**ATTITUDE AND SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICE DURING PREGNANCY**

**AMONG WOMEN IN AKINYELE L.G.A. OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

**M. C. EZEAMA**\*1, IKENNA EZEAMA

IMO STATE UNIVERSITY, NURSING, NIGERIA.

**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction**:  
 Problems of maternal morbidity and mortality are associated with attitudes and socio- cultural practices of women during pregnancy and childbirth. Knowledge, culture and experience determine pregnancy outcome.. Social cultural practices reflect attitudes, belief held by people for generations. Every social group worldwide has special cultural practices and beliefs, whether beneficial or harmful. Harmful practices like food restriction and traditional birth practices during pregnancy could result to neonatal deaths and stillbirths from maternal malnutrition and poor maternal health. This study identified attitudes and socio- cultural practices that influence pregnancy outcome of women in the rural areas of Oyo State **Materials and method:**

Sample for the study was made up of 405 women who have delivered babies a year prior to the study. Systematic sampling was used to cover the eight communities studied in Akinyele district. Instruments for data collection were questionnaire and focus group discussion. Four women of childbearing age vast in the knowledge of pregnancy related risk factors were trained as interviewers. Data were analyzed with the use of EPI- INFO (version 6.0). Positive attitudes to keep healthy, like attending antenatal (ANC) regularly, eating proteinous foods and vegetables were emphasized.

**Results:**

A total of 274(67.7%) women in the sample regularly attended ANC. Also 344(84.9) of the sample ate beans, meat (domestic animals meat only) during pregnancy. An important finding was that majority of the pregnant women 327(80.7%) of them avoided eating bush meat for the belief that eating such might cause their babies to hiccough and gasp during breast feeding. In addition, 61(34.5%) of others did not eat green leafy vegetables. For those who did not eat vegetables, the less educated (Illiterates and primary school) the pregnant women were, the more they avoided eating vegetables and the more educated (Secondary and Tertiary) the pregnant women were, the less they avoided eating vegetables. For those who actually registered for ANC, avoided eating of bush meat and vegetables their Perceived Social Support 27.5 points was significantly higher than others.

**Conclusion:**

From the findings unhealthy cultural practices like eating low proteinous foods and green leafy vegetables were common among the pregnant women. Therefore, periodic health education on the importance of eating proteinous food and leafy green vegetables is recommended.