
**TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND SCHOOL DROPOUT ON A GIRL CHILD IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS:
A CASE STUDY OF ZANA MIXED SECONDARY SCHOOL MAKINDYE DIVISION WAKISO
DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

Following teenage pregnancy and a girl child school dropout in Ugandan, a study was initiated to examine the relationship between teenage pregnancy and school girl dropout in Zana senior secondary school and the impact this practice contributes to school drop among teens in Ugandan. The study conducted a cross sectional research design and quantitative research approach. The sample was 74 from Zana senior secondary school division administrators, parents and school administrator's leaders from self-administered questionnaires. The statistical package for social scientist was used for qualitative data analysis. From the findings, it was evidenced that poor relationship with parents scoring 74 (100%) was the major factor among other factors. In relation to the above peer influence and low self-esteem scoring the second position with 65 (88%) each factor followed by spending long time with opposite sex alone scoring 53 (71%), and ignorance, carelessness and imprudence at 52(70%). The study recommends parents to be aware of their responsibilities. Despite of looking for money to meet the basic needs, get time to be with their children to listen to their problems and protect them, health officers and the ministry of education to work hand in hand to provide health officers monitoring schools to cater for the pregnant students so that they are kept at school to avoid absenteeism, the ministry of education and sports together with the ministry of health to embark on dealing and teaching sex education to teens and preventive measures against pregnant among school girls, clear documentation of policy all the issues pertaining to school dropout and members of parliament and the ministry of education to amend laws in order for pregnant school children to access schools.

Key words: teenage pregnancy, school dropout, girl child and secondary schools

Background of the study

Adolescent pregnancy and subsequent childbirth to women less than 18 years old continues to be a major global public health concern, affecting more than 16 million girls and young women Worldwide (Vincent & Peter, 2023). Adolescent pregnancy is commonly associated with adverse psychological, socio-economic, and health outcomes (Jac & Kazaara, 2023).

In Africa, especially a sub-Saharan African country, there are concerns about high rate of pregnancy related school dropout, also leading to reported gender disparities in education in the developing world (Mensch et., al 2005). In east Africa, almost 10% of young women give birth by age 16 (John et al., 2023). In particular, Uganda reports the highest proportion of women giving birth before the age of 20 (63%), and the highest total fertility rate (6.2) in east

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Africa (Uganda bureau of statistics UBOS 2014, UBOS & ICF International, 2012). The high early pregnancy rates have social problems leading to school dropout, unsafe abortions, and child birth (John et al., 2023).

School girls who become pregnant have fewer opportunities to complete their education after child birth and have fewer opportunities for socio-economic advertisement (Shamim et al., 2023). Among policy makers and even the media, pregnancy is increasing being mentioned as a reason for pre-mature school leaving in the region. Teenage mothers often drop out of school. This contributes to the low levels of girls attending secondary school in Uganda (Victor et al., 2023). Just 17% of girls attended secondary school from 2000-2007, according to the UNICEF's 2009 state of the world's children report (Mercy et al., 2023). A survey conducted in 2000 states that 65% of school dropouts are girls who got pregnant whilst in school (Awareness times newspaper 31st march 2008). Limited education and the responsibility of caring for a child reduce a girl's access to paid employment, completing a cycle of poverty for mother and child (Anthony et al., 2023).

According to the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), teenage pregnancy is defined as a Pregnancy in girls with in the ages of 13-19 (Yudaya & Aggrey, 2023). It is a global problem and creates issues for all those concerned about young women and their children's health and wellbeing. But according to Kanku and Mash (2010) teenage pregnancy is defined as a teenaged or underage girls usually within the ages of (13-19) becoming pregnant. However according to (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). School dropout is broadly defined as the student's failure to enroll for a definite number of successive semesters.

Statement of the problem

The Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW, 2007) indicates that education is an important pillar that determines one's health and legal status. Education helps people to become aware of their rights and have adequate knowledge of basic health care skills that include; improving child health and reducing infant mortality (Jac & Kazaara, 2023), complying with medical prescriptions, observing basic hygienic standards and seeking medical services such as antenatal and postnatal health care. In addition, the report argues that education enables rationalized thinking and reasoning, providing opportunities for girls and women to learn and understand their rights, making it easier to recognize laws and social attitudes that hinder the enjoyment of their rights (Brighton et al., 2023). Another aspect outlined by the report is that education is an important tool in liberating girls and women from historical discrimination and thus enabling them to teach the next generation about the benefits of education (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). However, Cunningham and Boulton (1996) asserted that girl child education is challenged by interrupted schooling factors such as teenage pregnancy and school dropouts, falling prey to criminal activity, abortion, ostracism, child neglect, school adjustment difficulties which results into lots of social consequences which include social insecurity, poverty, repeated pregnancy and negative effects on domestic life (Victor et al., 2023).

