

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF LIFE CHANCES OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND MOTHERS IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: The general objective of this study was to explore the public perception of life chances of teenage pregnancy in Ekiti State with special focus on rural areas. Reality theory of William Glasser propounded in 1965 was used as guide for the study. Isokan Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Ekiti State was purposively selected as a case of rural community. Structured interviews and key informant interviews were used for data collection. A total of 384 copies of structured interview schedule were administered and collected for analysis while 11 key informant interviews were facilitated among primary stakeholders of the plight of teenage pregnancy. Findings show that awareness of teenage pregnancy is high among the respondents with 76 percent aware of at least a pregnant teenager in their family. Teenage pregnancy is associated with rurality (73 percent), parental poor education (83 percent), and poverty. Male respondents hold higher level of awareness than female respondents. Social stigma is the most mentioned challenge of pregnant teenagers, then economic, health and inability to attain desired educational level. The life chances of pregnant teenagers are affected by distortion of schooling, and trap of poverty. It is recommended that school based sexual and reproductive health services should be prioritised in all secondary schools in the State, and addressing the fixated social and cultural barriers to access to adolescent contraceptive and life skills.

Background to the Study

Teenage pregnancy is known as a teenage girl, usually within the age of 13-19 years becoming pregnant. Also the term in everyday speech usually refers to girls who have not reached legal adulthood which varies across the world, who

become pregnant. Teen's pregnancy is social and medical issues that have effects on all aspects starting from the pregnant girl, her family and entire society. A child having a baby as a teenager is more likely to face critical social issues like poverty, poor education, risky behaviours that

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

lead to poor health issues, and child welfare. The financial cost of teens having babies is devastating. Educational attainment is difficult for the teen mother and this leads to decreased economic opportunities and earnings throughout their lifetime.

Teenage pregnancy usually makes the teenage girls miss out a lot of opportunities, which could make the person have unequal access to life choices and fall into poverty (Maharaj, 2022). A social norm in child development and socialisation ladder in southern Nigeria especially is for a child to attain at least have secondary school education and value tertiary education, the mandatory National Youth Service and seeking a good job either in the private or public sector. However, if the female child is pregnant before completing the aforementioned structure, there is high possibility that she would not be a socially fulfilled and her family disappointed and carry social stigma. This is because teenage pregnancy has been observed to be a strong factor, which forces people to take actions and decisions which they normally would not have taken. For less socio-economically endowed families like in rural areas, urban poor and socially and physically hard to reach communities, access to long years of education and preferred occupation is difficult, they become most challenged to access opportunities. Teenage pregnancy is a social problem all over the world with huge costs to the society. Odu and Ayodele (2006) had earlier documented high incidence of teenage pregnancy in Ekiti State and the trend keep increasing while the study by Fayemi et al (2013) also documented the trend in a survey and by second decade of 21st century, the menace has become a national and public outcry (Owoseni and Agbana, 2021).

The health and social wellbeing of the teens are in the heart of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 16 and 17. Other Goals are also affected and impacted by the implications of the wellbeing of the teens which in Nigeria constitute about 40 percent of the population, about 80 million people (UNFPA, Adolescents and Youth Dashboard-Nigeria cited 25th October 2023). Report by Joel (2021) showed that 19.2 percent teenagers aged 15-19 years had started having children, with three percent have given birth before they were 15 years. Teenage pregnancy is perceived as a risk factor with adverse socio-economic and health consequences. The consequences affect their life chances such as the likelihood to be unmarried, poor or remain socially uneducated, have out of wedlock children with socio-cultural stigma, marital instability, and low income earners among others (Ayuba, & Gani, 2012).

