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AWARENESS AND USE OF CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES: A CASE STUDY OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

Keywords: Contraceptives, Females, Sexual Debut, Undergraduates, Use

ABSTRACT: Contraceptives are methods used to prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. It is used by both males and females that are sexually active. This study aimed at examining the awareness and use of contraceptives among female undergraduates in Federal University Oye Ekiti, Nigeria. It examined the age of sexual debut as well as frequency of contraceptives use. The study adopted the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) as its theoretical framework. It was a survey carried out among female undergraduates in the six faculties of the university at Oye, Ekiti. The sample size was 200 respondents randomly selected from females in the faculties. Questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection while books and academic journals were used as supporting sources. Data collected was coded and analyzed with SPSS version 2.0. The study concluded that female undergraduates of FUOYE were mostly between 16–25 years (85.5%), majority (69%) had their first sexual intercourse between 16 and 18 years, 100% of the respondents were aware of and (58%) use contraceptives frequently to prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Majority got to know about contraceptives through their friends (45.5%) and 20% equally (boyfriends and Google). Majority (76.5%) had only one sexual partner and (58%) had sex frequently. Therefore, the study recom-

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mended that the government should encourage female undergraduates with monthly stipends aimed at encouraging them to focus on their education and maintain academic stability instead of having multiple sexual partners that will distract them from reaching their goals.

INTRODUCTION

Female undergraduates are mostly vulnerable to premarital sex, short term sex, multiple sexual partners, sex for sale and pleasure (Utoo et al., 2020; Sweya et al., 2016; Bajoga et al., 2015) to meet up with their financial and social needs on campus. Most especially as they are likely to be experiencing freedom from their parents for the first time. Hence, the need to investigate if female undergraduates in FUOYE are aware of and make use of contraceptives in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted diseases.

The word awareness simply means knowing that something exists. According to Abdul et al. (2018) awareness can be seen as knowing, perceiving or sensing patterns or being conscious of something, events, objects, thought, emotions, etc. Hence in this study, awareness of contraceptives is taken to be, being aware of the existence of contraceptives which also includes its uses.

The word uses refers to putting into practice and in this case putting contraceptives into practice. Whereas contraceptives refers to action/drugs taken deliberately to prevent conception or impregnation. Abdul et al. (2018) refers to contraceptives as actions taken to effectively prevent conception and unsafe abortion. Hubacher & Trussell (2015) defined contraceptives as a medical product or procedure that prevents the process of conception despite acts of sexual intercourse. It is dangerous to note that about 172 females that are sexually active globally use no form of contraceptives at all (Alkema et al., 2013).

Contraceptives are of different types/forms ranging from injectable to pills and condoms. Studies have shown that about 85% of females and 91% of males between the ages of 15–49 years in Nigeria are aware of one type of contraception or the other (Abdul et al., 2018). Across the globe once a male or female becomes sexually active the possibility of using contra-

ception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDs is very high. The most energetic and sexually active period of human life is between the ages of 10–24 years and 10–19 years (Utoo et al., 2020). Therefore males and females of between the ages of 10–24 years which includes undergraduates that are sexually active are presumed to be aware of one form of contraception or the other. Hence the most commonly used contraception in Nigeria is pills and condoms. Therefore, 91% of males are aware of male condoms while about 71% of females are aware of pills (Abdul et al., 2018). It is one thing to be aware of contraception, another thing to have good knowledge of it yet it is another thing to use it when the need arises.

Another study carried out by the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey in 2018 revealed that 17% of all Nigerian Females of reproductive age (15–49 years) use any form of contraceptive and out of this number 12% use a modern method of contraceptive (National Population Commission & ICF, 2019). A report by the United Nations in 2020 revealed that 44% of females of reproductive age use a modern form of contraceptive globally. In Sub Saharan Africa the prevalence of use of any form of contraceptive was 29% and 23% in Nigeria (United Nations, 2019). A study revealed that contraceptive use varies with age and is lower especially among adolescents and young females and concluded that contraceptive use among young females between the age brackets of 15–24 years is 11% (Sidibe et al., 2020). Therefore this paper focuses on the awareness of contraceptives and how frequently female undergraduates use contraceptives in Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria (hereafter referred to as FUOYE).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There have been cases of females withdrawing from the university resulting from unwanted pregnancies. Some have missed years of schooling because of unwanted pregnancies while some have lost their lives through unsafe abortions and deliveries. Unwanted pregnancies leading to unsafe abortions have contributed to increase in maternal mortality rate which is about 40% in Nigeria and 11% across the globe (Abdul et al., 2018). The

