

# Assessment of pregnancy - Related Health Problems among Less Than 18 Years Pregnant Women in Al- Nasiriya Maternity Hospitals

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## Abstract

**Objective:** To assess the Socio-economic and Cultural Factors, Personal Behavior and Psychological Factors, and Biological Factor. **Methods:** descriptive analytic study conducted in December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 at Maternity Hospitals in Al-Nasiriya city . Non-probability sample consists of (180) pregnant women less than 18 years admitted to maternity hospitals suffering health problems. The study instrument comprised of factors related to pregnancy ( Socio-economic and Cultural Factors, Personal Behavior and Psychological Factors, and Biological Factor. Data collection is performed through the use of the study instrument , after permission were obtained from the pregnant women . Data was collected through interview techniques. Descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis approaches are used. **Result:** The study results shows that (60%) of women's current age is (17) years old, , (39%) primary school education, (65%) living in extended families, (37.2%) of women were aged (16) years at their first pregnancy . The results presents the factors related to pregnancy; the socio-economic and cultural factors that are significant (lack of knowledge in sexual and reproductive health (91.1%), and biological factors in early body changes and weight gain (43.9%). **Conclusion:** The study concludes there are lack of knowledge in sexual and reproductive health, lack of knowledge for health problems, lack of knowledge regarding use of contraceptive methods, Not having healthy food practice, stress and feeling of personal failure, and neglect of the special needs. **Recommendation:** The study recommends that pregnant teenager to have appropriate antenatal care as well as social support to avoid medical problems during pregnancy. Educational programs should be emphasized to pregnant teenage mothers for increasing their knowledge about pregnancy.

**Keywords:** Pregnant women , adolescent , pregnancy related Health, Personal Behavior, Biological Factor.

## Introduction

Teenage pregnancies are associated with social issues, including lower educational levels and poverty <sup>(1)</sup>. Teenage pregnancy in developed countries is usually outside of marriage and is often associated with a social stigma <sup>(2)</sup>. In the developing world about 2.5 million females under the age of 16 and 16 million females 15 to 19 year old have children each year .Another 3.9 million have abortions. It is more common in rural than urban areas. Worldwide, complications related to pregnancy are the most common cause of death among females 15 to 19 year old <sup>(3)</sup>. Teenage pregnancy is an important public health problem, especially in developing countries, with a high rate of marriages at a young age, along with poor

prenatal and postnatal care. In these countries, 15%–20% of all deliveries were in mothers aged younger than 19 years, and 25% of maternal deaths occurred in this age group <sup>(4)</sup>.

## Methodology

Descriptive analytic study conducted in December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 at Maternity Hospitals in Al-Nasiriya city . Non-probability sample consists of (180) pregnant women less than 18 years admitted to maternity hospitals suffering health problems. The study instrument comprised of: Socio-economic and Cultural Factors, Personal Behavior and Psychological Factors, and Biological Factor. The pilot study was conducted on

(20) pregnant women, in December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January , 2020, the instrument presented to (11) experts in the different fields. The reliability for the questionnaire was statistically adequate. Data collection is performed through the use of the study instrument , after permission were obtained from the pregnant women . Data was collected through interview techniques. Descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis approaches are used.

### Results

**Table (1): Socio-economic and Cultural Factors related to Pregnancy under the Age 18 Years (N=180)**

Socio-economic and cultural factors		No		Yes	
		f	%	f	%
1	Age difference between husband and wife.	138	76.7	42	23.3
2	Low level of education (limited education )	143	79.4	37	20.6
3	Marriage by desire or under family pressure	165	91.7	15	8.3
4	Dose the husband use alcohol or narcotic pills?	180	100	0	0
5	Family instability (exposure to violence and domestic abuse )	177	98.3	3	1.7
6	Lack of knowledge or incorrect use of contraceptives.	60	33.3	120	66.7
7	Lack of knowledge of health problems.	30	16.7	150	83.3
8	The structure of the extended family.	35	19.4	145	80.6
9	Lack of knowledge in the field of sexual and reproductive health.	16	8.9	164	91.1
10	Dose the period between current and previous pregnancy affect?	162	90	18	10
11	Is pregnancy planned?	73	40.6	107	59.4
12	Is pregnancy desirable type?	35	19.4	145	80.6
13	Low economic status	106	58.9	74	41.1

**f: Frequency, %: Percentage**

The table (1) presents the socio-economic and cultural factors related to pregnancy for women under age (18) years; the socio-economic and cultural factors that are significant are: lack of knowledge in the field

of sexual and reproductive health (91.1%), lack of knowledge for health problems (83.3%), the structure of the extended family (80.6%), the desirability of pregnancy (80.6%), lack of knowledge regarding use of contraceptive methods (66.7%), and planned pregnancy in (59.4%).

**Table (2): Personal Behavior and Psychological Factors related to Pregnancy under the Age 18 Years (N=180)**

Personal behavior and psychological factors		No		Yes	
		f	%	f	%
1	Emotional abuse include (ignore, isolation, verbal assault )	162	90	18	10
2	Physical abuse (physical violence)	179	99.4	1	0.6
3	Neglect, special needs are ignored	154	85.6	26	14.4
4	Lack of self- confidence	162	90	18	10
5	Stress	100	55.6	80	44.4
6	Hopelessness	172	95.6	8	4.4
7	Depression	169	93.9	11	6.1
8	Feeling of personal failure (feeling of helplessness).	154	85.6	26	14.4
9	Healthy food practice	117	65	63	35

The table (2) presents the personal behavior and psychological factors related to pregnancy for women under age (18) years. Personal behavior and psychological factors present: Low frequencies have been seen among the personal, behavioral and psychological factors that are: Not having healthy food practice(65%), stress (44.4%), feeling of personal failure (14.4%), and neglect of the special needs (14.4%).

