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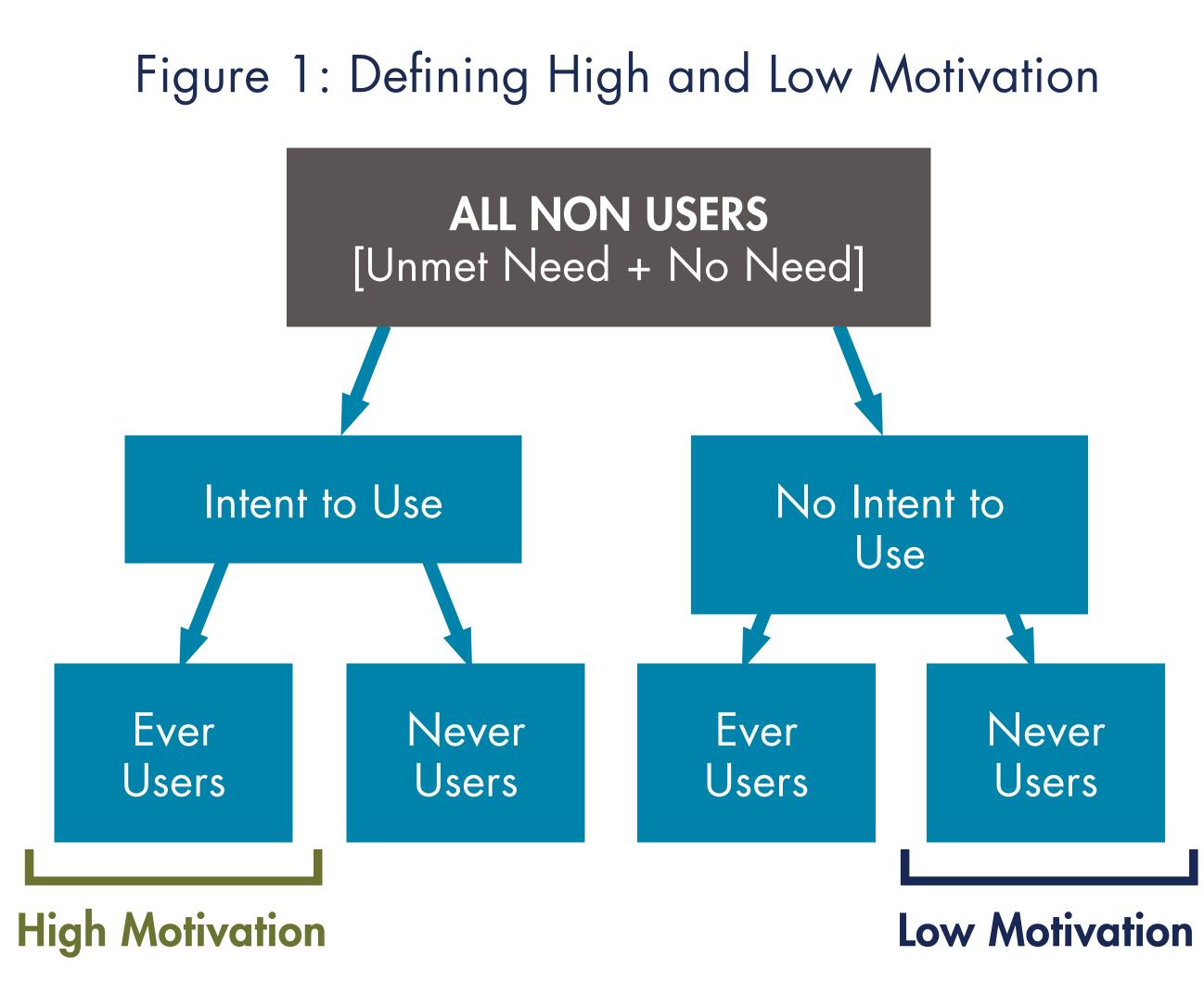
Characterizing Motivational Intensity of Need for Family Planning Among Non-Users in Sub-Saharan Africa

INTRODUCTION

As a group, non-users of contraception differ greatly in their likely motivation to adopt a method or resume use. This study, conducted under the USAID-funded Health Policy Project, presents a new approach by defining high- and low-motivation groups among current non-users according to

- Stated intention to use
- Past use
- Unmet need

By evaluating the demographic characteristics and fertility preferences of these subgroups, we can identify consistent correlates of motivational intensity. This information can be used to guide family planning policies and implementation.



