

The perception and practice of
abortion among female
undergraduates in the University of
Ibadan, Nigeria

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Introduction

- Unsafe abortion is one of the neglected problems of health care in developing countries and continues to cause irreparable harm especially to young sexually active women in the reproductive age group.
- Abortion is restricted in most African countries and permitted only when the mother's life is endangered.



Methodology



- A cross-sectional study was conducted among female undergraduates resident on campus in the University of Ibadan to assess the perception and practice of abortion
- 425 students were interviewed using structured, self-administered questionnaires

Results



- The mean age of the respondents was 21.5 ± 2.8 years .
- 29% had ever had sexual intercourse with a mean age at sexual debut of 19.2 ± 2.3 years.
- 79% had good knowledge about abortion and its complications and mean knowledge score was 4.1 ± 1.4 (range 0-5).
- Older students, those at higher levels of study and those from richer backgrounds had better knowledge of abortion and its complications ($p < 0.05$)

ATTITUDE

- Most of the respondents, 371 (87.3%) generally disapproved of abortion
- However, 120 (28.2%) still disapproved if the mothers health was in danger ,and 163 (38.2%) even for rape victims.
- Generally attitudes toward abortion was negative. Mean attitudinal score was 2.6 ± 1.31 (range 0-8).

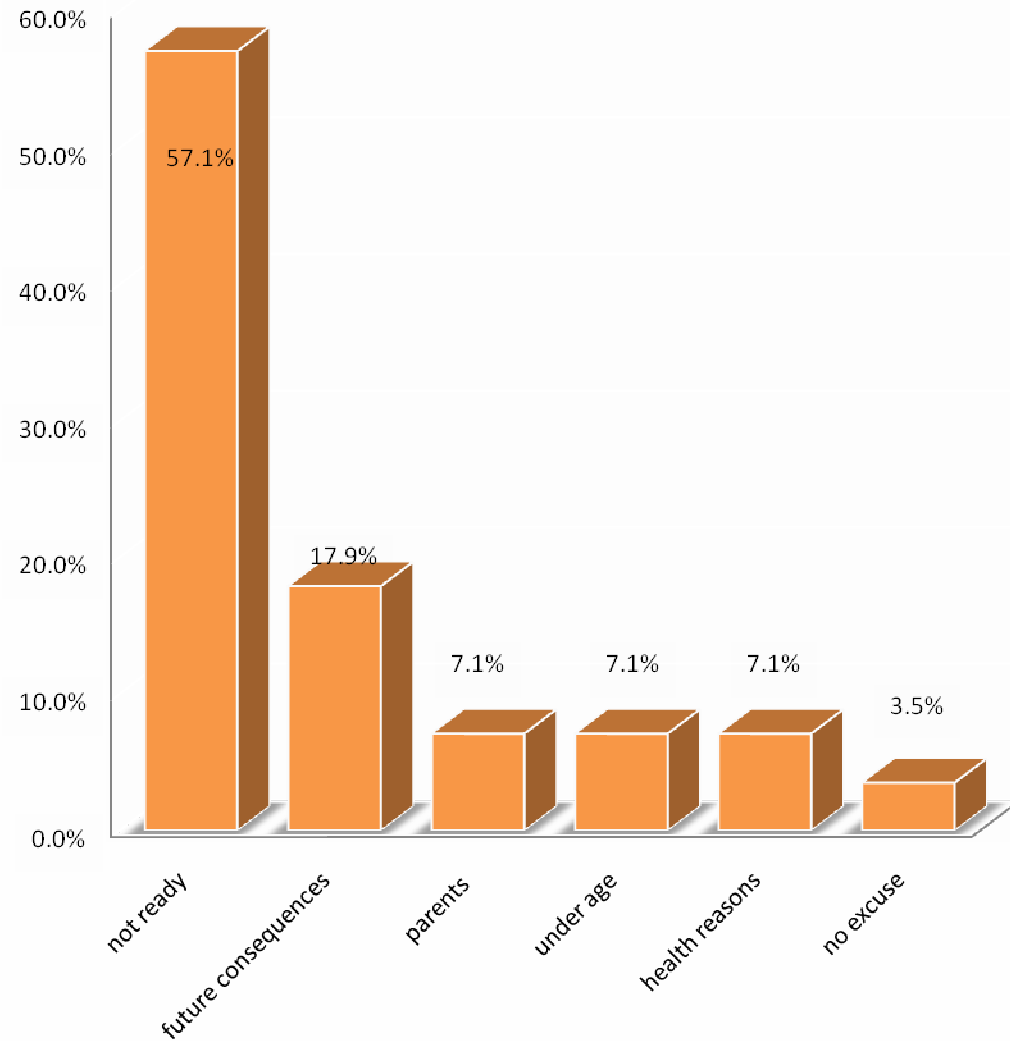
PRACTICE

Twenty five percent of the sexually active had ever been pregnant.

90% had terminated the pregnancy.

Most common reason given for termination was that pregnancy was unplanned for

Figure 1: Reasons for procuring abortion



Conclusion

- Despite good knowledge about abortion and its complications and disapproval of abortion and its liberalization, almost all the respondents who had ever been pregnant terminated the pregnancy
- Prevention of unplanned pregnancies by improving access to quality family planning services must therefore be the highest priority