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THE TIPPS PROJECT
LEVER BROTHERS OF NIGERIA, LTD
FEMALE SURVEY FINDINGS



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THE TIPPS PROJECT

LEVER BROTHERS OF NIGERIA, LTD.

FEMALE SURVEY REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The TIPPS Project is a five-year population project funded by The Agency for International Development, contract no. DPE-3035-C-00-5047-00. TIPPS is designed to:

- * Raise the awareness and understanding of the private sector regarding the demand for birth spacing services among employees and dependents;
- * Conduct cost-benefit analyses to measure the costs and benefits associated with company investment in birth spacing services for employees and dependents;
- * Increase private sector investment in sponsoring birth spacing programs for employees and dependents.

In Nigeria, TIPPS has collaborated with UNILAG CONSULT to conduct a market research study for Lever Brothers Nigeria, Ltd. (LBN). TIPPS designed the research study to measure the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of LBN families regarding contraceptive use and current and future fertility desires.

Specifically, in 1986, 534 male employees of LBN were interviewed concerning their attitude towards, and interest in, birth spacing services. The results of this survey were extremely positive; 78% agreed with the use of at least some birth spacing methods and 75% wanted to receive more information on birth spacing. 70% percent felt that their wives should receive more information.

As a follow-up to that survey, a sample of 244 female spouses and employees was selected for interview. This survey measured the levels of birth spacing knowledge and use among this population and estimated potential demand for birth spacing information and services at Lever Brothers. These results were even more positive; birth spacing knowledge and use levels were found to be very high, and demand for services at the Lever Brothers clinic strong. The specific findings from the female survey are presented in this report.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WOMEN INTERVIEWED

Socioeconomic Characteristics

Only women in their reproductive years, from 15-49, were included in the survey. The actual age range of the women interviewed was 16 to 47 years, their average age being 29 years (See Table 1). This group of women is young; 85% are between 20-34, which are prime reproductive years.

These women are also highly educated (See Table 2). Almost all (95%) have attended school. Of those with an education, only one-third (33%) have a primary education. The remaining two-thirds have had, at least, some secondary schooling (46%) or have attended technical school (16%). This is very important for a successful birth spacing program since educated women, and men, are much more likely to know of and use birth spacing methods.

Eighty-four percent of the women interviewed are currently employed: 17% are employed by Lever Brothers, 20% are employed by other firms, and 47% are self-employed. Employed women can have a greater incentive to space their pregnancies and, thus, may have more favorable attitudes toward birth spacing methods.

All employed women were asked to report their monthly income (in Naira) from all sources. Ninety percent of the employed women earn 400 Naira or less per month. Most of the remaining women (9%) earn between 401 and 600 Naira per month.

General Health

The women interviewed in this survey were asked several questions about their general health. Thirteen percent reported varicose veins, while 5% reported high blood pressure. These women should not use the pill as a birth spacing method.

Only a fourth (24%) of the women interviewed had had an OB/GYN examination in the 12 month period prior to interview. This percentage was much higher among Lever Brothers employees; almost one-half (49%) had had a gynecological examination in the past year while only 19% of the spouses had received one.

III. FERTILITY

Present fertility is high among the women interviewed and many want families of between 5 and 6 children. The provision of birth spacing services, however, would allow women to plan these births, thus reducing the risk to their health. Women could also limit their pregnancy total to the number desired, thus eliminating unwanted births.

Pregnancy

Eighty-one percent of the women interviewed have had at least one pregnancy. On the average these women have had 4.2 pregnancies. Because of this high fertility, most women will become pregnant several times more during their reproductive years. Women in this group who have completed their childbearing (aged 40-47 years) have had, on the average, over six pregnancies and presently have five living children.

About one-fifth (18%) of the women currently pregnant at the time of the survey. This rate is highest among young women (16-29); 24% of this group was pregnant at the time of the survey (See Table 3/Chart 1). It appears from these high rates that many younger women may not be adequately spacing their births to prevent the health problems associated with pregnancy and childbirth. The number of pregnancies decreases for women in their thirties. Pregnancies should decline since the probability for pregnancy complications increases dramatically after age 35.

Future Fertility Desires

The women in this survey were asked whether they would like to have more children in the future and, if they would, how many more children they would like to have. Overall, 79% want more children, while 21% do not want any more or are undecided. The proportion wanting additional children declines with age; by ages 35-39 only 56% still want more children (See Table 4).

Women who want additional children were also asked when they would like to have their next child. Based on the entire sample of women interviewed nearly 24% want their next child in less than one year, another 14% want to wait at least one year, and 31% want their next child after two or more years. Another 10% did not state a specific time, and 21% do not want more children or are undecided. Thus, a large number (45%) of the women interviewed would like to postpone the next child for a year or more. These women who want to postpone their next child plus those who want no more children are the women most in need of birth spacing services.

In fact almost all (92%) of the women interviewed stated that their ideal birth interval would be two years or more even though only 70% reported an interval of two years or more between their last two live births. Twenty-seven percent of these same women would have preferred to increase the interval between their last two live births. Temporary methods of birth spacing would allow these women to lengthen, if they so desired, the intervals between future births.

Ideal Family Size

The women in this survey were asked "If you could choose the ideal number of children to have during your entire life, how many would you have?" The answer indicates the respondent's estimate of the ideal number of children for her. Ideal family sizes ranged from 2 children to 10, with an average of 5 children.

Ideal family size can also be calculated by adding together the number of children a women currently has with the additional number she wants to have in the future. On the average women in this survey presently have 3.3 children and want an additional 2.6 children. This would add up to a completed family size of 5.9 children per women.

