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Culture, school pregnancies, and society: pubertal rites in Côte d'Ivoire

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Abstract

It is essential to understand the relationship between pubertal rites and the goals of socioeconomic insertion of children to school. Formal education promotes girls' rights and contributes to the creation of an egalitarian society. It empowers women to make better informed life choices. This survey used ethnographic data from the pubertal rites "Famian Bla" in Baoule Iffou County and "Yikee" in Toura County, Cote d'Ivoire as a reference point to examine the law of obligatory education of children of both sexes (aged six to sixteen years) and school archives from 2013 to 2017. The findings revealed a double perception between pubertal rights and conventional schools on the one hand; and conflicts of institutional objectives between reproductive expectations of society and the socioeconomic integration of childhood in society. Thus the values of pubertal rites are imposed on the educational training of children especially the girl child. The article argues that through girls' pregnancies at school, the values of pubertal rites for the reproduction of the society are not opposed to the goal of socioeconomic integration of the conventional school. (*Afr J Reprod Health 2021; 25[3]: 41-50*).

Keywords: Culture, education, Society, school pregnancy, pubertal rites, Cote d'Ivoire

Résumé

Il est essentiel de comprendre la relation logique entre les rites pubertaires et les missions d'insertion socio-économique de l'enfance à l'école. L'école considérée, dans ces approches, comme promouvant les droits des filles contribue à la création d'une société égalitaire et à l'autonomisation des femmes dans des choix de vie mieux informés. Les approches des grossesses scolaires mettent en partie en cause un système traditionnel arriéré qui favorise les rites de puberté des filles et leur rôle dans la reproduction sociale et économique. Par conséquent, le statut de reproducteur social des filles par les rites de puberté et l'intégration socio-économique promise par l'école semblent être en contradiction. Basé une sur une étude ethnographique des rites de puberté chez les Baoulé et les Toura en Côte d'Ivoire, l'article montre qu'à travers les grossesses scolaires, les valeurs des rites de puberté pour la reproduction de la société ne sont pas à opposer aux missions d'intégration socio-économique de l'école. (*Afr J Reprod Health 2021; 25[3]: 41-50*).

Mots-clés: Culture, éducation, société, grossesses scolaires, rites pubertaires, Côte d'Ivoire

Introduction

In 2000, The international community adopted on the Millennium Development Goals "which acknowledged education as an indispensable means for people to realize their capabilities, and prioritized the completion of a primary school cycle"¹ The objectives 4 and 5 consolidate this by specifying respectively "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all" and "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"² However, early pregnancy remains a challenge for the listed objectives. Indeed, the number of early

pregnancies for all 17-year-old girls in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia seems impressive: "3, 397,000; which shows that 10% fewer pregnant girls and 59% fewer pregnant girls if all girls receive secondary education"³. Statistics on school pregnancies indicate that obligatory education compromises childhood, especially the girl child, in the process of social transformation, the creation of an egalitarian society and the empowerment of women in making more informed life choices. The school is suffering from the scourge of school pregnancies.

The WHO (2014) report situates this issue with alarming statistical data in terms of "what

needs to be done"⁴. According to the same report, nearly 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 and another 2 million below the age of 15 give birth each year. Thus, this accounts for about 11% of all births worldwide. In Saharan Africa and Côte d'Ivoire, pregnancies described as "early" are found in all walks of life, especially at school. From 2013 to 2017, school statistics⁵ indicated 17,263 cases of pregnancies for all cycles combined, including 1,055 cases in the primary cycle among girls who are between 9 and 14 years old. There have been grievous effects of school pregnancies. Observed on the one hand, 40% of young girls drop out of school and, on the other hand, by voluntary interruption (IVG) and/or death⁶. This is in addition to health morbidity whose spread of STDs and HIV/AIDS conditions the life and developmental projects of the nation⁷.

