Teenage Pregnancy and Girl-Child Education

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Abstract
This study focused on Teenage Pregnancy and Girl-Child Education. The study specifically sought to find out the factors responsible for Teenage Pregnancy, find out the socio-emotional implications of teenage pregnancy and ways of reducing Teenage Pregnancy. The population of the study was 5200 SS II students in Abakaliki Education Zone. The sample adopted multistage sampling techniques which consists 500 students drawn from the selected secondary schools used for the study. The questionnaire served as a method of data collection. The mean, standard deviation and frequency were used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed factors responsible for the teenage pregnancy. Such as lack of parental upbringing, peer pressure, inadequate knowledge of sex education, among others. The findings further revealed the implications of adolescent pregnancy such as poor nutritional complications, abortion, school drop-out, stigmatism, depression and so on. It was suggested that sex education should be encouraged in post-primary institutions and pre-marital sexual should be detested.

Keywords: Adolescent, Teenage Pregnancy, Girl-child education, Contraception, Sex-education, Out of wedlock.

INTRODUCTION
According to Sambo (2009:82), “teenage pregnancy refers to pregnancies which occur when the girl child is below the age of 18 years. Unwanted, unplanned and out of wedlock”. Teenage pregnancy may occur as a result of early maturity with good physical features, sometimes coupled with the onset of menstruation that varies from person to person, especially exposing a young girl to peer's influence (Ede, 2011). Ede (2011) observed that a well mature adolescent girl knows that she can be attractive to opposite sex. Her image and self-esteem are in wholesome. It, in turn, enables her to
venture out to get the different sex attracted. Ede (2011) further stated that such well-matured girls without adequate social training and self-discipline usually see sex as a means of social, economic and emotional gratification and hastily go into it and become pregnant. He added that it is indeed an over-pressing problem because of the enormous demands that sexual issues make on young persons. Sometimes, teenage pregnancy occurs as a result of sexual abuse that is rampant in our society today. Given the above factors, Nweke (2012) stated that it is evident for a child abused at a very early to fulfill an adult or older siblings need the rest of her life with the feelings which he had to give too much of himself. The result of sexual abuse, however, is not restricted to problems in one's sexual life; they impair the development of themselves as an autonomous personality.

Several factors seem to have been accountable for the growth of an infant or teenage pregnancy in developing and other developed nations of the world which varies in time and places. Eke (2011) highlighted that efforts had been put in place to reduce high pregnancy rate on teenagers including other related social problem. The rapid increase in the population of the third world and Africa, in particular, had also increased the level of unemployment, poverty, hunger and poor education (Nwafor, 2013).

In some cases, teenage pregnancy occurs as a result of inadequate information about reproduction health and contraception within the context of early marriage. Dealing with unplanned pregnancy among teenagers is confusing and scary. A victim of unplanned pregnancy is likely to suffer or experience depression, frustration, fear and other emotional problems. Hence, the heightened risk for educational issues and injuries with children of adolescent parents is associated not with the influence of young age but the confounding influences of associated socio-demographic factors. Most teenagers become pregnant after they have hooked-up with their partners because of aggressiveness and curiosity of having sex. Odo (2012) claims: Our sexuality influences our attitudes, the way we think and feel. The need for sex education is emphasising because many adolescents have experienced failure in the area of sex resulting to teenage pregnancy, School dropout, rape, sexually transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS; as a cause of improper instructions on how to manage.

Anderson (2000) stated that children are sexually un-educated and the mothers in their view have just not done their job, such that we need professionals to do the right things. He further stated that teaching sex education to young children and adolescents will reduce the number of teenage pregnancies. Teenage parent often seems not to have financial resources to take care of their babies. And owing to this fiscal constraint, teen mothers appear to be at high risk. According to Igba (2005:103), “the financial strain and psychological trauma to which some single parents are subjected to could impede their capabilities to cater to their children's well-being adequately”.

Furthermore, both parents and business people seem to give more attention to acquiring wealth than they do to their parental duty toward moral upbringing of their children. And as a result of this, many female teenagers have been led astray by the
influence of the peers at school, and the resultant effect is the pregnancy that is not important. Egbo (2009) observed that the get-rich-quick syndrome had affected the all-important need by youths to get through the tripartite education system. The problem that often comes to mind is, “why do adolescents have an unwanted pregnancy? Is sex simply an answer?” It is clear that sex is the means through which higher and lower animals perpetuate their kind and an expression of love but when put in wrong use, it can quickly create a social problem. Sex had become fun; sadly, such fun leads to teenage pregnancy. The quest for sex among teenagers seems to be high and uncontrollable. Iman (2004) summarised this experience in the northern part of Nigeria and concluded that it has become impossible for parents to control the youths from indulging in sexual activities. He reported this, having an average of one request for one month from parents to abort the pregnancy of their daughters still in school. The action of parents goes to confirm that teenage pregnancy is now rampant in our society and if not correctly checked will undoubtedly amount to an unhealthy increase in the population of many school drop-outs.