IV. CONTRACEPTIVE KNOWLEDGE AND USE

A major objective of this survey was to measure the levels of current contraceptive knowledge and practice among Lever Brothers couples. Survey respondents were, therefore, asked about their knowledge and use of specific birth spacing methods.

Knowledge

All women were asked whether they had heard of specific birth spacing methods. The pill is the most widely known method; 93% of the women reported that they have heard of it. Other well known methods are injection (86%), the IUD (79%), tubal ligation (71%) and rhythm (70%). A little over half have heard of foam tablets or traditional methods, and less than half know of diaphragm or vaginal jelly (See Table 5).

Over 95% of these women know at least one of the ten methods mentioned above, while 72% know five or more. Thus, knowledge of contraceptive methods is nearly universal among these women.

Ever Use

Nearly 76% of the women interviewed reported that they (or their spouse) were presently using, or had used, a birth spacing method. ("Ever use" includes both current use and past use.) The largest number of women (54%) had used 1 or 2 methods. The methods most frequently used are withdrawal (40%), condom (37%), pill (33%), and rhythm (32%). Each of the other methods have been used by only a few women (or their spouses) (See Table 6).

Current Use

Thirty-seven percent of the women in the survey reported that they (or their spouse) were currently using a birth spacing method (See Table 7). The proportion of current users is highest (41%) in the 30-34 age group.

Current User Behavior

Among the ninety-one women who are currently using, the most popular methods are rhythm, used by 35% of this group, the condom, used by another 23%, and the pill, used by 18% (See Table 8). The only other popular method is withdrawal (12%). Almost one-half of the current users are using an ineffective birth spacing method (either rhythm, withdrawal, or traditional) which have a much higher failure rate than "modern" methods such as the pill and IUD.

V. DEMAND FOR BIRTH SPACING SERVICES

A principal purpose of this survey was to measure the demand for birth spacing methods among Lever Brother employees and their spouses. Accordingly, questions were included to measure the perceived need for birth spacing information and services.

Demand For Information on Birth Spacing

The respondents in this survey were asked whether they would like to receive more information on birth spacing. Over four-fifths (84%) said that they wanted more information (See Chart 2). The proportion desiring more information is highest (87%) in the 25-34 age groups, and then declines (to between 64% and 50%) with increasing age. Younger women, who are most at risk of an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, are the most interested in receiving additional information.

Those who wanted more information on birth spacing were asked to state how they would like to receive this information. They were asked to choose from two distinct groups: health personnel and mass media. Within the medical personnel category, 40% would prefer a Lever Brothers doctor or nurse, 35% an outside doctor or nurse, and 22% a health sister (See Chart 3). The preferred methods for receiving information were brochures or pamphlets (34%), group talks (27%), and individual talks (18%) (See Chart 4).

Acceptance of Birth Spacing Services From the Lever Brothers Clinic

All women in the survey were asked whether they would use birth spacing services if they were available at the Lever Brothers clinic. Seventy-nine percent (See Chart 5) stated that they would use these services if they were available.

Eighty-seven percent of the current users said that they would use birth spacing services at the Lever Brothers clinic if such services were offered there.

The women who would use birth spacing services at Lever Brothers said that they would prefer to use the IUD (25%), injection (20%), and the pill (20%) (See Table 9/Chart 6). Another 21% did not know which method they would prefer to use. Very few would prefer inefficient methods; only 6% mentioned rhythm as their method of preference. Many women presently use either inefficient methods or are protected by their husbands' use of condoms. The methods preferred by most of these women -- the IUD, injection, and pill -- are much more effective and will reduce the number of method failures which might result in unplanned pregnancies.

Acceptance of Health Talks at the Lever Brothers Clinic

An overwhelming majority (98%) of the women interviewed would like talks on health scheduled at the Lever Brothers clinic (See Chart 7). The most popular topics are: child development (55%), birth spacing (20%), and pregnancy (14%) (See Chart 8).

Exposure to Pregnancy

In order to determine exactly how many women at Lever Brothers want no more children or want to postpone their next child for at least one year, all women in the survey were divided into the following four categories:

1. Currently pregnant (18%)
2. Want a child within one year (12%)
3. Do not want any more children or want to postpone the next child at least one year (33%)
4. Are currently using a birth spacing method (37%): efficient methods (19%) and inefficient methods (18%).

Using the above categories, the women in this survey can be classified according to their risk of an unplanned pregnancy. Women exposed to this risk have the greatest need for birth spacing services.

Women in the third group, those who do not want any more children or want to postpone their next child for at least one year, but are not currently using a birth spacing method, are at risk of an unplanned pregnancy. Three out of ten women in this survey (33%) are presently exposed to this risk.

Another group of women at risk are those who are currently pregnant using inefficient methods of birth spacing. Eighteen percent of the women surveyed were using rhythm, withdrawal, or traditional methods.

VI. SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from the TIPPS survey of Lever Brothers female employees and spouses. This survey's main purpose was to measure the knowledge of, attitude towards, and practice of, birth spacing at Lever Brothers and determine the potential demand for services at the Lever Brothers clinic.

Lever Brothers women are young and well-educated.

A total of 244 women were interviewed. These women are between 16 and 47 years of age and are well-educated. This is important since educated women, and men, have much more positive attitudes towards birth spacing and are more apt to use birth spacing methods.

These women are also, on the average, young. Eighty-five percent are between 20 and 34 years of age which are the prime reproductive years.

