiv loved *Swem* because, "it was secured from tribal wars, fertile for farming and had clean water" (14). However, there have been some contentions

as to the real nature of *Swem*. Wegh, for example, disagrees with Dorward's description of *Swem* as a mythical place comparable to the Biblical Garden of Eden. However, he observed that the failure to locate the exact spot called *Swem* has continued to generate controversy and speculation (27). Dzurgba from his study however, has been able to establish the identity and location of *Swem* in Akwayaland in south- western Cameroon (*On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 31). Dzurgba equally pointed out that the Tiv, "have accorded *Swem* a special position in their historical, religious, social, economic and political narratives, beliefs and attitudes because it is still regarded as their original ancestral home" (*On the Tiv of Central Nigeria....* 31).

It was from *Swem* that the Tiv people migrated to their present and what may be described as their permanent home land. There are variations in the dating of the time of migration from *Swem*. For example, while Wegh (27) is of the view that the time of migration from *Swem* cannot be known with certainty, Ushe (14) holds that it was between early 1500 and 1600 AD and for Torkula (2), it was in 1500 AD. Similarly, different reasons and factors have been advanced as to why the migration of Tiv from *Swem* took place. Moti and Wegh (13- 14), Ushe (14- 15) and Dzurgba (32- 33) have identified some of those factors to include: increase in population and population pressure, hostilities from other tribes (*atoitiev*), and the desire to expand in farming activities due to the agrarian nature of the Tiv.

Before occupying the Benue valley, the Tiv people engaged in a series of wars, conquests, displacements and setting on the run other ethnic groups like the Udam, Idoma, and the Chamba (Moti and Wegh 14- 15; Torkula 2). Elaborating on the purpose of the war against the Chamba, Moti and Wegh pointed out that the

wars that were fought between Chamba and the Tiv during the nineteenth century were aimed at establishing ownership over the Benue valley. The Tiv finally defeated the Chamba at the decisive battle along the foothills of Ushongo, and established their supremacy in the area. (15)

From hindsight we opine that the victory of Tiv over the Chamba gave them respect among other tribes and dominance over the region. Ushe (15) also observed that these wars and especially those at the Ushongo Hills marked a turning point in the history of the Tiv people, especially in matters of politics, warfare and military leadership.

4.1.3 The Present Location of the Tiv People

Today, the Tiv people are predominantly located in Benue State in Central Nigeria. However, they are also in other neighbouring states like Nasarawa, Taraba and Adamawa. Ushe (21) and Ajiki (*Challenges of Christian Apostolate in Central Nigeria*...., 54) have noted that the Tiv people are the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria with their population strength according to the national population census of 1993 put at a conservative figure of six million. In Benue State the Tiv are located in the following fourteen local government areas: Makurdi, Guma, Gwer East, Gwer West, Gboko, Tarka, Buruku, Logo, Ukum, Katina- Ala, Ushongo, Kwande, Konshisha and Vandeikya. These local government areas have recently been grouped into the following intermediate areas councils: Jerchira, Jemgbagh, Kwande, Lobi, Gwer and Sankera established by the Benue State Council of Chiefs and Traditional Councils Law 2016 Part II, art 8, 1.

4.2. TIV MARRIAGE AND FAMILY SYSTEM

The institutions of marriage and family are as old as the creation of man and woman as recorded in the Genesis. God created man and he declared that it was not good for the man to be alone and so he created the woman out of one of the ribs of the man and gave her to the man who named her woman because she was taken from his flesh. God also commanded them to procreate and fill the earth, hence forming the first family of the human race from the Christian perspective (Genesis 2, 18,22- 25). As a concept, marriage is commonly defined as, “a union of a man and a woman as husband and wife” (Dzurgba 117). However, this definition tends to reflect only the Christian ideal of marriage as an institution between a man and a woman that is monogamous in nature. For other cultures like the Tiv culture marriage is not necessarily only monogamous; it could also be polygyny. According to Dzurgba, Polygyny, “is the marriage institution in which a man marries more than one wife” (117). Moreover, various authors like Wegh, Ushe and Dzurgba have pointed out that polygyny is even the preferred form of marriage in Tiv society. For example, Wegh asserted that “in general... among the Tiv, monogamy is either a self-denying ordinance, in the sense that a man voluntarily renounces or abstains from polygamy [polygyny], or it is dictated by the inability to afford more than one wife” (61). Dzurgba also cites poverty as one of the reasons that prevents a Tiv man from marrying more than one wife since polygyny is the institution of marriage practiced in Tiv society (117).

Marriage is contracted through different means in Tiv society. However, the research considers only two forms of marriages, that is, exchange marriage and marriage by bride wealth. Tarbo has pointed out that the earliest form of marriage among the Tiv was exchange marriage known as *yamshe* by which a man obtained a wife by giving his sister, that is, his *ingyol*, to the wife’s brother, that is, her *tien* (27). This form of marriage involved the exchange of women and

was based on mutual agreement among the contracting families. It aimed at fostering continuity of family lineage (Ushe 88). Iorshe holds *yamshe* had some advantages like serving as a check on premarital sex, promoting family cohesion and discipline (qtd in Nyityo, 21). The practice of exchange marriage was abolished by the British colonialists in 1927 and this was replaced with marriage by bridewealth (Wegh, *Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition, 83).

Marriage through bridewealth is called *kem* in Tiv. The word *kem* literally means the acquisition of something little- by- little or a continuous multiplication of whatever one is doing: farm (*kem sule*), business (*kem nyar*) and increase in knowledge (*kem mfe*) (Ushe 89). As a form of marriage, *kem* refers to the contracting of marriage through the payment of the bridewealth, that is, *kem kwase* and this confers traditional legality on the marriage (Afaor, 97). The function of bridewealth in legalizing marriage in traditional societies like the Tiv is that the children born in a marriage where the bridewealth has not been paid are regarded as belonging to the woman's family rather than the family of the man (Wegh, *Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition, 108). Iortyom also observed that without *kem*, the children of the couple would be open to attack by witches and one of their daughters would be taken by the guardian (*tien*) of the wife (qtd in Afaor, 99).

The process of *kem* is an elaborate one and it may differ from one community to the other though with a lot of similarities. Afaor has outlined the major items that are brought by the family of the man during *kem*. These include, inter alia, *bar* (salt), *gbanyi* (basin), *mkulem ma nyain* (palm oil), *nyam toho* (bush meat), *igyo* (pig), *ivo* (goat) and *inima* (umberella) (100). The monetary cash involved in *kem* is negotiated between the two families involved in the *kem*. However, an important aspect of *kem* as observed by Wegh (*Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition 108) and Afaor (101) is that it is not paid once and for all; it does not end

because for the Tiv, *kemkwase ngu been ga*, that is, bridewealth never ends (Wegh, *Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition 108). While the assertion that *kem* never ends has remained the practice in Tiv society, bridewealth today in Tiv society is generally high and according to Afaor, this has brought a lot of misgivings within Tiv society. It has made many people to either remain unmarried or take to other forms of marriage like elopement that are considered illegal (101). In whatever form marriage takes place in Tiv society, the procreation of children and the formation of family are essential to it. Since children are central to marriage and family life in Tiv culture, we are going to consider the place of children in the thought system of the Tiv people.

4.3. THE THOUGHT SYSTEM OF TIV ON CHILDREN

The thought system of the Tiv people values the procreation of children due to a number of considerations that have social, political economic and religious implications not just for individuals but also for their families and the society at large. Some of the most important considerations are discussed below.

4.3.1. Stability of Marriage

In Tiv cultural thought system, like other African cultures, the union of a man and woman only deserves the name marriage with the birth of children. As Utsua (87) noted marriage in Tiv is aimed at the generation of life. This is true also for the Ebira people of Kogi State. According to Ehusani (171), among the Ebira, the pleasure of sex which accompanies the union of man and woman and the companionship that marriage brings are considered as ‘secondary’ goods. Thus the customary norm surrounding marriage in Tiv culture is such that when there are no children born in any marriage, the marriage is only considered a marriage in theory. The

stability of a barren marriage in Tiv culture is generally uncertain. Wegh averred that childlessness remains a major source of family tension, stress and quarrels among couples and also the large family (*Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition 94). Barrenness or childlessness is a major reason for divorce or polygamy in Tiv culture. The same can equally be said of other African cultures. Bujo (110) noted that in most African cultures, in the case of the barrenness of the wife, only polygamy can assure the man of not dying without children. The instability of marriage in Tiv culture as a result of childlessness is a reality even in contemporary times regardless of the educational attainment, religious affiliation, and economic and status of the couple. Denga observed that in Tiv society where a childless marriage was formalized with a church wedding, the conflict and complexities heighten when the couple is faced with the decision to appease the fertility gods of the land and solicit ancestral help or adhere to Christian principles which are against sacrifices to gods, spiritism or divination (qtd Wegh, 95).

4.3.2. Symbol of Status and Prestige

In Tiv cultural system, the procreation of many children is a symbol of economic status and prestige. Wegh pointed out that the greatest outcome of marriage in Tiv society is children who are seen not only as a sign of prosperity, but who also bestow prestige or *shagba* on their parents; through them, Tiv see a long future before them (*Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition, 92). Thus, one without a child is as good as dead, without honour, respect or status. In a similar way, Utsua (92) noted that in Tiv society, children are considered as a source of wealth and prestige since they are the ones who boost agricultural production and are engaged in other economic activities like hunting and fishing. The number of children in a large family was also a sign of social status and economic strength. The man with many children in Tiv society is well respected as a man with *jime*, which literally means back but which is used as a

metaphor for strength. To be the father of a large family is indicative that the man is a person of great wealth who is able to provide for the needs of his family. The status of women in Tiv society is also tied to the procreation of children. A childless or barren woman is often mocked and referred to as a 'man' especially by relatives of her husband. In a polygamous or extended family system, the woman equally sees her personal fulfillment and elevation through child bearing; and the mother of several children is greatly honoured and respected by her husband, his relatives and neighbours (Wegh, 94).

4.3.3. Continuity of the Family Lineage

The continuation of the family lineage is another value considered in Tiv culture for the procreation of children. Utsua stated that children are the means of fostering the continuity of offspring who will inherit from the parents at their death (87). In Tiv culture, each person desires to have his or her own children. Tarbo has highlighted on this in the following words:

The Tiv believe that it is necessary to transmit life from oneself to another person, and are not satisfied with having someone else's children. To the Tiv, all other devices for having children such as adoptions are considered unnatural. To the Tiv, having children means eternal life. It means to cooperate with God for the continuity of one's family and the community in general (56).

