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Influence of Social Factors on Teenage Pregnancy in Secondary Schools in Turkana Central Sub County Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between social factors and teenage pregnancy in public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County, Kenya. The study was guided by classical liberal theory of equal opportunities and social Darwinism. The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study were school principals, teachers and female students who were drawn from mixed and single girls' public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County. Stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select the study sample. Data was collected using Document analysis guide and Questionnaire. Validity of research instrument results was determined by consulting experts. Reliability was determined by use of test re-test technique. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) and inferential statistics (ANOVA and t-test) to test hypotheses. Data was presented using tables. Findings of the study revealed that teenage pregnancy was high in mixed secondary schools and low in single girls' secondary schools. The researchers concluded that social factors such as social media, peer pressure, home environment and drug and substance abuse influenced teenage pregnancy.

Key words: social factors; teenage pregnancy

1. Introduction

Teenage pregnancy is defined as any pregnancy that ends before the age of 20 years. According to Gwido and Alemu, (2015) about 16 million girls aged between 15 to 19 years old give birth each year. This is an alarming concern owing to the fact that most girls aged below 20 years are of school going age. Although different countries have advanced strategies to curb such cases and improve on access to basic education for girls, teenage pregnancy is still an issue of concern. There are various factors that have been associated with teenage pregnancies such as media usage, peer pressure, drug and substance abuse. In Sub Saharan Africa, it is estimated that in low and middle income countries, 10% of all girls become mothers before they attain 16 years of age (WHO, 2008). Data from demographic health Surveys indicated that teenage pregnancy rates in Sub Saharan Africa ranged from a low of 5.9 percent in Burundi to a high of 43.1 percent in Niger (World Bank, 2005). In Sub Saharan Africa, teenage pregnancy has had adverse effects to social and economic development. It is reported that teenage pregnancy in Africa had led to increased cases of school dropout and child mortality (Namunwa & Melisa 2012).

In Ghana, teenage pregnancy exposes young girls to medical, social and economic problems. According to Ahorlu (2015) most parents relied on relatives such as aunts to provide sex education and guidance to their children because parents had cultural beliefs which hindered them from communicating directly to their girls on matters concerning reproductive health. This left the girls more vulnerable and resulted to early teenage pregnancies. In Tanzania according to Mauna (2015), teenage pregnancy had risen resulting to high levels of educational wastage through increased dropout and infant mortality. It was also reported that socio-cultural factors such as early initiation ceremonies had an impact on sexual practices. Teenagers who participated in initiation ceremonies were engaged in premarital relationships as compared to those who did not engage in initiation practices.



In Nigeria, teenage pregnancy has been identified as one of the social problems affecting youth development in the country. A study by Jelili, Akindele and Akitayo (2011) on factors influencing teenage pregnancy linked the vice to factors such as residential density, poor parenting, social environment, peer group pressures and pornography. Implications of teenage pregnancy in the country had resulted to increased school dropouts, increased poverty.

In Zimbabwe, teenage pregnancy is on the increase and particularly in rural areas. A study conducted by Mutanana and Mutara (2015) revealed that teenage pregnancy in Zimbabwe had resulted to early marriages among teens. It had also resulted into school drop outs and domestic violence. The study identified factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in Zimbabwe as socio-economic background, peer influence and traditional roles.

In the United States, teen childbearing has been on the increase. A study by Kearney and Levine (2015) sought to establish the influence of MTVs 16 and pregnancy on teen childbearing. The study examined the impact of the introduction of the widely viewed MTV programme. Findings of the study implied that the programme was effective in reducing the rate of teen pregnancy. Similarly, a study by Strukel (2016) sought to establish teenage pregnancy and media engagement in the United States. Study findings indicated that media influenced the attitude of teenagers towards premarital relationships. Kiarie and Mugambi (2016) investigated on the influence of social media on teenage pregnancy among students in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Kenya. The study was motivated by increased teenage pregnancy cases which had resulted to high levels of school dropout. Study findings revealed that students' access to social networking sites had increased with much focus on sexually explicit music, sexual videos, and socialization on media. There was limited use of social media for academic purposes. The study concluded that social media contributed to teenage pregnancy which affected academic performance.

Isuku (2015) investigated on peer pressure and teenage pregnancy among adolescent secondary school girls in Ibadan Metropolis. Findings of the study revealed that the level of peer pressure was low among the respondents and it significantly influenced teenage pregnancy. The role of peer pressure as agents of socialization had negative consequences on the lifestyle of teenagers especially in the area of productive health. Similarly, Adebayo and Asebiomo (2019) carried out a study on contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko District, Nigeria. The findings revealed that inadequate knowledge on productive health education, peer pressure and lack of parental guidance and media or internet were contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents.