Lever Brothers women have high fertility.

Eighty-one percent of the women interviewed have had at least one pregnancy. On the average these women have had 4.2 pregnancies. Currently, almost one-fifth (18%) are pregnant.

These results indicate a high fertility among Lever Brothers women. Women in this group who have completed their childbearing (aged 40-47 years) have had, on the average, over 6 pregnancies and presently have 5 living children.

Four-fifths of Lever Brothers women want more children.

Overall, 79% want more children, while 21% do not want more children or are undecided. The proportion who want more children declines with age; by ages 35-39 only 56% still want more children.

The ideal family size is high. Ideal family sizes range from 2 children to 10, with an average of 5 children.

Many Lever Brothers women, however, want to space their births.

Among women who want additional children, only 24% want their next child in less than one year. Fourteen percent want to wait at least one year and 31% want their next child in two or more years. (10% did not specify a time.) Thus, a large number (45%) of women who want additional children would like to postpone their next pregnancy for more than one year.

In fact, almost all (92%) of the women interviewed stated that their ideal birth interval was two years or more, even though only 70% reported an interval of two years or more between their last two live births.

Lever Brothers women already have knowledge of birth spacing methods.

Most women know of at least one birth spacing method. Ninety-Three percent know of the pill, 86% know injection, and 79% have heard of the IUD. Tubal ligation is known by 71% of these women.

Many Lever Brothers women have used, or are presently using, a birth spacing method.

A majority of women have had experience with a birth spacing method. Nearly 76% reported that they (or their husbands) had used (or were presently using) a method.

Thirty-seven percent of the women in the survey reported that they (or their husbands) were currently using a birth spacing method.

The most widely used methods among current users are the rhythm (35%), condom (23%), and the pill (18%).

Almost one-half of the current users are using an ineffective birth spacing method (either rhythm, withdrawal, or traditional) which have a much higher failure rate than "modern" methods such as the pill and IUD. Most of these users would prefer to switch to more efficient methods such as the pill and the IUD. This improved method mix would result in fewer method failures and unwanted or mistimed pregnancies.

Most Lever Brothers women would like additional information on birth spacing.

Over four-fifths (84%) want to receive more information on birth spacing. The proportion desiring more information is highest (87%) in the 25-34 age groups.

Most Lever Brothers women would use services at Lever Brothers if they were available.

Seventy-nine percent of the women interviewed stated that they would use birth spacing services at Lever Brothers if they were available. Eighty-seven percent of the current users said that they would use services at the Lever Brothers clinic.

The women who would use birth spacing services at Lever Brothers said that they would prefer to use the IUD (25%), injection (20%), and the pill (20%). Very few would prefer ineffective methods; only 6% mentioned rhythm.

There is a need for birth spacing services at Lever Brothers.

Thirty-three percent of the women interviewed either did not want more children or wanted to postpone their next child for at least one year, and were not currently using a birth spacing method. These women are at risk of an unwanted or unplanned pregnancy.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

These survey results indicate that almost all Lever Brothers women have heard of family planning methods and many (37%) are currently using them. There is also interest in receiving more information on birth spacing and using services at the Lever Brothers clinic, if they were available. A demand for services, therefore, appears to exist among Lever Brothers women. Availability of birth spacing services at the Lever Brothers clinic should increase the prevalence rate (number of users), thus reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies.

The method mix should also improve. Presently 48% of the women who use birth spacing employ either rhythm or withdrawal which are very inefficient methods. Women in the survey, however, would prefer to use the IUD, injection, and pill which are much more efficient. If Lever Brothers were to offer birth spacing services, not only would the number of users increase but they would also choose more efficient methods, thereby reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies.

On the other hand, Lever Brothers women still want to have, on the average, between 5 and 6 children. To most women, therefore, birth spacing should be promoted as a means of planning their next pregnancy rather than as a means of terminating childbearing. Health issues should be promoted: births should be spaced at least two years apart; women over 35 are at greater risk of pregnancy complications; and women who have had five or more pregnancies are also at risk. If women space their children over longer intervals, their overall fertility will be, in many cases, reduced.

Most women (84%) were interested in receiving more information on birth spacing. They preferred to receive this information from doctors, health sisters, or nurses through the distribution of brochures, or attendance at group or individual talks. Brochures, of course, can be distributed throughout the company. In addition, group talks or individual sessions should be scheduled at the clinic and directed by health personnel.

Even more women (98%) were interested in talks on health topics. The most mentioned topics besides birth spacing were child development (55%), child spacing (20%), and pregnancy (14%). These talks might attract a large number of women to the clinic initially and be used to introduce birth spacing as part of the subject matter.

A large number of Lever Brothers women appear to be interested in birth spacing information and services. This demand could be satisfied by a relatively small investment in staff training, commodities, and clinic facilities. The development of an appropriate information, education, and communication program would generate further interest in birth spacing and could allay any fears or misnomers about the use of contraceptives.

Based on the demand for child spacing services as determined by the surveys and that the cost of satisfying demand is potentially modest, the TIPPS Project recommends that Lever Brothers invest in a company-sponsored birth spacing program for all employees and spouses.

