
CONTRIBUTING VARIABLES TO TEENAGE PREGNANCY AMONG FEMALE ADOLESCENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko districts of Ondo State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The Population for this study consisted all pregnant teenager's attending antenatal care in Akoko districts Health Centre (HC) and General Hospital (GH). Purposive sampling technique was used to select 20% (720) from 3,600 registered pregnant teenagers for antenatal. Simple random sampling of fish bowl with replacement was used to select fifteen (15) respondents at each HC and seventy two at GH respectively. A Contributing Variable to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (CVTPQ) was developed by researcher and used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts and a reliability coefficient of 0.83 was established with Cronbach's alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage for demographic data while linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that inadequate knowledge about sexuality education, peer pressure, lack of parental guidance and media/internet were contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents. Recommendations were made among is that government should make health care professionals working with adolescent's to develop a wide range of practical and interpersonal initiatives on teenage pregnancy.*

KEYWORDS: *Adolescent, Media/Internet, Parental Guidance, Peer Pressure, Sexuality Education, Teenage Pregnancy.*

INTRODUCTION

Teenage pregnancy is one of the post global challenges posing potential threat to the future generation. Adolescence is defined as the development phase in the human life cycle that is situated between childhood and adulthood (Gouws, Kruger and Burger, 2008). Adolescence is characterized by rapid physical growth and development, with notable emotional and social changes (Gouws et al., 2008). Adolescent pregnancy is a concern worldwide and has risen at an alarming rate in African society (Dommissie, 2007). According to 2012 World Health Organization (WHO) fact sheet on adolescent pregnancy, it is estimated that 16 million adolescent girls give birth every year – most in low- and middle-income countries. A great challenge in this stage of development is that new feelings emerge, friends assume greater importance, and interest in the opposite sex increases (Gouws et al., 2008; Shaffer and Kipp, 2007).

Adolescent pregnancy brings change to the lives of young girls and in most instances negative social consequences such as dropping out of school and interrupted education. Adolescent pregnancies contribute to many health problems as girls enter into motherhood before they are

physical and psycho-socially ready (Goddard, 2008). Society is negatively affected with socio-economic factors in relation to adolescent pregnancies such as educational failure; poverty; unemployment and poor literacy. Unprotected sexual intercourse can lead to an unwanted adolescent pregnancy which is often considered a serious social and public health problem (Mestad, Secura, Allsworth, Madden, Zhao and Pelter, 2011).

A study by Mothiba and Maputle, (2012) observed that teenage pregnancy appears to be encouraged by lack of access to sex education. Some parents are reluctant to make sexuality education and contraceptives available to their teenagers, as they are afraid that their teenagers might interpret this as permission to engage in sexual activities. Most adolescents lack information on sexuality and contraception, as most of the education that is presented on this matter is limited (Bankole, Ahmed, Ouedraogo, Neema and Konyani, 2007). Morake, (2011) revealed that teenagers appear to be ignorant about sex education and issues such as puberty, pregnancy and contraception.

Teenagers have sex as a way to appear cool and sophisticated, but in some cases the end result is an unplanned teen pregnancy. Langham, (2015) opined that peer pressure contribute to teens pregnancy 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. Mothiba and Maputle, (2012) submitted that the pressure by older boys and their refusal to use condoms during sexual intercourse, were the main reasons for teenage pregnancies. Adolescents spend more time with friends and peer groups than with their parents which affects their choices and decisions (Gouws et al., 2008). Kaiser Family Foundation, (2015) states that more than 29 percent of pregnant teens reported that they felt pressured to have sex, and 33 percent of pregnant teens stated that they felt that they were not ready for a sexual relationship, but proceeded anyway because they feared ridicule or rejection.

Many parents have busy lives that prevent them from providing the guidance and support that their young teenagers need to make good decisions on issues such as sex (Langham, 2015; Website Parent Dish, 2014). It has been established that Nigerian parents regard facts on sex so sacred that they rarely discuss them with their children (Anton, 2010). When a teen does not feel that she can talk to her parents about sex either because they forbid sex talk or because they are not around, she will more than likely turn to friends for direction on whether or not to have sex, resulting in misinformation and possible teen pregnancy.

Mass media is defined as those media that are designed to be consumed by large audiences through the agencies of technology (Anton, 2010; Wakefield, Lokan and Hornik, 2010). An array of communication media reaches large numbers of the public, including radio, television, movies, newspapers, and magazines. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmits information and services such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer, interlinked web pages, and other documents of the World Wide Web (Brown, 2002). According to ABC's Good Morning America (2014) states that movie industry and the media contribute to teenage pregnancy by glamorizing teen pregnancy in news stories and

movies. The mass media and the internet have their advantages in terms of providing necessary information for young people on sexual health and healthy sexual relationships (Brown, 2002).