It is suggested that school drop-out is a "uniquely predictive factor" of teenage pregnancy and a precursor to, rather than a consequence of, becoming pregnant (Bonell et al, 2004). This brings to the fore the need to tackle early

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pregnancy and school dropout before it happens as opposed to exclusively relying on re-entry, a perspective that underpinned this particular study given the fact that it makes it more difficult for them to complete education, career and other life goals (Aisha et al., 2023). Although studies done elsewhere point to the significance of teenage pregnancy in female student school dropout in secondary schools (Nyaga, 2010; Sifuna and Chege, 2006; Musonga, 2014) none has been done in particularly focusing on the relationship between teenage pregnancy and school dropout on a girl child in secondary schools in Makindye division and the role this disruptive phenomenon has on the overall secondary school completion rates; a gap that this study was meant to fill (Christopher et al., 2022).

Specific objectives

1. To examine the factors that exposes the girl child to teenage pregnancies in Zana senior secondary school.
2. To examine how teenage pregnancies contributes to school drop outs in Zana senior secondary school.
3. To examine the measures taken to fight against teenage pregnancies among girl child.

Methodology

Research design

It is on this basis that the design adopted to examine teenage pregnancy and secondary school completion rates in Makindye division. The study used descriptive survey. It is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2004).

Target Population

The study was carried out at Zana mixed secondary school Makindye division Wakiso district. The researcher collected information from a population of 74 respondents and these include educational officers, Makindye division administrators, teaching and non-teaching staffs, students, school administrators and other stakeholders. Students were selected in order to give in their story of what can lead them into teenage pregnancies and how these pregnancies can affect them from continuation with education. Educational officers were selected in order to get the government position on the state of teenage pregnancies in the area under study.

Sample size and sampling procedure

According to Kerlinger (2004) an ideal sample size should be between 10%-30%. Depending on the data to be gathered and analyzed. Using this, the researcher sampled 45 Students, 10 Teachers, 5 school administrator's officer, 20 parents and 5 division administrators.

Sampling procedure

The respondents were sampled using simple random method, purposive and cluster sampling method.

Table 1. Showing sampling procedure

Group	Size	Sampling technique
Division administrators	5	purposive
School administrators	5	Purposive

teachers	10	Cluster sampling
Parents	20	Simple random method
Prefectural body	45	Simple random method

Research instruments

This study involved the use of questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were quite useful when responses are required from a large number of respondents (Orodho, 2004). The students' questionnaire was administered by the researcher herself to solicit information on perceptions of learners and other stake holders on teenage pregnancy risk factors, contraceptive use and communication barriers on sexual issues.

Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher having collected all data for her project of research, she then resorted to sorting, classifying, coding, and tabulating the data obtained and in this, the researcher analyzed data using the narrative analysis where by data collected was presented in the descriptive form using SPSS (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Existence of teenage pregnancy and school girl dropout at Zana senior secondary school

Table 1 show in whether teenage pregnancy and school girl dropout exist at Zana senior secondary school

	Strongly agree		Agree		Non deciding		Strongly disagree		Disagree	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Independent variable (teenage pregnancy)	61	82.4	6	8.1	3	4.1			4	5.4
School girl dropout (dependent variable)	74	100								

Source: primary source

From table 1 above it is established that at Zana senior secondary school there is an existence of teenage pregnancy at a frequency of 61 (82.4%) as our independent variable in this study and the existence of school dropout in the school a frequency of 74 (100%) as our dependent variable. From the above table it is therefore the researchers' intention to present the findings of the study related to teenage pregnancy and school dropout in Zana senior secondary school Makindye division Wakiso district (Richard et al., 2023).