Teenage pregnancy of the Girl-Child attracts enormous implications since children born to adolescent parents are less fit to receive proper nutrition, wellness care, cognitive and social stimulation. Most pregnant teenagers are expelled from their place of study and may not have the opportunity of being reabsorbed to the school system. This break in academic pursuit could hinder the future development opportunity as well as the quantity of life of the young person. In many societies, people stigmatise the pregnant teens. This act has to do with feelings of shame, guilt, anger, denial and depression. Teenage pregnancy can be a contributing factor in cold self-esteem. Teens are often afraid to tell friends, parents or other family members about their pregnancy which can lead to further anxiety, grief and aberration in the society. Consequently, teenage pregnancy can lead to adverse emotional and psychological effects including resentment or anger which can be severe.

Teenage mothers appear to be at high risk of experiencing birth complications, toxaemia, anaemia and even death. Williams (2009) added that influence of adolescent pregnancy is not only pointed toward the health of the mother and baby but also to the health of teenage girls. These teenagers are more likely to end up sick and have their children grow up in abject poverty. From the above, it is therefore imperative that teenagers should refrain from pre-marital sex as the only means of getting unplanned pregnancy coupled with considerable diversity in outcomes of teenage pregnancy. Also, the necessity to have teenagers make the right decision at the time of pregnancy ought to be a priority. Pregnant teens seem to undergo controversy and confusion on either to keep the pregnancy or to abort it. In his view, Okolie (2005) emphasised that sex education should not be paid lip-service to make headway against this ugly situation and lessen the rate of teenage pregnancy. According to him, Sex-educated teens often appear to be safe from the consequences of early pregnancy and other marathon adolescent complications. Adolescent pregnancies have become a public health issue because of their observed adverse effects on fetal outcomes and long-term morbidity. The community of young maternal age and long-term morbidity is usually mixed, however, by the high
currency of poverty, low level of education, and single marital status among teenage mothers. Thus; there is a need for education as the process of self-discovery by which an individual discovers his or her innate lying talents, capabilities, and potentials for the benefit of the individual in his or her immediate environment, the society and of the world at large (Okoye, 2001). Most teenagers who were a victim of unplanned pregnancy had attempted aborting the pregnancy. Abortion among the teenagers should be discouraged to a great extent by the health workers in various hospitals to save lives and rescue the infected teenager from the complications. According to Efiong (2006:56);

Most teenage abortion is intentional, when abortion is intentional, it can cause a problem for the woman and if a couple is unable to have a child, and then abortion can cause unhappiness. Reports reveal cases of maternal morbidity and mortality during such years are due primarily to unsafe abortion because of infections and illnesses. The Pedagogic emphasis as could be deducted from the citation is that both induced and intentional abortion is detrimental to health. Unsafe abortion, however, is a procedure for terminating an unintended pregnancy, carried out either by a person (s) lacking the necessary skills or in an environment that does not conform minimal medical standards, or both (WHO, 2000). The abortion rate among teenagers records shows that out of every ten girls, seven have committed an abortion at one time or the other (WHO, 2000). And following the risk involved in abortion, many of the teenagers have lost their lives in the act.

In his view, Sambo (2009), highlighted that children born to teenage mothers are less likely to receive proper nutrition, health care, adequate education, cognitive and social stimulation. As a result, they may have an underdeveloped intellect and attain lower academic achievement. The children not only grow up in poverty but also commit delinquent acts and other adult crimes. Such teen ends up a school drop-out since the school management does not harbour a pregnant teen while in school. And a victim might likely become a prostitute or inadequate member of the society. The nutritional need of pregnant teenage girl is the greatest at a time of pregnancy. Because of poor dietary habits, pregnant teenagers seem to enter into pregnancy with the reduced nutritional store and increased risk of protein deficiencies. From the above, it is therefore imperative that teenagers should hate all forms of pre-marital sex as the only means of getting unplanned pregnancy coupled with considerable diversity in outcomes of teenage pregnancy. Also, the necessity to have teenagers make the right decision at the time of pregnancy ought to be a priority. Pregnant teens seem to undergo controversy and confusion on either to keep the pregnancy or to abort it. Indeed, all hand should be on deck, the need for the study.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Reports revealed that the influence of teenage pregnancy would cause a drastic reduction in the academic performance of the Girl-Child. Most teenagers have been withdrawn from school by their parents or relations on the ground of unplanned pregnancy. And the teenage boys are being taken to police and courts for complicity.
Meanwhile, both the school system and the home have blamed to share for their inability to impart sex education to the youth. The ethical foundation of sex education both in school and at home is essential. The broader societies have not escaped from having its part of the blame. The community has failed to create an atmosphere that nurtures sexual promiscuity and abandoning her traditional role of collective responsibility in instilling moral discipline to the teenagers. The social welfare Department swan daily with pregnant teenagers trying to force the paternity of their pregnancy on the unwilling young men for complicity. The long-term consequences of teenage births for parents and their children result in illegal marriages, kidnapping, murder and other related crimes as a result of frustration. Also, dysfunction families have set the stage for pregnancy. The problem of the study, is what the implications of adolescent pregnancy on Girl-Child education are?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child education.

