

ABSTRACT

Background: This study sought to find out the factors influencing teenage pregnancy in Gulu regional Referral Hospital. The general object was to find out the factors contributing to the teenage pregnancy in Gulu. This was to generate measures that can be used by the municipal council health team in cubing down the rate of teenage pregnancy and also to offer an in-depth assessment of the contributing factors leading to increased number of teenage pregnancy in Gulu district.

Methods and materials: The researcher used data obtained by interviewing teenage girls who have brought their children for immunization services and also those who have come for antenatal services. Data was collected from 392 teenage girls who were between 13 and 19 years, and was finally analyzed using SPSS system.

Results from the study indicated that majority of teenagers involved were below 18 years, About 57% were found pregnant at the time of the study and most of them were secondary school drop outs (59.9%) as compared to 10.7% who were primary school dropouts. Majority were catholics constituting 34.9%. 10.7% were cohabiting while 64.6% were single and 67.9% have ever had sex before they were 19 years. Majority of the respondents acknowledged that they have heard about contraceptives however they could not clearly explain what it is but know at least two different types of contraceptives. Factors such as age of the girl, religion, marital status, staying with both parents, girl child education and community perception on teenage pregnancy were found to have a statistically significant association ($p < 0.05$) with teenage pregnancy. Such factors influence the prevalence of teenage pregnancies within the study area.

In conclusion, sensitization of teenage girls on reproductive health, coupled with early initiation of sex education in schools and most importantly intrasectoral collaborations should be encouraged. This will tackle teenage pregnancy from the grass root if the millennium development goal of reducing maternal mortality rate is to be achieved and ending poverty by year 2015.