

---

**A STUDY ON THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 OUTBREAK ON TEENAGE PREGNANCIES  
AMONG THE SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**

**A CASE STUDY OF KANYUM SUBCOUNTY KUMI DISTRICT**

**1 Akello Salume, 2 Kalikola Jacob**

**1, 2 Metropolitan International University**

**ABSTRACT**

*According to Dr. Susan Okwakol, the auxiliary district health officer who also serves as the in charge of maternal and child health in Kumi district, pregnant teens account for 50% of the youngest female school dropouts in the municipality and are most prevalent in primary school girls (adolescent girls) despite the lockdown. She reported that they enrolled 1900 adolescents' conceptions among January and September 2020 at various healthcare centers in the district. A descriptive survey design was used in the study. The investigation was carried out in Uganda's Kumi district's Kanyum sub-county. Instructors in chairperson positions, afflicted girls, and residents of the Kanyum sub-county made up the study's target group. 50 people were eligible to participate, and they were chosen because they are all impacted by the consequences of young pregnancy. Face-to-face interviews and self-administered questionnaires were used to gather information. The frequency distribution tables, proportions, and bar graphs were used to analyze the data. It was simple to determine that pregnant adolescents among school-age children are a major issue of concern to government agencies based on the data reported in this study and information gathered by previous investigators. Pregnancies among teenagers in Kanyum Sub- County, Kumi District, have an impact on how long students stay in school. This calls for coordinated efforts from every one of the stakeholders to implement initiatives that are intended to improve the wellbeing of students in classrooms. A key component of these initiatives may include educating parents and community members about the value of a schooling for the kids they have, which will ensure that students stay in school until they graduate. The current and future problems in the educational sector deserve to be taken into consideration while enforcing education laws.*

---

*Key words: covid-19 outbreak, teenage pregnancies and children*

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

*There have been more than 200 million verified cases of COVID-19 recorded worldwide. UN and Center for Disease Prevention and Control of Diseases in Europe, 2020.*

*As only a portion of new infections are detected and communicated to the published case count significantly understated the true burden of COVID-19. After taking into account potentially false results (both positive and negative), sero prevalence surveys conducted in the United States and Europe reveal that the rate of prior exposure to SARS-COV-2 as indicated by sero optimism surpasses the proportion of reported infections by a factor of at least ten.*

*The inaugural case of Corona Virus Disease (covid-19) in Uganda was identified on March 21, 2020. A 36-year-old entrepreneur from Kampala, capital of Uganda, who had gone to Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) four days earlier in poor health. He arrived at Entebbe International Airport in Uganda with a fever and flu-like symptoms, and a SARS-COV-2 infection, which is the cause of covid-19 (corona virus disease, 101), was detected in his sample. As a result, people who had visited UAE Dubai two weeks before the initial incidence were located by the department of health in Uganda and placed under quarantine in institutions.*

*As in many other nations, covid-19 has led to an increase in the number of teenage pregnancies in Uganda. Girls have been involved in financial sex with males who make light of their demand for money in order to obtain basics like bathroom towels.*

*Pregnancy among teenagers is described by the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) as "a teenage girl getting becoming pregnant, typically between the ages of 13 and 19, and refers to girls who have not attained adulthood legally, which varies throughout the world." The majority of these pregnancies among teens in school-age children and childbirths, reported to the WHO, are unintended and unwanted.*

### ***Problem statement.***

---

*Most girls drop out of school when they get pregnant. These rarely re-enroll for school after giving birth, thus contribute to overall observed school dropout.*

*According to Dr. Susan Okwakol, the auxiliary district health officer who also serves as the person in charge of the health of pregnant women and children in Kumi district, pregnancies among teens account for 50% of young female school dropouts in the district and are most prevalent in primary school girls (adolescent girls) despite being under lockdown. She reported that they enrolled 1900 teenage conceptions among January and September 2020 at various medical facilities in the district. This demonstrates a significant increase in pregnant adolescents among school-aged youngsters as a result of the closure of the schools due to the lockdown caused by the pandemic.*

***Specific objectives.***

- 1. To analyze the impact of covid-19 on the education of Uganda.*
- 2. To evaluate the other circumstances that can lead to teenage pregnancies among school going children.*
- 3. To analyze the possible solutions on the causes of teenage pregnancies among the school going children*

