

P2.5. Socio-economic Correlates of Early Childbearing in Iwo and Ife North Local Government of Osun State, Nigeria - **Liasu S. Ayotunde**, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife; **Agunbiade Ojo**, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife
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Background/Significance: Early childbearing is on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa; most women in the region experience sex before the age 20 which invariably lead to teenage childbirth. Early childbearing contributes greatly to high fertility rate in developing countries. Issues of teenage fertility with its attendant problems have become serious reproductive health concern worldwide.

Main Question/Hypothesis: Teenage childbirth with the attendant high maternal and infant mortality rates is rampant in many parts of the country. The trend is in fact increasing despite the series of studies and efforts to curtail the problem. However, in the absence of well-resolved knowledge about the socio-economic and demographic factors underlying the problems, no serious headway can be made in tackling the long term effects of the menace. The study therefore attempts to bridge the gap.

Methodology: The study covered two purposively and randomly selected Local Government Areas of Osun State. The local Government Areas was Iwo and Ife North Local Government. Using an appropriate indicator of early childbearing from previous study in sampling determination formula and a 10% sample size adjustment factor for non-response, a total of 355 respondents from 36 randomly selected enumeration areas were interviewed within April to June 2006. Statistical package for Social Scientists (SPSS) for Windows (13 version) was used for the statistical analysis of the quantitative data. Frequency distributions of variables were displayed with corresponding tables, while Bivariate and binary logistic regressions were used for statistical analyses. Pearson's χ^2 test was employed to test the significance of the bivariate relationship. Probability (p) value of less than 0.05 was considered in the test of variables association. Lastly, logistic regression was adapted to ascertain the validity of the statistical relationship and to control for simultaneous effects of independent variables.

Findings: The study confirmed high prevalence rate of early childbirth in Nigeria, nearly 60% of the total respondents (52.2% in Iwo and 67.4% in Ife North) had teenage childbirth in the study areas. The mean age at first birth for Iwo and Ife North local government were 17.6 and 18.4 respectively. Economic standard of respondents measured by parental living arrangement (owned/rented houses) revealed that women whose parents lived in owned houses were more likely to report teenage childbirth than those in rented apartment [exp.(B)=1.432; p value<0.05]. Multivariate logistic further showed that girls whose had post secondary level of education were less likely to report teenage childbirth than those from mothers with low educational level [exp.(B)=1.14; p value = 0.676]. It was equally revealed that women from polygamous homes were 2 times more likely to experience early childbirth than their counterparts from monogamous family [exp.(B) = 1.63; p value <0.05]. Girls who collect gift in exchange of sexual act stand a greater risk of teenage childbirth than their counterparts who never exchange sex for gift [exp.(B) 2.565; p value <0.001]. The study concluded that formulation of appropriate intervention strategies and programmes to reduce early childbirth should be channeled towards parents and girl's child so that they may be aware and knowledgeable of important predictors of early childbirth.

Knowledge Contribution: The study provided useful information on the socio-economic variables influencing teenage childbirth. It gave more insight into the consequences and challenges of early childbearing on women, infants and the society at large.