

## **The influence of the Programme of Pastoral Instruction on the education of teenage mothers in the Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa, Kenya**

<sup>1</sup>Stephen Osiche, <sup>2</sup>Fr. Prof. Clement Majawa and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Paschal Wambiya

<sup>1</sup>*Phd Finalist, the Faculty of Education at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and the author*

<sup>2</sup>*Prof. Fr. Clelement Majawa, Professor of Theology at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and Co-author*

<sup>3</sup>*Dr. Paschal Wambiya, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and Co-author*

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**Abstract:** The coastal region of Kenya has one of the highest teenage pregnancies in Kenya. In spite of that, minimal research has been done on the causes and possible remedies to the high level teenage pregnancy in the region. The Catholic Church in Kenya has a programme of Pastoral Instruction in all Public schools they sponsor. Lack of programme of pastoral instruction (PPI) during normal childhood development can lead to severe negative impacts in later life cycle stages and some deficits have irreversible consequences. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of holistic pastoral education on enhancing the education of teenage mothers in the Catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa Sponsored Public Secondary Schools, Kenya. The study was carried out in the Catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa, based on the selected four counties with the highest pregnancy rates: Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi and Taita Taveta counties. Convergent Mixed methods design was used to carry out the study. Research focused on children aged between 13 to 18 years by drawing a sample of 344 respondents using both probability (stratified and simple random sampling) and non-probability (purposive) sampling techniques. Convergent mixed method design was used in this study. The main research question of the study was to determine the influence of the Pastoral Programme of instruction on teenage mothers in Secondary schools in the Archdiocese. Questionnaires were used to collect data from students and teacher counselors while interview guide was used to collect data from teenage mother students, principals and pastoral personnel within the location of the study: Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, and Taita-Taveta counties. The researcher used both content validity and Cronbach's Alpha method to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The reliability threshold in Cronbach's Alpha was 0.8. Data analysis involved both quantitative (descriptive - frequencies, mean, standard deviation and percentages and qualitative techniques where data was summarized in themes and presented in narrative form as well sources as raw data excerpts. Ethical considerations were upheld to avoid plagiarism, with all and information cited being acknowledged and high integrity levels being maintained during the study. Findings of the study established that although holistic pastoral education is beneficial to the society in curbing teenage pregnancy and in enhancing girl child education, it is not done well in the Secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education and the Archdiocese needs to sensitize principals, deputy principals and teachers to fully implement holistic pastoral education in schools to boost holistic education of children and curb teenage pregnancies.

**Keywords:** Pastoral, Holistic, programme, pregnancy, Convergent, teenage, Archdiocese

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### **1.1 Introduction**

The overall objective of the present study is to evaluate the pastoral holistic education as provided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa in the schools it sponsors. The Catholic Church has a Programme of Pastoral Instruction (PPI) in all the secondary schools in Kenya in general but those they sponsor in particular. All the four secondary school classes have a syllabus for PPI that is supposed to be completed at the end of each class. The syllabus focuses on the teachings of the Catholic Church as enshrined in the Holy Bible to bring up a righteous and God fearing youth who lives according to the Way of Jesus Christ. The teaching focuses on the spiritual, social, economic and academic issues affecting the youth (Commission for Education and Religious Education (CERE) (CERE, 2019). According to CERE, PPI provides a holistic Catholic Teaching approach and encompasses CBC in line with changing dynamics of education and addressing emerging Christian issues and how they affect the youth in a practical manner

### **1.2 What is Holistic Pastoral Education?**

But the real question in this study is what is meant by holistic Pastoral education and how does it influence the education of the youth in the Archdiocese of Mombasa? Holistic education is an experiential and learner-centered which is different from the teacher-centered knowledge approach. Holistic education is part lifelong learning competency based learning where learners are equipped with life skills, attitudes and personal awareness for survival in this complex world (Hare, 2010). The Knowledge based approach where subject content is the focus is replaced with a competency based learning where learners are prepared for critical thinking, learning how to learn, and the use of this knowledge in a broad range of contexts; it is these that represent the education currency of the future. In Cameroon adolescent pregnancy accounts for 30% of gender gap between boys and girls at the level of secondary education (Cameroon Public Expenditure Review, 2019), while in Kenya 14.8% of 15-19 year old were either pregnant or mothers, a cohort that should ideally be at secondary school level, even if the government has a policy of the re-admission of this teenage mothers. One of the fundamental human rights is education which is crucial to the progress and development of the country. The socialization of the individual is one of the main goals of education (Terziev & Vasileva, 2022). Both emerging and developed nations have put in place mechanisms to guarantee that their citizens receive a high standard of education. It translates to sound economic growth and progress in technology. Chien and Liao (2021) points out that holistic education has gained currency in the area of education. There are divergent views on what it entails and no consensus can be reached. There have been assertions that whole-child education is reflected in holistic education. However, this has not been adequately defined in the sphere of education, which has led to misunderstandings about what it means.