Statement of problem

Teenage pregnancy has a direct implication on school dropout among girls and a subsequent contributor to the disparities experienced in the education of both girls and boys. Despite the extensive attention given to adolescent sexuality and teenage pregnancy in the past 30 years, many teenagers were still a victim in Akoko districts of Ondo State. Teenage pregnancy has become an epidemic in the study area, partly because more and more teenagers who give birth decide to keep and raise their children without thinking of education any more. The widespread perception is that girls who become pregnant entered a premature marriage and become the head of an impoverished household, relying on meager assistance from her family and the child's father. This study seeks to establish the contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State.

Purpose of study

The main purpose of this study was to identify contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study:

Ho₁: Lack of sexuality education will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Ho₂: Peer pressures will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Ho₃: Parental guidance will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Ho₄: Media exposure will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Significant of study

This study would contribute to the prevention of teenage pregnancies. It could be useful for health educators to guide teenagers on how to avoid unwanted pregnancies through school health programme.

METHODS

Design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted. This research design was suitable to obtain relevant information to describe and identify factors that contributes to teenage pregnancy in Akoko districts of Ondo State.

Population

The target population in this study comprised all the pregnant teenagers between the ages of 13-20years. Akoko Districts has 86 (Eight six) HC with 3,600 pregnant teenagers registered.

Sample

The sample for this study consisted 720 pregnant teenagers' attending antenatal in the entire Health Centre (HC) and General Hospital (GH) in study area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 20% (720) from 3,600 registered pregnant teenagers for antenatal. This is shown diagrammatically below.

Table 1

Districts	No's of Health Centre (HC)/ General Hospital (GH)	Total no's of pregnant teenagers registered for antenatal in each districts	50% of HC & GH selected	20% respondents used for the study at each districts
Akoko North-East	20	762	10	152
Akoko North-West	20	756	10	151
Akoko South-East	16	660	8	132
Akoko South-West	28	1064	14	213
General Hospital	2	358	1	72
Total	86	3,600	43	720

Source: Researcher Consultation

Simple random sampling of fish bowl with replacement was used to select the respondents both at HC and GH respectively. This was done by written 1-20 on a sheet of paper where 5 were empty in HC and 1-80 in GH where 8 were blanked and placed on a box. Respondents that picked 1-15 in HC and 1-72 in GH were therefore selected for the study.

Instrument

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher tagged "Contributing Variables to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (CVTPQ)" and was used for the study. The instrument contained items on contributing variable using 4 likert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with scoring value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by experts in the field of Health Education, Measurement and Evaluation at the University of Benin. The instrument was subjected to reliability through test and re-tests method using fifty pregnant teenagers in Akure North Local Government Area outside the study population. The reliability index of the instrument resulting from the Crombach alpha computation was 0.83.

Data collection

The instrument was administered by the researcher with the aid of four trained research assistants who's interpreted and collected copies of the questionnaires from consenting participants at the HC and GH in Akoko district of Ondo State on the spot.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistical of frequency count and simple percentage was used to analysis demographic data while linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Seven hundred and twenty ($n = 720$) pregnant teenagers (between 12 and 20 years) who were attending antenatal care at HC and GH in the Akoko districts of Ondo state participated voluntarily in the study.

Table 2: Demographic data of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Age				
Valid 12-14 yrs	186	25.8	25.8	25.8
15-17 yrs	316	43.9	43.9	69.7
18-20 yrs	218	30.3	30.3	100.0
Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Age at first sexual intercourse				
Valid Below 12 yrs	128	17.8	17.8	17.8
12-14 yrs	188	26.1	26.1	43.6
15-17	214	29.7	29.4	73.6
18 yrs above	190	26.4	26.4	100.0
Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Qualifications				
Valid < primary six	96	13	13	13
Primary six	134	19	19	32
Junior secondary class	248	34	34	66
Senior secondary class	186	26	26	92
Above SS class	56	8	8	100.0
Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Occupations				
Valid Peasant	204	28.3	28.3	28.3
Petty traders	192	26.7	26.7	55
Employees	218	30.3	30.3	85.3
Others	106	14.7	14.7	100.0
Total	720	100.0	100.0	

H₀₁: Lack of sexuality education will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Table 3: Results to show lack of sexuality education as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy.

