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TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN ZING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF TARABA STATE, NIGERIA: FACTORS, CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBLE REMEDIES

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ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy is pregnancy that occurs in human females under the age of 20, it has implications on adolescents' growth and development. It is a social issue of public health importance that has received attention globally. It a menace to both developed and developing countries, but it is more prevalent in developing countries such as Nigeria. This outcome is of public health concern given that teenage pregnancy has effects on girl child education their health and the health of their children. This study focused on the causes, effects and control of this act among the teenagers in Zing Local government area of Taraba State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and 200 respondents were purposively selected across the local government area to complete a self-administered questionnaire. Some of the causes discovered are lack of proper parenting and sex education, poverty, and peer pressure while the effects include: education disruption, parental isolation and neglect, STIs/ Abortion among other. The study recommended adequate parental care and counselling, sex education and teachings of moral values through religious bodies as ways of reducing teenage pregnancy in Zing Local Government, Taraba state, Nigeria.

Keywords: **Teenage, poverty, teenage pregnancy, Zing, parenting methods.**

Introduction

Motherhood is a great challenge for any woman, despite its premium value particularly in African society in general. An additional obstacle is the fact that an adolescent mother lacks the mental or psychological and, at times, the financial capacity to raise a child. Many studies have highlighted the drawbacks of teen maternity for their children. These include impaired cognitive growth, poorer language skills, academic failure, poor social outcomes, and the possibility of becoming the next generation of teenage mothers and a high likelihood of ending up in foster care. (Alabi & Oni, 2017; Chiazor et al., 2017; Kassa et al., 2018; Vincent & Alemu, 2016)

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), every year 21 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 and 2.5 million under 16 give birth globally. For teenagers, pregnancy is associated with a higher risk of complications like puerperal endometritis and systemic infections relative to women between the ages of 20 and 24. These complications are a significant cause of death among girls in this age group.(WHO, 2014)

Teenage pregnancy is characterized as pregnancy occurring in girls 10 to 19 years of age. It has become a significant public health issue, particularly in Africa. Thus, the area is noted for high maternal and infant morbidity and mortality rates. Several governmental and non-governmental organizations have been involved in some African countries Since recent times, the focus has been on reducing the pregnancy rate for teenagers while very slow progress has been achieved.(Kassa et al., 2018)

Prior to procreation a woman should be physically and medically stable. Some teenagers die in the course of giving birth or lose their babies because a teenage girl's body is not always mature enough to handle pregnancy and the stress involved. A teen's mind is not yet sufficient mentally to manage the pressures of parenting and motherhood and that's why most teenage mothers live with relatives who help them care for their children. Although teenage pregnancy is seen in some societies as an aberration, in some other societies it could be celebrated because it is in line with their culture and societal norms.(Nkhoma et al., 2020)

Statement of the Problem

No doubt the rising issue of teenage pregnancy is a cause of concern. In Nigeria, the pace at which teens get pregnant is on the rise. It has become a social issue which needs to be tackled. Teenage pregnancy is popular in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa like Nigeria. Nigeria's Demographic and Health Survey (2018) shows that 8.6 % of females aged 15-19 have had sex at age 15 with corresponding 2.4 of their male counterparts. The survey also indicated that 21% of women aged 15-19 are already mothers, 4.3% are pregnant with the first child and 25.2% have begun childbearing.(National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria] and ICF. 2019., 2018)

Early exposure to sexual relationships for the girl leads to the risk of early pregnancy and childbearing, premature drop-out from school, early marriage, early separation or divorce, high exposure to HIV/AIDS, early entrance into the informal labour force and poverty(Chiazor et al., 2017)A societal issue such as teenage pregnancy, which has become a source of shame for families , schools, and society as a whole, calls for such studies. In every culture, whether it is existing, developing or less established, it is no longer a new thing. There have been many explanations for its development, but the fundamental problem is the persistence and geometric progress of its growth, despite all the efforts made by government, schools, religious bodies and non-governmental organizations to address certain established factors that lead to this cancer or decadence in our societies.(Alabi & Oni, 2017)

There are numerous research works on causes and effects of teenage pregnancy, however, such studies have not been explored in Zing LGA of Taraba State. It is on this ground that this study is undertaken with a view to finding out the causes and effects of this ugly social

and proffering some remedies to addressing this vice in Zing local government area of Taraba state.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the causes of Teenage Pregnancy in Zing LGA of Taraba state.
2. To ascertain the effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational attainment of teenagers in Zing LGA of Taraba State
3. To determine the socio-economic effects of teenage pregnancy in Zing LGA of Taraba State
4. To provide recommendations or remedies to the increasing menace of teenage pregnancy.