In West Pokot County, teenage pregnancy has been on the rise thus affecting girl's access to education and career development. It has also resulted to increased dropout rates in secondary schools. A study by Waragu (2018) revealed that social causes of teenage pregnancy included peer influence, mass media and neglect by parents. Cultural causes such as taboos, poverty and unemployment were among the predictors of teenage pregnancy.

Waweru (2020) investigated on socio-economic factors contributing to increase in pregnancy cases in public secondary schools in Gatanga Sub County, Kenya it was revealed that poverty and peer pressure influenced teenage pregnancy. Substance use among adolescents increases the risk of unplanned pregnancies In USA, substance use among teenagers is an enduring problem (Connery, Albright and Rodolico, 2014). For instance, in 2011, 75% of high school students were reported to have used addictive substances including tobacco, alcohol, Marijuana and other illicit drugs. According to Heil (2011) rates of unintended teenage pregnancy were higher among substance abusing students. This implied that drug and substance abuse increased cases of unintended pregnancy among women and teenagers. In Africa, teenage pregnancy is a common phenomenon among adolescents and thus a major factor to the highest percentage of dropouts among female students. A study by Kassa, Arowojolu, Odukogbe and Yelew (2018) the authors established that nearly one-fifth of adolescents become pregnant in Africa.

In Kenya, teenage pregnancy has become a malaise with some areas in the country having 1 for every 4 girls being affected (Demographic & Health Survey, 2014). The survey reported further indicated that nearly 18 percent of adolescent girls aged between 15 and 19 years were mothers. The common consequence of teenage pregnancy in Kenya is loss of educational opportunities. It is reported that 13000 girls in Kenya leave school every year due to pregnancy. Among factors identified as causes to teenage pregnancy included: poverty, poor parenting, broken marriages and inadequate education on reproductive health.



In Turkana Central Sub County, teenage pregnancy cases are rampant. Data from Lodwar County Referral hospital revealed that 1123 girls aged between 10-19 years were affected in 2017. In 2018, the teenage pregnancy cases were at 743 and in 2019, 585 case of teenage pregnancy were reported. These statistics revealed that teenage pregnancy was an issue of concern in the Sub County.

2. Research Methods

Cross-sectional survey research design guided the study. The research design helped to clearly answer the problem question of teenage pregnancy in relation to the variables in finding the relationship between socio-cultural factors and teenage pregnancy in public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County. The study targeted school principals, teachers and female students from mixed and single girls in public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County. Stratified simple random sampling was used. A total of eight schools comprising of two single girls and six mixed schools took part in the study. Questionnaire and document analysis guide were used to collect. 5 teachers were used to check items in data collection instruments to determine their language, appropriateness, adequacy and length. Thereafter, items were corrected in line with the report from the experts. A reliability index was then calculated using test-retest. The reliability score of 0.70 was acceptance.

3. Analysis Result

Table 1: Teachers Responses on Perceived Social Factors Influencing Teenage Pregnancy

	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	SD
Most students engage in sexual relationships due to pressure from peers	1(4.2)	22(91.7)	1(4.2)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	4.0	0.3
Most students engage in sexual relationships due to pressure from social media	12(50.0)	11(45.8)	1(4.2)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	4.5	0.6
Most students engage in sexual relationships due to the influence of drugs	2(8.3)	19(79.2)	2(8.3)	1(4.2)	0(0.0)	3.9	0.6
Boda-Boda business contributes to teenage pregnancy	1(4.2)	23(95.8)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	4.0	0.2
Long distance from home to school contributes to teenage pregnancy	0(0.0)	17(70.8)	7(29.2)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3.7	0.5
Sugar daddies have contributed to teenage pregnancy in schools	0(0.0)	16(66.7)	1(4.2)	7(29.2)	0(0.0)	3.4	0.9
Mean						3.9	

The study sought to establish perceived social factors influencing teenage pregnancy. Findings of the study on whether most students engage in sexual relationships due to pressure from peers revealed that 1 (4.2%) strongly agreed with the statement, 22 (91.7%) agreed and 1 (4.2%) were undecided. The mean rating was 4.0 implying majority of the respondents agreed with the statement. Study findings implied that peer pressure influences teenage pregnancy. Majority of teenagers engage in boy/girl relationships due to pressure from peers. On whether most students engage in sexual relationships due to pressure from social media, study findings revealed that 12 (50.0%) strongly with the statement, 11 (45.8%) agreed and 1 (4.2%) were undecided. The mean rating on the item was 4.5 which meant that respondents agreed with the statement. Findings of the study implied that pressure from social media promotes teenage pregnancy.

