

The Impact of Contemporary Parenting Approach on the Prevalence of Teenage Pregnancy in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province

Bassey Augustine Inyang*, Radzilani-Makatu Makondelele,
Zikhali Prudence Thobile and Mokgale Makgopa

*Centre for African Studies, Sociology Unit, University of Venda, P/Bag X5050,
Thohoyandou 0950, South Africa*

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ABSTRACT This paper describes the critical impact of contemporary parenting approach on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. A quantitative approach was used to conduct the study. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to recruit 400 participants who were mainly teenage girls. Closed-ended questionnaires were administered to the participants. Data analysis used the statistical package for social sciences' programme. Frequency tables were created to categorize the demographic characteristics of the participants. Then cross-sectional tables were created to show significant associations of variables. The findings revealed that parenting practices, including the experience of single-parenthood, teenage girls parents socio-economic background, and the lack of parents-teenage girls' sex education contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. This paper concludes that parenting of the teenage girls in Vhembe District is not taken as a serious task. There is a lack of sensitive parenting of the teenage girls, therefore, the girls are victims of teenage pregnancy.

INTRODUCTION

This paper posits that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District emerges out of the critical parenting approach of the teenage girls. The teenage pregnancy is a repercussion of parenting experience of the girls regardless of the fact that they are still under their protective purview. Teenage pregnancy incidence in Vhembe District is a clear expression of parenting practices and approaches of the teenage girls that continuously enlist them under the prevalence. Bassey (2018) noted that growing up in a stable household for most teenage girls in Vhembe District is an impossible dream. This situation is a major concern for the teenage girls raised in the district, where living with two parents (biological father and mother) turns out to be a treat for a few. The unfortunate preceding impact on the teenage girls' family breakdown in Vhembe District and its associational variables, such as, household poverty that incapacitate parenting responsiveness, substantially play a role on the teenage girls' sexual attitudes and successively the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

The prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District befalls on girls who are pre-

dominantly raised in unsafe and/or insecure homes. Not only were the pregnant teenage girls' families disrupted in livelihood insecurity, but most of them are raised in homes with ageing grandmothers' as household head depending solely on social grants (Bassey 2018). These parents' socio-economic background characterized poor livelihood that further heightens parenting stress. Poverty constitutes a particular risk on parenting (Kaminski et al. 2013). A community survey in Vhembe District noted that about twelve percent of the families live on annual earnings below R5, 000 or less than R400 per month (Community Survey 2012). Such low levels of income undoubtedly incapacitate quality of livelihood, particularly for households with young girls. Beside household poverty that affects the ability of parents to deliver necessary provisions, the poor condition makes parenting approach itself very much challenging.

There is a critical relationship between household poverty experience and parenting approach on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Parents struggling with poverty, approach parenting with a lack of sensitivity and responsiveness (Gould and Ward 2015). They lack consistency with the reactions of their children behaviours (Roman et al. 2016). This sort of unreliable parenting practices that lacks adequate behav-

*Address for correspondence:
E-mail: austinobassey@yahoo.com

itorial monitoring and supervision, reinforces behavioural indulgence of teenage girls engaging in risky sexual activities that lead to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

Thus, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is a behavioural problem, effected and developed through a lack of parenting predictability of teenage pregnancy. Therefore, the construct of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy starts from parenting approach. The basis of parenting approach is warmth and control (Roman et al. 2016). The warmth aspect nurture independence and self-assertiveness (Cheah et al. 2009). While, the control aspect integrates the child into the family, through disciplinary and supervision methods applied by parents. Parenting itself provides evidence of different approaches and the effect of each approach in a child behaviour (Carr and Pike 2012). These approaches reflect the forms of parenting values and practices as well as a different balance of responsiveness and demandingness yielding different expectations for children behaviours (Roman et al. 2016). Parents fundamentally play the role on how children develop; giving to the type of parenting approach they adopt.

But, regardless of the fact that parenting approach influences children behaviour, children experiences acquire with peers and other adults around them also apply to the behavioural development of children. Agreeing to the American Psychological Association, these three influences act together to regulate how children grow and behave. But, the influence which parents can regulate is their parenting approach, of which there are four basic types, namely: permissive, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved parenting approaches.