Globally, teenage pregnancy is conceived as a social menace and a common public health problem, in which millions of teenagers were involved (Mgbokwere, et al. 2015). Psychological problems are not exempted in some teenagers which include dropping out of school, social discrimination and stigmatization and sub-Saharan nations constitute about 19 percent of the global burden while much more imparted due to poverty and socio-cultural norms with resultant psychosocial and mental challenges for the pregnant teenagers (Eborelme, Ezeokiri, Adams, & Banke-Thomas 2022). Reports from WHO estimated that in each year, 21 million females from 15-19 years and 2 million female aged 15 years get pregnant in developing nations. Also globally teenage pregnancy posed a public health threat as almost all teenage maternal deaths take place in poor nations like Nigeria.

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

Also adolescent mothers which include teenagers face higher risks of eclampsia, puerperal endometritis and systemic infections than women aged 20-24 years, and babies of adolescent mothers face higher risks of low birth weight, preterm birth and severe neonatal conditions (WHO 2023). These gloomy pictures of teenage pregnancy will even be worse for the low income, rural, illiterate, and culturally fixated cohorts within African nations.

Statement of the Problem

Teenage pregnancy is an unwanted phenomenon, which seems to be a social challenge for many nations and Nigeria is not exempted. According to Okoli, et al. (2022), about 21 million female teenagers from 15-19 years got pregnant every year and the prevalence is about 95percent higher in developing nations compared to the developed nations. At the national level, teenage pregnancy per 1000 was accounted for nations like Mozambique with 180, Chad with 179, Mali accounted for 164, Angola recorded 163, Niger Republic was reported for 154 and Tanzania with 139, and all these were higher than Nigeria with 23 percent (Joel, 2021). In Nigeria, North West with 36 percent and North East with 34 percent were reported as the highest prevalence of teenage pregnancy, as Cross River State with 17 percent recorded the highest among the Southern States. Also, teenage pregnancy accounted for 40 percent maternal deaths in Sierra Leone where early marriage is supported by traditional practice. This is because teenage mothers face high risk of low birth weight, preterm delivery and several neonatal implications (Ihedioha, 2021). Despite the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Nigeria, and the negative socioeconomic and health implications attached to it, there is a number of grounded empirical

study on the life chance of teenage pregnancy and mothers in Ekiti State, makes this study germane. Alo and Ojo (2022) empirical study found out there is a good knowledge of teenage pregnancy among the teenagers surveyed. UNICEF however has reported that Ekiti State leads in teenage pregnancy prevalence in southwest Nigeria, related to child marriage prevalence, describing it as dangerous trend (Ogunje, 2022). However, the fact that there is no grounded empirical study on the public perceptions of life chances of teenage pregnancy and mothers in Ekiti State, Nigeria with a focus on Isokan Local Council Development Areas in Ekiti State, makes this study relevant and germane to study

Theoretical Framework

Reality Theory

This theory was established by William Glasser in 1965. This theory, also is named Choice theory, attempts to explain human behaviour in terms of success identity or failure identity. According to the theory, human behaviour is motivated by people regardless of their culture or location as they strive to meet their physiological needs. Besides, the theory recognized five basic psychological needs, which are survival, satisfaction, love, power and freedom (Collins 2018). As one develops his identity, others such as, people, parents, or siblings play an important role to enable one to see himself as a success or failure. Behaviour therefore comes as a result of responding to change in identity that leads to change in the way one feels, lives and behaves resulting in change in behaviours as posited by (Jacob & Hussein 2021). Also, it is more possible to change one's life than attempt to change other people's life. This theory is very practical in the sense that it assumes that someone should undertake certain behaviour based on what

he/she is feeling presently and not what he is expecting in the future. With regards to the subject matter, Fute, Sun and Oubibi (2022) stated undertook psychological attributes of parents and teachers about teenage pregnancy. The attributes are empathetic concern, feelings of responsibility, and attribution of blame. In the study attributions of feelings of responsibility and empathy were higher for parents than teachers while parents have higher attribute of blame than teachers. This shows much social condemnation for pregnant teenagers. Therefore, much of positive choice is the responsibility of victims of teenage pregnancy and needs counselling and empathy to achieve this. Reality theory also underpins that teenagers are moved by what they see and what they hear, especially among themselves. For instance, someone might want to go into dating or premarital sex simply because he/she heard that others are doing it. This theory also recognizes factors like the home, the school, the social media, the community, deviant behaviour and sexual behaviour could influence the way teenagers makes decision and choices. Thus, it is the best to identify the prevalent factor that influence the way teenagers' behaviour and ensure that such determining factor influencing them for the best and not for the worst. For instance, unwanted pregnancies by teenagers have been associated with poor educational and low income families globally and are more heightened in resource poor environments of Africa.