Table 2: Students responses on social factors influencing teenage pregnancy

	All the time 4	Most of the time 3	Few Times 2	Not at all 1	Mean	SD



I engage in boy/girl relationship due to pressure from friends	0(0.0)	19(11.4)	100(59.9)	48(28.7)	1.8	0.6
I engage in boy/girl relationship due to pressure from social media	0(0.0)	53(31.7)	113(67.7)	1(0.6)	2.3	0.5
I engage in boy/girl relationship due to the influence of alcohol and drugs	0(0.0)	25(15.0)	115(68.9)	27(16.2)	2.0	0.6
I engage in boy/girl relationships in order to fit in my group	0(0.0)	22(13.2)	122(73.1)	23(13.8)	2.0	0.5
Boda-Boda business contributes to teenage pregnancy	0(0.0)	4(2.4)	118(70.7)	45(26.8)	1.8	0.5
Long distance from home to school contributes to teenage pregnancy	0(0.0)		114(68.3)	53(31.7)	1.7	0.5
Sugar daddies have contributed to teenage pregnancy in schools	0(0.0)	8(4.8)	120(71.9)	39(23.4)	1.8	0.5
I engage in boy/girl relationships because no one cares about me	0(0.0)	5(3.0)	104(62.3)	58(34.7)	1.7	0.5
My home environment makes me enter into boy/girl relationships	0(0.0)	16(9.6)	135(80.8)	16(9.6)	2.0	0.4
Loneliness makes me engage in boy/girl relationships	0(0.0)	27(16.2)	124(74.3)	16(9.6)	2.1	0.5
Mean					2.3	

Study findings on whether students engage in boy/girl relationship due to pressure from friends revealed that 19 (11.4%) stated most of the time, 100 (59.9%) stated few times and 48 (28.7%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 1.8 which meant that most of the students stated sometimes they engage in boy/girl relationship due to pressure from friends.

Ho3: There was no significant mean difference between social factors scores and teenage pregnancy status

Table 3: Relationship between social factors and teenage pregnancy

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pregnancy status * social factors	Between Groups	(Combined)	20.146	10	2.015	2.749	.004
	Within Groups		114.345	156	.733		
	N		134.491	166			

In order to establish the relationship between social factors and teenage pregnancy status, one way analysis of variance was performed at 0.05 level of significance and 10 degrees of freedom between groups and 156 degrees of freedom within groups. The study tested the null hypothesis that; there is no significant mean difference between social factors scores and teenage pregnancy status. Study revealed that the test was significant since the P-value (0.004) was less than 0.005 level of significance. The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant mean difference between social factors scores and teenage pregnancy status in public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County, Kenya.

4. Discussion

From the results social media has been seen to be greatly contributing to teenage pregnancies for example, watching pornographic videos and watching romantic movies. Parents should always check on what their children are watching either on TVs or their phones to avoid this negative exposure. Findings of the study were in agreement with Isuku (2015) who observed that peer pressure significantly teenage pregnancy in schools in Nigeria.



Study findings on whether most students engage in sexual relationships due to the influence of drugs revealed that 2 (8.3%) strongly agreed with the statement, 19 (79.2%) agreed, 2 (8.3%) were undecided and 1 (4.2%) disagreed with the statement. The mean rating was 3.9 implying that most of the respondents agreed with the statement. This implied that drugs influence teenage pregnancy. Findings of the study on whether boda-boda business contributed to teenage pregnancy revealed that 1 (4.2%) strongly agreed with the statement and 23 (95.8%) agreed with the statement. The mean rating was 4.0 implying that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement. Study findings implied that boda-boda business contributes to teenage pregnancy.

Findings of the study on whether long distance from home to school contributes to teenage pregnancy revealed that 17 (70.8%) agreed with the statement, and 7 (29.2%) were undecided. The mean rating was 3.7 implying that most of the respondents agreed with the statement. This meant that long distances from home to school influences teenage pregnancy. Study findings on whether sugar daddies have contributed to teenage pregnancy in schools revealed that 16 (66.7%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, 1 (4.2%) were undecided and 7 (29.2%) disagreed with the statement. The mean rating was 3.4 which meant that majority agreed with the statement. Findings of the study meant that relationships between girls and sugar daddies results to increased cases of teenage pregnancy. The overall mean rating was 3.9 implying that most of the respondents agreed with the statements. This implied that social factors influence teenage pregnancy in schools. Among the social factors included peer pressure, pressure from social media, drug and substance abuse, boda-boda business, long distance from school to home and sugar daddies. Study findings agreed with Kassa, Arowojolu, Odukogbe and Yelew (2018) who reported that drug abuse affected teenage pregnancy in Africa. Parents are advised to ensure their children are taken to school by responsible people or by themselves to be sure that the children reach school on time and with no other destructors who can lead them astray.