The assertions of Tarbo above are similar to those of Mbiti who averred that among Africans in general and the Tiv of central Nigeria in particular, the main purpose of marriage is to provide a means for the members of the family to multiply and increase the population of their communities (125). In Tiv society, the family consists of a man, his wife or wives and his children including grand –children. Thus the idea of family for the Tiv goes beyond the nuclear

family to that of the extended family system. Wegh observed that the Tiv word for family is *tsombur*- umbilical cord) which is a metaphor for the organic unity of all family members (*Between Continuity and Change...* Second Edition 125).

In view of the importance of continuing one's lineage, childlessness is abhorred in Tiv culture and to die without getting married or childless is to be totally cut off from one's society and to lose all links with humankind (Wegh *Between Continuity and Change... Second Edition* 94). As it is with the Tiv society so is it with the African society generally. Bujo remarked that in African societies, a man who dies childless falls into oblivion and will be unable to find happiness in the next world because he had left no children who will honour him; thus he is cut off from the family community (107). Bujo continued that "childlessness is a personal disgrace. It is also felt as a kind of slur on the community, a social fault, and it often leads to divorce" (107).

4.3.4. Ancestorship

Ancestral veneration is a prominent feature of African religious belief system. Mbiti described them as those who are physically dead but are still believed to be alive in the memory of those who remember them when they are in the community (Ushe, *God, Divinities and Ancestors...*, 170). In Tiv religious thought ancestors are held to be in a state of personal immortality. Ajiki explained this when he stated that in Tiv culture death neither ends life nor severs the bond between the dead and the living members of the community. Thus the dead are believed to be with the living dead members living among the ancestors. This means that the ancestors continue their role as guidance of the living members of their families (Ajiki, *Understanding World Religions...*, 352). They are consulted by family members in times of need

for their blessings, protection and intercession. This is true of all ancestors because as Magesa stated, ancestors, “possess power over humanity and creation in that they have been endowed with a stronger vital force than the living. They can use this power to effect either harmony or chaos in the world” (70).

The desire of a traditional Tiv man or woman is to become an ancestor at the end of his or her life in this world. However, the status of an ancestor is not conferred on every dead Tiv person. To become an ancestor, the deceased person must meet certain conditions in order to be recognized as an ancestor. Utsua (90- 91) and Ushe *God, Divinities and Ancestors...*, 174) have identified similar qualifications to be met before a dead member is declared an ancestor in Tiv culture. These include:

- i. The person would have been married and raised many children who are expected to give him or her befitting burial at death. These children eventually together with their children will constitute the clan for which the deceased becomes an ancestor. Having children while living in this world is the first condition to be met and the more children one had while alive, the more certain is one's integration into the community of ancestors beyond one's death (Bujo, 110). The person who has died without any children can never be an ancestor in Tiv culture since there is no one to guarantee his or her memory within the community.
- ii. The person ought to have lived a good life, a life of kindness, generosity, love, and peace and must be worthy of being emulated.
- iii. The person should have died in old age and died a good death. People who die by drowning, fire, lightening, falling from a tree, accident or *aakyol*, during a festival or any untimely death at a young age are said to have died a bad or unnatural death.

These persons cannot become ancestors because of their type of death suggests the displeasure of the ancestors or gods and thus is indicative of an existence outside the land of the ancestors in death.

- iv. The person must have received a befitting burial. The children of the deceased are expected to accord him or her befitting. A befitting burial is the one that follows all the pre- burial, burial and post- burial rites of the Tiv culture. Without this burial, the dead person will not be admitted into the land of the ancestors and his or her spirit will continue to wonder endlessly within the community.

4.3.5. Inheritance

Another consideration in Tiv thought system for having children is the question of inheritance. It is the desire of every man to beget his own children who will inherit his wealth and take over the family's estate in order to perpetuate the family's name. Utsua (93) pointed out that this assertion is reflected in Tiv philosophy as expressed in the song composed by Maseshin Zungwe as follows:

*Kwase wam a mar gar me zenda un gay o ka nana va yam tse. Ityo yam cia la doo
mayangega, gayo me seer kwase*

The above song is transcribed in English as follows;

*If my wife does not procreate, I will divorce her otherwise who will inherit my belongings?
My kinsmen this cause is not a good one or I will add another wife*

The desire of the Tiv man to have heirs is fulfilled, especially in male children in keeping with the patrilineal nature of Tiv society. Wegh (*Between Continuity and Change... Second Edition* 93)

observed that the social system of compound and its pattern of land and property inheritance through the male child makes having a male child a source of great anxiety in Tiv society. a Tiv man who has not have a male child in his family does not think of having established a family. Girls are said to belong to another man's family since they are married away. It is only through a son who can inherit from his father that a Tiv man can *ver tse* (a kind of family continuity insurance).

4.3.6. Chieftaincy Titles

The conferment of chieftaincy titles in Tiv culture comes with so much *civir* or honour for the recipients. However, chieftaincy titles are not just conferred on anyone without following any criteria. One of the criteria to be met before a man can receive a chieftaincy title in Tiv is begetting children. In Tiv culture, according to Utsua, a chief must have been married and raised children who are expected to give him a befitting burial. These children are the ones who eventually constitute the clan for which the chief becomes the ancestor at death (92). Aboho (linknaija.com) has identified some of the chieftaincy titles that have been conferred on a number of Tiv sons to include *Nomyange u Tiv* (The Rising Son of Tiv), *Tagher Tagher Wan u Tiv* (The Prominent Son of Tiv) *Igyungu Mfe I Tiv* (The Hill of Wisdom of Tiv), *Nom Or u Tiv* (The Strong Man of Tiv) and *Wanbegha u Tiv* (The Cub of Tiv), *Igyuve i Tiv* (The Eagle of Tiv)

4.4. BIRTH CONTROL SYSTEM IN TIV SOCIETY

The research was unable to find any secondary sources that articulated the birth control practice among the Tiv people of Benue State. Thus, in order to find out the practice of birth control in Tiv society, the research developed a questionnaire that was randomly administered to 300 respondents in five selected local government areas in Tiv society namely: Gboko, Katsina-

Ala, Kwande, Makurdi and Vandeikya. The respondents were 210 females and 90 males in both the rural and urban areas with various religious, social and economic backgrounds. They answered questions concerning: the reason for birth control; the preferred methods of birth control and the reason (s) for such preference; the side effects or benefits of using such methods; their understanding of NFP and the question of NFP as the only legitimate means of birth control. In addition to the questionnaire, the research also made use of oral interviews with various persons including health workers in hospitals. The questions for the interviews were from a list of sampled questions and some items on the questionnaire. The findings from the responses from the questionnaire and interviews are presented below.

4.4.1 Reasons for Birth Control in Tiv Society

The following are the major reasons for the practice of birth control in Tiv society.

- i. Economic Reasons: Most of the respondents said that the economy was an important reason for birth control. Economic considerations are central to birth control because parents have an obligation not only to procreate but also to take care of the needs of their children including food, shelter, clothing and education. What Tizhe and Odineze say of Africa society also applies to Tiv society. According Tizhe and Odineze the living condition in Africa coupled with the increased pressure in the economic and educational fields make the rearing of a large family more difficult than it used to be (63). Terhemba Pine (Oral Interview 10 Feb 2017) asserted that low income, especially among urban dwellers contributes to the practice of birth control.

- ii. Social Reasons: Social considerations that necessitate birth control in Tiv society are similar to those identified by Tizhe and Odineze. These include: the desire to maintain a small family size in order to cope with the high cost of living; the age of the age of either of the couple since older couples tend to limit the number of their children; unemployment leading to income inequality; rural- urban migration and inadequate educational opportunities (64).
- iii. Medical Reasons. Medical considerations for birth control in Tiv society apply both to men and women. Aondoakaa Esther (Oral Interview 25 Aug 2016) and Ikor Patience (Oral Interview 10 Feb 2017) said they practice birth control because of the health risk of conceiving again having both given birth on three previous occasions by caesarean sections (C- sections). Other medical conditions that were identified as resulting in birth control include: sickness of either of the parents or an infant being nursed, and the fear of miscarriage as a result of persistent cases of miscarriage.
- iv. Religious Reasons: Religion generally plays an important role in African societies the Tiv society in particular. The predominate religion in Tiv society is Christianity though there are others within Tiv society who are adherents of Tiv religion. Neither Christianity nor traditional religion is opposed to birth control. The Catholic Church, for example, requires it of her members for the well being of the family. The Catholic Bishops of Nigeria hold that planning for marriage, for family decisions, including birth control and policies in all areas of marriage and family life is the normal function of intelligent people (Schineller, 110). The Catholic Church only teaches that the practice of birth control should only be limited to the natural planning methods.

- The Catholic Bishops of Nigeria are opposed to any family planning that involves the use of contraceptives and abortifacient to block conception or birth (Schineller, 110).
- v. Parents' Education: The desire for parents in Tiv society, especially women to acquire high level of education is one other reason why couples practice birth control. Most women reported that they adopted birth control measures either when they first got admissions into the university or when they began graduate studies. They argued that the practice of birth control while pursuing their educational studies enabled them to be fully committed to the rigorous demands of academics.
 - vi. Work Reasons: The desire to be engaged in public or private service and career advancement or growth, especially for women was also identified as part of the reasons for birth control in Tiv society by the respondents to the research questionnaire. This is corroborated by Laba. According to Laba many women in Nigeria including Tiv society have embrace birth control because of their Jobs. Laba quoted Sandra Akah who said she previously did not believe she needed birth control until she kept going for maternity leave which threatened her banking job (guardian.ng). Certain jobs require a lot of time, presence and commitment and women may find it more difficult coping with such jobs if they keep breaking due to maternity leave.
 - vii. Government Policy: The Nigerian Population Policy is deliberately aimed at the promotion of birth control. The policy states that “to achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, Nigeria shall promote appropriate policies including population-related policies, to meet the needs of current generations, without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs”

(population.gov.ng). According to the National Population Commission, the specific targets of this policy, inter alia, include: Achieve a reduction of the national population growth rate to 2 per cent or lower by the year 2015; achieve a reduction in total fertility rate of at least 0.6 children every five years. And increase the modern contraceptive prevalence rate by at least 2 percentage point per year (population.gov.ng). As part of the means of achieving these targets the Nigerian government at all level: federal state and local has been promoting birth control and the use of modern means of birth control the implementation of the Nigeria Family Planning Blueprint.

