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# Effect of Teenage Pregnancy Consequences on Academic Attainment of Girls in Selected Public Secondary Schools Case of Nyaruguru District, Rwanda

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## Abstract

Teenage pregnancy consequences remain a complex problem on girls 'academic attainment in secondary schools. The main objective of the study was to find out the effect of teenage pregnancy consequences on academic attainment of girls in public secondary schools in Nyaruguru. The specific objectives were: to determine teenage pregnancy consequences that girls of public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district face, to assess the level of academic attainment and investigate the effect of teenage pregnancy consequences on academic attainment of girls in Public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district. Questionnaire and interview methods were used for gathering the needed information. Questionnaires were administered among 105 mothers who dropped out after pregnancy and interview to 40 head teachers from all schools with pregnancy drop out cases. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select the respondents. Quantitative data was gathered using questionnaire and structured interview for qualitative data. This study employed descriptive and correlational design. Early marriage, low self-esteem, discrimination from family, separation with former friend at school and isolation from other students are teenage pregnancy consequences that girls in public secondary schools face. The low academic performance, frequent absenteeism and school dropout are the level of academic attainment indicators of pregnant teen girls in public secondary schools of Nyaruguru. Teenage pregnancy consequences contribute 75.2% of the academic attainment. The study recommended education officials, parents and schools leaders to help pregnant schools girls complete their studies.

**Keywords:** *Teenage Pregnancy Consequences, academic attainment, public secondary schools,*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Getting pregnant of teenagers and its associated consequences is a complex worldwide issue (Sylvia, 2016). In large area of the world age of marriage has been traditionally low depending on economies and societies. Due to that reason high number of girls get married few days after girls' first period, as a result a great number of children were born from teen mothers (WHO, 2004). Countries either with advanced economy like America or developing world nations, this issue has become a challenge to the countries' makers of policies and all providers of human-related service due to its effects on community and country (Grunseit, 2007). The high number of adolescent mothers (60%) are possessed by the US, however there is a meaningful difference in adolescent pregnancy between developed and developing countries. The average of adolescents birth rate of the United State is approximately four times the average of the European Union (Sylvia, 2016).

The countries in sub-Saharan region possessed the greatest number of females who get pregnant under 19 years old (Mkwanzani, 2015). Reproduction of adolescents females occupied the highest percentage, more than a half of all child births rate in the entire region. An estimation of 101 children births in 1000 birth is occupied by the adolescents between 15 to 19 years old.

According to NISR (2016), 7% of females aged 15-19 have already become mothers in Rwanda, but this percentage is less than the other Sub-Saharan African countries. It was suggested by Maembo (2018) that the disturbing and discouraging effects of teenage pregnancy negatively affects girls' students to continue their education particularly. Many studies agreed that a high number of teenagers left the schools as the consequences of pregnancy effects. A study carried out in Kenya in 1985 revealed that 10% of girls students left schools because of teenage pregnancy. In 1996, 11, 000 girls in Kenya left the schools and never back as the results of getting pregnant.

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

Adolescent Pregnancy continues to be a worldwide complex problem. Many countries have developed the strategies for its prevention (Hadley, 2018), however secondary school pregnant teenagers are still facing its associated consequences, including consequences from the family of the teenager (rejection and discrimination from their families), consequences from the teenage mother (early marriage, low self-esteem and health problems), consequences from school life (separation with former friends and isolation from other students) and consequences from community (lack of support from community and underestimation from community) (WHO, 2020).

Many researches argued that the high number of teenagers drop out of schools as a results of getting pregnant (Gyepi, 1985). This was supported by Haguruka (2018) that the girls who got pregnant while they were in school only 5% of them continued to be the students. According to David (2018), as consequences of getting pregnant on the education of girls who are expecting to give birth to babies, their performance decreased compared to the academic performance before pregnancy.

The latest RDS has proven that, however pregnancies among adolescents decreased from 11% in 1992 to 4% in 2005, it has raised from 6 percent in 2010 and reached 7% in 2014-2015.

According to NISR (2014), Southern province was the highest in teenage mothers rate and 2014-15 Rwanda demographic health survey showed that in the total number of 15 -19 aged girls, around 7% of them have already gave birth in Rwanda. Southern province is at 6% of girls between 15 and 19 who have already begun childbearing. Nyaruguru is one of the district in Southern province with 7% of girls who have begun childbearing (NISR, 2016). Nyaruguru as one of the districts with high number of pregnant teenagers constitute a good area for this research.