It is challenging formulating a single universally accepted definition of holistic education. According to Miseliunaite et al. (2022), holistic education is comprised of a set of beliefs, feelings, guiding principles, and broad concepts that guide the emotional, social, academic, and spiritual of the child's development. The present day teenagers are increasingly in need of life skills education to assist them navigate the problems of daily living and make the transition to adulthood. There is need for life skills education in our schools and its importance and value in the education system cannot be overemphasized. The philosophical underpinning of holistic education is a complete, balanced and all rounded learner.

### **1.3 What are the benefits of holistic Pastoral Education?**

The results of holistic education around the world are quite impressive. It is responsible for the rise in completion rates for elementary education to 27%, while at the secondary it is 15–17% (Lamsal, 2015). According to UNESCO (2022) the return on investment from holistic education are estimated to be 49% for basic education and 26% for education at secondary school level and that holistic education is one of the most effective ways of reducing poverty, providing opportunities for people to better their lives and a way of asserting their rights. This has the net effect of enhancing their productivity and improving their health. Teenage motherhood, when girls aged 13-19 years conceive, is one of the impediments to the attainment of this goal holistic education. According to Govender, Taylor, & Naidoo, 2020; Brindis et al. 2020; and Segalo, 2020, teenage pregnancy is a complex reality of contemporary society in the United States of America (USA), Asia and Sub Saharan Africa. India, Monteiro and Shetty (2016) as cited by Shirao, Momanyi and Anyona (2020) conducted a survey in Mangalore city that revealed that making holistic education compulsory in schools boosts the self-esteem of students. The study concluded that low self-esteem and lack of life skills are directly correlated and those who have normal range of self-esteem have high levels of life skills.

### **1.4 The Status of holistic Pastoral education in the Secondary Schools in the Archdioceses of Mombasa**

This holistic pastoral education restricts itself to secondary schools and the extent to which it influences youth behaviors to increase their knowledge on sexual and reproductive health issues (KIE, 2008). The fact that young people are not well equipped with the requisite life skills has significant implications at the individuals as well as the corporate level of the entire nation, this translate to a large part of the Kenyan population with approximately 43 percent of them being below 15 years (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019) as being ill-equipped. These young people are making serious life choices Twithout vital life skills which will impact the future of Kenya and more so the Kenyan economy (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006). These youngsters would prefer to get information about sexuality from a trusted adult (USAID, 2010). Most parents are either unwilling to guide their children or are ill prepared to do so leaving teachers as the next alterative. However, teachers also are tasked with the duty of teaching academic content to the learners and may suffer similar shortcomings as parents. The resulting reality that we have to cope with is the emerging realities like teenage pregnancies; hence require training and support to fulfill this role effectively; there is a lacuna that the current study intends to fill.

There is a correlation between poor school performance and teenage pregnancy according to (Hallman & Grant, 2006). However, in most schools there are few resident chaplains, hence their roles and responsibilities of chaplaincy include; ensuring that pupils and students are not executed. Chaplains minister to both Catholics and non-Catholics through giving proper religious formation to grow in the relationships of those in their charge with God during their time at school and to help them to see the good in themselves.

While these services are critical, there is a gap in the pastoral care personnel, especially in both ordained clerics and school chaplains who are lay persons, trained to provide holistic pastoral education functions at catholic sponsored elementary public schools in the Mombasa Archdiocese. A survey reveals that the majority of young adults in Kenya accessed information about sexuality from a trusted adult as their preferred source (USAID, 2010). Most parents were reluctant to guide and counsel their children on sexuality; however teachers as the next option were preoccupied with the academic curriculum. However, teachers may suffer similar shortcomings and have to cope with emerging realities like teenage pregnancies; hence require training and support to fulfill this role effectively; a gap that was filled by the current study.

The integral educational role of the church dates back to the teachings of Jesus Christ. On a daily basis over a period of three years, Jesus taught the disciples in relation to the truths in the Old Testament by interpreting what the prophet's prophesized and what the other teachers of Israelites said. This was to make sure that there might be no misunderstanding of the message. The present study problem statement of the study is the increasing number of teenage mothers in Catholic public sponsored secondary schools in the catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa. The effective and efficient approach to addressing this challenge requires an integrated pastoral education programs from professionals including parents, state and holistic pastoral education by experts like the trained school chaplain.

