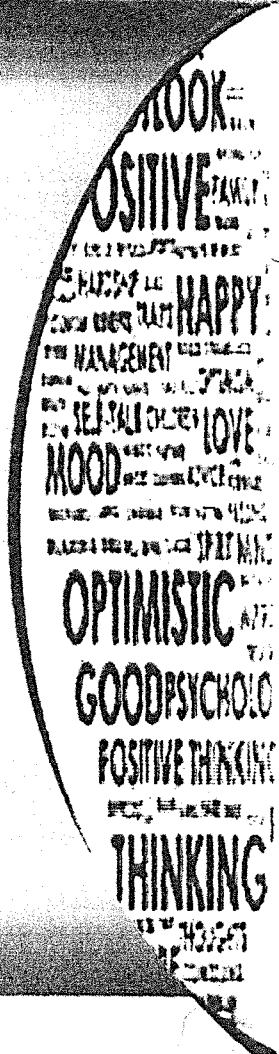


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## Social Factors As Determinants Of Teenage Pregnancy Proneness Among Public Secondary School Students In Ibadan, Oyo State

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### Abstract

In Nigeria, teenage pregnancy among secondary school students is becoming rampant. In this study, the authors investigated the effect of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) associated with proneness to teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a non-experimental research design of survey type. Population comprised all SSS II students in public secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis out of which 1200 students (600 Boys and 600 girls) were sampled through multistage sampling procedure. Two instruments used for this study were Social Factors Questionnaire (SFQ) and Perception to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (PTPQ). The findings revealed that social media usage ( $\beta = 0.09$ ,  $t = 2.32$ ), parenting style ( $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $t = 2.14$ ) and sexuality education ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $t = 3.90$ ) contributed significantly to the prediction of male proneness to pregnancy. Also, social media usage ( $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $t = 2.27$ ) contributed significantly to the prediction of female proneness to pregnancy. Parental support ( $\beta = 0.05$ ,  $t = -1.24$ ), parenting style ( $\beta = -0.07$ ,  $t = -1.80$ ), peer influence ( $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $t = 1.62$ ) and sexuality education ( $\beta = 0.06$ ,  $t = 1.68$ ) did not contribute significantly to female proneness to teenage pregnancy. The authors concluded that parents and all educational stakeholders should join hands to guide youth against the menace of teenage pregnancy.

**Keywords:** Teenage pregnancy, Proneness, Sexuality education, Peer influence, Parenting style

### Introduction

Teenage period is the time between the beginning of sexual maturation, puberty and adulthood. It is considered to be the period between ages 13 and 19 and is largely characterised as the beginning of sexuality. During this period, teenagers experience not only physical growth and change but also emotional, psychological, social and mental change. At this stage, the secondary sexual characteristics in the body are becoming pronounced and visible. The awareness of these body changes makes teenagers pay more attention to them and tend to feel they are adults. In other words, a teenager can be referred to as a developing adult because they are immature boys and girls. Hence, they want to practice what adults do. Teenage pregnancy is one of the socio-economic challenges confronting this millennium and a risk factor affecting qualitative education. Experience has shown that many teenagers engage in pre-marital sex. They want to engage in sexual life which entails kissing, giving and receiving gifts (which can serve as bait), exchanging love notes, showing affection, romancing with one another with less attention on the consequences of such sex life or behaviors.

The sexual behavior of teens is rampant among secondary school students who incidentally form the bulk of teenagers. A major consequence of these increased sexual activities among teenagers

is out of wedlock pregnancies that may result in abortion, or even death. Ogori, Shittu and Yunusa (2013) posited that teenage pregnancy refers to pregnancy that occurs in young girls, mostly in the age range of 13-19 years old. According to Guttmacher Institute (2013), the standard definition of teenage pregnancy is "pregnancies earlier than girls desired or not wanted ever in the future (Mosher, Jones and Abma, 2012). When a girl that should be in school becomes pregnant, her entire life could be completely altered as her hopes and aspirations could be shattered. She may be pressured or forced to leave school due mostly to pressures being experienced which include stigmatization that is limited to early parenting; isolation from peers; and lack of necessary support from family, friends, schools, thereby denied her right to education. Furthermore, her health, and her entire life may be in jeopardy, trapping her in a lifetime of poverty and exclusion.

