



Rising Incidence of Delayed Conception among Newly Married Women in South-South, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Delayed in conception among young newly married couples is on the increase across the world. There are rising incidence of delayed in getting pregnant by newly married women and this is worrisome. Married women that are being confronted with this challenge are not happy at their matrimonial home. It is expected a newly married woman should have conceived barely three months after marriage in African's culture. Beyond this expectation, it becomes a problem and if not properly handle, it can traumatize the woman. The aim of this study is to determine Rising Incidence Of Delayed Conception Among Newly Married Women In South-South, Nigeria. The study was a cross-sectional study and a total of 260 female students within participated in the study. A well-structured questionnaire was distributed to each participant by the research assistant after consent was granted by the participants. The study was carried out in the six States that make up South-South Geopolitical Zones and it lasted for a period of 2 years (from July 2021 to August, 2023). The research findings revealed that 50% of the participants were young and were between the 28-32 years of age. The study revealed that 16.70% of the participants had primary education, 27.80% had secondary

education, while 55.60% had tertiary education. 8.30% of the participants were farmers, 41.70% were business women, 27.80% were civil servants, while 22.20% were students. The study also, revealed that 94.40% of the participants were married and 50.50% had spent between 6 months to 1 year, 26.90% had spent 2-4 years, 17.50% had spent 5-7 years, while 5.60% had spent about 8-10 years as duration of marriage. 69.40% of the participants had not been pregnant and 77.80% have no child. 75.0% said they do not know the cause. Also, the study shows that 44.40% had discharge from their breasts while 55.60% did not. 66.70% agreed that they had abortion.

Keywords: Rising, Incidence, Delayed, Conception, Newly, Married, Women

I. INTRODUCTION

Reproduction is an important aspect of African culture with the aim to maintain continuity in the family circle (Gbaranor et al, 2020) This however can only be actualized when a mature male and female agree to be couple with the desire to have children (Gbaranor et al, 2020). Desired conception is when both couple agree based on favourable conditions to have a child or children and delayed could be any factor that may impede or



delay this conception process in the female (Gbaranor et al, 2020). In African culture, the desire of a woman of reproductive age is to give birth or have children, especially among married women (Gbaranor et al, 2020). However, when this desire is delayed, it becomes a concern to the woman and to the entire family. Every woman is important as far as reproduction or conception is concerned (Gbaranor et al, 2020). The happiness of every husband is to see their wives conceiving at their desired time (Gbaranor et al, 2020). Also, married women will be comfortable in their matrimonial homes when conception is not delayed to avoid hate speeches or maltreatment from their in-laws (Gbaranor et al, 2020). Desired, delayed conception may be due to several factors and some of these factors appear commoner with a certain group of women (Gbaranor et al, 2020).

Factors such as parity and age, with nulliparous women on oral contraceptives until greater than 30 years old have greater reduction in fertility (Vessey et al, 1989). Exogenous hormonal therapy causes delayed return of normal function of hypothalamic/pituitary/ovarian axis (Shearman 1966; Horowitz et al, 1968; Halbert and Christian, 1969; MacLeod et al, 1970), and temporary infertility (Bracken et al, 1990). Increased blood serum concentration of prolactin causes many disturbances in the function of the gonads and it leads to an imbalance in GnRH and LH secretion and consequently to hypoestrogenism. (Sylwia Pałubska et al, 2017) Decrease oestrogen concentration due to hyperprolactinaemia affects women's sexual life and symptoms include lowered libido, dryness of the vagina – with subsequent dyspareunia (Niedziela and Dębski, 2006) and disturbances in the arousal phase and orgasm (Linn et al, 1982). Hyperprolactinaemia is the cause of 3% of primary amenorrhoea and 18% of secondary amenorrhoea in women (Kaiserk, 2012) Considerable prolactin secretion occurs when

animals are exposed to physical or psychological stress. (Fujikawa et al, 2004).

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This was a descriptive cross-sectional study involving 360 pregnant mothers who are within the age of 18 to 47 years. The pregnant women were recruited from the six states that make up South-South Geopolitical zones. A well-structured questionnaire was administered to participants. Each participant had one questionnaire to fill appropriately and independently after a well informed consent was granted. The study lasted for a period of 2 years (from July 2021 to August, 2023). Statistical analysis of data was done using SPSS Version 25 and P value < 0.05 was considered significant for data.

