



Teenage pregnancy and socio-economic implications for adolescents in southern senatorial district of cross river state, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigates teenage pregnancy and socio-economic implications for adolescents in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. It is both a quantitative and qualitative study that utilizes questionnaire, structured interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to gather data. 517 respondents were randomly selected using multistage and simple random sampling techniques to arrive at the sample. Data drawn from the interview were analyzed using tables, percentages, mean and standard deviations, and data drawn from FGD were analyzed by ATLAS.ti 8 software for windows while Chi-square (X^2) was used to test research hypothesis. The findings revealed that teenage pregnancy has become pervasive in the study area and were perpetuated by socio-cultural factors such as widowhood practices, patriarchal culture, male child preference, early marriage, peer pressures, social media influence and financial inducements. These socio-cultural practices have destroyed facets of the future of these teens including dropping out of school, increased level of poverty and inability to care for the newly born child among others. Based on these findings it was recommended among others that harmful cultural practices should be eradicated by the government. Also, sex education is required to promote strong moral values among teens. Teens should be sufficiently empowered, encouraged on contraceptive use. Awareness creation and sensitization campaigns should be organized as measures to curb teenage pregnancies in the study area.

Keywords: Adolescents, Pregnancy, Socio-Economic Implications, Teenage pregnancy, Teenager

1. Introduction

The term “teenage pregnancy” is given to a female of 10 to 17years old who got pregnant. It is a phenomenon which the society frowns at. The family and the entire society do not consider it an appropriate behavior for a teen to indulge in sexual activity, which will result into pregnancy. In most societies, pregnant teens are continuously exposed to socio-cultural rebuke or condemnation and stigmatization. Also, they are mostly at risk of certain social problems such as, sexual harassment, substance abuse, sexual immorality, prostitution, cultism and trafficking. She is also confronted with the challenge of

coping with antisocial behaviors such as abuse of drugs, alcoholism, and unexpected or rather undesired motherhood. The experiences of a pregnant teen are also woven around fear, rejection, trauma, depression and isolation.

Alzate et al., (2019) assert that the teen also witnesses rapid growth in terms of development and enlargement of body features, which may trigger a sudden upsurge of interest in one’s own body and that of others, due to the development of secondary sexual characteristics. At this point, the zeal for independence out of parental control and protection, desire to love and be cared for, start manifesting and



this further makes them vulnerable to males' sexual advances which invariably threatens their mental, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing. Not only is the pregnant teen affected but also the unborn child, her parent, relatives and society at large. Globally, greater proportions of teen (adolescent) girls are lured into motherhood, daily turning themselves into "baby making tools" amid scarce resources to cater for their needs.

It is a trite fact that despite the advances in modern medicine with increased knowledge of family planning and birth controls, the upsurge of teenage pregnancy in recent times has grown exponentially. Isokon, et al., (2022) opined that increase in poverty level and breakdown of value system which depicts traditional African family setting threatens teenager's sexual reproductive health. Increased urbanization, modernity and exposure to foreign cultures through migration, tourism and the social media assisted are also causal factors (Isokon, et al., 2022). Again, the gradual weakening of the practice of extended family system where uncles, aunties, cousins, act as guardians and watch dogs for teens contributed to it. It is also a fact that adolescents are easily influenced by social media information, literature, school and peers which lured them to sex life. The failure of parents and guardians to introduce and educate their teen girls on sexuality related issues also a consideration. In other words, getting pregnant as a teen is a sign of parental failure in their obligation towards their adolescence daughters. (Effiom & Jacks, 2019; Ajala, 2014). Agba et al., (2022) revealed that parent-child relationship has a negative influence on the girl child in Cross River State.

Majority of the teens who engage in coital sex do not use contraceptive device either due to ignorance, forgetfulness, inconvenience or unacceptability by one or both partners. Teenage pregnancy also occurs as a result of unprotected sex (Onyema & Isokon 2017). Ignorance of

sexual activity and protection on the part of teenagers complicates the issue. This is because some teens are timid as to seek the knowledge on conventional methods of preventing early pregnancy. Besides the unwanted pregnancy which manifest as a result of teen's sexual activity, the probability of contracting infectious diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV/AIDS is apparent. In spite of these consequences, the records in Cross River state are hitting 17 per cent rise in teenage pregnancy (Isokon, et al, 2020). In General hospital at Calabar South, a look at maternity records revealed that between January 2012 and 2013, 142 unmarried teenagers within the ages of 14 and 17 years were delivered of babies (Amaran, 2012). This is quite substantial in relation to 260 births that took place at the hospital during this period (Ekeng et al, 2014). This does not of course include the number that would have opted for abortion and the ones that delivered in Traditional Birth Attendant homes (TBA), churches and even at private home. It becomes clear that the challenge is a huge one and teenage pregnancy has become an everyday topic within concerned circles. The questions that easily comes to mind is, what are the socio-economic implications of teenage pregnancy and what measures should be put in place towards curbing the trend?

