

Teenage Pregnancy Among Bachelor Of Science In Criminology Students

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Abstract

The study dealt on factors that affects teenage pregnancies among the Criminology students. The study looked into the factors affecting teenage pregnancies among the B.S. Criminology students as to family, personal and environmental. The study made use of the descriptive-case study. It utilized the qualitative research in gathering data from identified participants using open-ended questions. The individual's mentality about teenage pregnancy and behaviour is of great influence to this study. The family contributes if it does not perform its expected role and is fueled by the influences of the environment. Teenage pregnancies among students can absolutely disturb their concentration in their studies resulting to dropping out of school. Regrets are experienced after all such involvement but at the same time the respondents were challenged with their experiences. The researchers recommended that parents will advise their children on the effects of early intimate relationships and early pregnancies; First and second year B.S. Criminology female students to undergo seminars on how to deal with peer influence; setting priorities as students; consequences of early sexual involvement; responsible sexuality; possible effects of live-in partners; requirements and challenges of an functional family; and the effects of lack of emotional cohesiveness of a child and a mother.

Keywords: Teenage pregnancy, family, early sexual involvement, consequences.

INTRODUCTION

Teenage pregnancies and teenage motherhood are a cause for concern worldwide (Kinchergast, 2016). Becoming pregnant as a teenager, especially if the pregnancy is not wanted, can put enormous stress on young women and their families. Mwenda (2012) point out that pregnant women may take longer to complete their studies because of the challenges they face, and this may impact the economy. It is very important that the young woman has her parents' support at this time. Several factors are strongly associated with and contribute to the increased risk of an early pregnancy. These factors include: lack of knowledge about sex and how to use contraceptives; barriers to access contraceptives including negative attitudes of health staff; peer pressure; sexual coercion; low self-esteem; low

educational expectations; poverty; family breakdown; and heightened sex-based messages in the media (Mothiba, T.M. & Maputle, M.S., 2012).

Children of teen parents are also more likely to suffer educational deficiencies, be kept back in school, and are more likely to eventually drop out. Their daughters are significantly more likely to become teen mothers than the offspring of women who were older, married, and living in two-parent households (Seigel, D., 2012). Teenage mothers are three times more likely than other teenagers to drop out of school. They are also likely to spend longer periods of time living in poverty (Regoli, J. 1996).

According to an American study, "750,000 girls get pregnant each year, 31% of teenage girls get pregnant at least once before

the turn 20, and the federal government spends about \$7 billion to help families that originate with a teen mother” (Gilbert, P. & Robert, L. 2007). Studies have shown throughout these countries that America still has the highest rate of teen pregnancy. In Canada, “the teen birth rate declined from 35.7 per 1000 in 1974 to 14.4 in 2003” (2006).

Teens living in the East or North central United States or in an urban area are more likely to have a live birth, once pregnant, than those in other regions or in non-urban areas (Zelnik, M. & Kantner, J.F. 1980). In addition, peer environment is important. The more positive a likely a young pregnant girl is to have a live birth (Hofferth, S., 1987). In addition, girls who know a single teen mother are more likely to have a live birth.

Becoming pregnant as a teenager, especially if the pregnancy is not wanted, can put enormous stress on young women and their families. However once it has happened there is no way to go back so the important thing is to support the young woman and to help her to make the wisest choice for her at this time. This is a very difficult time for a young woman who has only a short time to make a major decision. There is no easy way out. The choices available are continuing with the pregnancy and keeping the baby or giving it up for adoption, or termination (abortion). Some factors to take into account are age, family, personal beliefs, access to services and support, how the young woman sees the pregnancy, and how far the pregnancy has progressed. The decision needs to be the one that is the best possible decision for the young woman in difficult circumstances at this particular time. She needs to be able to look back and know that the decision she made was the best she could at the time.

The role of young men in pregnancy prevention is increasingly recognized, and they may need support and information to navigate various aspects of this issue. Research and programs emphasize the importance of engaging young men in discussions about

gender, masculinity, fatherhood, and contraception to prevent teenage pregnancy and encourage responsible sexual behavior (Johnson, P.J. & Manlove, J. 2018)

Young men often receive blame but little information, counselling and support. Young men may need help to accept and support the young woman's right to decide the outcome of the pregnancy, and what her choice means for the father. They may need support to talk about their reaction to the pregnancy, how they feel about future involvement, dealing with family and friends' responses. If the young woman decides to keep the baby it raises the issues of what involvement the father wants and his legal responsibilities to help support his baby. If the father's name is on the birth certificate, or if he is presumed to be the father (e.g. because he and the young woman were living together), then he will be liable to help support the baby financially. If a young man does not believe he is the father, he would need to get legal advice. It is possible to have a DNA test to check if someone is the father of a particular baby. This is done on blood (or other body tissues) from the man, the baby and preferably the mother as well. The test can be done at any age and is now very accurate. He would need to talk with his doctor to find out how to do this. Many young men may need information about contraception.

