

ABSTRACT

Factors affecting outcome of pregnancy in adolescent at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital in Kingston.

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This study involved all the adolescents 10-19 years of age who were delivered at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital between December 1, 1995 and February 29, 1996. There was a total of 570 adolescents in the study.

Teenage pregnancy is not a new phenomenon of modern times. In some countries it occurs within the framework of considerable kin and community approval. Fertility among adolescents varies from country to country. In Jamaica the fertility rate for adolescents 15-19 for 1993 was 108 per 100,000. Ninety percent of pregnancy in women under 20 years of age occur outside the formal marriage or common-law unions.

The hazards of childbirth in adolescents are greater for both mother and infants than for women in their childbearing prime, age 20-29 years. There are higher incidence of prematurity and low birth weight to these babies.

The purpose of the study was to deduce what preventive measures if any, may be required to improve reproductive outcome among adolescents. The method used was collection of data from adolescents' records and interviewing some of them.

Of the total, 94.6% had normal delivery and 5.4% had caesarean sections or other methods of delivery. There were 17.5% low birth weight and 20.7% prematurity. There was a significant association between multiparity and age of mothers. The results were generally in keeping with previous findings.

The prediction of those adolescent mothers and babies at risk of poor outcomes due to pregnancy induced hypertension and other complications are particularly important in developing countries such as Jamaica. Hence, the importance of early and appropriate antenatal care and intervention are crucial.

Unintended pregnancies and childbearing among adolescents are a source of increasing concern because of their impacts on the young mothers, the children and society at large.