2. Literature Review

Prevalence of teenage pregnancy

According to Burton (2017), African countries are leading in adolescent pregnancy, some of these pregnancies are in union and are intending owing to early child marriage. Infact, in Sub-Saharan Africa Nigeria is rated the highest in adolescent pregnancy, accounting for 50 million adolescents, constituting more than one in four youths making up half of Nigeria's current estimated population of 205million (Mkwanzani, 2016). In Nigeria, 1 in every 5 teenage girls aged 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child.



Rural teenage women are three times more likely to start bearing children than urban teenage women (WHO, 2020). Alukagberie et al., (2023) noted that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is between 7.5 and 49.5 per cent. In 2021, Nigeria recorded 106 per 1000 and the contributing factors to this increase are multiple, such as, education, income level, poverty, peer pressure, contraceptive use, sex education, child marriage and sexual violence (Chiazor et al., 2017) Akanibi et al. (2021) reported that 9 out of 10 school drop-outs adolescents are more sexually agile. This is coupled with the fact that one out of ten secondary school students usually have intercourse between the age of 10 and 16 years. Also, Ekeng et al (2014) reported that 54per cent of female adolescents are sexually conscious and that a greater number of them had their initial sexual rounds at the mean age of 15years. Young girls are always under pressure to get married and bear children, (Ekeng et al., 2014). Yampolskaya, et al., (2012) opined that “approximately 73per cent of teenagers go on welfare within 5years of giving birth”, this type of motherhood is adorned with shame, dishonor, reproach and sometimes vitiates the individual’s dream of future goals.

Factors exacerbating teenage pregnancy

Victims of teenage pregnancy are always defective of adequate knowledge and proper education on safe sex (Kinby, 2011). Socio-economic status of parents is a strong factor which results to child marriage, transactional sex or acceptance of gift for sex, and poor financial status of parents (Elekeh et al., 2021). Alabi and Oni (2017), noted that absence of parental participation in a child upbringing can actually pose a lot of defects which might cause teenage pregnancy. Teenage girls are likely to be vulnerable and prone to early pregnancy because they lacked the requisite interaction and confidence needed from their parents who busy themselves daily at the expense of the basic characteristic inductions required of their children to excel.

Perceived consequences of teenage pregnancy

The consequences are also far reaching, having repercussions, not only on the teenagers themselves, but also on the children born out of such pregnancies, the family and the society at large. According to Effiom and Jacks (2019), whether the teenager is in school or not, pregnancy outside marriage is usually “unplanned” and “unwanted” and presents three options to her which are all problematic. These options are illegal abortion that usually get complicated, premature marriage with its attendant socio-economic consequences; and childbirth outside marriage which also has social and economic implications for the child, the mother and the family. Ghose and John (2017) stated that a good proportion of children found thrown into gutters, bushes, toilets and dust bins are children of teenage mothers. The menace of teenage pregnancy with its attendant psychological, physical and emotional trauma brings stigmatization. Marnach et al., (2013) remarked that maternal and prenatal health issues revolve around teenagers that are pregnant or parenting; while the global incidence of premature birth and low birth weight rest heavily on adolescent mothers.

Ways of curbing teenage pregnancy

Effiom and Jack (2019) recommended that teen parents should counsel teens regularly. Having a foundational knowledge of what to look out for and what to give out to our teens will definitely result to a sound training and support. Parents therefore should be certain about their teens’ sexual attitude, values and restrain; teens should be educated on early sexual matters, enforcing assertiveness in decision taking; parents should monitor and evaluate their children’s activities and should get to know their children’s friends and their families as well as discourage early, constant and regular dating of their teens (Amin, 2014; Rachina-Dubey, 2014). Sensitization, seminars and counseling was recommended (Elekeh et al,



2021) It has been accepted that parents should encourage abstinence for the unmarried youth and discourage the use of contraceptives for the adolescents. Education on birth control to avoid unwanted pregnancies is recommended (Nabugoomu et al 2020). Nabugoomu et al, (2020) further opined that imposing a law that will be carefully enforced on offenders who impregnate teens between the ages of 13 and 18 years will reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy and equally support the affected girls.

