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DETERMINANTS OF PRETERM BIRTH AT THE POSTNATAL WARD OF KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL, NAIROBI, KENYA

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Statement of the Problem: Preterm birth remains the leading cause of perinatal and postnatal mortality and morbidity especially in developing countries like Kenya. In Kenya, in 2014, the under-five and infant mortality rates were 52 and 39 per 1000 live births respectively (UNICEF, 2015). Although, the burden of preterm birth is heavy in Kenya, there is limited information available about the determinants of preterm birth in the Country. Hence the aim of this study was to determine the determinants of preterm birth at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), Nairobi, Kenya.

Materials and Methods: This was a hospital based cross-sectional study involving randomly selected respondents (N=183) from the post natal ward of KNH. Systematic random sampling method was applied to recruit the study respondents. A pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. Data was analyzed using SPSS software version 22.0. Pearson's chi-square test and odds ratio with corresponding 95% confidence intervals were used to find the association between the various variables.

Findings: The prevalence of preterm birth was 20.2%. History of urinary tract infection during pregnancy, history of preterm birth, history of abortion, history of hypertension during pregnancy, advanced maternal age and alcohol consumption during pregnancy were determined as significant risk factors for preterm birth.

Conclusion and Recommendation: The determinants of preterm birth are multifactorial and most of them are controllable if reproductive age mothers are educated properly. It is very important for antenatal mothers to adhere to the guidelines of antenatal visits so that those at risk are early spotted and closely monitored.