Methods

This study was conducted in Isokan Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Ekiti State. The LCDA is made up of Ilogun, Oke and Odo Ora Communities, Aaye Ekiti, Orin Ekiti, Ifisin Ekiti, Igbole Ekiti and Ifaki Ekiti. The

headquarters of the LCDA is Ifaki Ekiti and the LCDA has four Political wards (Ifaki 1 and Ifaki 2, Orin/Ora Ward, and Igbole/Ifisin/Aaye ward) with 35 Polling Units. The area was carved out of the present Ido Osi local government area in August 2021 by the State government with a view to make governance and development closer to the people. The LCDAs in 2021 have estimated population of Seventy-Eight Thousand (78,000) people according to National Primary Health Care Agency. The area is located north of the State Capital.

The study is a descriptive study among male and female adults in the LCDA with the use of survey questionnaire and key informant interviews. The sample size was then determined using the Cochran formula which produced 384 samples or survey respondents who are male and female adults, 14-40 years of age. The sample for the study is drawn using multi stage procedure. First with the simple random selection of three of the communities that is the headquarters and two other communities. The second with systematic selection of respondents through their PU. All the eight autonomous communities made up of the local council development area were selected for the study. Independent national Electoral Commission's List and Location of Polling Units (PUs) in the eight communities were used as basis for identifying and contacting 384 respondents. There are 35 PUs in the LCDA and each PU was allocated equal proportion of 11 respondents. Housing Units around each PU were demarcated with the assistance of community guides. Random sampling of housing units based on the total housing unit for each PU was done. Adult male or female in each selected housing unit who showed willingness and readiness to voluntarily participate in the study

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

were contacted and interviewed by a trained fieldworker.

Eleven key informant interviews were conducted among community health workers, parents, male and female youth, a teenager, and non-governmental organisation staff and volunteer working in the LCDA. Also a female member of the Ekiti State Gender Based Violence Management Committee (EKSGBVMC) was also interviewed. The administered copies of questionnaire being edited, and presented using the descriptive analysis. The key informant interviews notes were transcribed and analysed based on the themes of the research objectives

and codes. This qualitative data being used as complementary information to the survey data.

Results

Social Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Social Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Characteristics	Male (N=184)	Female (N=200)	Total (N=384)
Age (Years)			
Below 20	67.5	33.3	50.0
21-25	15.0	52.4	34.1
26-30	12.5	9.5	11.0
31 and above	5.0	4.8	4.9
Marital status			
Single	92.5	71.4	81.7
married	5.0	28.6	17.1
Divorced/separated	2.5	0	1.2
Religion			
Christianity	92.5	69.0	80.5
Islam	5.0	23.8	14.6
Traditional religion	2.5	7.1	4.9
Ethnicity			
Yoruba	97.5	85.7	65.0
Igbo	2.5	4.8	27.5
Hausa	-	9.5	7.5

Sources; Research Fieldwork; 2023

Social characteristics of the survey respondents are presented in Table 1. The age bracket shows

that male respondents constitute 68 percent were below 20 years, 15 percent were within 21-

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

25 years, 13 percent were 26-30 years, and five percent were 31 years and above. While for female respondents, it states that 33per cent were below 20 years, 52 percent were between 21-25 years, about 10 percent were between 26-30 years and five percent were within 31 years and above. The total respondents show that half of them were below 20. What this implies is that majority of the respondents were teenagers and well represented in the study. However, it is important to note that there are more male teenagers and more female adolescent (21-25 years) in the study. The marital status of respondents was illustrated also. For male respondents, 93 percent were single, five percent were married, and about three percent were either divorced or separated. While for female respondents, 71 percent were single, 29 percent were married. The implication of this finding is that an overwhelming proportion of the total

respondents were single, and this shows that teenagers are well represented in the study. The religion affiliation of respondents for male shows that 93 percent Christians, five percent are Islamic worshippers and two percent claimed that they are Traditional religion. For the female respondents, 69 percent were Christians, 24 percent practice Islamic religion, and seven percent practice traditional religion.