TABLES

TABLE 1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN

Age	Number of Women	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
16-19	4	1.6	1.6
20-24	33	13.5	15.1
25-29	100	41.0	56.1
30-34	75	30.7	86.8
35-39	25	10.2	97.0
40-44	5	2.1	99.1
45-47	2	0.9	100.0
Total	244	100.0	

Mean age = 29.3

TABLE 2: PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN BY EDUCATION

	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>All</u>
Primary year 2		0.5	0.4
year 3		3.0	2.6
year 4		1.5	1.4
year 5		1.0	0.4
year 6	<u>9.8</u>	<u>32.5</u>	<u>28.5</u>
Primary Total	9.8	38.5	33.3
Secondary year 2	2.4	2.0	1.7
year 3	22.0	9.6	12.1
year 4	7.3	4.6	5.2
year 5	<u>29.2</u>	<u>26.2</u>	<u>25.7</u>
Secondary Total	60.9	42.4	45.7
Technical year 1	4.9		0.8
year 2	7.3	2.0	3.0
year 3	9.8	6.7	7.4
year 4	<u>7.3</u>	<u>4.6</u>	<u>5.1</u>
Technical Total	29.3	13.2	16.3
No response/Unknown		5.8	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of Women	41	191	<u>232</u>

TABLE 3: PREGNANCY STATUS BY AGE GROUP

Age Group			Pregnant		
Age	Total No.	Women %	Number	% of Total	% of Group
16-19	4	1.6 %	1	2.3 %	25.0 %
20-24	33	13.5 %	7	15.9 %	21.2 %
25-29	100	41.0 %	25	56.8 %	25.0 %
30-34	75	30.7 %	9	20.5 %	12.0 %
35-39	25	10.2 %	2	4.5 %	8.0 %
40-44	5	2.1 %	0	0.0 %	0.0 %
45-47	2	0.9 %	0	0.0 %	0.0 %
Total	244	100.0 %	44	100.0 %	18.0 %

TABLE 4: DESIRE FOR MORE CHILDREN BY AGE

Age	*Desire				Number of Women
	Yes	No	Don't Know	All	
16-19	100.0	--	--	100.0	4
20-24	100.0	--	--	100.0	33
25-29	84.0	11.0	5.0	100.0	99
30-34	73.3	18.7	10.9	100.0	75
35-39	56.0	24.0	35.7	100.0	25
40-44	20.0	80.0	--	100.0	5
45-47	50.0	50.0	--	100.0	2
All	78.7	14.8	7.8	100.0	243

TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN HAVING KNOWLEDGE OF INDIVIDUAL BIRTH SPACING METHODS

Method	Percentage Having Knowledge
Pill	93.4
Diaphragm	40.1
Jelly, Cream	44.2
Foam Tablets	51.4
Injection	85.6
IUD	79.4
Tubal Ligation	70.9
Rhythm/Temperature	70.4
Traditional Methods	52.5

TABLE 6: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO HAVE REPORTED EVER USE OF INDIVIDUAL BIRTH SPACING METHODS

Method	Percentage Ever Used
Pill	33.1
Diaphragm	0.8
Jelly, Cream	0.4
Foam Tablets	3.3
Injection	2.5
IUD	5.4
Tubal Ligation	0.0
Rhythm/Temperature	31.7
Traditional Methods	1.2
Condom	37.3
Vasectomy	0.0
Withdrawal	39.5

TABLE 7: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO REPORT CURRENTLY USING A BIRTH SPACING METHOD BY AGE

Age	Percentage Currently Using	Number of Women
16-19	25.0	4
20-24	33.3	33
25-29	35.0	100
30-34	41.3	75
35-39	36.0	25
40+	57.1	7
Total	37.3 %	244

TABLE 8: PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF METHODS FOR CURRENT USERS

Method	Percent Using	Number of Women
Pill	17.6	16
Barrier *	2.2	2
Injection	1.1	1
IUD	7.7	7
Rhythm/Temperature	35.1	32
Traditional	1.1	1
Condom	23.1	21
Withdrawal	12.1	11
Total	100.0	91

* Diaphragm, Jelly, Cream, Foam Tablets

TABLE 9: PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PREFERRED METHODS FOR ALL WOMEN

