

**PARENTAL PRACTICES AS DETERMINANTS OF TEENAGE
PREGNANCY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL GIRLS IN IGEMBE
CENTRAL, MERU COUNTY, KENYA**

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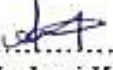
**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Art in Counseling
Psychology of Chuka University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for an award of diploma or conferment of a degree in this or any other University

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Recommendation

This thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as University supervisors

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Husband Alex Makanda and my children.

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ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy remains a critical public and social issue with consequences on the education and wellbeing of teenage girls, families and communities. In Igembe Central, Meru County, teenage pregnancy rates have been rising, raising concerns about the role of parental involvement in adolescent reproductive health. While numerous studies have identified parental practices such as lack of supervision, inadequate emotional support and limited communication as a significant factor contributing to teenage pregnancy it is not clear how specific aspects of parental practices have contributed to teenage pregnancy among girls in Igembe central sub county, Meru. This study sought to establish how parental practices act as determinants of pregnancy among teenage girls in secondary schools by exploring aspects of parental practices such as parental emotional distress, parental conflict, parent teenager communication and parental monitoring. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 4201. This comprised of 4129 girls aged 13-19 years, 18 counselor teachers and 54 Form two to four parent representative from the secondary schools in the study area. Simple random sampling was used to select 2 schools from the 17 mixed day secondary schools while the only girls boarding secondary was purposively selected. A sample size of 312 respondents, comprising of 300 girls, 3 teacher counselors and 9 parent representatives was selected to participate in the study. Instruments for data collection comprised questionnaires, focus group discussion and interview schedules. The study instrument was piloted on a small sample of 30 respondents drawn from Igembe North Sub County sharing similar social economic characteristics. A pilot study was conducted to test reliability of the instruments. The study determined that the instruments were reliable as an average of 0.7 cronbach coefficient was attained. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. Qualitative data collected was analyzed thematically. The findings were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts to facilitate interpretation. The findings established parental conflict, parental teenage communication and parental monitoring acted as determinants of teenage pregnancy among secondary school girls in Igembe central Sub County, Meru County, Kenya. The results therefore concluded that although many students report adequate parental support, a considerable proportion experience emotional gaps at home that may predispose them to early romantic involvement and pregnancy. Addressing these issues through enhanced parent-child communication, emotional support programs, and community counseling can be instrumental in reducing teenage pregnancy in Igembe Central. The study recommended that parents and teachers should become more actively involved in their teenage daughters' lives by knowing their friends, whereabouts, and daily routines.