

Age at Coitarche, Awareness and Contraceptive Prevalence amongst Adolescents in South-South and South-East: A Nigerian Study **Briggs NCT¹, Eli S², Kalio DGB³, Owhonda G¹**

Department of Community Medicine, Rivers State University.¹

Mother, Baby and Adolescent Care Global Foundation.²

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.³

Correspondence: Dr. Eli S MBBS, FWACS

Mother, Baby and Adolescent Care Global Foundation

Phone: +2348064529884

Email: elisukarime@gmail.com.

Abstract

Background: Age at coitarche varies from one environment to another. Factors that contribute to this include sex education, peer-pressure, religion, socio-cultural and exposure to various media outlets including the internet. In addition, the sex of the individual as well as access to contraceptive services influences the age at coitarche.

Method: This was a cross sectional study conducted by the Mother, Baby and Adolescent Care Global Foundation amongst 400 adolescents attending a holiday camp meeting in Rivers State. Informed consent was obtained from the subjects comprising of secondary school students and under-graduates from southern and eastern Nigeria. The Information was analysed using SPSS version 23.

Results: A total of 350 questionnaires were retrieved from the study. The mean age was 15 years. Females were 240 while males were 110. Adolescents ages were those less than 13 years were 70(20%), between 14–15 years were 185(50%) and between 16–19 years were 105 (30%). Age at coitarche were 16 years in males 55 (50%) and 17 years 96 (40%) for females. Contraceptive awareness was 231 (66%). Condoms and pills were the contraceptive methods known 140 (40%) and 91 (26%) respectively. Seventy (20%) used condom while 11 (12.1%) used contraceptive pills.

Conclusion: The study revealed the age at coitarche as 16 years for the males and 17 years for the females. Though the contraceptive awareness was above average (66%) the prevalence was 32.1%. This is worrisome concerning the challenges of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, STIs including HIV/AIDS amongst adolescents which are vulnerable.

Keywords: Coitarche, awareness, contraceptive, prevalence, adolescents, Nigeria.

Disclosure: There was no conflict of interest.