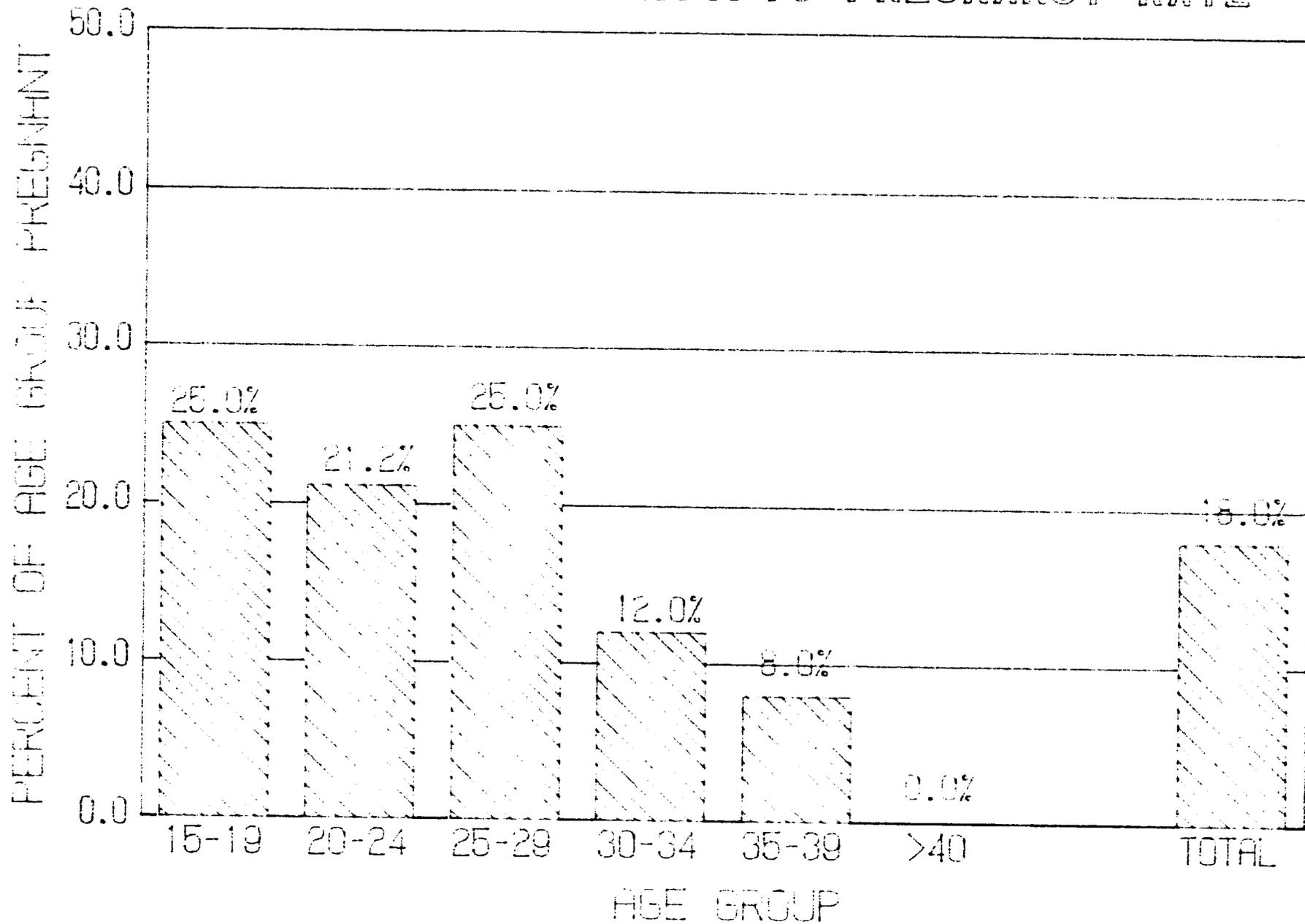
Method	Percent Who Would Use	Number of Women
Pill	19.7	36
Barrier *	4.9	9
Injection	20.2	37
IUD	25.1	46
Rhythm/Temperature	6.0	11
Traditional	--	--
Condom	7.7	14
Withdrawal	--	--
Tubal Ligation	0.5	1
Don't Know	21.1	25
Total	100.0	183

