

GIRL – CHILD EDUCATION AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY: A CASE STUDY OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NDOKWA EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The importance of the girl-child education cannot be over emphasized. Hence, this study examines the effect of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of the girl-child. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprise all the teachers and students of the 27 public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area of Delta State. Sample of 1,000 students and 2,000 teachers were randomly drawn from the 27 public secondary schools. Two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated, while data collection was majorly through the use of questionnaire. In analyzing the data, the descriptive statistics (percentage, frequency) were used to answer the research questions while the chi-square contingency table was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. All the hypotheses were accepted. The study revealed that the causes of teenage pregnancy include: lack of parental control, poverty, peer pressure, among others. Also, it revealed that the major effects of teenage pregnancy include: depression, self-withdrawal etc. The study recommends amongst others that parents should be encouraged to live harmoniously and give adequate training to their girl-child; school as an agent of socialization should be involved in impacting knowledge to teenagers on their interpersonal relationship, teenagers should be counseled on why they should not allow friends and emotions affect their attitude towards sexual intercourse.

Keywords: girl-child, education, teenage pregnancy, secondary school

Introduction

Teenage pregnancy is one of the major contemporary issues confronting most countries in the world today, both the developed countries and the developing countries like Nigeria. All over the world, societal challenges such as corruption, stigmatization, tribalism, social inequality, public health challenges, to mention but a few continued to impede the development of nations. Teenage

pregnancy and its effects on girl-child education are two key socioeconomic concerns that are generating debate among experts and plaguing both developed and emerging cultures. Teenage pregnancy is a current issue that affects most countries around the world, both developed and developing, such as Nigeria. Teenage pregnancy is defined as a pregnancy by a female teenager or under

the age of eighteen years old who is between the ages of thirteen and eighteen years old. In fact, it is a cultural issue when adults do childlike activities (Alabi & Oni, 2017). It can also be characterized as a pregnancy that occurs as a result of a child's drug misuse and sexual exploitation (Ekefre, Ekanem& Essien, 2014). As a result, physical and psychological functions normally designated for adults can be deducted. Because of its harmful consequences for girls, this issue has become a major topic of concern for policymakers, social workers, and other service providers (Grunseit 2007).

According to Spencer (2011), a teenage pregnancy occurs when a young girl is between the ages of 13 and 14. Macleod (2011) sees it as a social issue in which adult behaviors and activities (sexual intercourse, reproduction, and motherhood) are disrupted. Adult practices and activities (sexual intercourse, reproduction, motherhood) are displayed by a person who, due to her age and developmental stage, is not – yet – an adult. Making it difficult for the girl–child to finish her education is one of the most traumatic and destructive effects of adolescent pregnancy.

In fact, the issue of adolescent pregnancy in a girl–child is far from simple. It is commonly stated that one's adolescent years are the most enjoyable of one's life.

For many teenagers, however, life is a terrible tug of war packed with competing feelings and demands from parents, instructors, peer groups, relatives, and friends. Most parents pay less attention to their children, which is compounded by the fact that today's youth are growing up in a culture where unmarried sexual relationships (particularly involving teenagers) are widely accepted through peer pressure, television and motion pictures, music, and periodicals. Such anticipated behavior has played a significant role in the moral degradation that is common among our teens.

The presence of teenage pregnancy does not bode well for the girl-development. child's This is due to the girls' age and the lack of any continuous means of support to care for the children and themselves while they were supposed to be in school. Teenage pregnancy and motherhood are said to be associated with hardship, shame, humiliation, school dropout, and sometimes the termination of a person's hopes of achieving higher goals. School dropout, falling prey to criminal activities, abortion, ostracism, child neglect, school adjustment difficulties for their children, adoption, lack of social security, poverty, repeated pregnancy, and negative effects on domestic life are just some of the social consequences of teenage pregnancy. According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2011), roughly 16

million girls globally become pregnant each year, with about 5.5 million in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the United States of America leads the industrialized world in the number of teenage moms, whereas Japan and South Korea are the least affected (Gaby 2012). Major (2004), asserts that in developing countries, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of teenage mothers. In fact, 13,000 girls drop out of school each year due to teen motherhood (Kirby 2002).

In Nigeria, an estimated 23% of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have started having children, with 17% having their first child and 5% expecting their first child. In addition, 32 percent of teenagers in rural areas have started having children, compared to 10% in Nigeria's urban areas. North West 36 percent, North East 32 percent, North-central 19 percent, South South 12 percent, South East 8 percent, and South West 8 percent are the geopolitical zones with the most inequality, according to the survey (Okeke et al 2008)

In light of the aforementioned, it has become imperative to do research into the impact of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of the girl-child in public schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area of Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

Teenage pregnancy is an unwelcome occurrence among girls who are both educationally and economically disadvantaged. Due to a variety of contributing reasons, it has persisted in our local communities and has had harmful consequences for the girl – kid involved. In reality, scholars have debated the impact of adolescent pregnancy on the scholastic development of the girl-child in many ways. According to Pandey et al., (2009), adolescent mothers are unlikely to complete high school (i.e Secondary School Education). Non-completion of secondary school education limits the earning potential of the adolescent population, potentially perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

The study will identify and examine the causes and effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of girls, as well as reveal options for preventing teenage pregnancy, based on this concept. As a result, research into the effects of adolescent pregnancy on the educational development of girls in Delta State's Ndokwa East Local Government Area is required.

