
ABSTRACT

The present study is a descriptive comparative study of a sample of 204 primiparous women aged 18-40 years of age, attending antenatal wards and child welfare clinics conducted at De Soyza Hospital for Women, Colombo. It was planned with the objectives of describing postpartum health problems during the puerperium and to compare these problems between those undergoing vaginal delivery and Caesarian section. Information was collected on day 1 postpartum and at 6 weeks with regard to urinary problems, anal incontinence, pain and sexual problems. The instrument used for data collection was an interviewer administered, pre coded, structured questionnaire.

The study revealed the presence of urinary incontinence of 7.7%, flatus incontinence of 21% and fecal incontinence of 0.7% in the vaginal delivery group at 6 weeks. None of these problems were identified in the elective Caesarian section group. Pain and sexual problems were common in both groups. It was also found that most of the complications mentioned above were seen more in assisted vaginal delivery group.

Hence it is recommended that all mothers, especially those who undergo vaginal delivery, should be assessed at least once following delivery for identification and appropriate management of sequelae, which may need medical intervention.