The approaches of humanitarian bodies and universities, on one hand, have been helpful in that they have indicated and qualified "violence"⁸, school pregnancies, and how they can hinder educational pursuits and objectives. Besides, they have also identified "factors and repercussions"⁹ that are likely to serve as a switch for action towards effective awareness and curbing of the public developmental issue being discussed. The complicit endeavor of the government officials, humanitarian workers, associations, and NGOs was launched using slogans such as "school for all" and was intended at combating school discrimination between boys and girls, "compulsory education in childhood of both sexes up to the age of 16"¹⁰, criminal proceedings against male partners who committed pregnancies, as well as "zero pregnancies in school"¹¹. This was done by distributing to students some free "condoms and morning-after pills as well as information workshops on sexual and reproductive health"¹². Far from the current project, the idea of evaluating the policies of access, especially that of the girl child to schooling or the eradication of the school pregnancies as statistically reported, have raised reservations. From observation, the parent ministry indices reflect an improvement in the school enrollment rate: "55.8% for girls in primary education against 67.1% for boys. In secondary education, the education rate for girls was 24.6% against 33.1% for boys". Also, there is a reduction

from 6,800 to 4,471 cases of school pregnancies from 2013-2017. The girl child, regardless, continues to be on the receiving end of the impact of "violence" as supported by practices and laws—which provokes considerations. The previous approaches, predominantly sociological, descriptive, and explanatory, have put the cultural, phenomenological, and institutional dimension of school pregnancies on hold. Indeed, students already conditioned by puberty rites were symbolically configured for sexual life. Reproduction in the society has institutional disadvantages regarding the knowledge economy offered by conventional school through education and training, both technical and professional. If the initiates of puberty rites are "social majors", the two sexes of "six to sixteen", in contrast, attend conventional school under the demographic regime of childhood. There are at the same time cultural, statutory, and promotional conflicts in the space of the knowledge economy that represents conventional school. This is with the school pregnancies being the only phenomenal iceberg. It is therefore pointless to argue the above with policies to eradicate school pregnancies.

How do cultural, statutory, and institutional conflicts operate between puberty rites, school pregnancies, and reproduction in the society¹³ through an anthropological viewpoint? This study seeks to contribute to bringing an anthropological light since the researchers have individually experienced the various conflicts of school pregnancies to the fullest extent. This can be achieved through the girl child, and the adult women virtually get affected at least in three dimensions: in carrying a pregnancy, dropping out of school, and being weakened in socioeconomic integration. An anthropological consideration, thus, would enable an understanding of the links among rites, school pregnancies, and reproduction in the society.

Choice of pubertal spaces and law on access to conventional school

Ethnocultural pubertal rites are variously experienced in the ethnocultural areas, Gour, Krou, Akan Lagunaires, Mandé du Nord, Mandé du Sud and Akan Continentaux, in Côte d'Ivoire¹⁴.

However, while the study was in progress, the researchers chose to observe the puberty rites with and/or without body marking¹⁵ lived by the Continental Akan and the Mandé of the North. The "Famian blâ" rites in Baoulé Iffou country and "Yikèè" in Toura country are respectively located in the Iffou Administrative Regions in the Center-West and Tonpki in the West of Côte d'Ivoire. The rites celebrate and dedicate the passage from childhood to the exercise of sexual authority and the reproduction in the society. The education law in Côte d'Ivoire has been amended to make educational, technical, and vocational training compulsory for both sexes, from age six to sixteen years. Relations between the two institutions show cases of school pregnancies to which data collection techniques have been applied.

Data collection techniques and tools

The choice of the documentary technique makes it possible to browse ethnographic bibliographic references and the archives of the Ministry of National Education, Technical Education, and Professional Training relating to school pregnancies from 2013 to 2017. In June 2019, an interview guide was organized with resource persons from the selected cultural areas: Iffou and Toura. Also, assistance of an investigator was also provided to enrich the information relating to pubertal rites and their symbolic interference in the occurrence of school pregnancy.

Manual analysis and data analysis

Manual processing was favored in the processing and analysis of documentary and ethnological data. The combination of content analysis techniques, structural functionalism, and phenomenological symbolism highlights the qualitative design of this research but is conditioned by a quantitative perspective with photographic illustrations and statistical tables. Thus, this gives methodological force to the comparison and renders it interpretable. The study therefore develops competitive and contradictory logics between community puberty rites and school pregnancies especially of the girl child and virtually the woman in the process of the reproduction of the society. Hence, their

conventional school must state the paradigms as an institution promoting the knowledge economy.

From the choice of socio-anthropological places to the identification of techniques/data collection and analysis, it is a matter of having data on the relationships between the pubertal rites "Famian blâ" and "Yikèè", school pregnancies, and reproduction in the society. What is the configuration of the logical links between the data collected?

"Famian blâ" rite in Baoulé Iffou country

The pubertal rite "Famian blâ" consecrates "the reproductive status of the pubertal girl 'Taloua ba' in society"¹⁶ according to the following stages: the announcing semiology, the purifying act, the community meal, confession, and call for candidates.

