

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND CHURCH'S RESPONSE IN OGBOMOSO  
SOUTH WEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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## ABSTRACT

This essay "Teenage Pregnancy and Church's Response in Ogbomoso South West Baptist Association" was carried out to know the reality, causes and effects of teenage pregnancy and even the response of the church towards the teenage pregnancy. This study was to challenge the church as the carrier or preacher of the gospel to help both the parents and teenagers to have a sound and better understanding of the purpose for which sex was created by God. The essay also challenges the church to take up responsibility of fostering sex education in the church in collaboration with the parents.

Questionnaire was the research instrument used in this essay. The total number of 14 churches in Ogbomoso South West Baptist Association were randomly selected. The research carried out revealed that sexual indiscipline is very common among teenagers in the society of which Baptist denomination is not exempted.

About 74% of the respondents affirmed that teenage pregnancy is common among Christians. The reason for this was revealed in the research that poor family relationship is a strong factor for teenage pregnancy which means most parents are not accessible or available to their children to give or educate them about their sexuality. The implication of this, is that most parents are not carrying out their duties in the aspect of sex education.

This essay challenges the church to foster sex education so that both parents and adolescents will have a better understanding of God's demands from each one of them.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusion were reached, the teenage pregnancy is a reality, and a common problem among Christians. The bad attitude of people towards pregnant teenagers is believe to be as a result of the pains, sorrow and shame the teenager has brought either to the family or the church. Similarly, poor family relationship suggests that when parents are not in good term with their children a lot of things will suffer in that family such as sex education. In fact there will be serous communication gap in that home, and the problem will definitely leave the children in total darkness of their lives. It is so easy for children from this home to fall into temptation of sexual intercourse which may lead to pregnancy.

Furthermore, the finding shows that lack of sex education causes teenage pregnancy. It is therefore assumed and concluded that when teenagers do not have access to sex education the possibility of engaging in sexual activities will be very high because of the lack of information about the development of their secondary characteristics such as enlargement of the breast, ability to reproduce sexually, breaking of the voice, increase in the size of genitals, enlargement of pelvic and lips regions, menarche and subsequent regular ovulation.

The influence of the peer group as one of the factors encouraging teenage pregnancy cannot be over emphasized in the sense that teenagers acquire more information from the peer group than they receive from the parents because the group is more accessible than the parents.



Also, the indecent dressing of young ladies which promotes teenage pregnancy affirms that some homes have failed in teaching their children good moral life. Parents should be blame for this moral decadence that pervade the society today because some of them not given properly training to their children any longer. The way a child dresses really shows the kinds of home he/she comes from.

Based on the finding the researcher believes that abortion is a common practice among teenagers and a lot of them have lost either their lives or wombs in the process. This will serve as a lesson for teenagers who are contemplating of engaging themselves in sexual intercourse to know the risk involved.

Finally, the church's response to the challenges of teenage pregnancy through sex education and other programmes of the church is a point to the fact that the church is performing her role as agent of transformation. The impact of the church needs to be felt to a greater level in sex education to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy in the society.

### Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this study the followings are recommended as solutions to the problem of teenage pregnancy.

#### Church

The church should take the educational ministry of the church more seriously and improve her activities the more on sex education. The effectiveness of the goodness of a programme will be determined by the handling of the programme. The church should know that an effective use of the Sunday school, church training, discipleship programme, Bible Study to

address the issues of teenage pregnancy by emphasizing on the important of sexual purity of teenagers will solve or reduce the problem to a certain level.

Christian educators could be as well allowed in the church in teaching sex education and as they will be role models in teaching adolescents to understand the purpose of creating sex. The church also needs to educate them that sexually transmitted infections are passed from one person to another through sexual intercourse. This will help adolescents to appreciate sex and make good decision on moral standard.

The church needs to fully involves teenagers in church training programme by allowing them to participate in the programme on every Sunday. The church should compulsory discipleship programme for all members to teach them Christian ethics. This programme will go along way in solving or reducing the problem of teenage pregnancy.

The church needs to provide pastoral care and counselling for pregnant teenagers who may be suffering from depression, fear, frustration, resentment and those contemplating abortion.

The church should empower teenage ministry through serious teaching on sexuality and marriage sanctity. The church should also assist teenage members financially to meet their needs.

## Parents

Parents should make themselves available to provide adequate useful information on sex education for their children and give room for effective communication from time to time. The good morals should be taught by the parents to their children in order to prevent moral decadence among teenagers. Parents should as well know the kind of company their children keep because influence of peer group has a great negative effect on them.

Parents should also love their children by providing for their personal needs. This will prevent them from engaging in sexual activities for money in order to meet up with their basic needs. Also Parents and children should attend the same church together so as to prevent their children from erroneous teachings that could lead them to illicit sexual activities.

### Teenagers

Abortion should be avoided by pregnant teenagers because of the risks involved such as damage of wombs, death, barrenness for life. Teenagers are advised to desist from premarital sex because it is a sin against God. they should try to wait till they get married.

Teenager should not dress seductively in order to attract the opposite sex and feel that they have arrived. They should rather dress decently as good children of God who will not abuse their sexuality. Teenagers should try as much as possible to run away from bad friends. The scripture says evil communication corrupts good manner.

Teenagers are advised to cooperate with their parents and church to give them adequate information on sexuality through sex education. They should try to be submissive to the rules and regulation of both the parents and the church. Finally, pregnant teenagers are advised to go for pastoral counselling for proper guidance.