### 1.3 Research Questions

- i. What are the teenage pregnancy consequences that girls of public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district face?
- ii. What is the level of academic attainment indicators of pregnant teens in public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district?
- iii. What is the effect of teenage pregnancy consequences on academic attainments of girls in public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district?

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Teenage Pregnancy Consequences that Girls Face

#### 2.1.1 Consequences from Pregnant Teenager

According to Baatsen *et al.* (2017), despite the lack of education and employment opportunity, a prominent cause for adolescent girls to be married is getting pregnant. PLAN (2017) revealed that adolescent pregnancy out of marriage is the cause early marriage. This research suggested that the pregnancy for young unmarried girls followed by unintentional marriage due to pressure from the community in which they live.

McCue (2018) suggested that teenagers very often make a questionable choice which is not important for themselves. A teenage mother also experiences doubt, low self-esteem, uncertainty, loneliness and powerlessness than their colleagues do. An investigation conducted by Hall (2017) opined that teenage mother feel guilty and depressed in view of increasing responsibility. (Sylvia, 2016)

#### 2.1.2 Consequences from the Family of the Teenager

Rejection and discrimination of pregnant adolescents in their families has been the big-gest challenge which affect education of pregnant girls. Culturally a girl who becomes pregnant before getting married was considered as curse and sometimes drown in water to die. Some people still believe in this culture and can't accept teenage pregnancy easily as a result, the families expel their daughters after pregnancy or discriminate them in other family members (UNFPA, 2018).

#### 2.1.3 Consequences from the School Life

Getting pregnant for school girls separates teenagers from their friends before pregnancy, due to the reason that their thinking is no longer the same (Ellis, 2018). Teenage mother find that when they attend schools after getting pregnant, many of their old friends are not interested in collaborating with them or not want to associate with them. The other students stigmatize them because of pregnancy (Nkosi & Edmarie, 2019). These girls miss their friends and feel lonely.

Wilson (2001) argued that creating new friendship is not easy for some of them because of limited time available, as most of their time outside of school is spent on finding the basic needs for living as most of them are rejected by their families and community, which results into low academic performance, school absenteeism and school dropout.

## **2.2 Academic Attainment Indicators**

### **2.2.1 Teenage Pregnancy and School Attendance**

The high repetition of absence from school ends up in missing many schools activities including: assignments, lessons and tests (Bhana, 2010).According to Moyagabo (2012) Frequent absenteeism can be an indicator of pregnancy as well as associated symptoms. Evidence from the research carried out by Nkosi & Edmarie (2019) argues that pregnant teenagers attend school irregularly which led to dropout