The ethnic group of respondents was also shown. For male respondents, 97 percent affirmed to belong to the Yoruba ethnic group, and three percent were Ibo ethnic group. While for female respondents, 86 percent were Yoruba, five percent were Ibo, and nine percent were Hausa ethnic group. There is a large distribution of respondents who are of Yoruba ethnic. This can be attributed to the fact that the study area is predominantly Yoruba speaking area.

Knowledge and Awareness about Teenage Pregnancy

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Knowledge and Awareness about Teenage Pregnancy

Items	Male (N=184)		Female (N=200)		Total (384)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you think teenage pregnancy is risky	92.5	7.5	90.5	9.5	91.5	8.5
Do teenage pregnancies happen more in rural area than urban area	70.0	30.0	76.2	23.8	73.2	26.8
Has your family experienced teenage pregnancy	20.0	80.0	28.6	71.4	24.4	75.6
Poor education status of parents leads to teenage pregnancy	95.0	5.0	71.4	28.6	82.9	17.1
Is teenage pregnancy a much social problem in this area	90.0	10.0	81.0	19.0	85.1	14.6

Source: Research Fieldwork, 2023

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

Knowledge and awareness of what teenage pregnancy is was measured and presented in Table 2. Table 2 illustrated the knowledge and awareness of teenage pregnancy between male and female respondents. With respect to respondents thinking of whether teenage pregnancy is risky, both male and female respondents affirmed to it as risky as about 93 percent and about 91 percent respectively attest to it. The implication of this finding is that an overwhelming distribution of respondents claimed that teenage pregnancy is risky. In determining if teenage pregnancy occur more in rural than urban, 70 percent male and 76 percent female attest that teenage pregnancy occur more in rural than urban areas. Therefore, about three-quarter of the total respondents believed that teenage pregnancy occurs more in rural than urban areas. All the eleven key informants affirm that rural areas account for more teenage pregnancy. It must be noted that rurality is also linked to poverty and poor access to adequate information for wellbeing. Whether respondents have experienced teenage pregnancy in their respective families, 71 percent of total respondents claimed that their family have not experienced teenage pregnancy but about a

quarter of female respondents have family members experienced teenage pregnancy.

Also with respect to whether poor education status of parent results to teenage pregnancy, it was shown that both male and female with 95 percent and 71 percent respectively confirmed that poor education status of parents results to teenage pregnancy. Therefore, majority of 83 percent attested that poor education of parent's result to teenage pregnancy. Lastly, whether teenage pregnancy is a social problem was investigated; both male and female respondents with 90 percent and 81 percent respectively affirmed that teenage pregnancy is a social problem. As a results, three-quarter of the total respondents confirmed that teenage pregnancy is a social problem. From the qualitative study participants, out of the 11 participants, all the female participants affirm that teenage pregnancy is common in their community while four out of the five participants affirm that it is not common. This shows there is a gender perspective to the problematic of teenage pregnancy. While female see it as a social concern but the male see is as not really a problem.