World Health Organizations (2014) suggested that about 45% of all abortions around the globe are unsafe, leading to about 7 million women hospitalized in developing countries and 4.7% and 13.2% maternal deaths annually. This problem of maternal mortality among females resulting from unsafe sex, unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion especially among undergraduates is a major challenge among female young adults needing urgent attention. In addition, withdrawal from school resulting from unwanted pregnancy among female undergraduates is a major challenge in girl child education in Nigeria. Hence this study intends to bring to fore the awareness, age of sexual debut and frequency of contraceptives use among female undergraduates in FUOYE.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions drawn from the objectives of this study are:

1. What is the awareness level of contraceptives among female undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti?
2. What is the age of sexual debut among female undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti?
3. How often do female undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti use contraceptives?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

AWARENESS OF CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIA

Extant studies in Nigeria have suggested that there is an increasing sexual activity among female University undergraduates (Akintayo et al., 2015; Chimah et al., 2016; Utoo et al., 2020; Okpokumoku et al., 2017). There is also progressive decrease in age at onset of sex (Akintayo et al., 2015; Okpokumoku et al., 2017). Some of the reasons for this trend are high poverty level, adoption of western norm/values, lack of parental control, mass media, urbanization and tourism (Chimah et al., 2016).

The rate of contraceptive use for all methods in Nigeria is 17% (NDHS, 2018). This picture among the general population is not significantly different from reported rates among the young and adolescent female undergraduates in Nigerian universities. Ahmed et al. (2017), reported 15.6% in Kano, Akintayo et al. (2015) reported 34.4% in Ekiti. A similar study done in Uganda reported 36.6% (Nsubuga et al., 2016).

Utoo et al. (2020) carried out a study among female undergraduates at Makurdi and found that Three hundred and four (70.5%) female undergraduates were sexually active as at the time of the study. The average age of sexual onset was 19.5 years. One hundred and twenty-seven (41.8%) had more than one sexual partner, while 177 (58.2%) had only one sexual partner. They also found that 414 (96.1%) were aware of contraceptives and 255 (85%) of them had used contraceptives before.

Abudul et al. (2018) also carried out a study on awareness, knowledge and contraceptive use among female undergraduates of university of Ilorin and found that generally undergraduates are within 17–25 years, and most of their respondents were between 20–24 years. 47.7% of their respondents below the age of 20 years have used contraceptives before. Those that are between 20–24 years that have used contraceptives were 55.0% while 33.35% between the ages of 25–29 years have used contraceptives. They found that awareness and knowledge of contraceptives influence the use of contraceptives. They found that 91.4% of their respondents were aware of contraceptives but only 31.1% of them had good knowledge of it and 51.0% had ever used any form of contraceptives. The rate of contraceptives use is 3:1 (three times more likely) based on good knowledge of their participants. That means female undergraduates with good knowledge of contraceptives are more likely to use them compared to those with poor knowledge.

Another study carried out by Oseni et al. (2017) among female undergraduates in Edo state concluded that though female undergraduates are aware of contraceptives but the rate of use is very low. In tandem with this conclusion is the submission made by Chimah et al. (2016) where they said despite the high awareness of modern methods of contraceptives among youths in Nigeria, the rate of utilization is very low. In the same vein, Akintayo et al. (2015) noted that contraceptive use among female

undergraduates in Nigerian institutions is very low (34.4%). It is therefore necessary to replicate this type of study in higher institutions of learning such as FUOYE in order to ascertain the reality of the situation and contribute to knowledge on the phenomenon.

FREQUENCY OF CONTRACEPTIVES USE AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIA

The various types of contraceptives come with their different methods of use. Some are taken on daily basis like the pills while some are taken on monthly bases such as injections, some last for months while some last for years or for a lifetime. Umukoro et al. (2022) carried out a study at Abrakka and found that over half (58.8%) of the respondents were currently on contraceptive with most (32.4%) of them admitting weekly use. Akintayo et al. (2015) also found among Ekiti State university undergraduates that about one-third (34.4%) consistently use contraceptives.