***Research questions.***

- 1. What are the impacts of covid-19 on the education of Uganda?*
- 2. What are the other factors that can lead to teenage pregnancies among school going children in Uganda?*
- 3. What are the possible solutions on the causes of teenage pregnancies among the school going children?*

***Methodology***

***Study design.***

---

*The procedures and techniques used to gather and analyze data for a study are referred to as the study design. The study's design was split into two categories, namely analytical as well as descriptive studies. A descriptive narrative and an analysis using qualitative as well as quantitative data were used to describe the study.*

*The study's recommendations and findings were based on the results obtained from participants.*

***Study population.***

*The audience that one desires to investigate is referred to as the study demographic by Mugenda, O.M. and Mugenda A.G. in 2003. The hamlet of Kanyum sub-county and its schools (Kumi district) served as the study's foundation. The researcher conducted interviews with a variety of participants, including government-appointed school administrators, the clan members of the superintendent of schools, and residents of the Kanyum sub-county.*

***Sampling technique***

*The many methods used to choose the sample size for the study included methods for sampling. A survey sampling method was adopted, and the most affected villages in the Kanyum sub-county were interviewed by conducting in-person interviews with the people who participated. Additionally, when actual data relating to the variable under research were actually observed, intentionally selected sampling was frequently used.*

***Sample size.***

*The selection of the data points or replicates to be included in a statistical sample is known as sample size. There were 50 responses in the sample size. In the impacted villages of Kogil and Kabwongo in the sub-county, there were 10 affected girls, ten participants from the neighborhood, twenty participants from the school head teachers, and 10 participants from the clan elders.*

***Data collection methods***

### ***Data Observation***

*This involved the use of all senses to perceive and understand the responds according to the interest and needs of respondents basing on his/her characteristics of the variables of study.*

### ***Interview guide***

*Face to face interviews were undertaken with respondents. The method however was undermined by the fact that many of the highly informed respondents prefer filling questionnaires at their leisure than being subjected to a long interview (Amin, 2015).*

### ***Self-administered questionnaire***

*The beneficial effects of using a survey are that it is the most practical tool for obtaining reliable information from the population being studied quickly, and the predetermined inquiries and answers are free of the investigator's conclusions and prejudices. The study used the questionnaire technique and targeted the available participants who were given both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires while the answers were documented. The questionnaire's ability to measure responses from a large number of respondents to a small set of questions will facilitate comparability and quantitative aggregating of the data.*

### ***Data analysis***

*The investigator used the aforementioned approaches because they were appropriate for usage with the particular kind of data collection techniques that were employed. The surveys were tagged for convenience of entry after completion of data collection. To make it possible to link records to the appropriate surveys, every survey was given a special number. Separate analyses of quantitative and qualitative data were conducted using statistical methods that were both descriptive and inferential. The Special Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) tool was used to examine the numerical information sheets created from the computer-keyed survey data. More specifically, the SPSS was used for calculating a chi-square for goodness of fit. To compare*

answers, frequency runs were performed and proportions were calculated.

## RESULTS

*Table 1: Showing distribution of respondents by gender*

| <i>Gender of Respondents</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Male</i>                  | <i>20</i>        | <i>40%</i>        |
| <i>Female</i>                | <i>30</i>        | <i>60%</i>        |
| <i>Total</i>                 | <i>50</i>        | <i>100%</i>       |

**Source: Primary data**

*From the table above 44% of the respondents were male and 56% were female thus there was no bias on either sex. This implies that majority of the respondents were female.*

*Table 2: Shows responses on how teenage pregnancy among the girl child is related to Covid-19 outbreak*

| <i>Sex of respondents</i> | <i>No. of respondents</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Male</i>               | <i>20</i>                 | <i>40</i>             |
| <i>Female</i>             | <i>30</i>                 | <i>60</i>             |
| <i>Total</i>              | <i>50</i>                 | <i>100</i>            |

