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CAUSES OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DISEASES AMONG WOMEN OF CHILD-BEARING AGE IN OGORI-MAGONGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child – bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. The objectives of the study were to: (i) examine whether underutilization of maternal health care facilities have influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age; (ii). investigate whether unsafe abortion have influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age; and (iii) examine whether poor personal hygiene have influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age. A descriptive research design of survey type was employed for this study. The population for the study comprised all women of child-bearing age in the study area. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select two hundred respondents that participated in the study. The instrument was a researcher's designed questionnaire that was validated by three experts in the related field. Reliability of the instrument was established through test re-test method and result of 0.76r was obtained, this indicates a strong consistency and good enough for the study. Data were administered with the aid of three trained research assistants and the result of data collected were analysed using inferential statistics of Chi-square at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The finding of this study shows that:

- i. underutilization of maternal health care facilities had influence on causes of reproductive health diseases because calculated chi-square value of (136.9) > crit. chi-square value of (21.03);
- ii. unsafe abortion had influence on causes of reproductive health diseases because calculated chi-square value of (171.6) > crit. chi-square value of (21.03); and
- iii. poor personal hygiene had influence on causes of reproductive health diseases because calculated chi-square value of (161.0) > crit. chi-square value of (21.03).

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that underutilization of maternal health care facilities, unsafe abortion and poor personal hygiene had significant influence on reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in the study area. Therefore, it was recommended amongst others that, the local government health department should carry out

enlightenment campaign that will educate women on benefits of utilizing maternal health care facilities so as to protect them against reproductive health diseases.

Keywords: *Causes, Reproductive, Health, Diseases, Women*

Introduction

Reproductive health refers to the diseases, disorders and conditions that affect the functioning of the male and female reproductive systems during all stages of life. Disorders of reproduction include birth defects, developmental disorders, low birth weight, preterm birth, reduced fertility, impotence, and menstrual disorders. Research has shown that exposure to environmental pollutants may pose the greatest threat to reproductive health. Exposure to lead is associated with reduced fertility in both men and women, while mercury exposure has been linked to birth defects and neurological disorders. A growing body of evidence suggests that exposure to endocrine disruptors, chemicals that appear to disrupt hormonal activity in humans and animals, may contribute to problems with fertility, pregnancy and other aspects of reproduction. A woman's reproductive system is a delicate and complex system in the body. It is important to take steps to protect it from infections and injury and prevent problems including some long-term health problems. Taking care of yourself and making healthy choices can help protect you and your loved ones. Protecting your reproductive system also means having control of your health, if and when, you become pregnant (Centre for disease control and prevention, 2015).

Reproductive health occupies a central position in the identity of the health as well as the development of a given population. In developing countries especially in Nigeria, there is need to improve maternal and child health care services as most deaths of women during pregnancy or delivery are preventable (Adinma, 2002).

Reproductive health diseases can be harmful to the overall health and emotional well-being and can make it hard for someone to enjoy sexual relationship. The basic elements of reproductive health diseases are reproductive/sexual behaviour problems, ineffective maternal care and safe motherhood, poor personal and environmental sanitation, ineffective control of reproductive tract infections (RTIs) including sexually transmitted infections (STIs), infertility problem, unsafe abortion, and prevention and malignancies of reproductive organs. Reproductive tract infections include sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and other infections that are not sexually transmitted including infections which are caused by inadequate medical procedures such as unsafe abortion and child birth or infections due to the over growth of organisms normally present in the reproductive tract (International Women's Health Coalition, 1994).

Reproductive tracts infections (RTIs) and their complications are among the most important causes of illness and death for women in poor regions of the world (WHO, 2005). Women in the reproductive age group are at risk of RTIs/STIs during natural events in their life such as menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth due to the inherent physiological characteristics of the female reproductive tract. The problem is more pronounced in developing and underdeveloped countries where women often have to deal

with unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, problems arising from poor contraception practices, different socio-cultural norms and lack of economic independence, which further reduce their capacity to protect themselves from STIs (Jejeebhoy, 2000).

