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**Sex Education and Teenage Pregnancy among Upper UBE Learners in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

The study examined sex education and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners in Yala LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria. Three research questions were posed and converted to three null hypotheses. Literature review was carried out based on the variables under study. Survey research design was used for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the 200 primary five pupils from 10 public primary schools. A validated 20 items four-point modified Likert scale response option questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at 0.5 level of significance. The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement, peer influence, and socio-economic factors and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners. It is recommended among others that, relevant agencies, ministries and departments should consistently educate parents/guidance not to be shy in advising their children on sex issues, parents should also deviate from attitudes or lifestyle that grants permission to the child(ren) to be wayward. Cultural norms that allow the girl child to expose her body should be avoided. Teenagers should set achievable educational goals and disregard any distraction that is capable of cutting short their educational attainments.

**Keywords:** *Sex education, teenage, pregnancy, upper UBE learners, peer influence, parental involvement and socioeconomic factors*

**Introduction**

Teenage pregnancy is a significant public health concern globally, with profound implications for the health, social, and economic well-being of adolescents and their families. In Nigeria, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is particularly high, contributing to a cycle of poverty, poor health outcomes, and limited educational and employment opportunities for young mothers. Yala Local

Government Area in Cross River State is no exception to this issue, where teenage pregnancy rates remain alarmingly high among upper Universal Basic Education (UBE) learners.

Teenage is referred to as graduating stage of adolescence which is a transitional stage in physical and psychological development period from puberty to adulthood called pubescence. Cognitively it is viewed as changes in the ability to think abstractly, multi-dimensionally and socially as a period of preparation for adult roles (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2020). Teenage pregnancy refers to pregnancies occurring in young women aged 13-19 years. It often results in severe consequences, such as maternal and child health complications, interruption of education, and socio-economic disadvantages. In many cases, teenage mothers face stigma and discrimination, which further exacerbates their challenges (Hirsch, 2017).

Teenage pregnancy remains a significant challenge in many parts of the world, including Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Despite various efforts by government and non-governmental organizations to curb this trend, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy continues to pose severe social, economic, and health issues within the community. This persistent issue raises a critical question: why do teenage pregnancies continue to occur at high rates despite the availability of educational programs and interventions? (Odey, 2024)

The crux of the problem lies in the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the sex education provided to upper Universal Basic Education (UBE) learners in Yala. There appears to be a gap in the current educational curriculum that fails to address the real-life situations and challenges that teenagers face. This inadequacy may stem from cultural taboos, insufficient teacher training, and the lack of resources dedicated to sex education. This research seeks to examine how sex education can be optimized to significantly reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners in Yala.

### **Parental Involvement and Teenage Pregnancy among upper UBE learners**

Miller (2018) researched on "Family communication about sex: What are parents saying and are their adolescents listening?" The study included 523 adolescents aged 14-17 years and their parents. The sample was drawn from urban and suburban communities in the United States. The study targeted families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Data was collected using self-report questionnaires administered separately to parents and adolescents. The questionnaires included items on family communication about sex, parental attitudes towards sex education, and adolescents' sexual behaviors.

This was a cross-sectional study, designed to capture a snapshot of family communication patterns and their association with adolescent sexual behaviors. Statistical analyses, including correlations and regression analyses, were conducted to examine the relationship between parental communication about sex and adolescent sexual behaviors. The study found that only a minority of parents (about 25%) reported having comprehensive discussions about sexual topics with their adolescents. Adolescents who reported having more frequent and open communication with their parents about sex were more likely to delay sexual initiation.

There were gender differences in communication patterns, with girls more likely than boys to report discussing sexual topics with their parents. Parental communication was associated with higher rates of contraceptive use among sexually active adolescents. The study concluded that parental involvement and communication about sex play a crucial role in shaping adolescent sexual behaviors. Adolescents who perceive their parents as open and approachable regarding sexual topics are more likely to make informed decisions and engage in safer sexual practices. The findings highlight the need for interventions that promote parent-adolescent communication about sex, especially in communities where such discussions are less common.

Crosby and Davies (2021) conducted a research on "Parental monitoring: Association with adolescents' risk behaviors". The study included 1,244 adolescents (aged 14-17 years) and their parents. Participants were recruited from urban and suburban communities in the United States. Data was collected through self-report surveys administered separately to parents and adolescents,

assessing parental monitoring, communication about sex, and adolescent risk behaviors. Statistical analyses, including regression models, were conducted to examine the relationship between parental monitoring and adolescent sexual behaviors.