Warning semiology

Two main signs are observed:

- Body signs: enlargement of the breasts, hair on the private parts, etc.
- Symbolism of purification: "Manzakuia".

By noticing the enlargement of the breasts and the presence of hair on the private parts, "Taloua ba" became the subject of particular attention. She is assigned to the vigilance of another woman "Blâ kpin gbin", who has over time proven to be a generous woman and a virtuous mother, to confirm the menses "Manzakuia". The required confirmation triggers the purifying protocol.

Purifying act

"Taloua ba" is subject to an act of purification: "Blâ wunziwa", that is the washing of women, purified women, and adults. The observation of the appearance and flow of blood during the menses, the symbolism of red color justifying a change boosts the purifying act by a presence of white color. Indeed, on a bright day in the reproductive health calendar and in the early hours of the morning, "Taloua ba" receives a white cloth with a surprised jet of "Blâ kpin gbin". There follows a brutal awakening from sleep. This brutal jet of white tissue can cause watery eyes in the pubertal adolescent. Otherwise, she can be hit with chicory

to symbolically get tears in her eyes. The flow of blood is marked by the "Manzakuia", which is the throwing of the white cloth of "Blâ kpin gbin" by surprise. Also, the symbolism of the tears of "Taloua ba" constitutes the purifying act "Blâ wunziwa". It involves the transition from puberty from "Taloua ba" to the status of social maturity. Furthermore, "Blâ wunziwa" opens at a community meal event.

The community meal

The day after the brutal awakening, "Taloua ba" shares with the other girls of her generation a meal composed of corn seeds and fines of dry roasted peanuts. Through the communion meal between "the chosen ritual" and the other "Taloua ba", divorce is consumed with childhood on the one hand and access to a new status, which is that of reproduction on the other hand. The sketch in another statute in the society requires of "Taloua ba" a community accompaniment for the quest for longevity and success which are aggregated in the expression "Moayè".

Royal stool

"Taloua ba" is installed on the "Cessè bia", which means *royal stool*. It is clad in the canons of "beauty and aesthetics"¹⁷: royal hairstyle, naked body coated with palm oil, "adornments"¹⁸, sex cover, and feet in the royal sandals placed on animal skin. Investing in the status of "Famian blâ" on the royal stool, the initiate enjoys a social and popular anointing, i.e., congratulations/encouragement accompanied by donations/gifts and especially loin cloths by family and community members. During the other days of the ritual, "Famian blâ" accompanied by maids of honor, pass from court to courtyard of the village to execute the protocol of greetings and recognition. At the end of the "Atonvlè" rite, "Taloua ba" is subjected to the test of virginity.

Confession

The initiate is subjected to an interrogation on the state of her virginity or not before the ritual. When virginity is confirmed, the locks on the doors of virginity give way to training on sex, the sacred power of women, the exercise of sexual activity, marital, and family lives. The suitors embark on the

protocols of sexual, marital, and family negotiations. In the event that virginity is overturned, fines are imposed on guilty men by way of redemption of the happiness which the ritual "Famian blâ" confers on women and their children, whether born or unborn.

The "Famian blâ" rite illustrates the symbolism of the transition from the state of childhood to "adult life"¹⁹ of "Taloua ba" for access and exercise of female reproductive status in society.

"Yikèè" rite in Toura country of Mandé du Nord

The Toura or wi / wen ethnic group is made up of nine cantons: Gouorsèè, Guousèè, Gansèè, Walousèè, Yiliguélésèè, Liwaasèè, Nanhosèè, Boorsèè, and Gwagnsèè who experience annual cultural hikes "Yadélé", "Gbon" and "Yikèè"²⁰. The initiation rite "Yikèè" gives rise to both the male and female novices, the test of social maturation, according to the following stages.

Predictive semiology

The "Yikèè" rite designates female and male initiations in Toura. It is not a question of confirming the resilience of a cultural fact which undermines human dignity, in particular the girl child. Thus, the reference to the cultural rite "Famian blâ" or "Yikèè" retains the symbolism which it develops and which can generate educational recovery through various forms.

State of "Soi" Boy

The bodily signs are revealed by the presence of hairs on the intimate parts of the body, in particular the chin, armpits, and pubis. The voice takes on an air of gravity, a sign foreshadowing the expression of authority. Checking for these signs subjects "Soi" to the act of circumcision. Scarring is usually done after a week. Semiological reading is observed in girls of the same generation.