Teenage pregnancies can be linked to lack of religiosity that is based on values, virtues, and fruits of the Holy Spirit and the Christian principles of life. Holistic pastoral education focused on attitudes and values can be essential approach to addressing the challenges of bad parental influence, peer pressure and adventure personality's especially teenage girls who seek experiences from risky behaviors (Helbling, Tomasik & Moser, 2019). These are meant to achieve life techniques needed for oneself and service to the community. Pastoral holistic education offers solutions to the modern challenges of teenage girls that arise from school environment, mass media, adult leaders and moral dilemma. Pope Pius specified that education is essentially a societal and not a mere individual activity. Pope LEO XIII observed that it is not necessary for the religious to be given only at a fixed period or stage but also be permitted with Christian piety in every other subject taught.

In Kenya the goal of free universal education especially for girl-child remains a pipedream. Even though Kenya has developed comprehensive law and policy framework to protect and implement the right to education, girls' education continue to be affected by early marriages and pregnancies, gender stereotypes and social norms which overburden them, sexual abuse and poor economic conditions which disproportionately affect them (Mutua, 2017). Despite the introduction of free primary education in the country which accounted for an increase in enrolment, a sizeable number of children, especially girls, still find themselves out of school owing to a number of reasons (Hunt, 2014). Poverty is another setback that makes parent to marry their girls and prevents them from accessing education according to the study by Schaefer and Clandinin (2019). Another study by the Kenya Human Rights Commission/Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance (KHRC/RHRA) show the extent to which unwanted pregnancy and abortions were rampant among school-going teenage girls, which is attributed to a number of reasons such as the gender disparity in school completion rates is teenage pregnancy which this study attempts to examine critically (Mumah et al., 2020).

Education requires wise teachers who have insight, character and intentions of their students as well as the ability to draw out the best from them (Prov. 20: 5). If any education or curriculum does not align with God's revelation and wisdom, it remains or becomes skeleton, impoverished and unproductive (1Cor. 1: 17; 2: 4, 2Cor. 1: 12). Besides, the ignorance of true and holistic education leads to abominators such as rape, adultery, destructive lust (2Sam. 11: 2-4, Mt. 5: 27 – 28; Rom. 1: 24, 1 Cor. 6: 18 – 20). Where integral education is seriously practical, it prepares persons to become good citizens and responsible to duties as well as having a duty to God (Mt. 22: 15 – 22), (Rom 13: 1-7 and 1Tim 2: 1-2). According to Saint John Chrysostom (407 AD), Christian education develops three transformations: the consciousness which stands for awareness of the vision of a given educational curriculum, mission and its destiny. Secondly, is conscience which measures how which these educational programs develop the students ethical and integrity aspects. The third and the final area are focused on communion. Education curriculum must reflect the nature and the needs of the community it is based. This study is focused on examining pastoral holistic education as practised in the secondary schools sponsored by the Catholic Church and how it can be used to address teenage motherhood, equality and disparity among in education within the Catholic public sponsored schools of Archdiocese of Mombasa.

**Statement of the problem**

Kenya has declared education as a basic human right. There is a raft of policies that have been enacted to enable girls in Kenya enjoy the right to education such as the re-entry policy (Republic of Kenya, 1994) Gender Education Policy (Republic of Kenya, 2015). However, the problem of teenage girls’ re-entry to school after delivery still persists in Kenya. There is a need to investigate the underlying factors that make re-entry difficult for the teenage mothers. Stakeholders are concerned that even those girls who have returned to school after delivery are not able to learn and succeed to careers like teachers, doctors and responsible members of society. The Catholic Church introduced a Programme on Pastoral Instruction (PPI) in secondary schools with a view to bringing up God fearing youth who live the way Jesus Christ lived. However despite this programme being in schools, teenage pregnancy has persisted and girls returning to schools are not succeeding.

There have been few studies to determine the contribution of PPI to the education of girls returning after having children in the secondary schools sponsored by the Catholic Archdioceses of Mombasa. Despite the fact Kenya has developed an elaborate system of laws and policy framework to protect and implement the right to education, there are a myriad of issues that hinder girls’ education such as: early marriages and pregnancies, sexual abuse, gender stereotypes and social norms which overburden them, and poor economic conditions which disproportionately affect them (Mutua, 2017). Therefore, the current study investigated how holistic pastoral education as done under the PPI programme, influences teenage mothers’ education in the Secondary Schools sponsored by the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Mombasa, Kenya

**Research Question**

How does the PPI programme contribute to the holistic education of teenage mothers in the public secondary schools sponsored by Catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa?