From the result of the study, higher levels of parental monitoring were associated with lower rates of risky sexual behaviors, including early sexual initiation and unprotected sex. Open communication between parents and adolescents about sex further reduced the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviors. Girls reported higher levels of parental monitoring compared to boys. The study concluded that parental monitoring and communication about sex are protective factors against adolescent risk behaviors, including teenage pregnancy. Effective parental monitoring can contribute to delaying sexual initiation and promoting safer sexual practices. The recommendations of the study encouraged parents to establish clear rules and expectations regarding adolescent behavior, including sexual activity.

Gordon (2016) carried out a research on "Maternal correlates of adolescent sexual and contraceptive behavior". The study included 745 adolescents (aged 15-18 years) and their mothers. Participants were recruited from diverse socio-economic backgrounds in urban and suburban communities in the United States. Data was collected through interviews and self-report surveys administered separately to mothers and adolescents, assessing maternal attitudes, communication about sex, and adolescent sexual behaviors. Statistical analyses, including hierarchical regression models, were conducted to examine the relationship between maternal factors and adolescent sexual behaviors.

The result of the study indicated that mothers who communicated openly and frequently with their adolescents about sex were more likely to have children who delayed sexual initiation and used contraceptives. Higher levels of maternal monitoring were associated with reduced rates of early sexual initiation and unprotected sex. The study concluded that maternal attitudes and behaviors play a crucial role in shaping adolescent sexual behaviors, effective maternal communication and monitoring are protective factors against risky sexual behaviors and teenage pregnancy. It was

recommended that there is the need to develop interventions that target mothers and enhance their communication skills and knowledge about sexual health.

Guilamo-Ramos, Jaccard, Dittus and Bouris, (2017) researched on "Parent-Adolescent Communication about Sex and Contraceptive Use among Puerto Rican Adolescents". The study included 476 Puerto Rican adolescents (aged 14-17 years) and their parents. Participants were recruited from urban and suburban communities in Puerto Rico. Data was collected through structured interviews and self-report surveys administered separately to parents and adolescents, assessing communication about sex, parental attitudes, and adolescent sexual behaviors. Statistical analyses, including structural equation modeling, were conducted to examine the relationship between parent-adolescent communication about sex, contraceptive use, and sexual behaviors. The study found that parent-adolescent communication about sex was positively associated with contraceptive use among sexually active adolescents.

Adolescents who reported higher levels of communication with their parents about sex were more likely to use contraceptives consistently. The study concluded that parent-adolescent communication about sex is a significant predictor of contraceptive use among Puerto Rican adolescents and that effective communication between parents and adolescents about sexual health can promote safer sexual practices and reduce the risk of teenage pregnancy. The study recommended among others that there is need to develop culturally sensitive parent-adolescent communication interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of Puerto Rican families.

### **Peer Influence and Teenage Pregnancy among upper UBE learners**

Isuku (2015) carried out a study on the influence of peer pressure on teenage pregnancy among adolescent girls in selected primary schools in Ibadan Metropolis. The study adopted the descriptive research design. Eight hundred and twenty-five respondents were selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure. A questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.75 was used for data collection. The findings of this study revealed that the level of peer pressure among the

### *Sex Education and Teenage Pregnancy among Upper UBE Learners in Yala Local .....*

respondents was low (Mean =1.82  $\approx$ 2), and that peer pressure has significant influence on teenage pregnancy in primary schools in Ibadan Metropolis ( $R^2 = 0.407$ ). The role of peer groups as agents of socialisation could have dicey consequences on the lifestyle of teenagers especially in the area of sexual activity.

Peer pressure could influence the typical teenager's perception about sexuality so much so that teenagers tend to conform to the norms about sexual behaviour which are deemed acceptable to the peer group to which he or she belongs. Ultimately, peer pressure has been found to significantly influence teenage pregnancy. This study recommends that parents and guardians should be mindful of the friends their children have. Educators, counsellors and other stakeholders in the school setting should pay close attention to teenagers in this crucial stage of their development and apply tact in giving reorientation to pupils who exhibit character traits that are symptomatic of deficiencies in parental upbringing as this can curtail the influence they may have on their peers.

