

INFLUENCE OF ABORTION ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH STATUS OF WOMEN IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

*** OLAITAN, OL
*ABIKOYE, AI.
JIMOH, AAG

***Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education
**Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria**

Corresponding author: OLAITAN, O L

Email: lanreolives@yahoo.com

olaitan.ol@unilorin.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out influence of abortion on reproductive health status of women in Ilorin metropolis. Three Local Government Areas were for effectiveness of the works, they are: Ilorin South, Ilorin West and Ilorin East. The major purpose of this study is to examine the perception of women on the relationship between abortion and reproductive health status in Ilorin metropolis. The population of the study comprised of health workers, private workers, civil servants, business women and students of higher institutions, from each Local Government Area. Four Hundred and Fifty (450) respondents were sampled using purposive random sampling technique for the study, based on the occupation mentioned above.

The descriptive and inferential survey designs were utilized for the study. The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between abortion and reproductive health status among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis, at $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance

Conclusions were drawn based on the hypotheses tested among which include, that abortion is one of the causes of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. In spite of this reality, some of the adolescents and young women, still indulge in it (unsafe abortion) due to poverty, peer pressures and ignorance. Pelvic inflammatory diseases are one of the consequences of abortion among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis; and unsafe abortions is one of the leading causes of maternal mortality, among women of child bearing age.

Recommendations were made based on the followings among which are: organization of abortion workshops in secondary schools and tertiary institutions, on abortion and its effects/complications (such as pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, infertility and others) on the reproductive health status of the women (females) among others.

Keywords: Incidence, abortion, reproductive health status, child bearing age, pelvic inflammatory disease, maternal mortality

INTRODUCTION

In this modern dispensation adolescents and youths are great exploiters, in the process of trying to discover certain things about themselves and their environment. This made them take some drastic steps which they are not conscious of or mindful of the repercussion in future. They enter into all forms of sexual immorality like lesbianism, homosexual, fornication, rape, and masturbation among others ¹.

The most frequently abused is fornication which might eventually lead to unwanted pregnancies, resulting in abortions, thus not taking into proper consideration the disastrous effects on the reproductive organs of body. Abortion is the clinical termination of a pregnancy either spontaneous or induced before twenty eight (28) weeks gestation. Abortion may be spontaneous or induced, if induced may be legal or illegal. In its widest sense abortion refers to a deliberate or induced termination of a pregnancy²⁻⁴.

According to World Health Organization (2009),⁵ reproductive health refers to capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so, not merely absence of reproductive disease, having a responsible, satisfying and safer sex. Reproductive health deals with the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life.⁶ This implies that people have the ability to reproduce, to regulate their fertility and to practice and enjoy a wholesome sexual relationship. It also implies that women go safely through pregnancy and child birth, that fertility regulation can be achieved without health hazards and that people are

safe in having sex. Finally, it implies that reproduction is carried to a successful outcome through infant survival, and lays the foundation for future health and development^{1,6}

It is interesting to note that jet age has exposed adolescents into an uncontrollable freedom from the thorough supervision of the parents, sexual relationship not being an exception, thus the rampant cases of unwanted pregnancies and child abandonment. The reproductive health which is of universal concerned, is a crucial part of general health and a central feature of human development, especially among the women of child bearing age (from adolescent to menopausal). Reproductive health is a must for the continuity of human race. The rate of maternal mortality and infant mortality worldwide is alarming.

Research Questions

The following questions are raised to guide the study:

1. Is abortion the leading cause of infertility?
2. Can abortion lead to pelvic inflammatory disease?
3. Is abortion one of the leading causes of maternal/infant mortality?
4. Can abortion lead to ectopic pregnancy?
5. Can abortion lead to uterine abnormalities?

Hypotheses

Ho₁ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis

Ho₂ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of pelvic inflammatory disease among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.

Ho₃ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of maternal mortality among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.

Ho₄ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of infant mortality in Ilorin metropolis.

Ho₅ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of ectopic pregnancy among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.