**Findings and discussions**

Research question sought to determine how holistic pastoral education as done under PPI in secondary schools influenced participation of teenage mothers in education after pregnancy. This Section shows results and discussions on influence of holistic pastoral education on the education of teenage mothers after pregnancy in schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa as responded by teenage mother students, student leaders and teacher counselors to questionnaire distributed to them by the researcher. Teachers and students were given a questionnaire comprising of statements related to level of teenage pregnancy in schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa and requested to put a tick (√) on the best option on a five-point scale (1-5) to show their level of agreement or disagreement with statements using the Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, NS=Not sure, D=disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree. Their responses are presented in Table 10

Table 12 Influence of holistic pastoral education on teenage pregnancies as perceived by teenage mothers, teacher counselors and student leaders

Statement	P	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	S. Dev.
Schools provide education On strong abstinence messages to adolescents	M	19(25.0)	26(34.2)	19(25.0)	8(10.5)	4(5.3)	2.33	1.195
	S	2(7.7)	11(42.3)	2(7.7)	6(23.1)	5(19.2)	3.04	1.341
	T	13(17.1)	26(34.2)	12(15.8)	15(19.3)	10(13.2)	2.73	1.095
Pastoral education is taught by teachers under the laid down spiritual endeavors	M	5(6.6)	30(39.5)	17(22.4)	14(18.4)	10(13.2)	2.76	1.031
	S	5(19.2)	4(15.4)	6(23.1)	5(19.2)	6(23.1)	3.04	1.219
	T	7(9.2)	28(36.8)	15(19.7)	15(19.7)	11(14.5)	2.76	1.031
Holistic pastoral lessons are taught by chaplains and teachers in schools	M	20(26.3)	36(47.4)	13(17.1)	4(5.3)	3(3.9)	2.13	.998
	S	3(11.5)	4(15.4)	10(38.5)	7(26.9)	2(7.7)	3.04	1.113
	T	18(23.7)	30(39.5)	13(17.1)	8(10.5)	7(9.2)	2.63	.988
Ministry of education should implement sexual education curriculum	M	13(17.1)	15(19.7)	8(10.5)	23(30.1)	17(22.4)	3.75	.853
	S	4(15.4)	6(23.1)	0(0.00)	5(19.2)	11(42.3)	3.50	1.606
	T	16(21.1)	15(19.7)	3(3.9)	20(26.3)	22(28.9)	3.85	.756
Peer pressure And the availability of contraceptives makes teenage girls think of sex	M	10(13.2)	15(19.7)	9(11.8)	24(31.6)	18(23.7)	3.90	.696
	S	8(30.8)	5(19.2)	1(3.8)	5(19.2)	7(26.9)	2.92	1.671
	T	7(9.2)	13(17.1)	8(10.5)	34(44.7)	14(18.4)	4.01	.584
Holistic pastoral Education enhances gender equality	M	2(2.6)	33(43.4)	25(32.9)	10(13.2)	6(7.9)	2.76	1.031
	S	5(19.2)	4(15.4)	7(26.9)	5(19.2)	5(19.2)	3.04	1.399
	T	3(3.9)	27(35.5)	21(27.6)	16(21.1)	9(11.8)	2.84	1.021
Implementation of holistic pastoral	M	17(22.4)	37(48.7)	13(17.1)	6(7.9)	3(3.9)	2.63	.998

Education has improved parental involvement in academics of their children	S	3(11.5)	4(15.4)	10(38.5)	7(26.9)	2(7.7)	3.04	.813
	T	15(19.7)	33(43.4)	13(17.1)	12(15.8)	3(3.9)	2.75	.978
Implementation of holistic pastoral education has high completion rates for girls in secondary schools	M	16(21.1)	12(15.7)	9(11.8)	29(38.1)	10(13.2)	3.63	.995
	S	2(7.7)	6(23.1)	2(7.7)	6(23.1)	10(38.5)	4.04	.541
	T	11(14.5)	14(18.4)	7(9.2)	21(27.6)	23(30.1)	3.73	.892
Through implementation of Holistic pastoral education there are reduced risks for early pregnancies in girls	M	6(7.9)	15(19.7)	9(11.8)	22(28.9)	24(31.6)	3.95	.853
	S	4(15.4)	6(23.1)	0(0.00)	5(19.2)	11(42.3)	3.50	.906
	T	5(6.6)	13(17.1)	10(13.2)	33(43.4)	15(19.7)	4.05	.793
Schools have an Integral Holistic pastoral educational approach for students in curbing teenage pregnancy	M	11(14.5)	16(21.1)	13(17.1)	24(31.6)	12(15.8)	3.13	.998
	S	3(11.5)	4(15.4)	10(38.5)	7(26.9)	2(7.7)	3.04	1.113
	T	8(10.5)	18(23.7)	15(19.7)	22(28.9)	13(17.1)	3.21	.976

