Cohort profile: 1958 British birth cohort

(National Child Development Study)

This study originated as study of Perinatal Mortality focusing on births in 1958. The objective was to identify social and childbirth factors linked to stillbirth (death in womb) and neonatal (newborn) deaths.

The findings contributed to the improvement of maternity services in Britain and to a reduction in perinatal mortality.

For these cohorts, the health and social development data was collected at age 7, 11, 16, 23, 33, 42 and 45/50 years into their adult life.

On Epileptic focus the fits in first year and after, petit mal were observed from the childhood and then were followed as Epileptic fits, tics, and habit spasms from the ages 7 to 11, 16 and 23. Later only cohorts’ Emotional problems were profiled.

The cohort has been extremely influential in its impact on policy and practice and in extending our understanding of human development, social inequalities, and health inequalities. The Perinatal

This Study also demonstrated that reductions in birthweight were mainly due to smoking during the pregnancy. This also explained why higher rates of spontaneous abortion in smokers were seen.

This study also lead to understanding on growth and obesity levels in children as they grew older. Along with the relationships between birth-weight and cognitive trajectories. How different aspects of child development combine to affect adult health. How markers of child development (height, emotional development, and cognition) had effects on adult (poor-rated) health and the influences on some adult outcomes accumulate over long periods. Thus establishing important perspectives in life-course epidemiology (the incidence, distribution, and possible control health factors).

One of the shortcoming of the study has been it was not was not done on a diverse group, of ethnic diversity of today’s population.