Jerry and Ozim (2016) conducted a research on the influence of peers and teenage pregnancy among Upper UBE Learners. The study included a sample of upper UBE learners (typically aged 13-15 years) from schools in Yala Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. Respondents were drawn from diverse socio-economic backgrounds within the community. Data was collected through structured surveys and interviews administered to upper UBE learners, assessing peer influence, attitudes towards sex, contraceptive use, and sexual behaviors. Peer influence was measured by assessing peer norms, peer pressure related to sexual behaviors, and the influence of friends on decision-making. Statistical analyses, such as correlation analyses and regression models, were conducted to examine the relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy.

The result indicated that peer pressure and adherence to peer norms related to early sexual initiation were associated with increased risk of teenage pregnancy. Peer influence was also linked to attitudes towards contraceptive use and the likelihood of using contraception among sexually active adolescents. The study concluded that peer influence plays a significant role in shaping

adolescent sexual behaviors and the risk of teenage pregnancy. Peers can exert pressure that influences decisions about sexual activity and contraceptive use among upper UBE learners. The study recommended that there is need to develop interventions that address peer influence and promote positive peer norms related to sexual health and there is need to implement peer education programs that empower adolescents to make informed decisions about sexual behaviors and contraception.

Bearman and Brückner, (2019) conducted a research on "peer influence and adolescent risk behaviour: An Analysis of Student Networks". The study included a sample of high school pupils from various schools in the United States. Data was collected through longitudinal surveys administered to pupils, assessing peer networks, peer influence, risk behaviors (including sexual behaviors), and outcomes such as teenage pregnancy. Peer influence was analyzed by examining friendship networks and the impact of peer behavior on individual behaviors. Statistical analyses, including social network analysis and regression models, were conducted to examine the relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy.

The result of the study indicated that pupils with friends who engaged in risky sexual behaviours were more likely to initiate sex early and have higher rates of teenage pregnancy. The study identified longitudinal effects of peer influence on sexual behaviours and pregnancy outcomes. They concluded that peer influence, as mediated through friendship networks, significantly impacts adolescent risk behaviors, including teenage pregnancy. Recommendations included the need to incorporate peer education programs into school curricula to address the influence of peers on adolescent sexual behaviors.

Ali and Dwyer, (2021) researched on "peer influence on sexual activity and contraceptive use: A review of the literature". The study reviewed multiple empirical studies on peer influence and sexual behaviors. Studies included adolescents from various socio-economic backgrounds across different countries. The study reviewed empirical research articles on peer influence, sexual activity, contraceptive use, and teenage pregnancy. Findings from multiple studies were

synthesized to understand the role of peer influence in adolescent sexual behaviors. Meta-data analysis techniques were used to aggregate findings across studies. The result revealed that positive peer norms regarding contraceptive use were associated with higher rates of contraceptive use among adolescents. Peers who engage in risky sexual behaviors can influence adolescents to engage in similar behaviors. The study concluded that peer influence plays a significant role in shaping adolescent sexual behaviors and contraceptive use.

Doku and Asante (2015) carried out a research on "peer influence on sexual activity among adolescents in Ghana". The study included a sample of adolescents (aged 12-19 years) from various schools in Ghana. Respondents were drawn from urban and rural communities, representing different socio-economic backgrounds. Data was collected through surveys administered to adolescents, assessing peer influence, sexual activity, contraceptive use, and factors associated with teenage pregnancy. Peer influence was measured by examining peer norms, peer pressure related to sexual behaviors, and the influence of friends on decision-making. Logistic regression models, were conducted to examine the relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy. Adolescents who perceived their peers as engaging in sexual activities were more likely to initiate sex early and have higher rates of teenage pregnancy. The study concluded that peer influence significantly impacts sexual behaviors and the risk of teenage pregnancy among adolescents in Ghana.

### **Socio-Economic factors and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners**

Dennis, Felix, Divine and Magdalena, (2022) examined the socio-economic factors associated with adolescent pregnancy and motherhood in Ghana. This was a primary analysis of the 2017 Ghana Maternal Health Survey, which was a nationally representative cross-sectional survey. Data from 4785 adolescents aged between 15–19 years were included in the analysis. Adolescent pregnancy was defined as adolescents who have ever been pregnant, while adolescent motherhood was defined as adolescents who have ever given birth. Weighted logistic regression was used to assess the association between the socio-economic variables and adolescent pregnancy and motherhood.