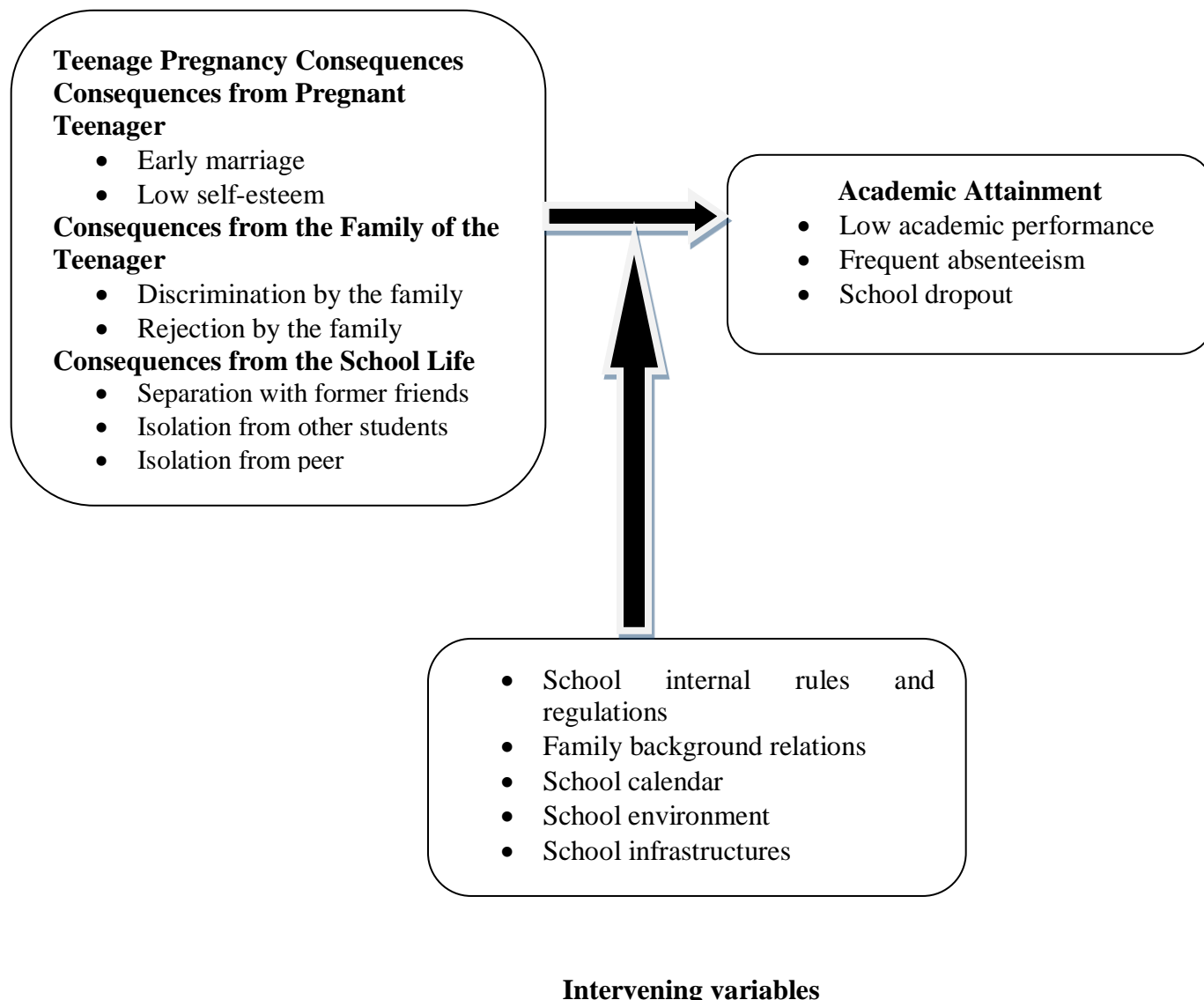
### **2.2.2 Teenage Pregnancy and Academic Performance**

Charles (2013) found that 62.8% of the respondents were performing well before the pregnancy and 51.4% of research participants reported poor performance after pregnancy, the study was interested to know the cause and found that their confidence and their socialization became low after pregnancy. Through these findings, it was argued by the research that there is potential correlation between adolescence pregnancy and the academic performance (Charles, 2013).

### **2.2.3 Teenage Pregnancy and School Completion**

A study carried out by Duglas (2017) argued that teenage pregnancy is particularly affecting the educational attainment of girls and, as results a big number of pregnant school adolescents leave the schools. According to Charles (2013) Adolescent pregnancy is considered as factor leading to leaving the school for many girl students.





**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used both descriptive and correlational research design. Target population was 105 mothers who dropped out after pregnancy and 40 head teachers from the schools with teenage pregnancy dropout cases. Purposive sampling was used to select 105 mothers and 40 head teachers. Questionnaire and interview were used as data collection instruments

### 4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings for each specific objective were gathered from 105 mothers and 40 head teachers. Questionnaire was distributed among mothers and structured interview was conducted to the head teachers.

#### 4.1 What Are the Teenage Pregnancy Consequences that Girls of Public secondary schools of Nyaruguru District Face?

The opinion of mothers who dropped out of school after pregnancy is presented in Table 1

**Table 1: Opinion of Mothers who dropped out of School after Pregnancy**

Statement	Yes		No		Mean & Std	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Mean	Std
Early marriage	57	54.3	48	45.7	1.46	0.501
Low self-esteem	93	88.6	12	11.4	1.11	0.32
Rejection by the family	46	43.8	59	56.2	1.56	0.499
Discrimination from the family	93	88.6	12	11.4	1.11	0.32
Separation with former friends at school	88	83.8	17	16.2	1.13	0.342
Isolation from the other students	91	86.7	14	13.3	1.13	0.342