The study specifically sought to:

1. Find out factors responsible for the teenage pregnancy.
2. Ascertain the implications of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant as it will highlight the causes of teenage pregnancy, its impact in school, home and society, with a particular interest in its influence on Girl-Child academic performance Secondary Schools.

The findings of the study will direct the educational sectors on how to handle adolescents without contributing to their frustration. It will also enable educational planners to incorporate sex education into the school curriculum to achieve solutions to social problems. The findings will expose parents not to see sex as a taboo that must never discuss with children. It will also encourage parents to observe some developmental changes in the body of their children to avoid being misled by peers. The findings of the study will motivate the school administrators to organise moral instruction on weekly bases to inculcate morality on the students.

Its findings of the study will further be beneficial to the teenagers on their part to control their sexuality and thereby adjust to positive way towards their educational attainments. To the infected teenagers, it will expose them on dangers of abortion and equally instill in them the determination and courage to continue their academic pursuit even at the point of pregnancy despite the shame and social stigma involved.

Pertinently, the finding of the study will contribute to the general health of the society
by inculcating in the people how best to reduce teenage pregnancy and to manage the phenomenon to encourage the infected teens educationally. The full community will further understand the primary motive of sex which is for procreation and not for fun and thereby improve in perception and attitude.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the factors responsible for teenage pregnancy?
2. What are the socio-emotional implications of teenage pregnancy?
3. What are the ways of reducing teenage pregnancy?

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test.

$H_01$: There is no significant relationship in the mean response of male and female on factors responsible for the teenage pregnancy.

$H_02$: There is no significant difference in the mean response of Girl Child from urban and rural areas on the implications of teenage pregnancy.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design of the Study

The design of the study is quantitative and qualitative design. This model was used to find out the influence of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child.

Population of the Study

The Population of the study consist 5200 SS II students in Abakaliki Education Zone.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample used for the study is 500 students from the selected Secondary Schools two. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to draw the sample size through different stages.

Instrument for Data Collection

The device employed by the researcher for this study was a self-developed structured questionnaire on the influence of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child. The researchers adopted modified -4 point rating scale. Three experts validated the instruments from
the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained indicating high reliability. The researchers and the three research Assistants administrated the instruments to the respondents.

Method of Data Collection

500 copies of the instrument administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. The entire questionnaire returned with the help of the research assistants that did the distribution and retrievals indicating 100% return of the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

The mean and standard deviation and frequency answered the research questions. Items that scored 2.50 and above were accepted while items that scored less than 2.50 were all rejected as the decision rule. Hypotheses 1-2 were tested at an alpha level of 0.05 level of the significant using t-test.

RESULTS

Table 1: Factors responsible for teenage pregnancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item no.</th>
<th>Factors responsible for teenage pregnancy</th>
<th>( \bar{x} )</th>
<th>Std</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Lack of parental up-bring</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student's disobedient to parents</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Inadequate knowledge of sex education</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Indecent dressing</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Inordinate affection</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Co-habitation</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Inadequate moral instructions in school</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Poor standard of living</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Co-education school system</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 2.81

Table 1 revealed that all the items are factors responsible for teenage pregnancy except in item no. 10 which the respondents disagreed that co-education school system is not among the factors responsible for the adolescent pregnancy.
Table 2: Implications of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item no.</th>
<th>Implications of teenage pregnancy</th>
<th>$\bar{x}$</th>
<th>Std</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pregnant teens often drop out of school</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>They are being stigmatized</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>They are inexperienced to bear the certainty of their baby</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>They suffer poor nutritional Complications</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Children born to teens' mother behave absurdly</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Most pregnancy results in abortion</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Teenage complications cause death</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>It leads to incidence of broken homes</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 3.10

Table 2 above showed that the respondents agreed that items 1-8 are the implications of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child.