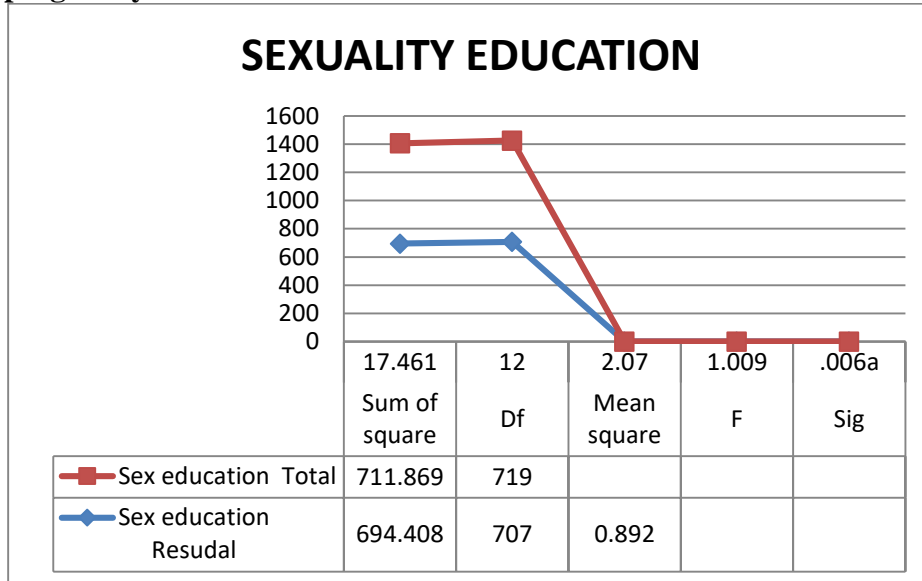


Table 3 shows the result on lack of sexuality education as a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy in Akoko districts of Ondo State. From the table, F-ratio was 1.009 farther than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted as contributing variables to teenage pregnancy in study area.

H₀₂: Peer pressure will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Table 4: Results to show peer pressure as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy.

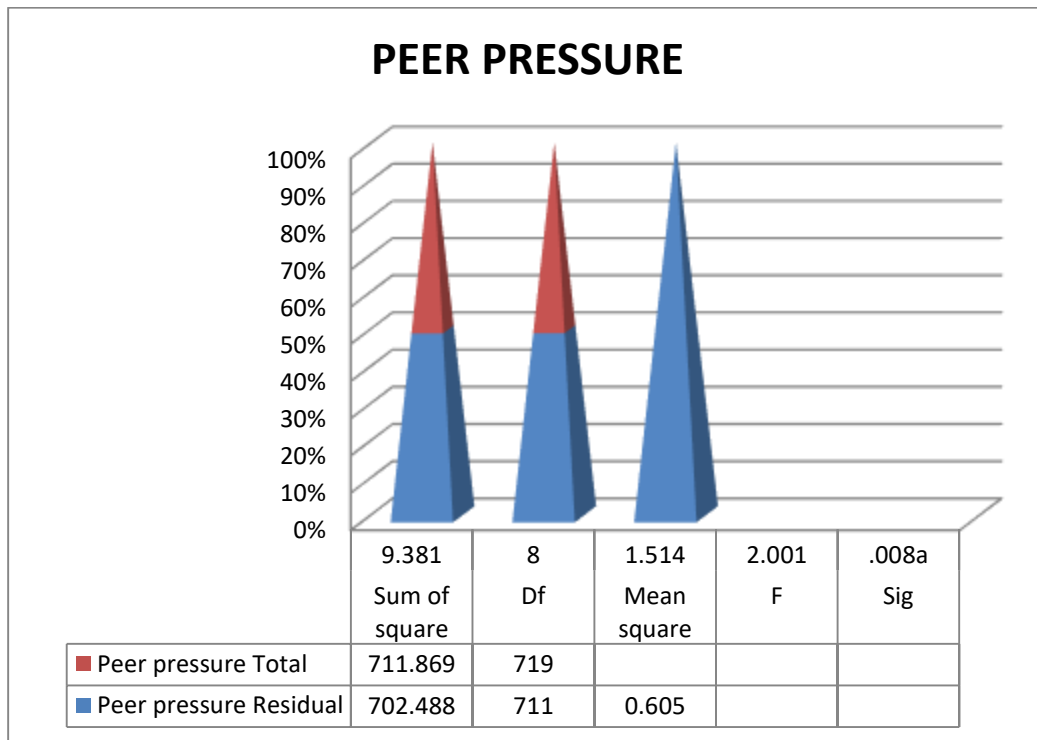


Table 4 above revealed peer pressure as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy, F-ratio was 2.001 which also higher than level of significance 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted as contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State.