State of "Soi" Girl

Two main signs can be seen in the state of "Soi" girl:

- Body signs: enlargement of the breasts, hair on the private parts;

- Symbolism of purification: the red blood of menstruation "Men yé"²¹.

The trigger for the "Yikèè" rite comes from girls and, by analogy, the recruitment of promoter boys follows suit. So the girl impels the ritual tone "Yikèè" among the Toura.

Vigil of statements of choreographic talents

The novice is called to invest in the preparations for "Yikèè": collection and storage of firewood, husking and rice storage, sewing of clothing, hairstyle model "Kàlà" ... The states "Soi" for the boy with circumcision and for the girl with the preparations open to the organization of a dance vigil "Yignan". "Yignan" is that occasion where both partners express their choreographic talents. The next day is the departure for the sacred woods.

Seclusion in sacred forests

The time of seclusion in sacred groves can extend over a week.

The "Soi" boys access the sacred wood "Soïngui" where they successively receive human training from the large mask "Guéhéwaa", from the panthers "Logno" and "Gbon". The "Soi" girls have access to "Kognpélé" where they undergo the excision which gives them the status of "Bâ nein" and remain under guardianship matrons and educators for both care and training: hygiene, sexuality, choreographic dances, and education, married and family life. The initiate "Bâ nein" answers a question about the state or not of her virginity. At the end of the seclusion period, she attains the status "Bâ woloe" and prepares for the evening "Yikèè" dedicating the return to the community.

Choreographic exploits

The return of initiates is consecrated by a choreographic demonstration in the public place "Guié é téné" or a confirmation dance and choreographic exploits of the "Yikèè". Table 1 shows the changes in the designation of social age between the novices and the "Yikèè".

If at the dance "Yignan", it is the partners "Dohn" and "Déi" who perform with the status of "Soi", on the return from the sacred forests, the "Yikèè" are respectively designated by "Doh wan" and "Déi maan" at the choreographic sessions of

"Guié é téné". The "Doh wan" and "Déi maan" are called upon to demonstrate exploits and confirm the choreographic potentials. In the second choreographic performance in the public square, the "Doh wan" and "Déi maan" dance face to face, thereby transgressing the parallelism of relational relationships in favor of an encounter between two complementary sexes to perpetuate the human and community kingdoms. The two sexes are configured in logic relationships of complementarity and verticality. The "Yikèè" approach sex life, marriage, and family relationships according to the rules of the Toura community.

Pregnancy dance

The girl "Soi" who infects the state of virginity is affected by a dance called "Gwitan". It is organized by girls of initiation age, in the evenings, through songs like:

"She who becomes pregnant in her "Soi" state does not benefit from good tamtam sounds!"

"I throw a pregnancy stone, she misses me to touch *n* [the name of the pregnant "Soi" or having violated virginity]". To end the generational and ritual taunts, the dishonored parents and family members brush the incestuous girl with kaolin and invite her to join the culturally provocative group. The "Yikèè" rite through circumcision and excision of the "Soi" configure the two sex partners in reproductive health and social responsibility.

Childhood continues to be observed through the crossing of pubertal rites for reproductive health, of reproductive society especially by the maturation of social status. The "Famian blâ" rites of the Baoulé Iffou and "Yikèè" of the Toura bear witness to this symbolism which, through forms stolen from rural and urban areas, continues to be practiced despite the struggles and policies of ostracism. Consciously or unconsciously, the girl and the boy remain under an initiation embargo in favor of the quality of a reproductive society when the school opens the doors to them.

School pregnancies and traps of conventional school

The archives make the observations on Table 2. With regard to the table partially filled in statistical

Table 1: Social hierarchy of social status from the “Yikèè” rite

Quality of the elder	Before « Yikèè »	After « Yikèè »
Big Brother	« Dohn »	« Doh wan »
Big sister	« Déi »	« Déi maan »

