

AWARENESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND EARLY MOTHERHOOD AMONG TEENAGE MOTHERS IN ALIMOSHO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

This study aimed at examining awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy and early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State. To achieve the study two-research questions and two hypotheses were postulated. The descriptive survey research method was used while the research instrument used was a self-developed "Teenage pregnancy and early motherhood questionnaire (TPEMQ)". One hundred and fifty (150) Questionnaire on Teenage pregnancy and early motherhood in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State were distributed and collected on the same spot. Section A was on demographic data of the respondents while Section B of the instrument contains items on the two hypotheses. The research instrument used for the study was a four-point likert-type rating scale questionnaire. The test-retest method of reliability was adopted. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by using the Cronbach's method getting an alpha coefficient of 0.86. Chi square and Multiple regression analytical tools were used to test all stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance; In conclusion, this study found that there was significant awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area and there existed significant awareness of the consequences of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State. On this basis, it was recommended that the Government and different agencies concerned with adolescents and teenagers should create and promote broader development programmes that have positive impacts on girls health, educational and employment opportunities which potentially affects decision making of young adult. In the same vein, the mass media should also be encouraged to do more in public enlightenment on the consequences of illicit sexual engagement, teenage pregnancy and early motherhood as a tool to reduce increased occurrences.

Keywords: *Teenage pregnancy, Early motherhood, Teenage mothers*

Introduction

Teenage delinquencies and youthful exuberance have been hugely identified as chief contributors to indiscriminate sexual engagements in this part of the world as many major health and societal issues encompassing medical and psychosocial effects are predominantly linked with adolescents and the young majority (Mezmur et al., 2021).

Teenage pregnancy is a global concern and a major public health challenge in Nigeria and it is considered the number one killer of teenage girls around the world (World Health Organization, 2014). The teenage period of

growth is heavily characterized by numerous attributes but simply defined as a set of growing young adults within the age bracket of thirteen and nineteen years of age (13-19) with Nigeria for instance, boasting 23 percent of teenage girls in her total population according to National Population Commission (2013). Concurrently, the World Health Organization estimated that every year approximately 16 million females within this age bracket gets pregnant and around one million girls aged less than 15 years old give birth (McCarthy et al., 2014). Predominantly, lack of sex education, inaccessibility and unaffordability of contraception services especially to teenagers have been linked to as predisposing factors to prevalence of teenage pregnancy around the world (Panting et al., 2019)

Teenage pregnancy constitutes major socio-medical and economic problems in both developed and developing nations with increasing prevalent rate in contemporary times (Olapeju & Okafor, 2020). Teenage pregnancy implies teenage or under-aged girl within ages of 13-19 years becoming pregnant and this hugely linked to young people living in Sub-Saharan Africa and show significant susceptibility to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) (Amoran, 2012). The unfortunate outcome of teenage pregnancy varies from poor obstetric outcome, decline in socio-demographic development of pregnant teenagers, poor maternal and child indices which culminated into slow pace of attainment of the related millennium development goals (MDGs) in sub-Saharan Africa (Polly et al., 2010; Evuladu *et al.*, 2014). In similar fashion, many pregnant teenagers are at great risk of major global societal problem as it poses exasperating consequences on teenage mothers, their babies and their caregivers. Unemployment, stigmatization and rejection, poverty, intimate partner violence, malnourished babies who as toddlers are at great risk to childhood accidents and little to access to health and social support are few among the unlimited societal encumbrances linked with teenage pregnancy (Franjić, 2018).

Motherhood is a great challenge for any woman despite its premium value particularly in Africa society in general. For teenage mothers it is a bigger responsibility and as a result Mangeli (2017) identified lack of mental or psychological and even financial capacity to raise a child as primary and inevitable encumbrances which teenage mothers contend with. Teenage pregnancy and early motherhood are unanimously associated with higher risk of complications like perpetual endometritis and systemic infections relative to women between the ages of 20 and 24 a leading cause of death among girls in this age bracket (WHO, 2014). Concurrently, impaired cognitive growth, poorer language skills, academic failure, poor social outcomes, can influence this new borns to enjoy negative transformation into becoming teenage mothers of the future hence repeating the unhealthy circle of teenage motherhood (Alabi & Oni, 2017; Chiazor et al., 2018; Vincent & Alemu, 2016). Following the volume of consequences surrounding teenage pregnancy, several governmental and non-

governmental agencies have shown great involvement in African countries with focus on reducing the pregnancy rate for teenagers although, very slow progress has been achieved (Kassa et al., 2018).