- viii. Advocacy by International Organizations and Donor Agencies: Advocacy by International Organizations and Donor Agencies in favour of birth control in Nigeria is a major reason for birth control in Nigeria including in Tiv society. Nigeria remains a priority country for most of the international donors, including USAID and DFID and Nigeria has depended on them for years for the sponsorship of family planning programme (advancefamilyplaning.org). These organizations are promoters of the population control campaign in Africa described in Family Planning 2020, an international plan funded in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bayer Health Care and Merck, and implemented with the support of large NGOs like Marie Stopes International, Planned Parenthood and USAID (naturalwomanhood.org). Family Planning 2020 (FP2020), “is a global partnership that supports the rights of women and girls to decide freely, and for themselves, whether, when and how many children they want” (familyplanning2020.org). The plan for Nigeria aims at increasing the rate of contraception use from 15% in 2014 to 36% by 2018. To

accomplish this ambitious goal, the plan calls for an aggressive demand generation effort, which includes targeting identified high-priority segments: adolescents, young people and unmarried women (naturalwomanhood.org). The plan then includes supplying long-acting reversible contraceptives for free to the population in a systematic fashion through the public and private health network. This plan to cut birth rates through contraception is proposed as a solution to reduce maternal and child mortality. This Family planning according to Migeon is presented as offering a host of additional health, social, and economic benefits; It can help slow the spread of HIV, promote gender equality, reduce poverty, accelerate socioeconomic development, and protect the environment (naturalwomanhood.org). A driving factor for all these according to Migeon is the enduring fear of overpopulation in Africa, and the desire for a drastic reduction of the fertility rate, which is currently 5.5 per woman in Nigeria (naturalwomanhood.org).

4.4.2. Methods of Birth Control used in Tiv Society

Earlier above, the research established importance of children in marriage and family life in Tiv cultural systems. However, the desire for children is not limitless in Tiv society. Torkula has pointed out Tiv society also practices family planning, the regulation of the birth of children, especially because of social- economic reasons and the dynamics of contemporary times in the advent of westernization and Christianity (“A Survey of the Marriage and Burial Institutions....” scribd.com). Even at that long before the introduction of western methods of birth control, Tiv society like other traditional societies as Atede observed used certain traditional behaviour to regulate the fertility of women and thus control the birth of children (142). Delano has defined the traditional methods of birth control as, “the practices, beliefs or customs handed down from

one generation to another aimed at preventing pregnancy” (18). Delano has grouped these methods into the appliance and the non- appliance methods. The appliance methods involve specific preparation and application by the herbalist or traditional healer and the non- appliance methods of birth control are self administered and they do not need the attention of the herbalist (18). Delano (19) and Okpalanwaka (11- 12) have listed similar methods in both the appliance and the non- appliance traditional methods of birth control. Examples of the appliance methods include: herbs, scarification and supernatural barrier methods like charms; examples of the non- appliance methods include: abstinence, breast feeding, polygyny, and sexual taboos.

The phenomenon of birth control in Tiv culture is seen in the traditional methods of birth control which are commonly used in Tiv society. These include both the appliance and the non- appliance methods. These methods are briefly discussed below.

4.4.2.1. Traditional Contraceptive herbs in Tiv

Traditional herbs are commonly used in Tiv society for the purpose of birth control. These herbs are prepared by the traditional healer using different plants like the nim or neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*). Herbs or oils produced from the nim tree have spermicidal properties that kill the sperm within the vagina within 30 seconds and remain active for 5 hours. In men nim leaf tablets taken for one month produce reversible male infertility without effecting libido (“neem and birth control.” prosectosdeNeem.com). The researcher gathered from oral interviews with Hemba Agnes, Nyiwoo Ngobua and Tor Samuel that these herbs are mostly taken by women. Agnes Hemba, an elderly woman in an oral interview explained to the researcher during an oral interview explained how this traditional contraceptive herbs work. According to her, the mixture of different herbs called *guma* is prepared by a traditional herbalist from a mixture of

different herbs for the woman intending to use them. The woman is expected to boil and take them for about three to six days. Thereafter the herbs are buried inside a hole and depending on the depth of the hole the woman will either experienced a prolonged menstruation if the hole is deep or normal menstruation if the hole is shallow. But in both cases, conception will not occur. Delano has also pointed out that in some cultures the herbs are could equally be taken on behalf of the woman either by another woman or domestic animal, or be placed at a circular road as sacrifice to be consumed by the spirits to prevent conception (20). These herbs, according to the researchers' interviewees mentioned above achieve a permanent sterilization of the women and render them permanently incapable of child birth. A few other respondents said they experienced miscarriages as a result of using traditional herbs.

4.4.2.2. *Azinga* and Scarification in Tiv

There is another appliance tradition method of birth in Tiv society called *azinga* (small sticks). The researcher got the idea of *azinga* from Agena Ngodoo during an oral interview with her. The method of *azinga* according to Agena Ngodoo involves the tying of the *azinga* (small sticks) into a bundle by the traditional medicine man who hands them over to the woman intending to use them. These sticks are tied according to the number of years that the woman intends to avoid conception. During those years the woman is unable to conceive any child though she may continue to experience her normal menstruation. Once the years are over, the woman unties the broom sticks and then she can conceive it. Agena Ngodoo during the interview said that the use of *azinga* as a means of birth control is very effective and she added that this method is very common among women in rural Tiv communities. The use of *azinga* as a method of birth control unlike the traditional contraceptive herbs mentioned earlier achieves only a temporary sterilization of the woman. Other form of birth control is the application of substance

through scarification. Scarification according to Delano involves incising the supra pubic or the spinal region of the male and the female followed by the application of a specially prepared substance which is absorbed through the blood streams and works as contraceptives (20). In Tiv society, the traditional healer prepares the substance from a mixture of different items and then applies it after the incision for three times to achieve an effective result in controlling birth. (Nyiwoo Ngobua, Oral interview).

4.4.2.3. Polygyny in Tiv

Polygyny is the practice of a man marrying more than one wife. This practice was also used as a method of birth control in some African societies including the Tiv society. Kisembo, Magesa and Shorter observed that the practice of polygyny helped mothers to be able to recover well enough before the next pregnancy (187). Similarly, Delano said that polygyny enabled the husband to satisfy his sexual urge with another wife who was not nursing a baby and this prevented unintended pregnancy by the nursing wife who was isolated from her husband and given space for uninterrupted breast feeding of her baby (21).

The practice of polygyny in Tiv society also serves as an important means of birth control, especially for Tiv men. Agbo Terver, who is married to three wives told the researcher during an oral interview that his being married to three wives has helped him to control and space the child birth of each of his wives According to him once any of his wives gives birth, he keeps away from her avoiding sexual intercourse with her for some time preferring sexual intercourse with the other women.

4.4.2.4. Breast feeding and Abstinence in Tiv

Abstinence as Okpalanwaka pointed out is the avoidance of sexual intercourse by couples for various reasons including for the purpose of birth control (11). Breastfeeding on the other hand refers to the act of nourishing the baby from the mother's milk rather than from a feeding bottle (Nwamadi, 109). Abstinence and breastfeeding were usually combined in traditional societies for the regulation of birth. Atede observed that in traditional African society, sexual intercourse was discouraged while the mother was breastfeeding. This helped to keep the birth interval longer and fertility lower than it would have otherwise been. Atede concluded that breast feeding does help delay conception in many cases, so that there is usually at least a year and a half between the births of children (142). According to Delano, abstinence was required during breast feeding because it was believed that intercourse during breast feeding could result in the contamination of the breast milk by the sperm and result in the ill health or death of the child (21). However, McSweeney pointed out that the belief that breast milk is contaminated by sperm during intercourse is completely false (40). Both of these methods are known to Tiv society. Hemba, Agnes (10th December, 2015), Oryiman Terwase (Oral Interview 10th December, 2015) and Jov Igba (Oral Interview 8 June, 2016), held that abstinence was practiced during breast feeding in Tiv society because of the fear that the woman may conceive another child when she has not even weaned the child already born.

4.4.2.5. Douching

Douching involves the washing of the vagina of the woman after intercourse with hot water with or without concentrated solutions of salt, alum, lemon or potassium in order to effectively kill the sperm and eliminate the possibility of pregnancy (Okpalanwaka, 11). From

the responses to the research's oral interviews it was established the women in Tiv culture, especially in the rural areas used this method of washing the vagina immediately after conjugal sex with a solution of salt to prevent conception, especially nursing mothers.

4.4.3. Trends in the use of Methods of Birth Control in Tiv Society

The table below shows the methods of birth control that are used by couples in Tiv society. The data was collected from copies of the questionnaire that were administered to 300 respondents for this research consisting of 210 women and 90 men in five selected local government areas within Tiv society: Makurdi, Gboko, Kwande, Logo and Vandeikya.

Method	Number	%
Condoms	63	21
Hormonal (Pills/ implants)	60	20
Intra- uterine device (IUD)	51	17
Injectables	75	25
Operative sterilization	6	2
I nterrupted intercourse (Withdrawal)	21	7
Natural Family planning (Billings method)	45	15
Abstinence and breastfeeding	15	5

Herbs	9	3
Polygyny	6	2

Table 2. showing Trends in the Methods of Birth control in Tiv Society from the Research Questionnaire in August and September 2016

The table above indicates that there is preponderance in the use of artificial means of birth control or contraceptives in Tiv society with over 80% of the respondents making use of at least one method of contraceptives. About 15% of the respondents said that they used the natural family planning methods and another 10% the traditional methods of birth control. It is evident from the responses that some respondents used more than one method of birth control in their practice of birth control. The research also corroborated the data from the questionnaire by visiting some health institutions in Tiv land like the Federal Medical Centre (FMC) Makurdi, Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH) Makurdi, Family Support Hospital (FSH) Makurdi, General Hospitals Makurdi, Gboko and Vandeikya and interviewing some health workers in each of them. The high use of contraceptives in Tiv land according to Aondowase John, Nyiekaa Simon, Pever Dorcas, Terna Tiza and Upaa Dooshima (Oral Interviews) all of them health service providers who were interviewed for this research is directly linked to the availability and low cost of such contraceptives just as most of the respondents noted. According to the above, some of these contraceptives are given either at a low cost or completely free because they have been either subsidized or paid for by the Nigerian government or other international donor agencies.

Some of the donor agencies that were identified as the promoters of contraceptives in Tiv society, nay Nigeria, according to the interviewees above include: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), an affiliate of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Centre for Integrated Health Programme (CIHP), United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), Society for Family Health (SFFH), Bluestar Health Care Network (BHCN) and DKT International. Only recently, for example, the country director of DKT International declared that the organization wants to make contraceptives as easily available in Nigeria as coca- cola (pulse.ng).

The common injectables used for birth control in Nigeria including Tiv society according To Gbaeren Jacob (Oral Interview 29 Feb. 2016) include: Norigynon, which is given once a month; Noristerat which is given once in two months and Depo-Provera that is given once in three months. These injections are given to a woman in the upper arm or buttocks as stated above to prevent pregnancy. Another health worker, Anande Doom (Oral Interview 29 Feb. 2016) identified Copper T as the major IUD and implanor and Jadelle as the two main implants used as contraceptives in health facilities within Tiv society. These implants which are thin plastic rods, according to Anande Doom, “are inserted under the skin of a woman’s upper arm by a trained health care provider to prevent pregnancy for up to three and five years and can be removed sooner if the woman desires to become pregnant” (Oral Interview 29 Feb 2016).

