

ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy refers to the situation where young girls ranging from thirteen to nineteen years of age become pregnant. During their pregnancy the teenage girls are affected in their psychosocial lives. The expectant teenage girls also tend to employ coping mechanisms which can be positive or negative. Psychosocial wellbeing is the positive affective state such as personal growth, positive relations and self-acceptance and interpersonal relations of the expectant teenage girls. The cases of teenage pregnancy have been on the rise. In Trans Nzoia County the teenage pregnancy rate is 18 percent. Expectant teenage girls have been reported to procure abortions which have led to death and other health problems among expectant teenage girls. Societal coping mechanisms are essential for the expectant teenage girls to cope with pregnancy. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to establish the effect of teenage pregnancy on psychosocial wellbeing of expectant teenage girls and their coping mechanisms among girls in Trans Nzoia West Sub County. The study applied two theories which are Crisis theory by Caplan and Problem Behaviour Theory by Jessor. The study used the descriptive survey research design. This design was considered appropriate for the study because it is useful in securing evidence concerning an existing situation or current condition. The target population for this study was 136 expectant teenage girls in Trans Nzoia West Sub County. The sample size was 103 expectant teenage girls who were sampled using purposive sampling technique. A pilot study was carried out to test for the reliability of the instruments. The validity of the instruments was ascertained through expert judgment from Chuka University Department of Education and other experts. A pilot study was carried out to test for the reliability of the instruments. The reliability co-efficient of the tools was tested using split half technique and Spearman rho correlation coefficient. The obtained reliability co-efficient of the instruments was 0.83. Data was collected by use of Focus Group Discussion and Questionnaires which were administered to the expectant teenage girls and interviews were conducted among the nineteen nurses. The data collected was organized, coded, tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The findings showed that expectant teenage girls were experiencing low self-esteem, poor interpersonal relationship and depressive symptoms. The expectant teenage girls reported that they felt unfortunate because of the pregnancy. They were also very critical of themselves and do not like interacting with others. Participants gave reports that teenage pregnancy was seen as a shameful event for the teenagers involved. This led to poor interpersonal relationship with their partners and relatives. The study showed aspect of depressive symptoms whereby expectant teenagers reacted to the realization of pregnancy with anxiety,

hopelessness and thoughts of taking away their lives. The study also found out that the expectant teenagers were using coping mechanisms such as religion, social support and counseling. These coping mechanisms have made the expectant teenagers cope with their pregnancy better. The findings and recommendations of this study may provide information to expectant teenage girls concerning coping mechanisms that can be used to cope with teenage pregnancy better. The information may help the Ministry of education to be aware of the necessary factors to take into consideration when formulating and implementing policies and programmes designed to sensitize teenagers about the effect of teenage pregnancy and coping mechanisms of teenagers who are pregnant.