Table 2: Pregnancies in schools in Côte d'Ivoire

Year	Primary cycle	Other cycles combined	Girls' ages
2013-2014		6800	
2014-2015	512	5992	51 under 12 353 over 12 years old
2015-2016	404		
2016-2017	139	4471	1,153 between 9 and 14 years of age 2,393 between 15 and 18 years of age 925 over 19
Total	1055	17263	

data, the information on pregnancies is a delicacy. "There is no way to identify a pregnancy at the precise moment of fertilization of the egg, and the pregnancies are terminated during the first week of its development in utero"²². However, these are realities that exist and which weaken the school curriculum and regularity, especially among girls. The 2013-2014 school year does not specify the rate of cases in the primary cycle or the ages of the 6,800 cases registered by the school administration. The 2015-2016 school year indicates 404 cases of pregnancies and remains silent on those of other cycles combined and of the ages of the girls. Despite the findings of inadequacies and partial information in the table, the research paper is content to observe the available data. Highlights show that the efforts of the school administration to educate about extra-curricular behavior usually jeopardize girl's success in school. If the law⁶ makes compulsory the schooling of “two sexes [the feminine and the masculine differentiated] aged from six to sixteen years”, the policies of schooling, technical, and professional training would be trapped by the occurrence of pregnancies in school. The 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 school years recorded 4,354 cases of pregnancies in the primary cycle alone, a rate close to almost a third, 5,754, of the 17,263 cases. The ages of the 4,354 pregnancies fall within the compulsory school age range. What are the logical links between the practice of puberty

rites and the occurrence of school pregnancies in conventional school?

Puberty rites, school pregnancies and status for girl child in conventional institution

The initiates "Famian blâ" for the girl and the call for candidacies by the rite "Atonvlè" which institutes the boy as partner among the Baoulé, the "Doh wan", and "Déi maan" by the choreographic performances "Yikèè" among the Toura symbolically celebrate the configuration of the breeder statutes of the company. In girls, the ritual and pubertal act has a symbolically stronger impact. This is because the pubertal act makes women a primordial social landmark: she is "ritualized in the roles of procreator and educator of society"²³. It is with the formatting of the reproductive status of society conferred on "social majors" according to the rites that the conventional school receives the boy and the girl for whom compulsory schooling, technical or vocational training projects are designed. If the conventional school ignores the mark of reproductive status "deposited" by puberty rites to "social majors", it is, on the contrary, perceived as a space generously offered for living in the state of breeding of the society. The occurrence of pregnancies at school is positioned at the confluence of the status of reproducers of society. This is guaranteed by puberty and socio-economic rites by projects of identity, instructions, and socio-professional exercises in a logic of conflict and overlay. Of this game, "childhood" by conventional school but "social majors" by rites and culture, the female sex alone bears major marks of the occurrence of pregnancy. In addition, carriers of school pregnancies see the chances of diminishing at the prospect of a promise of completed education or the exercise of a trade at the end of the compulsory cycle of conventional school. Thus, this is because the training process is thwarted by the state and evolution of pregnancy, maternity, mothering, early childhood education, and the expectation of care for the child by the structures of education and training, up to the age of six. Can attending school from childhood guarantee the reconciliation of values such as the status of reproductive society and the guarantee of education and socio-professional lines of work for the girl,

Table 3: Age at the confluence of unequivocal sociological majorities

Age perceptions	Cultural age	Compulsory age / school	Civil and professional-electoral-criminal age	Biological age
Boy	Semiology: Presence of hairs Gravity of the voice	6-16	18	20
Girl	Semiology: Breast enlargement Hair on the private parts; Blood flow	6-16	18	20

who is virtually pregnant after puberty rites? “Who benefits from our schools²⁴? This is the title of a review in which the author observes that “the education of part of the colonized populations of Africa [...] was one of the decisive factors for the disintegration of our ancestral structures and the emergence of new administrative and political bodies, the integration of which was and still is the sine qua non condition for social and political advancement”²⁵. In the same logic, pregnancies pose to conventional school the taking into account of values which can feed simultaneously the status of reproduction of the society, the instruction and the guarantee of socio-professional lines of work to the female child especially, and the ritualized and educated. The conventional school must reconcile the values of the status of reproduction in the society, of education, of the quest for socio-professional occupations for children, especially women, who are victims of violence such as school children.

