The Influence of Teenage Pregnancy on Secondary School Girls
(Study in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area of Ekiti State)

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Abstract: This study investigated the influence of teenage pregnancy on secondary school girls in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government area of Ekiti State. The study employed the use of the descriptive research of the survey type. The population consisted of all secondary school girls in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Four secondary schools were randomly selected from the Local Government. The sample was 200 subjects selected through purposive sampling in the study area. A questionnaire constructed by the researcher was used to collect data. Four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The data collected were analysed using t-test statistic and all hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that environment, media and ICT, parental background and peer group had significant influence on teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in Irepodun/Ifelodun in the study area. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that parents should consider good environment that will be suitable for growth and development of their children. They should watch their wards at home and create time to monitor their activities on media and ICT. This could also prevent peer influence. Sex education should also be given to girls both at home and in school.

Keywords: Teenage pregnancy, secondary schools, Irepodun/Ifelodun local government.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the recent years, one of the major social problems confronting most countries all over the world is teenage pregnancy. Researches’ have shown that it has occurred among teens of all ages and races. According to Sedgh, Finer, Bankole, Giler and Singh (2015), the U.S teen pregnancy rate is substantially higher than other western industrialised Nations. To buttress this, Planned Parenthood report on pregnancy and childbearing among U.S. teens compared teenage birth rates in other developed countries and discovered that Americans are the highest, twice as high as Australia’s and Canada’s, three times as high as France, three and half times as high as Germany’s, six times as high as the Netherlands, and seven times as high as Japan’s. Up to 70,000 teen girls in these developing
countries as observed by Mayor (2004), die from complications during pregnancy each year. Young mothers and their babies are also at greater risk of contacting HIV.

Apart from the developed countries, Nigeria has also faced an awful problem of teenage pregnancy. According to the data of the World Health Organization (2012), more than 16millions girls from 15 to 19 years old are becoming mothers and 2million or even younger teenagers give birth yearly. An estimated 3.2million of them undergo unsafe abortions and are exposed to complications in pregnancy while most of them are faced with complications as obstetric fistula, illness, injury and death. As stated by Sedgh (2012), almost half of these abortions committed are unsafe and they occur in less developed countries. Out of these, 40% are among girls less than 25years old.

Teenage pregnancy is defined by Mcgraw-Hill concise Dictionary of modern medicine (2002) as adolescent pregnancy, teen pregnancy, and social medicine pregnancy. It is also pregnancy by a female age 13 to 19, which is understood to occur in a girl who has not completed her core education, that is, secondary school, has few or no marketable skills, is financially dependent upon her parents or continues to live at home and is mentally immature. WHO (2004) sees adolescent pregnancy as pregnancy in females under the age of 20 while it is defined according to Langham (2015) as an unintended pregnancy during adolescence. Complementing these, Hamilton and Ventura (2012) sees teenage pregnancy as a pregnancy in human females under age of 20 at the time that the pregnancy ends.

The role of parents cannot be over emphasized in the upbringing of the children. Parents are supposed to provide basic needs of human beings which include the need for shelter, food, education and good health for the children. In a situation where these are lacking, girls could be pushed into pre-marital sex which could in turn lead to unwanted pregnancies. Teen girls are more likely to get pregnant if they have limited or no guidance from their parents. Many parents have busy lives that prevent them from providing the guidance and support their young teenagers need to make good decisions on issues such as sex. As a result of the nature of work of most parents, they do not have time to put their wards on the right track and when parents do not have time to give proper parental care or proper guidance to the children, they may be influenced negatively by the peers who are readily available to interact with their friends. As observed by Hobbie (1993), the first to be blamed are school and teachers but the real starting point should be from within the family who are supposed to be parents. Therefore, parents have a lot to do in ensuring proper upbringing of the children. According to Honig (2012), lack of education about sex and pregnancy is a large cause of teenage pregnancy.

It has been observed that parental background of the girl child can contribute to teenage pregnancy and this may include the economic situation of the parents. The researcher has observed that poverty in many homes had pushed teenage girls into pre-marital sex which in turn could lead to unwanted pregnancies. In a research conducted by Undiyaudeye, Agba and Mandeun (2015), statistically, girls who are reared from poor background families have the highest rated sexual activity that lead to early pregnancy. As shown by the study, poor parenting, poverty, dating, violence, age discrepancy in relationship, child environmental factors, medical and so on are the major causes that lead to consequences of teenage pregnancy.

