

Infertility In Nigeria

Gracie Martensen WCSN, Nadia Othman WCSN, Olivia Torregrossa WCSN

Wagner College, Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing

Introduction

- The burden and stigma associated with infertility in Nigeria has many disadvantages to female mental health.
- The problem found correlated with this community and population is the social impact concerning the lack of education of infertility in Nigerian communities
- The overall question here is: How can we use education to decrease the stigma of infertility in Nigerian men and women?

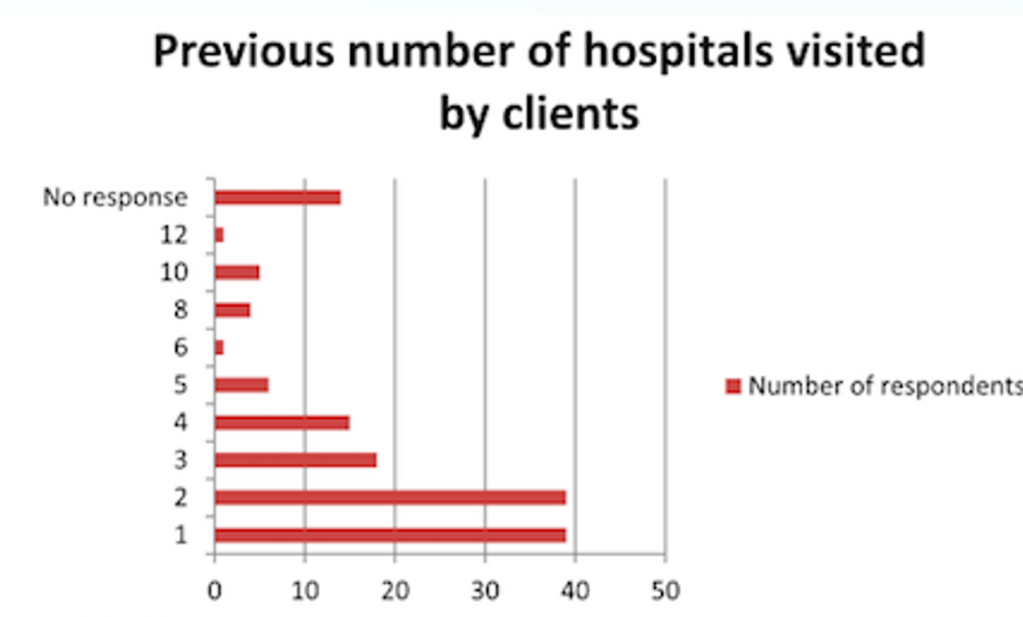


Fig. 1 Number of previous hospitals visited

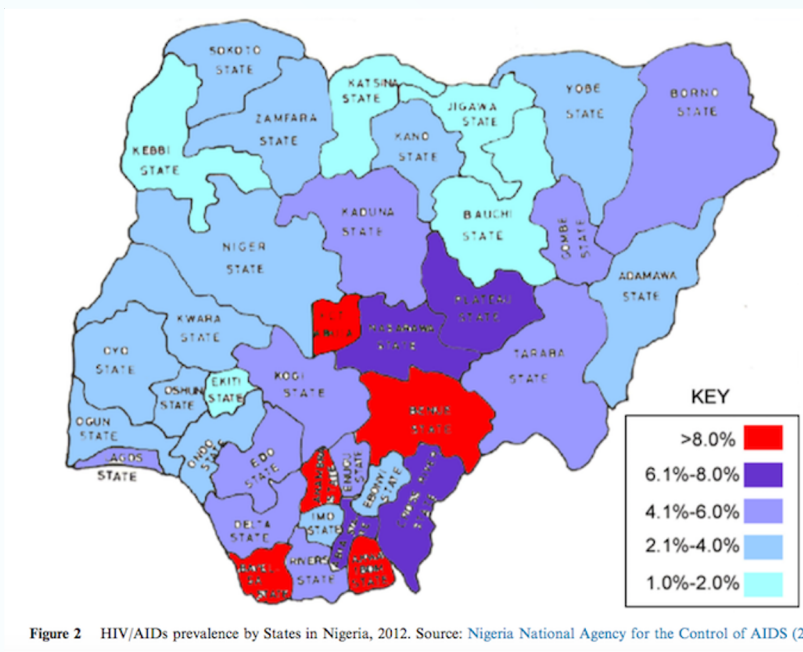


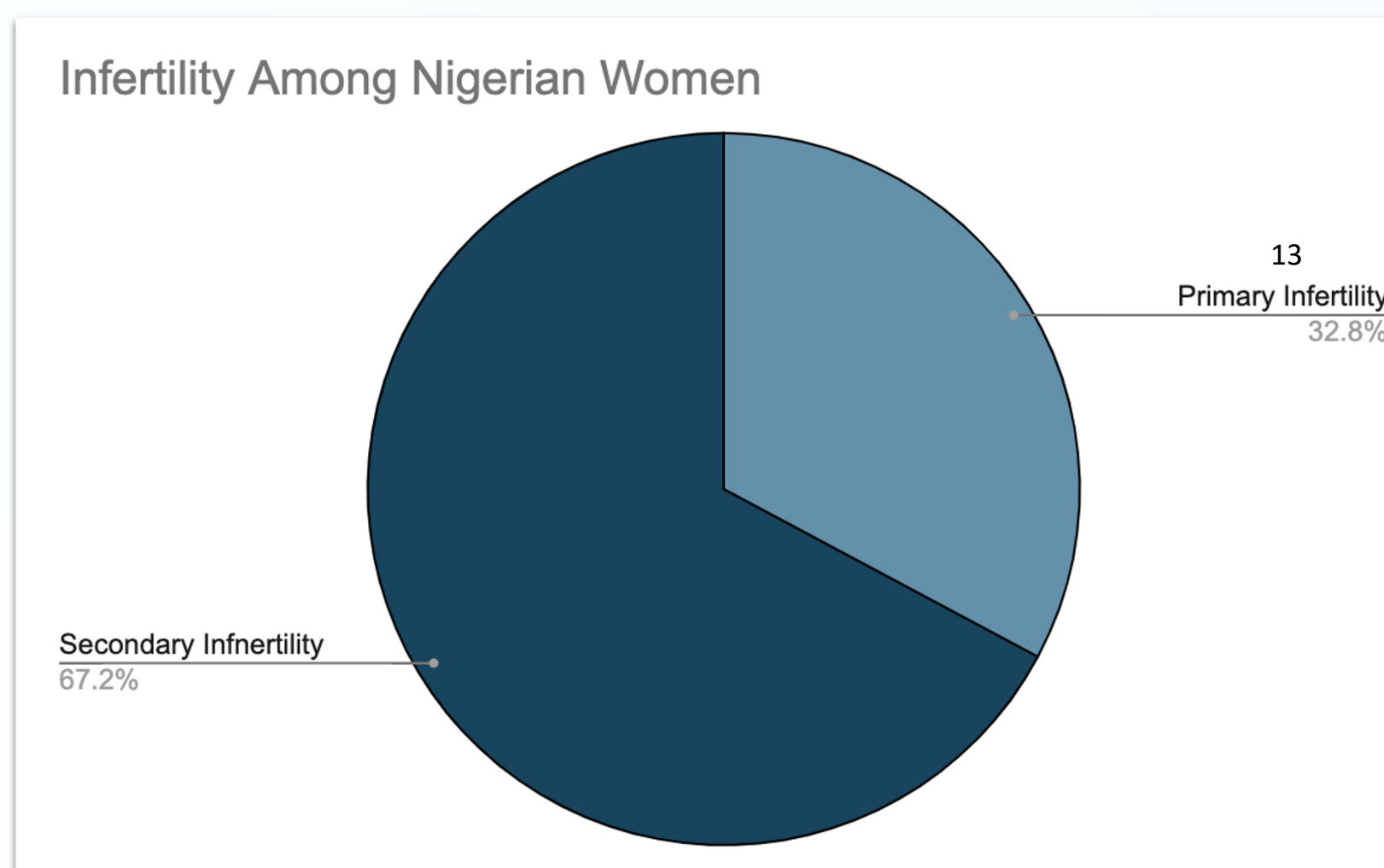
Figure 2. HIV/AIDS prevalence by state in Nigeria, 2012. Source: Nigeria National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NNACA).

