

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Induced Abortion in Nigeria: Findings from Focus Group Discussion

Boniface A Oye-Adeniran^{1,5*}, Isaac F Adewole^{2,5}, Augustine V Umoh³, Ngozi Iwere⁵ and Abidoye Gbadegesin⁴

Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, College of Medicine, University of Lagos (CMUL), Lagos, Nigeria¹; Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria²; Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo, Nigeria³; Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Ayinke House, Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Ikeja, Nigeria⁴; Coordinator, The Campaign Against Unwanted Pregnancy (The CAUP), Lagos, Nigeria⁵

*For Correspondence: E-mail: bonifaceoye@yahoo.com

Abstract

Abortion is carried out daily in Nigeria despite the restrictive abortion law. This study was carried out to obtain information on societal attitude to the issues of family planning, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, adoption of children and laws relating to them. Focus group discussions were held in south-western Nigeria among 11 sub-groups. Participants felt that there was high prevalence of unwanted pregnancy and abortion particularly among youths. They had high level awareness of contraceptives and ascribed its low use to negative side effects, high cost and provider bias. Christians favoured planning of pregnancies while the Muslims did not. Majority of the respondents had negative perception of induced abortion. Some of them supported abortion if the education of the young girl would be disrupted, if paternity of pregnancy is in dispute, or if it would save the family from shame. Participants supported the enactment of laws that would make adoption of unwanted children easier. (*Afr J Reprod Health* 2005; 9[1]: 133-141)

Keywords: Contraception, adolescents, awareness, Nigeria

References

1. Adewole IF. Trends in postabortal mortality and morbidity in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* 1992; 38(2): 115-118.
2. Emuveyan EE and Agboghorama OC. Trends in abortion related maternal mortality in Lagos, Nigeria. *Trop J Obstet Gynaecol* 14(1): 39-41.
3. World Health Organisation. Unsafe Abortion: Global and Regional Estimates of Incidence of and Mortality Due to Unsafe Abortion with a Listing of Available Country Data. Geneva, World Health Organisation, 1998 (WHO/RHT/MSM/97.16).
4. Unuigbo JA, Oronsanye AU and Orhue AE. Abortion related morbidity and mortality in Benin City, Nigeria. 1973-1985. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* 26: 435-439.
5. Okonofua FE, Odimegwu C, Ajobor H, et al. Assessing the prevalence and determinants of unwanted pregnancy and induced abortion in Nigeria. *Stud Fam Plann* 1999; 30(1): 67-77.
6. Henshaw SK, Singh S, Oye-Adeniran BA, Adewole IF, Iwere N and Cuca YP. The incidence of induced abortion in Nigeria. *Int Fam Plann Persp* 1998; 24(4): 156-164.
7. Adewole IF, Oye-Adeniran BA, Iwere N, Oladokun A, Gbadegesin A and Babarinsa AI. Contraceptive usage among abortion seekers in Nigeria. *W Afr J Med* 2002; 21(2): 112-114.
8. Population Reference Bureau. World Population Data Sheet, 2002.
9. Otoide VO, Oronsanye F and Okonofua FE. Why Nigerian adolescents seek abortion rather than contraception: evidence from focus group discussions. *Int Fam Plann Persp* 2001; 27(2): 77-81.
10. Alan Guttmacher Institute. *Sharing Responsibility: Women, Society and Abortion Worldwide*. New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1999.
11. Hof C and Richters A. Exploring the intersections between teenage pregnancy and gender violence: lessons from Zimbabwe. *Afr J Reprod Health* 1999; 3(1): 51-65.
12. Shearer SB. The value of focus group research for social action programs. *Stud Fam Plann* 1981; 12(12): 407-408.
13. Folsch-Lyon E and Trost J F. Conducting focus group sessions. *Stud Fam Plann* 1981; 12(12): 443-449.
14. Osagbemi MO and Adepetu AA. Gender differences in the reason for participation in spouse sharing among the Okun in Nigeria. *Afr J Reprod Health* 2001; 5(2): 36-55.
15. Wolf B, Knodel J and Sittitirai W. Focus group and survey as complementary research methods: examples from a study of the consequences of family size in Thailand. *Research Reports* 1991; No 91-213.
16. Knodel J and Pramultratana A. Focus group research as a means of demographic enquiries. *Research Reports* 1987; No. 87-106.