Despite research work and awareness to save the young girls from this menace, young boys who are exposed and aroused with the technological revolution will not allow girls to yield to strict information on abstinence from casual and regular sex life style. Various reasons have been adduced for incidence of teenage pregnancy, but the basic problem is the persistency and the geometric progression of its expansion despite all the efforts that have been made by government, schools, religious bodies and non-governmental agencies at resolving some identified factors leading to this decadence in the society.

A question that arises at this junction is "What are the social factors that can influence teenagers to go into sex life of adults which can consequently lead to pregnancy?" Social factors are the things, circumstances, aspects, characteristics, experiences and facts that can affect a person's lifestyle. In other words, they are the extrinsic or external factors that can influence the way someone lives and behaves. Social factors such as parental support, parenting style, peer influence; social media usage and sex education can make teenagers engage in early sex life which can consequently lead to pregnancy.

Magwaza (2003) listed parental support as one of the predictors of teenage pregnancy. Parental support is a multidimensional term that comprise various types of activities that parents are involved in so as to promote academic achievement as well as a fulfilled life. Barnes et al (2000) defines parental support as all forms of parental behaviors exhibited toward the child, such as praising, encouraging and giving physical affection, which indicates whether the child is accepted and loved. Children tend to succeed better when parents support their learning because parents are the first teachers that children interact with. In general, research has consistently revealed that greater parental support predicts better teenage functioning and fewer behavioral problems in a range of domains including drug abuse, alcohol misuse and premarital sex (Essau and Hutchinson, 2008).

Parenting style is a construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. Parenting styles are the representation of how parents respond to and make demands on their children. There are various opinions on the best ways to raise children, as well as differing levels of time and effort that parents are willing to invest. As children go through different stages in life, they begin to develop their own personalities over time. It then becomes essential that parents also create their own parenting styles from a combination of factors that will help in the upbringing of their teenage children (Sharma, 2006). These factors include parent's personal

characteristics, family histories, ideals, consistent discipline, reasoning, problems and expression of warmth. During the teenage period, parents try to adjust to a new lifestyle in terms of adapting and bonding with the teenagers who encounter new challenges, such as seeking and desiring freedom.

Huong, Chengshi and Naomi (2016) found out that peer influence accounts for a fair percentage of factors causing teenage pregnancy. This is because many teenagers rely on their peers for guidance when they are troubled or seek for information on issues that bother them. Albert (2007) identified peer influence as a factor that promotes teenage pregnancy. On the other hand, some teenagers also engage in unhealthy and risky activities that can affect their lives negatively so that their peers will notice them so that they may fit in. As they try to fit in, they are involved in various activities with their friends. They provide safe venues where they can explore their identities, feel accepted and develop a sense of belonging. A variety of terms refer to this behavior such as "hooking up", "booty calls" or referring to someone as a friend with benefits (Macleod and Tracy, 2010).

The level of social media usage in the 21st century that teenagers engage in has greatly increased over the years. It has been generally observed that some teenagers do not use the media and other digital technology productively. The internet that was supposed to enhance the academic performance of teenagers is now having negative effects not just on their academics but even jeopardizing their future. They use computers and other gadgets especially phones to view pornographic websites instead of educational websites offering online learning, virtual learning and activities specifically designed for secondary school students. Consequently, they become eager to know how sex feels. Huong (2014) quoting effect of internet users in Vietnam concludes that the use of internet has positive influence on teenage pregnancy. This means that urbanization, modernization/westernization encourage premarital sex and consequently pregnancy among teenagers. The type of films that teenagers watch can also arouse their interest in sexual activities. Some teenagers derive joy in online hang out on social media such as Facebook, porn where nudity is promoted.

Teenagers use electronic media in large numbers and are therefore uniquely positioned to be particularly vulnerable to its effects. Teenagers usually use Television, Radio, the Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS) such as Facebook and Twitter for information and other usage. Over half of all Internet-using teenagers share original media such as photos and videos, or remix content into new creations (Lenhart and Madden, 2009). Through a single website such as Facebook, millions of teenagers are now linked to other teenagers online. Each of these ties represents a potential tie of influence. Preliminary evidence suggests that displays of sexual material on Facebook are associated with the reported intention to become sexually active among teenagers (Connell, 2009).

