



Research Article

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY: A PHENOMONOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe the Antecedents and Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy. The participants were 10 Teenage Mothers aged 14-19 that are selected purposively in terms of undergoing teenage pregnancy in Barangay Bambang, Bulakan, Bulacan and shared their lived experiences pertaining to this stage of their life. Phenomenological type of Qualitative Research was utilized in this study. The researcher utilized a guided questionnaire that was based on literature which has been validated by 3 professionals. The main data source typically is in-depth conversations, with the researcher and informants as co-participants. Data was collected through tape recording. After the data collection, the researcher analyzed and interpreted the information obtained using IPA Methodology (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis). The findings revealed that socio-economic phenomenon caused (antecedents) the participants to experience teenage pregnancy are Teenage Pregnancy is associated with poverty including low family income, crowded community, semi squatter dwelling type and school disengagement. Prevalence of family problems/conflicts including ruptured relationship with parents, broken family and limited parental guidance. Peer influences including hanging out with wrong barkadas, involvement in drinking sprawl and alcohol misuse. The consequences of teenage pregnancy that the teenage mothers experienced are family problems including financial problems, nourishment of the child and early responsibilities. They also experienced discrimination acts like feedback about early pregnancy and topic of rumors. Teenage mother's unmet goals are to go abroad, to finish their studies and to support their family. The coping mechanisms of the teenage mothers are getting family support, acceptance of the phenomenon, getting support from the husband's family and finding employment. The Sociological Propositions that evolved from the experiences of the young adolescents who experienced teenage pregnancy as a social phenomenon is caused, and therefore it can be avoided if the causative factors can be brought to for, studied and a relevant social program can be formulate to mitigate teenage pregnancy and its consequences. To conclude, Socio-economic phenomenon plays an important role in causing teenage pregnancy. The results of the study became the basis for developing guidelines to mitigate teenage pregnancy. The study recommended that the Government should focus on improving economic opportunities to low-income families to improve their life. Teenagers need proper counseling and support from their families.

KEYWORDS:- Teenage, Pregnancy, Antecedents, Consequences, Phenomenological



INTRODUCTION

Teenage Pregnancy is a cause of concern because of its increasing incidence in the society and its associated increase in mortality. The Department of Health tackles teenage pregnancy as central to the Government's work to prevent health illnesses, child poverty and social exclusion. Maternal and prenatal health is of particular concern among teenage pregnant women. The worldwide incidence of premature birth and low birth weight are higher among adolescent mothers. The Researcher is faced with the glaring truth that at a very young age, a lot of young people today have their children. According to a survey, one out of four women became mothers by age of 19. In this young population, majority is still unmarried – % is living-in with their partners and 2.6 are not in union. (National Demography and Health Survey, 2003).

Teenage pregnancy is a serious problem that affects the community, school and society. Teenagers nowadays tend to be more liberated about their sexual relationship and sexual activities. The books, magazines, newspapers, and other forms of media influenced the teenager's idea of sex, giving rise to sex experimentation and unprotected sexual intercourse. Based on the National Statistics Office (NSO), Pregnancy among girls under the age of 20 increased by 65 percent over a 10-year period, from 2000-2010. In 2010, live births by teenage mothers registered with the NSO were 207,898, compared with 126,025 in 2000. On the other hand, teenage marriages registered with the agency shows a slow but steady decline from 14.8 percent in 2000 to 13 percent in 2010 according to the United Nations Population Fund. The 2011 Family Health Survey revealed that while child birth is slowly decreasing among women in the older age groups, it is increasing among girls 15 to 19 years old. From 39 per 1,000 live births in 2006 to 54 in 2011, across all regions in the Philippines. Researcher has shown that the lack of comprehensive sexuality education and limited access to adolescent-friendly reproductive health services are key reasons for the high incidence of teen pregnancies.

NSO administrator Carmelita Ericta said that from 2000 to 2010, the number of babies born to teenage mothers increased from 7% to 11%. The NSO had recorded 616 girls below 15 years old who had given birth to their first baby in 2000 and another 102,724 from the age group 15 to 19. Ten years later, the figures have bloated to 1,260 and 174,085, respectively. Ericta said that the under-age marriage during this period went down from 12,790 to 8,473.

Being a young mother can affect one's education. Teen mothers are more likely drop out of high school than girls who delay childbearing. Young motherhood can also affect employment and social class. A teenage mother may become financially dependent on her family or on public assistance. Teen mother is more likely to live in

poverty. Social issues in different countries regarding teenage pregnancy include lower education levels, higher rates of poverty. Social issues in different countries regarding teenage pregnancy include lower education levels, higher rates of poverty and other poorer life outcomes 'birth for the teen mother and her child. Teenage pregnancy is usually, outside of marriage and carries a social stigma in many communities and cultures.

In the Philippine setting, teenage pregnancy is becoming a major cause of concern. An alarmed rising trend of young women becoming mothers and majority are unmarried. Young pregnant women are more vulnerable to death during pregnancy while childbirth and a huge number are not physically and emotionally prepared for motherhood.