Scaling-up skills on sexual and reproductive health training and enhancing the fight against teenage pregnancies is very important (Sivis-Cetinkaya, 2015). Recreational centers for sexually active teens should be provided where they will receive comfortable and timely services and free contraceptives to prevent unwanted pregnancies (Sivis-Cetinkaya, 2015). Educative information is better communicated to teenagers who in turn make informed choices to avoid abortion or teenage pregnancy (Onyema et al, 2020). Onyema et al (2020) further added that merging formal education with skill acquisition will empower and assist the girl child's early pecuniary needs as well as enable her evade the twin dangers of vulnerability and insolvency.

Justification for the study

The review focused on teenage pregnancy and socio-economic implications for adolescents in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. The basic variables reviewed include: prevalence of teenage pregnancy, factors exacerbating teenage pregnancy, perceived consequences of teenage pregnancy and ways of curbing teenage pregnancy. Although the literature revealed were mostly studied based on different social settings across the globe yet they do not contradict local studies reviewed and are still relevant to this study in the sense that they have given considerable insight on the dimensions of teenage pregnancy and its

implications for teens in particular and humans in general. However, it is observed from these reviews that none of these had bothered to investigate the socio-cultural implications for teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial District in Cross River State, Nigeria. It is this gap in literature that this present study intends to fill. Consequently, the study proposed to answer the research question: How do socio-cultural factors influence high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State?

Objectives of the study

To determine the influence of socio-cultural factors on high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State

Research hypothesis

Socio-cultural factors do not have significant influence on high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State?

Theoretical framework

Anomie theory by Robert Merton (1938) was adopted as a background to this study. The anomie theory is aimed at achieving culturally recognized goals. Therefore, a state of anomie is developed when an individual is unable to access these goals. Anomie also occur when the individual deviate from the established norms of the society. The consequence of anomie is deviant and rebellious behavior. It is also assumed that anomie is the result of missing social rules and value-medium discrepancy or the result of the discrepancy between goals and means. In every society exists goals and legitimate means to achieving these goals. But, when the individual decides to use divergence means to achieve these goals, anomie occurs.

It is also believed that the discrepancy between goals and means differs from one social class to another. Such discrepancies lead to the individual's disorientation, psychological stress and social conflicts. The anomie theory further identifies models of adaptations, each of which follows certain behavioral patterns as follows:



Conformity: This is a situation where the individual full accepts cultural goals and adapt to social change.

Innovation: This is a situation where the individual accepts cultural goals but refuse to recognize legal means to achieve the goals.

Ritualism: This is a situation where the individual did not recognize or abandons cultural goals but maintain the legal means to achieve them.

Retreatism: This is where the individual rejects cultural goals as well as the legal means of achieving them.

Rebellion: Combating the objectives and the means to change social structures.

The anomie theory further assumed that those who belong to the socio-economic upper class or social strata tend to follow legal means to achieve societal goals, due to the fact that they have the opportunities unlike those from socio-economic higher class to achieve cultural goals. The various patterns of adaptations and behavioral patterns are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Adaptations and behavioral patterns

Mode adaptation	Culture goals	Institutionalized means
Conformity	+	+
Innovation	+	-
Ritualism	-	+
Retreatism	-	-
Rebellion	(+/-)	(+/-)

The anomie theory is relevant to this study because it highlights the causal factors behind teenage pregnancies among teens to include weak moral rules in the society, poverty as well as the discrepancy that occurs between cultural goals and means to achieving them. In other words, teens or adolescents often use divergence means to achieve their goals. In a bid to satisfy their sexual desires, these teens rather than get marry resort to engage in illicit sex. Also, many teen girls instead of seeking for jobs to earn income allow themselves to be deceived with monetary inducements and to be engaging in sexual escapades which thus make them pregnant.