In one American study, teenagers who viewed sexual references on their peers Facebook profiles, found them to be believable and influential sources of information (Moreno et al, 2009). Another study in the U.S found that, teenagers who perceived sex to be normative based on others Facebook profiles were more likely to report an interest in initiating sex (Litt and Stock, 2011). The other concern of the influence of electronic media to teenage pregnancy is sexting which involves sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages or pictures via a cell

phone or over the internet via email or a social networking site. Given the anonymity of the internet and the ease with which identity can be disguised on social media, online sexual solicitation is the other area of great concern on the influence of electronic media on teenage pregnancy. In the U.S the sexual solicitation rate for teenagers was estimated at between 13-19% (Wolak, Mitchell and Finkelhor 2006).

It is therefore important that teenagers should be properly informed about issues surrounding their sexuality. Sexuality education is education on the subject of sexual activity and sexual relationships. It includes teaching about the male and female bodies so that the learner can understand about sexuality and recognize the onset of puberty, be knowledgeable about personal relationships, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, childbirth, bonding, parenting and family living (Brooker, 2006). Some teenagers do not fully understand the biological and emotional aspects associated with having sex, so they may get incorrect information from friends, videos, and /or movies. According to Almasarweh (2003), teenagers who are uneducated about sex are more likely to have an unintended pregnancy.

There are many challenges associated with the transition from childhood to adulthood that teenagers should address with special care and knowledge. Many teenagers find it difficult to manage this transition successfully while others find themselves engaging in premarital sexual behaviors that place their well-being at risk. They have many unanswered questions about sexuality that the answers seem far-fetched or out of reach. Most children are not receiving sexuality education from their parents so their minds become the battle ground for seeking answers to sex-related questions. Unfortunately, many teenagers get such answers from questionable sources that are likely to provide wrong information, making them more likely to engage in indiscriminate sexual activities. Such reckless and unguarded sexual experimentation consequently result to teenage pregnancy (Carrera, 2012).

Development of sexual characteristics in teenagers makes them feel that they are adults. During this period, teenagers are expected to acquire education and skills needed for the future. On the contrary, many of the teenagers at this level engage in premarital sex, which expose them to the risks of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and other health related problems among which is teenage pregnancy. From the foregoing, several reasons such as parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education have been found to predict teenage pregnancy worldwide. Despite effort to curtail this menace of teenage pregnancy, it keeps increasing probably because attention is centered more on girls whereas the boys need to be observed to see their involvement in teenage pregnancy. In view of the aforementioned, this research investigated the combined influence of the socio factors associated with proneness to teenage pregnancy among secondary school students in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions

1. What is the relative effects of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) on proneness to teenage pregnancy among male teenagers?
2. What is the relative effects of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer

influence, social media usage and sexuality education) on proneness to teenage pregnancy among female teenagers?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted a non-experimental research design, descriptive survey type. Variables:

- a. Independent: These are Social Factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) independent variable
- b. Dependent: This is proneness to Teenage Pregnancy the dependent variable.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique:**

Population comprised all Senior Secondary School Two boys and girls in various public schools in Ibadan Metropolis. There are 11 local government areas due to the high population density of Community Birth Attendants operating at the various centers where most of the pregnant teenagers are registered. Ibadan was stratified into city and less city. Random sampling technique was adopted in selecting three Local Government Areas each from Ibadan City (Urban) and Ibadan Less City (Rural). Four schools each were randomly selected in each of the Local Government Areas domiciled in the rural and urban areas of Ibadan to make twenty-four secondary schools in all. Rural and urban schools were used to have heterogeneous groups for the sample. Purposive sampling technique was used to select Senior Secondary School Two boys and girls that fall within the age bracket of 13 to 19 years. In addition, random sampling techniques was used to select 25 boys and 25 girls within the age bracket in each school, in all 1200 students were sampled. Two instruments were used for this study. These are Social Factors Questionnaire (SFQ) and Perception to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (PTPQ)

### **Social Factors Questionnaire (SFQ)**

The Social Factors Questionnaire (SFQ) developed by Tyrer and Nur, (2004) was adapted to fit in for this study. Items in the SFQ instrument are self-reporting research measures of the core symptoms and functioning concerning various social factor variables (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sex education) which the respondents answered on a modified four point Likert scale of Very True - 4, True - 3, Almost True -2 and Not True - 1. It was trial tested on a small sample similar to, but not constituting the final sample size. Data collected were analyzed and investigated for reliability using Cronbach Alpha which yielded 0.59