*Table 2 reveals that of the fifty participants that took part, 20 were men, making up 40% of the sample, while the remaining 30 were women, making up 60%. 50 out of the total responses made up the subtotal, whereas 100 out of the total number of participants made up the subpercentage. The gender equality in the majority of Kanyum's schools and towns may be the cause of the aforementioned discrepancy between the figures and proportions of male and female respondents. The subsequent comments were gathered when the investigator asked them.*

*Table 3: Shows responses on how teenage pregnancy among the girl child is*

*related to Covid-19 outbreak*

| <i>Item</i>      | <i>No. of respondents</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Aware</i>     | <i>35</i>                 | <i>70</i>             |
| <i>Not aware</i> | <i>15</i>                 | <i>30</i>             |
| <i>Total</i>     | <i>50</i>                 | <i>100</i>            |

*Table 4: Showing the education background of respondents*

| <i>Level of education</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Never attained any</i> | <i>10</i>        | <i>20</i>             |
| <i>Primary</i>            | <i>10</i>        | <i>20</i>             |
| <i>O'Level</i>            | <i>5</i>         | <i>10</i>             |
| <i>A'Level</i>            | <i>5</i>         | <i>10</i>             |
| <i>Diploma</i>            | <i>10</i>        | <i>20</i>             |
| <i>Degree</i>             | <i>10</i>        | <i>20</i>             |
| <i>TOTAL</i>              | <i>50</i>        | <i>100</i>            |

**Source:** *Primary data*

*From the table above 20% were degree holders, 20% were diploma holders, 10% were 'A' level drop outs and also 10% were O' Level drop outs while 20% of the respondents did not attain any education level. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were degree, diploma holders, primary leavers and some did not attain any education level. This is because they had enough skills and they were able to interpret the questionnaires as majority of the population knows how to read and write*

*Table 5: Show the ages of respondents*

| Age group(years) | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 10-14            | 5                  | 10         |
| 15-17            | 5                  | 10         |
| 18-24            | 10                 | 20         |
| 25- 30           | 10                 | 20         |
| 31- 45           | 12                 | 24         |
| 46 and above     | 8                  | 16         |
| Total            | 50                 | 100        |

Table 6 Shows that the respondents within the age bracket of 10-14 formed the percentage of 10%, 15-17 formed the percentage of 10%, those between 18-24 years formed the percentage of 20%, those who were between 25-30 formed the percentage of 20 also. Whereas those between 31-45 years formed the greatest percentage of 24% and those above 45 formed a percentage of 16% out of the sub percentage of 100.

*Table 6: Shows the Marital Status of Respondents*

| Marital status | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| Single         | 25        | 50             |
| Married        | 20        | 40             |
| Divorced       | 2         | 4              |
| Widowed        | 3         | 6              |
| Total          | 50        | 100            |

**Source:** *Primary data*

The table above shows that 50% of the respondents were single, 40% were married, 4% were divorced and 6 were widowed. This shows that most respondents were single which can also be explained by majority middle aged respondents.

---

***The impact of covid-19 on the education of Uganda.***

*The study revealed that the causes of school dropout can largely be categorized into;*

*social disgrace. Due to receiving resources to help their study, many English learners also endure social stigma and discouragement in their school community. As a result, English language learners could find it challenging to access course material and stay up with their peers who only speak English as a first language in academic settings.*

*little use of native tongue. Despite the fact that fluency and comprehension in the home language have been related to successful academic achievements, many educational materials for English learners offer little to encourage home language development.<sup>116</sup> While guardians and parents frequently assist*

*adversely impacted academic development and widened already-existing gaps. There are concerning indications that children may be falling further below pre-pandemic standards in several grades in core areas.*

*COVID-19 has deepened the impact of disparities in access and opportunity facing many students in public schools, including technological and other barriers that make it harder to stay engaged in virtual classrooms.*

***Other circumstances that can lead to teenage pregnancies among school going children.***

***Socio-cultural causes.***

*Girls between the ages of 14 and 17 who live in urban and rural areas lacking a father figure are 25% more likely to become pregnant than those who live with an adult male family member (Keddie, 1992).*

*Existential. In Jamaica, girls between the ages of 13 and 17 are frequently raised by single parents (Kang, Hutchinson, and Waldron 2013). Furthermore, there is a substantial family history of teenage pregnancies among teen mothers.*