* Diaphragm, Jelly, Cream, Foam Tablets

CHARTS

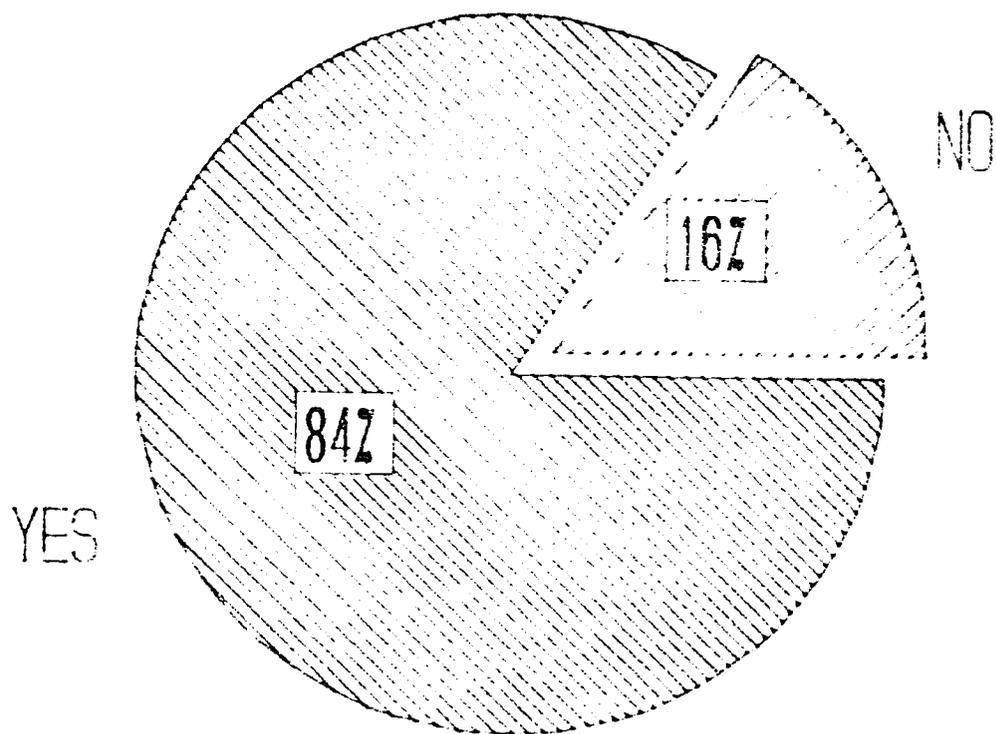
TIPPS - LEVER BROTHERS NIGERIA

CHART 1 - AGE SPECIFIC PREGNANCY RATE



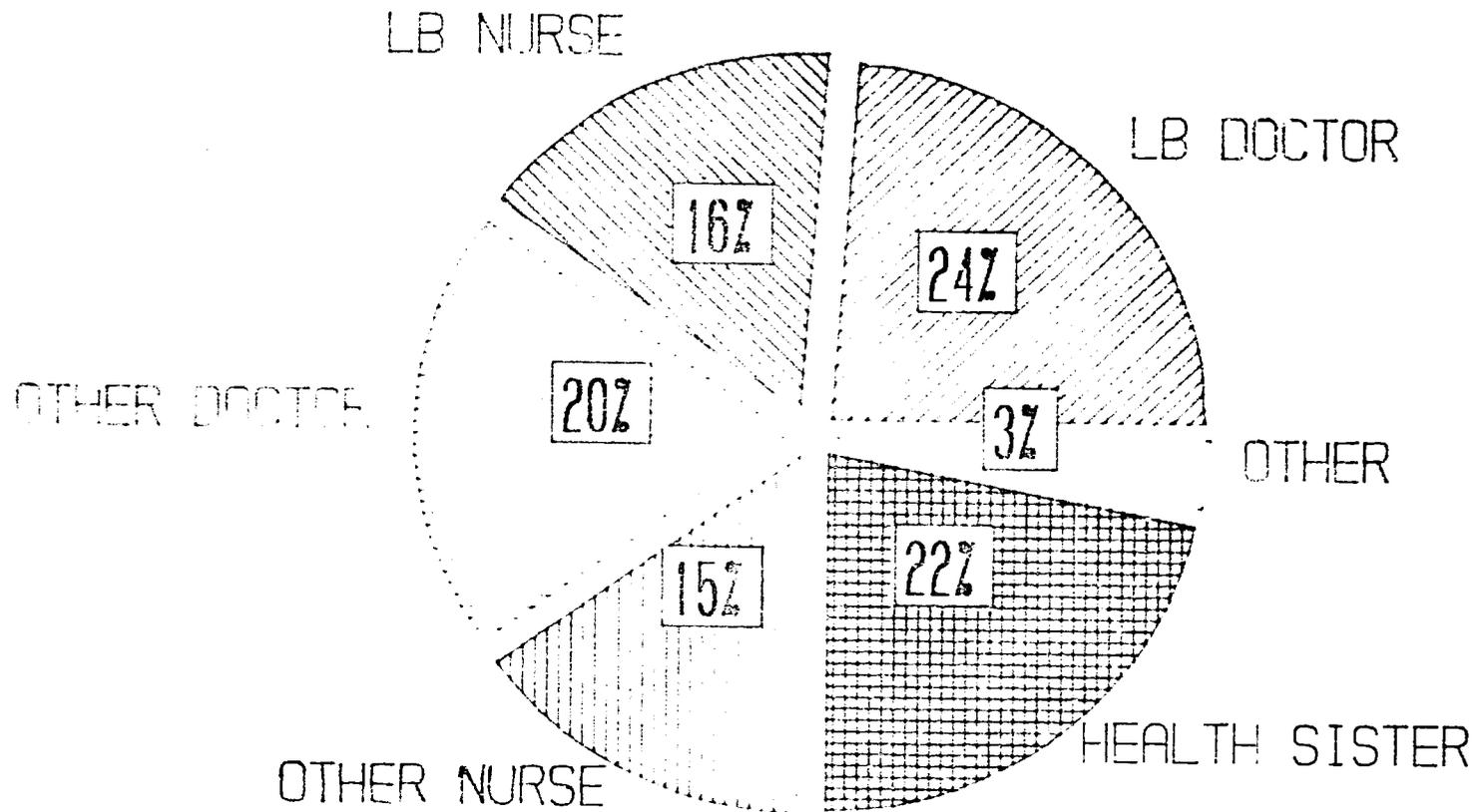
TIPPS - LEVER BROTHERS NIGERIA

CHART 2-DESIRE BIRTH SPACING INFO N=242