### **Proneness to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (PTPQ)**

The Proneness to Teenage Pregnancy Questionnaire (PTPQ) is a self-reporting instrument that was constructed by the researcher to measure proneness of boys and girls to teenage pregnancy. The instrument comprises 30 items to measure the extent to which girls and boys perceive teenage pregnancy on a four point modified Likert scale with response formats of Most Like Me, Like Me, Unlike Me and Most Unlike Me. It was trial tested on a small sample similar to, but not constituting the final sample size. The result collected was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha

which yielded 0.67 and 0.60 respectively. The questionnaires were administered directly to the respondents with the assistance of four researcher assistants. The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics. The inferential statistics used are correlation and multiple regressions analysis at 0.05 significant level for analyzing data collected from the field with the help of SPSS.

## Findings And Discussion

**Table 1 - Descriptive statistics of male students' proneness to teenage pregnancy**

Items	Mean	Standard deviation
Proness to teenage pregnancy	43.86	15.25
Parental support	7.29	2.92
Parenting style	7.80	2.73
Peer influence	7.61	3.34
Social media usage	7.38	3.32
Sexuality education	10.84	3.68

Table 1 shows the mean of the various social factors in relation to male proneness to teenage pregnancy.

**Table 2 - Descriptive statistics of female students' proneness to teenage pregnancy**

Items	Mean	Standard deviation
Proness to teenage pregnancy	40.02	12.30
Parental support	6.42	2.56
Parenting style	7.16	2.36
Peer influence	7.21	2.87
Social media usage	6.62	2.94
Sexuality education	10.27	3.58

Table 2 shows the mean of the various social factors in relation to female proneness to teenage pregnancy.

**What is the relative effect of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) on proneness to teenage pregnancy among male teenagers?**

**Table 3: Effect of social factors on proneness to teenage pregnancy among male teenagers regression coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	p-value
	B	Std Error	Beta			
(Constant)	9.096	1.869			4.865	0.00*
Parental Support	-0.01	0.19	-0.00		-0.07	0.95 <sup>NS</sup>

Parenting Style	0.39	0.18	0.07	2.14	0.03*
Peer Influence	0.20	0.17	0.04	1.21	0.23 <sup>NS</sup>
Social Media Usage	0.41	0.18	0.09	2.32	0.02*
Sexuality Education	0.47	0.12	0.11	3.90	0.00*

NS= Not significant at  $p>0.05$ , \*= significant at  $p<0.05$

The findings from table 3 indicates that among the social factors investigated social media usage ( $\beta = 0.09$ ,  $t = 2.32$ ), parenting style ( $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $t = 2.14$ ) and sexuality education ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $t = 3.90$ ) contributed significantly to the prediction of male proneness to pregnancy. While parental support ( $\beta = -0.00$ ,  $t = -0.07$ ) and peer influence ( $\beta = 0.04$ ,  $t = 1.21$ ) did not contribute significantly to male proneness to teenage pregnancy. Their non-contribution significantly may be as a result of the fact that if parents give support that are not directed towards guiding their wards against teenage pregnancy, their wards may end up being prone to teenage pregnancy. Similarly, the type of peer group that the child keeps will speak volume of the type of influence the peer will have on such child and this could either predispose the child to teenage pregnancy or not.

The finding on parenting style and teenage pregnancy in this study is in line with that of Markham, Lormand and Gloppen (2010) found that parenting style exerts a strong influence on teenage pregnancy. They reported that parenting styles that lack warmth and supportiveness, such as authoritarian, permissive and neglectful parenting styles have higher odds of teenage pregnancy. However, Burns and Grove (2003) found that children raised by authoritative parents are high academic achievers with good psychosocial development and few behavioural problems.

With respect to findings on relative contribution of sexuality education on teenage pregnancy, Anggleton (2006) and Botchway (2004) found that many teenagers lack appropriate sexual information and they become entangled in risky sexual behaviours. Adegoke (2003) who reported that many Nigerian parents do not raise topics on the sexual lives of their children corroborates Anggleton and Botchway whose results support this finding.

**What is the relative effect of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) on proneness to teenage pregnancy among female teenagers?**

Table 4: Effect of social factors (parental support, parenting style, peer influence, social media usage and sexuality education) on proneness to teenage pregnancy among female teenagers?