The pills readily available in hospitals and health centres that provide artificial methods of birth control within Tiv society according to Pever Dorcas (Oral Interview 25 Aug 2016) include: Azuerette, Beyaz and Enpresse. On the use of condoms, it was mainly the male respondents that said that they have been using condoms as a method of birth control. This was supported by two health care workers: Iorkohol Tersoo (Oral Interview 25 Aug 2016) and

Shapande Abraham (Oral Interview 10 Dec 2016) who said that male condoms are the only condoms commonly used as most women often refuse the use of the female condoms preferring that the men use the male type. From the responses to the research's questionnaire, operative sterilization is the least used method of contraception in Tiv society. This low use of sterilization in Tiv society is obviously a reflection of its general low use in Nigeria as noted by T. Z. Swende and T.S. Hwande. According to Swende and Hwande, sterilization has not been accepted as a popular method of contraception in developing countries like Nigeria and this may be due to the reported aversion to operative procedures and the permanent nature of the method (Annalsafmed.org).

For the natural family planning methods, only about 10% of the respondents said that they made use of the Billings method of natural family planning to control the birth of their children. This percentage in the use of NFP is very low when compared to the generally high percentage of the use of contraceptives in Tiv society. Bua Erdoo (Oral Interview 25 Aug 2016), Gbaeren Jacob (Oral Interview 29 Feb 2016), Aondoakaa Esther (Oral Interview 25 Aug 2016), Tsav Matthew (Oral Interview 10 Dec 2016) and Ikor Patience (Oral Interview 10 Feb 2017) explain why the natural family planning methods are less used in Tiv society. According to the above, NFP methods are not usually promoted in public health institutions and most women no longer patronize the natural methods of birth control. They added that women who engage in exclusive breastfeeding do so not necessarily as a means of birth control but for the healthy growth of their new born babies. In spite of the assertion that NFP methods are no longer promoted, these methods are not completely unknown in Tiv society as even the responses to the research questionnaire have indicated. The NFP methods of birth control are promoted by the magisterium of the Catholic Church including in Tiv society. For example, in a Communiqué

issued at the end of the Second Plenary Meeting 8th – 14th September, 2012, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) declared that “as Catholics, we reiterate that the use of contraceptives is immoral and sinful and we recommend only Natural Family Planning, abstinence and self-control” (cnsng.com).

These Catholic priests: Aluga Samuel, Mom Paul, and Nyinya Emmanuel, (Oral Interviews) noted that the Catholic Church in Tiv society has been promoting NFP methods through different forms: sermons, seminars, Catechetical Week and Family and Human Life Week programmes, retreats and workshops for different groups like the Catholic Women Organization (CWO), Holy Family Association and Pro-life Association, and especially during pre marriage courses. Aluga Samuel noted that for example in 2009, the theme for the Catechetical Week in the Catholic Church in Nigeria, including Tiv society, which took place in all Catholic parishes and missions was: “Sexuality and Human Development: A Christian Understanding.” Topics like the nature and purpose of human sexuality including conjugal love were discussed within the week. Also in 2015 during the Life and Human Life Week with the theme; “Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive,” the meaning of conjugal love as aimed toward procreation and the formation of family was a central issue for discussion. In all these, the Catholic Church in Tiv society has been reiterating the magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control, which promotes NFP methods of birth control and rejects contraceptives as methods of birth control.

From the responses to the research questionnaire, it is evident that the traditional methods of birth control are not widely used in Tiv society. These traditional methods are less used in Tiv society because as Anem Simon and Bagu Irene (Oral Interviews 10 Feb 2017), both of them community health workers, noted that “abstinence from sexual intercourse and exclusive

breastfeeding are often not promoted as methods of birth control in Tiv society.” These practices are promoted for other reasons: abstinence as a means of prevention of Sexually Transmitted Illnesses (STIs) and exclusive breastfeeding for the healthy growth of the child and well being of the mother. From the analysis of the trends in the methods of birth control in Tiv society, it is evident that major methods in the practice of birth control in Tiv society are the artificial methods and a lower percentage of the natural family planning methods.

4.4.4 Factors Influencing the Choice of Method of Birth Control in Tiv Society

The factors influencing the choice of birth control methods as identified by the respondents to the research questionnaire are similar to some of those identified by Olukunmi Lanre (academicjournals.org) as influencing the choice of family planning methods among couples in Southwest Nigeria. These factors include:

- i. Simplicity of the Methods: The simplicity of some methods is a motivation for others in the choice of the method of birth control. Methods like the pill, condom and injectables were generally considered simple to use.
- ii. Low cost and availability: The low cost and availability of a number of birth control methods, according to some of the research’s respondents and interviewees, played a significant role in deciding which method of birth control to use. Methods like the condom, pill and the implants are relatively cheap and within the immediate reach of those who want to use them. Nyiwoo Ngobua (Oral Interview 23 May 2016) said that women within her community who wanted birth control usually got the implants on their upper arms at the community’s health clinic at no cost. She added that this free

- contraceptive service has encouraged a lot of women to embrace artificial birth control in the area.
- iii. Effectiveness of the Method: This is another important consideration in the choice of birth control methods. In fact, for some of respondents, the effectiveness of the method is the only consideration. Methods that were said to be preferred due to their effectiveness include the Billings Method, the Pill, IUDs, implants, herbs and operative sterilization.
 - iv. Faith: The religious doctrines of Churches of some of those interviewed were also indicated given as factors influencing the choice of birth control methods in Tiv society. This was very common with Catholics who cited their Church's teaching on birth control as the primary reason for adopting the NPF method.
 - v. Campaigns by government and non- governmental organizations (NGOs): A lot of those who responded to the questionnaire reported that they were greatly influenced by the media campaigns of government and other NGOs and what they were taught at the family support and local clinics by reproductive health care providers. The NGOs and donor agencies funding reproductive health programmes, which include access to birth control methods in Nigeria include: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bayer Health Care and Merck, Marie Stopes International, Planned Parenthood and USAID (naturalwomanhood.org).

4.4.5. Effectiveness and Effects of the Methods of Birth Control in Tiv Society

From the responses to the questionnaire and findings from oral interviews, most of the persons that used the following methods said they were very effective and achieved the intended result: Billings method, IUDs, implants, pills, traditional herbs and sterilization. However, those

that were using the condom and withdrawal methods reported a high level of failure. Some respondents reported a high failure rate with the withdrawal method and an average level of effectiveness with the use of the condom.

From the responses to both the questionnaire and oral interviews conducted for the research, the following are some of the major side effects of some methods of birth control in Tiv society:

- i. Excessive weight gain: This side effect was identified by women respondents who were using or had used hormonal pills and traditional herbs as a method of birth control. One respondent said that the weight gained while using the pill has remained with her even after she had stopped the usage of contraceptive pills.
- ii. Pains: Many respondents and interviewees, male and female, said that they had various degrees of abdominal and stomach pains while using some methods of birth control. For the women, those pains were associated with the use of IUDs, Norplant and vaginal diaphragm. Most of the men who said they experienced stomach pains were those that were using the condom as a means of birth control.
- iii. Unstable menstruation: The side effect of unstable menstruation was experienced by women using mostly IUDs, vaginal diaphragm and contraceptive pills. The distortion in the menstruation of such women was two-fold. Those using IUD and vaginal diaphragm said that they often experienced either an increase in the menstrual flow or had a double menstruation in a month while some of the women that were using the pill and traditional herbs reported a cease in menstruation altogether.
- iv. Anxiety: Anxiety as a side effect was identified by men who had chosen either the condom or withdrawal methods and also by some women whose husbands were using

- these methods. The anxiety came as a result of the fear of a possible and sudden break of the condom or of the possibility of the men not withdrawing in time before ejaculation. These persons added that such anxiety reduced their concentration during sex and also limited their sexual pleasure.
- v. High Blood Pressure (HPB): High Blood Pressure was reported mostly by women who were using contraceptive pills and the Norplant. The experience of HBP came with increased temperature, dizziness and feverishness. It is also important to note that HPB is one of the factors that can result in stroke. Perhaps this explains the increase in the cases of stroke among women of child bearing age in Tiv society today.
 - vi. Abstinence: This was reported more as a challenge by those using the natural family planning methods. They, especially the men, said that the abstinence required for an effective NFP deprives them of sexual pleasure which they should derive from their wives.
 - vii. Sexual misconduct within the Society: The presence and use of contraceptive methods of birth control have also given rise to promiscuity, early or teen sex. Otu and Admike observe that sexual promiscuity is on the increase in Africa due to contraceptive mentality (104) Nyiekaa Simon (Oral Interview 11 Oct 2016) and Zege Andrew (Oral Interview 23 Nov 2016) identified the condom and the pill as the leading promoters of risky sexual behaviour, especially among young people
 - viii. Infertility: Prolonged use of birth control methods, especially contraceptives also cause infertility, especially among women. Willett mentions five major ways through which contraceptives can negatively impact on long term fertility. These ways include:

disruption of the menstrual cycle; causing hormone imbalance; disruption of ovulation; causing changes in the cervical mucus and the uterine lining (naturalfertilityinfo.com).

- ix. Feeling of guilt: Some of those who used contraceptives, especially Catholics, reported that they experienced the guilt of sin as a result of that since it was against the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Some of the major benefits associated with the use of some methods of birth control as reported by the respondents include the following:

- i. Elimination of the fear of conception: This was reported as the major aim and benefit of using any birth control method. However, the respondents who reported that they were sure of eliminating the fear of conception through birth control methods were those using the Billings method of NFP, sterilization, IUD, the pill, and injectables.
- ii. Achievement of pregnancy: A few women pointed out that the Billings method of birth control assisted them in achieving conception that was earlier delayed.
- iii. Economic and social benefits: Almost all the respondents and those interviewed said that with proper spacing of their children through the use of birth control methods they have children that they can adequately cater for in terms of housing, education and feeding. Others also noted that since their preferred methods were cost effective, they spent little or nothing to achieve birth control.
- iv. Religious benefits: This benefit was identified mostly by Christians using the NFP methods. They said that they felt fulfilled at obeying the laws of God concerning birth control using only the natural methods. The Catholics among them said that they can

also go for Holy Communion without feeling the guilt of sin that comes with the use of artificial means of birth control.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN APPRAISAL OF THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH

CONTROL IN THE CONTEXT OF TIV CULTURE

5.1. THE NATURE OF THE METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL

A contrast between the methods of birth control approved by the Magisterium the Catholic Church and the methods of birth control found in Tiv culture and society indicates a significant difference. While the Magisterium of the Catholic Church has sanctioned the natural family planning as the only morally acceptable means of birth control, the practice of birth control in Tiv society does not prohibit the use of any method of birth control. In fact, the reality is that there is there is preponderance in the use of artificial means of birth control in Tiv society as against the methods of natural family planning. Even some the traditional methods used in Tiv culture like herbs and douching acted in a similar manner like modern contraceptives.

