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2. The LJN has the tripartite mission of:
 - (a) Promoting a culture of excellence in Nursing Research.
 - (b) Encouraging the exchange of profound and innovative ideas capable of generating creative practice in nursing research practise.
 - (c) Disseminating information on nursing related development that are not usually easily available to academics and practitioners.
3. The Journal will accordingly encourage the publication of the following categories of papers.
 - (a) Research papers that move away from orthodoxy and which really break new grounds in terms of methodology and findings.
 - (b) Essays and issues papers that contribute to reorienting received ideas, values and practices.
 - (c) Documents emanating from national and international conferences, as well as from largescale research work that emerging trends and thinking in nursing related development.
4. LJN is published biannually in any area of nursing interest or relevant to needs of academics and practitioners.

In this edition, nineteen (19) manuscripts scale through the eye of the needle of the Editor-in Chief. The title of the papers in this edition are: Assessment of client satisfaction with contraceptive services in public health care facilities in Zamfara State, Nigeria; Sociocultural and economic determinants of open defecation practices in Kano State, Nigeria; effect of simulation based training on midwives' skills in managing retained placenta with umbilical vein oxytocin injection in health facilities, Osun State, Nigeria; Nurses Level Of Preparedness In Management Of Patient With Viral Hemorrhagic Fever In Emergency Ward In University Of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, **Nigeria**; Nursing Education: A Sine Qua Non For Addressing The Healthcare Demands Of The 21st Century; Influence Of Nursing Training On Their Competency In Selecting Wound Dressing Materials At A Secondary Health Facility In Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria; Prevalence And Outcome Of Malaria Infection Among Children Below 11 Years In A Tertiary Healthcare Facility In Benin City From 2018-2020; Factors Influencing Prevalence Of Gender Based Violence Among Men And Women In Bagudo LGA Kebbi State, Nigeria; Knowledge Of Health Implications Of Rape And Associated Factors Among Male Undergraduates In Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria; Quackery In Nursing, The Causes, Effects And Control Measures: The Nigeria Experience; Knowledge, attitude and practice of injection safety among nurses in Nigeria: a case study of University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria; Awareness Of Computer Vision Syndrome Among Staff Of Information Communication And Technology Unit Of University Of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria; Utilization Of Personal Protective Equipment Against Organic Dusts Among Poultry Farmers In Ona-Ara Local Government Area, Ibadan, Nigeria; Predictors Of Surgical Site Infection Amongst Post Operative Patients In Federal Medical Centre Lokoja, Nigeria; Evaluation Of The Involvement Of Nurses In Policies And Policy Formulation In Nigeria; Determinants of Stress and Coping Mechanisms among Nurses in Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano State, Nigeria; Influence Of Nursing Training On Their Competency In Selecting Wound Dressing Materials At A Secondary Health Facility In Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria; Adaptation To Stress And Academic Performance Of Students In Nursing Institutions In Oyo State, Nigeria; Medication Adherence And Quality Of Life Of Hypertensive Patients Attending Selected Hospitals In Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria; Perspectives Of Youth On The Legalization Of Abortion In North Central Nigeria.

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Welcome to LAUTECH Journal of Nursing!

LAUTECH Journal of Nursing focus on but not limited to research findings in the different areas of Nursing: Nursing Care, Nursing Education, Medical Surgical Nursing, Maternal and Child Health Nursing, Community Public Health Nursing, and Psychiatric/Mental Nursing. This journal is published to promote quality scholarly writing and hence instigating and generating vibrant discourse in the different areas of nursing. Apart from providing an outlet for publications of research findings, it offers opportunities for professionals and students to disseminate their views or position on topical issues and emerging theories within the scope of the journal. The Journal is peer reviewed by seasoned scholar. Eighty authors have contributed in one way or the other to the thirteenth edition of the journal.