The authoritarian parenting approach favours strict discipline towards the child. They feature numerous household rules which they expect their children to obey and at the same time consistent with punishment if they disobey (Bahr and Hoffmann 2010; Nauck and Lotter 2015). An authoritarian parent is less affectionate and in some circumstances withdraw love to get the child to obey their rules (Roman et al. 2016). The behavioural dimension for teenagers raised by authoritarian parents is a tendency to be moody and anxious, at the same time, unhappy and distrustful, with maladaptive behaviour as they grow older (Agadoni 2014). The authoritarian parenting approach is branded by physical coercion,

verbal hostility and non-reasoning/punitive dimensions (Roman et al. 2015). This parenting approach exhibit very little or lack of communication between the parent and their children; as well as not according a child the freedom for individuation (Agadoni 2014). Therefore, the teenage girls raised by this parenting approach are more vulnerable to social problems, and at the same time, likely potential victims of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy given to the numerous effects of the parenting experience.

The authoritative parenting approach favours a precise sense of balance of warmth and control. They are receptive to children needs (Roman et al. 2016). Authoritative parents foster discipline and explain the reasons that discipline might be in order (Bahr and Hoffmann 2010). The teenagers raised by authoritative parents are most likely to be contented, compassionate teenagers who can resolve problems on their own and who are self-motivated and self-confident. An authoritative parenting approach establishes independence, determination, and discipline towards children (Cherry 2017). The best outward features are the method in which self-control is achieved. Authoritative parents practice both power and reason, which allows children to be conscious of their wrongs in order to amend (Roman et al. 2016). This parenting style is shadowed by set planned guidelines and letting the child some liberty and at the same time being compliant with discipline. The effects for children raised by authoritative parents are social accountability, early individuality, self-confidence, higher self-esteem and adaptive behaviour (Moyo 2012). Therefore, a teenage girl raised by authoritative parents would hardly fall victim to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy given to the numerous effects of the parenting experience.

The permissive parenting approach demonstrates more warmth and less control. The balance of warmth and control tips the opposite way from the rest parenting approaches. They show a lot of love and affection towards children but maintain and enforce few if any rules (Agadoni 2014). Permissive parents' lack planned guidelines for children and in its place depicts a lot of receptiveness and tolerance with their children's desires without setting proper limits (Roman et al. 2016). The effects for children raised by permissive parents comprise high self-esteem; however, they are often at high risk of using drugs and alcohol and display problematic be-

haviours (Davids et al. 2015). The teenage girls raised by a permissive parent are very vulnerable and easily exposed victims of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy given to the critical effects of the parenting experience.

Uninvolved parenting approach is basically a dysfunctional parenting approach. These parents are low on being receptive to children needs and low on control and discipline (Agadoni 2014). Parents on the vilest extreme of this approach even neglect or discard their children completely. They have no solid emotional attachment to their children because they were not involved in their lives, and if they provide discipline, they are inconsistent and unpredictable (Bahr and Hoffmann 2010). These parents have little or no expectations or demands for children behaviour, for the reason that they are frequently overwhelmed with their own problems other than their children (Cherry 2017). Therefore, teenagers raised by uninvolved parents learn to provide for themselves. They avoid reliance on other persons; they are habitually expressively quiet and tend to exhibit more delinquency during teenage-hood (Cherry 2017). They also feel stressed owing to the absence of parental care and have an increased danger of substance abuse (Bahr and Hoffmann 2010). Owing to the absence of emotional receptiveness and love from their parents, teenagers with uninvolved parenting experience often exhibit difficulty developing affection or attachment bond later in life. The complete absence of discipline in their home makes it problematic to develop appropriate social behaviours, which is the reason behind their inappropriate behaviour and potentially vulnerable to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

Thus, the impact of parenting approach predicts the behavioural outcome of the child. Vhembe District is dogged with increasing rates of teenage pregnancies that are unrelated to early marriages. The aim of this paper was to describe the impact of contemporary parenting approach on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District. However, the fundamental understanding of the social context of parenting approaches on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy necessitates a theoretical underpinning of early childhood care and the behavioural outcome. Accordingly, this paper adopts the attachment theory as the guiding theoretical framework. The attachment theoretical perspective

offers the dynamic background for understanding the developmental influence of primary social and emotional bond, recycled by a child to build views of self (Moullin et al. 2014). Attachment theory explains social-emotional development from the standpoint of process and outcome and classifies a range of markers predictive of the later social capability of the child.