It is also true that discrepancy between goals and means differs from one social

class to another, and causing anomic conditions, so also are their different conditions and factors that cause teen pregnancies. Most teen pregnancies are primarily the result of monetary inducements, peer group influence, and other socio-cultural factors. The consequences also differ from one teen to another depending on what the teen goal is defined. Because many teens try to cut corners in achieving their goals, they end up being pregnant. It is therefore necessary for government and parents to maintain stringent moral rules and regulations that teen girls must adhere to. Also, since teenage girls can be easily influenced by factors such as monetary inducements, peer pressure and other factors, teens should be introduced to new orientations and innovations that can help them achieve their desired goals.

3. Methodology

The Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria is the study area. It comprises Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South and Odukpani Local Government Areas. The research design adopted for the study was the survey method and the population of the study was adolescents' residents in the study area. The sampling technique used to draw the sample was the multistage and simple random sampling techniques.

First, the sampling was carried out in the following stages:

In the first stage, five (5) out of the seven (7) local government areas were selected using the simple random sampling method. That is, numbers were assigned to represent local government area. The numbers which were written on pieces of papers were put in a hat and properly shuffled, upon which five of the pieces of papers were picked for use in the study. (i.e. Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South and Odukpani Local Government Areas were selected). The second stage has to do with the selection of political wards. Simple



random sampling was equally used to select two (2) political wards from each selected local government area and numbers assigned to them. Thus, 10 political wards selected for use in the study. The third stage was the selection of one (1) community from each political ward. This was done using a systematic sampling method. Finally, the fourth stage was the selection of the respondents. Here, the participants were selected using simple random sampling method. In other words, pieces of papers were prepared with: "YES" or "NO" inscribed on each. The pieces of papers were then thoroughly shuffled in a hat, upon which respondents were to pick just a piece of paper. Only those who picked YES were interviewed. A total of 517 respondents participated in the study.

The research instruments used were 4-point Likert scale questionnaire, in-depth-interview schedule and a 10 item FGD guide. The data from the in-depth interview was analyzed using tables, percentages, mean and standard deviations; FGD was analyzed using ATLAS. ti 8 software for windows while the research hypothesis was analyzed with Chi-Square (X^2). In order to facilitate a smooth gathering of data, two (2) university students were recruited to serve as research assistants in each of the stratum (i.e. local government areas). Altogether ten research assistants were mobilized and properly trained for this research activity.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) items

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) session was organized for the study. Two teenagers were purposively selected from each of the five selected local government areas to participate. Thus, 10 participants were purposively selected based on their knowledge and experiences about teenage pregnancy. The session lasted for one hour. Ten predetermined questions were developed to guide discussion. The FGD data was systematically analyzed with ATLAS. ti 8 software for windows. Four (key) areas in relation to teenage pregnancy

and socio-economic implications for adolescents in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria were assessed and analyzed. These include:

1. Prevalence of teenage pregnancy
2. Factors that trigger teenage pregnancy
3. Effects of teenage pregnancy
4. Measures that can be used to curb teenage pregnancy

Item pool and field testing of in-depth interview and literature review

In-depth interview was conducted for respondents in their various communities in the study area. Female adolescents were the target population and were approached to contribute their views and experiences with regard to whether teenage pregnancy was prevalent in their communities, the factors that trigger teenage pregnancy, effects of teenage pregnancy as well as measures that can be used to curb teenage pregnancy. The in-depth interview schedule contains items that were thematically arranged in accordance with the objectives of the study. The in-depth was carried out by the researchers assisted by 10 research assistants.

The literature review covered various articles, reports and on-line materials were drawn from secondary sources of data collection. The review focuses on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy, factors that trigger teenage pregnancy, consequences of teenage pregnancy and measures used to curb teenage pregnancy from different settings in developed and developing countries of the world.

4. Results and Discussion

The result in Table 2 shows the items with their mean scores and standard deviations on the prevalent rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State. The result shows that all the 5 items measured had means scores above 2.5 which is the scale critical mean. This implies that there are plenty pregnant teens in the study area. It also revealed that many



pregnant teens have committed abortions. It further shows that a lot of pregnant teens have put to birth in TBAs. It also goes to imply that pregnant teens put to birth in

health facilities and that many teens who are pregnant are not married.

Table 2: Responses to prevalent rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State (n = 517) 182

Items	Agree	Disagree	Don'tknow	Mean	Std
There are plenty pregnant teens in my community	407	98	12	5.7	3.11
I know that many pregnant teens have committed abortion	435	72	10	3.5	4.10
I know of a lot of pregnant teens who put to birth in TBAs	395	122	0	4.7	3.19
I am aware that few pregnant teens put to birth in health facilities	17	492	8	3.7	3.25
There are many pregnant teens who are not married	414	95	8	3.8	4.12

Source: Fieldwork 2023

Mean > 2.5 represent high prevalent rate, while Mean < 2.5 represent low prevalent rate.