Literature/Empirical Review

Analysis of literature is a framework on which a study is based. It aims to analyze the perspectives and observations of other academics on particular issues or problems. In this study, teenage pregnancy will be clarified with empirical circumstances associated with teenage pregnancy.

A systematic review was undertaken on the determinants of adolescent pregnancy in sub-Saharan Africa. The objective of the review was to identify factors influencing adolescent pregnancies in sub-Saharan Africa in order to design appropriate intervention program. The study identified Socio-cultural, environmental and Economic factors (Peer influence, unwanted sexual advances from adult males, coercive sexual relations, unequal gender power relations, poverty, religion, early marriage, lack of parental counseling and guidance, parental neglect, absence of affordable or free education, lack of comprehensive sexuality education, non-use of contraceptives, male's responsibility to buy condoms, early sexual debut and inappropriate forms of recreation). Individual factors (excessive use of alcohol, substance abuse, educational status, low self-esteem, and inability to resist sexual temptation, curiosity, and cell phone usage). Health service-related factors (cost of contraceptives, Inadequate and unskilled health workers, long waiting time and lack of privacy at clinics, lack of comprehensive sexuality education, misconceptions about contraceptives, and non-friendly adolescent reproductive services,) as influencing adolescent pregnancies in Sub-Saharan Africa..(Yakubu & Salisu, 2018)

A similar systematic review and Meta-analysis study was also conducted on Prevalence and determinants of teenage pregnancy in Africa. The review included 52 studies, 254,350 study participants. A total of 24 countries from East, West, Central, North and Southern African sub-regions were included. Factors associated with adolescent pregnancy include rural residence, ever married, not attending school, no maternal education, no father's education, and lack of parent to adolescent communication on sexual and reproductive health issues. (Kassa et al., 2018)

Vincent & Alemu, (2016)also conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study on the factors contributing to, and effecting, pregnancy among teenagers in Juba. The study found out that the factors contributing to teenage pregnancy included: lack of school fees, lack of parental care, communication and supervision, poverty, peer pressure, non-use of contraceptives, desire for a child, forced marriage, low educational level and need for dowries. The effects of pregnancy on the teenagers included: school drop-out, health risk during and after childbirth,

divorce, rejection by parents, stigmatism, and, sometimes if the baby is unwanted, abortion according to the study.

Achema et al., (2015) a descriptive survey study was conducted to determined factors responsible for teenage pregnancy and its implication on adolescent health and education: Perception of secondary school students in Nigeria. Findings reveal that lack of parental care, lack of self-control and lack of sex education were identified as factors responsible for teenage pregnancy. The study also revealed that polygamous family system acted as contributory parenting factor for teenage pregnancy. The effects of teenage pregnancy according to the study included school dropout, abortion, sexually transmitted infections and aftermath implication during pregnancy and delivery, malnutrition, anemia and bleeding.

Asare et al., (2019) also conducted a study to identify the factors associated with teenage pregnancy in the Akatsi South District of the Volta Region of Ghana. The study indicated that teenage pregnancy was associated with early adolescent marriage. The effects of teenage pregnancy on the teenagers included: school drop-out, health risk during and after childbirth, divorce, rejection by parents, stigmatism, and, sometimes if the baby is unwanted, abortion.
Alabi & Oni, (2017) in his study on Teenage Pregnancy in Nigeria: Causes, Effect and Control where it focused on the prevalence of this act among the teenagers in Nigeria. Some of the root causes identified was poverty, peer pressure and media influence while the effects include: school drop-out, inadequate care for the child born by teenage mother, health problems and a host of other vices

Chiazor et al., (2017)on his study, teenage pregnancy: the female adolescent dilemma to measure the perception of teenagers, who are key actors. A descriptive survey research design was used and the study revealed that low socio-economic status, cultural factors, peer pressure, lack of adequate sex education were the major causes of teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy has detrimental effects on the health of both mother and child according to the study.