Nigerian Community Assessment & Analysis

- Nigeria has approximately 162 million people in their country with a total of 36 states.
- The capital of Nigeria is Abuja.
- The country is primarily English spoken but does not flourish in areas of lower education status.
- Hausa and Fulani are in the North, Igbo is the religion in the Southeast, and Yoruba inhabits the Southwest
- The maternal mortality in developing countries is a serious public health problem and contributes to the low life expectancy in Nigeria.
- Women's health screening is not a priority in low socioeconomic groups. Women are less educated than men. ⁴
- **Health Problems in Nigeria:**
 - Major causes of infertility in Nigeria is infection: STDs, post abortal and puerperal sepsis ²
 - An IVF treatment costs around US \$2500 meanwhile, the minimum wage is \$52-\$60 a month. ¹
 - Health problems that are also prevalent in Nigerian communities are depression, HIV/AIDS and hypertension. ²
- **Social Stigma of Infertility in Nigerian women**
 - The community frowns upon infertile women. The community members first advise the husband to take another wife when they find out their wife is unable to bear children.⁷

Problems In the Community

- *Infertility is a major healthcare problem within the Nigerian Community.* The Worldwide Health Organization (WHO) defines infertility as, "a disease of the reproductive system defined by the failure to achieve a clinical pregnancy after 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse."⁸
- Infertility has run rampant on the continent for both men and women in Nigeria; but it is women who have to hold the burden of allegedly living an incomplete and unsuccessful life as the community sees her for not bearing a child.
 - Research suggests that infertility is widespread in the Sub-Saharan ranging from 13-17% (Infertility Survey in 27 Sub-Saharan African Countries including Nigeria).
- The cultural perspective behind women who are infertile causes a psychosocial issue. This includes those in need of emotional care and medical support.
 - This can support a woman to have a child down the line.
 - It can also provide education for couples on other opinions of parenthood.
- Nigerian's culture shines a dark light on those who are struggling to conceive.
- The result of infertility is a traumatic life with suffering, personal grief, frustration, social stigma, ostracism and economic deprivation for both men and women
- Continued shame women receive from their family and their husbands will cause psychiatric mental health issues.
- The social stigma against these women must be dropped.
 - Infertile women need to have early psychiatric screenings and therapy, if needed, incorporated into their care of treatment.
- Infertility is caused by sexually transmitted diseases/ and untreated sexually transmitted infections. Without proper medical care and routine check ups to evaluate such infections before they can progress into infertility is key to decreasing the prevalence of the issue ⁹.
 - This includes educating the population on how important it is to get screenings and check ups routinely. Without this it leaves space for untreated infections to spread to your ovaries and fallopian tubes, once it reaches this point it is difficult to carry out a pregnancy ⁹.
- It is crucial to close in on the gap causing the widespread issue of increasing infertility in Nigeria. Poor Nigerians not having access to primary care physicians is a factor ⁶.
- The problem for this population is the negative stigma that is associated with infertility is causing mental health issues in these women.
- Provide education to all people of Nigeria about infertility including why it happens and ways to prevent it. The more education these women receive the more likely they are to seek help.
- It is important to help infertile women navigate where services are to help them with their physical and mental health.



Proposed Solution

The proposed solution would be to create an innovative health program called Education About Infertility and Empowerment for couples of Nigeria

This program would include:

1. Educational seminars to the men and women of Nigeria. Included in the seminar would be:

- The causes of infertility
- Safe sex practices
- Resources that are available to them such as local clinics that provide STD testing and other screening and let them know where they are located
- Information about how insufficiencies in the male reproductive tract could cause difficulty conceiving a child and it is not always caused by only the women

1. Group therapy sessions for women:

- Allows for a safe area for women who are experiencing infertility to express how they are feeling
- Provide a support system for Nigerian women of childbearing age
- Coping strategies
- Empowerment
- Ways to leave an abusive relationship⁵

Our Goal:

To end the negative stigma associated with Nigerian women of childbearing age who are considered infertile. By increasing the awareness to all people of Nigeria about the causes of infertility the women will receive less physical and mental abuse.

Learning Objective goals are:

- Increase education for all individuals of Nigeria on infertility and will identify three different causes of infertility
- Nigerian couples will identify a location where they will go for help for infertility and participation in support groups
- Infertile women will vocalize feelings of empowerment and less feelings of guilt or shame ⁵

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