\*Key: P=Participants, M =Teenage mother students n=76; S=Student leaders n =26 and T=Teachers counselors n= and Teachers n=76

Findings in table 10 show that, 34.2% disagreed and 25.0% strongly disagreed, with 25.0% not sure while 10.5% agreed and 5.3% strongly agreed to the statement that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents. Majority of the teenage mother students 84.2% were in disagreement that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents. For the student leaders, 42.3% disagreed and 7.7% strongly disagreed, with 7.7% not sure while 23.1% agreed and 19.2% strongly agreed that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents. Most of the student leaders 57.7% were in disagreement that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents.

For the teacher counselors, 34.2% disagreed and 17.1% strongly disagreed, with 15.8% not sure while 19.3% agreed and 13.2% strongly agreed that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents. Most of the teacher counselors 67.1% were in disagreement that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents. The statement that schools provide education on strong abstinence messages to adolescents means were (2.33 for teenage mother students, 3.04 for student leaders and 2.73 for teacher counselors), an indication of high levels of disagreement to the statement, with standard deviations of teenage mother students as 1.195, student leaders as 1.341 and teacher counselors as 1.095. The awareness on abstinence helps girls to understand their value in the society hence able to be retained in schools and their chances of school completion becomes higher. The principals and teachers have the required training to implement the holistic pastoral syllabus in order for students to gain skills relevant towards abstinence from sex until the right ages are acquired thus curbing teenage pregnancies in schools.

With strict supervision on the teaching of holistic pastoral lessons and strong base for guidance and counseling sessions students are able to do justice for themselves by abstinence from unwanted sex. Regarding open ended questionnaire most female students noted that:

“Holistic pastoral education is important to me since it has enabled me to make the right decisions when it comes to teenage love affairs; helps to cope with life problems and curbs teenage pregnancy and enables teenagers top make informed decisions in life on abstinence which helps girls to control themselves.”

In open ended questionnaire, teachers said that:

“Holistic pastoral education has educated girls on how to abstain as well as apply their life skills in their day to day life; teenagers are more aware of the changes taking place in their bodies.”

Most of the teen mothers in their open ended questionnaire noted that:

“During holistic pastoral education lessons, teachers emphasize on abstinence as this is the best method to protect teenager from unplanned pregnancies and most of all sexually transmitted diseases. Preventing the teenage pregnancy, knowing the effects of use of drugs, many things, how to deal with people in the outside, because you know people are different and how to deal with people, mingling with others, communication.”

Most principals noted that holistic pastoral education should be taken seriously right from primary schools. Through serious training of teachers specifically for holistic pastoral education so that they become enthusiastic towards imparting the holistic pastoral skills to the learners and especially the girl child hence able to restrain herself from sexual habits. The finding is contradicted by Yakubu and Salisu (2018) study “identified

Sociocultural, environmental and Economic factors (Peer influence, unwanted sexual advances from adult males, coercive sexual relations, unequal gender power relations, poverty, religion, early marriage, lack of parental counseling and guidance, parental neglect, absence of affordable or free education, lack of comprehensive sexuality education, non-use of contraceptives, male's responsibility to buy condoms, early sexual debut and inappropriate forms of recreation)".

### Conclusions

The second Research question sought to determine the influence of holistic pastoral education on the reduction of teenage pregnancies in schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa, Kenya. The results of the study indicated quite clearly that PPI is not taught well and in most Secondary schools in the Archdiocese, there is no person qualified to teach it. Since there is nobody to teach it well, its influence to improve the moral and spiritual characteristics of the students is reduced. This also goes for its ability to reduce teenage pregnancy among school girls in secondary schools in the Archdiocese.

### Recommendation

The study recommends strongly that PPI must be taught well in the secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Mombasa. For this to happen, the study recommends that Catholic teachers in these schools should be trained by the Diocese as Chaplains and give the modules and a small allowance to teach PPI. The Education Secretary of the Diocese should evaluate these programmes on a regular basis to ensure PPI is taught and the student learning ensured.

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