

The Knowledge Attitude and Practice of Contraceptives by Undergraduates in Lagos Nigeria.

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Abstract

There is a high mortality rate associated with teenage pregnancy, abortion and complications related to abortion among university undergraduates. The awareness and practice of contraception such as; natural method, barrier method, hormonal method and traditional method were studied among university undergraduates in Lagos state using structured questionnaire. Sources of information on contraception were also studied alongside choice and use of contraceptive among undergraduates.

The result showed that the major source of information on contraceptives was peer group followed by electronic media, parental contribution on this issue was low.

98% of our respondents had good knowledge about contraceptives, their attitude towards contraceptive was also positive but its use was low with only about 54% practicing contraception and this is probably due to discrimination against adolescent and young adults by family planning providers and low parental influence on contraceptives.

Keywords: Awareness, Contraceptives, Practice, Undergraduates

1. Introduction.

Risky sexual behavior, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and their complications still remain the major health problems of young adults worldwide. (W.O. Ndifon et al 2006). The commonest reasons for not wanting these pregnancies are bad timing, desire to continue schooling and the high cost of education; and the commonest method of resolving unwanted pregnancy is by abortion (Okonofua FE 2006)

The practice of induced abortion remains widespread in Nigeria despite the restrictive abortion laws in Nigeria. Majority of women still undergo induced abortion every year without putting into cognizance the complications attached to this illegal practice. The practice of induced abortion is illegal in Nigeria therefore its practice is usually unsafe with a lot of quaky. Unsafe abortion is a neglected problem of health care in Nigeria and this continues to cause irreparable damage to young and sexually active undergraduates. There are approximately 610, 000 abortions performed in Nigeria annually, 60% of which are unsafe, resulting in an abortion mortality rate of 120 deaths per 100,000 live births (Adinma JIB 2002). The incidence of induced abortion amongst undergraduates in university of port harcourt was 47.2% and up to 47% of these undergraduates had performed abortion in the past (Oriji VK et al 2009).

The high prevalence of abortion is not restricted to Africa similar predicaments can also be found in latin American where 65.9% of the students of a Brazilian university had had an abortion (Hardy E et al 1993).

Female undergraduates have only partial knowledge, about various methods of contraception, they are generally familiar with only three, particularly the condoms (Mercy A. Ijirigho 2010). Oriji VK et al 2009 stated that about 40% of university undergraduate had never used an effective form of contraception in the past and 13% were unaware of contraception (Oriji VK et al 2009).

The use of contraceptives can help reduce the complications from abortion and the prevalence of unwanted pregnancies. Are university undergraduates aware of the various contraceptive methods? What is their attitude and practice to contraception? These are the questions that these research intend to address.

2. Materials and methods.

A cross sectional study was carried out on the knowledge attitude and practice of contraceptives among undergraduates in Lagos state university.364 individualized self questionnaires with open and close ended questions were administered to both male and female students attending undergraduate courses in the four main campuses of Lagos state university. Random sampling technique was used to cut across all levels in the selected

faculties. The questionnaire was in four parts, Biodata, it also examined their knowledge on types of contraceptives, their attitude towards contraceptives and the use of contraceptives.

3. Results

Table 1

This table shows age distribution, sex, marital status and religion.

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<20	28	7.69
20-24	244	67.03
25-29	65	17.85
30-34	27	7.4
Gender		
Male	128	35.2
Female	236	64.8
Marital Status		
Married	27	7.41
Single	337	92.58
Religion		
Christian	212	58.24
Muslims	152	41.76

A total of 364 students took part in the study 7.69% were between < 20years 67.03% were between 21-25 years 17.85% were aged 26-30years and 7.41 were between 31-35years. Majority were females, 236 and 128 were males. 337 were single while the remaining 27 were married. 212 were Christian and 152 were Muslim.

Table 2

Shows Source Of Information On Contraception.

Source of information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Peers	176	48.35
Electronic Media	156	42.86
Parents	68	18.68
Others	39	10.71

Peer group was identified as the highest source of information with 48.35% with followed by electronic media with 42.86% while parents contributed 18.68% and other sources was 10.71%.

Table 3

KNOWLEDGE OF TYPES OF CONTRACEPTIVES

A. Natural Methods	Frequency	%
Withdrawal	233	64.01
Billing's method	39	10.71
Abstinence	236	64.84
B. Barriers Method		
Condom	349	95.88
I.U.C.D	151	41.48
Diaphragm	185	50.82
Cervical cap	103	28.30
C. Hormonal Method		
Pills	289	79.40
Injectibles	155	42.58
Norplant	92	25.27
D. Traditional Method		
Rings	77	21.15
Waist band	59	16.21
Wooden carving	20	5.49

Condom was the most known contraceptives method with 95.88% followed by the pills with 79.40%, abstinence was also well known with 64.84% this was closely followed by the withdrawal method with 64.01%, diaphragm was 50.8%, traditional methods such as rings, waist bands and wooding carving had been the lowest % with 21.15%, 16.21% and 5.49% respectively.