A study was conducted to examine factors associated with teenage pregnancy and childbearing in Nigeria. Using the 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) data; the results found that the incidence of teenage pregnancy and childbearing reduced as educational levels, wealth status, and age at first sex increased. The study concluded that education, wealth status and age at first sex hold great potentials in reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy and childbearing in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study involved the use of quantitative data where descriptive survey research design was adopted. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study from the target population who were pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers in Zing Local Government Area. The Local Government Area is situated in Taraba State, Nigeria, with its headquarters in Zing. It has an area of 1,030 km² and a population of 127,363 at the 2006 census. The Mumuye are the predominant ethnic group in Zing (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Zing).The area is subdivided into ten political wards which comprise Zing A, Zing A2, Zing B, Kakulu, Bitako, Lamma, Dingding, Bubong, Monkin A,

Monkin B, and Yakoko ward respectively. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 200 respondents from the communities' across the Local Government Area and the questionnaires were administered with the help of research assistants who translated the questionnaires to Mumuye and Hausa languages for easy understanding. Data collected was analyzed via statistical package for social sciences (SPSS)

Presentation of Data

200 questionnaires were used for the study, but the return rate was 96% i.e. 192 questionnaires upon which the analysis was based.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Data of Respondents

Age	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
10-15	58	30.2%
16-19	134	69.8%
Total	192	100%
Marital Status		
Single	133	69.3%
Married	48	25.0%
Divorced	11	5.7%
Separated	0	0.0%
Widow	0	0.0%
Total	192	100%
Religion		
Christianity	124	64.6%
Islam	30	15.6%
Traditional	38	19.8%
Total	192	100%
Ethnic Group		
Mumuye	162	84.4%
Hausa/Fulani	30	15.6%
Total	192	100%
Educational Qualification		
None	36	18.8%
Primary	30	15.6%
Secondary	116	60.4%
Tertiary	10	5.2%
Total	192	100%

Source: Survey, 2020 Fieldwork

Table 1 above shows the demographic data of the respondents. The study indicates that 30.2% of the respondents were within the age category of 10-14 years while 69.8% were between 15-19 years category. Majority of the respondents 69.3% were single while 25% were married and 11% divorced. Religious affiliation of the respondents indicated that 64.6% which is the majority were Christians, 15.6% where Muslims while 19.8% were Traditional worshippers. Furthermore, the survey indicated that 84.4% were Mumuye by ethnic group while 15.6 belong to the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. The educational qualification of the respondents

also revealed that 18.8% had no any formal education, 15.6 have primary education, and 60.4% have secondary education while only 5.2 obtained tertiary education.

Table 2: Causes of Teenage Pregnancy

Poverty	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agreed	51	26.6%
Agreed	96	50%
Strongly Disagreed	26	13.5%
Disagreed	19	9.9%
Total	192	100%
Early Marriage		
Strongly Agreed	48	25%
Agreed	71	37%
Strongly Disagreed	41	21.4%
Disagreed	32	16.6%
Total	192	100%
Peer Pressure/Drug Abuse		
Strongly Agreed	68	35.4%
Agreed	61	31.8%
Strongly Disagreed	35	18.2%
Disagreed	28	14.6%
Total	192	100%
Lack Of Parenting/Sex Education		
Strongly Agreed	35	18.2%
Agreed	112	58.3%
Strongly Disagreed	24	12.5%
Disagreed	21	10.9%
Total	192	100%
Pornography(social media/videos)		
Strongly Agreed	30	15.6%
Agreed	48	25%
Strongly Disagreed	60	31.3%
Disagreed	54	28.1%
Total	192	100.0%