Table 3: Ways to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy among Girl-Child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT/N Ways of reducing teenage pregnancy</th>
<th>$\bar{x}$</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Good home training</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Proper knowledge of sex education</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use of contraceptive during sex</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mature attitude of parents on Sexual issues</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Avoidance of cohabitation</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Descent dressing among Girl-child</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Discouraging peer Pressure on sexual issues</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Adequate moral instructions in school</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Employing qualified counsellors in school</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Provision of required financial assistance to the Girl-Child</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 2.72
Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed that items 1-10 are ways of reducing teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child.

Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship in the mean response of male and female on factors responsible for the teenage pregnancy.

This null hypothesis was tested and presented in Table 4.

Table 4: t-test statistics on the factors responsible for teenage pregnancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>( \bar{x} )</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the calculated t-test score of 1.08 with 498 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significant is less than the critical t-value of 1.960, the null hypothesis stated above was significant.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship in the mean response of the urban and rural adolescents on the socio-emotional implication of teenage pregnancy. This null hypothesis was tested and presented in Table 6.

Table 5: t-test statistics on the implications of teenage pregnancy among the urban and rural dwellers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>( \bar{x} )</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the calculated t-test score of 2.0 with 498 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significant is higher than the critical t-value of 1.960, the null hypothesis evidenced in Table 5 above was not significant. The indication was that the urban dwellers appear to be safer from the implications of teenage pregnancy.
DISCUSSIONS

The findings on the factors responsible for teenage pregnancy and hypothesis one are in agreement with Derek (2001) who emphasised that the unfortunate situation came as a result of the inhibitions about sex which we acquired from our parents and others during our upbringing. Uchendu (2002) added that women should not have access to education with the conception that they will be pregnant while in school.

The findings on the implications of teenage pregnancy on Girl-Child is in line with Sambo (2009) who stated that adolescent pregnancy complication causes a break in academic pursuit among pregnant teens which can hinder the future development opportunity as well as the quality of life of a young person. He further opined that children born to teenage mothers are less likely to receive proper nutrition, healthcare, cognitive and social stimulation. Miller (2004) noted that the financial strain and psychological trauma to which some single parents are subjected to could impede their capabilities to cater to their children's well-being adequately. Hurlock (2001) pointed out that early marriages are in part responsible for the rise in several and other indications or marital failure delinquency and family friction-person who marry early. Uchendu (2002) emphasised that if early marriage arises from teenage pregnancy, it leads to drop out of school.

The findings on ways of reducing the rise in teenage pregnancy are in agreement with Okeke and Offorma (2001) who pointed out that the education of a Girl-Child will bring about the desired change in behaviour through the acquisition of skill, knowledge, new interests, values, and different attitudes to life. And also will make a difference in the girl child's life. Briere (2000) added that government, charitable organisations, philanthropists should aid early pregnancy clinics or institutions (often psychologists) to advertise the heinous effects of child pregnancy both on the TV screen and radio and as well hold frequent workshops on the issues for proper development.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that teenage pregnancy is a social problem which should be denounced by every well-meaning citizen. As can be seen from the survey, its cause is not traced to a specific course instead of the home, school; churches, government and indeed more full society share the blame.

The full involvement of the society is on how to save these teenagers from becoming pre-mature mothers and subsequently terminating their education. The immediate introduction of formal sex education in the school system and more especially in Secondary Schools should not pay a deaf ear. Therefore, if the above recommendations adhered to it, then the influence of teenage pregnancy on Girl-child academic performance would become a nightmare.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the observation, the following recommendations were made:

1) Voluntary Organizations in Nigeria should develop new approaches and programs to sex-educate young people. The voluntary agencies will send their agents to schools and churches or meet with the teenagers and educate them on changes in their body, use of contraceptives and problems of early or teenage pregnancy. Also, the society should pick up young drop-outs and encourage them to start their academic pursuit again or teach them skills to lift them from their dependent status and make them real again.

2) Sex education program must be broadly structured and multi-disciplined and should be planned to suit students in Secondary Schools by accommodating sex education formerly on the curriculum of Secondary Schools.

3) Parents should train their children to fear God in all their dealings with their co-students coupled with the excellent impression that would frequently exert a powerful influence upon their lives positively.

4) Teenagers should abstain from pre-marital affairs and possibly zip-up from sexual intercourse as such is the sole condition of becoming pregnant in spite of their academic pursuit.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1) Teenage pregnancy is one of contemporary society’s evils and is a somewhat alarming situation. Most countries, developed or undeveloped, consider adolescent pregnancy a social stigma. And it can have disastrous effects on the teens’ social life.

2) The negativity, the social alienation, and financial stress can wreak havoc in anyone’s life, let alone that of a teen, which is not yet mature or stable enough to face the world.

3) The education of the teen mother remains on hold during pregnancy, and some teens decide to drop out of school.

4) The whole social life of the teen mother gets raped due to her new and unusual pregnancy, and she has to waste her life in emotional shock.

REFERENCES