Objectives of the Study

The study's major goal is to look at the impact of adolescent pregnancy on the educational development of the girl child. The following are the specific goals:

- i. The goal is to figure out what

- causes teenage pregnancy.
- ii. To determine the difficulties that teenage mothers face in schools.
- iii. To investigate the effects of teenage pregnancy on the girl child education.
- iv. To propose solutions to the causes of teenage pregnancy that have been recognized.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study

- I. What are the causes of teenage pregnancy in public secondary schools?
- ii. To what extent does teenage pregnancy affect the educational development of the girl-child in public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area?

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following Hypotheses

- 1. There is no significant difference between the age range of the respondents and the causes of teenage pregnancy of the girl-child in public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area.
- 2. There is no significant difference between the male and female

respondents on the effects of teenage pregnancy on the development of the girl-child in public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area.

Significance of the Study

Teen pregnancy in school has been a major cause of concern. Not only in Delta State but in Nigeria. The findings of this study will aid policymakers, particularly education planners, in developing more appropriate teen pregnancy institution programs. It will also assist in highlighting the characteristics linked to teen pregnancy among school-aged youngsters. The study will also be useful to parents/ guardians on how to protect their female children from engaging in elicited relationships. The study will also contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the subject, laying the groundwork for future research on teen pregnancy among school-aged children.

Methodology

The research was conducted using a descriptive survey research design, which enables for both qualitative and quantitative approaches to be used. This design is intended to aid researchers in the data collecting, processing, and interpretation process. All public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local

Government Area of Delta State were used in this study. As a result, the study included public secondary schools as well as all teachers and students in the study area.

A total of 1,000 students and 200 teachers were chosen at random from public secondary schools for the study. The questionnaire served as the data collection tool. The instrument's face and content validity were verified. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was also used to calculate the test-retest method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.81.

The information gathered was examined and organized into tables. The study questions were evaluated using descriptive statistics (percentages and

frequencies), whereas the hypotheses were analyzed using inferential statistics (chi-square contingency table). The significance threshold was set at 0.05.

Presentation of Results

Research Question one

What are the causes of teenage pregnancy in secondary school in Ndokwa East L.G.A of Delta State?

Discussion of Results

The study's findings on research question two revealed that the reduction in absorption rate is the most common of the four probable consequences of adolescent pregnancy on the educational development of the girl-child. This means

Table 1: causes of Teenage pregnancy in secondary school

Variables	Frequently	Percentage %
Poor parenting	500	41.7
Love seeking	100	8.3
Poverty	190	15.8
Media	100	8.3
Poor social economic background	110	9.2
Total	1,200	100

From table 1 above, it is clear that 500 respondents representing 41.7% opined that poor parenting is the major cause of teenage pregnancy, 100 respondents, representing 8.3% indicated that love seeking is one of the causes of teenage pregnancy, 190 representing 15.8% showed that poverty is the major cause of teenage pregnancy, 200 representing 16.7% indicated that peer pressure is the major causes of teenage pregnancy, 100 representing 8.3% indicated that media is the major cause of teenage pregnancy, and 110 respondents, representing 9.2% indicated that poor socio-economic background is the major cause of teenage pregnancy on the whole, all the respondents agreed that the identified factions/ variable being about teenage pregnancy in secondary school in Ndokwa East Local Government Area.

Research Question Two

To what extent does teenage pregnancy affect the educational development of the Girl-child in public secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area.

Table 2: Effect of Teenage pregnancy on the Educational development of the Girl- child.

Variables	Frequently	Percentage %
Reduces average number of study periods	300	25
Absorption Rate	350	29.2
Depression	300	25
Self-withdrawal	250	20.8
Total	1,200	100

From the table above, 300 respondents representing 25% opined that pregnancy affected their educational development through reduction in their study hours, 350 respondents representing 29.2% indicated that depression sets in when pregnancy

occurs, and 250 respondents representing 20.8% indicated that students will withdraw themselves from academic activities during pregnancy. All these identified variables affect the educational development of the Girl- child.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the age range of the respondent and the causes of teenage pregnancy among the girl- child in secondary schools in Ndokwa East Local Government Area.