The results presented in Table 1, reveals that the mothers who got pregnant early faced the following consequences: Low self-esteem, 93 (88.6%), mean and standard deviation of 1.11 and 0.320 revealed that their self-esteem became low after getting pregnant, discrimination from family, 93(88.6%) mothers, mean and standard deviation of 1.11 and 0.320 said that they were discriminated by their families after pregnancy, isolation from other students, 91 (86.7%) respondents, mean 1.13 and standard deviation of 0.342 reported that they face isolation from other students after getting pregnant, separation with former friends at school, 88 (83.8%) with mean of 1.13 and standard deviation of 0.342 said that their friends at school left them after pregnancy and early marriage, 57 (54.3%) of them, mean and standard deviation of 1.46 and 0.501 accepted that they got married because of getting pregnant. Rejection by the family was supported by 46 (43.8%), mean of 1.56 and standard deviation of 0.499. which means that the

majority of the participants contradicted rejection by the family as the consequence faced by pregnant teens.

The interview conducted to the headteachers supported the mothers' view about teenage pregnancy consequences that girls in public secondary schools face as shown in Table 1. The results concur with the findings of Baatsen *et al* (2017) who established that despite lack of education and employment opportunity, the prominent cause for adolescent women to be married is getting pregnant. Also, McCue (2018) suggested that teenage mother experiences self-esteem.

#### 4.2 What is the Level of Academic Attainment Indicators of Pregnant Teens in Public secondary schools of Nyaruguru District?

The results depicted in Table 2 presents opinion of mothers about their academic attainment after pregnancy.

**Table 2: Opinion of Mothers about their Academic Attainment after Pregnancy**

Statement	Yes		No		Mean & Std	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Mean	Std
Low performance after pregnancy	87	82.9	18	17.1	1.17	0.38
Frequent absenteeism after pregnancy	92	87.6	13	12.4	1.12	0.331
Teenage pregnancy the cause of dropout	105	100.0	0.00	100.0	1.00	0.00

According to results in Table 2, It was revealed by the respondents that 105 (100%), mean and standard deviation of 1.00 and 0.00, which means that no one dropped out for the other reason, but pregnancy. Table 4.6 argues that 92(87.6%), mean and standard deviation of 1.12 and 0.331 ascertained that they were frequently absent in the class after getting pregnant, while 87 (82.9%), mean of 1.17 and standard deviation of 0.38, showed that there performance were low after pregnancy.

The perceptions of the headteachers about the level of academic attainment indicators of pregnant teens in public secondary schools of nyaruguru district are the same as the findings from quantitative data as illustrated by the table 4.2. The present findings are in line with the study carried out by Charles (2013) which found that 62.8% of the respondents were performing well before pregnancy and 51.4% of research participants reported poor performance after pregnancy. Further, Moyagabo (2012) said that frequent absenteeism can be an indicator of pregnancy as well as associated symptoms.



### 4.3 What is the Effect of Teenage Pregnancy Consequences on Academic Attainments of Girls in Public secondary schools of Nyaruguru District?

The R-Square of teenage pregnancy consequences and academic attainment of girls is shown in Table 3

**Table 3: The R-Square of Teenage Pregnancy Consequences and Academic Attainment of Girls**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.867 <sup>a</sup>	.752	.739	.163	.752	59.961	5	99	.000

The findings indicated in Table 3 shows that the effect of teenage pregnancy consequences on academic attainment of girls. It was indicated by the study findings the R-square is 0.752 which means that the contribution of independent variable on academic attainment of girls is 75.2%. The interview supported the information provided by mothers through questionnaire. Referring to the view provided by the head teachers, it was evidenced that teenage pregnancy consequences greatly affect academic attainment of pregnant teenagers. According to Charles (2013), there is potential correlation between consequences from pregnancy in adolescence and girls' academic attainment.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the main objective of the study which was to find the effect of teenage pregnancy consequences on academic attainment of girls in public secondary schools of Nyaruguru district, it was found that that teenage pregnancy consequences affect academic attainment of girls in public secondary schools at 72.5%.

### 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study

- i. The teenagers should think on the consequences that are associated with teenage pregnancy before the situation which involve them in sexual intercourse.
- ii. Parents should regularly find a time to discuss with their children about the consequences of becoming pregnant in adolescent age, including low academic attainment.
- iii. The school leaders should help in system which supports the pregnant teens at school. Through this system, attention and special care should be ensured to pregnant teens in order to help them to finish secondary schools.
- iv. The education officials should be the first to help the schools to establish the school based strategies for preventing teenage pregnancy and teenage pregnancy consequences

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