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) propounded by Ajzen & Fishbein, (1980). Both models are based on the premise that individuals make logical, reasoned decisions to engage in specific behaviors by evaluating the information available to them. The performance of sexual behavior is determined by the individual's intention to engage in it (influenced by the value the individual places on the behavior, the ease with which it can be performed and the views of significant others) and the perception that the behavior is within his/her control.

Therefore a female undergraduate may be more likely or intend to use contraceptives if she has favourable attitudes towards using contraceptives. Her intentions are determined by the three variables of the theory; personal attitude which is avoidance of unwanted pregnancy. The second is subjective norm which is dependent on what other people perceive about her actions. Thirdly is perceived behavioural norm which also depends on

the level of control she has on the use of a chosen type of contraceptive. All these put together guides female undergraduates sexual behaviour and consequences of her actions. The use of contraceptive is also greatly influenced if a partner perceives that his/her partner is supportive of using contraceptives, and feels that he/she is able to use contraception and to discuss it with and persuade his/her partner.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive cross-sectional survey research based on the research problem identified. The Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, has two campuses. One is located at Oye and the other is at Ikole, Ekiti State, Nigeria. Oye campus comprises of six faculties; Arts, Social Sciences, Management, Sciences, Health Sciences and Education. Each faculty has female students in all levels (100–500 as the case may be). While Ikole campus is made up of Faculty of Engineering. It also comprises of female students in all levels. Consequently, female undergraduates from 200 to 500 levels in Oye campus were purposively selected. 35 female undergraduates that were sexually active from each faculty were randomly selected for this study. The total sample size for this study was 210 female undergraduates selected across six Faculties in Oye campus.

The study was quantitative in nature. It adopted both primary and secondary method of data collection. Primary data was collected with the use of questionnaire among randomly selected 210 female undergraduates in Oye Ekiti campus of the university. The questionnaire consisted of both open and closed ended questions formulated from the three research objectives. The questionnaire was divided into four Sections; Sections A to D. Section A examines the relevant socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section B examines the awareness of contraceptives among the respondents, Section C examines the types of contraceptives mostly used by the respondents, Section D examines the frequency of contraceptives use among the respondents. Each faculty got 35 questionnaires each totaling 210. But on return 10 questionnaires were wrongly filled and considered not suitable for analysis, hence 200 questionnaires

that were properly filled and considered suitable for analysis were analyzed for this study.

The consent of the respondents was sorted with the assurance that the study was strictly an academic exercise and answers will be treated as confidential before they agreed to fill the questionnaires. They therefore gave voluntary consent to participate in the study. Some of them even asked for little reward like bottles of soft drink which was provided before accepting to take part in the study. After explaining the details of the questionnaires to them, the researcher went back the following day/week to collect the already filled questionnaires from the respondents. It took about one week to collate all the questionnaires together. data was analyzed with the use of SPSS 2.0 version.

RESULTS

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Age				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
16–25 years	171	85.5	85.5	85.5
26–35 years	29	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Sex				
Female	200	100.0	100.0	100.0
Marital Status				
Single	187	93.5	93.5	93.5
Married	13	6.5	6.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Religion				
Christianity	149	74.5	74.5	74.5
Islam	51	25.5	25.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Age				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Ethnicity				
Yoruba	142	71.0	71.0	71.0
Igbo	40	20.0	20.0	91.0
Hausa	18	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Faculty				
Arts	31	15.5	15.5	15.5
Management Sciences	34	17.0	17.0	32.5
Sciences	34	17.0	17.0	49.5
Education	33	16.5	16.5	66.0
Social Sciences	35	17.5	17.5	83.5
Law	33	16.5	16.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Level of Study				
200	64	32.0	32.0	32.0
300	58	29.0	29.0	61.0
400	78	39.0	39.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Monthly Allowance				
20,000-40,000	98	49.0	49.0	49.0
40,000-60,000	47	23.5	23.5	72.5
60,000-80,000	44	22.0	22.0	94.5
100,000	11	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1.1 shows that majority (85.5%) of the respondents were between the age bracket of 16–25 years while few (14.5%) were between 26-35 years. This indicates a youthful population in their active years which is usually marked by increased sexual and risk taking activities. It also shows that 93.5% of the respondents were single while 6.5% are married. This indicates that the respondents are not tied to marital vow which indicates they are single and searching for their future partners. Also majority of

the respondents were Christians (74.5%) and of Yoruba speaking tribes (71%) followed by Igbo (20%) and Hausa (9%).