METHODOLOGY

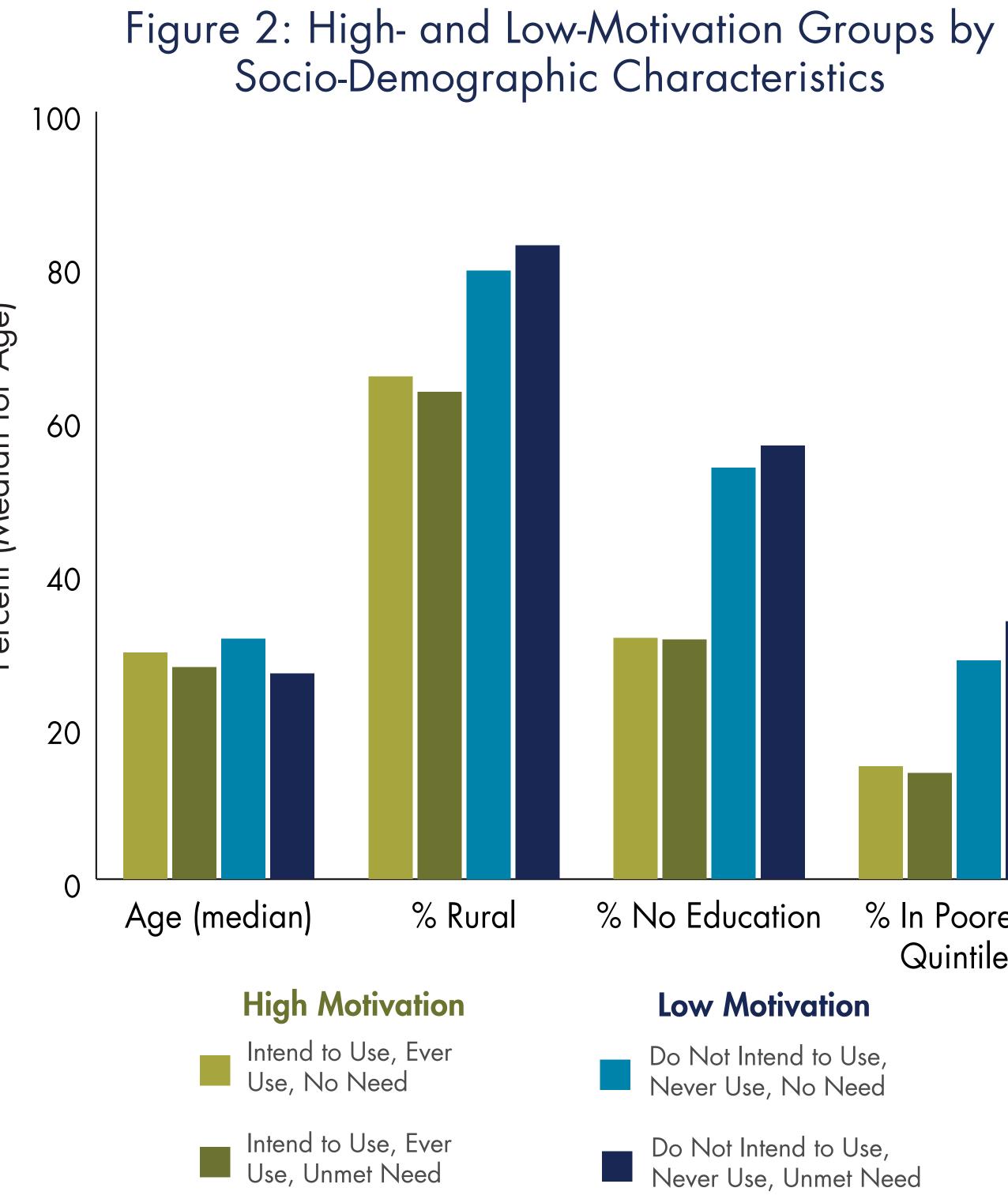
The most recent (2003–2011) Demographic and Health Surveys data from 23 sub-Saharan African countries were used to categorize subgroups of women with varying motivational intensities to adopt contraception in the future. Data were analyzed using Stata/SE 12. The analysis was restricted to married/in union women who were not using any contraceptive method. A yes/ no division grouped all these non-users by intention to use, unmet need, and ever use (see Figure 1). (In these 23 countries, those who intend to use a method and those who do not are about equally represented.) The no-need group includes fecund married/in union women who want a child within two years, women whose current pregnancy is wanted and properly timed, and postpartum amenorrheic women whose last birth was wanted and properly timed.



RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Profile

The low-motivation non-users, compared to the highmotivation ones, are more rural, less educated, and closer to poverty (Figure 2) and may tend to have less access to public services. These differences between the low- and high-motivation groups hold true regardless of unmet need status, suggesting similarities between the no-need and unmet-need groups.



CONCLUSION

By identifying high- and low-motivation groups according to past use, intention to use in the future, and unmet need, large and consistent differences between the highand low-motivation groups were discovered. Because these groups differed substantially and consistently in fertility histories and preferences, with some women in the low-motivation group having no interest at all in contraception, those with higher motivational intensity would benefit more from prioritization in certain program strategies, especially those related to reducing supply barriers.