Table3 :Test of significant Difference on the causes of Teenage pregnancy

Age Range	Causes Of Teenage Pregnancy Among The Girl-Child				Row Total	X ³ Value
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
11 – 19	50 (51)	70 (70)	60 (62)	40 (39)	220	0.07
19 - 29	120 (121)	60 (59)	72 (70)	70 (72)	322	
29 - 39	82 (82)	33 (32)	100 (99)	41 (43)	256	
39 - 49	30 (29)	29 (32)	35 (37)	51 (48)	145	
49 & above	105 (104)	72 (72)	62 (61)	18 (18)	275	
TOTAL	387	264	329	220	1,200	

Significant at 0.05 $df = 6 = 7.85$

As indicated in the table above, the calculated value of 0.07 is lower than the critical value of 7.85 at 0.05 level of significance. There is no significant difference on the causes of teenage pregnancy. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference between the age range of the respondents and the causes of teenage pregnancy among the girl – child, is hereby accepted.

Hypothesis 2.

There is no significant difference between the male and the female respondents on the effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of the girl – child in secondary schools in Ndokwa – East Local Government Area of Delta State.

Table 4: test of significant difference of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of the girl – child.

Gender of Respondents	Extent at which teenage pregnancy affect the educational development of the Girl-Child				Row Total	X ³ Value
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Male	168 (170)	96 (94)	56 (58)	100 (98)	420	0.17
Female	300 (298)	301 (303)	100 (102)	79 (77)	780	
Total	468	396	156	179	1,200	

Significant at 0.05, $dt = 6 = 7.85$

The data in table 4 above shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents. The calculated table value of 0.17 is lower than the critical value of 7.85 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypotheses which states that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents on the effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational development of the girl – child is accepted.

that the rate at which young pregnant girls in NdokwaEast Local Government Area of Delta State concentrate, absorb, and internalize whatever they are taught is severely reduced. As a result, when young females become pregnant, their capacity to continue learning is negatively impacted, and they become weak, weary, and ill. This finding agrees with that of Bezuidenhout (2008), who claims that an unmarried pregnant teenager (school girl) is caught in the middle of a multifaceted crisis marked by the emotional and physical realities of pregnancy, as well as the disruption of her education.

The second most common impacts of teenage pregnancy in the research area are depression and a reduction in the number of average study periods. This indicates that the majority of pregnant adolescent girls experience sadness, which reduces the number of study hours and their ability to stay in school, often leading to school dropout. This finding is consistent with Sambo's (2009) findings that adolescent pregnancy complications create a halt in education pursuit among pregnant teens, which can obstruct a young person's

future development opportunities as well as their quality of life.

According to the findings of the study on research question one, the causes of teenage pregnancy include bad parenting, peer pressure, poverty, a weak socioeconomic background, love seeking, and the media. Teenage pregnancy is primarily caused by poor parenting. Park (2008) and Kinby (2001) findings on peer pressure, single parenting, and exposure to sexual intercourse on electronic and print media corroborate this conclusion.

The null hypotheses that were developed to guide the research were all accepted. When it comes to the causes of adolescent pregnancy among schoolgirls, Hypotheses 1 revealed that there is a significant disparity in the age range of respondents. This means that all of the possible causes of teen pregnancy identified in this study had the same chance of resulting in a pregnancy in schoolgirls.

Similarly, the results of hypothesis 2 revealed no significant differences in the impacts of teenage pregnancy among girl-child in schools between male and female

respondents. This demonstrates that the respondents' opinions have no bearing on the study's outcome. In fact, both male and female respondents believe that teen pregnancy can cause depression and a reduction in average study hours, which can lead to dropping out. This finding is consistent with Uchendu's (2002) findings that adolescent pregnancy contributes to school dropout.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are given based on the findings of this study:

1. Parents should be encouraged to live in harmony and properly train their daughters.
2. The school, as a socialization agent, should be involved in influencing teenagers' interpersonal relationships.
3. Advise teenagers on why they should not let their friends' feelings/emotions influence their own attitude toward sexual intercourse.
4. One of the identified causes of teenage pregnancy was poverty. To overcome this problem, the government should strengthen families so that they can meet the requirements of girls.
5. The government should also promulgate a law requiring girls to be at least twenty (20) years old

before marrying.

Conclusion

Every girl – child has the right to education, which is the key to changing her life and making her a responsible member of society. Girls are denied the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute to society if they do not receive education. In Nigeria, barriers to girl-child education have been linked to a number of reasons, including poverty, a poor parental background, and economic factors, all of which lead to adolescent pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy and school attendance, in fact, do not mix well because the latter has a negative impact on their education and future aspirations in school. This is owing to the fact that teenage mothers attend school irregularly and occasionally drop out due to their parental responsibilities.

Girls are denied the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute to the development of their country if they do not receive education. Despite this, certain initiatives have been undertaken in Nigeria to improve the education of girls. Much work need to be done if women are to completely fulfill their potential and contribute to the country's political, socioeconomic, and technological progress.

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