Objectives: The aim of the study was to evaluate the incidence, indications and outcome of operative vaginal deliveries among pregnant women managed over a ten-year period (1999-2009) at the Ebonyi State University Teaching Hospital (EBSUTH), Abakaliki, Nigeria.

Methods: This was a retrospective review of all cases of operative vaginal deliveries (vacuum extraction, obstetric forceps and destructive operations) conducted at the Ebonyi State University Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki (EBSUTH) over a ten-year. Statistical calculations were done using Epi Info statistical software 2007 version.

Results: A total of 9,828 deliveries were conducted during the study period, out of which 461 were by instrumental vaginal delivery giving an incidence of 4.69% with vacuum extraction accounting for 4.45%, forceps 0.07% and destructive operation 0.17%. The common indications for vacuum and forceps deliveries were delay in the second stage of labor, poor maternal effort, fetal distress and maternal medical conditions such as pre-eclampsia/eclampsia and cardiac diseases. The indication for destructive operations was mainly prolonged obstructed labor with intrauterine fetal death. The perinatal mortality rate was 0.03%. There was no maternal death recorded.

Conclusion: The outcome of operative vaginal delivery in Abakaliki, Southeast, Nigeria, shows that it remains an important facet of contemporary obstetric practice in developing countries.

Keywords: operative, instrumental, delivery, forceps, vacuum