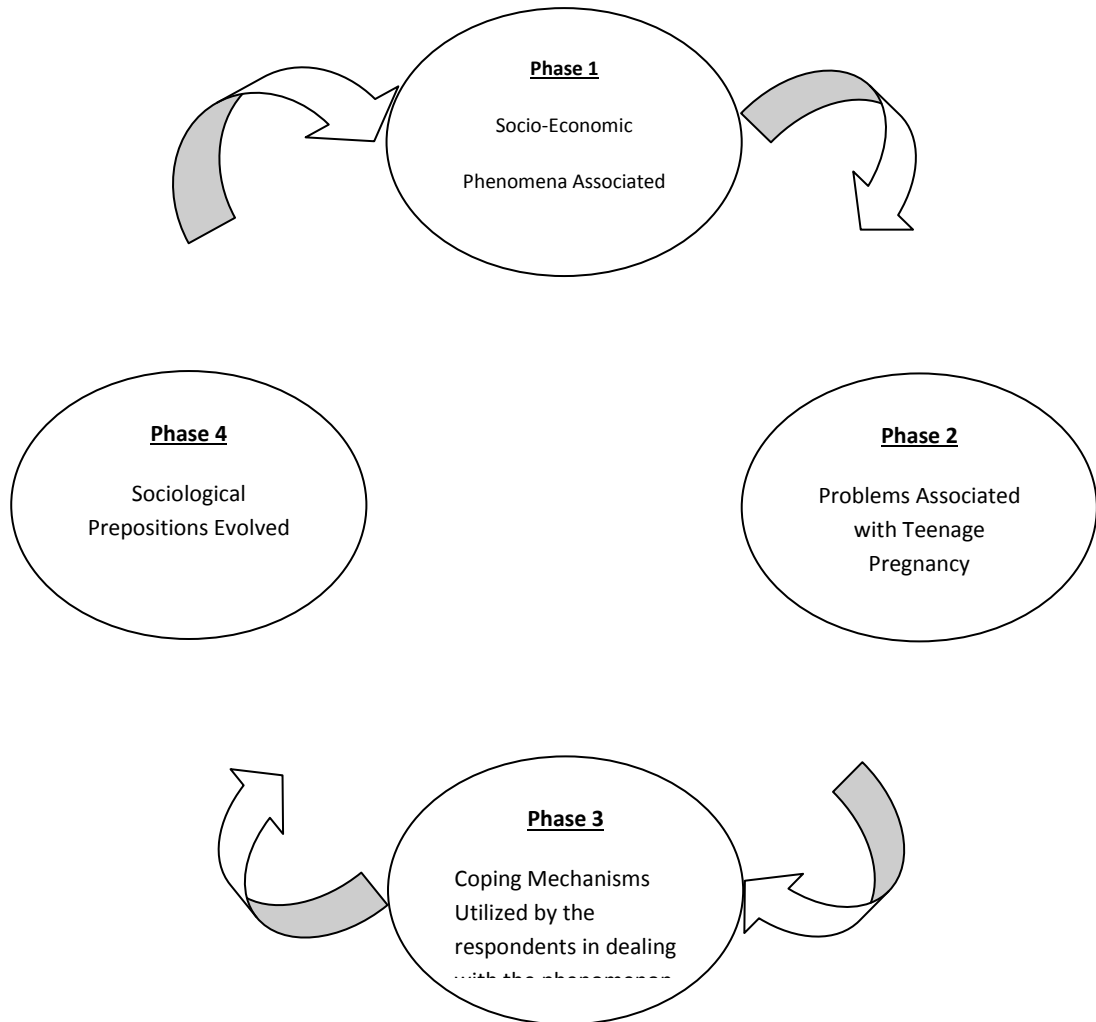
One-third of pregnant teens receive insufficient prenatal care and that their children are more likely to suffer from health issues in childhood or be hospitalized than those born to older women (Guttmacher Institute, 2001). Many pregnant teens are subject to nutritional deficiencies from poor eating habits that are among teenagers. Young mothers and their babies are also at great risk of contracting HIV. Life is more often difficult for a teenage mother and child. In view of the aforementioned issues, the researcher chooses to investigate or make study on the Antecedents and Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy in selected Barangay Community in order to address the issue raised. This caught the interest and curiosity of the researcher to work on this kind of a research topic. Teenage Pregnancy is a very common issue in Brgy. Bambang Bulakan, Bulacan.