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PERSPECTIVES OF YOUTH ON THE LEGALIZATION OF ABORTION IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has stringent abortion laws; however, the practice remains prevalent, particularly among youths, despite ongoing debates about its legality. This study assesses youth perspectives on the legalization of abortion in North-Central Nigeria, where abortion is notably common. A community-based cross-sectional descriptive research design was employed, and a simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 250 youths. Data were collected using self-developed structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with the significance level set at 5% (0.05). Findings revealed that more than half of the respondents were aged 19–20 years and were female. Findings of this study reveal that the respondents have a positive perspective on legalization of abortion among youths (55.4%) and the factors influencing youths' perspectives on legalization of abortion include Social Stigma (59.2%) and Accessibility to healthcare system and biomedical technologies (57.6%). Study revealed that there was significant association between youths' level of education and their perspective on abortion legalisation with p value = 0.006 < 0.05. The study concluded that most respondents held positive views on abortion legalization, emphasizing the need for the Nigerian government to review and amend existing abortion laws while addressing the challenges associated with legalization.

Keywords: Abortion; Perspective; Legalisation; Youth.

INTRODUCTION

Legality of abortion is a critical public health and human rights issue that has remained the most controversial issue with religious, social, moral, cultural and political dimensions in many parts of the world (Alemayehu et al, 2019; Steinfield et. al, 2023; World Health Organisation, 2023). Restrictive abortion laws tend to increase lack of access to safe, timely, affordable and respectful abortion care, while significantly escalating the maternal morbidity and mortality rates (Steinfeld et. al, 2023)

Out of the 210 million pregnancies that occur annually worldwide, about 80 million (38%) are unplanned and 46 million (22%) in abortion (Megersa, 2018). About 42 million induced abortions occur each year, nearly 20 million are performed in unsafe conditions and/or by unskilled providers and result in the deaths of an estimated 47,000 girls and women. This represents about 13% of all pregnancy-related deaths (Alemayehu et al, 2019). According to World Health Organisation (W.H.O., 2023). Six out of 10 of all unintended pregnancies end in an induced abortion and approximately 45% of all abortions are unsafe, of which 97% take place in developing countries. Unsafe abortion is a leading but preventable cause of maternal deaths and morbidities. It can lead to physical and mental health complications and social and financial burdens for women, communities and health systems (W.H.O., 2023).

Abortion among adolescent girls and young women (15–24 years) is a major public health issue, especially in low-and middle-income countries (Ahinkorah et al, 2020; Alemayehu et. al, 2019). Mortality from unsafe abortion in Africa is the highest in the world and it is estimated that

six million unsafe abortions and 220,000 abortion-related deaths occur annually (Gebremedhin et al, 2018; Oseni et al, 2020). Girls from 15 to 19 years account for 25% of all unsafe abortions in Africa (Munakampe et. al, 2018). The proportion of abortions performed due to unintended pregnancies has increased from 51% to 61% over the 30-year period from 1990 to 2019 (Allotey et. al, 2020). About 99% of abortions in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are unsafe and over 60% are among young women less than 25 years of age (Gebremedhin et al, 2018). The major factors responsible for unsafe abortion in SSA are restrictive abortion law, poverty, social inequality, poor quality of health services and low level of awareness (Munakampe, 2018).

Abortion related deaths among young people are seen to be more frequent in countries with more restrictive abortion laws than countries with less restrictive laws (Oseni et. al, 2020). For instance, despite restrictive law on abortion in Nigeria, a large number of women seek abortion unsafe places, thereby leading to preventable deaths or complications from the procedures (Bankole, 2015). An estimated 610,000 induced abortions occur annually and account for about 40% of maternal deaths, making it the second leading cause of maternal mortality in Nigeria (Akpanekpo et.al, 2017).