**Table (3): Biological Factor related to Pregnancy under the Age 18 Years (N=180)**

Biological factor		No		Yes	
		f	%	f	%
1	Decreased menstruation age (beginning of the first menstruation).	153	85	27	15
2	Do you suffer from menstrual disorder	125	69.4	55	30.6
3	Impact of malnutrition on the menstrual cycle	173	96.1	7	3.9
4	Suffer from the effects of hormonal changes (analysis )	160	88.9	20	11.1
5	Early body changes (weight gain and large breast size)	101	65.1	79	43.9
6	Exposure to some disease and infections during this age Period	113	62.8	67	37.2
7	Suffer from anemia	126	70	54	30

The table (3) presents the biological factors related to pregnancy for women under age (18) years. The biological factors present: early body changes (weight gain and large breast size) (43.9%), exposure to some disease and infections (37.2%), and suffering from menstrual disorder (30.6%).

## Discussion

### Discussion of Factors related to Pregnancy among Pregnant Women Less than 18 Years:

The study results in Table (1) presents the factors related to pregnancy for women under age (18) years; the socio-economic and cultural factors that are significant are: lack of knowledge in the field of sexual and reproductive health (91.1%), lack of knowledge for health problems (83.3%), the structure of the extended family (80.6%), the desirability of pregnancy (80.6%), lack of knowledge regarding use of contraceptive methods (66.7%), and planned pregnancy (59.4%). A study found that (66.8%) of women have lack of knowledge in the field of sexuality and lack of knowledge in contraceptive method use<sup>(5)</sup>, that agree with the result of present study. Also, another study found the planned pregnancy in (54%)<sup>(6)</sup>, that agree with the result of present study.

The study results in Table (2) presents the there are low frequencies have been seen among the personal, behavioral and psychological factors that are: Not having healthy food practice(65%), stress (44.4%), feeling of personal failure (14.4%), and neglect of the special needs (14.4%). A study regarding the effect of teenage pregnancy on adolescents, in this study (92%) of the participant have lack of self –esteem<sup>(7)</sup>, which is inconsistent with the results of present study. this result agree with the result of study concerning factors associated with teenage pregnancy and its effects, the study found the neglect or lack of basic needs is in (8.1%)<sup>(8)</sup>, another study about factors responsible for teenage pregnancy and its implication on adolescent health and education: Perception of secondary school students in Nigeria, the study found health problems in food practice is (60%)<sup>(9)</sup>. Teenage pregnancy in developing countries often occurs within marriage and half are planned. However, in these societies, early pregnancy may combine with malnutrition and poor health care to cause medical problems. When used in combination, educational interventions and access to birth control can reduce unintended teenage pregnancies, study about major depressive disorder during teenage pregnancy: socio-demographic, obstetric and psychosocial correlates, they found significant association with the (wife's educational at p-value 0.006 and occupational at

p-value 0.017)<sup>(10, 11, 12)</sup>, that's disagree with the result of present study.

The study results in Table (3) presents the there are early body changes (weight gain and large breast size) (43.9%), exposure to some disease and infections (37.2%), and suffering from menstrual disorder (30.6%). The study result agree with the result of the study regarding teenage pregnancies: A worldwide social and medical problem, who found that the weight gain in (43.8%) of teenage pregnancies<sup>(13)</sup>. also study found the percentage of exposure to infection was (21.6%) of participant<sup>(14)</sup>. Another study concerning teenage pregnancy medical and biological problems, the study finding showed that menstrual disorder in (4,6%) of participants, the result of study disagree with the result of present study<sup>(15)</sup>. Teenage mothers are also at high risk of malnutrition and sexually transmitted diseases. Medical complications in this age group during pregnancy include anemia, urinary tract infection, hypertension, preeclampsia, eclampsia, and a high rate of instrument delivery and cesarean section<sup>(4)</sup>. Previous studies have reported that adolescent pregnancy and delivery are associated with adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes, such as low birth weight, stillbirth, preterm delivery, maternal anemia, postpartum depression, eclampsia, maternal death and post neonatal death. However, there has been conflicting findings from previous studies especially in women aged  $\leq 15$  years, primarily due to small sample size, differences in medical services, and women's social backgrounds<sup>(16-20)</sup>.

## Conclusions

The study concluded that there are lack of knowledge in sexual and reproductive health, lack of knowledge for health problems, lack of knowledge regarding use of contraceptive methods, Not having healthy food practice, stress and feeling of personal failure, and neglect of the special needs.

## Recommendations

The study recommends that pregnant teenager to have appropriate antenatal care as well as social support to avoid medical problems during pregnancy. Educational programs should be emphasized to pregnant teenage mothers for increasing their knowledge about pregnancy.

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**Conflict of Interest:** None to declare.

**Ethical Clearance:** All experimental protocols were approved under the Department of Maternal and Neonate Nursing Department and all experiments were carried out in accordance with approved guidelines.

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