

## ABSTRACT

Child neglect and teenage pregnancy are major issues and a global phenomenon affecting both developed and developing countries. In 2019, statistics from Marigat Sub-County in Baringo County, Kenya showed rising cases of teenage pregnancy in various schools. This alarming rise in teenage pregnancies has forced hundreds of girls in Marigat Sub-County to drop out of school. This has prompted education stakeholders of Marigat Sub-County into a discussion over the causes of teenage pregnancy. The purpose of this study was to determine Child neglect influence on teenage pregnancy among girls in primary schools in Marigat sub-county of Baringo county, Kenya and its counselling implications. The study used *ex-post facto* research design. The population under study was 12,898, comprising 101 head teachers, 101 heads of counselling department, 6,456 parents and 6,240 pupils from 101 participating schools. The sample size was 384 respondents comprising 90 head teachers and 90 heads of counselling department who were chosen using purposive sampling from the selected schools, 102 parents and 102 pupils were selected by simple random sampling. The study employed questionnaires to collect data. The validity of the research instruments was verified by the supervisors and lecturers from the department of Psychology, Counselling and Education Foundations whose opinions and suggestions were incorporated into improving the instrument. A pilot study was done in nine 9 primary schools where 9 Head teachers, 9 heads of counselling department, 10 parents and 10 pupils from one (1) division in Samburu County were involved. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.78, 0.73, 0.77 and 0.75 for questionnaires for head teachers, heads of counselling department, parents and pupils was attained and accepted for it is within the recommended level. The data generated by the study were analysed using descriptive statistics namely frequencies, means and percentages and inferential statistics. T-test was used to test for the hypotheses set at  $\alpha = .05$ . Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24 was utilised in data analysis. The study has provided valuable knowledge to pupils, teachers, guidance and counselling teachers, head teachers, the Ministry of Education officers, county education officers and National Government on issues concerning child neglect and teenage pregnancy. The study established that children who lacked parental care were likely to be exposed into engaging in sexual activity, leading to teenage pregnancy. It also established that knowledge acquired from guidance and counselling can be used as a teenage pregnancy preventative measure. The study recommended that both National and County Governments should create public awareness and educate parents, guardians and caregivers to firmly take charge of the custody of their children while at home and protect them from sexual abuse, sexual harassment and teenage pregnancies. Parents and guardians should guarantee safety and health of their children at home.