Due to the practice of pubertal rites, school pregnancies cannot be perceived as mishaps in schooling, technical, and professional training projects. If government policies are to drastically reduce the discriminatory education gap between girls and boys in elementary and secondary school, the occurrence of pregnancies described as “early” develops a feeling of victimization and guilt with regard to the female than her partner. Disqualified from completing the compulsory course in conventional school, female childhood remains marginalized from the system. In addition, the other partner runs the risk of applying criminal provisions and losing his job. Admittedly, these measures contribute to dissuading and discouraging the culture of pregnancies in the school environment, but a policy of awareness, support, follow-up, and the possible resumption of the tainted but compulsory course seems more operational in the

socio-economic reintegration project. Biomedical experts maintain that “there is no way to detect a pregnancy at the precise moment of fertilization of the egg, and pregnancies terminating in the first week of in utero development are poorly known”²⁶. To reconsider pregnancy as a mishap in the school environment is to take pregnancy out of a Machiavellian logic for the benefit of partners in reproduction in the society, especially the girl child. Thus, this is in accordance with the primordial status conferred on her by the symbolism of puberty rites. The projects of statutes of reproducers of the society, inherited from the pubertal rites and of socio-economic insertion by the conventional school, cannot enter into institutional conflicts by episodes of school pregnancies which see the partners out of school. Cultural heritage concedes a formula to reduce the accidental or offense-related nature of extra-ritual pregnancies and restore social order to reproductive health and society. It is the symbolism of cultural recovery from pubertal rites that should inspire conventional school, in particular, by reinserting mothers into the compulsory conventional school circuit until the age of 16.

Age related to cultural, professional, political, and biological considerations becomes a fluctuating and controversial factor. Table 3 puts age at the confluence of unequivocally sociological majorities. When the table is analyzed, the majorities according to pubertal rites, education, profession, electorate, and psychophysiology are not identical. Statistical data unequivocally relate to age as a socio-demographic indicator of puberty, childhood, biomedical majorities, and community or sociological majorities. School childhood counts within it and with confusions of community or sociological majorities. When pregnancies are described as “plagues” and “early” in the perspective of a brake on the socioeconomic

integration status of conventional school, the partners are already consecrated by the execution of pubertal rites and at the threshold of health of the reproduction of the company. If the majority is established by culture with regard to semiological criteria, it will be based on a detailed statistical data from the civil status. This confusion is damaging for the girl who finds herself experiencing another form of social violence. When puberty rites "open up" the reproductive status of society to partners, the occurrence of a school pregnancy jeopardizes socio-economic integration, especially for girls. The conventional school therefore had to be aware of the fact that it must necessarily form a childhood with identities of plural school ages in search of curricula vitae in the production process. A ritualized childhood cared for by conventional school bears the signs of partners in the reproduction and productivity of society.

Conventional school, social reproduction and socio-economic production

The Education Law is imperative as to the prospect of making mainstream school inclusive. Indeed, schooling is compulsory for "two sexes aged six to sixteen". "The State has the obligation to maintain, within the school system, children aged six to sixteen including those with special needs and put in place a mechanism to integrate or reintegrate children aged nine to sixteen who are outside the system; in particular through bridging classes for the nine to thirteen year age group and vocational training for that of fourteen to sixteen year olds". These legal Ivorian provisions take full strength through UNESCO's vision on education. To this effect, Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO, states that: "The benefits of education are visible from birth in all aspects of life"²⁷. If we are to end poverty and hunger, improve health, preserve our planet and build more inclusive, resilient, and peaceful societies, everyone, especially girls and women, must have access to quality lifelong education. The facts are unequivocal: education saves lives and transforms lives, it is the foundation of sustainability. We must therefore work together in all areas of development to make it a universal right". The phenomenon of school pregnancies, sociologically free from

accidental and conflicting gravity, restores to conventional school both the horizontal, vertical, and integral dimensions of human capital resources. Thus, conventional school, by absorbing school pregnancies, durably and structurally reconciles human resources for reproduction and production in the society. The results of the study²⁸ on teenage pregnancies in schools in England may inspire the reconciliation of the values of the puberty rites and the education, training and vocational programs of childhood schooling, especially for girls.

Conclusion

After careful investigation, the findings discussed so far appear to be the antipodes of public and community policies which make the deathbed for school pregnancies perceived from the angle of "violence" done specifically to young women and virtually to adult women on the compulsory route of the conventional school. It is a high level concern that must be quickly overcome to identify the educational dimension that conveys pubertal rites in their relations to the reproduction in the society. According to the rites, extra-ritual pregnancies are culturally recovered and symbolically celebrated to serve the causes of the communities. The conventional school in its visionary efforts to promote a knowledge economy should not be penalizing on the accidents manifested by the occurrence of school pregnancies. Female youngsters and adult women "can have access to quality lifelong education"²⁹.

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Conflict of interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Irafiala Toure

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