Social determinants of health, such as low education and low income levels of a teen's family, may contribute to high teen birth rates.⁷ Teens in certain settings are at higher risk of teen pregnancy and birth than other groups (penman-Aguilar, A. et.al. 2013).

One in ten young Filipino women age 15-19 has begun childbearing: 8 percent are already mothers and another 2 percent are pregnant with their first child according to the results of the 2013 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). Early pregnancy and motherhood are common among young adult women age 15 to 24 with less education than among those with higher education. Early

childbearing is also more common in Caraga (38 percent) and Cagayan Valley (37 percent) than other regions. Over 40 percent of young adult women with some elementary education, compared with only 7 percent of those with college education, reported having their first intimate sexual act at age 18.

Statement of the Problem/Objective of the Study

The study looked into teenage pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students of Mountain Province State Polytechnic College.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following problems:

1. What are the factors affecting teenage pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students as to family, personal and environmental?
2. What are the effects of teenage pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students?

Importance of the Study

This study shall be significant to the B. S. Criminology to have understanding about teenage pregnancy. Through this study, the Department can come up with remedies to prevent pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students. Further, this study can be used by other Departments experiencing teenage pregnancies among their students for preventive measures.

Theoretical Framework

The study rests on the sociological proposition that teenage pregnancy is a sociological phenomenon causing serious problems to the concerned individuals, their families, and the society in general. Figure 1 presents the conceptual flow of activities that guided the conduct of the study. This study attempted to elicit the factors affecting teenage pregnancy

among the respondents. The respondents were given the opportunities to share their personal experiences or self-story on the phenomenon under investigation. The researchers noted the effects of teenage pregnancies among the respondents that relate directly to the phenomenon under investigation. The experiences of the respondents were presented in the thematic headings. Based from the gathered data, the researchers came up with recommendations to address the issue on teenage pregnancies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive-case study was used. Open-ended questions were asked to a selected sample from a specific population identified and selected by the researchers.

Further, this study utilized the qualitative research through interviews conducted by the researchers from the respondents. Qualitative data analysts seek to describe their textual data in ways that capture the setting or people or produced this text of their own terms (Sutton, J., 2015).

Locale and time of the Study

The study was conducted among the B.S. Criminology students officially enrolled in the College for Second Semester, SY 2018-2019.

Respondents

The respondents of the study are the five (5) female B.S. Criminology students who became pregnant and have given birth.

Instrumentation

The data that were gathered from the interviews were collated, analyzed, and interpreted as follows:

The statement of each respondent as to the factors that had affected them for early pregnancy were described. Likewise, their answers to the effects of early pregnancy were also be presented. From their individual

responses, remedies were proposed to address the factors affecting teenage pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students.

The statements of the respondents were translated into English language. Pseudonym were designated to each respondent namely: Apple, Babes, Cathy, Deborah, and Everly.

Data Collection

The data used in the study were collected from the five (5) B.S. Criminology students who became pregnant and had given birth while studying. Open-ended interviews were conducted to gather needed data with the approval of the College President.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following presents the factors affecting the teenage pregnancies among the B.S. Criminology students:

Family Factors

Single-parent family. Apple, the first respondent is the 4th eldest child of her late father to his 4th common-law wife. Apple grew up with her biological mother who is a daily-wage earner until the age of 7 when she was taken by the parents of her late father. She came here to Bontoc where she met a guy who then became her boyfriend and was pregnant for her first child at age 17. She had her second child at age 19. Apple was accordingly affected by her family set-up, a bastard and with inconsistent upbringing considering the different family members who reared her. Her mother's remarriage with another man had also an impact in her life. The attention of her mother was on her younger siblings instead of her mother attending to Apple's needs.

The psychodynamic theory (Seigel, D., 2007), places heavy emphasis on the family's role in producing a delinquent child.

Prevalence of the family problems and conflicts are experienced by the teenage mothers. They experienced ruptured relationship with parents; some of them came from a broken family and had limited parental guidance (Meneses, J. & Saratan, C., 2015).

Family conflicts

Cathy, the third respondent is the 2nd child in a family of 4. Her father is a daily-wage earner while her mother is a plain housewife. Accordingly, her parents always quarrel, so she tried to look for friends whom she can have peace of mind until she met a guy during a campaign period for the local election and had relationship with the guy and got pregnant at the age of 18.