The result in Table 3 indicates the mean scores and standard deviations of items on socio-cultural factors that influence teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State. The result shows that out of the 10 items measured, 7 had mean scores above 2.5 while 3 items had mean score below 2.5. This implies that

widowhood practices, patriarchal culture, male child preference, early marriage, peer pressures, social media influence and financial inducements were the actual factors that influence teenage pregnancy in the study area while weak parental control, absence of sex education and rampant sexual assault were not considered as such.

Table 3: Responses to socio-cultural factors influencing teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State (n = (517)

Items	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Mean	Std
Widowhood practices	295	201	21	2.9	4.41
Patriarchal culture	358	139	20	3.5	3.67
Male child preference	382	124	11	3.3	3.91
Early marriage	311	192	14	2.6	3.45
Peer pressures	415	81	21	3.8	5.12
Social media influence	433	65	19	3.7	4.17
Financial inducements	89	404	24	2.4	2.29
Weak parental control*	101	374	42	2.3	2.44
Absence of sex education*	95	410	12	2.4	2.43
Rampant sexual assault*	125	373	19	2.1	2.30

Source: Fieldwork 2023

Mean > 2.5 represent the socio-cultural factors that influences teenage pregnancy in the study area while Mean < 2.5 represent factors not considered.



The result in Table 4 shows the items with their mean scores and standard deviations on the effects of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State. The result shows that out of the 9 items measured 7 had mean scores above 2.5, which implies that school dropout, immature pelvic suitable for delivery, stigmatization, abandoned babies, illegal

abortions, emotional trauma and premature marriages were considered as the effects of teenage pregnancies. On the other hand, 2 items scored below 2.5 which implies that high rate of death of the infant and low birth weight of a new born were not considered as effects of teenage pregnancies.

Table 4: Responses to effects of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State (n = 517)

Items	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Mean	Std
School drop-out	416	57	44	4.8	3.21
Immature pelvic suitable for delivery	341	153	23	3.5	2.81
Stigmatization	398	75	44	2.6	2.55
Abandoned babies	188	308	21	3.5	3.27
High rate of death of the infant*	101	394	22	2.3	2.11
Illegal abortion	288	197	32	3.6	3.07
Emotional trauma	399	105	13	4.1	3.74
Premature marriage	385	105	27	4.3	4.01
Low birth weight of a new born*	101	405	11	2.4	2.47

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Mean > 2.5 represent the items showing effects of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State while M < 2.5 represent item not considered as effects.

The result in Table 5 shows the items with their mean scores and standard deviations on intervention measures that can curb teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State. The result shows that all the 7 items measured had mean scores above 2.5, which implies that sex education for sexually active teens,

strong moral values, teenage empowerment, encouraging contraceptive use by teen girls, passing laws against teenage pregnancy, sensitization campaigns against teenage pregnancy and legalizing abortion of teen pregnancies were all counted as measures that could curb teenage pregnancies in the study area.

Table 5: Responses to intervention measures that can curb teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State (n = 517)

Items	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Mean	Std
Sex education for sexually active teens	319		15	3.8	3.93
Strong moral values should be strengthened	325		14	3.5	2.83
Teenage empowerment should be enhanced	313		17	3.6	3.45
Encourage contraceptive use by teen girls	292		14	3.7	3.40
Pass laws against teenage pregnancy	281		19	3.9	3.15
Sensitization campaigns against teenage pregnancy should be intensified	309		21	3.1	3.06
Legalize abortion of teen pregnancies	311		31	2.9	3.75

Source: Fieldwork 2023



Mean > 2.5 represent the items showing intervention measures that can curb teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State while M < 2.5 represent item not considered to curb teenage pregnancy in the same study area.

