

Abstract

Sexual and reproductive health among teenagers is a major concern in Uganda where many teenagers are sexually active at an early age and premarital sex is common among 13-19 years old.

This study was carried out to assess the factors that influence sexual practices among teenagers in Mukono Municipality, Mukono District, and the objectives were:

1. To determine the prevalence of sex practices among teenagers in Mukono Municipality,
2. To ascertain the influence of personal factors on sexual practices among teenagers in Mukono Municipality,
3. To establish the influence of social economic factors on sexual practices among teenagers in Mukono Municipality and,
4. To establish the influence of media on sexual practices among teenagers in Mukono Municipality.

A cross sectional study of 200 teenagers from 14 cells which were selected by convenience, and purposively selected key informants was undertaken in Mukono Municipality using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Proportions and crude odds ratios were used to analyze the data using SPSS version 20 software.

The study found that of the 200 teenagers, 59% reported that they had ever had sexual intercourse, 15% reported that they had ever masturbated and 42% reported that they had ever kissed. Teenagers aged 15-16 years (COR = 13.13, CI: 2.88-61.37) and those aged above 17 years (COR = 76.15, CI: 17.33-334.57) were more likely to have ever had sex compared to those aged 13-14 years. In addition, Anglican (COR = 2.52, CI: 1.22-5.19) and Muslim (COR = 4.65, CI: 2.26-9.57) teenagers were more likely to have ever had sex compared to their catholic counterparts; teenagers who were in secondary/tertiary school (COR = 35.29, CI: 12.07-103.19) were also more likely to have ever had sex compared to those who were in primary school or not at school.

In conclusion, a significant proportion of teenagers engage in sexual practices, and personal factors like age, sex, schooling and religion do influence the practice. Socio economic factors like working status, and media exposure also influence teenage sexual practices.

Therefore educational and sensitization programs need to target older teenagers and those in secondary/tertiary institutions to influence their sexual practices. Other sources of information like school awareness, community and public agencies health programs need to be utilized to influence the sexual practices of teenagers.