Research efforts Seigel (2007) have consistently supported the relationship between family conflict, hostility, low warmth and affection, and delinquency.

Lack of parental advice from parents

Cathy, the third respondent was not properly advised by her parents on early intimate relationship and the consequences of early pregnancy since her parents always quarrel with each other. At an early age, she did not have enough knowledge about sex resulting to early pregnancy.

Everly, the fifth respondent also claimed that she was not properly advised by her parents on the effects of intimate relationships and early pregnancy. She got pregnant at the age of 19. The Kinsey studies of Maciones (2001) reported that people born in the early 1900's, about 50 percent of men but just 6 percent of women had premarital sexual intercourse before age nineteen.

The most important family factor associated with delivering a baby versus aborting a pregnancy is parental education. The higher the education of parents, the lower the likelihood that a teenager, once pregnant, will have a live birth (Zelnik et al., 1980).

Lack of parental supervision

Apple, the first respondent claimed that she was not well supervised by her mother. Likewise, Cathy, the third respondent also claimed that her parents did not supervise her because they were busy with their marital conflicts. Further, Deborah, the fourth respondent had the same claim. Her surviving father was unable to supervise her when her mother died. Her father

was rather busy with her job as a law enforcer than attending to the needs of his children.

Seigel states that there is ample evidence that close, effective parental supervision can reduce children's involvement in delinquency. Youths who believe their parents care little about their activities and companions are more likely to engage in delinquency than those who believe their actions will be closely monitored.

Personal Factors

Lack of self-control

All the five respondents lack of self-control. They all had early intimate relationships with the opposite sex and were unable to limit their closeness with their respective partners and made them pregnant.

The self-control of the general theory of crime states that people with limited self-control have impulsive personalities (Seigel, D., 2007). They tend to be insensitive, risk taking, short sighted, and nonverbal. Children lacking self-control also tend to be adventurous, active, physical, and self-centered. In their adulthood, they have unstable marriages, jobs, and friendships.

The general theory argues that poor self-control is a function of inadequate child rearing practices. Parents who refuse or are unable to monitor a child's behavior, fail to recognize deviant behavior when it occurs, and neglect to punish that behavior will produce children who lack self-control. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1969) conclude that the cause of persistent delinquency-the lack of self-control-is established during the early formative years and controls behavior throughout the life course.

Involvement in vices such as drinking and smoking with friends and boyfriends

Apple, the first respondent admitted that since High School, she had been into vice, particularly drinking with her peers. She had a "happy-go-lucky" lifestyle and "come-what-may" mentality.

Babes also admitted that she was involved in drinking with her peers. Just like Apple, she had an "easy-go-lucky" lifestyle and a "come-what-may" mentality. With her lifestyle, she met her boyfriend here in Bontoc whom she had a child at age 18. Deborah, just like the first two respondents was also involved in drinking and smoking with her peers. She had also a "happy-go-lucky" lifestyle and "come-what-may" mentality. She enjoyed hanging out with friends and did not think of the possible negative consequences of her actions.

Structural and learning theorists Seigel (2007) view experience as one marked by close peer group support. They link delinquency to the rewards gained by associating with like-minded youths, learning deviant values and behaviors from peers, and being influenced by the "peer pressure." Youths who maintain friendships with antisocial peers are more likely to become delinquent regardless of their own personality makeup or the type of supervision they receive at home.

A number of studies from Schaefer & Richard (2005) confirm the idea that young people are more likely to engage in delinquency if they believe that members of their peer group encourage such activity. One recent investigation focused on sexual activity among eight-grade students. Two predictors of such behavior in young girls were having boyfriend who, presumably, encourages sexual relations and having girlfriends they believed would approve of such activity. Similarly, boys rewarded them with high status in the peer group.

Peer influence according to Meneses & Caludio (2015) is one of the factors that caused teenage pregnancy at Brgy. Bambang Bulakan, Bulacan. Hanging out with wrong "barkadas" and involvement in drinking sprawl influenced them to change their attitudes, values and behaviors.

Desire to have a child

Babes, the second respondent and Deborah, the 4th respondent claimed that they wanted to have

a child. They both think that rearing a child is easy and that they can do it while studying.