Pregnancy is accompanied with responsibilities that requires a woman physical and medical stability. Some teenagers die in the course of giving birth or lose their babies because a teenage girl lacks the physiological and morphological maturity to handle pregnancy. Every year 50,000 teenage girls and young women die during pregnancy and child-birth and in many cases because their bodies are not ready to bear children (Etukudo, & Usoro, 2020). A teens mind is not yet mentally prepared to manage the pressure of parenting and motherhood and as such, many teenage mothers live with relatives who help care for their children. In several past researches, many have linked transactional sex, inaccessibility to contraception services, affordability of contraceptives, sex abuse, sex education and teenage delinquencies as factors causing teenage pregnancy and early motherhood. Therefore, it was pertinent to appraise awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy and early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State.

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were postulated for the study:

1. There will be no significant awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government Area, Lagos State.
2. There will be no significant awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government Area, Lagos State.

Methodology

The Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted because of its capability to examine the relationship between variables under study, hypotheses testing and development of generalization. The population of the study consisted of all teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State. The sample for this study comprised One hundred and fifty (150) teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State. A multi-stage sampling technique was used. The first stage of sampling adopted the simple random sampling technique in selection of the three (3) local council development areas which include Igando-Ikotun, Egbe-Idimu and Akowonjo respectively. Consecutively, the Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select all the participants from each local council development area respectively. The. The research instrument for this study was a self-developed questionnaire, titled Teenage Pregnancy and Early Motherhood Questionnaire (TPEMQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: A and B. Section A contained

demographic data of respondents, while Section B was structured to test the hypotheses. The questionnaire adopted a four (4) point Likert modified scale ranging from Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The face and Content validity of the instrument were ascertained by a panel of three experts in the departments of Human kinetics, Sports and Health Education, faculty of education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach alpha technique. An r-value of 0.86 was obtained and used as basis for the adoption of the instrument for data collection. The copies of the questionnaire were personally administered with the help of three trained research assistance to the respondents. A total of 150 copies of the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher with the help of research assistants at the spots and data collection lasted for four weeks. Copies of the administered questionnaires were checked to ensure that they were well completed. Daily review meetings were held at the beginning and end of each day with the research assistants. Data collected were analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages for data presentation. While the inferential statistics of Chi-square (X^2) and Multiple regression were used to test stated hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used for analyzing the data collected.

Results

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by level of education

Level of Edu	Frequency	Percentage %
No formal	60	40
Primary	80	53.33
Secondary	7	4.67
Tertiary	3	2
Total	150	100

Table 1 showed that 60 (40%) of the respondents had no formal education while 80 (53.33%) had primary education, 7 (4.67%) had secondary education and 3 (2.0%) had tertiary education.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one states that there will be no significant awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State. This hypothesis was tested using Chi Square at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Chi-square result on the awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State students in Lagos State University

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	X^2	Sig
Strongly agree	84	33.0	-2.0	24.00	0.000
Agree	60	33.0	43.0		
Disagree	7	33.0	-41.0		
Strongly Disagree	0				
Total	150				

In table 2, the data collected from the respondents are displayed. It shows that 84 of the respondents strongly agreed to the items on having awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy, 60 of the respondents agreed while 7 of the respondents disagreed and no respondent strongly disagreed to the items respectively. Further, the table reveals a calculated X^2 value of 24.000 which is statistically significant at $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ at 12⁰ of freedom hence the rejection of the null hypothesis. It therefore, implies that there was significant awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos State. This further explains that many teenagers have failed to transmit the knowledge of this consequence into health promoting behaviour hence they are predisposed to teenage pregnancy since awareness is not enough to bring a change.

