

NBS
M. Th
P195P
248.83

**PASTORAL CARE APPROACH TO
TEENAGE PREGNANCY:
A CASE STUDY IN MUPUN LAND**

Presented to the Faculty

of the

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary
Ogbomoso, Nigeria

*In Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology*

By

Manasseh Panpe

June, 1999

99111

ABSTRACT

The focus of this piece of work so far, has been on trying to look into the problems of teenage pregnancy as well as suggesting ways in which a pastoral counsellor can best minister to both the pregnant teens as well as their parents. The work is spread out in five chapters thus.

Chapter one introduces the subject matter by looking at the problems teenagers go through as they pass through these ages of crises. They are so called crises age because teenagers often demand for their independence and in trying to exercise it, get themselves into problems (especially girls,) one of which is teenage pregnancy. In chapter two, a case study is cited from a local Baptist Church in the northern part of Nigeria after which a careful analysis of the case is given as well as its evaluation.

Chapter three brings out the problems posed by teenage pregnancy, first by looking at those factors responsible for the pregnancy. There are a lot of factors that are responsible for teenage pregnancy but the researcher chose to discuss only six, viz: developmental factors, economic, family, sexual, peer pressures and lack of education on the part of the teenager. There are several effects posed by teenage pregnancy; a few are posed on the teenager herself, the family, the Church and their religious lives.

In chapter four, the researcher attempted to approach the problem in three dimensions, viz. First, the cultural approach dealt with the Mupun culture where the case is cited and sees how the problem could be approached. Second, pastoral care approach, which discussed ^{four} approaches out of ^{many} numerous acceptability, flexibility, understanding and relationship which are all important. Third, theological approach

discussed five approaches to the problem being healing, sustaining, guiding, educating and reconciling.

The last chapter, which is the conclusion, gave some biblical teachings and drew a conclusion with some recommendations as tools for pastoral care givers in regard to the problem of teenage pregnancy.

B. CONCLUSION

This chapter seeks to bring to conclusion the study by summarizing what has been said so far and also give some recommendations for further studies.

Teenage period is a time of crises and during these crises, both the teenagers and their parents are in pains because of what had happened during the crises period. Many teenagers develop negatively when they are associated with bad peer groups engaging in bad behaviour, for instance, smoking, taking alcohol and dangerous drugs and so on. They can develop positively by associating with good peer groups which leads to shaping their lives. As a result of the negative development, female teenagers get into the problem of teenage pregnancy. Both the teenagers and their parents pass through difficult moments during the teenage period of pregnancy.

The pastoral care giver is needed to minister to the pregnant teenager as well as her parents. Teenagers are inexperienced, no matter their quick body development. They still have the characteristic of teenagers. Parents should therefore, be aware of this to be able to appreciate and accept them when passing through this age period. As parents recognize this age of their children, they will also be able to help their teenagers cope up with life at the age period. Parents therefore have responsibilities of bringing up their teenagers to a state of young adulthood, to be able to decide for themselves and take responsibilities themselves as well. In the case of girls, mothers have greater responsibility to bring them to maturity. Hunt said,

So as daughters grow into womanhood, mothers must realize that they are passing into mature womanhood. She will have questions about life, sex, men in general,

and you can best help your daughter not by having one 'big talk' about sexuality and physical maturity but by gently and gradually having normal, relaxed conversation which your daughter can expect in the year ahead.⁴

Hunt has observed rightly in the sense that a lot of parents treat teenagers like little children. Teenagers are not children neither are they adults; for this reason, they have to be treated in between and with care. They should be given their dignity as well as knowing that they are not developed in mind. They are to be treated with respect and worth which will make them feel important and listen to whatever rebuke or pieces of advice that are given to them. Open rebuke and confrontaton will make teenagers 'prove more tought' than they were, for that matter parents should create good working relationship with their teenagers. They (teenagers) should be shown love and care from their parents. This shows that as they develop, they are bound to exhibit certain characteristics which parents called 'odd'. But if parents prepare for these developmental stages in their teenagers' years, they will be able to help them.

Parents should be able to spend most of their time with their teenagers and guide them in their decision making. They need people who will guide them in taking these decisions. Most of the time, teenagers are not given much attention in the home and so make a second home with friends or in the school as Campbell said that,

Parenting teenagers in today's world is difficult. One important reason for this is that most of a teenager's time is spent under the control and influence of others - school teachers, peers, neighbours, and television entertainment.⁵

⁴Angela Elwell Hunt, *Living With Teens*, November 1994, p. 14.

⁵Rose Campbell, *How to Really Love Your Teenager* (USA: Victor Books, 1981), p. 10.

This writer is not of the view that teenagers should be 'locked up' in the home so as not to be influenced by the society. But as Hunt said, even when they have opportunity to interact with their teachers at school, peers, neighbours and television, parents should be able to answer their questions when they return home. It is when they do not have people to help them with what they learn outside that they take them for what they are. It is therefore, important that parents get closer to their teenagers to help them in their normal programme of growing up. Overton said,

In counselling with these early teeners, I find one of their major conflicts with their parents. Many of these conflicts are in the normal program of growing up; they cannot be avoided. The problem is to keep them from becoming too intense lest the possible good influence of the parents be lost and the children seek ways to avoid their parents and to deceive them. Unless the adolescent finds understanding at home, he is likely to become evasive, and then parents find themselves unable to help as they so much desire to do.⁶

Many a times teenagers try to avoid their parents because the parents only notice them when they do something wrong. There should be understanding in the home, between teenagers and their parents as Overton suggested above.

The effect of teenage pregnancy on the teenager is great. Apart from the creation of a sense of guilt, fear, withdrawal and shame, it brings low self esteem. A pregnant teenager might appear rejected and isolated; she might also feel that she is no longer a 'human being'. This is because the interest she had for herself and which people had in her before the

⁶Grace Sloan Overton, *Living With Teeners* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), p. 9.