Abortion practice in Nigeria is highly restricted by law and it is only permitted when the continuation of pregnancy constitutes threat to the woman's health (Abdullahi et al, 2019). Contrary to its intended purpose, restrictive abortion laws have not prevented abortion in Nigeria; instead, the laws have criminalized the practice of abortion and making it unsafe for women (Oseni et al., 2020). youths now resort to clandestine methods of termination of pregnancy because of this abortion law, which predispose them to post-abortion complications (Atuhaire, 2019). Oseni et al., (2020) reported that 50% of the Nigerian women who die from unsafe abortion each year are youths, and abortion complications are responsible for 72% of all deaths among teenagers.

Nevertheless, there have been agitations for the modification of Nigeria abortion laws to make it

more liberal over the years. Human rights and pro-choice groups are the most vocal in this regard (Latt. et al, 2019). They argue that the restrictive abortion laws of Nigeria are responsible for the unsafe abortions and that the restrictive abortion laws of Nigeria are thought to force women especially youths with unwanted pregnancies to seek clandestine abortion, most of which take place in unsafe places like private clinics, local birth attendant home (Okorie & Abayomi, 2019). By this argument, therefore, it stands to reason that if the abortion laws are liberalized, women will have access to safe abortion from qualified medical personnel in standard health care facilities, thereby reducing the risk of complications from unsafe abortions (Chigbuet. al, 2018).

Youths are the most in need of abortion and post abortion services since more than half of patients with abortion-related complications are adolescents and young women (Otoide et al., 2001; Wanjohi, 2021). Therefore, if abortion is legalized and youths have access to safe, timely, affordable and respectful abortion services, then, there will be reduction in the incidence of abortion complications from unsafe practices (Moore et. al, 2021; W.H.O., 2023). Various studies have shown relationship between legalisation of abortion and reduced maternal mortality in different countries (Adogu et al, 2014; W.H.O., 2023)., but studies that have examine the youths' point of view on unsafe abortion and abortion legalisation remain limited Therefore, the study aimed to assess perspective of youths regarding legalization of abortion, as well as factors influencing their perspective in North-Central Nigeria.

METHODS

Study Design: A community based cross-sectional design.

Setting: The study was conducted in Oke-ose community, Iponrin district in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria. Ilorin East is located between latitude 8° 5'N and longitude 4° 5'E. The LGA shares a boundary with Ilorin South, Ilorin West, Moro and Ifelodun LGA, has land area of about 486km² and a population of 207,462.15. The

proportion of females was put at 49.5% of the total population.

Sample Size Determination: The sample size for this study was calculated using Fisher's formula: Sample size (S) = z^2pq/d^2 Using test statistic (z) of 1.96 at 95% confidence interval, estimated proportion of an attribute in a population (p) is 0.50, q is $1-p$, and the desired level of precision (d)=0.05.

Sampling Technique: Simple sampling technique was used to select 250 youths within the age of 15-21years who are permanent residents of the community and were willing to participate in the study.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire. It consists of section A-D,

section A was designed to elicit the socio-demographic data of respondents,

section B was designed to assess perspective on legalization of abortion with options of 'agree', 'disagree', and 'undecided; and

section C assessed factors influencing youths' perspective on legalization of abortion with options of 'yes', 'no', and 'not sure.

Face and content validity of the instrument was done by experts in midwifery, nursing research and biostatistics who were requested to go through knowledge and uptake questionnaire and give their validity based on relevancy, clarity, simplicity, and ambiguity of question items. This is to ensure that the tool assess adequately and accurately what it was designed to assess. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test-retest method which involved the administration of the 25 copies questionnaire (10% of the sample size) to youth

from a different community with similar characteristics at two weeks interval. The reliability of the instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha and a Cronbach alpha coefficient score of 0.77 was obtained. This indicates that the questionnaire is reliable. Data were collected from May 10 to June 26, 2021. The process of data collection lasted over a period of 7 weeks. The data collected were collated and analyzed using Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 25 and results were presented using both descriptive and inferential statistics and p -value less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

Ethical consideration: Written permission to use the community for the research was obtained from the appropriate authorities. Information about the research was discussed in detail with participants and consent forms were duly signed by the participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured as names were not required on questionnaires and cannot be traced to the participants. Respondents were granted the freedom to withdraw at any point they want.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that more than half 130 (52.0%) of the respondents were between 19-20 years of age, 226(90.4%) were singles, 144 (57.6%) of the respondents were Christians, 194(77.6%) were Yorubas and 152 (60.8%) had tertiary level of education.

