

# The Influence of Poverty on Abortion Practices among Women in Farming Communities of Ile-Ife: Focus on Health, Education and Living Standard

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## ABSTRACT

Abortion is a major pivotal cause of maternal mortality, particularly in developing countries. Despite being a criminal offence in Nigeria, the practice persists. As such, engaging in empirical investigation on the process undertaken and the experiences across cultures becomes imperative to contribute to the ongoing debate on safe abortion practices among rural dwellers in Nigeria. This study examined the influence of poverty on abortion practices in farming communities of Ile-Ife. This quantitative study was conducted on 310 rural women of reproductive age in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. The indicators used in measuring poverty were the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), poverty intensity (A), and multidimensional headcount (H). The MPI incorporated household size, education, health and living standard. Results showed an MPI of 0.6059 indicating that over 60% of the study population experienced poverty in one or more dimensions, suggesting a relatively high poverty level in the region. Also, 98.3% of the recruited women were poor (H=0.9831), suggesting that they are in a state of acute poverty. The analysis found that the poor were deprived of 61.6% of the weighted indicators (A=0.6163), highlighting the extent of deprivation they face across multiple dimensions. 9% of the respondents have had an abortion. No abortions were reported among those who reported no poverty. Among those in the low poverty level category, 50.0% had safe abortions and 50.0% had unsafe abortions. In contrast, among those in the high poverty level category, only 30.0% had safe abortions while 70.0% had unsafe abortions. The chi square result ( $\chi^2=0.306$ ) indicated that there is a significant relationship between abortion practices and poverty level at  $p \leq 0.05$ . Overall, these findings suggest that poverty level is an important factor to consider when assessing abortion practices.

**Keywords:** Abortion, Multidimensional Poverty Index, Poverty Reduction, Rural Women