

Household Socioeconomic Factors Associated with Teenage Pregnancies in Kigali City, Rwanda

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Abstract : Teenage pregnancy is a challenging problem for sustainable development due to restrictions it poses to socioeconomic opportunities for young mothers, their children and families. Being unable to take appropriate economic and social responsibilities, teen mothers get trapped into poverty and become economic burden to their family and country. Besides, teenage pregnancy is also a health problem because children born to very young mothers are vulnerable with greater risk of illnesses and deaths, and teenage mothers are more likely to be exposed to greater risk of maternal mortality and to other health and psychological problems. In Kigali city, in Rwanda, teenage pregnancy rate is currently high and its increase in recent years is worrisome. However, only individual factors influencing the teenage pregnancy tend to be the basis of interventions. It is important to understand the important socioeconomic factors at the household level that are associated with teenage pregnancy to help government, parents, and other stakeholders to appropriately address the problem with sustainable measures. This study analyzed secondary data from the Fifth Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (RDHS-V 2014-2015) conducted by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR). The aim was to examine household socio-economic factors that are associated with incidence of teenage pregnancies in Kigali city. In addition to descriptive analysis, Pearson's Chi Square and Binary Logistic Regression were used in the analysis. Findings indicate that marital status and age of household head, number of members in a household, number of rooms used for sleeping, educational level of the household head and household's wealth are significantly associated with teenage pregnancy in Rwanda ($p < 0.05$). It was found that teenagers living with parents, those having parents with higher education and those from richer families are less likely to become pregnant. Age of household head was pinpointed as factor to teenage pregnancy, with teenage-headed households being more vulnerable. The findings also revealed that household composition correlates with the probability of teenage pregnancy ($p < 0.05$) with teenagers from households with less number of members being more vulnerable. Regarding the size of the house, the study suggested that the more rooms available in households, the less incidences of teenage pregnancy are likely to be observed ($p < 0.05$). However, teenage pregnancy was not significantly associated with physical violence among parents ($p = 0.65$) and sex of household heads ($p = 0.52$), except in teen-headed households of which female are predominantly heads. The study concludes that teenage pregnancy remains a serious social, economic and health problem in Rwanda. The study informs government officials, parents and other stakeholders to take interventions and preventive measures through community sex education, policies and strategies to foster effective parental guidance, care and control of young girls through meeting their necessary social and financial needs within households.

Keywords : household socio-economic factors, Rwanda, Rwanda demographic and health survey, teenage pregnancy

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