Lack of knowledge about sex

Apple and Cathy admitted that they lack enough knowledge in sexual involvement. They were not aware that sexual intercourse even for once can cause pregnancy especially during the fertile period of a woman. According to UNICEF Malaysia (2006) Teen pregnancies may result for different reasons in industrialized countries as compared to developing countries. Adolescent sexual behavior which may also be influenced by alcohol and drugs, lack of education and information about reproductive sexual health including lack of access to tools that prevent pregnancies, peer pressure to engage in sexual activity, incorrect use of contraception, Sexual abuse that leads to rape. Poverty, exposure to abuse, violence and family strife at home, low self-esteem, low educational ambitions and goals.

The survey also reveals that one in five (19 percent) young adult Filipino women age 18 to 24 years had initiated their sexual activity before age 18.

Environmental Factors

Peer pressure

Apple, Babes and Deborah were all involved in peers. Their peers influenced them to engage in vices such as smoking and drinking. It was their peers and through their peers that they met their live-in partners. According to Cherry (2021), "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action". Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. It was through the recreational facilities that Apple, Babes and Deborah were given the opportunity to be with their peers and engage in vices. The recreational facilities became their meeting place with their

peers who became their boyfriends and live-in partners.

Effects of Teenage Pregnancy among the B.S. Criminology Students

Lack of focus in attending classes

All the five respondents experienced lack of focus in their studies. Accordingly, they feel lazy to attend classes brought about by the biological changes in their body as pregnant women. The children of teenage mothers are more likely to have lower school achievement and to drop out of high school, have more health problems, be incarcerated at some time during adolescence, give birth as a teenager, and face unemployment as a young adult (Hoffman, S.D. 2008).

Dropping from classes

Apple and Deborah had to drop from their classes to give birth and to take care of their respective children. Apple cannot let her mother and other family members take care of her child, so she has to drop from her class while her husband continues to drive a tricycle to provide their daily needs. Just like Apple, Deborah cared for her child since no family member is available to do the child rearing while her live-in partner engages in daily labor. Girls who become pregnant during their teen years often find that it is a rocky road. Many drop out of school, believing they will not be able to handle being a mother and a student at the same time (Seigel, D., 2007).

Norman R. Galaboa, Gloria P. Gempes (2017), found out that physical and emotional distress emerged because among teenage pregnant women. They were felt exhausted, lousy, sleepy, too tired to go to school, occurrence of hot flashes; painful when the baby moves in the tummy, dizzy and nauseated, sensitive and easy to cry, hot tempered and easily flare up over small things. Veronica Gregorio (2018), based on the sharing made by the participants in her study, found out that the effects of teenage pregnancy include but are not limited to the following: dropping out of school

(while their boyfriend continues to study), having limited time for self-recreation with friends, being blamed for lack of knowledge on sexuality and pregnancy, and depending on their husbands for livelihood.

Feeling of isolation and low-self-esteem

Apple became a full-time housewife caring for her two kids and had lived with the imperfections of her husband. Apple felt as if she was alone to provide everything for the family causing her low self-esteem. For young women of all racial and ethnic categories, weak families and low-income sharply raise the risk of becoming sexually active and having unplanned child (Maciones, J., 2006). To make matters worse, having unplanned children raises the risk that young women will face numerous disadvantages in life, including not finishing school and becoming poor.

Deborah likewise had the same feeling of isolation like Apple. She was challenged as a young mother to care and nurture her child while her live-in partner work for their daily basic needs. Her father, though capable of assisting them in their financial needs did not extend his help. Deborah has the feeling of rejection by her father that had caused her low self-esteem.

Living together with illegitimate children

All the five respondents have to live together with their partners since they cannot be legally married with the respective fathers of their children because of their ages. As a result, their children are all illegitimate. During the Progressive era of the early 1900s a more compassionate attitude toward unwed women and their children evolved. Unplanned pregnancies were no longer considered a moral or economic problem, but rather "a societal problem, an index of what was wrong with society" (Rocca, C. et.al., 2010). A stigma has long been associated with giving birth out of wedlock, and the fear and shame that went along with bearing illegitimate children kept the number of unmarried births low until relatively recent decades. Today, many sociologists admit

that the stigma is largely gone, and that its disappearance has had at least some relation to the increase in teen sexual activity and pregnancy (Kohli, V. & Nyberg, K. 1995).

Josefina Natividad (2013), stated that pregnancy resulting from premarital sexual activity often leads to the decision to begin cohabitation but not necessarily to a formalized marital union. Corroborating evidence for this shift toward non-marital fertility among teenage women is found in the vital statistics report of the National Statistics Office which states that in 2008 "Majority (79.2 %) of babies born to women under 20 (years) of age were illegitimate. The trend toward non-marital fertility is by no means limited to the youngest women. The Vital Statistics Report for 2008 further states that of the total births registered in 2008, 37.5 percent were born out of wedlock and 40 percent of illegitimate births were born to mothers in the age group 20-24.