Ho₆ Abortion will not significantly be a cause of uterine abnormalities among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

The study assessed the influence of abortion on reproductive health status of women in Ilorin metropolis, with emphases on pelvic inflammatory disease, maternal mortality, infant mortality, ectopic pregnancy and uterine abnormalities.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study design is a descriptive survey design type. The population for this study comprised women in Ilorin metropolis. Purposive random sampling technique was used to select three Local Government Areas in Ilorin metropolis because of the vastness of the area. Based on gender (female only) and by age (the reproductive age group only). A sample of one hundred and fifty respondents from each Local Government Area, Based on the laid down rule for research that involve large target population; the sample population must not be less than 384 because, the total population is more than 10,000 (Fisher et.al, 1998)⁷. The instrument used for this research was structured interviewer administered questionnaire, tagged the perception of women on the relationship between

abortion and reproductive health status in Ilorin metropolis. The questionnaire items were generated from literature review and developed by the researchers. The draft questionnaire was subjected to both face and content validity

In ensuring the reliability of this study, test – retest method was use. Sixty questionnaires was administered to female of reproductive age at Ganmo in Ifelodun Local Government Area using Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient was used for test of reliability and reliability correlation of 0.82 was obtained.

The researchers and 6 trained research assistants distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. The completed questionnaires were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the demographic information in Section A, while the inferential statistics of chi – square was used to analyze Section B in order to reject or not to reject the null hypotheses at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance through SPSS 16.0 version.

DATA ANALAYSIS

RESULTS

Table 1: Frequency distribution and percentages of respondents according to religion, age and occupation.

S/N	Respondents	South	West	East	Total	Percentage
1.	Religion					
	Islam	115	75	113	303	67.6
	Christianity	35	75	35	145	32.4
2.	Age Range (years)					
	13-19yrs	3	13	4	20	4.5
	20-26-yrs	51	32	36	119	26.6
	27-33yrs	38	39	38	115	25.7
	34-40yrs	30	33	36	99	22.0
	41-47yrs	20	26	24	70	15.6
	48 and above	8	7	10	25	5.6
3.	Occupation					
	Health workers	30	30	28	88	19.6
	Private workers	30	30	30	90	20.1
	Civil Servants	30	30	30	90	20.1
	Business women	30	30	30	90	20.1
	Students	30	30	30	90	20.1
	Total	150	150	148	448	100.0

Religion: Table I show that majority of the respondents 303 (67.6%) were Muslims, while 145 (32.4%) were Christians. The age range in the table shows that, 20 (4.5%) of the

respondents fall between the age bracket of 13-19 yrs while 119(26.6%) of the respondents fall between the age bracket of 20-26yrs, 115 (25.7%) respondents fall between the age bracket of 27-33yrs, 99(22.0%) respondents fall the between the age bracket of 34-40yrs, 70(15.6%) respondents fall between the age bracket of 41-47yrs and 25 (5.6%) respondents fall between the age bracket of 48 and above. From the above analysis of the respondents 333 (74.3%) fall within the reproductive age of 20-40years, as 40yrs of age is recognized as the onset of menopause for females generally. While 95 (21.2%) respondents fall within the full blown age of menopause (41-48yrs and above)S. However, on occupation, the table shows that a total of 90 respondents were sampled in each of the Local Government Areas (Ilorin South and Ilorin West), except in Ilorin East, where 2 respondents failed to return their questionnaires, for this therefore 88 (19.6%) of the respondents were Health Workers, 90 (20%) each, respectively were Private Workers, Civil Servants, Business Women and Students.

Testing of Hypotheses:

Table 2: Chi-square table showing influence of abortion on reproductive health status among women of child bearing age N= 448

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	ROW TOTAL	df	CALC. X ²	TABLE VALUE	DECISION
Abortion do not cause infertility									
1	148(33.0)	201(44.9)	55(12.3)	44(9.8)	448	9	58.11	16.92	REJECTED
2	37(8.3)	206(45.9)	147(32.8)	58(12.9)	448				
3	114(25.4)	201(44.9)	101(22.5)	32(7.1)	448				
4	67(15.0)	135(30.1)	160(35.7)	86(19.2)	448				
Abortion do not lead to pelvic inflammatory diseases									
5	179(40.0)	233(52.0)	23(5.1)	13(2.9)	448	9	158.93	16.92	REJECTED
6	163(36.4)	227(50.6)	44(9.8)	14(3.1)	448				
7	126(28.1)	239(53.3)	66(14.7)	17(3.8)	448				
8	73(16.3)	134(29.9)	194(43.3)	47(10.5)	448				
Abortion do not cause maternal mortality									
9	180(40.2)	191(42.6)	59(13.2)	18(4.0)	448	9	292.7	16.92	REJECTED
10	208(46.4)	191(42.6)	39(8.7)	10(2.2)	448				
11	178(39.7)	190(42.4)	56(12.5)	24(5.4)	448				
12	229(51.1)	192(42.9)	21(4.7)	6(1.3)	448				
Abortion do not cause infant mortality									
13	120(26.8)	153(34.1)	120(26.8)	55(12.3)	448	9	100.75	16.92	REJECTED
14	292(65.1)	123(27.5)	17(3.8)	16(3.6)	448				
15	231(51.5)	166(37.1)	39(8.7)	12(2.7)	448				
16	28(6.3)	22(5.0)	84(18.6)	314(70.0)	448				
Abortion do not cause ectopic pregnancy									

