

Some aspects of teenage pregnancy in Nairobi: a prospective study on teenage mothers at Kenyatta National Hospital and Pumwani Maternity Hospital

Abstract:

In order to determine the magnitude of teenage pregnancy and also to determine the demographic and socio-economic problems associated with these pregnancies, a prospective study was conducted in two major delivery centres in Nairobi. The incidence of teenage pregnancy was found to be 10.5%. For Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), the incidence was 13.1% and Pumwani Maternity Hospital (PMH) recorded an incidence of 8.8%. Most of the teenagers (82.8%) were from large families, and upto 59.4% had been pregnant at least once. They had low education; 66.7% had only primary level education. Both the teenager and their parents were unemployed. Their average age at menarche was 14.2 years. 70% had had intercourse by 16 years. Up to 60% had no knowledge of contraceptives and; most of those who knew, had it from informal sources. Only 1% had used any known contraceptive method. It is concluded that intervention programme like adolescent antenatal clinics, adolescent sexuality education and appropriate use of contraceptives be provided as a matter of priority. All health facilities should open special units for handling adolescent sexuality. This should include both sexes. Teachers, parents and respectable community leaders should effectively be involved in formulation of programmes that would reduce teenage pregnancies. These measures should be started right at the primary school level