Accordingly, theory of attachment basically looks at the exact outcome of early parenting practices; given to the connections with parents, children develop an inner working model of social relationships capability (Moullin et al. 2014); suggesting that if the child experiences her parent as a basis of warmth and well-being, the child is more likely to hold a positive self-image and develop secure attachment. The basic tenet of attachment theoretical assertion upholds that an insecurely attached child externalizes behavioural problems during teenage-hood. Therefore, the strongest predictor of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy lays on teenage girls having an insecurely attached parent (Moullin et al. 2014). This includes parents who are living in poverty, single-parenthood experience, and teenage motherhood struggling with parenting responsibilities.

Objective

The objective of this paper was to examine the correlation between parenting approach and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District.

METHODOLOGY

The study design was deductive in approach. It used the quantitative descriptive method, then focused mainly on primary data. The study site and field work were in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The district shares borders with Zimbabwe and Botswana in the north-west and Mozambique in the south-east through the Kruger National Park. The Limpopo River valley forms the border between the district and its international neighbours. Vhembe District comprises four local municipalities, namely Collins Chabane, Musina, Thulamela, and Makhado. The district is largely rural and the households are mostly headed by females (Community Survey 2012). Vhem-

be District is also a legendary cultural hub. The district has a total population of 1,302,113 with 53.3 percent being females and 46.7 percent males. The distribution of the population across age groups shows that the teenage age group is significantly higher than all the other age groups. The racial makeup of the district is 98.2 percent Blacks, 0.1 percent coloured, 0.4 percent Indian/Asian and 1.1 percent White (South African Social Security Agency 2011).

Vhembe District was chosen as the site for the study mainly because of its teenage pregnancy characteristics. The participants of the study were teenage girls. The stratified sampling procedure was used to recruit the study participants. The stratified sampling technique was adopted for control reasons and to ensure participants fall within the required age limit. The instrument used to collect data from participants was a close-ended questionnaire. The closed-ended questionnaires were administered to 400 teenage girls. The research hypothesis that was formulated was: There is a correlation between parenting approach and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District. The data collection was carried out from January 2015 to September 2015. The data obtained with the closed-ended questionnaires (Annexure) were analyzed with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. Tables and frequencies were created to categorize the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Multi-variant frequency tables were created to analyze responses accordingly, that bring out certain distinctiveness on parental practices and to test performance on variables at a confidence level of ninety-five percent.

RESULTS

The findings that emerge suggest that there is a correlation between contemporary parenting approach and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District. The various parenting practices and approaches that were used to raise teenage girls’ in Vhembe District, shaped different parenting experience that contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The correlation occurred through factors that included parenting experience of the teenage girls. Table 1 presents information on the impact of the parental context of teenage girls’ on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The cross-sectional Table 1 presents the results.

The results in Table 1 shows that about half (51.5%) of the teenage girls raised by biological parents, almost one-quarter (21.0%) of them were teenage mothers. Whereas, the few (25.5%) of the teenage girls raised by grandparents, about one-quarter (31.4%) of them were teenage mothers. Then under the category ‘others’, some (22.8%) of the teenage girls were raised by relatives or lived under the child-headed home. However, about 27.5 percent of them were teenage mothers. The findings that emerge from this results indicate certainly the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood in the various parenting arrangement in Vhembe District.

The experience of single-parenthood on the teenage girls contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and motherhood in Vhembe District. The results in Table 2 shows that about half (53.0%) of the teenage girls’ raised in single-parent households, one-third (30.1%) of them

Table 1: The impact of the teenage girl’s parental context on the prevalence pregnancy and teenage motherhood

			<i>Who are you living with?</i>			
			<i>Biological parents</i>	<i>Grand parents (GM or GF)</i>	<i>Others (relatives or child-headed)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Q_15	Yes	Count	43	32	25	100
		% within Q_15	43.0	32.0	25.0	100.0%
		% within Q_7	21.0	31.4	27.5	25.1%
No	Count	162	70	66	298	
	% within Q_15	54.4	23.5	22.1	100.0%	
	% within Q_7	79.0	68.6	72.5	74.9%	
Total	Count	205	102	91	398	
	% within Q_15	51.5%	25.6	22.9	100.0	
	% within Q_7	100.0%	100.0	100.0	100.0	

were teenage mothers. The cross-sectional Table 2 presents the results.