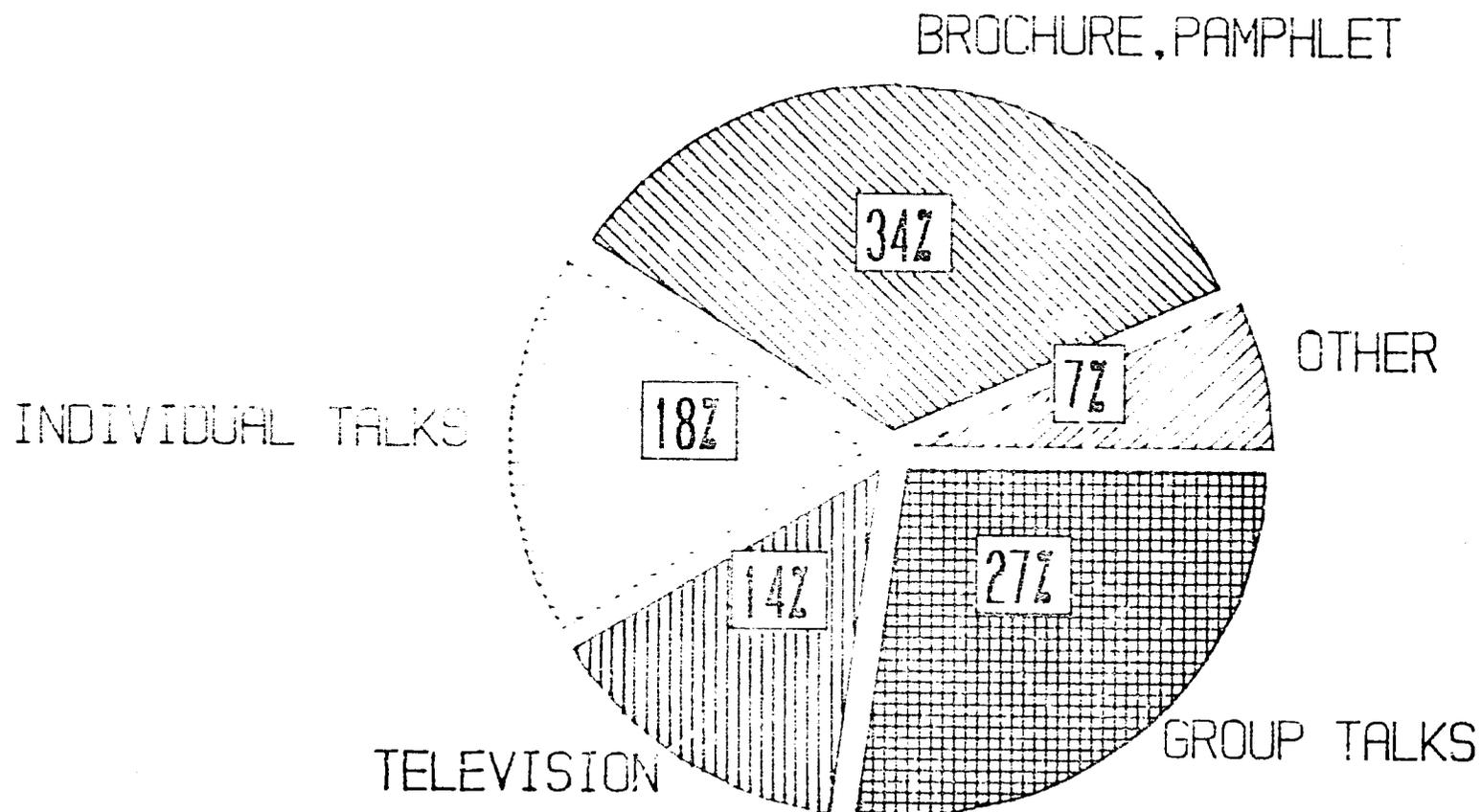
TIPPS - LEVER BROTHERS NIGERIA

CHART 3 - PREFERRED BIRTH COUNSELLOR N=202



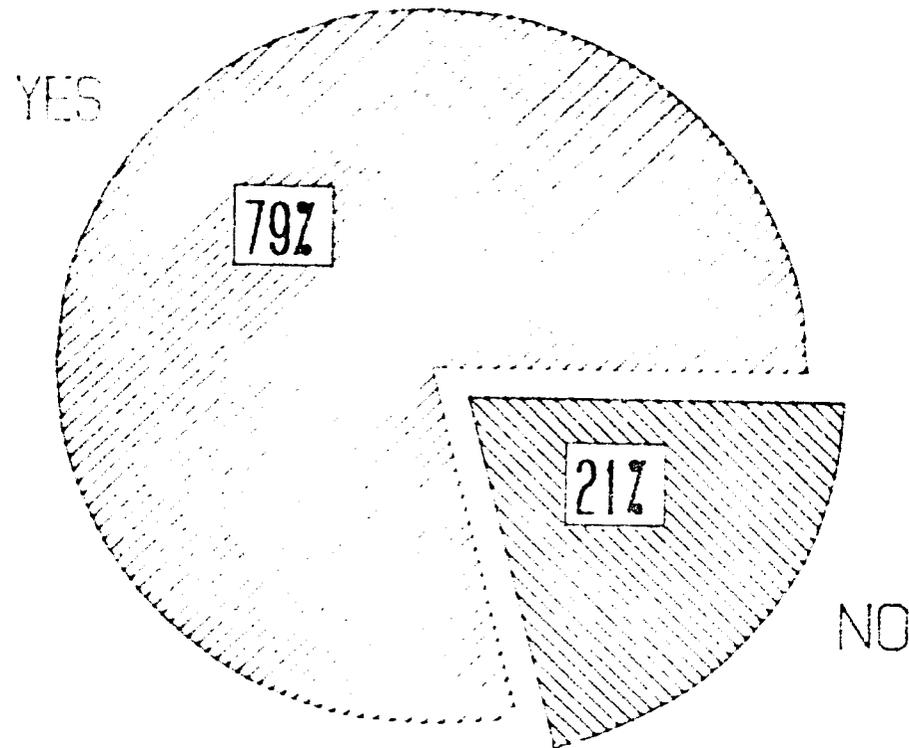
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CHART 4 - PREFERRED BIRTH INFO SOURCE N=201