17	196(43.8)	201(44.8)	35(7.8)	16(3.6)	448	9	124.24	16.92	REJECTED
18	126(28.1)	257(57.4)	54(12.0)	11(2.5)	448				
19	60(13.4)	249(55.6)	109(24.3)	30(6.7)	448				
20	82(18.3)	224(50.0)	118(26.3)	24(5.4)	448				
Abortion do not cause uterine abnormalities									
21	27(6.0)	95(21.2)	150(33.5)	176(39.3)	448	9	110.24	16.92	REJECTED
22	21(4.7)	102(22.8)	164(36.6)	161(35.9)	448				
23	78(17.4)	165(36.8)	123(27.5)	82(18.3)	448				
24	210(46.8)	196(43.8)	29(6.5)	13(2.9)	448				

$P \leq 0.05$

*For items 1 – 24 see appendix (Questionnaire)

From table II, in the hypothesis testing, on the influence of abortion on causes of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. The calculated value (58.11) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant influence of abortion on the causes of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. Which means abortion can lead to temporary/permanent infertility, increasing infertility, increasing high rate of infertility and Sexually Transmitted Diseases been underlying causes of infertility among women.

In the hypothesis testing on the influence of abortion on pelvic inflammatory diseases among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis, the calculated value is (158.93) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, abortion significantly influenced pelvic inflammatory diseases among women of child bearing age

in Ilorin metropolis. Which means abortion can lead to inflammation of the uterus, fallopian tubes and/or ovaries, being signs and symptoms of septic or criminal abortion.

The hypothesis testing on the influence of abortion on maternal mortality among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis was analyzed. The calculated value (292.7) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is significant influence of abortion on maternal mortality among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. That is, abortion is one of the underlying causes of maternal mortality, especially among adolescents and young women (due to unsafe abortion).

Hypothesis testing on the influence of abortion on infant mortality in Ilorin metropolis was analyzed. The calculated value (100.75) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating there is significant influence of abortion on infant mortality in Ilorin metropolis. That is, abortion can be responsible for increase in the deaths of infants or their deformities.

Hypothesis testing on the influence of abortion on ectopic pregnancy among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis was analyzed. The calculated value (124.24) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant influence of abortion on ectopic pregnancy among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. That is, abortion through criminality or unsafe procedure can lead to blockage of uterus and subsequent to occurrence of ectopic pregnancy in future.

Hypothesis testing on the influence of abortion on uterine abnormalities among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis was analyzed. The calculated value (110.24) is greater than the critical value (16.92). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is significant influence of abortion on uterine abnormalities among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. However it has been scientifically proof that therapeutic or repeated first trimester (3 months) spontaneous abortion has effect on uterine abnormalities. It leads to formation of fibroid in the womb.

Discussion of Findings

The data analyzed revealed that there is influence of abortion on reproductive health status of women. A total of four hundred and fifty women were sampled, based on their occupation earlier mentioned in summary of findings from three Local Government Areas (Ilorin South, Ilorin West and Ilorin East). One hundred and fifty respondents from each of these Local Government Area in Ilorin metropolis. Ninety-nine and half percent (99.5%) of the respondents (448) returned their completed questionnaires while half percent (0.5%) failed to return their questionnaires (2 respondents), that were health workers (Doctors) from University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital at Oke-Ose in Ilorin East LGA.

