

Abortion; Its Health & Psychological Consequences on Adolescent

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Abstract: Abortion remains an act or practice of terminating pregnancy. Abortion is recognized internationally as violation of child's right to life especially when procedure is illegal (unsafe) and can result to health-related complications such as secondary infertility, infection (sepsis), even material deaths, other side effect includes severe pain, hemorrhage anemia, tetanus, abscesses, urinary incontinence, psychological problems. From early 1842 during Victoria Era in New York sun, abortion has been recognized as a health issues among African & International Government and women's organizations. Global and national anti-abortion group has made effort to legalize the practices and to reduce its consequences on health, as well as eliminating the psychological impact on individual and families.

Keywords: Abortion, Consequences and Adolescent.

I. INTRODUCTION

Abortion refers to as termination of pregnancy before the fetus is viable or before the fetus is capable of extra-uterine life. Abortion is an illegal practice which has remains illegal in most western country between 19th – 20th centuries as various anti-abortion groups fight on the bans of abortion, yet but has been legalize in most of the west (Wikipedia.org.2002).

Abortion law was first codified for legislation under sections 1 & 2 of malicious shooting or stabbing Act of 1803, this bill proposed by Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales Edward law, 1st Baron on Abortion Act provided death penalty for the offences this same law was amended in 1828 and 1837, basically for mothers experience late pregnancy, also eliminate death penalty for those who were not up to 14 years, this imprisonment amendment cause marked increase on the number of abortions among married women in 1840 (Keogh, 1981).

However, in 1860s abortion service were more available in countries like new York, new Orleans, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago and Indianapolis , With estimate ratio of 1:4 live birth, finally in 1873, legislators, doctors and concern organization like American medical Association prohibited Publication of information related to abortion in 1909 new law on penalty for abortion was make for defaults to pay fine of 5,5000 or five years imprisonment and by 1910 till date nearly all state establish their anti-abortion laws.

In Nigeria, abortion is only permitted when the mother's life is at risk, as governed by two different laws, 1st is the penal code law No. 18 of 1959 made for the Muslims states of

Northern Nigeria's and the criminal code of 1916 made in the southern part of the country, both codes prohibit abortion, offender (both person who voluntarily cause and mother who indulged on the act) is subjected to fourteen years imprisonment or payment of fine. Abortion law in Nigeria is governed by 2 laws, according to geographical area e.g. Northern Nigeria (panel code) while southern Nig is by criminal code and only those whose life are in danger can perform abortion legally. (wikipedia, 2013)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Abortion globally remains one of the health-related issues in many countries, due to its related complications and increasing mortality and mobility rate, in under developed country like Nigeria especially with unsafe procedure. (WHO 2014)

Gutmacher (2016), estimated 456,000 unsafe abortion yearly. He also posted that about 20, 000 women were noted to engage in unsafe abortion each year.

WHO, (2004), are of the view that abortion is one of the safest medical procedures if done in line with WHO guidance, and also the cause of 1:6 maternal deaths, when unsafe from complications. The guidance reviewed that; the number of death form abortion drops in countries that allows abortion on request without restriction.

However, there are only six main grounds for allowing abortion which is apply in any countries, when mother's life is at risk, in a case of rape or sexual Abuse, serious fetal abnormality, risk to physical and sometimes mental health, social and economic reasons and on special request.

Globally, about 25% pregnancies, ended in induced abortions between 2010-2014. This value in countries with high rates of contraceptive prevalence.

Preliminary finding on study to estimate abortion pre-case and total cost of post abortion care (PAC) using 14 secondary level of health facilities in four (4) states in Nigeria review that about 60% of women seeks for abortion procedure yearly, with annual treatment cost estimated to \$190,000; study concluded that, 60% of these cases had the abortion based on outpatient medical evacuation abortion (MVA) while 40% still are in need of MVA.(United Nation Population Division,2002)

Abortion can be unsafe when the abortionist is unqualified for the procedure and safe when the abortionist is qualified to carry out such procedure based on the following therapeutic reasons that continuation of the pregnancy endangers the mother's life, or in a case of gross fetal abnormality and in case of rape of the mother. (United Nation Population Division, 2002).