The findings that emerge from this results revealed that the experience of single-parent-hood contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood. Although, the single parent homes system alone did not entirely explain the whole impact of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Further findings revealed that the high rate of a female-headed factor of the single parent homes system played an intensified role in the incidence of teenage pregnancy. The evidence in Figure 1 clearly showed that female-headed and/or single mothers' households basically bear childcare responsibilities in the single-parent-hood parenting arrangements in Vhembe District. The Figure 1 presents the results.

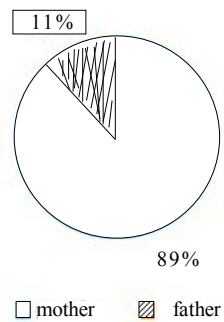


Fig. 1. The experience of female-headed household on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy

The results in Figure 1 shows that the teenage girls with the single-parent-hood experience, the majority (89%) were raised by their mothers, whilst 11 percent of them were raised by their

fathers. However, the impact of the single-parent-hood experience in line with the parenting approach develops an inappropriate sexual behaviour of the teenage girls. The cross-sectional Table 3 presents results.

The results in Table 3 shows that the majority (67.8%) of teenage girls who were sexually active were raised by single parents. The findings from the results revealed that single-parent-hood experience has a significant impact on the inappropriate sexual behaviour of teenage girls.

Further findings revealed that the teenage girls' parents' socio-economic background played a role in the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood. The cross-sectional Table 4 presents the results.

The results in Table 4 shows that about half (51.8%) of the teenage girls with working parents, some (19.9%) of them were teenage mothers. Then a few (17.8%) of the teenage girls with retired parents, about one-third (35.2%) of them were teenage mothers. Another few (21.9%) of the teenage girls with parents who have never worked, about one-third (29.9%) of them were also teenage mothers. Whilst very few (8.5%) of the teenage girls with parents in business, some 23.5 percent of them were teenage mothers in Vhembe District. The findings that revealed from the results suggest that the teenage girls' parents' socio-economic background contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood.

The lack of communication between the teenage girls' parent and the teenage girls on sex subjects/education play a role in the prevalence of teenage prevalence and teenage motherhood in Vhembe District. The absence of sex education from primary parents with the teenage girls

Table 2: The experience of single-parent-hood on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood

			Are your both parents living together?		Total
			Yes	No	
Q_15	Yes	Count	56	63	119
		% within Q_13	47.1	52.9	100.0
		% within Q_8	30.3	30.1	30.2
	No	Count	129	146	275
		% within Q_13	46.9	53.1	100.0
		% within Q_8	69.7	69.9	69.8
Total	Count	185	209	394	
	% within Q_13	47.0	53.0	100.0	
	% within Q_8	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: The impact of single-parenthood experience on teenage girls’ sexual attitude

			<i>Are your both parents living together?</i>		<i>Total</i>
			<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	
Q_12	Yes	Count	125	143	268
		% within Q_12	46.6	53.4	100.0
	No	% within Q_8	66.8	67.8	67.3
		Count	62	68	130
Total		% within Q_12	47.7	52.3	100.0
		% within Q_8	33.2	32.2	32.7
		Count	187	211	398
		% within Q_12	47.0	53.0	100.0
		% within Q_8	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4: The impact of the socio-economic background of the teenage girls’ parents’ on the prevalence teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood

			<i>What is the occupation of your parents?</i>				<i>Total</i>
			<i>Working</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>Never Worked</i>	<i>Business</i>	
Q_15	Yes	Count	41	25	26	8	100
		% within Q_15	41.0	25.0	26.0	8.0	100.0
	No	% within Q_10	19.9	35.2	29.9	23.5	25.1
		Count	165	46	61	26	298
Total		% within Q_15	55.4	15.4	20.5	8.7	100.0
		% within Q_10	80.1	64.8	70.1	76.5	74.9
		Count	206	71	87	34	398
		% within Q_15	51.8	17.8	21.9	8.5	100.0
		% within Q_10	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

contributed to the lack of sexual awareness among them, and as well leading them to early sexual debuts and risky sexual practices. The cross-sectional Table 5 presents the results.

The results in Table 5 shows that the majority (71.4%) of the teenage girls have never had sex conversation and education from their parents, suggesting that there is a complete absence of sexual awareness among them. Other findings from the results revealed evidence of inappropriate sexual culture among the teenage girls which substantially contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The early sexual debut culture among the teenage girls was com-

mon practice regardless of the parental context. The cross-sectional Table 6 presents the results.