Challenges of Teenage Pregnancy

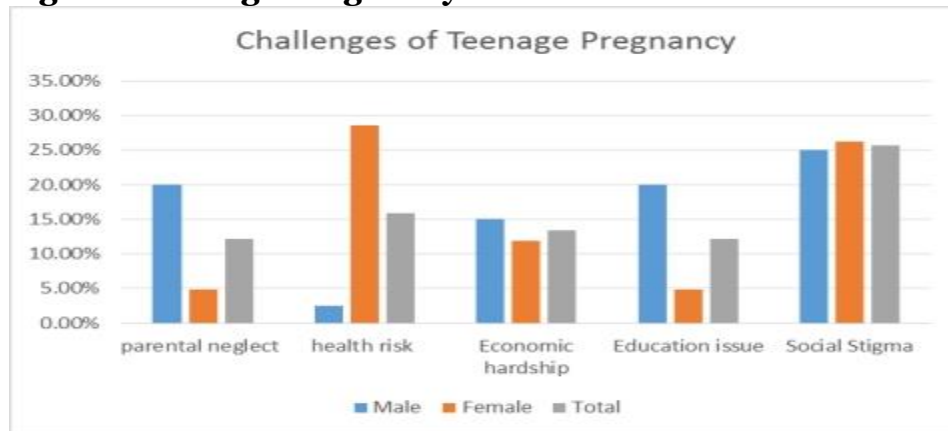


Figure 1: Respondents perceived Challenges of Teenage Pregnancy

Survey respondents were asked the challenges of teenage pregnancy. Overall social stigma, rejection and discrimination make the highest identified challenge to the teenage pregnant girls and mothers by both sexes. The opinion of female respondents was also more vehement about the health and economic challenges and implications of teenage pregnancy while male respondents also expressed higher opinion about the parental neglect and educational attainment challenge to teenage pregnant persons. However, across the gender, the least challenge is parental neglect to the pregnant girls. The implication of these results is that majority of the respondents believed that teenage pregnancy faces the challenge of social stigmatization, followed by economic, health risk, educational and parental neglect in the order. From the transcripts of key informant interviews, the identified causes of teenage pregnancy include mostly poor parenting and poor parents especially; *when parents cannot take care of their children, poverty, ignorance, parental conflicts* as expressed by another teenage key informant *Bad parenting, peer pressure and ignorance about sex education*.

A community trained Nurse in a Basic Health Centre affirmed;

These girls do not have good information about how to prevent pregnancy, when they would not obey what they were told by their parents and pastors. They don't even believe them since the parents themselves are not there to provide for their basic needs. They need sex education both in school and by other sources. Most mothers are poor and the children needs money and any source to get this leads to trap.

A poor parent in terms of economic power and educational level cannot take meaningful decision to even remedy the plight of their pregnant daughter compared to educated, more economically endowed or urban parents who likely to have access to social information to prevent and or cure the plight of sexually exposed daughters.

A member of the Ekiti State Gender Based Violence Management Committee, equally a gender scholar expressed her mind thus;

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

The main causes of teenage pregnancy include poverty; poor parental upbringing, ignorance of the victims; drug abuse by perpetrators; drunkenness by victims and

perpetrators; lack of adequate sex education for teenagers in schools and out of schools among others in Ekiti State

Life Chances of Pregnant Teenagers and Teenage Mothers

Table 3: Percentage Assessment of Life Chances of Teenage Mothers by Respondents

Items	Male		Female		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do female students return back to school after falling pregnant as teenagers	47.5	52.5	33.3	66.7	40.2	59.8
Would it be wise to continue schooling after getting pregnant as a teenager	62.5	37.5	54.8	45.2	58.5	41.5
Is it easy for female students to be schooling and taking care of a baby at the same time even in secondary school	10.0	90.0	4.8	95.2	7.30	92.7
Do most school teenagers drop out of school when pregnant	65.0	35.0	78.6	21.4	72.0	28.0
Would someone who has gotten pregnant out of wedlock be accepted by her family	45.0	55.0	33.3	66.7	39.0	61.0
Is it easy to have a good reputation as a single mother	47.5	52.6	21.4	78.6	34.1	65.9
Does teenage pregnancy make a person look like he/she lacks home training	50.0	50.0	73.8	26.2	62.2	37.8
Would you allow your children become friends with someone who got pregnant in secondary school	12.5	87.5	35.7	64.3	24.4	75.6
Do you think a lady who became pregnant as a teenager can be psychologically stable in life	22.6	77.5	38.1	61.9	30.5	69.5
A lady who got pregnant will experience economic deprivation in life	72.5	27.5	61.9	38.1	67.1	32.9
Poverty is associated with teenage mothers and later in life	65.0	35.0	45.2	54.8	54.9	45.1

