

SEXUAL ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICE OF ABORTION AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract:

Background: A major proportion of adolescent pregnancies resulted in abortion. Unsafe abortion is an important challenge associated with adolescent sexual activity. The objective of this research is to study the sexual activity and practice of abortion among Secondary School Students.

Methodology: It is a cross sectional study. Multi-stage sampling was used in recruiting the sample size from the three LGAs in Ilorin metropolis in which 527 students from six Public Secondary Schools randomly selected. Semi- structured, self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection. The data obtained was fed into computer and analysis was done with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 20. Tables and cross tabulation were generated with a p- vale predetermined at less than 0.05.

Results: One hundred and fifty nine (30.2%) of the respondents has ever had sexual intercourse, 19.5% had been pregnant or has impregnated someone before, 87.1% of the recent pregnancies resulted in abortion. Factors that were positively associated with the practice of abortion among respondents were age, marital status of parents and parents' level of education.

Conclusion: Early introduction of sex education and importance and use of contraception in our schools will help to reduce teenage pregnancy and its consequences

Keywords: Sexual activity, Practice, Abortion.

Introduction

Adolescents constitute 20% of the world's population and about 18% of Nigeria's total population¹⁻³. Teenage sexual activity is increasing globally with a trend towards early onset⁴⁻⁶. In Nigeria, as many as 20% to 50% of adolescents have initiated sexual activity with the age of first sexual intercourse ranging between 14-18 years across the various geographical zones^{1,4,7,8,9}. About 20% of teenagers conceive during their first sexual exposure and fifty percent within the first six months⁴. The younger the age of initiation of sexual intercourse, the greater the likelihood of pregnancy⁴.

Teenage pregnancy is a major public health problem the world over and its incidence is on the increase^{10,11}. It is one of the most unfavorable outcomes of adolescent sexual activity⁴. It constitutes a health hazard to both the mother and the fetus. The mother is at increased risk of pregnancy induced hypertension, anemia, obstructed labor and its sequelae^{12,13}. The fetus is prone to be delivered preterm, small for gestational age and has an increased risk of peri-natal death¹³.

A major proportion of adolescent pregnancies resulted in abortion^{12,14}. Unsafe abortion is an important challenge associated with adolescent sexual activity. Unsafe abortion is a procedure for terminating unwanted pregnancy that is performed by someone lacking in necessary skills or in an environment lacking minimal standard^{15,16}. In most African countries, abortion remains both unauthorized and unsafe and is a leading cause of maternal deaths accounting for a global average of 13% of pregnancy related deaths¹⁵. Sixteen percent of maternal deaths were due to adolescent abortion². In studies done by Aderibigbe and Abiodun in Ilorin, 89.5% and 64% respectively of adolescents unwanted pregnancies ended up being terminated^{12,14}. The objective of this research is therefore, to study the sexual activity and practice of abortion among Secondary School Students in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

Methodology

The study was carried out among Public secondary school students aged between 10-19 years in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. It is descriptive cross sectional study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to determine the study 527 students from six Public Secondary Schools randomly selected from the three LGAs that makes up Ilorin metropolis. Pre-tested, semi-

structured, self administered questionnaire was used for data collection. The data obtained was fed into computer and analysis was done with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 20. Tables and cross tabulation were generated with a p- value predetermined at less than 0.05.

Result

Five hundred and twenty seven questionnaires were returned. Mean age of respondents was 14.52 ± 1.07 . Majority were Females (50.7%), Yoruba tribe (63.2%) and Muslims (51.2%). One hundred and fifty nine (30.2%) of the respondents has ever had sexual intercourse with mean number of sexual partners since sexual initiation being 2.06 ± 0.91 ; 67.3% of respondents had ever use any form of contraception, majorly, Condom (59.1%), Safe periods (19.5%), withdrawal (17.0%) and Emergency Contraception (12.6%); 19.5% had been pregnant or has impregnated someone before, 87.1% of the recent pregnancy resulted in abortion while 12.9% were delivered. Factors that were associated with practice of abortion among respondents were age (with a p-value of 0.000), marital status of parents (with a p-value of 0.000), Mother's level of education (with a p-value of 0.001).

Discussion

One hundred and fifty nine (30.2%) of the respondents has ever had sexual intercourse. This is similar to studies done in Port Harcourt, Ilorin, Ibadan and Plateau state where 25.75%, 28.2%, 28.7%, and 34% respectively were sexually active^{4,12,16,17}. However, the result by Ameh et al, in Northern Nigeria showed that only 12.6% were sexually active¹⁸. This may be due to concealment of cases and underreporting, especially when one considers the practice of early marriage from that part of the country.

