

Knowledge, attitude and practice of parturient regarding Epidural Analgesia for labor.

OLAJUMOKE T.O^{*(FWACS, FMCA)}, Afolayan J.M^{** (FMCA)},
Aworinde O^(FWACS)

** Department of Anesthesia and Intensive Care LAUTECH Teaching Hospital, Osogbo Osun State, Nigeria.*

*** Department of Anesthesia and intensive care, Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital, Ado Ekiti.*

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To assess the knowledge, sources of knowledge, attitude and practices regarding Epidural Analgesia (EA) by parturient at LAUTECH teaching Hospital Osogbo.

Methods: A hospital based cross sectional study was conducted at the Antenatal clinic of LAUTECH Teaching Hospital Osogbo from December 2018 to July 2019. A questionnaire was filled through verbal interviews conducted on 150 parturient fulfilling the inclusion criteria.

Results: Of the total of 150 patients; 98(65.3%) were aware of labor analgesia of which 12 (12.2%) were aware of epidural as a method of labor analgesia.

Key words: Labor, analgesia, Epidural

I. INTRODUCTION

Labor has been described as painful even though the intensity varies among parturients.¹ Several reasons has been given for the cause of labor pains. The contractions of the uterine muscles and the pressure on the cervix from the descending fetus create pain during labor. Strong cramping, as well as an achy feeling, can be felt in the abdomen, groin, and back. Some women may get pain in their sides and thighs. Other causes of pain during labor include the baby's head pressing on the bladder and bowels, as well as the delivery canal and vaginal stretching.^{1,2} In most cases, women dread this pain but choose to endure it altogether.

Pain during labor leads to release of catecholamines hence a reflex increase in blood pressure and oxygen consumption all of which could adversely affect uterine blood flow.²

Some women take pride in enduring labor pain despite the intensity to show strength. On the contrary, other women cannot withstand this pain

but have to weather it because of the culture in which they live.³

We found out that not much study has been done in this locality as regards acceptability or otherwise of epidural analgesia in labor hence the need for this study

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross sectional study was carried out at the antenatal clinic of LAUTECH Teaching Hospital Osogbo between December 2018 and January 2019. LAUTECH Teaching hospital is a tertiary teaching hospital in Osun state South West Nigeria. The hospital serves the populations in Osun state as well as neighboring states like Oyo, Ekiti, Ondo and Kwara.

The ANC clinic is run by consultants and sometimes senior resident doctors. The ANC clinic attends to 50 mothers per month. The study recruited mothers who were Para1 (women who has had labor experience at least once) and above attending ANC that consented to participate in the study. Consenting persons were consecutively enrolled to reach the targeted sample size of One hundred and fifty (150) patients. An interviewer administered questionnaires in two languages English and Yoruba which are the predominant languages in the environment.

Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

This study included all pregnant women who visited antenatal care clinics during the data collection period (December 2018 to July 2019). Pregnant women with history of previous caesarian sections and those who refused to participate despite adequate explanation were excluded.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 23 to obtain descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, and percentage.

Furthermore, the chi-square test was used to compare categorical variables. A p-value of < 0.05 was used to indicate statistical significance.

III. RESULTS

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics

Age	Percentage N =150 (%)
18- 25	36 (24)
26-40	98(65.3)
41-60	16 (10.7)

Level of Education N=150(%)

Non	11 (7.3)
Primary	32 (21.3)
Secondary	74(49.3)
Tertiary	33 (22)
Tribe	N=150(%)
Yoruba	129 (86)
Ibo	14 (9.3)
Hausa	7 (4.7)

Parity

Para 1	74 (49.3)
Para 2	49 (32.7)
Para 3	17(11.3)
>3	10(6.7)

Table 11

Is pain relief during delivery good?

Yes	138 (92)
NO	12 (8)

Table 111

Awareness of Pain relief methods during delivery=150(%)

Aware	98 (65.3)
Not aware	52 (34.7)

Table IV

Methods of pain relief awareness N=98(%)

Intramuscular Analgesic	84 (85.7)
Epidural Analgesia	12(12.2)
Inhalation	2(2.1)

Medium of awareness N=98(%)

Antenatal clinics	43(43.9)
Through Friends	32(32.7)
Social Media	23(24.5)

Table V

Preferred pain relief next delivery N=150 (%)

None	14 (9.3)
Epidural	64(42.7)
Intramuscular	72(48)

One hundred and fifty (150) patients not less than parity of one that booked at the Antenatal clinic of LAUTECH Teaching hospital between December 2018 to July 2019 that consented were recruited..