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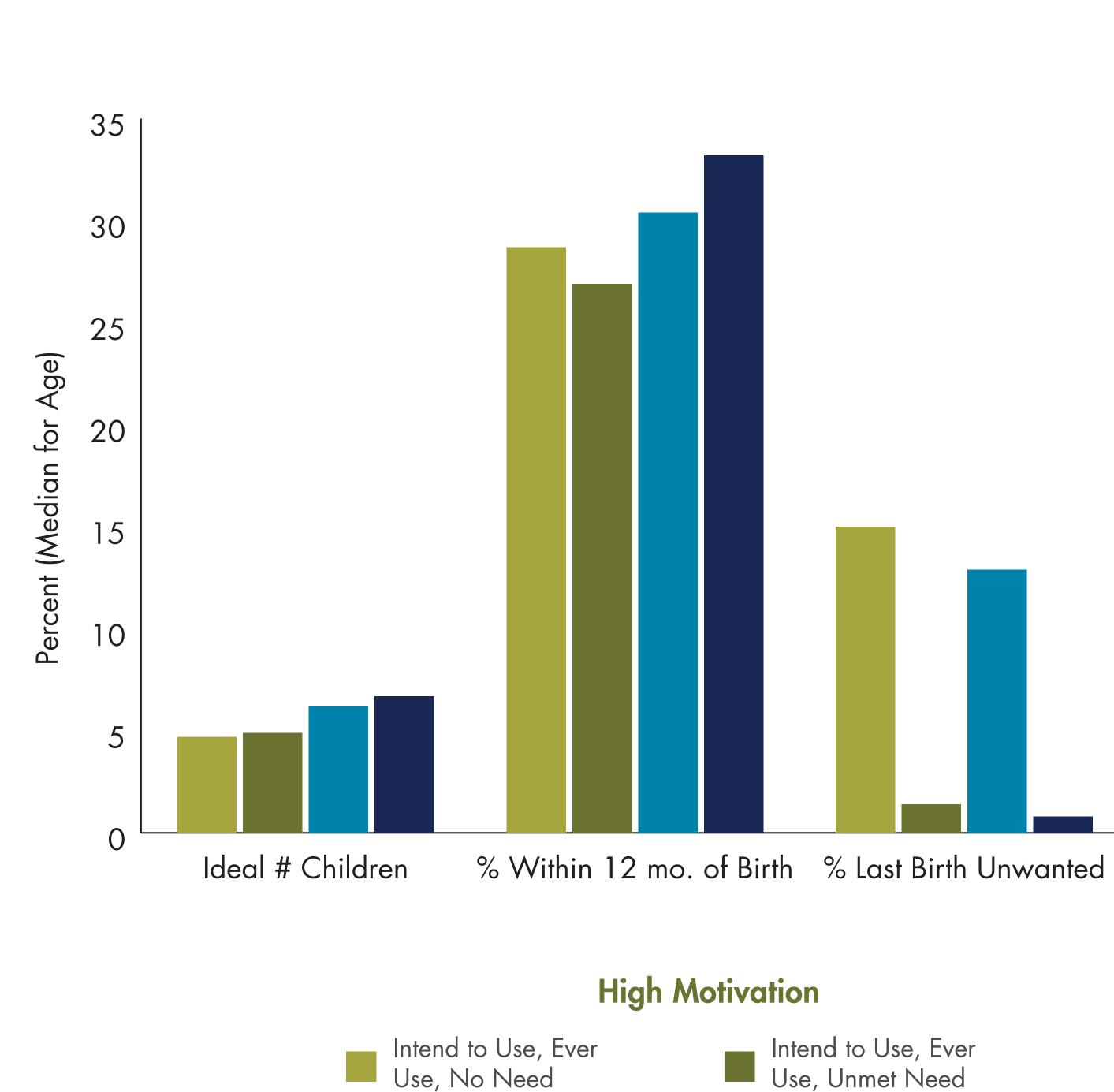
Fertility History and Preferences

Six proxies for the likelihood of adopting family planning were examined in conjunction with the constructed high- and low-motivation groups (Figures 3 and 4).

Ideal number of children: The ideal number of children is higher in the low-motivation group. This also applies to both the unmet-need group and the no-need group.

Recent birth: More low-motivation women had given birth in the preceding 12 months than high-motivation women; this is a strong correlate to the prevailing fertility rate within each group, especially since these women are comparable in age.

Unwanted births: Women with unmet need are more likely to have recently had an unwanted birth, since unmet need is partly based on whether the last birth was wanted. Almost none of the members of the no-need groups, mostly younger women who are still building their families, stated that they did not want their recent births.