Of the 25062 women aged between 15 and 49 years included in the 2017 maternal health survey, 4785 (19.1%) were adolescents between 15–19 years. Adolescent pregnancy was reported in 14.6% (CI: 13.2% -16.1%) of the respondents, whereas 11.8% (CI: 10.5% -13.1%) of the respondents had ever given birth. In the multivariate regression analysis, zone ( $p<0.001$ ), wealth index ( $p<0.001$ ), age ( $p<0.001$ ), marital status ( $p<0.001$ ) and level of education ( $p<0.001$ ) were all significantly associated with adolescent pregnancy and motherhood. The odds of pregnancy and motherhood were significantly higher in the Middle and Coastal zones ( $p<0.001$ ) among older adolescents ( $p<0.001$ ). However, the odds of pregnancy and motherhood was significantly lower among adolescents from households with the highest wealth index ( $p<0.001$ ), among those who were never married ( $p<0.001$ ) and among adolescents who had primary/higher education ( $p<0.001$ ).

The study concluded that several socio-economic variables including education, household wealth, marital status and zone of residence were significantly associated with adolescent pregnancy and adolescent motherhood. Sexual and reproductive health education should be intensified among these populations. Adolescent friendly corners should be made available and accessible to all adolescents in Ghana irrespective of where they live or their age.

Kirby, Laris and Rolleri, (2022) examined socio-economic status and adolescent reproductive health. The study reviewed multiple empirical studies on socio-economic status (SES) and adolescent reproductive health. Studies included adolescents from various socio-economic backgrounds across different countries. The study synthesized findings from empirical research articles on SES, reproductive health outcomes (including teenage pregnancy), and contraceptive use among adolescents. Findings from multiple studies were aggregated to understand the relationship between SES and adolescent reproductive health. Meta- dataanalysis techniques were used to summarize the strength and consistency of the relationship across studies.

The result indicated that lower SES was consistently associated with higher rates of teenage pregnancy and lower contraceptive use among adolescents. Higher parental education and income

### *Sex Education and Teenage Pregnancy among Upper UBE Learners in Yala Local .....*

levels were protective factors against early sexual initiation and teenage pregnancy. Socio-economic factors influenced access to reproductive health services and information. The study concluded that socio-economic factors significantly influence adolescent reproductive health outcomes, including the risk of teenage pregnancy. Interventions should address socio-economic disparities and promote access to reproductive health services

Odimegwu, Mkwanzani and Achia, (2023) researched on "socio-economic factors and adolescent pregnancy outcomes". The study included a sample of adolescents (aged 15-19 years) from various schools and communities in Kenya. Participants were drawn from urban and rural areas, representing different socio-economic backgrounds. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with adolescents, assessing socio-economic factors, reproductive health behaviors, and outcomes related to teenage pregnancy. Logistic regression models were conducted to examine the relationship between socio-economic factors and teenage pregnancy outcomes.

The result of the analysis indicated that lower socio-economic status (e.g., poverty, lack of education) was associated with higher rates of teenage pregnancy. Higher levels of education were protective against early pregnancy among adolescents. Access to reproductive health services and cultural norms influenced adolescent reproductive health outcomes. The study concluded that socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping adolescent reproductive health outcomes, including teenage pregnancy, in Kenya.

Kearney and Levine, (2022) examined the impact of socioeconomic status on adolescent pregnancy outcomes in the United States. The study utilized data from large-scale surveys and administrative data sets in the United States. Respondents were adolescents from diverse socio-economic backgrounds across different states. Data was collected through surveys and administrative records, assessing socio-economic status, reproductive health behaviors, and outcomes related to teenage pregnancy. Statistical analyses, including regression models and propensity score matching, were conducted to examine the relationship between socio-economic status and teenage pregnancy outcomes. The results indicated that Lower socio-economic status

was associated with higher rates of teenage pregnancy and lower use of contraceptives among adolescents. Higher levels of parental education and stable employment were protective factors against teenage pregnancy. The study concluded that socio-economic factors significantly influence adolescent pregnancy outcomes in the United States. The study recommended the development of policies that promote economic opportunities and stability for families to reduce teenage pregnancy rates.

### **Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions;

1. To what extent does parental involvement relate with teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners
2. What is the relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners
3. To what extent does socio-economic factors relate with teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners

### **Statement of Hypothesis**

The three research questions were converted to three hypotheses as follows;

- 1) There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners
- 2) There is no significant relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners
- 3) There is no significant relationship between socio-economic and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.