The results in Table 6 shows that half (51.6%) of the teenage girls raised by biological parents, the majority (59.2%) of them were sexually active. The one-quarter (25.6%) of the teenage girls raised by grandparents, the majority (75.5%) of them were sexually active. Whilst under the category ‘others’ (22.8%), the majority (76.9%) of the teenage girls were also sexually active. The sexual attitude of the teenage girls is evident of the fact that parents in Vhembe District mostly favour permissive or authoritarian and uninvolved parenting approaches that effectively leads the teenage girls to their early

Table 5: The lack of sex education and conversation parents on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy

		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid percent</i>	<i>Cumulative percent</i>
Valid	Yes	114	28.5	28.6	28.6
	No	284	71.0	71.4	100.0
	Total	398	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

Table 6: The impact of parental context on the early sexual debut of the teenage girls'

			<i>Who are you living with?</i>			
			<i>Biological parents</i>	<i>Grandparents</i>	<i>'Others'</i>	<i>Total</i>
Q_12	Yes	Count	122	77	70	269
		% within Q_12	45.4	28.6	26.0	100.0
		% within Q_7	59.2	75.5	76.9	67.4
	No	Count	84	25	21	130
		% within Q_12	64.6	19.2	16.2	100.0
		% within Q_7	40.8	24.5	23.1	32.6
Total		Count	206	102	91	399
		% within Q_12	51.6	25.6	22.8	100.0
		% within Q_7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

sexual debuts. It is the effect of these parenting approaches that develop early sexual debuts among the teenage girls and subsequently lead to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. In addition, the evidence from the results indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the early sexual debut of the teenage girls and prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The Table 7 presents the results.

The results in Table 7 show that the chi-square examines the differences between the expected and actual counts across the cells in the cross-sectional Table 5. The significance value in the chi-square table is $<.05$. Therefore, there is a statistically significant relationship between the experience of parental background and the teenage girls' early sexual debut.

Table 7: Chi-Square Tests on the teenage girls' parental context with the early sexual debut

	<i>Value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</i>
Pearson Chi-Square	13.066 ^a	2	.001
Likelihood Ratio	13.229	2	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.219	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	399		

DISCUSSION

There is great concern about the impact of parenting practices and approaches in Vhembe District on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. This is regardless of the fact that the pregnant teenage girls and teenage mothers were predominantly raised by their biological parents. The findings revealed from the parenting experience of the teenage girls suggest a good indica-

tion of parenting commitment, mostly by biological parents of the girls. However, their livelihood conditions incapacitate their ability to act in a responsive manner, which, therefore, relatively created the transferring of parenting responsibilities in the hands of grandparents (particularly the grandmothers) and relatives, which also led to some of the teenage girls ending in child-headed homes. Vhembe District itself is characteristically situated in an economically deprived area (Bassey 2018; Mulaudzi and Peu 2013; Roman et al. 2016), therefore, it reinforces the parenting inabilities and instability of the teenage girls and hence leads to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The parenting experience of the teenage girls' develop the social patterning of their sexual attitude and behaviour that subsequently lead to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

Parenting and/or parenthood experience in Vhembe District emerge as a contributing factor in the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Parenting experience is the process involved in raising a child, which includes the practices, the approaches, and the skills the parents used in providing care to a child, whereas, parenthood is the state of being a parent to a child. Parenthood also involves role-taking, as a mother or father and as a co-parent. Therefore, parenthood in this paper denotes the person who is either a father or mother or both, that shoulder the responsibility of raising a girl-child to teenage-hood through variables such as a biological parent, grandparent, and 'others'. The parenthood experience of the teenage girls' indicate parental involvement from the angle of biological parents, grandparents, and 'others' (relatives, and child-headed homes).

The findings from the results revealed that about half (51.5%) of the teenage girls were raised

by their biological parents. Whereas, about one-quarter (25.6%) of them were raised by their grandparents. Although, there is an indication where teenage girls lived in the same households with their own biological parents and grandparents. The teenage girls (22.9%) under the category 'others', were raised by relatives or grew up in child-headed homes. The preceding findings suggest that biological parents demonstrated a strong and good pledge of parental involvement in Vhembe District communities. The attitude of the biological parents taking on parenting responsibilities is commendable and demonstrate optimistic parenting practices. This parenting practice perceptively can prevent or safeguard a teenage girl against the social vulnerabilities of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy, given to appropriate responsive care. The study by Moullin et al. (2014) found that an early childcare practice is associated with the child well-being and their overall development. Therefore, it is undoubtedly easy for biological parents to foster parenting practices of a child from the first day of birth than grandparents or relatives as the case may be. A study on parenting practices noted that early sensitive and responsive parenting plays a significant role in the social well-being and development of the child and even during their teenage-hood (Tronick and Beeghly 2011). However, the nature of the biological parents parenting experience also count and determine to a large extent the outcome of the teenage girl behaviour. The teenage girls raised by their biological parents with the experience of single-parenthood or teenage motherhood have consequences on the teenagers' social development and overall well-being.