Source: Survey, 2020 Fieldwork

Tables 2 above, shows the causes of teenage pregnancy. According to the table, majority of the respondent with 50% agreed that poverty is a cause of teenage pregnancy, and were supported by 26.6% who also strongly agreed, as opposed to 13.5% of the respondents who strongly disagreed and 9.9% who also disagreed. This implied that poverty is one of the causes of teenage pregnancy

On whether early marriage is also a cause of teenage pregnancy, the table shows that 25% of the respondents strongly agreed, 37% also agreed with the same view, in contrast 21.4% of the

respondents strongly disagreed that early marriage is not a cause of teenage while 16.6% o also disagreed. This implies that, early marriage is one of the causes of teenage pregnancy. The table equally indicates that 35.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that Peer pressure& drug abuse is a cause of teenage pregnancy, subsequently 31.8% agreed with the same view, in contrast, 18.2% strongly disagreed and were supported by 14.6% respondents who disagreed. Thus indication shows that majority of the respondents agreed that peer pressure & drug abuse is one of the causes of teenage pregnancy.

The table also indicates that 18.2 % of the respondents strongly agreed that teenage pregnancy is caused by lack of parenting and sex education, overwhelming, 58.3% of the same respondents also agreed with the same view, in contrast, 12.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that teenage pregnancy is caused by lack of parenting and sex education while 10.9% also disagreed. Therefore, the highest respondents were in support of lack of parenting and sex education is a cause of Teenage pregnancy. This implies that Lack of parenting and sex education is a cause of teenage pregnancy.

On whether pornography (social media/ videos) is also a cause of teenage pregnancy, the table shows that 15.6% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 25% also agreed to the same view. On the contrary, 31.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that pornography (social media/videos) is a cause of teenage pregnancy and were also supported by 28.1% who equally disagreed. Unfortunately, the highest percentage of the respondents disagreed that teenage pregnancy is cause by pornography(social media/videos)This implies that teenage pregnancy is not cause by pornography (social media/videos)

Table 3: Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy

Education Disruption	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
Strongly Agreed	53	27.6%
Agreed	104	54.2%
Strongly Disagreed	21	10.9%
Disagreed	14	7.3%
Total	192	100%
Isolation/Rejection by parents		
Strongly agreed	48	25%
Agreed	79	41.1%
Strongly Disagreed	37	19.3%
Disagreed	28	14.6%
Total	192	100%
STI/Abortion		
Strongly agreed	69	36%
Agreed	64	33.3%
Strongly Disagreed	28	14.6%
Disagreed	31	16.1%
Total	192	100%
Suicide/Death		
Strongly agreed	29	15.1%

Agreed	58	30.2%
Strongly Disagreed	73	38%
Disagreed	32	16.7%
Total	192	100%
Poverty		
Strongly agreed	86	48.8%
Agreed	64	33.3%
Strongly Disagreed	30	15.6%
Disagreed	12	6.3%
Total	192	100%
Disgrace/Shame		
Strongly agreed	64	33.3%
Agreed	80	41.7%
Strongly Disagreed	26	13.5%
Disagreed	22	11.5%
Total	192	100%

Source: Survey, 2020 Fieldwork

The table 3 above shows the consequences of teenage pregnancy, according to the table, 27.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that education disruption is one of the consequences of Teenage pregnancy, 54.2% of the respondents also agreed with the same view, while 10.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 7.3% also disagreed with education disruption as an effect of teenage pregnancy. Fortunately the highest percentage of the respondents supported that education disruption is a consequence of teenage pregnancy.

According to same table, 25 % of the respondents strongly agreed that teenage pregnancy lead to Isolation and Rejection by parents, 41.1% of the same respondents agreed with the view, but 19.3% strongly disagreed while 14.6% of the respondents also disagreed with. This implies that Isolation and rejection by parents is one of the effects of teenage pregnancy.
On whether STI and Abortion is one of the effects of teenage pregnancy, the table shows that 36% of the respondents strongly agreed and share same view with 33.3% who also agreed. However, 14.6% strongly disagreed that teenage pregnancy leads to STI and Abortion and were supported by 16.1% who also disagreed. This shows that STI and Abortion are effects of teenage pregnancy

Furthermore, the survey also show that 15.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that Suicide and death is also an effect of teenage pregnancy, 30.2% of the same respondents agreed while on the contrary, 38% of the respondents strongly disagreed with suicide and death as one of the effects of teenage pregnancy and were supported by, 16.7% of the respondents who also disagreed. Unfortunately, highest population of respondents disagreed that teenage pregnancy can lead to suicide and death. This implies that suicide and death is not an effect of teenage pregnancy.