### **Research design and methods**

The research design adopted for this study was the survey research. This is a type of research that studies large and small population to discover the relative incidence, distribution, inter-relation of

sociological and psychological variables. This study was carried out in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is in the town of Okpoma in the east of the area at 6°35'35"N and 8°38'01"E. It has an area of 1,739 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 267,843 according to Google population projection 2023. The local government area has four major dialects-Ukelle, Yala, Yache and Igede spoken across the four divides of the LGA. The LGA has abundant salt deposit which can sustain small to medium scale salt industry. There are many salt ponds in Okpoma which are of great history to the people and are mined locally. The LGA also offers a wide range of investment opportunities in agro-based industries as well as solid mineral industries.

The sampling technique adopted for this study is the simple random sampling technique. The sample for this study is two hundred (200) primary five pupils randomly selected from the ten (10) primary schools for the study, with 85 of them being males, and 115 being females as presented on table 1.

The instruments used for the study was a structured questionnaire titled "Sex Education and Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (SETPQ). It was divided into two sections (A & B). Section A was designed to elicit information on the personal characteristics of the respondents such as sex, age, etc. Section B was structured to elicit information to address the research questions, based on the sub-variables of the study, which includes: parental involvement, peer influence and socio-economic status under a four point-Likert-type scale response options to evaluate sex education as a means of solving the problem of teenage pregnancy.

The items for the study were developed by the researcher. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. To determine the reliability of the instrument (questionnaire) a trial testing was done using twenty (20) pupils drawn from the population area who were not part of the real study.

**Table 1: Sample distribution of the study**

S/N	Name of Schools	No. of Male pupils	No. of Female Pupils	Total No of Pupils
1	Community Primary School, Wanikade,	8	12	20
2	RCM Primary School, Imaje.	10	11	21
3	Government Primary School, Wogada-ebo.	9	14	23
4	Community Primary School, Okpoma.	7	8	15
5	Community Primary School- Iyaja-Igede	8	10	18
6	Community Primary School, Wanihem	8	14	22
7	Conty Primary School, Uchu.	8	12	20
8	St Joseph Primary School, Okuku	10	14	24
9	RCM Primary School, Aliforkpa	9	11	20
10	Government Primary School Ijegu	8	9	17
	Total	115	85	200

Source: field Survey, 2024

## Results and discussion

This study examined sex education and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The independent variable in this study which is sex education was sub-divided into three variables, namely, parental involvement, peer influence and socio-economic factors. The dependent variable for this study is teenage pregnancy. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used for data analysis. The result is presented hypothesis by hypothesis below;

### Hypothesis one

The result of the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical analysis shown on table 2 revealed that parental involvement produced a mean score of 14.22 with a standard deviation of 3.79, while, teenage pregnancy produced a mean score of 24.11 with a standard deviation of 6.01. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .069 obtained with a p-value of .000 at 198 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at.05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners was rejected, indicating that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.

**Table 2: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy, (N=200)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Parental involvement (x)	14.22	3.79		
			0.69	.000
Teenage pregnancy (y)	24.11	6.01		

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df= 198

**Hypothesis two**

The result of the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical analysis on table 3 revealed that peer influence produced a mean score of 17.11 with a standard deviation of 4.87, while teenage pregnancy produced a mean score of 24.11 with a standard deviation of 6.01. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .047 obtained with a p-value of .000 at 198 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at.05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners was rejected, indicating there is a significant relationship on table between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.

**Table 3: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy (N=200)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>p-value</b>
<b>Peer influence</b>	<b>17.11</b>	<b>4.87</b>		
<b>(x)</b>				
			<b>0.047</b>	<b>.000</b>
<b>Teenage pregnancy (y)</b>	<b>24.11</b>	<b>6.01</b>		

- **Significant at 0.05 level and 198 degree of freedom**

### Hypothesis three

The result of the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical analysis on table 4 has also revealed that socio-economic produced a mean score of 16.88 with a standard deviation of 4.01 while teenage pregnancy produced a mean score of 24.11 with a standard deviation of 6.01. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .044 obtained with a p-value of .000 at 198 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at.05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners was rejected indicating there is a significant relationship between socio-economic and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.