While the above biological parental involvement is commendable, worthy of note is the fact that, in most instances, there are many uninvolved parents who neglect their parenting tasks, and leave the responsibilities at the hands of others or even on the teenage girls. The teenage girls with the experience of uninvolved parenting approach (as indicated in the findings under the category of 'others') suffer from social competences due to the absence of parental support and appropriate child-care. Uninvolved parents have a dysfunctional parenting approach (Agadoni 2014; Cherry 2017), that lack responsiveness to the teenage girl's needs, which further results in behavioural problems due to lack of parental control, supervision,

monitoring, and discipline towards the teenage girl. The behavioural problems as affected by the uninvolved parenting approach are to a large extent the critical drivers that contributed to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District.

Furthermore, the development of the teenage girls under the category 'others', allegedly raised by relatives is primarily an indication of unstable parental experience. There is the likelihood that the teenage girls in this category did not experience early sensitive and responsive care that often serve as a protective mechanism for their future well-being and social mobility. Insensitive and unresponsive early child-care experience is often associated with the child behavioural problems (Tronick and Beeghly 2011). A study tracing the prevalence of teenage pregnancy to their parenthood experience found that the strongest predictor of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy lays in a child with difficult childhood experience (Panday et al. 2009). There is a critical impact on the absence of early sensitive and responsive parenting experience on the development of secure attachment (Moullin et al. 2014), and an insecurely attached teenage girl is a potential victim of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

The other critical concern for the teenage girls under the category of 'others' is the effects associated with child-headed households on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Some child-headed households embody overcrowded households comprising of the teenage girls, her siblings and even younger relatives living together. The main concern of child-headed family system is that the teenage girls under such household background stand the risk of living in poor conditions because most often none of the household members earns reasonable income (Holborn and Eddy 2011). This is the condition that often leads the teenage girls to trade-off their body as a means of compensation for economic security. The main critical concern driving teenage girls into teenage pregnancy in child-headed households is the fact that they compromise sex-trade compensation for an economic return just to enable them to escape household adversities with lesser power to negotiate safer sex for themselves in the process.

Furthermore, about one-quarter of the teenage girls were raised by their grandparents. These teenage girls also arguably experience unstable

early parenting responsiveness, due to the parental handover from their biological parents to the grandparents. Usually, most of these cases involve teenage girls from young parents' particularly with teenage motherhood experience who immediately after childbirth decided to continue schooling or working class mothers who had to return to work duties. But most often, these situations occur because the biological mothers may be shouldering the parenting tasks alone from pregnancy until childbirth, who then hand over the responsibility to their own willing mothers. The perception of the teenage girls' grandmothers conflates with those of elderly women. While some grandmothers are quite young, many are very old, particularly when their grandchildren become teenagers. However, there are negative portrayals of grandmothers parenting skills on children's social competences. The grandmothers are often associated with being inactive and highly dependent on government support particularly the elderly grandmothers (Dunifon and Bajracharya 2012). The inactive parenting skills that lead to less social competence for teenage girls speak of subsequent social problems that befall on these teenagers. Certainly, it was on this basis that the teenage girls under this parenting background and experience were more subservient to the vulnerabilities of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

In addition, approximately half (52.8%) of the teenage girls' were raised in single-parent households. However, amongst the teenage girls with single-parenthood experience, the majority (89%) were raised by their mothers. The evidence from the results showed that female-headed single-parent households basically spearhead childcare responsibilities in Vhembe District. The disparity in terms of the impact of parenting and its outcome is critical in the setting of the teenage girls' social development as it concerns the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Certainly, the social welfare of the teenage girls with single-parenthood experience would be less in comparison to the teenage girls (46.8%), who were raised by two parents due to the imbalance of parenting responsiveness. Researchers profiling the prevalence of teenage pregnancy often based their findings on the social well-being of teenage girls. The well-being of a teenage girl within the family is vital to their development and social growth. The study by Panday et al. (2009) found that for a teenage girl when both

parents, are at home, the risk and vulnerabilities for the prevalence of teenage pregnancy are automatically decreased. Therefore, characteristics of single-parenthood contribute to an imbalance parenting responsiveness on both social and economic measures, which then position them at a heightened vulnerability of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