Source; Research Fieldwork, 2023

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

The Table 3 illustrated the assessment of life chance of teenage mothers in the State especially in a typical rural area of the study. With respect to whether female students return back to school after falling pregnant as teenagers, both male and female respondents with 52.5 percent and 66.7 percent respectively affirmed that female students do not return back to school after falling pregnant as a teenager, a total of 59 percent affirmed pregnant school girls do not return back to school. However just same percentage (58 percent) affirmed that pregnant school girls should be allowed to attend school during the period. More percentage of female respondents affirms this. What this implies is that majority believed that it is better for teenagers to continue schooling during and after pregnancy. The Table 3 also reveals that overwhelming over 90 percent of the respondents believed that combining schooling with child care is not convenient for the school girls. However, 72 percent of the respondents affirm that pregnant in-school teenagers do not continue schooling.

Concerning social acceptability of pregnant teenagers and teen mothers, 45 percent of male respondents, 33 percent of female respondents and 33 percent of all respondents affirm that they are accepted. This shows very high level of social stigma associated with teenage pregnancy. Related to this is the negative profiling of pregnant teenagers with poor home training, what Yoruba cultural ethos describes as *alaileko* or *alaigbeko*. The first is a child without or lack home training, while the second is about a stubborn, recalcitrant child and impervious to home training. In this study, 50 percent of male respondent ascribe pregnant teenagers to either of the two, while 74 percent of female respondents ascribe pregnant teenagers to either also. This is why 87 percent of male respondents

would not allow their children to associate with pregnant teenagers, 64 percent of female respondents would not and 75 percent, three quarter of total respondents will not allow their children to associate with pregnant teenagers or teen mothers. Pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers according to the respondents have very low psychological health status with about 65 percent viewing them as psychologically unsound, victims of gender based violence.

Whether someone who was pregnant outside wedlock would be accepted in their family was presented. It shows that more than half (55 percent) of the male and about 67.0percent female respondents said no. That is, a large proportion of the total respondents believed that pregnancy outside wedlock is not accepted by the family. The study investigated whether it is easy to have good reputation as a single mother. It shows that male respondents with 53 percent and female respondents with 78 percent confirmed that it is not easy to have good reputation. The total sample population stated that 66 percent attest that it is not easy. Therefore, what this implies is that majority of the respondents believed that it is not easy having good reputation as a single mother. Table 3 further showed if teenage pregnancy makes someone look like he/she lacks home training. For male respondents, there is no actual response as it was 50-50. While for female respondents, 74 percent claimed that teenage pregnancy makes someone look like he/she lack home training. Nevertheless, majority of the total respondents with 62 percent attest to that it makes someone look like he/she lacks home training. Also the Table 3 showed the perception of respondents as regard if they can allow their children to make friend with someone who got pregnant in secondary school. The results show

that both male and female respondents with 87 percent and 64 percent respectively confirmed that they cannot allow their children to make friend with someone who got pregnant in or during secondary school. Therefore, majority (75 percent) of the total respondents said they cannot allow their children to make friends with someone who got pregnant in school. In the same Table 3 whether a lady who has fallen pregnant as a teenager can be psychologically stable in life was examine. It explained that about 78 percent male and 62 percent female claimed that a lady who has fallen pregnant as a teenager cannot be psychologically stable in life. What this implies is that majority of the total respondents (about 70 percent) affirmed that they cannot be psychologically stable in life. Also, the study illustrated whether a lady who got pregnant will experience economic deprivation in life. It shows that both male (72 percent) and female (62 percent) respondents believed that lady who got pregnant experience economic deprivation in life. As a results, a large percentage distribution (67 percent) of the total respondents confirmed that lady who got pregnant do experience economic deprivation in life. Lastly in Table 3 shows results on whether poverty is associated with teenage mothers and later in life. For male respondents, 65.0percent agreed that poverty is associated, but 55 percent female respondents disagreed that poverty is not associated. Nonetheless, more than half (55 percent) of the total respondents confirmed that poverty is associated with teenage mothers and later in life. The implication here is that poverty sets in later in life with teenage mothers.