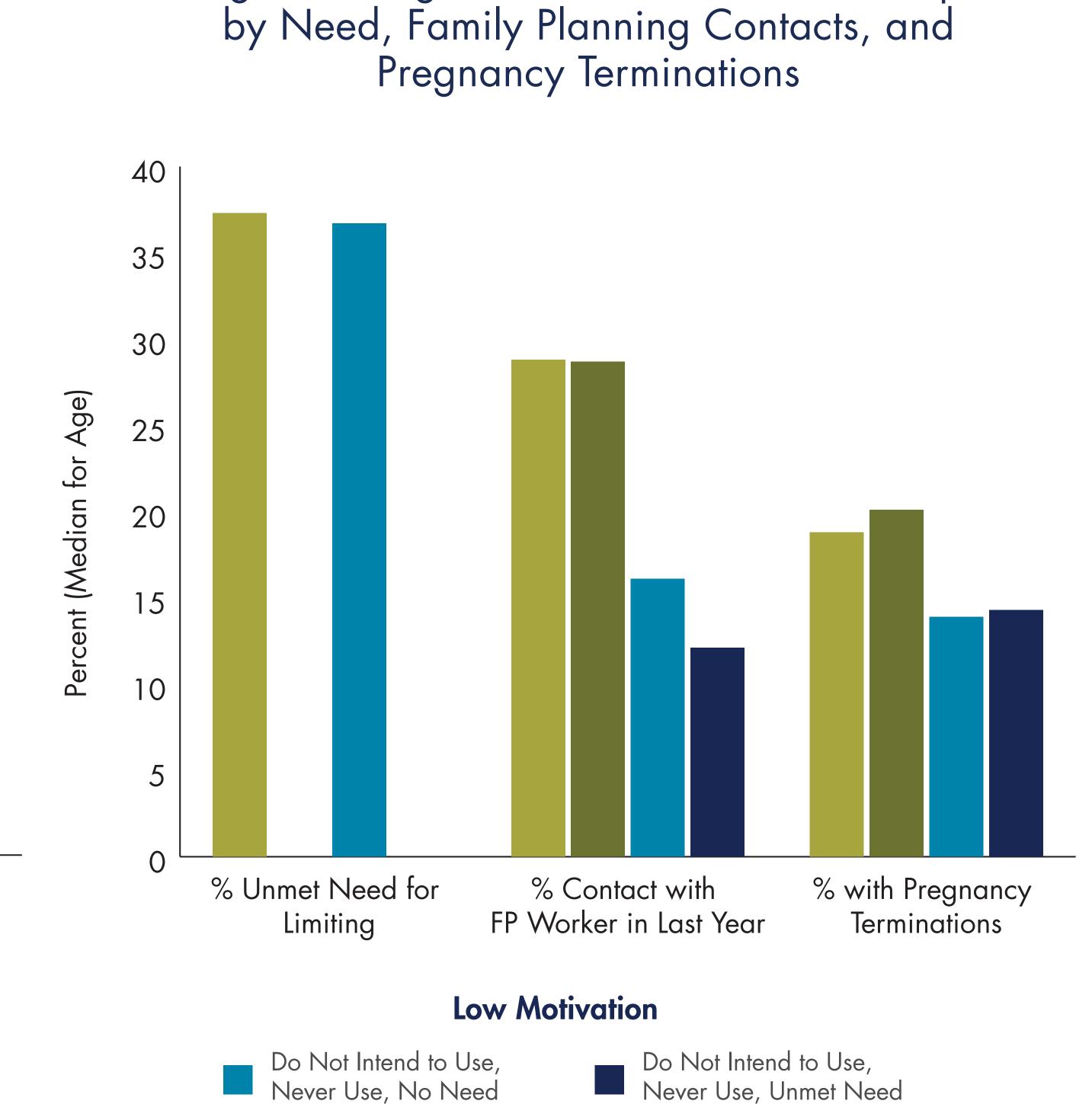
Use, No Need

Figure 3: High- and Low-Motivation Groups by Fertility and Preferences

- Unmet need for limiting births: If unmet need for limiting dominates (i.e., is a substantial proportion of all unmet need within a subgroup), this suggests stronger motivation to use a method. However, the two motivation groups were nearly identical in the distribution of limiting versus spacing objectives.
- Recent contact with a family planning health worker: Women were asked whether they were counseled on family planning by a healthcare worker at a health facility in the last 12 months. The low-motivation groups reported the least exposure to family planning counseling.

Termination of pregnancies: The high-motivation groups, comprised of women who were more urban and better educated, reported more terminations. This was likely due to induced abortions, although the data are limited.

Figure 4: High- and Low-Motivation Groups



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