Nonetheless, the impact of single-parenthood on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Vhembe District speaks volumes about not just the fact that it is a single-parent inadequacy or imbalance resource measure, but typically that of single mothers. Several studies found that the social and economic standing of single parents condemns mothers to a higher poverty experience rate, because of the prevailing economic inequalities situated in Africa (Holborn and Eddy 2011; Onyango 2011). The impact of single-parenthood on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy indicates that single parents often do not have adequate economic means to foster quality parenting outcome, mostly when the responsibility rests on the mother. The implication of the profiling of poor livelihood indicated that in sub-Saharan Africa about fifty percent of the population lives in absolute poverty, and eighty percent of that population are women (Rapsomanikis 2015). The fact that women are the bearers of children indicate that they tend to be closer to parenting duties as mothers. Therefore, women experiencing poverty explains the regular association of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy factually with single-parenthood experience.

Thus, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is mainly associated with the experience of single-parenthood because of the predominant single motherhood characteristics. Existing studies with the same perspective, tie the prevalence of teenage pregnancy to the socio-economic standing of the parents (Akella and Jordan 2015; Neiterman 2012). However, the main argument for the prevalence of teenage pregnancy from single-parenthood experience lay in poor living conditions. That is because a parent who is struggling with poverty is more likely to be inconsistent with responses to the child's needs and reactions (Gould and Ward 2015). Under conditions of poverty, single mothers are less likely to be caring towards their children, and more likely to leave them unsupervised and also monitor them less (Gould and Ward 2015). There-

fore, the experience of single-parenthood on teenage girls demonstrate a lack of control over their activities, which increases the likelihood of risky sexual behaviour and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

Single-parenthood experience develops a certain vulnerability on teenage girls that consequently lead to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The findings that emerge from the results suggest that the majority (67.8%) of teenage girls who were sexually active were basically raised by single parents. The study results indicate that about half of the teenage girls (53%) who were raised by either their mothers (89%) or their fathers (11%) in single-parent households account for a high rate of the early sexual debut. The validity of this result further collaborate the views by Akella and Jordan (2015), Eddy and Mphaka (2013), Fletcher and Yakusheva (2011), and Neiterman (2012) that single-parenthood is a trait of the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. In addition to the experience of inadequate welfare resource availability associated with single-parenthood (Akella and Jordan 2015), the experience has a critical influence on the social behaviour of teenage girls. The experience of single-parenthood delivers half of all parenting tasks such as responsiveness, social control, monitoring and supervision that protect teenage girls from social vulnerabilities and social problems. These are fundamentally the critical factors that easily place teenage girls on the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood.

Accordingly, being sexually active as a teenage girl at a younger age is a potential behavioural concern for the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. The particular link between the early sexual debuts of teenage girls with parenthood context is the fact that, parenting is the instrument through which a teenage girl develops inappropriate behaviour of the early sexual debut. On the contrary, parenting as an instrument also contributes to developing appropriate social behaviour of teenage girls, by providing them with an adequate understanding of early social competence. The single motherhood experience as commonly revealed in this paper would find it difficult to provide the parenting quality that guarantees a teenage girl self-regulating skills to delay her sexual debut especially, if the single mother is unemployed or not earning an adequate income.

The substantial burden single-parents shoulder makes it difficult for them to be affectionate at all times towards their teenage girls, and further provide warmth and form secure bond and/or attachment with their teenage girls. Those are the vital characteristics that guarantee parenting outcome and regulates the behaviour of teenage girls. In worst case scenario, single parents are often overwhelmed with not just economic stress (Panday et al. 2009), but also social and emotional stress arising from their own relationships (Tough 2012). Thus, the theoretical framework guiding this study upholds the empirical assertion that the lack of early social-emotional development from the perspective of parenting processes develop inappropriate behavioural outcome in the child. So, the experience of single-parenthood contributes to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy particularly because they are berated in capacity to delivering a complete parenting package for teenage girls' optimal social development.

