COVID-19 and Pregnant Women Psycho-Sociological Effects of COVID-19 in Pregnant Women in Haiti

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ABSTRACT

Introduction and objectives: This article aims to study the psycho-sociological effects of COVID-19 in pregnant women in Haiti. In order for this study to be carried out, first of all, we have inspired previous work carried out by Professor Nicolas Berthelot; Then, we included this study in a qualitative approach while prioritizing the semi-structured interview technique. Afterwards, we took a sample of (3) women who were pregnant during the COVID-19 period in Port-au-Prince. And finally, as a perspective, we found an anthropological aspect in the treatment of COVID-19 which is not yet recognized as a scientifically based treatment in Haiti.

Materials and methods: Our research object relates to the behaviors and the way in which pregnant women live in times of COVID-19. As part of this work, we conducted a semi-directive interview with three (3) female clients taken as a sample, and randomly during the COVID-19 period, in the city of Port-au-Prince, in the month of February.

Results: The results of this interview revealed to us several important elements allowing us to grasp the stakes and the magnitudes of this problem. First of all, it must be said that during the period of COVID-19, pregnant women obviously knew health principles because they read the newspapers, listened to the radio and followed social networks. This would allow them to keep informed throughout the course of this pandemic. However, this did not prevent the latter from manifesting very great psychological distress.

Conclusion: This article on the psycho-sociological effects of COVID-19 in women in Haiti, allows us to conclude by saying that psychological distress, fear, stress, anxiety in pregnant women do not come from the corona phenomenon.

Keywords: Psychological support; Medico-social assistance; Psychological distress; Stress; COVID-19; Pregnant women

INTRODUCTION

This article highlights COVID-19 and pregnant women in Haiti. We want to study from both a psychological and sociological perspective how pregnant women survived this pandemic and the various effects it left on them. In fact, we know that a pregnant woman is a fragile and sensitive woman. Obviously and especially in a period of COVID-19, it is normal to think that pregnant women are also the most vulnerable social categories, and who certainly need psychological support and medico-social assistance. In addition, provided that pregnant women are already categories of people at risk and vulnerable, we thought that this pandemic would probably cause psychological distress

in the latter. After all these thoughts, we wonder how did women who were pregnant survive in the face of COVID-19 in Haiti?. With this in mind, we are emphasizing the behaviors and the means by which these women have taken to face this pandemic in Haiti.

In addition, the process for studying this issue will proceed as follows: First, we would like to present the research of Professor Nicolas Berthelot which addressed this issue. Next, we aim to study the psycho-sociological effects of COVID-19 in pregnant women in Haiti, more specifically in Port-au-Prince. In the methodological section, we prioritized the qualitative method, because we wanted to observe certain elements arising from the

behavior of the subjects surveyed during the semi-structured interview. Finally, we took a sample of (3) women who were pregnant at this said period randomly as part of this study, present the results.

Study aim

Our research object relates to the behaviors and the way in which pregnant women live in times of COVID-19. As part of this work, we conducted a semi-directive interview with three (3) female clients taken as a sample, and randomly during the COVID-19 period, in the city of Port-au-Prince, in the month of February.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design

The pandemic known as COVID-19 has wreaked havoc around the world. Since its appearance, which was identified in Wuhan in Hubei province in China [1]. It has become a topical subject of concern to researchers and scientists. The data which are relatively collected by researchers in terms of loss of human life amount to 106,125,682 confirmed cases, of which 2,320,497 deaths have been recorded, or a lethality of 2.19%, according to the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) [2]. This report was published in February 2021. However, when we want to compare the global data in relation to Haiti, we have seen that in the context of Haiti, it has done less damage. According to MSPP, Haiti has registered 52,043 suspected cases; Either 12,016 confirmed cases, 246 deaths, 9,258 (77%) cases recovered, or a Lethality of 2.05% deaths; 12,016 confirmed cases, represent 43.7% are female and 56.3% male.

In addition, this pandemic has changed the social reality in all countries of the world in terms of social distancing, health care, and in the existential sense, ect. In addition, it has left serious consequences on the socio-economic, psychological and health levels. These consequences are immeasurable, we can see them, the closure of businesses, schools, universities in a word, confinement [2].

This virus affects all social categories, that is to say, old people, young people, adolescents and pregnant women, etc. But, it is less common in children. At the start of its onset, pregnant women and the elderly were considered to be the most vulnerable categories of people likely to be easily affected by the latter. This hypothesis is not confirmed. Then, during the COVID-19 wave, pregnant women were removed from among vulnerable people because there was little data on the effects of the condition in pregnant women and babies.

Nowadays, they are once again becoming categories of people at risk. A recent study conducted by a United States Public Health Agency (CDC), on November 2, affirmed that: "This study was conducted among approximately 400,000 women aged 15 to 44 years who are affected by coronavirus, she revealed that pregnant women were at increased risk of needing to be admitted to an intensive care unit compared to women of the same age who were not expecting a child (10.5 cases for pregnant women compared to 3.9 case for non-pregnant women) [3]. The results

show that expectant mothers are also more likely to be intubated. "Deaths were more likely in pregnant women than in non-pregnant women," the study said. The risk of death was 1.5 cases (per thousand) for expectant mothers against 1.2 for non-pregnant women (Table 1).