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Factors that expose the girl child to teenage pregnancies**Table 2 showing the result of responses on the factors exposing girls to teenage pregnancy**

Factor	Strongly agree		Agree		No response		Strongly disagree		disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Intention to have sex	38	51	14	19	2	3	9	12	11	15
Adolescent perceptions of norms	20	27	12	16	17	23	16	21.6	9	12
Peer influences	65	88	9	12						
Spending long time with opposite sex alone	53	71	19	26	2	3				
Low self esteem	65	88	7	9			2	3		
Poor relationship with parents	74	100								
Ignorance, carelessness and imprudence	52	70	15	20	7	10				
Misconduct and symptoms of antisocial personality	37	50	18	24	9	12	7	9	3	4
Poverty	51	69	20	27					3	4

Source: primary source

From table 2 above presenting respondents' response on factors exposing girls to teenage pregnancy in Zana senior secondary school. It is evidenced that poor relationship with parents scoring 74 (100%) is the major factor among other factors (Tasha et al., 2023). In relation to the above peer influence and low self-esteem scoring the second position with 65 (88%) each factor followed by spending long time with opposite sex alone scoring 53 (71%), and ignorance, carelessness and imprudence at 52(70%). These factors are considered to be the major factors for this study after applying Mugenda and Mugenda 1999 analysis. However other factors are considered relevant from this study and the responses of these factors indicates that poverty at 51 (69%), intention to have sex 38 (51%), miss conduct and symptoms of antisocial personality at 37 (50%) and adolescent perceptions of norms at 20 (27%). At other instances some respondents disagreed and others had no responses. Basing on the findings majority of the respondents agreed with the factors tabled before them (Kazaara et al., 2023).

Table 3 below shows how teenage pregnancy contributes to girl child school dropout in Zana senior secondary school.

Contributions of teenage pregnancy	Strongly	Agree	No	Strongly	disagree
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on school dropout	agree				response		disagree			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Emotional and physical realization of pregnancy	52	70	19	26	3	4				
An increase in medical risks	61	82	13	18						
Premature assumption of parent role	19	26	7	10	20	27	24	32	4	5
Economic disadvantaged	68	92	6	8						
Failure to meet schools academic demand	58	78	11	15					5	7
Grappling with the role of motherhood	43	58	21	28	8	11	2	3		
Frequent absenteeism from school when she visits medical care and other related issues.	72	97	2	3						

Source: primary source

From table 3, several contributions of teenage pregnancy to school girl drop out were put before the respondents to assess their effectiveness in addressing contributions. The most highly rated contributions include frequent absenteeism from school where she visits medical care and other related issues frequented at 72 (97%); economic disadvantaged rated at a frequency of 68 (92%); an increase in medical risks with a frequency of 61 (82%); failure to meet schools academic demand with a frequency of 58 (78%) and emotional at a frequency of 52 (70%) (Ronald et al., 2023). This finding represents an excellent response in support of the contributors and the results are supported by Mugenda and Mugenda 1999.

However, grappling with the role of motherhood was presented at a response of 43 (58%) giving the contribution a fair representation (Collins et al., 2023).

Table 4 below shows measures against teenage pregnancy in Zana senior secondary school.

Measures	Strongly agree		Agree		No response		Strongly disagree		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Support of existing programs	54	73	10	13.5	8	10			2	2.7
Education	60	81	14	19						

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Prioritizing adolescent, youth need and interest	46	62.2	24	32.4	4	5.4				
Addressing child marriage	58	78	16	22						
Changing attitudes and subjective norms	43	58	18	24	3	4			10	14

Source: primary source

From table 4, several possible strategies were put before the respondents to examine measures to prevent teenage pregnancy. The most highly rated measures include; education 60 (81%), addressing child marriage 58 (78%), support of existing programs 54 (73%). This finding represents excellent presentations from respondents and the findings are supported by (Nelson et al., 2023). Measures with minimal approval according to the frequency and percentage scores include prioritizing adolescent, youth need and interest frequency of 46 (62.2%) and changing attitudes and subjective norms 43 (58%). These results Shows that when Zana senior secondary school considers education, addressing child marriage and support of existing programs and considering all other parameters can register a decrease in teenage pregnancy.

Conclusions

The study acknowledges the contributions of the teachers, school administrators, non-teaching staff and Makindye division administrators in their support At Zana senior secondary school which has been evidenced in terms of spending tirelessly their time on support of girls through guidance and counseling, teaching and encouraging teen girls to focus on their education.

The study also notes that teenage pregnancy is not always practiced as there are checkups done on the school girls. Such checkups are challenged with inadequate skilled personnel's, limited staffs and ego related challenges.

Recommendations

The study recommends using a mix of various training and development methods like sponsoring girls' education, mentoring and monitoring to ensure safety and favorable school environment.

The study recommends proper and continuous active involvement of the ministry of education and sports in prevention and control of teenage and school girl dropout.

Using an acceptable evaluation criterion with clear and elaborative performance feedback mechanisms is required and thus needs to be put in place to ensure through pregnant checkup among school girls.

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