Table 1 showing socio-demographic profile of respondents (n=250)

Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Mean =19.32	15-16	14	5.6
	17-18	50	20.0
	19-20	130	52.0
	21-22	56	22.4
Religion	Islam	102	40.8
	Christianity	144	57.6
	Traditional	4	1.6
	Yoruba	194	77.6
Ethnicity	Hausa	10	4.0
	Igbo	22	8.8
	Others	24	9.6
Marital Status	Single	226	90.4
	Married	22	8.8
	Widowed	2	0.8
	No Formal Education	4	1.6
Level of Education	Secondary Education	94	37.6
	Tertiary Education	152	60.8

Table 2 revealed that 156(62.4%) of the respondents agreed that abortion is a sin. 68(27.2%) agreed that abortion should be made available for everyone irrespective of the age and 110(44.0%) said abortion should be legalized in Nigeria. More than half of the respondents 128(51.2%) agreed that abortion law in Nigeria infringe on human right, 166(66.4%) opined that legalization of abortion will reduce post abortion complications, 128(51.2%) agreed that abortion is an individual right and 180(72.0%) were of the view that there is need to review abortion law in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents 186(74.4%) opined that the major people that indulge in abortion procurement are youths while 158(63.2%) agreed that abortion should be allowed in government hospitals. Majority of the respondents 152(60.8%) agreed that parental consent should be obtained before abortion, 156 (62.4%) agreed that men should have equal right deciding on abortion and 116 (46.4%) agreed that most abortions are unsafe in Nigeria. However, 152(60.8%) of the respondents

disagreed that abortion should be allowed irrespective of the reason for seeking abortion. Also, majority of the respondents 152(60.8%) disagreed that abortion should be procured only if a woman is married and does not want any more children. Most of the respondents 222(88.8%) agreed that abortion should be procured if the woman's own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy, 114(45.6%) agreed that abortion should be procured if the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children. 198(51.2%) agreed, that abortion should be procured if there is strong chance of serious birth defect, 166(66.4%) opined that abortion should be procured if a woman gets pregnant as a result of rape and 130(52.0%) said as a result of incest; but 124(49.6%) disagreed that abortion should be procured if a woman is not married and does not want to marry the man. Findings of this study reveal that the respondents have a positive perspective on legalization of abortion among youths(55.4%).

Table 2 Showing perspectives on legalization of abortion among youths (n=250)

VARIABLES	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
Abortion is a sin	156	62.4	36	14.4	58	23.2
Abortion should be made accessible to everyone irrespective of their age	68	27.2	26	10.4	156	62.4
Abortion should be legalized in Nigeria	110	44.0	42	16.8	98	39.2
Abortion law in Nigeria infringe on human right	128	51.2	52	20.8	70	28.0
Legalization of Abortion will reduce post abortion complications	166	66.4	24	9.6	60	24.0
Abortion is an individual right	128	51.2	40	16.0	82	32.8
There's need to review abortion law	180	72.0	28	11.2	42	16.8
The major people that indulge in abortion procurement are youths	186	74.4	34	13.6	30	12.0
Abortion should be allowed in government hospital	158	63.2	22	8.8	70	28.0
Parental consent should be obtained before abortion	152	60.8	54	21.6	44	17.6
Men should have equal right in deciding on abortion when compared with women	116	46.4	74	29.6	60	24.0
Most abortion are unsafe in Nigeria	196	78.4	28	11.2	26	10.4
Abortion should be allowed irrespective of the reason for seeking abortion	84	33.6	14	5.6	152	60.8
Abortion should be procured only if a woman is married and does not want any more children	78	31.2	20	8.0	152	60.8
Abortion should be procured if the woman's own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy	222	88.8	4	1.6	24	9.6
Abortion should be procured if the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children	114	45.6	34	13.6	102	40.8
Abortion should be procured if a woman became pregnant as a result of rape	166	66.4	31	12.4	52	20.8
Abortion should be procured if a woman became pregnant as a result of incest	130	52.0	63	25.2	56	22.4
Abortion should be procured if a woman is not married and does not want to marry the man	90	36.0	36	14.4	124	49.6
Only married couples should be allowed to perform abortion legally	84	33.6	28	11.2	138	55.2
Abortion should be procured if there strong chance of serious defect in the baby	198	79.2	14	5.6	38	15.2

