

Adolescent Pregnancy in India

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Abstract

There is tremendous progress in reducing the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in India. Majority of teenage pregnancy within married life. Even if there is progressive reduction in child marriage, there are 12 states in India which shows higher prevalence in child marriage. One out of four married teenage girls are mother.

Key words: *Teenage pregnancy, Adolescent Health, Child Marriage.*

Introduction

The protecting and promoting the reproductive rights of adolescent girls is crucial to ensure girl's freedom to participate more fully and equally in society (UNFPA, 2016). Adolescent birth is the rate per 1000 women aged 15 to 19. The adolescent pregnancy risks girls healthy development and prevents them from achieving the full potential (UNFPA, 2015). Approximately 16 million girls between 15 and 19 years old give birth each year globally. Ninety percent of adolescent births among 15-19 year olds occur within marriage. According to UNFPO 20000 girls under age 18 in developing countries give birth every day and 7.3 million a year. The half of all adolescent births occur in seven countries: India, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Brazil, Nigeria, United States and Ethiopia (WHO). 11 percent of the world's adolescent pregnancy happen in India. It is one of the country with highest rates of early marriage in the world.

The ninety percentage of adolescent births occur within the marriage. According to NFHS 4 27 percent of girls in India married before the age 18. Third of all our young women marry before the legal married age. The teenage pregnancy lead to the cause of death of girls aged 15 to 19 (UNFPA). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2.2 is to end all forms of malnutrition, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and children. SDG aimed at prevent the insufficient activity among adolescents. Likewise SDG 3.7 and 5.6 is to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services (including for family planning) and rights. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that adolescents have many inalienable rights.

The government of India introduced various programmes and policies for the welfare of girls like "The Beti bachavo beti patavo" . India is progressive in empowering girls but lag behind the world (Yasmin Haque et.al, UN Women, 2017) . The number of married women of

age 20-24 years who are married before age of 18 years halved within a decade from 47.4 percent About 13 million adolescent girls between 10 and 19 years were married in India (Census 2011).

Objectives

1. To analyse the socio demographic characteristics of teenage pregnancy situation in India.
2. To analyse the interstate variations in teenage pregnancy in India.

Methodology

The study is based on secondary data. The main data source is the NFHS-3 And NFHS - 4.Comparison between NFHS 3 and NFHS 4 has also been undertaken to analysis the adolescent pregnancy situation.

Discussion

Table: 1

Teenage Pregnancy Rate in India

NFHS 3 (2005-06)	NFHS 4 (2015-16)
16	7.9

(Source:NFHS 3 and NFHS 4)

Half the number of women as before of age 15-19 years are getting pregnant. India is reduced the proportion of teenage pregnancy from 16 percent to 7.9 percent and which is half the level in 2005-06.The rate high in rural areas approximately one in ten women in the age group 15-19 are pregnant in rural areas. About 11.9 percent of the girls with the age 15-19 year old married before the age of 18 in India (NFHS-4, 2015-16).

Teenage married girls and first child birth

Table:2 shows age at first birth among teenage married girls aged 15 to 19 in India.31 percent of married teenage girls had a child by age 18 and 27 percent had at the age of 17. While More than one out of four married teenage girls are a mother. 4.2 of the married adolescent girls had two or more children. Child marriage are the main reason for the adolescent pregnancy.

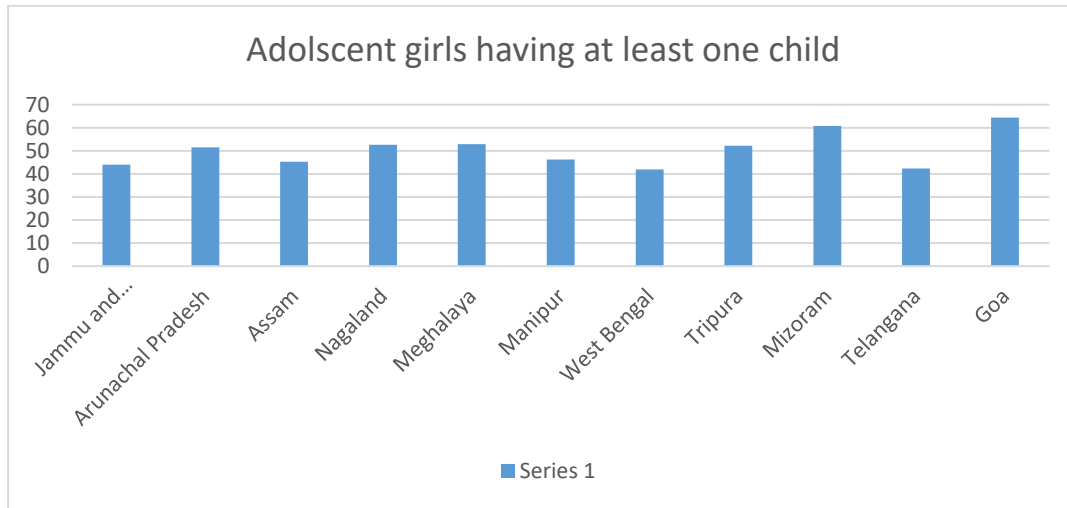
Table:2

Age at first birth among married girls aged 15-19 years old

Age	Below 13	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Percentage	0.6	0.8	2.8	7.7	16.5	26.6	30.7	14.3

(Source:NCPCR,)

The highest prevalence of teenage pregnancy is shown in 12 states in India in these states more than 40 percent have at least one child or more. The incidence of teenage pregnancy is high among the rural areas. 9.2 percent teenagers from rural areas are mothers. This rate is 5 percent among urban teenagers (NFHS4)



(Source: NCPCR)

Education and Teenage Pregnancy

Education could delay pregnancy rate. The educated mothers are prepared for child birth and motherhood. About 39 percent of illiterate girls had begun child bearing compared to 26 percent of literate girls.

Religious wise distribution of teenage pregnancy

The teenage pregnancy is higher among scheduled tribe women .About 9 percent of girls from SC community is in child bearing stage. It is clear that marginalised sections of society is mostly affected by teenage pregnancy.

Community	Teenage pregnancy (percent)
Scheduled caste	8.8
Scheduled Tribe	10.5
Other Backwardclass	7.0
Others	7.5

(NFHS 4)

Body Mass Index

The analysis of Body Mass Index is important to examine the health status of the teenage married girls. Women in India achieving better BMI by more than 35%. It reduced from 35.5 % in 2005-06 to 22.9 % in 2015-16. 36 percent of married teenage girls are found to be underweight. The underweight rate higher in Dadra Nager Haveli (68.9%), Gujarat (50.9%), Daman and Diu (44.0%), Rajasthan (43.9%) and Nagaland 41.4% (NFHS 4). The rate of still birth, low birth weights and late neo natal deaths are result of teenage pregnancy.

Conclusion

The majority of recorded births by teenage girls happen within the wedlock. There is a progressive reduction in the rate of child marriage and Teenage pregnancy. The study points out the importance of high quality secondary education and the need of access to sexual and reproductive health services.

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