Quarrels with partner

Apple, with her irresponsible partner caused their quarrels which eventually resulted to their separation. Her partner found a new one whom he is living-with at present. Their two kids are cared by her partner and what hurts Apple is that her very own kids do not recognize her as their biological mother but rather the second partner of their father.

Inability to provide the needs of the child

All the respondents except Deborah are unable to provide the needs of their respective child. Apple, is not physically contributing to the physical needs of her children because she has no source of income. Babes' child is being cared by her parents. Babes is not also providing the physical and emotional needs of her child since she has more time in her studies. Cathy, just like Apple and Babes is not personally caring and nurturing her child. Such is more provided by her mother.

Deborah and her family are staying in a boarding house but her child is still being cared by her in-laws. As a student, he is not also providing to her child what she is supposed to

provide. Parenting is not only expensive; it is a lifetime commitment (Maciones, J., 2001). Several teenage mothers got support from their family during and after their pregnancy (Meneses, J. & Saratan, C., 2015). They are the ones who provide the needs of teenage mothers and help them to overcome those challenges of raising a child. The teenage mothers were able to cope up by accepting the phenomenon.

Hope for a better life for their children

This is the positive effect of teenage pregnancy among the five (5) respondents. After experiencing the challenges of what they have gone through, they all dream to pass the licensure examination for Criminologists in order to find employment and provide the needs of their families for a brighter future for their children. Most of them had no plans of having a second or succeeding children unless they will have a stable job. All of them mentioned that they will tell their children not to repeat what they have done.

In a study conducted, it reveals that teenage mothers were challenged in their teenage experiences so they started picking up the broken pieces; starting up... a new life; love, courage, and hope; and tomorrow's plan. All of the participants in their study expressed their desire to start where they fall (Salvador, J. et.al., 2016). Despite series of unfortunate events in their lives, teenage mothers are willing to pick up the broken pieces they once left. As teen mothers learned more about themselves and honored the path that called them, they become stronger. All of the participants would like to start anew, no matter what people would tell them. Therefore, they are willing to work harder to provide a good life for their children.

The last theme is called 'tomorrow's plan'. All of the teenage mothers believed that their children would continue their lost dreams. Also, what they had experienced in life would be their guiding principles in raising their children.

Summary

Based from the gathered data, the following were derived:

On the factors affecting teenage pregnancies among B.S. Criminology students, it came out that the respondents were not properly advised by their respective parents about teenage pregnancies. It also showed that the respondents have a happy-go-lucky lifestyle and come-what-may mentality evidenced by their involvement in vices as influenced by their peers. Their lack of self-control contributed to early pregnancies.

On the other hand, the respondents had experienced several effects of their teenage pregnancies. In relation to their studies, they lack focus resulting to absenteeism and finally dropping their subjects. They need to stop to give birth and to nurture their children. They have to be live together with the respective fathers of their children without the benefits of legal marriage. Since they cannot study and care for their children at the same time, their family members, mostly in-laws have to take care of their children which causes lack of emotional attachment between them as biological mothers and their respective children. Most of the respondents have to be separated from their parents so they will learn to live at their own and manage their own families. This is a great challenge on the part of the respondents because they are not ready to do so and not an easy task for them. The respondents have learned their lesson from their teenage pregnancies and hope for a better life for their respective families.

Conclusions

Based from the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

The individual's mentality about teenage pregnancy and behaviour is of great influence. The family as well contributes if it does not perform its expected role and is fueled by the influences of the environment.

Teenage pregnancies among students can absolutely disturb their concentration in their studies resulting to dropping out. Their attachment with their children is less since they cannot study and care for their respective

children at the same time. Regrets are experienced after all such involvement.

Recommendations

Based from the derived conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Parents to advice their children on the effects of early intimate relationships and early pregnancies by providing parents education, helping them to develop skills to share their values with their children and teach them to avoid pregnancy.
2. First and second year B.S. Criminology female students to undergo seminars on how to deal with peer influence; setting priorities as students; consequences of early sexual involvement; responsible sexuality; possible effects of live-in partners; requirements and challenges of a functional family; and the effects of lack of emotional cohesiveness between a child and a mother.
3. Further studies can be conducted to improve this research case study.

Acknowledgement

The study would not have been possible without the guidance and help of several individuals who in one way or another contributed and extended their valuable assistance in the preparation and completion of the study. To Mountain Province Polytechnic State College, for allowing the researcher to gather data, specifically the College of Criminal Justice Education Department. Above all, to God almighty for the wisdom.

Funding

The researchers conducted the study with their personal expenses.

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