Test of hypothesis

This hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of socio-cultural influence on high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district of Cross River State. The independent variable is socio-cultural factors while the dependent variable is high rate of teenage pregnancy in

Southern Senatorial district of Cross River State. The hypothesis was analyzed using Chi-square analysis tested at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6: Chi-square analysis of the influence of socio-cultural influence on high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district of Cross River State (n= 517)

		Rate of pregnancy		Total	X ²	df	p-value
		High	Low				
Socio-cultural factors	Widowhood practices	122(95.6)	45(71.4)	167	36.42	5	9.49
	Patriarchal culture	40(57.8)	61(43.2)	101			
	Male child preference	62(64.7)	51(48.3)	113			
	Early marriage	31(32.1)	25(23.9)	56			
	Peer pressures	30(28.1)	19(20.9)	49			
	Social media	11(17.7)	20(13.3)	31			
	Total	296	221	517			

*p<.05; Critical X², =86.63

The result of the analysis indicated that the calculated X² value of 36.42 is greater than the critical X²-value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance with 4 degree of freedom. With the result of this analysis, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This result therefore shows that there is significant influence of socio-cultural factors on the high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The finding of this study revealed that there is high rate of teenage pregnancy in Southern Senatorial district in Cross River State. Almost every household has a teen girl that had put to birth or about to put to birth. Participants of the FGD agreed that about 53 per cent of teens had experienced unwanted pregnancies. Out of the ten participants, 7 confessed that they were pregnant before age 18.

Basically, various socio-cultural factors were found to have influenced the trend. These include widowhood practices, patriarchal culture, male child preference, early marriage, peer pressures, social media influence and financial inducements. This finding support Ekeng et al (2014) who opined that ignorance in regards to cultural belief systems had caused a lot of havoc to human existence. The finding also corroborate () that some cultural practices helped to weaken moral values, promoted poverty, and account for high sexual immorality and teenage pregnancies.

The cultural beliefs in widowhood practices, patriarchy and male child preference are interlinked to promote women subordination in the study area. For instance, when a male spouse dies, the widow was made to undergo ritual practices to exonerate her from blame of killing her husband, thereby subjecting her to untold humiliation and limitations.



The patriarchal culture had equally reduced the women to second class citizens by denying them certain rights and privileges such as the right to own properties or inheritance while the male child preference was uniquely observed to make a girl child inferior to males. Indeed, these cultural practices helped to destroy women integrity, self-esteem and ability to take independent decisions. Consequently, the teenage girls consider themselves inferior to males and therefore became helpless in the face of sexual advances made to them by the males. With the patriarchal culture, the females became economically deficient, a situation in which the males took advantage to exploit and lure them into sex with financial inducements.

The culture of early marriages in the study area has also influenced teenage pregnancy. The fact that a female child as young as 13 years was forced into marriage, sent signals to all her peers or age mates that they have reached the age to have sex. Therefore, many unmarried teens were compelled to make the sex experiments which resulted to pregnancy.

Peer pressures and social media were the social factors found to have influenced the high rate of teenage pregnancies. Almost every teen, especially those in schools are so addicted to social media which thus influences them to immoral behaviors. Also, because they have seen their peers indulge in sexual activities, they copied without a rethink which thus triggered the height of teenage pregnancy.

FG discussants agreed that some parents who are supposed to be role models are wayward and permissive to immoral behavior of their children as this result to teenage pregnancies in the area. The lack of sex educate for children has also been seen to be a causal factor. Further findings show that waywardness, parents' negligence in children's upbringing exacerbate high rate of teenage pregnancy. Also, socio-economic factors such as; poverty, social exclusion, gender inequality, low

educational levels were found to be contributing factors.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that teenage pregnancy in the study area is pervasive and has been negatively affecting the future of adolescents in diverse ways. The study also gives insight into why and how teenage girls indulge in immoral sex with little or no caution and the extent to which their actions can go, exposing causes and effect of indulging in unplanned pregnancy. The socio-cultural factors that influenced the increasing rate of teenage pregnancies in the study area include widowhood practices, patriarchal culture, male child preference, early marriage, peer pressures, social media influence and financial inducements. Indeed, teenage pregnancies are accompanied with health challenges. Most teen girls who got pregnant drop out of school. It equally accentuates a cycle of poverty among teens and their families. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should adopt programs/measures such as awareness creation, counseling, education that will help eradicate harmful cultural practices. Besides, teenage girls should be sufficiently counseled to live and maintain morally upright behaviors.
2. There should be continuous use of sex education and awareness program in all aspects of teens' life. This is because so many of them are wallowing in ignorance to the extent that they take actions without being aware of their implications.
3. Government should empower teen girls to enable them take care of themselves and not be influenced by monetary inducements.



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