Table 4
Discussion of contraceptives in Educational Institutions

A. Contraceptives should be discussed	Frequency	%
Yes	335	92.03
Yes	10	2.74
I don't know	8	2.20
No response	11	3.02
B. Level of Education		
Primary school	10	2.99
Secondary school	296	88.36
University	29	8.66
Total	335	

92.03% of our respondents were of the opinion that contraceptives should be discussed in school while a minor 2.74% do not want it to be discussed in the school.

83.36% were of the opinion that it should be discussed at secondary school, 8% want it to be discussed at university and 2.99% wanted it to be discussed at primary school.

Table 5
Respondent's Opinion about Contraceptive Use Among Young People

CONDOM	Frequency	%
Yes	268	73.63
No	88	34.18
I don't know	–	0.00
No response	8	2.20
B. PILLS		
Yes	76	20.88
No	167	47.88
I don't know	9	2.47
No response	112	30.77
C. WITHDRAWAL		
Yes	64	17.58
No	176	48.35
I don't know	12	3.30
No response	112	30.77

The most frequently mentioned contraceptives was the condom (73.63%) and withdrawal method being the lowest (17.58%)

Table 6
Attitude to Contraceptive Use

Respondents would encourage partners to use contraceptives	Frequency	%
Yes	261	71.70
No	47	12.91
Respondents would still use contraceptives if partner is on contraceptives		
Yes	181	49.73
No	111	30.49

71.70% would encourage partner to use contraceptive
 Of the 93.41% who responded on this, 49.73% would still use contraceptive even if partner is on contraceptives.

Table 7
Uses Of Contraceptives

Contraceptive use	Frequency	%
Yes	197	54.12
No	167	45.88
Educational level at start of use		
Primary school	3	1.52
Secondary school	92	46.70
University	103	52.28

Of the 364 respondents 197 i.e 54.12% use contraceptives while 45.88% do not use contraceptives.
 52.28% started using contraceptive in university while 46.70% have been using contraception from secondary school.

Table 8
Contraceptive Use And Sexual Exposure

	Frequency	%
Casual Sex	116	58.88
Stable relationship	112	

Casual sex was the highest reason for contraceptive with 58.88% followed by stable relationship while just a little 28.42% would use contraceptive based on partner's request.

Table 8
Shows reasons why young adults use contraception

	Frequency	%
Because of peer influence	28	14.21%
Because of sexually transmitted disease and unwanted pregnancy	180	91.37
Because of parental influence	13	6.60

A large % of 91.375 practice contraception to prevent sexually transmitted disease and to prevent unwanted pregnancy while just a few 6.60% use contraception for parental influence.

Table 9
Choice Of Contraception Among Undergraduates

NATURAL	Frequency	%
Withdrawal	58	29.44
Billing's method	13	6.60
Abstinence	21	10.66
B. BARRIER		
Condom	133	67.51
I.U.C.D	4	2.03
Diaphragm	–	–
Cervical cap	–	–
C. HORMONAL		
Pills	44	22.34
Injectables	8	4.06
Norplant	4	2.03
D. TRADITIONAL METHOD		
Rings	2	1.02
Waist bands	3	1.52
Wooden carvings	–	–

Condom was the highest contraceptive with 67.5% followed by withdrawal 29.44% , the pills with 22.34% the IUCD was found to be low with 2.03%.

4. Discussion

This study showed that the knowledge of condom with 95.88% was the highest with regards to knowledge of contraception followed by the pill with 79.40% and abstinence with 64.84%.

Condom use was also the highest contraceptive been practiced with 67.51% and this is probably due to the fact that the condom is popular amidst undergraduates cheap and convenient.

Age has also been said to influence contraceptive choice and the choice of condom was high initially but drops with increase in age this might have contributed to our findings where 206 of our respondents were below 25years of age.

Peer group was the highest source of information on contraceptive with 48.35% followed by electronic media 42.86% and parents with 18.68%. Even though 98.90% are knowledgeable about contraception only 54.12% practice it and 45.88% do not practice it, of the 54.12% that practice it 91.37% use it to prevent unwanted pregnancies and prevention of sexually transmitted infection, 14.21% use it due to peer pressure and 6.60% due to parental influence. Intra uterine contraceptive device was not so popular among undergraduates 4.48% likewise its use 2.03%

92.03% of the total respondents were of the opinion that contraception should be discussed and 88.36% were of the opinion that it should be discussed in secondary school while 8.66% would prefer that it should be discussed at the university. 71.70% would encourage their partner to use contraceptives and 49.73% would still use contraceptives even if partner is on contraceptives.

Our respondents had more than one reason for contraception with 58.88% using contraception when having casual sex, 56.85% in stable relationship and 28.42% would use only on request by from partner.

The study showed low usage of IUCD 2.03%, and pill 22.34% among undergraduates. Low practice of Traditional methods: rings 1.02%, waist bands 1.52% may be due to the fact that our respondents are educated people.

5. Conclusion

Knowledge of contraceptive use among university undergraduates is high 98.90%. The attitude to contraceptives was positive and welcoming as observed by the need to discuss it, which was also high 92.03% . Undergraduates not only believe that young adults should use condom 73.63%, but are also ready to encourage partners to use contraceptives 71.70%. But unfortunately, its practice 54.12% was low, this is probably due to discrimination against young adults by family planning providers and low parental influence on contraceptive 6.6%.

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