Types of Abortion

1. *Spontaneous Abortion*- This type of abortion comes naturally on its own, self-impose Abortion, the cause may be unknown, and usually occurring mostly in the first three month (2 weeks) of pregnancy.
2. *Induce Abortion*- This type of abortion is the most illegal in Nigeria, it's practice is usually caused by human factor with great percentage of above 80% occurrence which shows that about 1:10 of Nigerian women of childbearing age have obtained an abortion, with an estimated value of about 760,000 abortion recorded each year in Nigeria (Gutumacher, 2016)

Induced Abortion are further divided as

- i. Safe medical abortion
- ii. Unsafe

A. Safe Abortion:

Otherwise refers to as medical abortion, is abortion when procedure is done for medical reason such as the mother's life is threatened, and the abortion is considered safe because, the procedure is been carried by qualify skilled personnel, Environment used for the procedure are safe (hygienic techniques and practices), that the gestational age is not late. (planned parenthood of America, 2007)

In safe abortion the physician first calculate the stage of the pregnancy, discuss all available options with the mother, before deciding on a method of treatment, after obtaining consent.

Stages of Medical Treatment

1. *Early medical abortion*- using pills in termination of pregnancy under a week, which option of treatment falls within taking two pills orally 48, 24 or 6-8 hours apart. First pill is called mifepristone that inhibit preparation of the uterine lining to be ready for the egg by the pregnancy hormone. While the second pills prostaglandin taken 2 days apart, its function is to breaks down the uterine lining, making it uncondutive for implantation.
2. *Vacuum Aspiration (Suction method)*- method is employed for pregnancy between 9-15 week) treatment here involves surgical intervention without abnormal incision, instrument is passed through the cervix into the womb, to suck & evacuate the product of conception.
3. *Surgical Dilation & Evacuation* – This is also a surgical procedure done under general anaesthesia to in empty stomach, using a surgical tool (forceps & suction tube),

the Doctor carefully dilate the cervix to remove the product.

Late Abortion- Abortion here is more sensitive women are hospitalized for Dilation and evacuation of product. It is a two ways/stage surgical produce done for pregnancy between 20-24 weeks, under general anaesthes, were the is first stage is to ripen/soften and dilating the cervix, stopping the fetal heart to beats, while on the 2nd stage, the fetus is removed with the aid of forceps and suction tube.

B. Unsafe Abortion:

Is an illegal procedure for terminating unwanted pregnancy either by untrained (unskilled) persons lacking the minimal medical standard or both (WHO, 1995). Abortion is considered unsafe when the procedure is performed by an unskilled provides through inserting of herbs, roots, caustic chemicals, pins, bicycle spokes, drinking mixtures (concoctions), hot drinks, un prescribed drugs etc. also abortion is unsafe when performed in an unhygienic environment, including use of unsterile instruments.(WHO, 2004).

Prevalence & patterns of unsafe Abortion:

According to WHO, (1995) in Funso, (2006) state that unsafe abortion is a global tragedy with the record of about 19 million unsafe abortion performed yearly, 95% of these cases occurring in developing countries with death rate of 13% of all maternal death.

Reason for unsafe abortion among adolescence according to Funso,(2016) are

- Unwanted pregnancy
- Lack of sexual education to the adolescence
- Lack of parent's reaction to pregnancy
- Lack of knowledge about reproduction health
- Poverty (financial challenges)
- Denial by man that was responsible
- Multiple sexual partner
- Rape
- Public stigma etc.

III. HEALTH & PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

It is expected for any woman to experience negative health and psychological effect after abortion especially if unsafe abortion, however, the level/degree of effects varies in some individuals, depending on level of experience, beliefs about abortion, moral and ethical views of the women, age of the pregnancy, support from partner, reason for the abortion and type of abortion (safe or unsafe) etc. these effects could also be rated mild, moderate or severe.

Fergusson, (2006), study conducted in New Zealand, found that in all compared, those becoming pregnant and seeking for abortion, had significantly higher rates of anxiety disorder than these not pregnant. Also, when compared to women who had abortion, has significantly higher rates of being admitted for psychiatric condition especially the Adolesences

following guilt or complications. Psychological effects include Anxiety, Depression, infection, Drug Abuse, Post traumatic stress disorder, sexual Dysfunction, sleep problems, suicidal ideation.