The last measure of life chances of teenage pregnancy victims is the economic life chance. In this study and from Table 3, a total of 67 percent and 55 percent of the respondents affirm that

teenage pregnancy leads to economic deprivation and poverty respectively. Male respondents have more impression of these negative consequences of teenage pregnancy.

Discussion

The study examines the public perception of life chances of teenage pregnancy and mothers in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study revealed that half of the respondents were below 20 years. This finding supported the assertion of Asmamaw et al (2023) that teenage pregnancy is estimated for 16 million females between the age of 10-19 years, which also account for almost 11 percent of global birth. In the same vein, Bolarinwa et al (2022) stressed that the likelihood of teenage pregnancy in Nigeria was high among those between 15-19 years. The study also shows that there are more male respondents (67 percent) male teenagers and more female adolescent (52 percent, 21-25 years) in the study. Findings from the study show that an overwhelming proportion (82 percent) of the total respondents was single. Also revealing from the study is the religion affiliation which shows that a very large percentage distribution of respondents were Christians, as 15 percent and five percent were Islamic and traditional worshippers. The study further revealed that there is a large distribution of respondents who are of Yoruba ethnic group compare to 27 percent Ibos, and 7 percent Hausa ethnic group. These can be attributed to the fact that the study area is predominantly a Yoruba speaking area.

The study revealed that an overwhelming 92 percent of respondents with 91.5 percent claimed that teenage pregnancy is risky. Teenage pregnancy has far-reaching negative consequences which include an increasing risk of peri-natal complications and mortality, dropping out of school, socioeconomic disadvantage,

welfare dependence, marital difficulties, and less competent parenting. This report corroborates the finding of Ahinkorah, et al. (2021) that despite global improvement on maternal health, teenage pregnancy is still a common public health problem in developing nations like Nigeria, because it can lead to complications of physical and psychological health problem. Finding from the study also revealed that three-quarter (73 percent) of the total respondents believed that teenage pregnancy occurs more in rural than urban areas. This result is in accordance with the 2013 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) which stated that 32 percent of teenagers in rural areas have begun child bearing, as opposed to 10 percent in the urban areas of Nigeria (NPC 2014). This is to say that teenage girls in rural areas are likely to experience teenage pregnancy compared to those from urban and high socioeconomic background (Okoli et al, 2022).

Also revealing from the study is that a very large percentage of distribution (76 percent) affirmed that their family have not experienced teenage pregnancy before. However, this result is in contrary to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Nigeria as reported by Bolarinwa et al (2022) that teenage pregnancy in Nigeria was high among those between the age of 15-19 years. Furthermore, the study revealed that majority of the respondents (83 percent) attested that poor education of parent's result to teenage pregnancy. This finding is attributed to the fact that ways of life, little communication and information about sex education from poor educated parents can lead to teenage pregnancy. The study also revealed three-quarter (85 percent) of the total respondents confirmed that teenage pregnancy is a social problem. This is as Okoli et al (2022) asserted that teenage

pregnancy is a social problem because it constitutes a significant economic, health and social cost to the mothers and newborn children, to their families, and the society at large.