The differences in the choice of the methods of birth control in the Catholic Magisterium and Tiv society and culture requires s further examination of these methods, especially from moral perspective. Fundamentally, all the methods of birth control aim at the same major effect, the prevention of conception. However, to conclude thereupon that they are the same is too simplistic. Such a conclusion misses an important fact, the “radical difference in the nature of the actions that bring about the desired result” (Pazhayampallil, *Pastoral Guide Vol 2*. 1309). The significance of this difference has been stressed by Pope John Paul II who noted that, “it is a difference which is much wider and deeper than is usually thought, one which involves in the final analysis two irreconcilable concepts of human person and human sexuality” (*Familiaris Consortio*, No. 32).

What then is the difference between contraception including the use of traditional herbs and NFP? The essential difference is that while contraception is an anti- procreative act which tampers with nature, NFP is a non- procreative act which accepts nature (May, 16). What this means is that contraception involves the choice to do something before, during, or after the sexual act which destroys the possibility of conception precisely because it is believed that such a choice will indeed negate the possibility of conception (Shanley, 55). This effectively implies that contraception anticipates fecundity inherent in the sexual act and deliberately and actively voids it. NFP on the other hand does not exclude the possibility of conception by deliberately voiding the procreative potentials of the conjugal act. It simply follows the order of nature exercising the sexual act in the normal manner such that if conception is due to occur, nothing will prevent it. The intention to avoid conception using NFP does not interfere with the fecundity of the sexual act but simply abstains from sex at the fertile periods in the woman's menstrual cycle.

From the paragraph above, it is evident that the difference between contraception and NFP lies in their respective present intentions. Anscombe (17- 18) gives a very insightful explanation of this:

the reason why people are confused about intention, and why they sometimes think that there is no difference between contraceptive intercourse and the fertile times [NFP] to avoid conception is this: they don't notice the difference between "intention" when it means that the intentionalness of the thing you're doing- but *you're doing this on purpose*- and when it means a *further or accompanying* intention *with* which you do a thing.

Anscombe adds that:

contraceptive intercourse and intercourse using infertile times may be alike in respect of further intention, and these further intentions may be good, justified, excellent.... But contraceptive intercourse is faulted, not on account of this further intention, but because of the kind of intentional action you are doing. This action is not left by you as the kind of act by which life is transmitted, but purposely rendered infertile, so changed to another sort of act together.

Drawing from the submissions of Anscombe above, we argue that the intention to avoid conception through contraceptive or natural family planning directly affects the very structure of the conjugal act as a human act and this transcends mere biological or physical considerations; it also affects the dignity of the person. The true dignity of couples is intrinsically tied to the unity and procreative dimensions of their union as husbands and wives. In the words of Pope John Paul II, “neither in the man nor in the woman can the affirmation of the value of the person be divorced from awareness and the willingness and willing acceptance that he may become a father and that she may become a mother” (*Love and Responsibility*, 228). The possibility of either becoming a father or mother cannot be eliminated from the marital risk without any implications. In this regard, the assertion by Coleman is very pertinent. He says, “if the possibility of parenthood is deliberately excluded from marital relations... the character of the relationship changes radically. The transformation is from a relationship of authentic personal love toward a utilitarian relationship of mutual enjoyment....” (204).

From what has been said above, the difference between contraceptive traditional methods used in Tiv society and the natural family planning methods advocated by the Catholic

magisterium is increasingly evident. It is the former that limits itself to biological and physical considerations without taking into cognizance the inherent dignity of the human person which within the context of the marital act aims at fatherhood and motherhood. Contraception separates the person from his or her procreative potentials and hence introduces a dualism in human sexuality. NFP on the other hand integrates the dignity of the human person with his procreative ability. It respects both the person and the biological dynamism of the woman's body. The continence that it periodically calls for diminishes neither the marital act nor personal love but enhances both.

6.2. BIRTH CONTROL AND HEALTH

A common adage among Nigerians says that "health is wealth". This only underscores the importance of health in human life. The question of health is thus an important aspect of the discourse on responsible parenthood and birth control because the human body is at its centre, especially the body of the woman. The different methods used in the exercise of responsible parenthood have varied effects on the health of couples using them. The natural family planning methods of birth control advocated by the Catholic Church impact positively on the health of both the husbands and the wives. This is because NFP methods are 100% natural and there are neither chemicals nor devices to be introduced into the body of the man or woman that have the potentials of adversely affecting their bodies, hence their health. NFP methods instead promote the health of spouses as they allow the women's bodies to remain very healthy before the next pregnancy resulting in higher pregnancies and babies (Finn and Finn 69). Ratner, a physician, remarked strongly that NFP, "protects women against abortion, venereal diseases... suicide and other psychiatric disturbances" (45). On the other, the use of contraceptives like the pill, injectables, implants and traditional herbs as means of birth control, which are predominant in

Tiv society, has a lot of adverse health effects on couples, especially women. There are a lot of inherent health risks in hormonal contraceptives. If they are so strong as to disrupt the reproductive system of the woman, they can also effectively affect every major system of her body. Some of the major health risks of using artificial means of birth control include: pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy, perforation of the uterus, weight gain, liver tumors, ovarian cysts, blood clots in the veins, lungs, heart and brain, potentially causing heart attacks and breast cancer (Coleman 184- 185; Grugni and Fernandes, 17) It is also very instructive to note that the link between hormonal contraceptives and breast cancer has been known for the past thirty years (usccb.org).

The World Health Organization has classified synthetic estrogen and progestin in contraceptives as carcinogenic to humans (usccb.org). This simply means that they are cancer causing substances. For example, the use of Depo- Provera as a contraceptive was for a long time a subject of controversial debate in the USA because of its link with breast and cervical cancer and its use was banned until only recently when the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) permitted it in the USA (Genovesi, 216). Unfortunately, one does not find this very important information passed on to women who are provided with hormonal contraceptives by government and donor agencies like USAID, CIHP and SFFH in Tiv society, especially at the rural level. Contraceptives have also been presented by the aforementioned agencies within Tiv society and Nigeria as part of preventive health programme against what has been termed “unwanted pregnancy” and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). However, this is far removed from the truth, because pregnancy is not a disease or illness. Thus, to propose contraceptives as basic health care is to consider a woman’s fertility as a burden. This also undermines a core principle of real health care, which has the responsibility to affirm how a healthy body functions, always

treating it with respect and honour because it is integral to who we are. It is pertinent to add at this point that preventive health care aims at the prevention of illnesses and diseases and not at undermining a normal and healthy functioning of the reproductive system of women.

Another important health question with contraceptives is abortion. Abortion serves both as a means of birth control and also as an outcome of the use of other contraceptive devices, pills, implant, herbs the use of salt solutions. Using abortion as a means of birth control exposes women to a lot of health risks. Women who obtain abortion are at a higher risk of reproductive tract infections, including HIV/ AIDS and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which can cause serious damage to the fallopian tubes resulting in sterility (Genovesi 220). These health effects can even be greater when the procedure for the abortion is not properly followed or when it is performed by quacks. Women who undergo abortions and sometimes even the men who support them experience post- abortion trauma (PAT) and in some complicated cases of abortion, the death of the woman may even occur. The link between contraceptives and abortion will be examined under the discussion on the sanctity of life. The conclusion that can be drawn from what has been discussed above is that since artificial means of birth control also pose as serious health risks, they cannot guarantee the well being of couples in Tiv society in particular and even the general society. This lack is sufficiently filled by natural family planning methods, which are not only effective but also without any health risks (Nwamadi, 113).

6.2. BIRTH CONTROL AND THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

The sanctity or sacredness of human life is a core value shared by both the Catholic Church in her Magisterium and Tiv culture. In Tiv society like other African societies, the sacredness of life is of prime value. Ehusani buttressing this assertion noted that the traditional

African society places the utmost premium on human life, and that children are desired and valued far above ‘goods’ and achievements in the world. In this society, human achievement is measured by how much life a person has given, and how much he or she has promoted or protected life (*The Politics of Population Control* 99). The Africans’ position on the value of human life is rooted in the belief that life originates from God and it has a supernatural dimension. These views are similar to those of the Catholic Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that “human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the creator, who is its sole end” (# 2258). In both Tiv culture and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, procreation is a special participation of couples in the creative act of God. They are able to do so within marriage. Elaborating on this, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) declared:

Human procreation requires on the part of the spouses responsible collaboration with the fruitful love of God; the gift of human life must be actualized in marriage through the specific and exclusive acts of husband and wife, in accordance with the laws inscribed in their person and in their union. (*On Respect for Human Life...* 12)

This submission of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith indicates that since procreation is proper to marriage, the conjugal act should not be rendered in a manner that deliberately inhibits it. The idea of the sanctity of life is relevant to the question of responsible parenthood because some methods of birth control instead of enhancing the generation of life are against it. And whatever is against life runs contrary to the sacredness of life that is a core value in both the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture. What Pope John Paul II said of the African society at large is a true reflection of Tiv society in particular. He asserted that, “the peoples of Africa respect the life which is conceived and born. They rejoice in this life. They reject the idea

that it can be destroyed, even when the so- called ‘progressive civilization’ would like to lead them in this direction (*Ecclesia in Africa* # 43). The natural family planning methods of birth control promote openness to life and recognize the value of the child. These methods acknowledge the fact that the conjugal love of spouses is both an expression of their love and a means through which they become co-creators of life. This is in line with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church that conjugal love has two dimensions: it is both unitive and procreative, that is, both love- giving and life- giving (*Gaudium et Spes* # 48). By respecting this inherent life- giving potential of conjugal love, couples practicing the NFP opt to abstain from the sexual act at the fertile times whenever they desire to control the birth of children. This is the only method of birth control that will enhance the promotion of life and the begetting of children in Tiv society.