Table 3 showed that the major factors influencing youths' perspectives on legalization of abortion were traditional/cultural norms 190(76.0%), religious belief 212(84.8%), social stigmatisation 148(59.2%) and healthcare system and biomedical technologies

144(57.6%). The result revealed that the factors influencing youths' perspectives on legalization of abortion include Social Stigma (59.2%) and Accessibility to healthcare system and biomedical technologies (57.6%).

Table 3 Showing factors influencing youths' perspectives on legalization of abortion (n=250)

Variables	Yes		No		I dont know	
	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
Traditional/cultural norms	18	7.2	190	76.0	42	16.8
Religion	14	5.6	212	84.8	24	9.6
Social Stigma	148	59.2*	42	16.8	60	24.0
Knowledge of abortion laws	114	45.6	62	24.8	74	29.6
Experience with post abortion complications	108	43.2	96	38.4	46	18.4
Incorrect interpretation of abortion laws	90	36.0	88	35.0	72	29.0
Policy makers' attitude	86	34.4	82	32.8	82	32.8
Accessibility to healthcare system and biomedical technologies	144	57.6*	56	22.4	50	20.0

Significant*

Table 4 revealed that there was significant association between youths' level of education and their perspective on abortion legalisation

with p value= 0.006<0.05, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected

Table 4: Statistical illustration of the association between youths' level of education and their perspective on abortion legalisation

Variable	Responses	Perspectives on legalisation of abortion			Chi-Square X ²	df	P-value	Remark
		Positive	Negative	Total				
Level of education	Non-formal education	2	2	4	12.596 ^a	2	0.006	Significant
	Secondary education	70	24	94				
	Tertiary education	86	66	152				H ₀ rejected
	Total	158	92	250				

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed that more than half (52%) of the respondents were between 19-20 years with a mean age of 19.32. This implies that majority of the respondents were in their late adolescence and early adulthood. This is in line with a similar study conducted by of Oja et.al (2017) where the mean age of respondents was

19.82. Majority of the respondents 226 (90.4%) were single and had attained tertiary level of education. This suggests that most of the study respondents are well learned and that their level of education may influence their perspectives of abortion legalization.

Findings of this study reveal that the respondents have a positive perspective on legalization of

abortion among youths. This study corroborates findings by Paluku et al. (2013), where 94.3% of respondents had positive attitudes toward abortion legalization. However, it contrasts with Fehintola et al. (2023), where more than half of the respondents displayed unfavorable attitudes toward legalization.

The result revealed that the factors influencing youths' perspectives on legalization of abortion include Social Stigma and Accessibility to healthcare system and biomedical technologies. This study aligning with Fatai's (2017) findings where most respondents believed societal stigma affects abortion-related decisions. The writers suggests that societal reactions and behaviors toward abortion seekers significantly influence individual opinions, views, and attitudes regarding abortion legalization in Nigeria.

Hypothesis tested revealed that there is a significant association between youths' level of education and their perspective on abortion legalisation.

CONCLUSION

The majority of the respondents have positive perspective towards legalization of abortion despite perceiving procurement of abortion. They support the need for Nigerian government to review the abortion law and address the problems associated with legalizing abortion. Legalisation of Nigerian abortion laws will ensure accessible affordable and respectful safe abortion services.

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Competing interests

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