The study revealed that the total respondents confirmed that the age prevalence for teenage pregnancy is between the age of 25-30 years as more than 60percent agreed to it, which implies that teenage pregnancy is common among those within the age of 25-30 years. This study is in contradiction to the assertion of World Health Organization (2023) that 55 percent of teenage pregnancy occur among girls aged 15-19 years. From the study, it was revealed that majority of the respondents believed that teenage pregnancy faces the challenge of social stigmatization. This report is in line with Arome (2018) which averred that in Nigeria, teenage pregnancy comes with social stigmatization and other forms of discriminations in several areas. It is necessary to note that teenagers who got pregnant are stigmatized for violating age norms for parenting and for being members of devalued socioeconomic groups as stated by Lee (2020).

The study revealed that 60 percent of the sample population believed that female students do not return back to school after falling pregnant as teenager. However, with the right support and reasonable expectation, teenage girls can go back to school after a teenage pregnancy and succeed in getting a degree (Jochim, et al. 2020). The study also shows that majority (58 percent) believed that it is better for teenagers to continue schooling after pregnancy. Though, coping with teenage pregnancy and adjusting to life as a new mother is challenging, but returning to school offers a long-time benefit than returning too early in the absence of sufficient support may impede the healthy development of the child (Jochim, et al. 2020). Furthermore, findings

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

from the study revealed that 93 percent female students do not find schooling and taking care of their baby easy. This is said to be true as going to school can be really tough, but it can be tougher if one is still nursing baby (David, 2019). Revealing from the study is that majority with three-quarter of the total respondents affirmed that most teenagers drop out of school. This finding supported the view of Ihedioha (2021) that an estimated 55 to 33 percent of female aged 15-24 years who drop out of school do so because of early pregnancy. It is imperative to note that teenage pregnancy has compromise young female development opportunities as dropping out of school hinders their formal education, resulting in employment and productive disadvantages, which making them vulnerable to poverty, violence, crime and social exclusion as stated by Miquilena and Edgar (2021). Also, the study went further to state that a large proportion of the total respondents believed that pregnancy outside wedlock is not accepted by the family. The result supports the report of Mgbokwere et al. (2015) that 93percent parents agreed that a pregnant teenager outside wedlock is a social deviant. Nonetheless, when a teenage girl gets pregnant in Nigeria, there is an instant shroud of shame cast upon the girl. Many parents react in various ways towards teenage pregnancy. Some fathers do send their teenage pregnant daughters away and broke contract with them. The study revealed that about 66percent majority of the respondents believed that it is not easy having good reputation as a single mother. Nevertheless, teenage pregnancy is viewed as social stigma which they have to bear the bad reputations as the society treats them as an outcast and strangers (Gongala, 2023). The study further revealed that majority of the total respondents with 62 percent attest to that it

makes someone look like he/she lacks home training. Also the study stated that three-quarters (76 percent) of the total respondents said they cannot allow their children to make friends with someone who got pregnant in school. The study revealed that majority of the total respondents (about 70 percent) affirmed that they cannot be psychologically stable in life. Furthermore, the study shows that a large percentage distribution (67 percent) of the total respondents confirmed that lady who got pregnant do experience economic deprivation in life. Finding from the study revealed that more than half (55 percent) of the total respondents confirmed that poverty is associated with teenage mothers and later in life.

Conclusion

Teenage pregnancy is said to be a global issue as it has resulted to several social, economic and health problems. It is noted that this unwanted practiced is common among the rural areas and several data has reported and highlighted the challenges faced by children and women in the society. Based on this, it can be concluded that people are aware of teenage pregnancy in the State especially in the rural areas where it is prevalence, and their life chance is worrisome as they face challenges such as poor parenting, single parenting, poverty, stigmatization and even death

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were provided;

- i. Government and relevant stakeholders should create awareness and sensitize teenagers about the danger of teenage pregnancy and encourage to life a healthy life
- ii. Parents should be made to provide adequate basic needs for their children

C. T. Oluwadare, L. A. Oluwasanmi, K. E. Igbekoyi K. E, Ibikunle M. O., Ijabadeniyi, O. A. and Afolabi, C. Y.

iii. Female should be empowered to make themselves less vulnerable to sexual exploitation due to imbalance in power relations

iv. Sex education should be introduced to school curriculum

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