Table 1.1 also shows that majority (17.5%) of the respondents were from faculty of Social Sciences followed by faculty of Management Sciences and Sciences (17.0% respectively) and Education and Law (16.5% respectively) and faculty of Arts (15.5%). Although the questionnaires were equally distributed this result shows that more of the questionnaire that was discarded was from faculty of Arts while all those filled in faculty of Social Sciences were correctly filled. Majority of the respondents were 400 level students (39%), followed by 200 level (32%) and 300 level students (29%) and majority (49%) of the respondent's monthly allowance was between 20,000–40,000 naira. While 23.5% was between 40,000–60,000 naira and 22% got between 60,000–80,000 naira, very few got 100,000. This indicates that majority of the female undergraduates are surviving with very little allowance which is likely to predispose them to sexual activities in order to have more money to support themselves on campus.

AWARENESS OF CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG RESPONDENTS

Table 1.2. Awareness of Contraceptives among the respondents

What is Contraceptives				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Method of pregnancy prevention	84	42.0	42.0	42.0
Pills used to prevent pregnancy	62	31.0	31.0	73.0
All of the above	54	27.0	27.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
What is Contraceptives used for				
It is used to prevent pregnancy	106	53.0	53.0	53.0
It is used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases	11	5.5	5.5	58.5
All of the above	83	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

What is Contraceptives				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sources of Awareness of Contraceptives				
My mother told me	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
My friends told me	91	45.5	45.5	60.0
My boyfriend told me	40	20.0	20.0	80.0
Google	40	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: Filed Survey (2023).

Table 1.2 shows that majority of the respondents were aware of contraceptives (100%). It shows that majority of the respondents agreed that contraceptives are used to prevent pregnancy, 5.5% agreed that it is used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases while 41.5% agreed that it is used for both prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. This indicates that they are aware that contraceptives are used for pregnancy prevention and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

Regarding the sources of awareness of contraceptives, Table 1.2 shows that majority (45.5%) got to know about contraceptives through friends, equal proportion said their boyfriends and Google told them (20%), while 14.5% said their mothers told them about contraceptives. This indicates that the sources of awareness of contraceptives among FUOYE Undergraduates are mostly through friends and intimate partners.

AGE OF SEXUAL DEBUT OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1.3. Age of Sexual Debut of Respondents

Age of First Sexual Intercourse				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
15 years	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
16 years	65	32.5	32.5	47.0
17 years	11	5.5	5.5	52.5

Age of First Sexual Intercourse				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 years	73	36.5	36.5	89.0
Others	22	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1.3 shows that majority (36.5%) of the respondents had their first sexual intercourse at the age of 18 years. This is followed by those who had their first intercourse at 16 years (32.5%), 15 years (14.5%), and others 11% and a very few at 17 years (5.5%). This indicates that majority of them became adults (18 years: age of responsibility) before they started having sex while majority started having sex as adolescents (94=29+65; 47%).

FREQUENCY OF CONTRACEPTIVES USE AMONG THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1.4. Frequency of Contraceptives Use among the Respondents

I Use Contraceptives Only When I Have Sex				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	120	60.0	60.0	60.0
Agree	29	14.5	14.5	74.5
Disagree	11	5.5	5.5	80.0
Strongly Disagree	40	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I Use Contraceptives Frequently				
Strongly Agree	94	47.0	47.0	47.0
Agree	22	11.0	11.0	58.0
Disagree	40	20.0	20.0	78.0
Strongly Disagree	44	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I have Sex Frequently				
Strongly Agree	112	56.0	56.0	56.0
Agree	44	22.0	22.0	78.0

I Use Contraceptives Only When I Have Sex				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	44	22.0	22.0	100.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I Do Not Have Sex Frequently				
Strongly Agree	33	16.5	16.5	16.5
Agree	44	22.0	22.0	38.5
Disagree	51	25.5	25.5	64.0
Strongly Disagree	72	36.0	36.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I Have Only One Sexual Partner				
Strongly Agree	73	36.5	36.5	36.5
Agree	80	40.0	40.0	76.5
Disagree	11	5.5	5.5	82.0
Strongly Disagree	36	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I Have Two Sexual Partners				
Strongly Agree	18	9.0	9.0	9.0
Agree	11	5.5	5.5	14.5
Disagree	84	42.0	42.0	56.5
Strongly Disagree	87	43.5	43.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
I Have More Than Two Sexual Partners				
Strongly Agree	36	18.0	18.0	18.0
Agree	18	9.0	9.0	27.0
Disagree	44	22.0	22.0	49.0
Strongly Disagree	102	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: Filed Survey, 2023.