**Table 4: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between socio-economic background and teenage pregnancy (N=200)**

Variables	Mean	SD	R	p-value
Socioeconomic background (x)	16.88	4.01		
			0.44	000
Teenage pregnancy (y)	24.11	6.01		

\* Significant at 0.05 level, and DF of 198

### Discussion of findings

#### Parental involvement and teenage pregnancy

The result of hypothesis one showed that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners. This result unravels the significance of parental involvement in teenage pregnancy. The result is so because when parents maintain open lines of communication with their children, it fosters trust and allows for discussions on sensitive topics such as sexual health and relationships. Teens who feel comfortable talking to their parents are more likely to seek guidance and make informed decisions about their sexual behavior.

The finding of the study supports Miller, (2018) that adolescents who feel comfortable discussing sex and related topics with their parents are more likely to have accurate information and feel supported in making informed decisions. Active parental guidance and supervision can help teenagers navigate the complexities of adolescence. Parents who set clear expectations and monitor their children's activities can deter risky behaviors that might lead to teenage pregnancy.

The finding of this study also supports Gordon, (2016) that in many cultures, discussing sex openly is considered taboo. This cultural barrier can prevent parents from engaging in meaningful conversations about sexual health with their teenagers. Some parents may lack accurate information about sexual health and contraception, making it challenging for them to provide the necessary guidance and support. Differences in values and understanding between parents and teenagers can create communication barriers. Teenagers may feel that their parents do not understand their experiences and challenges, leading to reluctance to discuss sensitive topics. Financial limitations can hinder parents' ability to provide comprehensive support and resources to their teenagers, increasing the risk of teenage pregnancy (Crosby & Davies, 2021).

### **Peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.**

The result of hypothesis two showed that there is a significant relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners. This result highlights the importance of peer influence to teenage pregnancy as peers who promote healthy behaviors, such as focusing on academics, participating in extracurricular activities, and practicing safe sex or abstinence, can reduce the risk of teenage pregnancy. Positive peer pressure can encourage teens to make responsible decisions regarding their sexual health.

The finding of the study is in consonance with Kirby (2017) that adolescents who have friends or peers who are already parents may view teenage pregnancy as more acceptable or normal. Peer relationships can provide emotional support, but they can also contribute to feelings of isolation or pressure, which may influence sexual behavior. Having friends who value education and long-term goals can provide a support system that helps teens resist pressures to engage in risky behaviors



that could lead to pregnancy. These peers can offer advice, share information about contraception, and provide emotional support. Peers who are seen as role models for making smart and responsible choices can influence others to follow suit. For instance, if a peer group prioritizes safe sex practices, it sets a standard that others in the group may feel compelled to follow. However, negative peer pressure can lead to early sexual initiation, increasing the risk of teenage pregnancy. Teens may feel compelled to engage in sexual activity to fit in or to gain acceptance within a peer group.

### **Socio-economic factors and teenage pregnancy**

The result of hypothesis three showed that there is a significant relationship between socioeconomic factors and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners. This result is so because teens from low-income families often have limited access to resources such as contraception, sexual health education, and healthcare services. This lack of access increases the likelihood of unplanned pregnancies.

The finding of the study supports Kirby *et al.*, (2022) that socio-economic status can affect access to comprehensive sexuality education and information about contraception. Adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds may have limited knowledge about reproductive health and contraception methods, which can increase their risk of unintended pregnancy. These factors can influence cultural and community norms regarding early marriage and childbearing. In some communities, early pregnancy may be more socially acceptable or even expected, especially among disadvantaged populations.

Financial stress can lead some teens to view pregnancy and motherhood as viable options for stability, particularly in environments where education and career opportunities seem out of reach. Teenage pregnancy can perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Young mothers who drop out of school are less likely to achieve economic independence, making it difficult to break free from poverty. This scenario can also set the stage for their children to face similar challenges.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research, it was concluded that:

There is a significant relationship between parental involvement and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners

There is a significant relationship between peer influence and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners

There is a significant relationship between socio-economic and teenage pregnancy among upper UBE learners.

### **Recommendations for policy directions**

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Sexuality education should not be limited to school students only but relevant agencies, ministries and departments should consistently educate parents/guidance not to be shy in advising their children on sex issues.
2. Parents should also deviate from attitudes or lifestyle that seems he/she has granted permission to the children to live as they like.
3. Cultural and traditional norms and display that negate or allows the girl child to expose her body should be revisited to avoid become parents over-night and teenagers should set high educational expectation ahead of their lives and disregard any distraction that is capable of cutting short their education.

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