The table equally shows that 33.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that when teenage girl becomes pregnant it leads to shame and disgrace 41.7% of the respondents also agreed, in another vein, 13.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that teenage pregnancy lead to

shame and disgrace while 11.5% of the respondents also disagreed. This implies that teenage pregnancy leads to shame and disgrace.

Table 4: Remedy to Teenage Pregnancy

Remedy	Frequency	Percentage
Proper sex education	38	19.8%
Good parenting	55	28.6%
Abstinence from pre-marital sex	35	18.2%
Use of contraceptives	31	16.1%
Dress properly	12	6.3%
Avoid Bad company	21	10.9%
Total	192	100%

Source: Survey, 2020 Fieldwork

The table above indicates that 19.8% of the respondents recommended proper sex education as a way of curbing teenage pregnancy, 28.6% advocated for good parenting, 18.2% recommended Abstinence from pre-marital sex, 16.1% suggested use of contraceptives, 6.3% were of the view that proper dressing is the way out while 10.9% recommended Avoiding bad company.

Discussion of findings

The purpose of this study was to find out Factors, Consequences and Possible Remedies to teenage pregnancy in Zing local government area of Taraba state**.** The study revealed that the causes of teenage pregnancy includes Poverty, early marriage, lack of parenting and and sex education, peer pressure and drug abuse. This finding is in consistent with the findings of (Achema et al.,2015)which emphasized that lack of parenting ,and lack of sex education and poverty as factors responsible for teenage pregnancy. A similar study by (Alabi & Oni, 2017) also identified poverty, peer pressure, drug abuse and early marriage as cause of Teenage pregnancy. This findings was also confirmed by (Yakubu & Salisu, 2018) where poverty, lack of sex education, early marriage and peer pressure where identified as causes of teenage pregnancy.

The study also find out that the effects of teenage pregnancy includes, Education disruption, poverty, Sexual Transmission Infection (STI) and abortion, Rejection and Isolation as well as Disgrace and shame. This findings corroborate with (de Costa, 1985) where rejection, lack of continue education, STI and abortion are identified as the effects of Teenage pregnancy. The finding is also in consonance with (Chiazor et al., 2017; Nkhoma et al., 2020; Vincent & Alemu, 2016) which equally identified School dropout and disruption of education, STI/and abortion, poverty, and rejection as some of the effects of teenage pregnancy. Similarly (Kassa et al., 2018; Vincent & Alemu, 2016) also highlighted rejection and isolation, poverty, STI as effects of teenage pregnancy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored the causes, effects and control of teenage pregnancy in Zing Local Government of Taraba State. The study reveals that teenage pregnancy is associated in the study area with factors such as lack of parenting and sex education, peer pressure and early

marriage. Other factors such as poverty and drug abuse also play a big role in causing teenage pregnancy. The effects of which includes Education disruption, poverty, STI/Abortion and Shame.

Against this backdrop the research seeks to proffer the following recommendations:

1. There should be proper parental regulations and care, as well as parental counselling knowing that the exuberance of teenagers or young people could lead them to teenage pregnancy.
2. Parents, teachers and religious instructors should constantly teach the young about the danger of alcohol and drug abuse. They should be vigilant about the movement and activities of these teenagers and the type of company they keep.
3. Parents must stop the age old taboo of silence on sex education. The mothers specifically should be able to teach their female children about womanhood and all that it entails
4. The government, communities and relevant NGOs should set up counseling centers in all local government headquarters where teenagers can easily go for counseling on issues bothering them including their sexual life.
5. Teenagers should be taught abstinence and how to defer sexual gratification till after marriage.
6. Keeping adolescent girls in schools, using economic incentives and livelihood programs can help reduce teenage pregnancy

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