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
1	(Constant)	19.517	2.142		9.111	0.00*
	Parental Support	0.23	0.19	0.05	1.24	0.22 <sup>NS</sup>
	Parenting Style	-0.34	0.19	-0.07	-1.80	0.07 <sup>NS</sup>
	Peer Influence	0.28	0.17	0.07	1.62	0.11 <sup>NS</sup>

Social Media Usage	0.40	0.18	0.10	2.27	0.02*
Sexuality Education	0.20	0.12	0.06	1.68	0.09 <sup>NS</sup>

NS= Not significant at  $p > 0.05$ , \*= significant at  $p < 0.05$

From Table 4, Among the social factors, only social media usage ( $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $t = 2.27$ ) contributed significantly to the prediction of female proneness to pregnancy. Parental support ( $\beta = 0.05$ ,  $t = -1.24$ ), parenting style ( $\beta = -0.07$ ,  $t = -1.80$ ), peer influence ( $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $t = 1.62$ ) and sexuality education ( $\beta = 0.06$ ,  $t = 1.68$ ) did not contribute significantly to female proneness to teenage pregnancy.

The respective values of the significant levels of parental attitude to premarital sex, students' attitude to premarital sex and depression are lower than the critical value hence, their significant contribution to the prediction of female proneness to teenage pregnancy. This result may be due to fact that the variables had significant positive relationship with female proneness to teenage pregnancy. On the other way round, among social factors, only media usage contributed significantly to the prediction of female proneness to teenage pregnancy. This result may be as a result of the fact that attitudes are quite important when predicting human behaviour, which might have accounted for the significant prediction of media usage to female proneness to pregnancy.

The finding in this study on relative contribution of parental attitude on proneness to teenage pregnancy aligned with that of Nava (2012) who found that pregnant teenagers were as a result of the bad attitudes of their parents. The finding on contribution of students' attitude on proneness to teenage pregnancy is in line with that of Osisoma (2008) who found out that bad attitudes of some teenagers which are manifested in form of indecent dressing and acceptance of premarital sex led to a high incidence of teenage pregnancy. The result on relative contribution of depression on teenage pregnancy corroborates that of Roberts, Connor, Golding and Team (2004) that there is a strong relationship between depression and teenage pregnancy. They reported that teenagers from unconducive environment become sad, seek for relief and happiness from other sources, all of which can results in risky behaviours like pre-marital sex.

Result of this study on relative contribution of social media usage tallies with that of Anate (2006) who found out that social media affect the response of teenagers to sexual stimuli which if not well controlled could result into unwanted pregnancy. He reported that social media is a reflection of the dangers of increasing urbanization where teenagers are exposed to sexual stimuli in magazines, television, movies and online platforms to a greater extent than before. This has the potential to create a general trend towards liberated attitude and values that encourage open discussion on sexuality, once considered a taboo. The finding is also in tune with that of Berry, Chandra, Collins, Elliot, Kanouse, Martino and Miu (2008) who found out that teenagers who had a higher exposure to sexual contents on television and other media platforms had double chance of becoming pregnant than those who had low exposure. Furthermore, Chandra, Martino and Collins (2008) concluded that social media contributed significantly to teenage pregnancy.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Teenage pregnancy as generated a lot of concern over time among secondary school students. Various researchers have worked on different variables in order to stop this menace. The study investigated social factors as determinant of teenage pregnancy among public secondary school students in Ibadan, Oyo State. Findings from the study revealed that among social factors considered, social media usage, peer influence and parental support have positive and significant relationship with female students' proneness to pregnancy while, sexuality education is not related to male teenagers' proneness to pregnancy. Further still, social media usage, peer influence and parental support have positive and significant relationship with female students' proneness to pregnancy. While sexuality education and parenting styles are not related to female teenagers' proneness to pregnancy, among social factors, sexuality education contributed most significantly to the prediction of male proneness to pregnancy. While only social media usage contributed significantly to the prediction of female proneness to pregnancy.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommendations that the government through the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) should regulate the media industries to regulate and census media production. Also, parents should intensify efforts to relate with the teenagers to guide and prepare them for the society to avoid peer influence. It will also be necessary for Ministry of Education to incorporate sexuality education into the school curriculum. Hence, sexuality education should be effectively taught at secondary school level so as to instill in the students the necessary values that make them abstain from premarital sexual activities. In addition, school counselors should talk to the boys and girls about the dangers of premarital sex.

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