

**TEENAGE PREGNANCY: CRISIS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY DURING COVID
19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD. CASE STUDY: CHURCHES SURROUNDING
MAKOKOBA COMMUNITY IN BULAWAYO.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy is a significant societal issue that results in lost opportunities for teenage girls in both developed and developing countries. The teenage pregnancy rate during the period of Covid 19 lockdown in Zimbabwe and in Makokoba community, Bulawayo in particular is very high and it's worrying. Young mothers in the overcrowded community of Makokoba are facing a lot of challenges like being isolated, lack of support from their families, failure to continue with their education and poverty. This research describes perceptions and recommendations of teenagers, families and community members on why the rate of teenage pregnancy is high in Makokoba and how this can be reduced. A qualitative research method has been used to carry out this research and the aim of this study was to explore and compare views, attitudes and perceptions of the participants who were mainly the affected teenagers, family members, teachers, health workers and some other relevant organisations. Perceived factors that lead to these pregnancies which are also this research's assumptions include: lack of life skills and social survival skills, low acceptance/use of contraceptives, sexual abuse, pressure to contribute to family welfare through early marriage or sexual transactions, lack of community responsibility, cultural beliefs that promote early marriage and lack of role models. The research tools which were used to collect the data were the interviews and the use of questionnaires. Recommendations spanning family, community and government involvement can ultimately empower girls, their families and community members, and support collective action to reduce teenage pregnancies especially in such times like the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown. Also a boy child must be educated on the dangers of using dangerous substances like drugs that lead to misdemeanours which usual involves experimentation with sexual activities at a tender age.

Key Words: Teenage Pregnancy, COVID-19, Health, Education, Poverty, Family