H₀: Parental guidance will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State?

Table 5: Results to show parental guidance as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy.

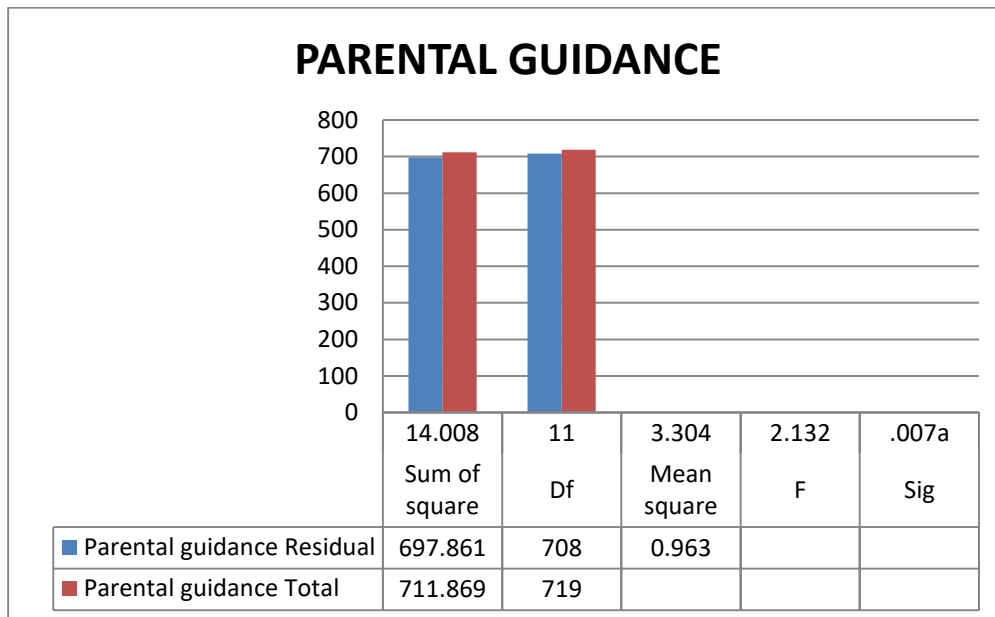


Table 5 shows hypothesis 3 results that parental guidance as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy. From the table, F-ratio was 2.132 against 0.05 level of significance, this hypothesis was also accepted as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State.

H₀₄: Media/internet exposure will be a contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State

Table 6: Results to show media/internet exposure as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy.

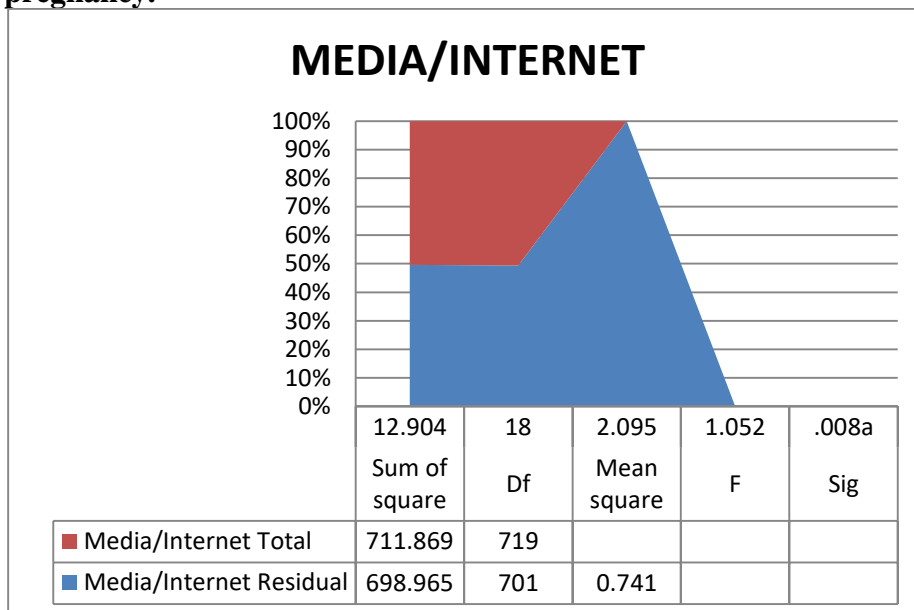


Table 6 revealed hypothesis 4 results and the F-ratio was 1.056 which is also higher than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, no rejection for null hypothesis, it was accepted as contributing variable to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko Districts of Ondo State.