Women bear the greatest burden of reproductive health problems. Women are at risk of complications from pregnancy and childbirth, they also face risks in preventing unwanted pregnancy, suffer the complications of unsafe abortion, bear the burden of contraception, and are more exposed to contracting, and suffering the complications of reproductive tract infections, particularly sexually transmitted diseases. Among women of reproductive age, 36% of people lost their life due to reproductive health problems such as unregulated fertility, maternal mortality and morbidity and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS. By contrast, the equivalent figures for men is 12% (Barua and Kutz, 2009).

Reproductive health of women is of immense importance due to its implications on women's health, health of their children, family members and socioeconomic development of the society. The component of women reproductive health includes fertility control, safe motherhood, and prevention and control of reproductive tract infections, which include sexually transmitted infections (Kaddour, Hafez and Zurayk, 2005). The reproductive health concept is not limited to mothers. Nor is it limited to women in the childbearing age. It recognizes the special health needs of adolescents related to their acquisition of the sexual and reproductive capacity before they have completed their social preparation for adult life. It recognizes that mature women, beyond the childbearing period, still have important health needs related to the reproductive system which they still carry and to the cessation of ovarian function. The concept also recognizes that the health of the adult builds on the health of the child, and that this is probably no true than in the area of reproductive health. Finally, the concept of reproductive health is not limited to women. Men too have reproductive health needs, and responding to these needs of men is also important for women (Kaddour, Hafez and Zurayk, 2005).

Reproductive health is a crucial part of general health and a central feature of human development. It is a reflection of health during childhood, and crucial during adolescence and adulthood, sets the stage for health beyond the reproductive years for both women and men, and affects the health of the next generation. The health of the newborn is largely a function of the mother's health and nutrition status and of her access to health care (Obono, 2008).

Reproductive health is a universal concern, but is of special importance for women particularly during the reproductive years. Although most reproductive health problems arise during the reproductive years among women. Men too have reproductive health concerns and needs, though their general health is affected by reproductive health to a lesser extent than is the case for women. However, men have particular roles and

responsibilities in terms of women's reproductive health because of their decision-making powers in reproductive health matters (Obono, 2008).

Good maternal health services can strengthen the entire health system. A health facility that is equipped to provide essential obstetric care services can also treat accidents, trauma and other medical emergencies. Women's overall underutilization of health services has been well documented. For instance, even though women in India report more illness than men, hospital records show that men receive more treatment. In Thailand, men are six times more likely than women to seek clinical treatment for malaria, a disease that affects women and men similarly. Even if they seek treatment, majority of women seek health care from quacks or unqualified for their health. Untreated infection can not only lead to Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases (PID), ectopic pregnancy, infertility and cervical cancer but also fetal loss, health problem of new born and increased the risk of HIV infection. In addition to health consequences, women experience social consequences in terms of emotional distress related to gynecological morbidity (Hanson, 2010).

Achieving good reproductive health remains a far-off goal in many parts of the world. This lack of care has repercussions. An estimated 536,000 women die of pregnancy-related causes each year, and about 15 million women suffer from related complications that can have life-long consequences. These complications could be eliminated if women and men had access to contraception to prevent unintended pregnancies. The World Health Organization estimates that 200 million couples in developing countries would like to delay or stop childbearing, but are not using contraception; more than 50% of women of reproductive age in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy are not using any method of contraception (WHO, 2005).

Lack of menstrual and personal hygiene is found to be associated with reproductive tract infection. In addition, there are socio-economic and cultural determinants of RTI's studies have shown strong association between women's livelihood, work and their reproductive health (Ooman, 2000). The diagnosis and effective treatment of women reproductive health diseases as a result of poor hygiene depend on accurate identification, effective therapy and restoration of the normal ecosystem of the vagina. Proper hygiene habits, dietary control, and management of stress are all helpful factors in controlling recurrent vaginal infections (Barua and Kutz, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Women reproductive systems are delicate and complex system in the body. It is important to take steps to protect it from infections, injury and prevent problems including some long term health problems. The number of women affected with the reproductive health diseases in the study area are increasing every day and this condition have affected many women of child-bearing age to experienced severe illnesses and many live have being lost as a result of these problem and the causes of this devastating condition are yet unknown.

Pelvic infection accounts for about one-third of all cases of infertility, worldwide, and for a much higher percentage in sub-Saharan Africa (WHO, 2007). The magnitude of the problem of infertility will not be ameliorated except by a combat of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), by safer births that avoid postpartum infection and by decreasing the need for or the resort to unsafe abortion practices.