III. RESULTS

The results of age distribution of participants shows that 20(5.60%) were within the ages of 18-22 years, 50(13.90%) 23-27 years, 180(50.0%) 28-32 years, 70(18.70%) were 38-42 years while 40(11.10%) were within 43-47 years (Table 1). The results of educational distribution of participants revealed that 60(16.70%) had primary education, 100(27.80%) had secondary education, while 200(55.60%) had tertiary education (Table 2). The results of occupational distribution of participants revealed that 30(8.30%) were farmers, 150(41.70%) business men, 100(27.80%) civil servants, while 80(22.20%) were students (Table 3). The results showed the number of years that the participants had spent in their marriages and 180(50.50%) had spent between 6 months to 1 year, 97(26.90%) had spent 2-4 years, 63(17.50%) had spent 5-7 years, while 20(5.60%) had spent about 8-10 years (Table 5). The results also revealed that 250(69.40%) of the participants have not been pregnant (Table 6).

Table 1: Age Distribution of Participants

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage(%)
18-22 years	20	5.6
23-27 years	50	13.9
28-32 years	180	50.0
38-42 years	70	18.7

Table 2: Educational Distribution of Participants

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	60	16.7
Secondary	100	27.8
Tertiary	200	55.6
Total	360	100.0

**Table 3: Occupational Distribution of Participants**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Farming	30	8.3
Business	150	41.7
Civil servant	100	27.8
Student	80	22.2
Total	360	100.0

Table 4: Married Participants

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	340	94.4
Not married	20	5.6
Total	360	100.0

Table 5: Duration of Marriage

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
6months-1Yr	180	50.0
2-4Yrs	97	26.9
5-7Yrs	63	17.5
8-10Yrs	20	5.6
Total	360	100.0

Table 6: Participants who have been pregnant

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Have been pregnant	110	30.6
Have not been pregnant	250	69.4
Total	360	100.0

IV. DISCUSSION

Delayed in conception among young newly married couples is on the increase across the world. There are rising incidence of delayed in getting pregnant by newly married women and this is worrisome. Married women that are being confronted with this challenge are not happy at their matrimonial home. It is expected a newly married woman should have conceived barely three months after marriage in African's culture. Beyond this expectation, it becomes a problem and if not properly handle, it can traumatize the woman.

The participants were highly educated and have something doing. Our study revealed that majority of the participants who had delayed in conception were between 28-32 years of age and they were worried not been pregnant and 69.40% of them had delayed in conception. This age group were still young and still in their reproductive age. Though previous studies revealed that fertility decreases with age especially beyond 35 years (Pal, and Santoro, 2003; Bairdet al, 2005; Kaplanet al, 2005). However, our study shows that the age of the women were between 28-32 years of age and that was quite young compared with age group of previous studies. For recent ties, young couples have been finding it difficult to conceived

immediately after marriage, despite their desire to conceived. Now days, young newly married women find it difficult to conceive within three months after having regular, unprotected sex with their spouse. Again, 75.0% of the women said that they do not know the cause for the delayed in conception probably because they have not been able to meet the healthcare providers who are in position to assist them in curbing the trend of delayed conception. In African's culture, it is a pride when a lady conceives within three months of her marriage. The study showed that 44.40% of the participants experienced galactorrhea and this might be the cause of the delayed in conception. Importantly, the findings revealed that 66.70% had abortions before their marriage. This could be serious such that the previous abortions carried out by the women may have carried out in unqualified environment and with unqualified and unskilled medical practioner and this could happen when the women as of that time before marriage, do not want their parents/guidance to know that they are pregnant, mostly when they still in school. Carrying out these abortions in an unqualified environment and with unskilled medical practitioner could also block their reproductive tubes there by cause delayed in conception. This



delayed the young married women experienced today could be traced to those illegal abortions carried out by them when they were still single. Possibly some of them may develop complications that may result in the removal of the reproductive tubes and for this, conception is impossible medically. Again, because some of them have decided to marry refuse to disclose the ugly event to their husband to be in other to avoid termination of marriage. Our study revealed that 77.8% of the women have not establish their delayed in conception to the hospital probably because they have refused to say the truth before they contracted their marriage. These are women who are highly educated and should first seek hospital findings. Again, 75.0% of them have not carry out any investigations probably because they have refused to register their delayed in conception with the hospital for proper investigations.

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that majority of the newly married young women had delayed conception. Majority of them had previous abortions that may contribute to the delayed conception and have refuse to seek hospital advise despite how highly educated they are. Some of the participated women also experienced milky discharge from their breasts.

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