Teenagers learn a lot from their peers. Charles (2013) believes that most teenagers rely on their peers for information which makes them fall prey to teenage pregnancy. Langham (2015) in consonance with this, agrees that during adolescence, teenagers often feel pressure to make friends and fit in with their peers many times, these teens let their friends influence their decision to have sex, even when they do not fully understand the consequences associated with the act and the end results is an unplanned teen pregnancy in some cases.

Environment is another factor that could influence teenage pregnancy. It contributes in no small measure to the growth and development of the girl child. This environment could be childhood environment, that is, the abode of the teenage child or the larger environment, that is, the area of abode or the society at large. Jellili, Akindele and Ojo (2013) in their study conducted on teenage pregnancy and home environment factors observe that incidence of teenage pregnancy is related to residential density, parenthood, heterogeneity of the housing environment and peer group pressure among others. Studies have found that girls whose fathers left the family early in their lives had the highest rates of early sexual activity and adolescent pregnancy. Treffers (2003) believes that one third of teenage
pregnancies could be prevented by eliminating exposure to abuse, violence and family strife. Also from observations, teenage pregnancy has become rampant in rural areas because of environmental influence and lack of exposure. In most of the rural areas, family planning and health services are not readily available and this has made the child not to have easy access to family planning methods that could prevent unwanted pregnancies.

A study conducted in 2006 found that adolescents who were more exposed to sexuality in the media were more likely to engage in sexual activity themselves (Engle, Brown, Kenneavy Brown, Kenneavy (2006). To buttress this, Park (2008) observes that teens exposed to the most sexual content on T.V are twice as likely as teens watching less of this material to become pregnant before they reach the age of 20. Asekun Olarinmoye, and Asekun Olarinmoye, Adebimpe and Omisoro (2014) in their research conducted found out that uncontrolled exposure to mass media and internet could negatively influence the sexual patterns and behaviour of youths. In line with this, Doughty (2017) affirms that the chances that a girl aged under 18 will get pregnant during this period marked by the rise of social media, failing unemployment and increasing numbers of girls going to the university is high.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been observed that adolescents spend most of their times watching pornographic films, browsing and visit internet to watch sex induced things which are easily accessible and this could likely influence their behaviour because they seem to practice all these in real life.

It has also been observed that most parents have little or no time to teach their children sex education which they leave at the mercy of the teachers who in turn have little to offer. This seems to have left them to get information from peers only and this could lead to pressure to engage in sexual acts.

It appears that teenagers in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area do not have access to appropriate and adequate information on sex education and reproductive health because most school teachers seem not to be well equipped on how to go about this, different teenagers seem not get the necessary information about sex education to enable them make informed decisions. It is on this premise that the researcher is interested in finding out the influence of teenage pregnancy on secondary school students in Irepodun/Ifelodun local government in Ekiti State.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of teenage pregnancy on secondary school students in Irepodun/ Ifelodun local government in Ekiti State. The study found out if parental background, media and ICT, environment and peer group influenced teenage pregnancy among girls in the study area.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were raised in the study:

1. Environment will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area.
2. Media and ICT will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area.
3. Parental background will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area.
4. Peer group pressure will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive research design of the survey type. It focuses on the influence of teenage pregnancy on secondary school students and questionnaire was used to collect information as it naturally occurred from the subjects.
6. POPULATION
The population consisted of all secondary school students in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

7. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES
The sample consisted of 200 secondary school students selected from four secondary schools in the Local Government through multi-stage sampling: Four towns were selected from the twelve towns in the Local Government through simple random sampling. Purposive sampling was also used to select 200 students from four secondary schools in the selected towns.

8. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT
The instrument used was a questionnaire tagged “Influence of Teenage Pregnancy on Secondary School Students Questionnaire”. The questionnaire contained 2 sections. Section one was on demographic data which sought information about the bio data of the respondents while section B contained items on the influence of teenage pregnancy.

9. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT
Experts in the area of counselling and Psychology ascertained the face and content validity of the instrument. Test re-test method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and reliability co-efficient of 0.77 was obtained which was judged to be reliable for the study.

10. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENT
The administration of the instrument was done by the researcher and some trained research assistants who visited the schools. The copies were collected back immediately after the respondents filled the questionnaire.

11. DATA ANALYSIS
The data collected were analysed using t-test for all the hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

11.1 Hypotheses 1
Environment will not significantly influence of teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>161.541*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>54.73</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>199</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

Table 1 reveals that environment had significant influence on teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area (t=161.541, p<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

11.2 Hypotheses 2
Media and ICT will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in study area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media and ICT</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>174.437*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>54.73</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>199</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05
The result in Table 2 reveals that media and ICT had significant influence on teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in the study area (t=174.473, p<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

11.3 Hypotheses 3
Parental background will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in study area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental background</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>159.925*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>54.73</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

Table 3 depicts that Parental background will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in study area (t=159.925, p<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

11.4 Hypotheses 4
Peer group pressure will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in study area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental background</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>161.022*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>54.73</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

Table 4 reveals that peer group pressure is a factor that can significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in study area (t=161.022, p<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

12. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
The study was on the influence of teenage pregnancy on secondary school students in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area in Ekiti State. The First hypothesis states that environment will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students. The finding revealed that environment had significant influence on teenage pregnancy among secondary school students. The null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that environment could have influence on teenage pregnancy and this is due to the fact that environment contributes to the growth and development of a child. This corroborates the findings of Jelili, Akindele and Ojo (2013) who found out that incidence of teenage pregnancy is related to residential density, parenthood, heterogeneity of the housing environment and peer group pressure among others.

The second hypothesis states that Media and ICT will not significantly influence of teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in Ado Ekiti. The null hypothesis was rejected because the finding revealed that Media and ICT had significant influence on teenage pregnancy among secondary school students. Media and ICT have contributed immensely to the moral decadence among teenagers of today. It has led to teenage pregnancy and abortion. This finding is in line with that of Park (2008) who observed that teens exposed to the most sexual content on TV are twice as likely more than those watching less of this content to become pregnant before they reach the age of 20. To buttress this, Asekun Olarinmoye and Asekun Olarinmoye, Adebimpe and Omisore (2014) found out that uncontrolled exposure to mass media and internet could negatively influence the sexual patterns and behaviour of youths while Doughty (2017) affirmed that the chances that a girl aged under 18 will get pregnant dived during years marked by the rise of social media and failing unemployment.
Hypothesis 3 states that parental background will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government. The finding showed that parental background had influence on teenage pregnancy; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Findings have indicated that parental background could influence teenage pregnancy in so many ways. As a result of the nature of work of most parents, they do not have time to put their wards on the right track and when they lack parental care and proper guidance, they may be influenced negatively by the peers who are readily available. Buttressing this, Honig (2012) believed that lack of education about sex and pregnancy is a large cause of teenage pregnancy. In the same vein, Undiyaudeye, Agba and Mandeun (2015) opined that parental background of girl child can contribute to teenage pregnancy. In their research, they concluded that statistically, girls who are reared from poor family background have the highest rate of sexual activity that lead to early pregnancy.

Hypothesis 4 states that peer group pressure will not significantly influence teenage pregnancy among secondary school students. The null hypothesis was rejected. This could be due to the fact that teens learn from their peers especially when parents fail in their duties to educate their wards, usually on sex and sexuality. Charles (2013) believes that most teenagers rely on their peers for information which makes them fall prey to teenage pregnancy. Langham (2015) in consonance with this, agrees that during adolescence, teenager often feel pressure to make friends and fit in with their peers many times, these teens let their friends influence their decision to have sex, even when they do not fully understand the consequences associated with the act and the end results is an unplanned teen pregnancy in some cases.

13. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study showed that environment, Media and ICT, Parental background and peer group are factors that can influence teenage pregnancy among girls in secondary schools in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government in Ekiti State.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents should consider good environment that will be suitable for growth and development of their children. They should watch their wards at home and create time to monitor their activities on media and ICT. These could prevent peer influence.

Sex education should also be given to children both at home and in school. Curriculum planners should make sure that education on sex and sexuality is included in school curriculum. Government should also provide employment opportunities for parents to enable them meet the needs of their children.

14. REFERENCES