As noted by Makinwa-Adebusoye (2006), policy and programming attention has turned towards adolescents' sexual and reproductive health in the past decade but not much attention has been paid to the reproductive health needs of women, particularly in a developing country like Nigeria. Despite the activities of governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the areas of women reproductive health, the need for accurate reproductive knowledge and skills especially among women that reside in poor disadvantaged communities in Nigeria still remain largely unmet.

The burdens of reproductive health diseases among women of child bearing age are becoming unbearable among women in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. Some women in the study area don't know the value of maternal health care services including family planning. Consequently, many of these women developed reproductive health problems such as reproductive tract infections, ectopic pregnancy, infertility, placenta previa, eclampsia, menstrual cramp, abortion, still birth and cervical cancer. These problems contributed to high rate of morbidity and mortality among women in the study area. The causes of these devastating condition are yet unknown. This study investigates the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Research Questions

Some of the research questions raised to guide this study were as follows:

- i. Does underutilization of maternal health care facilities influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State?
- ii. Does unsafe abortion influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State?
- iii. Does poor personal hygiene influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State?

Research hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated to guide the study were as follows:

Ho1: Underutilization of maternal health care facilities will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Ho2: Unsafe abortion will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Ho3: Poor personal hygiene will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Methodology

Descriptive research design of survey type was employed for this study. The population of the study comprised all women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. The target population used for the study made up of women of child-bearing age that attending ante-natal clinics in the area. The purposive sampling technique was used to select one ante-natal centre from each ward that had highest number of mothers attending ante-natal services in the last three months in the study area. Simple random sampling procedure of lucky dip (fish bowl) was used to select twenty women from each ward out of ten wards existing in the area and two hundred respondents participated in the study. The instrument used to collect data from the respondents was a researcher's designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin. Reliability of the instrument used for this study was established through test re-test method. The researcher pilot tested the instrument on ten women of child-bearing age that attending ante-natal care in Oke-ero local government of Kwara State. After three weeks of the first administration, the questionnaire was re-administered and Pearson product moment correlation was used to ascertain the result of the reliability. The result of 0.76r was obtained and this indicates a strong consistency. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents during ante-natal programme with the aid of three trained research assistants. Data were collected, sorted and coded, analysis of data was done using inferential statistics of chi-square at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis One: Underutilization of maternal health facilities will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Table 1: Showing chi-square analysis of underutilization of maternal health facilities on the causes of reproductive health diseases

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. χ^2	DF	Crit.	Decision Value
1.	Poor maternal health care facilities promote women reproductive health diseases	45 (22.5%)	111 (55.5%)	44 (22.0%)	0 (0%)	200				
2.	Inaccessibility of maternal health services promotes women reproductive health diseases	8 (4.0%)	112 (56.0%)	78 (39.0%)	2 (1.0%)	200				
3.	Lack of time for care of self promote women reproductive health diseases	2 (1.0%)	148 (74.0%)	50 (25.0%)	0 (0%)	200	136.9	12	21.03	Ho1 Rejected
4.	Low income promotes reproductive health diseases in women	4 (2.0%)	39 (19.5%)	149 (74.5%)	8 (4.0%)	200				
5.	Quacks or unqualified health care personnel promote reproductive health diseases in women	38 (19.0%)	151 (75.5%)	11 (5.5%)	0 (0%)	200				
Column	Total	97	561	332	10	1000				

$P < 0.05$

Table 1 revealed that the calculated chi-square value of 136.9 is greater than chi-square table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. Since the Cal χ^2 value of 136.9 is greater than the table value of 21.03, therefore the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that underutilization of maternal health facilities had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Hypothesis Two: unsafe abortion will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Table 2: Showing chi-square analysis of unsafe abortion on the causes of reproductive health diseases