Contraceptive methods of birth control on the other hand threaten the sanctity of human life because they are deliberately anti- generative of human life. As noted above, anything that is against human life cannot be a value in Tiv culture. The anti- generative nature of contraceptives is linked with their abortifacient consequences. Thus, there is that necessary link between contraception and abortion. Pope John Paul II has pointed this out in the following words:

The connection which exists... between the practice of contraception and that of abortion is becoming increasingly obvious. It is being demonstrated in an alarming way by the development of chemical products, intrauterine devices and vaccines which, distributed with the same ease as contraceptives, really act as abortifacients in the very stages of the development of the new human being. (*Evangelium Vitae* # 13)

There is an explanation of the link between contraception and abortion pointed out by Pope John Paul II above in Pazhayampallil and West. Pazhayampallil has explained that “couples using

contraceptives which rely heavily on technology have recourse to the next technical resort available and hence abortion follows as a natural corollary because contraception is not 100% effective (*Pastoral Guide.... Vol. 2* 1290). West who holds a similar view with Pazhayampallil argued that, “by using contraception, a couple set their will *against* the conception of a child”. West further pointed out that, “contraception has afforded the grand illusion that we can sever the inherent connection between sex and babies”. He added that “People then say the strangest things, such as: “I got pregnant by accident” (150). Women who “get pregnant by accident” describe the babies in the wombs as “unwanted babies”. There is a chain of events that follow the idea of unwanted babies. This has been explicated by West. According to West, “unwanted babies are the result of people having sex without being open to children. Pregnancy comes to be seen as a disease- contraception being the preventative medicine and abortion the cure” (150).

The connection between contraception and abortion is usually not explicitly made known to those who are provided with contraceptives. Genovesi felt disturbed that birth control pills and the Norplant are being advertised in the U S. for the most part as simply contraceptives without a clear acknowledgement of or reference to their abortifacient potentials (216). Consequently, “many people are unaware that the IUD, the pill and other hormonal contraceptive can at times act not to prevent conception but to abort a newly conceived human being” (West 151). As it is in the US, so it is in Tiv society, nay Nigeria. There is usually no mention of the abortifacient consequences of taking contraceptives. According to Hembra Agnes (Oral Interview 10th December 2015) and Oryiman Terwase (Oral Interview 10th December 2015) in 2015, there was a free implantation of the Norplant on some rural Tiv women by reproductive health care providers at a local government clinic at Adaka. However, they said there was no mention of the abortive effects of the Norplant on unborn children. These informants also said that some of the

women had to return to the clinic to have it removed because of the unbearable stomach pains they experienced after implantation.

It is now very evident that contraceptives and abortion are contrary to the Tiv love for life. This research is of the view that when members of the Tiv society are well informed of the anti procreative potentials of contraceptives, they will not just easily embrace artificial means of birth control, that is, if they do not totally reject them. This is the only way to enhance the promotion of life and the vitality of Tiv society. The assertions of Bujo on the position of African tradition on abortion are equally instructive. Bujo asserted that African tradition rejects abortion and has never regarded it as a legitimate means of birth control. This is so because abortion goes against God as the basis of life. It also goes against the ancestors whose existence is guaranteed by the unborn children; it is a form of suicide for couples since it is only in rejecting attitudes hostile to life that they can find their identity as husband and wife (148). Bujo added that abortion in African tradition is, “always a sin against the community, because it amputates a member of the community that places its hope on the child for a better future” (148).

Given that all the things stated above are true of African traditions, including Tiv tradition, members of the Tiv society cannot willingly embrace methods of birth control that have a direct link to abortion. It is here, then, that the natural family planning taught by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church is the best option for Tiv society. This is imperative because the Magisterium does not only regard all forms of contraceptives as intrinsically evil (*Humanae Vitae* #14) but she also legislates that those who procure or sponsor any abortion incur an automatic (*latae sententiae*) excommunication from the Church (Canons 1398 and 1329 # 2) until they ask the mercy and forgiveness of God through the sacrament of reconciliation (Canon 1357). Couples in Tiv society who are also Catholics should therefore not intentionally placed

themselves in a position of grievous sin which deprives them of the state of grace needed to be an active communicant member of the Catholic Church. Those who have found themselves in such situations should be encouraged by the mercy of God that is available to them in the Church and hasten to reconcile with God and the Church.

6.3. BIRTH CONTROL AND THE DIGNITY OF WOMEN

From the Biblical perspective, “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1, 27). It can be inferred from this that men and women were created with equal dignity albeit each with a different biological composition that complements the sexes. It is with this same dignity that a man and a woman enter the union of marriage. A unique composition of the woman is her fertility by which through an act of conjugal love with her husband procreation is made possible. Within marriage, the dignity of the woman is intrinsically tied to how her fertility is valued and appreciated, especially in relation to the means of birth control. The appreciation of the dignity of women in turn will enhance the understanding of their positive roles within the family and the larger society.

The natural family planning methods of birth control are the only methods of birth control that promote the dignity of women. Natural family planning advances a vision of sexuality that is very appealing. It promotes, as Pocak noted:

A vision where the body is a gift; a vision that believes men and women are first and foremost children of God; a vision that understands that sexual intercourse is not merely a re-creation, but a creation of the total self gift couples made on their wedding day to be united in a communion of love that is free faithful and fruitful.

It is from this vision of sexuality that natural family planning equally unfolds the dignity of women. Pocak noted how this works in great detail. In his words:

The art of NFP challenges the woman to embrace her dignity. Charting her signs enables her to get in touch with how she is wonderfully made. It helps redeem her body. It helps her assert her dignity to herself and to her husband by giving her the vocabulary she needs to articulate her physical, emotional, spiritual and sexual needs to her husband in a way that is virtually impossible without NFP. It gives her a way of embracing her sexuality in a manner that doesn't objectify her, but rather, sets her free to be loved as a person. (Patheos.com)

We contend that the challenge expressed above by Pocak is an exhortation to women to accept their bodies in the manner that God has created them without any feeling of inferiority when compared to the men. The challenge also goes to men who have to see the goodness that is in the very nature of the woman. Once women are accepted in their sexuality and not made to see their sexuality as something to be suppressed or manipulated, they grow in self confidence and self worth. This positive feeling of self worth spurs women to be more assertive in the family and society as a whole. Husbands who go through the art of natural family planning with their wives tend to have more respect for them because they come to understand the dynamics of their bodies (Finn and Finn, 71).

The dignity of women comes under direct attack as a result of contraceptives in whatever form they come. Sexual intercourse built on a contraceptive attitude is not rooted in a desire to express love which respects the dignity of the other person, but it is the result of an uncontrollable passion that is the symptom of an unruly domination over the body of women. In

such a situation, Wojtyla warns that, “there is a danger that the man may treat the woman as an object and indeed as an object to be used” (99). Pope Paul VI expressed this danger in these words:

A man who grows accustomed to the use of contraceptive methods may forget the reverence due to a woman, and, disregarding her physical and emotional equilibrium, reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desire, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection.
(Humanae Vitae, # 17)

The absence of reverence for women due to a contraceptive mentality which Pope Paul VI warned against results in the domination of women by men. And this desire to dominate the woman through a manipulation of her fertility is truly a sign of dishonesty and disrespect for the woman and it runs against the commitment that husbands make to their wives on their wedding days during the exchange of vows, “to love and honour” until death. Here lies the malice of contraception: through it the husband uses the wife just for lust instead of loving her. Pazhayampallil has equated this malice to adultery. He remarked strongly that:

A man who uses contraception cannot be said to “love” his wife and take up an attitude of donation towards her. In reality he does not love his wife but himself, and he commits adultery precisely for this reason, because the destination of his own love, which has become selfishness, is different and mistaken. *(Pastoral Guide.... Vol 2 1296)*

Adultery is not the only form of domination caused by contraception that debases women. Once women are objectified as meant only for sexual pleasure, there will be an increase in other sexual vices. Odozor has expressed this very well:

The contraceptive mentality of which Pope Paul VI wrote in his encyclical is here with us – with morally devastating consequences. Consider, for example, the rise in pornography and abortions and the trafficking of women and girls as sex slaves in many parts of the world, including Africa. These are only a few indications of the moral consequences of the contraceptive mentality which is fostered by powerful national and commercial interests. (thetablet.co.uk)

What Odozor has said of the African society applies also to the Tiv society in particular and they do harm not only to the dignity of women but also have a wide range of implications for the society as a whole.

6.4. BIRTH CONTROL AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

The Catholic Magisterium views marriage as the intimate partnership of life and love established by God and endowed with its proper laws by the creator (*Gaudium et spes*, # 48). Building on this assertion, the Code of Canon Law explicitly states that:

The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature for the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring, has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament between the baptized. (Canon 1055, # 1)

It can be deduced from what has been stated above that the nature of the marriage being referred to by the Code of Canon Law and invariably by the Magisterium of the Church is monogamous. It is within this marriage that family life emerges with the procreation of children. On the other hand, the traditional form of marriage within Tiv society is polygyny, a practice which allows a man to marry more than one wife (Dzurgba, *On the Tiv of the Central Nigeria*.... 117). However, Ushe

has observed that with the influence of Christianity and modernization, contemporary Tiv people now prefer monogamous marriages to polygyny (87). This observation does not mean that polygyny is completely eliminated from Tiv society. It is only an evidence of how social and cultural changes can result from cross cultural interaction and integration. It is also within marriage that family life evolves in Tiv society.

The teaching of the Catholic Magisterium on marriage and the cultural tradition of Tiv society both view the procreation of children as essential to marriage. For the Catholic Church, marriage by its very nature is ordered to the procreation and education of children and children are its crowning glory (*Gaudium et spes*, # 48). Similarly, in Tiv culture, “marriage is a life generating medium and the rock in which procreation and the family is wrapped” (Utsua 87). While the procreation of children is a cherished value in both the teachings of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture on marriage and family, the manner in which this procreation is achieved is equally important in enhancing marriage and family.

Procreation for any married partners cannot be done ad infinitum and this is a shared view of both the Catholic Magisterium and Tiv culture. This desire to have children is guided by the idea of responsible parenthood which is closely associated with birth control. As already noted in chapter three of this present research, the Catholic Magisterium accepts only the natural family planning methods of birth control. The practice of birth control in Tiv society as discussed in chapter four indicates that a higher percentage of Tiv people use artificial methods of birth control or contraceptives with only a very few practicing the natural methods. Each method of birth control has either positive or negative impacts upon marriage, family life and the society as a whole because the foundations of society are built on marriage and family life.

Marriage is a union of love, a shared bond between spouses. This unity finds its highest expression in conjugal love through which spouses express their mutual total self- gift to each other. The unique aspect of this self donation is its procreative potentials. It is only the practice of NFP that can strengthen this unity of married loved. As couples go through the art of NFP, they begin to talk about the dynamics of the wife's menstrual cycle and her fertility signs and as the husband learns to interpret them he is sure of having a greater bond with his wife. This closer bond also enhances an improved and effective communication between spouses. Fertility and the willingness to accept children or delay child birth are very sacred subjects of conversation between married partners. Thus as they sustain this conversation, they become excellent communicators who are more disposed to discussions about other aspects of their marriage and family life like finances, housing, the education of children and vacation plans. Where there is a closer bond and effective communication, the stability of the marriage is also more assured. The stability of marriage will lead to stability in family life and the society as a whole because the society is usually a reflection of her families. The period of abstinence during the fertile periods of the woman's cycle does not cause a break in the marital union. It is only a recognition and acceptance of the sacrifice that ought to be made for the overall good of the union. It also affords the couples an occasion to express their love in non sexual ways which can also lead to an increase in intimacy and prepare the ground for the resumption of sexual intercourse between spouses.