Table 1.4 shows that majority (60%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they use contraceptives only when they have sex, 20% strongly disagreed, 14.5% agreed and 5.5% disagreed. The indication of this is that approximately three quarter (74.5%) of FUOYE female undergraduates mostly use contraceptives only when they have sex. It also shows that

majority (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they use contraceptives frequently, 11% agreed, 20% disagreed and 22% strongly disagreed. Again the summation of those who strongly agreed and agreed is 58% which is more than half of the respondents indicating that FUOYE female undergraduates use contraceptives frequently.

Table 1.4 also shows that majority (56%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they have sex frequently while equal fraction of the respondents agreed and disagreed that they have sex frequently (22% respectively). The summation of those who agreed to have sex frequently is 78% which is more than half of the respondents. This is an indication that female undergraduates of FUOYE have sex frequently. It also shows that majority (36%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they do not have sex frequently followed by 25.5% that disagreed and 16.5% strongly agreed while 22% agreed that they do not have sex frequently. Here too the summations of those who strongly disagreed and disagreed (123; 61.5%) are more than those who strongly agreed and agreed (77; 38.5%). Hence it can be rightly said that FUOYE female undergraduates have sex frequently.

Finally, Table 1.4 shows that majority (40%) of the respondents agreed that they have only one sexual partner, 36.5% strongly agreed and 18% and 5.5% strongly agreed and disagreed respectively that they have only one sexual partner. Table 1.4 also shows that majority (43.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they have two sexual partners, 42% disagreed, 9% strongly agreed and 5.5% agreed. This indicates that majority of FUOYE female undergraduates have only one sexual partner. Furthermore, it shows that more than half (51%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they have more than two sexual partners, 22% disagreed, 18% strongly agreed and 9% agreed. This again shows that majority of FUOYE female undergraduates do not have more than two sexual partners.

DISCUSSION

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, OYE EKITI

Federal University, Oye Ekiti mostly comprises of female undergraduates in their late teens and early twenties with very few that are in their early thirties. This is an indication of the campus being populated by adventurous female youths that are in their active years and are usually marked by increased sexual and risk taking activities. This finding is in tandem with some other studies carried out at universities of Ilorin, Makurdi, Ekiti State University, Obafemi Awolowo University and Secondary schools in Edo (Abdul et al., 2018; Akintayo et al., 2017; Chimah et al., 2016; Fehintola et al., 2022; Utoo et al., 2020). These scholars found that female undergraduates between the ages of 14–25 years; 17–25 years are sexually active and are involved in increased sexual activities. Also it corroborates Oseni et al. (2020) where majority of their samples were between 20–24 years. This study also found that 93.5% of the respondents were single and it corroborates with Oseni et al. (2020) study that revealed that 93.9% of their respondents were single.

The study found that 71% of the respondents were Yoruba which corroborates Abdul et al. (2018) study where he found that majority of the female undergraduates in university of Ilorin are Yoruba and others were Igbo and Hausa. The study also corroborates Abdul et al. (2020) and Oseni et al. (2017) study where they found that majority of their sample were Christians. The study is in tandem with Abdul et al. (2018) study at university of Ilorin on economic status of female undergraduates concluding that majority of the female undergraduates are poor and it's likely to predispose them to increased sexual activities, multiple sexual partners and inability to negotiate sex. This is also in line with Oseni et al. (2017) suggestion on female undergraduates' vulnerability to multiple sexual partners, early sexual debut and inability to negotiate sex based on their low socio-economic status.