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. χ^2	DF	Crit	Dec Value
1.	Frequent abortion promotes reproductive health diseases of women	56 (28%)	90 (25.0%)	54 (27.0%)	0 (0%)	200				
2.	Unqualified doctors promotes reproductive health diseases of women	6 (3.0%)	154 (77.0%)	40 (20.0%)	0 (0%)	200				
3.	Unsafe abortion can lead to death among women	33 (16.5%)	161 (80.5%)	6 (3.0%)	0 (0%)	200	91.5	12	21.03	Ho2
4.	Drinking of bleach and other substance can damage the womb of a woman	8 (4.0%)	108 (54.0%)	82 (41.0%)	2 (1.0%)	200				
5.	Self medication can damage the womb and the woman may not be able to have children again	2 (1.0%)	38 (19.0%)	128 (64.0%)	32 (16.0%)	200				
Column	Total	105	551	310	34	1000				

P < 0.05

Table 2 above revealed that the calculated chi-square value of 91.15 is greater than the chi-square table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. Since the Cal χ^2 value of 91.15 is greater than the table value of 21.03, therefore the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that unsafe abortion had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Hypothesis Three: poor personal hygiene will not significantly influence the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Table 3: Showing chi-square analysis of poor personal hygiene on the causes of reproductive health diseases

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. χ^2	DF	Crit. Value	Decision
1.	Poor personal hygiene promotes women reproductive health diseases	0 (0%)	12 (6.0%)	182 (91.0%)	6 (3.0%)	200				
2.	Lack of menstrual hygiene promotes women reproductive health diseases	2 (1.0%)	64 (32.0%)	130 (65.0%)	4 (2.0%)	200				
3.	Painful urine result from poor personal hygiene in women	0 (0%)	121 (60.5%)	75 (37.5%)	4 (2.0%)	200	161.0	12	21.03	Ho3 Rej.
4.	Vulvar itching/ burning result from poor personal hygiene in women	4 (2.0%)	61 (30.5%)	129 (64.5%)	6 (3.0%)	200				
5.	White and thick vagina discharge result from poor personal hygiene in women	2 (1.0%)	155 (77.5%)	43 (21.5%)	0 (0%)	200				
Column Total		8	413	559	20	1000				

P<0.05

Table 3 revealed that the calculated chi-square value of 161.0 is greater than the chi-square table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. Since the Cal χ^2 value of 161.0 is greater than the table value of 21.03, therefore the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. It means that poor personal hygiene had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the finding of hypothesis one shows that underutilization of maternal health facilities had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. The calculated chi-square value of 136.9 is greater than the table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and at 12 degree of freedom. The finding of this study disagree with the study of Rani, Bonu and Harvey (2008) who reported that poor quality of maternal health care are responsible for the reduction of the utilization of

maternal health facilities and as a result, many women of child-bearing age suffered from reproductive health diseases. The government should implement policy that will improve quality of maternal health outcomes. Inadequate access and under-utilization of modern health care services were major reasons for poor health in developing countries.

The result of finding of hypothesis two shows that unsafe abortion had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. The calculated chi-square value of 91.15 is greater than the table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The result of this finding agree with the finding of Ahman and Dolea (2003) who reported that unsafe abortion is a significant cause of maternal mortality and morbidity. Nineteen million unsafe abortions are estimated to have taken place during the year 2000, 98 percent of them in developing countries. Over the period of 1995-2000, an estimated 78,000 maternal deaths, approximately 13 percent of all maternal deaths, were attributable to unsafe abortion.

The result of hypothesis three shows that poor personal hygiene had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. The calculated chi-square value of 161.0 is greater than the table value of 21.03 at 0.05 alpha level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The result of this finding agree with the finding of Barua and Kutz (2009) who stated that, the diagnosis and effective treatment of women reproductive health diseases as a result of poor hygiene depend on accurate identification, effective therapy and restoration of the normal ecosystem of the vagina. Proper hygiene habits, dietary control, and management of stress are all helpful factors in controlling recurrent vaginal infections.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Underutilization of maternal health care had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.
2. Unsafe abortion had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.
3. Poor personal hygiene had significant influence on the causes of reproductive health diseases among women of child-bearing age in Ogori-magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. The local government health department should carry out enlightenment campaign that will educate women of child-bearing age on benefits of utilizing

maternal health care services available in their area so as to promote their health status as well as that of their children.

2. The State ministry of Health should educate women through mass media on danger involved in unsafe abortion so as to protect them against reproductive health diseases.
3. The Local Government health department should organize programme that will educate women on importance of good personal and menstrual hygiene so as to reduce the incidence of reproductive health diseases among women in the area.

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