Hypothesis one states that “there will be no significant awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State.” Chi-Square (X^2) analysis review that there was significant awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State. The result of the research hypothesis agrees with Siddharth & Kirubamani, (2019) findings that on the awareness about consequences of teenage pregnancy among 122 women in the department of obstetrics and gynecology, Saveetha Medical college and hospital, Chennai, India. The women interviewed were between 25 and 35 years of age and there was significant awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy among young women, although formal education and media publicity was a catalyst for this.

Also, in the study Sarder et al., (2020) in their research work on the determinants of teenage marital pregnancy among Bangladeshi women, where the study was conducted on 4608 married women who were below 20 years of age. As much as the study revealed various factors responsible for teenage pregnancy it further suggested that there was awareness of the consequences of teenage pregnancy but predisposing factors like demographic, socioeconomic factors were inevitable causes. This was supported by Jones et al., (2019) in their study on the perception of teenage mothers towards teenage pregnancy where

they conducted the research on 40 mothers between the age of 16-19, from their perceptions recorded it was suggested that many of them were not aware of the consequences of teenage pregnancy until they became pregnant.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two stated that there will be no significant awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State. This hypothesis was tested using Chi Square at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in the table 3.

Table 3: Chi-square result on the awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State students in Lagos State University

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	X^2	Sig
Strongly agree	66	32.0	-8.0	54.840	0.000
Agree	75	32.0	65.0		
Disagree	9	32.0	-63.0		
Strongly Disagree	0				
Total	150				

Table 3 projects the data collected from the respondents on hypothesis two. It shows 66 of the respondents strongly agreed to the items on having awareness of the consequence of early motherhood, 75 of the respondents agreed while 9 of the respondents disagreed and no one strongly disagreed to the items respectively. Further, the table reveals a calculated X^2 value of 54.840 which is statistically significant at $p=0.000 < 0.05$ at 12^0 of freedom hence the rejection of the null hypothesis. It therefore implies that there was significant awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State. This further explains that many teenagers have failed to transmit the knowledge of this consequences into health promoting behaviour hence they are predisposed to early motherhood and the consequences inherent since awareness is not enough to bring a change.

The hypothesis two states that “there will be no significant awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State.” Chi-Square (X^2) analysis review that there was significant awareness of the consequences of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State. The result of the research hypothesis disagrees with that of Wado, Sully & Mumah, (2019) whose study aimed at identifying determinants that predisposes adolescent pregnancy and early motherhood in five East African countries. A survey data form on individual and household characteristics, sexual behaviour, contraception, and related reproductive behaviours was used to examine trends and risk factors

associated with adolescent pregnancy was administered to adolescent's age 15–19 years (Kenya, 5820; Tanzania, 2904; Uganda, 4263; Malawi, 5263; Zambia, 3675). Result showed that adolescent pregnancy and early motherhood is common in the five countries. This was linked to lack of information especially publicity on the consequence of teenage pregnancy and early motherhood as chief cause of this prevalence.

Also, finding of this research disagrees with that of Gbogbo,(2020)study where Schlossberg's Transition Theory was used to explore the experiences of pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers coping strategies during their transition to motherhood. this qualitative study used the in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) in proffering answer to the research. The findings found female adolescents' expressions of some of the negative aspects of motherhood they have been confronted with that have affected their lives. The prevalent societal challenges included financial constraints, unsafe abortion, stigmatization and having to deal with. Many of which the respondents denied awareness of before becoming a teenage mother.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings on this study, the following conclusions were made: There was significant awareness of the consequence of teenage pregnancy among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State that there was significant awareness of the consequence of early motherhood among teenage mothers in Alimosho Local government area, Lagos State.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that;

1. The Government and different agencies concerned with adolescents and teenagers should create and promote broader development programmes that have positive impacts on girls educational and employment opportunities which potentially affects decision making of young adults.
2. The mass media should also be encouraged to do more in public enlightenment on the consequences of illicit sexual engagement, teenage pregnancy and early motherhood as a tool to reduce increased occurrences.

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