A good proportion (67.3%) of the respondents have ever used contraception before. This can explain the pregnancy rate of 19.5%. However, of those that has ever been pregnant or has impregnated someone before, 87.1% had induced abortion. This result agreed with those of studies by Aderibigbe et al, Abiodun et al and Cadmus et al, where 89.5%, 63.5% and 93.3% respectively of all pregnancy were eventually aborted^{12,14,16}.

Factors that are significantly associated with practice of abortion among respondents includes age, marital status, mother's level of education and father's level of education

Conclusion: It is concluded that early introduction of sex education and importance and use of contraception in our schools is necessary to reduce the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and its consequences.

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Table 1: Sexual Activity among respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Ever had Sexual Intercourse			
	Yes	159	30.2
	No	368	69.8
	Total	527	100.0
Number of times engaged in sexual intercourse in the past 3 months			
	1 – 2	69	43.4
	≥3	90	56.6
	Total	159	100.0
Mean number of times	2.20±1.05		
Number of sexual partners since sexual initiation			
	1 – 2	129	81.1

	≥ 3	30	18.9
	Total	159	100.0
Mean number of sexual partners since sexual initiation	2.06±0.91		

Table 2: History of Contraception Use and Type Used

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
		N = 159	
Ever used any form of contraception			
	Yes	107	67.3
	No	52	32.7
Type of Contraception used			
	Condom	94	59.1
	Safe Periods	31	19.5
	Withdrawal	27	17.0
	Emergency Contraception	20	12.6
	Oral Contraceptive Pills	12	7.6
	Spermicide	12	7.6
	Rhythm Method	3	1.9

Table 3: Pregnancy History and Outcome of Pregnancy

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Ever been pregnant or impregnated someone before			
	Yes	31	19.5
	No	128	80.5
	Total	159	100.0
Number of times been pregnant or impregnated someone before			
	1	26	83.9
	≥2	5	16.1
	Total	31	100.0
Mean number of times been pregnant or impregnated someone before		1.13±0.11	
Outcome of most recent pregnancy			
	Abortion	27	87.1
	Delivery	4	12.9
	Total	31	100.0

Table 4: Factors Affecting Practice of Abortion among Respondents

Variable		Ever had Abortion before	
		Yes	No
Age(years)	10 – 13	1 (0.5)	185 (99.5)
	14 – 16	16 (6.0)	250 (94.0)
	17 – 19	14 (18.7)	61 (81.3)
		X² = 31.75 P = 0.0000	
Sex	Male	19 (7.3)	241 (92.7)
	Female	12 (4.5)	255 (95.5)
		X² = 1.41 P = 0.2352	
Religion	Christianity	18 (7.0)	239 (93.0)
	Islam	13 (4.8)	257 (95.2)
		X² = 0.78 P = 0.3776	

Tribe	Yoruba	6 (4.8)	317 (95.2)
	Hausa	6 (5.6)	101 (94.4)
	Igbo	5 (13.5))	32 (86.5)
	Other	4 (8.0)	46 (92.0)
		$X^2 = 5.01$ P = 0.1711	
Class	JSS 2	4 (3.5)	110 (96.5)
	JSS 3	7 (8.8)	73 (91.2)
	SSS 1	11 (5.9)	177 (94.1)
	SSS 2	9 (6.2)	136 (93.8)
		$X^2 = 2.38$ P = 0.4981	
Type of Family	Monogamous	19 (5.0)	362 (95.0)
	Polygamous	12 (8.2)	134 (91.8)
		$X^2 = 1.99$ P = 0.1582	
Marital Status of Parents	Married	7 (1.5)	451 (98.5)
	Divorced	14 (33.3)	28 (66.7)
	Widowed	10 (37.0)	63.0)
		$X^2 = 120.18$ P = 0.0000	
Mother Level of Education	None	5 (19.2)	21 (80.8)
	Primary School	4 (18.2)	18 (81.8)
	Secondary School	9 (4.8)	178 (95.2)
	Tertiary	13 (4.5)	279 (95.5)
		$X^2 = 111.72$ P = 0.001	
Father Level of Education	None	3 (13.6)	19 (86.4)
	Primary School	1 (6.7)	14 (93.3)
	Secondary School	8 (5.7)	133 (94.3)
	Tertiary	19 (5.4)	330 (94.6)
		$X^2 = 2.54$ P = 0.4685	