Any contraceptive form of conjugal love on the other hand achieves the exact opposite. Instead of strengthening the bond of marriage, it weakens it. Contraceptive intercourse is not real intercourse. It is mere sensation but with no real knowledge of sexual love. This kind of love, as Pazhayampallil has asserted, "deliberately destroys the unitive aspect of the conjugal act which

alone renders it truly unitive, it marks a rejection of the sexuality of the other, a rejection therefore of his or her integrity as husband or wife” (*Pastoral Guide.... Vol 2* 1285). Once the possibility of becoming a father or mother is deliberately removed from the conjugal act, it harms the entire unity of the marriage. A marriage without its unitive aspects stands the risk of collapsing. In the Catholic Church, a contraceptive intercourse is not capable of consummating a ratified marriage (Canon 1061 # 1) which gives it an indissoluble character. In the words of Canon 1141, “a marriage that is *ratum et consummatum* [ratified and consummated] can be dissolved by no human power and by no cause, except death.” Contraceptive intercourse can therefore be a ground for petition for the nullification of marriage within the Catholic Church where at least one of the partners in the disputed marriage is a Catholic. Thus the practice of artificial birth control in Tiv society is a threat to the foundation of marriage and family life.

The practice of polygyny in Tiv society also does not enhance the unity that is required by the very nature of marriage. If marriage entails a total and mutual self gift or donation between a man and a woman as husband and wife, it is very difficult if not impossible to demonstrate how this can be achieved between a man who is married to more than one wife. The Second Vatican Council argues that, “ the intimate union of marriage as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children demand total fidelity from spouse and require an unbreakable unity between them” (*Gaudium et Spes*, # 48). Thus, whether polygyny is adopted as a form of marriage or a means of birth control, it runs contrary to the very dignity of marriage and once this dignity is taken away its effects will be felt on family life and the good of the society will also be affected.

6.5. BIRTH CONTROL AND EDUCATION

Education is an important aspect of life. It leads to an increase in knowledge that improves the quality of life for the individual and the society at large. The question of conjugal morality which is at the heart of birth control is an integral part of human sexuality. The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in her Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics, *Persona Humanae*, maintained that, “the human person... is so profoundly affected by sexuality that it must be considered one of the principal formative influences of the life of a man or a woman” (# 1). Thus, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church has committed itself to offering an education on human sexuality in general but within the context of this study, a greater emphasis shall be placed on the education in conjugal morality. Pope John Paul II asserted strongly that “in the field of conjugal morality, the Church is Teacher and Mother and acts as such” (*Familiaris Consortio* # 33).

The Magisterium has consistently taught the moral law that ought to guide parents in their responsible parenthood and parenting. She does not claim to be the originator of this norm but only its faithful servant and interpreter since the norm itself is founded on divine law. In her teaching, as Pope John Paul II noted, “the Church interprets the moral norm and proposes it to all people of good will, without concealing its demands of radicalness and perfection” (*Familiaris Consortio* #33). The Magisterium of the Church in her teaching desires to lead people to the path of obedience to God through which they can get his blessings. However, the Magisterium does not shy away from the difficulties that can be experienced by those who follow her teaching or listen to her. She admits, for example, as Pope Paul VI pointed out that, “the teaching of the Church on birth regulation... will appear to many to be difficult or even impossible to put into practice” (*Humanae Vitae* # 20). This only shows the compassion of the Church as Mother. As

the Mother of all, the Church is close to all those couples who find themselves in difficult situation concerning the moral norm. She willingly reaches out to them and as pope John Paul II noted, the Church, “never ceases to exhort and encourage all to resolve whatever conjugal difficulties may arise without ever falsifying or compromising the truth” (*Familiaris Consortio* # 33). In doing this, the Church emphasizes that there should be no conflict between the divine law governing the transmission of life and the fostering of authentic married love (*Gaudium et Spes* # 51).

As part of her education aimed at enabling people to keep to the divine law on conjugal morality, the Catholic Church in her catechesis urges people to rely on God because such moral law, “would not be livable without the help of God who upholds and strengthens the goodwill of men” (*Humanae Vitae* # 20). The pedagogy of the Magisterium that results in a life of the virtues of patience, humility, fidelity, strength of mind and filial trust in God instructs married couples to,

Beg the help of God with unrelenting prayer and most of all let them drink deep of grace and charity from the unfailing font which is the Eucharist. If however, sin still exercises its hold over them, they are not to lose heart. Rather must they, humble and persevering, have recourse to the mercy of God, abundantly bestowed in the sacrament of penance.
(*Humanae Vitae* # 25)

The exhortation of the Catholic Church to married couples to turn to God in prayer is an acknowledgement that without God they and all human beings will be unable to achieve some good by themselves alone. This agrees with the words of the Psalmist that unless the Lord builds the house, the builders build in vain; unless the Lord protects the city, the guards keep watch in vain (Psalm 126, 1) The education that the Magisterium offers is not only aimed at helping

people to seek the help of God and grow in virtue. It also involves instructions on the dynamics of the human body, especially as it concerns its procreative capacity. She teaches men and women to be aware and appreciate the rhythm of fertility in the body of women and how this can be legitimately applied in the practice of responsible parenthood.

The education that the Magisterium of the Catholic Church as articulated above comes in the form Magisterial documents like encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, council ecumenical councils' decrees, homilies, catechesis, pre marriage classes, seminars and workshops. These are done by pastoral agents like bishops, priests, religious sisters and brothers, catechists, prolife members and Catholic health workers in parishes, hospitals, schools, group meetings for families, health care providers, religious teachers and public campaigns in the form of rallies and walks for life. It is the conviction of the Magisterium that this is the only kind of education that will equip people, especially married couples, to reach the perfection required by conjugal love which is total, a mutual self- gift and fecund.

Within Tiv society, one does not find a well articulated education on human sexuality like the one enunciated by the Catholic Magisterium. Education about human sexuality in Tiv society is like what is common in traditional African societies. Otu and Admike observed that in traditional African society, there was no clearly defined education in human sexuality because sexual matters were generally shrouded in mystery due to the presupposition of the sacredness of sex (106). In Tiv society, the question of human sexuality is not generally given prominence in the education that the youth receive. Dzurgba highlighted some of the major objectives of Tiv traditional education as identified by Denga to, inter alia, include: character formation; training in the knowledge and skill of farming, craftsmanship, hunting and fishing; training in the knowledge and skill of personal and environmental cleanliness; and participation in the religious,

social, political and technological aspects of the life of the community (*On Tiv of the Central Nigeria....* 146). However, this does not mean that such an education was completely absent. An elderly man, Uke Ityo (Oral Interview) said that instruction in human sexuality in Tiv society was given by elderly men and women or grandparents to boys and girls respectively as they approached adulthood.

The aim of education in human sexuality in Tiv society is common to other African cultures and it was to ensure that each child accepted his or her sexuality and gender roles with grace and ease, without any undue embarrassment, especially at the changes that they experience in their bodies as they grow up. The girls learnt how to control their menses, and were taught other issues on sexual intercourse and how to be attractive to men as they attain the age of marriage and eventually to their husbands. For the boys, it was centred on male gender roles as a father and how to assume same (Kisembo et al 146). Kisembo et al also pointed out that there were certain taboos associated with human sexually that parents taught their children like avoiding sexual intercourse with a woman during her menstruation because this could bring back luck to the man and incest considered as a pollution of the land that required cleansing (147).

On the question of responsible parenthood, there seems to be no direct education on it within traditional Tiv society. Most of the education on birth control in Tiv society comes from national awareness campaigns through programmes on both the electronic and print media supported by the federal and states' ministries of health in collaboration with international donor agencies from the West like United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Society for Family Health (SFFH), International Planned Parenthood Federation, Centre for Integrated Health Programme (CIHP) and the European Union (EU). These programmes connect birth control and women reproductive rights

to general issues of health and development. There is usually a greater emphasis on the promotion of contraceptives and very often, condoms and other contraceptive devices like the implants are made available to women, especially in the rural areas. Behind all these campaigns is a deliberate quest to promote a population policy instead of responsible parenthood. The Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) in 2012 spoke out strongly against this falsehood. Rising from their Second Plenary Meeting in 2012 the bishops said very strongly that:

We denounce the relentless efforts of many Western nations' development programmes and the United Nations' agencies to pressurize and manipulate countries in Africa, especially Nigeria, to embrace an anti-life culture and anti-life programmes, namely, artificial family planning, under the guise of population control, eradication of HIV-AIDS, and the promotion of so-called women's reproductive health rights. Abortion and contraception – which form the basis of this anti-life mentality and aggravate the culture of death, give rise to a libertine culture of promiscuity. (cnsng.org)

From all that has been said above, it is evident that it is only the education that is offered by the Catholic Magisterium on human sexuality that if taken and applied can promote both the cultural values of Tiv and even other African societies and also enhance responsible parenthood and the quality of education given to children, especially on human sexuality and the dignity of the human person.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1. SUMMARY

The basic findings of this research work are summarized in the following paragraphs.

The research was able to establish that marriage in both the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture is an institution ordained by God that has the procreation of children as one of its major aims. However, the research also found out that there is a major difference in the nature of marriage according to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture. This difference lies in the fact that while the Magisterium of the Catholic Church holds that marriage is fundamentally a covenant of love between one man and one woman, that is, monogamy, Tiv culture on the other hand views marriage as also possible between one man and more than one woman, that is, polygyny. But the work also found out that though polygyny is the type of marriage that is practiced among the Tiv, there is an increase in the number of Tiv people who have come to embrace monogamy as the preferred form of marriage due to the influence of Christianity and cross cultural interactions with other cultures.

This work also found that while the procreation of children is a high value in marriages in both the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture, both also agree that couples cannot continue to procreate endlessly. They both agree on the principle of responsible parenthood, that is, the willingness of couples to give birth only to the number of children they are able to take care of and also fulfil other obligations. Thus, there is also a common agreement between the

Catholic Magisterium and Tiv culture that for certain economic, social, and health reasons, couples have a legitimate right to limit or control the number of children they have.