The demographical characteristics of the recruited parturient are as shown in Table 1. Majority (92%) believed that pain relief during labor is good while 8% feels that pain relief during labor is not necessary.

Most of the study patients 65.3% were not aware of pain relief methods during labor (Table III); of the parturient only 12% were aware of epidural as a method of pain relief during labor (Table IV). The major route of awareness in this study was through antenatal clinics (43%) (Table IV). The proportion of patients that will prefer epidural analgesia for their next delivery was 64% (after brief education about this method of labor analgesia) while majority 72% still will prefer intramuscular analgesia and 9.3% will still not want any form of labor analgesia (Table V).

IV. DISCUSSION

Our study shows that of the 150 patients that were enrolled for the study; majority 63.9% were aware of labor pain relief. This is higher than that found in a study by Njiru et al where 10.6% of the mothers attending antenatal clinics have knowledge of pain relief methods in labour. In their own study equal fraction of parturient had awareness of epidural analgesia and intramuscular injections 45.5% each as against 85.7 and 12.2% for intramuscular and epidural awareness in our own study. Both studies were conducted in Africa; Kenya and Nigeria. The higher percentage of awareness of epidural analgesia might be connected with previous awareness on labor analgesia in Kenya as against that of Nigeria.

In a study by Joyce Nilima et al in India the incidence of awareness of epidural was higher than awareness with intramuscular injections 50% as against 35.9%. Majority of the parturient got knowledge of labor analgesia through internet and newspaper. This is due to the better medical services and previous awareness of labor analgesia in India

Mung'ayi et al found out that 56 % were aware of labor analgesia which is close to what was found out in other Africa countries however the study did not detail the proportion of the patients that were aware of epidural analgesia

Mugambe et al at Aga Khan University hospital in Nairobi found out that 56.3% were aware (of which only 26% of them had knowledge of epidural while majority were aware of

intramuscular, this is close to what we observed in this study. Akpan et al and Okereke et al in separate studies in Nigeria found 4.5 and 38.9% respectively as percentage awareness of labor analgesia. Our study found 63.9% awareness of labor analgesia with wide disparity between the other two studies done in Nigeria. The reason might be connected to level of education and sociocultural belief of the population involved. In terms of level of education majority of the respondents in this study are in the secondary level of education 49.3 while close to equal proportion have tertiary and primary education 22%. More of respondents in our study have secondary education which afford them opportunity to read understand and get information better hence their awareness of methods of labor analgesia.

Despite the average level of education of the respondents it was found out that majority of people that were aware of labor analgesia got to know of it through the antenatal clinics (43.9%) while 24.5 and 37.2% got to know of it through social media and friends respectively This lay credence to the fact that the antenatal clinic is a major route through which information are disseminated to pregnant women.

Uche Akunaeziri¹⁰ et al in their survey of practice of healthcare workers in North Central Nigeria on Labor analgesia found out that that 35% of healthcare workers surveyed had never counseled pregnant women on any form of intrapartum analgesia while 24% had never prescribed labor analgesia. The study was done recently and this shows that a lot of awareness is needed even among the work force expected to educate the parturient on labor analgesia.

RS Omotayo¹¹ et al in a study found out that 78% of the respondents have never heard about labor analgesia from their health care workers. Their study like many others did not include epidural as an option in labor analgesia thereby laying credence to the fact that awareness of Epidural analgesia in labor is low among health workers.

However after proper education, about 42% of the study population were willing to have epidural in the index pregnancy. This gives hope that with proper education more women will be willing to take epidural analgesia and thereby increase the acceptability of epidural analgesia as a method of pain relief during delivery.

V. CONCLUSION

As shown in this study, the awareness of labor analgesia is not bad but the awareness of epidural analgesia as a means is poor.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that there should be more awareness programs on epidural analgesia as a choice of pain relief during labor. This can be done through awareness talks at the Antenatal clinics as more patients from this study got to know of labor analgesia through Antenatal clinic. Also social media should also be employed as a medium of dissemination of information on epidural analgesia.

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