From the analysis, it was generally agreed, that there is significant influence of abortion on causes of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis (table 2). This conforms with several other studies that abortion is one of the causes of

infertility, among women of child bearing age due to its effects on the reproductive health status of the women such as pelvic inflammatory diseases, which lead to infertility⁸⁻¹⁰.

The study revealed that there is significant the influence of abortion on pelvic inflammatory diseases (table 2). This agrees with Olaitan³, pelvic inflammatory diseases are one of the effects of criminal abortion that may be caused, either by the spread of an unrecognized sexually transmitted diseases into uterus during the abortion or by micro-organism on the surgical instrument which are inserted into the uterus⁹.

It was also revealed that there is significant relationship between abortion and maternal mortality (table 2). This supports the study of Safe Motherhood¹ and WHO⁵ that of over 500,000 women who die during pregnancy and child birth worldwide, 90 percent occur in Africa and Asia, some of which died due to consequences of unsafe abortions^{2,4,7,11}. Likewise Robertson¹² claimed that a major cause of maternal deaths in Ghana is due to unsafe abortion. Therefore Nigeria is not an exception, Ilorin metropolis inclusive.

The study also revealed that majority of the females that died is adolescents and young women, for the fact, that they are poor contraceptive users, they engaged in abortion especially unsafe (criminal) abortion as previously enunciated by Olaitan,³ Jimoh⁴, Okonofua¹⁰ and others^{13,14} in their publications.

The findings also proved that there is significant influence abortion on infant mortality in Ilorin metropolis (table 2). Daiter claimed, that anatomic abnormalities (typically uterine), hormonal imbalance (typically in progesterone) and serious or life threatening diseases (chronic nephritis, untreated diabetes and others) contribute to infant mortality¹⁵.

The outcome of the study revealed, that there is significant influence of abortion on ectopic pregnancy among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis (table 2). Due to damage of tubes and ovaries, there can be serious consequences to the reproductive health future of the women involved in abortion, which can lead to ectopic pregnancy¹¹.

The findings also proved that there is significant influence of abortion on uterine abnormalities (table 2). This agrees with Olaitan³ and Adewole¹⁴ that one of the complications of abortion is perforation of uterus. Flemming et al¹⁶ claimed that Uterine Arteriovenous Malformation is one of the complications of therapeutic abortion. Ibahim¹⁷ and James¹⁹ claimed that patients with Mullerian duct anomalies are known to have repeated first-trimester spontaneous abortions. Also, Olaitan², asserted that structural abnormalities of the reproductive tract include the followings: congenital uterine defects (in particular uterine septum), fibroids, cervical incompetence, latogenic causes (Asherman syndrome).

Conclusions

Based on the facts collected from the respondents and the data analysis, the following conclusions were made that:

- a. Abortion is one of the causes of infertility among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis. Despite this reality, some of the adolescents and young women, still indulge in it (Unsafe abortion), due to poverty, peer pressure and ignorance.
- b. Pelvic inflammatory diseases are one of the consequences of abortion among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.
- c. Abortion (Unsafe abortion), is one of the leading causes of maternal mortality, among women of child bearing age, Ilorin metropolis inclusive.
- d. Abortion is one of the causes of infant mortality (Perinatal mortality), in Ilorin metropolis.
- e. Ectopic pregnancy is one of the physiological effects of abortion in future of the women involved in Ilorin metropolis.
- f. Abortions lead to uterine abnormalities among women of child bearing age in Ilorin metropolis.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made by the researcher based on the conclusion drawn from the findings of the study that:

1. Abortion workshops should be organized in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Ilorin metropolis inclusive, on abortion and its effects/complications such as Pelvic Inflammatory diseases, ectopic pregnancy, infertility and others, on the reproductive health status of the women (females). Since adolescents and young women, are mostly the victims of abortion.
2. Sexuality Education Programmes should be a must for all the Nigerian citizens through courses offer in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. In addition, the involvement of mass media such as television, radio, daily and weekly newspapers write-ups, which will be directed towards the implication of early sexual intercourse, causes of unwanted pregnancy and abortion.
3. Regular medical examinations of the Reproductive organs (Uterus, ovaries, and fallopian tubes) among the adolescents and young women would lead to early detection of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases, Fibroids among others.
4. Reproductive health specialists should try to organize workshops periodically to counsel people (clients) on the adverse consequences of abortion on their reproductive health life. This will curb the rate of involvement in abortion.

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