DISCUSSIONS

Sexuality education has been introduced into Nigeria curricular over many years ago in which most of those female adolescents must have benefited and has pre-knowledge of before engaging in sex resulted to pregnancy. It could be observed that adolescents were not properly educated with the issues related to sex. This finding agrees with the findings of Mushwana, Monareng, Richter and Muller, (2015) that lack of education on safe sex, either on the side of the parents or the educators may lead to teenage pregnancy. It was also consistent with Mothiba and Maputle, (2012) that teenage pregnancy appears to be encouraged by lack of access to sexuality education. The finding corroborated with Morake, (2011) that teenagers appear to be ignorant about sexuality education and issues such as puberty, pregnancy and contraception.

The finding shown that female adolescents motivated by cultural taboos to discuss sex with one's parents, combined with real or perceived peer group pressure to engage in sexual activities, cause unnecessary distress for many young women. This result was corroborated with Langham, (2015) that peer pressure contribute to teen's pregnancy during adolescence, teenagers often feel pressure to make friends and fit in with their peers. This result agreed with findings of Mothiba and Maputle, (2012) that the pressure by older boys and their refusal to use condoms during sexual intercourse were the main reasons for teenage pregnancies. Finding also consistent with Gouws et al., (2008) earlier mentioned in the study that adolescents spend more time with friends and peer groups than with their parents which affects their choices and decisions. This finding was also agreed with a developmental study by Ojo, (2014) that peers create a sense of normative behavior in which early sexual debut, having multiple sexual partners, and inconsistent condom use may be supported or rejected by peers, thus becoming a peer group norm.

The study also indicated that parental guidance is contributing variable to teenage pregnancy. Most people evade their children from talking about sex. In some cases, they provide false information regarding sex and discourage their children to participate in any informative discussion about sex. However, teenage mothers are not well educated about sex before getting pregnant and thus this leads to lack of communication between the parents and the children. The finding is agreement with Langham, (2015) that teenage parents were less likely to stimulate their infant through affectionate behaviours such as touch, smiling and verbal communication, or to be sensitive and care toward his/her needs. This finding is also in line with Marnach, Forrest and Goldman, (2013) found that many teenage mothers felt that their pregnancy upset their parents. Fathers tendered to be angered by their daughters' pregnancies. In some cases this anger would even lead to the father's rejection to chase their teenage daughters out of the house.

The study revealed that media/internet exposure is contributing variable to teenage pregnancy. The internet might have a positive effect on teenagers, as there are some sites that create awareness about teen pregnancy, human immunodeficiency virus, and sexually transmitted diseases. These sites could be used by young people when they have nowhere else to turn. This is similar to what has been reported in earlier studies (Anton, 2010; Brown, 2002) and it is expected because young people have been said to be vigorous users of the mass media (Mbambo, Ethlers and Monareng, 2006). However, research has shown that mass media/internet can also negatively influence young

people's sexual behavior because teenagers are more likely to start having sexual relationships earlier without using protection (Anton, 2010; Brown, 2002). This finding corroborated with reports from other researchers on the negative influence that internet use may have on adolescents' sexual behaviors (Brown, L'Engle, Pardon, Guo, Kenneary and Jackson, 2006). This result agreed with findings of Mushwana, Monareng, Richter and Muller, (2015) that determined sexual content in music, movies, television and magazines had an influence on early sexual activity in youth.

CONCLUSION

The study focused on contributing variables to teenage pregnancy among female adolescents in Akoko districts of Ondo State. The study concluded that teenagers were suffered from menace of inadequate knowledge of sexuality education, peer pressure initiators, unchartered parental guidance and media/internet exposure. The increase in the number of teenager's pregnancies is causing great concern and is becoming a critical issue. This situation requires the urgent attention of every section of society in order to prevent family life from disintegrating completely.

Recommendation

The under listed recommendations were made

- ❖ Sexuality education should be given adequate priority among the teenagers for proper counseling about early relationship with their partners.
- ❖ Teenagers should be discouraged from having sexual intercourse at their young ages and encouraged them total abstinences
- ❖ Parents should educate their teenagers' on the proper usage of social media/internet at home.
- ❖ Government should make health care professionals working with adolescents to develop a wide range of practical and interpersonal initiatives on teenager's pregnancy.

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