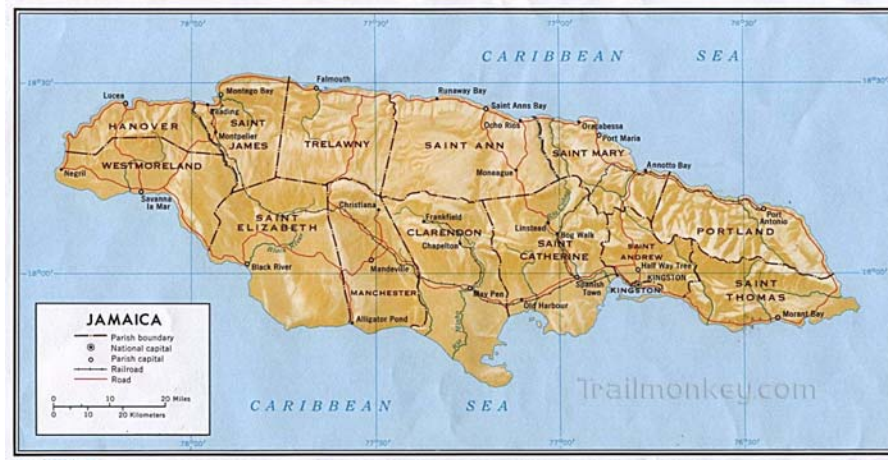


Findings and methodological and ethical challenges involved in conducting the FHI study *“Early Sexual Debut, Sexual Violence, and Sexual Risk-taking among Pregnant Adolescents and Their Peers in Jamaica and Uganda.”*



The Jamaican Experience
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Presentation flow

- Project overview
- Key challenges
- Findings and recommendations

Project overview

- Overall, the project aimed to identify risk factors for adolescent pregnancy in order to inform culturally appropriate programs that aim to prevent unintended adolescent pregnancy.



Project overview

- The study found that many female adolescents in Jamaica are victims of sexual coercion, which occurred in a variety of forms ranging from sexual harassment to rape.



Project overview

- The study comprised of two-phases:
 - 1ST Phase:
 - Formative research-
 - Focus group discussions
 - In-depth interviews



Project overview

- 2nd Phase:
 - Quantitative case-control study conducted in Jamaica.
- All research conducted with pregnant and never pregnant girls 15-17yrs.



Challenges

- Defining sexual coercion in a culturally appropriate way



Challenges

- Identifying and recruiting participants



Challenges

- Interviewer selection and training



Challenges

- Gaining entry to communities



Challenges: Ethical

- Participant consent vs parental consent



Challenges: Ethical

- Inclusion criteria: age of inclusion



Findings: Formative Phase

- **Girls experience a wide variety of sexual coercion** *including:*
 - Sexual harassment
 - Pressure or force
 - Coercion by men in the household



Sexual violence:

- **Sexual harassment:**
 - Verbal or physical harassment
- **Pressure or force**
 - Verbal persuasion
 - Physical force
 - Actually being held down



- **Verbal persuasion:**

- *“so when you say pressured you mean like he gives you argument or him keep asking you for it?”*

- **Unspoken threat**

- *I was there alone. He forced me to have sex and I didn't want to.*

*[Why did you think you had no choice?]
Maybe he would have hit me or something. I am afraid of him. He is very tall.”*



- **Physical force:**

- *“Sometime my baby father force me; sometime me no want to an him a force me.”*

- **Actually being held down:**

- *“At one point, he was trying to talk me into it and then he held me down but I was still refusing....I was vex afterwards...Bad, I felt bad and sad.”*



Coercion by men in household

- Credibility of the girl called into question:
 - A never pregnant girl from Kingston reported that “*her [mother’s] boyfriend tried to molest me and I told her about it and she say is lie me telling; and I run away from her and I end up into a home for six months.*”



Quantitative findings

- **Levels of sexual coercion similar among both cases and controls** (*pregnant vs never pregnant girls*).
 - Coercion at first sex: 34%
 - Coercion at last sex: 10%
 - Been forced to have sex: 23%
 - Victim of violence in the home: 17%
 - Forced to do something sexually degrading: 6%
 - Raped at last sex: 2-3%



Quantitative findings

- **Incidence of sexual coercion similar:**

except for “*having ever been touched in a way that made me feel uncomfortable*”.

- Never pregnant girls 63%
 - Pregnant girls 51%

Quantitative findings

- Conscious use of contraception main difference between pregnant and never pregnant girls.
- Pregnancies generally unplanned as mistimed.



Quantitative findings

- Compared to their never pregnant, sexually active peers, pregnant participants were more likely to:
 - Show less connectedness to their community
 - Less connection to father and mother
 - Be in a stable relationship



Recommendations

Sexual coercion and violence, is an important issue which should be addressed in programs for and with adolescents.

It is recommend that programs to prevent adolescent pregnancy should:

- build adolescents' self-esteem and future orientation
- encourage stronger connections with parents and community groups
- teach girls and boys about contraception and make it accessible



CONCLUSION

- Many girls describe having been forced to have sex at one time or another by their boyfriends or someone they had a relationship with.

CONCLUSION

- **Sexual coercion experienced maybe:**
 - Actual physical force or the threat of force
 - It may be being asked over and over again until it was easier to say “yes” than to say “no”
 - It may be violent rape

CONCLUSION

- Although the study found no association between sexual coercion and sexual risk taking (pregnancy) the prevalence of sexual violence indicates it is an important issue which needs to be understood further and an issue programs need to address.

Thank you...