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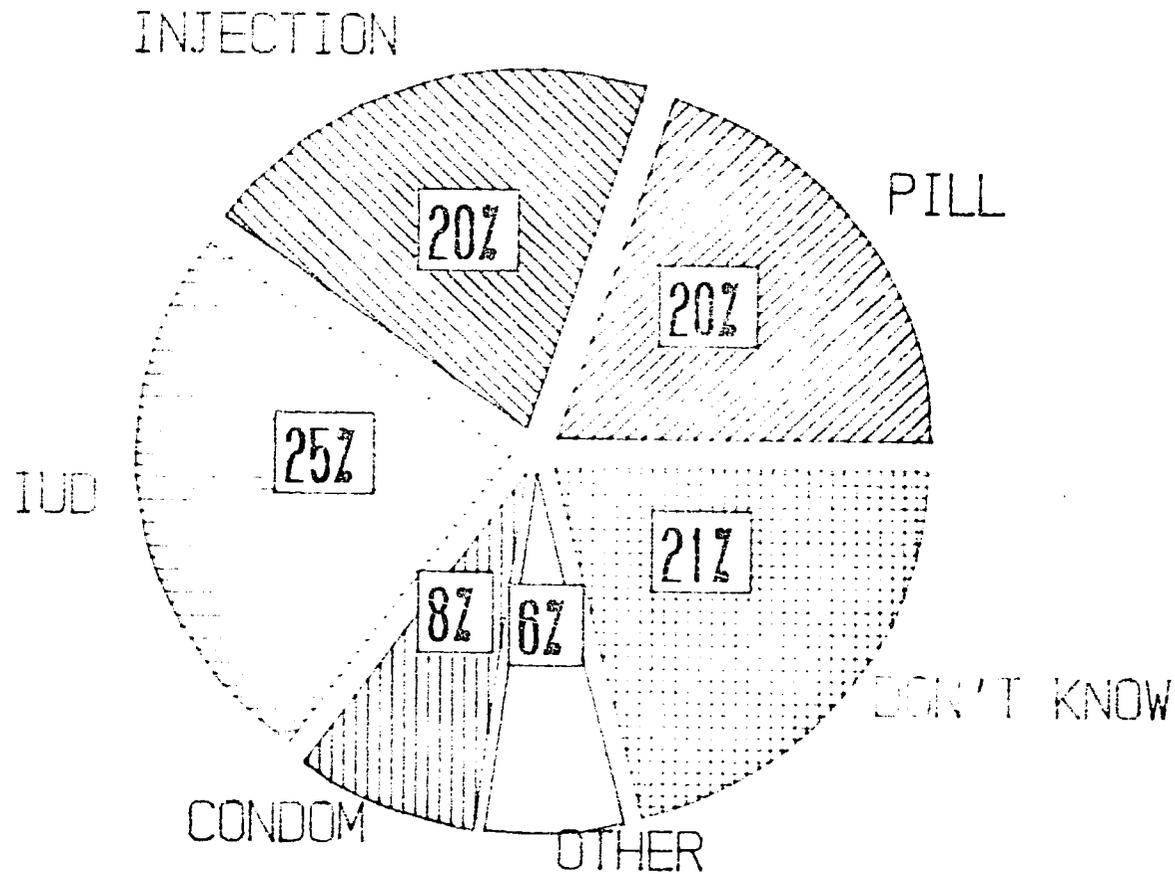
CHART 5 - USE BIRTH SPACING AT LB CLINIC N=243



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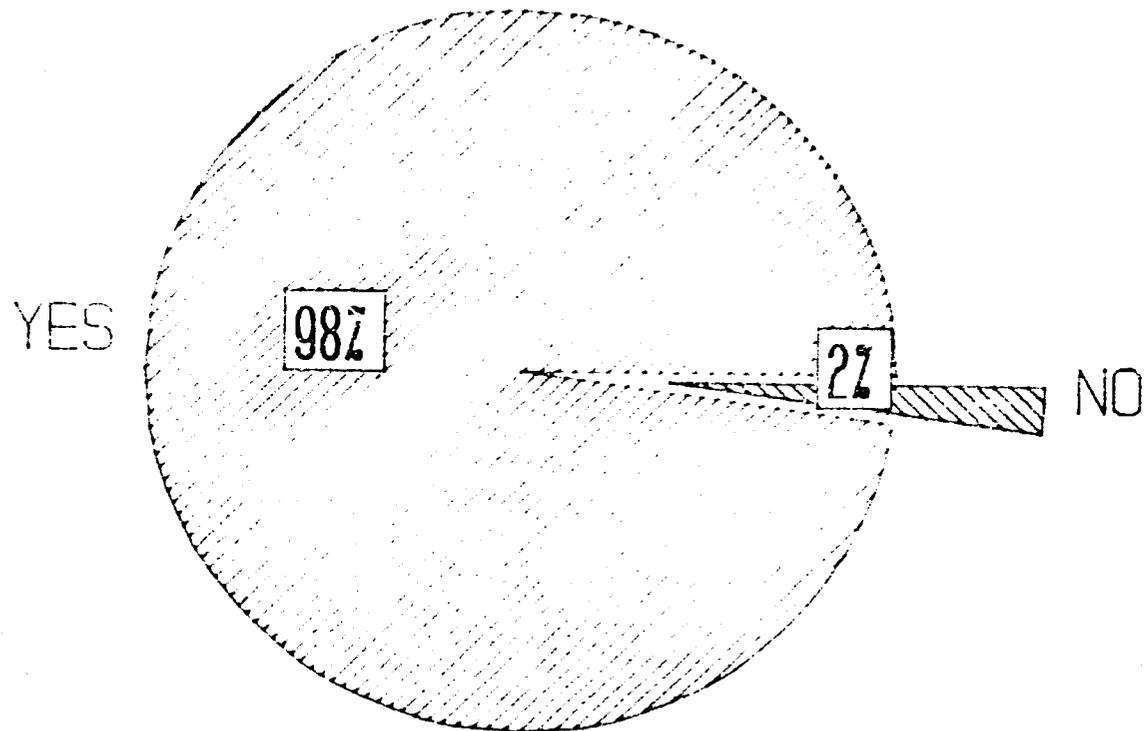
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CHART 6-PREFERRED METHOD MIX FOR ALL WOMEN N=183



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CHART 7 - DESIRE TALKS ON HEATH AT LB CLINIC N=243



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CHART 8 - DESIRED TOPICS FOR HEALTH TALKS N=237