***Individual causes.***

---

*Pregnancies in teens can be caused by a number of factors, including inadequate access to services for young people, a lack of understanding about sexual and reproductive health rights, social and family temptation to be married, sexual assault, and child or forced marriage. Pregnancies among teenagers are caused by all of these reasons.*

***Possible solutions on the causes of teenage pregnancies among the school going children***

*Mentoring male teenagers; Despite having numerous partners in sex and having their first sexual encounters at younger ages than teenage girls, male teenagers seek sexual health services less often than females. Fewer treatments are made for boys than for girls in adolescent health clinics and educational initiatives. Teenage boys want knowledge on STDs, contraception, becoming pregnant, and sexual wellness, but only 32% of sexually inclined boys get it from their doctors or other medical professionals. Focused attention to male teenagers will be necessary to reduce the prevalence of pregnancy among adolescents, including creating channels for regular sexual health treatments and specific educational initiatives.*

*Sex and contraceptive counseling; Health care professionals can play a key role in improving contraception use and STD prevention. Success in this regard could have a profound impact on teenage pregnancy rates: the pregnancy rate without using contraception is 15 to 30 percent of sexually active teenagers.*

### ***Conclusion of the Study***

*It was simple to determine that pregnant adolescents among school-age children are a major issue of concern to government agencies based on the data reported in this study and information gathered by previous investigators. Pregnancies among adolescents in Kanyum Sub- County, Kumi District, have an impact on how long students stay in school. This calls for coordinated efforts from every government stakeholder to implement strategies for intervention that are geared toward strengthening the general health of students in the classrooms. A key component of these initiatives may include educating parents and other community members about*

---

*the value of education for their children in order to ensure that students stay in school until they graduate. Aside from enforcing schooling regulations, given the existing emerging issues in educational sector.*

### ***Recommendations of the Study***

*According to the investigators, the study would offer elected officials, educators, school administrators, parents, and neighbors' comments that would be helpful in reducing the problem of pregnant adolescents among school-age children. Following were some of suggestions that were created in light of the study's findings:*

*To promote curiosity and urge pupils to learn, teachers should foster a culture of trust and serve as positive role models by refraining from inappropriate behavior like being intoxicated at school, chain smoking, and even extreme relationships between male and female students of contrasting sex.*

### ***References***

*The independent: Kumi district unable to account for 700 teen teenage pregnancies; October*

*27, 2020; available at <http://www.independent.co.ug>*

*The consequences of covid-19 for girls in Uganda. Available at <http://globalgirlsglow.org.ug>*

*Anthony Mark Ochen, Primus Che Chi and Stephen Lawoko: BMC pregnancy and childbirth, Article number 211 (2020)*

*WHO. Global health estimates 2015; deaths by cause, age, sex, by country and by region,*

*2000 2015. Geneva: WHO; 2016*

*UNFPA. Adolescent pregnancy; are view of the evidence. New York: UNFPA, 2013.*

*Ganchimeg T, etal. Pregnancy and childbirth outcome among adolescent mothers; a world*

---

health organization multi country study. *Bjog.* 2014, 121 (S. SUPP\1): 40-45

UNFPA. *Girlhood, not motherhood: preventing adolescent pregnancy.* New York: NFP, 2015

Neals, Mathews Z, Frost M, et al. *childbearing: adolescents aged 12-15 years in low resource countries: a neglected issue; New estimates from demographic and Household surveys in 54 countries* *Aeta obstet Gynecol scand* 2012;91:1114-18. *Every woman child. The global strategy for women children and adolescent health (2016-2030).* Geneva: Every woman Every child, 2015.

World Bank. *Economic impacts of child marriage: Global Synthesis report.* Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017.

UNESCO, and *Unintended pregnancy and the education sector: Evidence Review and recommendations.* Paris: UNESCO, 2017.

Teenage pregnancy; Plan-international organization (causes and teenage pregnancies)

available at <http://www.plan-international.org.ug>

Baumgartener. J.N.C. Waszak Geary, H Tucker and M. Wedderburn, 2009. "The influence of sexual debut and sexual violence on adolescent pregnancy; A matched case-control study in Jamaica." *International perspectives on sexual and reproductive health* 35C (1): 21-28