

Reproductive Resilience to Teenage Pregnancy in Eastern Ghana: A Study of the Begoro Community

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The Ghana Health Service in 2007 reported an increase in the rate of teenage pregnancy in Fanteakwa in the Eastern Region of Ghana from 523 in 2005 to 579 in 2006. Focusing on adolescent girls in a peri-urban area, Begoro in Ghana, the study aims at providing insights into adolescents' sexual and reproductive health realities and resilience against or coping well with and after teenage pregnancy.

Background

In Sub-Saharan Africa, adolescents are faced with numerous health challenges which affects their productive contribution to development. In 2009, about 12% of girls aged 15-19 years in Ghana were pregnant or already mothers.

Using the Multi-Layered Resilience Framework (Obrist et al., 2010) this study aims at analyzing factors that can build adolescents' resilience against teenage pregnancy and enable already pregnant girls to cope well with teenage pregnancy and early motherhood.

Photo 1: Girls in Accra, Ghana (Photo: C. Ahorlu)



Research Objectives

1. To investigate how adolescents in Begoro interpret their sexuality and teenage pregnancy
2. To identify female adolescents' capacities, social connections and involvement in institutions and organizations that might contribute to building resilience against teenage pregnancy
3. To analyze how social actors, institutions and organizations can build resilience of adolescents against teenage pregnancy in the district.

Photo 2: Interviewing an adolescent girl in Begoro (Photo: S.Adu-Gyamfi)



Approach

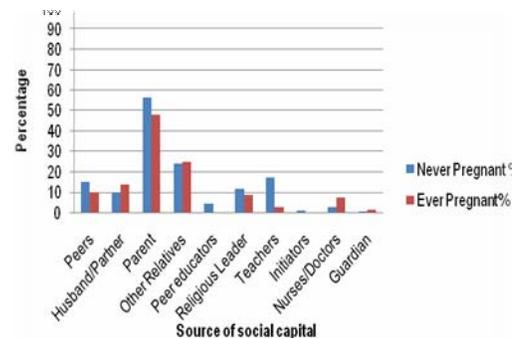
A mixed method approach is being used for data collection:

- For the quantitative data (cross-sectional survey) 500 adolescent girls, aged 15-19, were sampled from Begoro a peri-urban community using multistage cluster sampling.
- Purposive sampling was used to select 20 (10 high and 10 low resilient) girls for follow up over the course of four months for qualitative data collection using in-depth interviews and observation to identify resilient pathways.

Preliminary findings

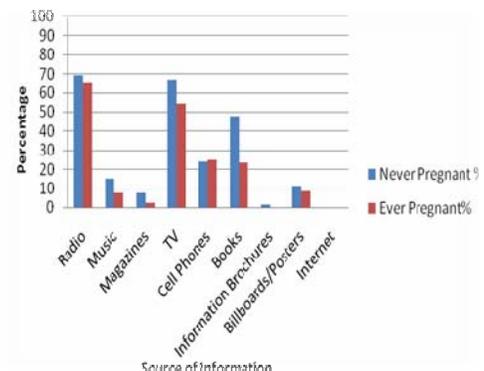
- 500 adolescent girls were interviewed
- 81 (16%) have ever been pregnant or were pregnant, indicating that pregnancy rates did not decrease in the past years. In 2008, 16% of adolescent girls in rural areas begun child bearing between the ages of 15-19 years (Ghana Demographic Health Survey, 2008).
- 65% of the never pregnant girls had someone they could turn to in case they had questions or needed support related to how to protect themselves against teenage pregnancy.

Fig1: Access to social capital among female adolescents (15-19 yrs) in Begoro, Ghana



- 69% of the ever pregnant girls had someone they could turn to when they need support related to pregnancy and neonatal care.
- 80% of the ever pregnant girls and 90% of the never pregnant girls had access to other sources of information

Fig. 2: Access to cultural capital (TV, radio etc.) among female adolescents (15-19 yrs) in Begoro, Ghana



Progress and achievements

- Quantitative data analysis has been finalized
- Qualitative data collection is ongoing

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