Findings of the study implied that peer pressure influences teenage girls to engage in boy girl relationship which may result to early pregnancies. On whether students engage in boy/girl relationship due to pressure from social media study findings indicated that 53 (31.7%) stated most of the time, 113 (67.7%) stated few times and 1 (0.6%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 2.3 implying that most students stated few times. Findings implied that students engage in boy/girl relationships sometimes due to pressure from social media. Study findings on whether students engage in boy/girl relationship due to the influence of alcohol and drugs revealed that 25 (15.0%) stated most of the time, 115 (68.9%) stated few times and 27 (16.2%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 2.0 which implied that most respondents stated few times. Findings on whether students engage in boy/girl relationships in order to fit in their groups revealed that 22 (13.2%) stated most of the time, 122 (73.1%) stated few times and 23 (13.8%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 2.0 which meant that majority of the students stated few times. Findings of were in tandem with Janine (2017) who reported that in USA, drug and substance abuse is correlated with risk factors such as family break ups, conflicts and teenage pregnancy.

Findings of the study on whether motorcycle business contributes to teenage pregnancy revealed that 4 (2.4%) stated most of the time, 118 (70.7%) stated few times and 45 (26.8%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 1.8 implying that majority stated few times. This implied that boda-boda business contributes to teenage pregnancy to some extent. Study findings on whether long distance from home to school contributes to teenage pregnancy revealed that 114 (68.3%) stated few times, 53 (31.7%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 1.7 which implied that long distance contributes to teenage pregnancy on a small extent.

Study findings on whether Sugar daddies have contributed to teenage pregnancy in schools revealed that 8 (4.8%) stated most of the time, 120 (71.9%) stated few times and 39 (23.4%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 1.8 implying that sugar daddies contribute to teenage pregnancy on a small extent. On whether students engage in boy/girl relationships because no one cares about them revealed that 5 (3.0%) stated most of the time, 104 (62.3%) stated few times and 58 (34.7%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 1.7 which meant that most of the students stated few times. Findings of the study on whether home environment makes students enter into boy/girl relationships revealed that 16 (9.6%) stated most of the time, 135 (80.8%) stated few times and 16 (9.6%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 2.0 indicating that majority stated that few times the environment at home influences them to engage in boy/girl relationships. Study findings on whether loneliness makes students engage in boy/girl relationships revealed that 27 (16.2%) stated most of the time, 124 (74.3%) stated few times and 16 (9.6%) stated not at all. The mean rating was 2.1 meaning that majority stated few times. Findings implied that loneliness of students may result to teenage pregnancy on a small extent.



The overall mean rating was 1.92 which implied that majority of the students selected few times. Findings of the study implied that social factors contribute to teenage pregnancy on some occasion. Among the social factors which were rated high in influencing teenage pregnancy included social media, peer pressure, home environment and drug and substance abuse. Findings of the study revealed that inadequate knowledge on sex education, peer pressure and lack of parental guidance influenced teenage pregnancy.

5. Conclusions

Among the social factors which were rated high in influencing teenage pregnancy included social media, peer pressure, home environment and drug and substance abuse. The study concluded that there is a significant mean difference between social factors scores and teenage pregnancy status in public secondary schools in Turkana Central Sub County, Kenya.

6. Recommendations

The study recommended that parents or guardians should provide personal requirements to female students such as sanitary towels. This will help increase retention of girls in schools therefore protecting them from risks that could lead to teenage pregnancy. Parents/guardians should regularly visit female students in schools in order to understand their needs. This will help increase confidence and self-esteem in girls. The study recommends that Ministry of Education to develop more girls boarding schools in Arid and Semi-Arid Areas (ASALs). The cost of boarding schools in ASAL areas should be subsidized in order to promote access and retention of female students in schools. The County Government of Turkana County should give priority to female students in the allocation of bursaries. They should also provide essential items such as sanitary pads to needy female students. This will help in keeping girls in schools therefore reducing the risks of them engaging in sexual relationships with members of the society.

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