AWARENESS OF CONTRACEPTIVES AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE, EKITI

This study revealed that 100% of the female undergraduates of FUOYE that took part in this study were aware of contraceptives. Almost half of them (42%) perceived it as method of pregnancy prevention, some (31%) saw it as pills used to prevent pregnancy and a little above quarter (27%) saw it as both method and pills used to prevent pregnancy. The fact remains that they were all aware that it is used to prevent pregnancy. It therefore, corroborates Oseni et al., (2017) findings that 100% of their samples are aware of contraceptives and Utoo et al. (2020) study which found that 85% of their samples in Makurdi are aware and have used contraceptives before and Fehintola et al. (2022) respondents at Obafemi Awolowo University were all aware of contraceptives but not all of them use it. It also supports the findings that the rate of contraceptive use is low (NDHS, 2018; Ahmed et al., 2017; Akintayo et al., 2015). The study also concludes that the knowledge of contraceptives is mostly got from friends and intimate partners.

AGE OF SEXUAL DEBUT OF FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, OYE EKITI

This study adds to existing knowledge on female undergraduates' sexual debut (that is, age of first sexual intercourse). Very interestingly this study found that majority (36.5%) of the respondents had their first sexual intercourse at the age of 18 years and many others at 16 years (32.5%). This indicates that majority of them became adults (18 years: age of responsibility) before they started having sex while majority started having sex as adolescents (52.5%). In like manner, Oseni et al., (2017) found that 72.5% of their sample had their first sexual intercourse between the ages of 15–19 years. It also corroborates Utoo et al. (2020) which found that the age of sexual debut among their respondents is 19.5 years. In support of Oseni et al. (2017) this study therefore concludes that the age of sexual debut among female undergraduates of FUOYE is between 15–18 years (representing 89% of the total sample). This is also in tandem

with Okpokumoku et al. (2017) suggestion of a decrease in age of sexual onset in Nigeria. While Fernandez et al. (2021) found that the age of sexual debut in Brazil is above the age of 18 years.

FREQUENCY OF CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, OYE, EKTITI

This study indicates that approximately three quarter (74.5%) of the selected FUOYE female undergraduates use contraceptives only when they have sex. While more than half (58%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they use contraceptives frequently. Hence corroborating Abdul et al. (2018) suggestion that female undergraduates with good knowledge of contraceptives are more likely to use them compared to those with poor knowledge. Also it corroborates Fernandez et al. (2021) suggestion of high prevalence of contraceptive use among female undergraduates in Brazil.

In this study, the summation of those who agreed to have sex frequently is 78% which is more than half of the respondents. This is an indication that female undergraduates of FUOYE have sex frequently. This corroborates Fehintola et al. (2022) study at Obafemi Awolowo University where they found that majority of their samples were sexually active. This is not out of place because the number of sexual partners a female undergraduate has determines the number of times she will have sex which may in turn influence the frequency of contraceptives use depending on the type in use. Hence it can be rightly said that selected FUOYE female undergraduates have sex frequently. There is an indication that FUOYE female undergraduates maintain only one sexual partner even though they have sex frequently. This corroborates Utoo et al. (2020) study at Ilorin and Fernandez et al. (2021) in Brazil where they found that majority of their respondents had only one sexual partner. Meanwhile it contradicts Oseni et al. (2017) finding in Makurdi which revealed that majority of their respondents have two sexual partners.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that female undergraduates of Federal University Oye-Ekiti campus are majorly within the age bracket of 16–25 years, mainly Christians of Yoruba origin. Majority of them live within a monthly allowance of 20,000-40,000 naira and majority are sexually active with age of sexual debut as 16 and 18 years. All of the female undergraduates are aware of contraceptives most of them use contraceptives and got to know about contraceptives through their friends, boyfriends and Google. They are sexually active, have sex frequently and single but maintain one sexual partner.

The study also concluded that female undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti campus frequently have sex most of them have one sexual partner and used contraceptives only when they have sex. The prevalence of contraceptive use depends on the number of times they have sex. Hence most of them used contraceptives as frequently as they had sex while some others use contraceptives frequently.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study therefore recommends that there should be more enlightenment of the various methods of contraceptives and their benefits/side effects in all secondary and higher institutions of learning in order to create more awareness among the populace (male and female) of the varieties of options to choose from. Adequate and proper education of the methods of contraceptives will encourage widespread awareness and use among the youths and adults alike.

Lastly if possible, the government should encourage female undergraduates with monthly stipends with the aim of encouraging them to focus on their education and maintain academic stability with full concentration

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