Table 1: Prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Name	Global	Haiti
Cases-cumulative total	2.42E+08	23406
Cases-cumulative total per 100000 population	3103.283	205.27
Cases-newly reported in last 7 days	2866268	473
Cases-newly reported in last 7 days per 100000 population	36.77276	4.15
Cases-newly reported in last 24 hours	438684	0
Deaths-cumulative total	4919755	658
Deaths-cumulative total per 100000 population	63.11796	5.77
Deaths-newly reported in last 7 days	47474	1
Deaths-newly reported in last 7 days per 100000 population	0.609067	0.01
Deaths-newly reported in last 24 hours	7189	0

Source: WHO (2021)

New research carried out recently in Canada, notably by Professor Berthelot Nicolas, has revealed the reasons why women are particularly categories or sub-groups that are more vulnerable. To quote Professor Berthelot Nicolas: Many women hold a job in the health network, others are single mothers and who are mainly concerned by the increase in conjugal violence, noticed since the beginning of the health emergency.

Second, pregnancy and the period surrounding the birth of a child are the source of upheaval in a large number of spheres (physical, professional, social, identity) and in themselves represent a period of particular vulnerability for mental health.

Finally, psychological distress during pregnancy could have serious consequences for mothers and their fetuses. Indeed, anxiety or depressive symptoms in pregnant women have been

associated with poorer functioning in mothers, lower birth weight, lower gestational age at birth and increased risk, increased developmental problems of the child, such as delays in cognitive development and socio-emotional development (Table 2) [4].

Table 2: Prevalence and effects of coronavirus (COVID-19) in pregnant women in Haiti

Data from Ministry of Public Health and Population, Haiti (February 2021)	
Confirmed cases	106,125,682
Deaths	2,320,497
Lethality	2.19%
Data of country: Haiti	
Suspected cases	52,043
Confirmed cases	12,016
Deaths	246
Cases recovered (%)	9258 (77%)
Lethality (mortality %)	2.05
Female (%)	43.70%
Male (%)	56.30%
United States Public Health Agency-CDC study results	
No. of infected women (15 to 44 years)	400,000
Pregnant women (Risk of intensive care unit admission)	10.5 cases (per thousand)
Non-pregnant women (Risk of intensive care unit admission)	3.9 cases (per thousand)
Pregnant women, mortality	1.5 cases (per thousand)
Non-pregnant women, mortality	1.2 cases (per thousand)

In a similar context in Haiti, health professionals and leaders waited for an immeasurable devastation since Haiti does not have a better health structure in terms of quality, the Haitian population was worried and expected a desperate situation since the COVID-19 has fatally struck on a global scale and has done a lot of damage to see in the case of Haiti, we did not expect the worst do they say the health professionals?

RESULTS

The results of this interview revealed to us several important elements allowing us to grasp the stakes and the magnitudes of this problem. First of all, it must be said that during the period

of COVID-19, pregnant women obviously knew health principles because they read the newspapers, listened to the radio and followed social networks [5]. This would allow them to keep informed throughout the course of this pandemic. However, this did not prevent the latter from manifesting very great psychological distress. Several factors have explained this psychological distress in the case of Haiti: first, all pregnant women are afraid of being affected, and believed that COVID-19 could also affect their fetuses, they say? Some have even thought that if they reach COVID-19, the fetuses will be born with physical and mental deformities [6]. Indeed, during this period the population possessed a knowledge of how it should behave to avoid any contamination and spread of this virus, but not a rational knowledge of the disease as such, because it falls within the domain of scientist.

Note that many women did not feel comfortable wearing masks, which prevent them from breathing properly, especially among those with respiratory problems, they say. The other major factor considered to trigger stress comes from the lack of service in hospitals. Doctors have been less available to patients, including pregnant women [7]. The latter faced a double problem, that of COVID-19 and containment. Another element that must be considered in this analysis, therefore, is the question of unemployment. Stress also increases during periods of confinement, causing upheaval in women whose husbands are unemployed. This period had given the impression that there was more hope for Christians to repeat "the end of the world is near".

Many people have even had to testify to the absence of the Haitian State in their care since even before this pandemic. This absence translates into the state's inability to meet certain health requirements. Faced with such a situation, everyone should have their own strategy.

DISCUSSION

Therefore, in order to possibly avoid being contaminated and spread this virus, the Haitian population had taken certain remedies that do not have side effects, known as natural. They are generally, clove, a powerful natural antiseptic, ginger so-called natural remedies which serve as a prevention against COVID-19. In this study, an in-depth anthropological approach to the question was briefly discussed. In general, Haitians very often use natural treatments for their disease [8]. The so-called natural treatments are treatments using the leaves. To cope with this plight in times of COVID-19, some pregnant women listen to music, avoid being alone at home.

CONCLUSION

This article on the psycho-sociological effects of COVID-19 in women in Haiti, allows us to conclude by saying that psychological distress, fear, stress, anxiety in pregnant women do not come from the corona phenomenon. Virus unlike other countries, but rather an absence of a health policy which is linked to the weakness of the state of Hatien. From an anthropological point of view, Haitians have a very broad knowledge of traditional medicine. This is the reason why in

this study pregnant women are much more proud of traditional treatments than so-called conventional ones.

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