Primarily, the early sexual attitude of the teenage girls potentially placed them at the risk of becoming pregnant. As indicated in the results, the teenage girls under the sexually active category, are those who were pregnant teenage girls or teenage mothers. Teenage girls' sexual practices at a very young age are considered an inappropriate social behaviour that is developed through critical effects of parenting approach. Therefore, early sexual activities among the teenage girls as indicated from the results is an empirical expression of the effects of their parenting approach experiences. The experience of permissive, authoritarian, and uninvolved parenting approaches, which is considered to be sub-optimal parenting approaches of teenage girls depicts activities that lead them to risky sexual behaviour (Bahr and Hoffmann 2010). Therefore, whatsoever is done that help teenage girls develop inappropriate behaviour (early sexual debut) merges with how it is done, that distinguish parenting approaches that usually vary in expressions of the behavioural outcome.

Thus, early sexual activeness of the teenage girls is a behavioural trait commonly associated with the experience of permissive, authoritarian, and uninvolved parenting approaches. The collective effects of these parenting approaches on teenage girls include a display of problematic behaviour; and, they stand a higher risk of using drugs and alcohol, get involved in early

and risky sexual behaviour (Davids et al. 2015), leading to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. Evidence from the study results indicates that some 30.3 percent and 25.1 percent of the teenage girls that were sexually active were pregnant teenage girls and teenage mothers respectively. The study by Jewkes et al. (2009) noted that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is a profoundly entrenched social phenomenon, however, teenage girls contribute to shaping it, due to their social activities. The implication of this study's result is that it is easier for the teenage girls' who choose to delay their sexual debut to prevent and avoid the prevalence of teenage pregnancy than the ones who are sexually active. Accordingly, the findings further suggest that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy develops primarily out of early sexual activities and practices of the girls.

CONCLUSION

The intrinsic findings of this paper lead to the conclusion that there is lack of sensitive parenting on the teenage girls in Vhembe District and a total blame on the way parents raised the teenage girls, whether influenced by the socio-economic status, cultural values, availability or absence of the other parent. Furthermore, the parenting practices and approaches failed to acknowledge the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. However, some parents need to play a more active role and take charge of sex education of their teenage girls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper's recommendation follows the fact that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is purely a social behavioural problem. This acknowledgement would enable the mothers and other parents to be sensitive and responsive (in a reflective manner and with respect to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy) to the child in order to foster healthy development and secure attachment. The need for parents to stay committed to fostering secure attachment with their infants in early stages is particularly vital to decrease the prevalence of teenage pregnancy, owing to the fact that it is the effects of insecure attachment on teenage girls that exhibit the behavioural problems responsible for the prevalence of teenage pregnancy. However, this will

be possible if policies are directed towards achieving a secure attachment between parent and the child and also by improving the socio-economic conditions of the parents. A good and optimal parenting policy, with a long-term benefit of secure attachment, would be vital for teenage girls' healthy development.

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ANNEXURE

Close-ended Questionnaire

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
1	Age	13-14	15-17	18-19
2	Occupation	Student	Working	N/A
3	Educational attainment	Matric	Matric in view	N/A
4	Marital status	Married	Single	Divorce
5	Religion	Muslim	Christian	N/A
6	Municipality	Makhado	Musina	Thulamela
7	Who are you living with?	Biological parents	Grandparents GrandMa.... GrandPa.....	Others Relatives..... Child-headed.....
8	Are your two parents living together?	Yes	No	
9	If your answer is no to question 8, who are you living with?	Mother	Father	
10	What is the occupation of your parent?	Working	Retired	Never worked... business.....
11	Do your parents, the ones you live with have any formal education?	Yes	No	
12	Are you sexually active?	Yes	No	
13	Have you been pregnant before?	Yes	No	
14	Are you presently pregnant?	Yes	No	
15	Are you a teenage mother?	Yes	No	
16	Did any of your siblings fall pregnant at an early age?	Yes	No	
17	Did your mother give birth as a teenager?	Yes	No	
18	Have you ever had a sex-related conversation with your parents?	Yes	No	
18a	If yes, who did you hold the conversation with?	Mother	Father	Friends
19	Have you attended any sexual awareness campaign or lessons before?	Yes	No	
20	Do you use protection during sexual intercourse?	Yes	No	Others (Not applicable)
21	Does non-condom use sexual relations makes you his main girlfriend?	Yes	No	
22	Who will you prefer to have sexual discussions with?	Mother	Friend	
23	Were you influenced by your peers to start dating?Yes	No		