- *Anxiety*- This is a state of overwhelming fear of the unknown for wrongdoing, complications, or even death.
- *Depression*- Depression is sudden lost of interest on self and environment sometimes may be related to guilt of committing abortion. The Planned Parenthood federation of America, (2007) reports that approximately 20% if post abortion women experience depression, while about 10% of them will progress into post abortive depression disorder.
- *Drug Abuse*- Indiscriminate use of drugs among Adolescent girls, has been linked to induced abortion and other related crime. This fact has been supported with fact.
- *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*- Post traumatic disorder is related to deep seated anxiety, affected individual start seeing another person harmed or killed the disordered can be presented in (3) ways / forms.
 - Re-experiencing the event
 - Avoidance & emotional numbing
 - Change in sleeping patterns and increased alertness (insomnia) and altered eating pattern following worries.
- *Sexual Dysfunction*- some girls who had abortion can experience “loss of sexual pleasure, some pain, or become promiscuous.
- *Suicidal Ideation*- induce abortion, especially abortion associated with complication or post traumatic disorders has been linked to suicidal thoughts & suicidal attempts, possibly for shame.

Health consequences of Abortion; health related implications of Abortion are divided to two (2).

1. Immediate medical complication
2. Late medical complication

1.Immediate medical complication include- Hemorrhage, (blood loss), retain product of conception, injury to cervix, vaginal laceration cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, renal, shock etc.

- ✓ *Hemorrhage*- bleeding occurs following trauma or laceration on or around the vagina cervix etc., or coagulation of the blood.
- ✓ *Retain Product of Conception*- This is possible for abortion in late pregnancy (18 wks. above) when, part of the conception product will remain in the uterus.
- ✓ *Injury to Cervix and Vaginal Laceration*- lead to access blood loss (hemorrhage).

✓ *Cardiac Arrest*- Usually are secondary to sudden fall of the circulating blood or due to the effects aesthetic effects.

✓ *Shock*- Excess shortage of loss of blood within a short period can lead to sudden fall on circulating blood, shock can also be a long-term consequence in case of infection (sepsis) called.

It is important to note that the immediate complications are more life threatening affecting approximately 10 percent of all women undergoing abortion.

2. long (late) term consequences of Abortion include.

Infection (sepsis), shock, ectopic pregnancy, metabolic disorder, cancer of the breast, incompetency cervix, recurrent preterm delivery, miscarriages, death, permanent damage to the womb (infertility) endometrial scar, placenta previa etc.(Funso 2016).

IV. SUMMARY

Abortion and its consequences (health & Psychological) on the adolescent, catholic culture stated abortion to be either direct (induced) or indirect. Direct abortion as any destruction of the product of human conception, whether before or after implantation in the worm, while direct abortion is one that is intended either as an end in its self or a means to an end as a willful attack. Abortion can be spontaneous or induced, the induced further, can be safe also called medical abortion because it is conducted by a train personnel with less complications and the unsafe abortion performed by unskilled personnel.

Health consequence of abortion could be immediate or post (late), they include hemorrhage, laceration, retain product of conception, shock, cardiac arrest, infection, cervical incompetent, miscarriage, uterine perforation, breast cancer, infertility, etc. while the psychological consequences include anxiety, depression, drug abuse, post-traumatic stress, sexual dysfunction, suicidal ideation, shame etc.

High motility and morbidity rate associated to abortion can be controlled, if abortion is attached with penalty, with more awareness campaign done on the danger of abortion in school & emphasis on moral effect of abortion in communities and churches.

V. CONCLUSION

Abortion is an unsafe procedure that is linked to life threatening situation, with great psychological and health consequences are directly related to unsafe abortion performed by unskilled professional in an unhygienic environment. however, study reviewed that Legalizing abortion with caution is more likely to reduce these consequences.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Amendment of the laws – the Government and concerned citizens should amend abortion law to enable the committers make an informed decision before a skilled professional who can help to assess if patient meets with the approved condition or fit for the procedure.

Intensified awareness; consequences of abortion as reported by researcher should be made known to public especially schools.

Churches should also take up their responsibility to teach religious moral to members based on punishment.

Sex education should be embraced in school, as a way of exposing the danger of abortion to the adolescent by teachers (Adult) rather than allowing adolescent to learn on their own from friends.

Change in Health Seeking behavior- victim of unwanted pregnancy should try to stop being secretive on the issues and learn to seek for help from trained professionals who can answer their questions, discuss their condition and must learn to take an informed decision about choice on reason or type of abortion. Avoid people pressuring you, on what they think should be right.

Finally, parents should learn to be close to their children, know their activities, teach them sex education, norms and

value etc. specially the girl child to avoid unwanted pregnancy, abortion and its consequences

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