In Western countries, women delay the age of their first pregnancy but postponing pregnancy is a risk for women and pregnancy outcomes.

In women aged 40 years or above, the critical pregnancy rate decreased and assisted reproductive techniques are often recommended.

The objective of this study was to compare pregnancy outcomes in women with spontaneous pregnancy (SP) versus patients undergoing in vitro Fertilization (IVF) in women aged 40 years or above.

METHODS

We retrospectively analysed data of a cohort of 479 women aged 40 years or above that gave birth in our hospital between January 2015 and December 2016. Multiple pregnancies were not included. Seventy eight women got pregnant after IVF and 401 became pregnant spontaneously.

We assessed:
• Vaginal birth rate
• Risk of pre-eclampsia
• Gestational diabetes rate
• Operative delivery rate
• Post-partum haemorrhage rate

RESULTS

Vaginal birth rate was similar between SP and IVF (75.3% vs. 70.5%, p= 0.454). Likelihood of assisted vaginal delivery with the help of forceps or vacuum device was lower in SP than in IVF arm (30.1% vs 56.4%, p<0.001).

There was not significant difference between both arms of the study in pre-eclampsia, gestational diabetes and post-partum haemorrhage rates.

CONCLUSION

In our study, perinatal outcomes were no significantly different after IVF than SP in women aged 40 years or above and only a higher rate of assisted vaginal deliveries was detected.