

SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACT ON ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy is one of the most important social and public health problems all over the world. Pregnancy during adolescence is often associated with less favorable outcomes for both mother and child. In this study, we aimed to determine the effect of adolescent age on neonatal outcomes and also observed the lifestyle of pregnant teenage girls. We conducted a study of 2434 mothers aged ≤ 19 years ($n=294$) or 20–34 years ($n=2140$) who gave birth in 2019–2020 at Department of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Louis Pasteur University Hospital in Kosice. Data on mothers and newborn infants have been reported from the Reports on mothers at childbirth. Women aged 20–34 years were used as the reference group. The adolescent mothers were at higher risk of giving birth as single mothers (OR=14.2; 95% CI=9.3–21.6; $p<0.001$) and with basic education or lack of education (OR=16.8; 95% CI=11.5–24.6; $p<0.001$). They also had a higher risk of smoking during pregnancy (OR=5.0; 95% CI=3.8–6.6; $p<0.001$). The percentage of low birth weight in infants born from adolescent mothers was higher than that of mothers who gave birth at adult age ($p<0.001$). Our results confirmed a lower birth weight among adolescent mothers children (-332.6 g, $p<0.001$). Adolescent women were associated with lower Apgar score at 1st min ($p=0.003$). In our study, we found a higher prevalence of preterm births in the pregnant adolescents compared with the control group ($p=0.004$). This study identifies important differences in neonatal outcomes between women by age group. These findings could help in identifying at-risk groups for additional support and interventions to minimize the risk of adverse outcomes for these vulnerable groups.

Keywords: adolescent pregnancy; birth weight; preterm birth; neonatal outcomes; risk factors

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent pregnancies are a global public health problem. Adolescent pregnancy was defined by the World Health Organization as a pregnancy in girls aged 10–19 years [1]. Adolescents are also divided into early (10–14 years), mid (15–17 years), and late adolescents (>17 years) [2].

Adolescence is a phase in which there are many changes in the physiological, anatomical, structural and psychological aspects and finally switch to adulthood. As many adolescents are neither physically nor psychologically ready for pregnancy and childbirth, this reproductive event makes them more vulnerable to complications resulting in devastating health consequences for them. Having babies during adolescence has serious consequences for the health of the girl and her infant [1]. Adolescent age group is associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes [2, 3].