The research was able to explore the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control which it grouped into three: the Magisterium before *Humanae Vitae*, the Magisterium of *Humanae Vitae* and the Magisterium after *Humanae Vitae*. *Humanae Vitae* is taken as the central point of this Magisterium because its publication in 1968 was a defining moment in the Magisterial teaching of the Church on birth control. The research established that this Magisterium has been constant on its core positions: the rejection of all forms of artificial birth control as intrinsically evil and contrary to the nature of marital love willed by God for the procreation of children; an acceptance and promotion of the methods of natural family planning as the only legitimate means of birth control in harmony with the nature and dignity of conjugal love as ordained by God for the procreation of children.

The research described the nature of Tiv society, highlighting its historical origins, marriage and family system of Tiv, the place of children in Tiv thought and birth control system in Tiv society. The research also through an administered questionnaire and oral interviews was able to establish the practice of birth control in Tiv society. The findings indicate that in Tiv society, the predominant means of birth control are artificial methods with a few people using the natural family planning methods and other traditional methods. The research equally found out that some factors like religion, government campaigns, effectiveness and availability of method influenced the choice of birth control methods in Tiv society. It also established some of the benefits and side effects associated with birth control in Tiv society like the elimination of the fear of pregnancy, economic and religious benefits; and gain of excessive weight, high blood pressure, unstable menstruation and shame respectively.

The last set of the findings of this research came from contrasting between the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control and the practice of birth control in Tiv society in certain areas like the dignity of marriage and family life, the dignity of women, health and the sanctity of life. On each of these areas, this research was able to establish that it is only the Magisterium on the Catholic Church on the natural family planning methods of birth control that respects and promotes key values in Tiv society like the place of children in marriage and the sanctity of life. This Magisterium also has other benefits like: the promotion of an integrated education on human sexuality to guarantee effective responsible parenthood; the elimination of all health risks associated with artificial methods of birth control; the restoration of the dignity of women that is called to question by contraceptives; and the promotion of the dignity, stability and perfection of marriage and family. All these benefits will contribute in enhancing a better society for the good of all.

6.2. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The primary aim of any research is to contribute to knowledge. This research is therefore not an exception. The contribution of this research to knowledge can be seen from different perspectives. The research, first of all, has advanced the debate on the birth control question, especially as enunciated by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. A very significant contribution of this research is its discourse of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control and the practice of birth control in Tiv society. This discourse has made it possible for others to understand the challenges and benefits of this particular teaching of the Catholic Church in a given society. The context of this discourse is also new because, to the limit of the research's awareness, no such comprehensive study has been done in this area within Tiv society.

This study is thus an important contribution to comparative studies between Christian Religion and African society.

6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the major findings of this research, the following suggestions are offered towards the promotion of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church on birth control within and beyond Tiv society. This will enable a greater number of persons to be better informed and well assisted in their desire to exercise their right to responsible parenthood.

Catholic dioceses in Tiv society, that is, Makurdi, Gboko and Kastina- Ala Dioceses, should collaborate and translate the major Magisterial teachings of the Catholic Church on birth control into Tiv language to facilitate the understanding and appreciation of this rich Magisterium in Tiv society. Other Catholic dioceses in Nigeria too ought to translate same into the indigenous languages of their respective dioceses.

Catholic pastors, catechists and religious educators within Tiv society should intensify catechesis on integral human sexuality and responsible parenthood in all pastoral units within Tiv society and more so during pre- marriage courses.

Family and Life Commissions of the respective Catholic dioceses should organize periodic trainings for pastors, doctors, nurses, religious instructors and local animators of natural family planning programmes to update their knowledge on responsible parenthood for a more effective performance.

Catholic Health Information Centres in the Catholic dioceses of Katsina- Ala, Gboko and Makurdi within Tiv society should collaborate with their respective media directorates and

sponsor educative and catechetical programmes on the radio or television on health in general and authentic reproductive health in particular.

Catholic Pro-life Associations and other affiliate organizations like the Knights of Saint Mulumba, Nigeria (KSM) should sustain their public campaigns, rallies and walks for life in favour of natural family planning; and prayers for the conversion of the advocates and sponsors of contraceptives and abortion.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) should continue to lead the resistance of any state or national legislation that will aim at promoting the use of contraceptives and abortion within Nigeria under the guise of reproductive health care services or programmes.

The directorates of pastoral affairs of the Catholic dioceses of Katsina- Ala, Gboko and Makurdi in Tivland should form family support groups or units in their respective diocesan pastoral units, especially in parishes to bring couples and families together and also provide help to such families to live faithfully the demand of responsible parenthood. These family support groups could also serve as channels of networking with other groups like pro-life organizations that promote the Catholic Magisterium on marriage and the family.

Other researchers in the areas of religion, Christian ethics and sociology should undertake further research in this area building on the findings of this research.

6.4. CONCLUSION

The Catholic Magisterium on birth control in the context of Tiv culture has been the focus of this research. The research established that the procreation of children is central to the institution of marriage in both Catholic tradition and the Tiv society for perpetuation of the

human race. The research further advanced the argument that this procreation is however not infinite because of the demands of responsible parenthood and parenting which require that couples should only give birth to the number of children that they can adequately take care of and also fulfill other duties. The idea of responsible parenthood and parenting led this research to the question of birth control from the perspective of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and Tiv culture. The research ascertained that while this Magisterium effectively advocates only for the natural family planning methods of birth control, the practice of birth control in Tiv society adopts mainly artificial methods of birth control albeit a few others also adopt the natural methods. From the research, it is evident that the practice of birth control in Tiv society that embraces contraceptives falls into a number of moral, medical and social problems that can be completely eliminated if birth control were practiced according to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Moreover, whenever couples within Tiv society and even beyond adhere to the position of the Catholic Church on birth control, they stand to gain a lot in different aspects of life namely, the promotion of the dignity of women, the sanctity of human life and an all embracing education in human sexuality. The research will guide pastoral agents and Church leaders in Tiv society in the formulation of pastoral and catechetical guidelines on marriage and family life in Tiv society. While this research is limited to the context of Tiv society, its findings can also be beneficial to other societies, especially those that have similar variables to the ones found in this research. However, the research is also strongly confident that other scholars and researchers will find in it sufficient motivation to undertake a similar research in other societies and it suggests that such researchers could address the question of birth control from other perspectives like sociological and economical perspectives. Given all that has been said, the Magisterium of the Catholic Church enunciated here can adequately enhance the practice of birth

control in Tiv society and if it is properly followed, Tiv society will become a better place for the promotion of love in marriage and family life.

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APPENDIX A
LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

NAME	OCCUPATION	PLACE	DATE
Aluga, Samuel	Catholic priest	Jato- Aka	23 Mar 2016
Anande, Doom	NGO	Makurdi	29 Feb 2016
Anem, Simon	Health worker	Makurdi	11 Oct 2016
Aondoakaa, Esther	Nurse	Kastina- Ala	25 Aug 2016
Aondowase, John	NGO	Makurdi	29 Feb 2016
Bagu Irene	Health worker	Gboko	10 Feb 2017
Bua, Erdoo	Nurse	Makurdi	5 Jan 2017
Gbaeren, Jacob	Medical doctor	Makurdi	29 Feb 2016
Gusha, Martha	Nurse	Vandeikya	8 June 2016
Hemba, Agnes	Trader	Adaka	10 Dec 2015
Ikor, Patience	Nurse	Gboko	10 Feb 2017
Iorkohol, Tersoo	Teacher	Kastina- Ala	25 Aug 2016
Jov, Igba	Health worker	Vandeikya	8 June 2016
Mom, Paul	Catholic priest	Makurdi	5 Jan 2017
Nyiekaa, Simon	NGO	Makurdi	11 Oct 2016
Nyinya, Emmanuel	Catholic priest	Gboko	14 May 2016
Nyiwoo, Ngobua	Health worker	Jato- Aka	23 Mar 2016
Oryiman, Terwase	Civil servant	Adaka	10 Dec 2015
Pever, Dorcas	Nurse	Kastina- Ala	25 Aug 2016

Shapande, Abraham	Health worker	Adaka	10 Dec 2015
Terhemba, Pine	Teacher	Gboko	10 Feb 2017
Terna, Tiza	Medical Doctor	Makurdi	11 Oct 2016
Tsav, Matthew	Civil servant	Adaka	10 Dec 2015
Upaa, Dooshima	Nurse	Vandeikya	8 June 2016
Zege, Andrew	Trader	Jato- Aka	23 Mar 2016

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

This Questionnaire has been designed by the researcher, GABRIEL TERFA ABIEM to aid him in his doctoral research titled: A RELIGIO- CULTURAL DISCOURSE OF THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL IN TIV SOCIETY: in the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies at the Benue State University, Makurdi, Benue State.

The responses to this questionnaire shall ONLY be used for the purpose of this present research and the identity of each respondent will STRICTLY remain undisclosed.

Kindly answer the questions below as honestly as you can.

1. Name (optional)
2. Age.....
3. Sex.....
4. Educational Level: Primary (); Secondary (); Tertiary (); Informal Education ()
5. Occupation.....
6. How long have you been married?.....
7. Number of Children.....
8. Do you practice birth control? Yes (); No ()
9. If yes, State your reasons for birth control
-
-
-
-

10. Which is your preferred method of birth control? Contraceptives (☐); Natural Family Planning (NFP) (☐) Traditional methods
11. What has influenced your choice in 10 above? -----
12. Be specific as to the method (s) you have adopted: Withdrawal (☐); Condom (☐); Intra-Uterine Devices (IUDs) (☐); Vaginal Diaphragm (☐); The Pill (☐), Sterilization (☐); implants (☐); Injectables (☐); Basal body temperature method (☐); Billings Method (☐) Polygyny (☐); Abstinence (☐); Herbs (☐)
13. How effective has your method (s) of birth control been? Very effective (☐); Effective (☐); Not very effective (☐); Not effective (☐)
14. Have you experienced any side effects using your method (s) of birth control? Yes (☐); No (☐)
15. If Yes to 11 above, Mention the main side effects.....

16. Were you taught this method? Yes (☐); No (☐)
17. If yes to 16, Where? Church (☐); Health clinic; NGO (☐)
18. Do you consider NFP as the ONLY legitimate means of birth control? Yes (☐); No (☐)
19. State your reasons for 15 above.....

.....
...

20. Do you practice NFP? Yes (); No ()

21. If Yes to 17, what have been your benefits?
.....
.....
.....

22. What have been your challenges using NFP?.....
.....
.....
.....

23. Any other comments?.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What are the major birth control methods preferred by your clients?
2. Who are the promoters of these birth control methods in Tiv society?
3. Mention the basic contraceptives available in your health institution
4. What are the side effects associated with the methods of birth control that you have mentioned?
5. How would you assess the understanding of natural family planning methods in Tiv society?

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON BIRTH CONTROL

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Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, Apostolic Exhortation On The Joy of Love, 2016.

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