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. The study consists of four phases. Phase 1 attempted to elicit the socio-economic phenomena associated with teenage pregnancies (antecedents). The respondents were given the opportunities to share their personal experiences or self-story on the phenomenon under investigation. In Phase 2, the researcher noted within the personal experiences of the respondents key phrases and statements that relate directly to the phenomenon under investigation. The subject's interpretations of the phrases were obtained, as well as the resulting issues and problems. The researcher also came up with a structural synthesis. The bones of the experiences were analyzed in thematic headings. Phase 3 concluded with the coping mechanisms utilized by the respondents in dealing with the consequences brought about by the phenomenon. In Phase 4, the researcher examined closely the meaning and structures that emerged and came up with sociological

proposition that may be utilized in mitigating teenage pregnancy and its consequences.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study



evolved from the lived experiences of the young mothers for policy and/or program development?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to describe the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy in Brgy. Bambang, Bulakan, Bulacan in terms of antecedents (cause factors) and consequences (effect factors) as well as the coping mechanism utilized in dealing with the problem.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

- i. What socio-economic phenomenon had caused (antecedents) the respondents to experience teenage pregnancy?
- ii. What problems associated with teenage pregnancy were experienced by the respondents?
- iii. What coping mechanisms were utilized by the respondents in dealing with their problems? What sociological proposition may

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study made use of qualitative research design which is a form of inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. (Holloway and Wheeler, 2003). The research is engaged in the phenomenological type of qualitative research. In a phenomenological study, the main data source typically is in-depth conversations, with researcher and informants as co-participants. Researcher helped informants to describe lived experiences without leading the discussion. Through in-depth conversations, researcher strived to gain entrance into the informant's world, to have full access to their experiences as lived. The focus of a phenomenological

study according to Palton (1990) lies in the descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience. The goal is to identify the essence of the shared experience that underlies all the variations in the particular learning experience. Essence is viewed as commonalities in the human experiences. Palton's phenomenological framework guided the conduct of the study.

Locale of the study

The chosen locale where the researcher conducted the study is at Brgy. Bambang Bulakan, Bulacan has a total land area of 1,483.40 km². The researcher visited the participants that are selected based on the criteria of the researcher.

Instrumental Analysis

A semi-structured interview guide was developed and used as a primary data gathering tool by the researcher in conducting the study. The interview guide consisted essentially of the following questions:

- i. What activities or socio-economic phenomenon do you remember you engaged in prior to your experience of teenage pregnancy?
- ii. What would you describe your feelings/view points when you learned you were pregnant?
- iii. How did you break the news to your parents and other family members?
- iv. How did your parents and other family members react to your experience of teenage pregnancy?
- v. What problems did you encounter during and after pregnancy?
- vi. How did you cope to the problems and stresses brought about by the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy?
- vii. What lessons did you learn from the experiences?
- viii. What programs do you think are necessary to mitigate the problems and consequences of teenage pregnancy?

Data Analysis

The researcher observed ethical principles during the implementation. Permission to conduct this study is granted by the Barangay Bambang Bulakan, Bulacan. Ethical principles observed are as follows.

Right to privacy, Confidentiality

During an interview to the participants, all information given was kept confidential. Also prior to the implementation, the researcher implored and explained about confidentiality. Rapport is gained between the researcher and respondents, and embarrassment and doubts were avoided.

Right to Self-discrimination, Autonomy: Respect Own Decisions

Each one has the right to make decisions for ourselves. Nurses need to acknowledge the mother's ability to think a reason and make decisions. The respondents were informed that they are to be studied. As the interview proceeds, the researcher needs to respect the participant's decision.

Beneficence

It is a duty to do no harm and maximize the benefits. During the interview phase, the researcher should not insist the respondents to answer some questions that might be too personal for them. In beneficence, the researcher considered the emotional harm it might inflict.

Informed Consent

Before the implementation, the researcher prepared an informed consent form containing the objective and coverage of the study, and more importantly to secure the permission of the respondents to participate in the study and to share their lived experiences associated with teenage pregnancy. These will also provide information whether a participant wants to refuse voluntarily.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teenage Pregnancy explored in this study is associated with poverty. It was noted that majority of the participants come from low-income family. Common among the fathers of teenage mothers are jeepney drivers. Their earnings are not enough to afford their necessities. Other types of works are sewing, engaged in direct selling, working in fast food chain and working in Babuyan. Majority of the participants are living in crowded community occupied with many people, houses and trees and living in semi squatter dwelling type where there are many drug addicts residing. 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. Peer influences are one of the factors that caused teenage pregnancy in the said Barangay. Hanging out with wrong barkadas and involvement in drinking sprawl influenced them to change their attitudes, values and behaviors. Several participants experienced family problems such as financial problems, nourishment of the child and early responsibilities. They encountered lack of financial stability being a mother at an early age and difficulty in financing and nourishing their babies. They also stated that raising a child is a tough responsibility especially in teenagers. They also experienced discrimination acts like feedback about early pregnancy and topic of rumors from the neighbors and some member of their family who is not in favor of their early pregnancy. Teenage mother's unmet goals are to go abroad, to finish their studies and support their family, but they are less likely to complete school,

and less likely go to college to quality for a well-paying job.

Several teenage mothers got support from their family during and after their pregnancy. 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. They experienced mixed emotions but in the end, they just accepted the situation. They also got support from the father of their baby who helps them in raising and nourishing their baby. They are the ones who provided their needs. Majority of the participants seek for employment. They work hard in order for them to nourish their child at very young age. Teenage pregnancy or premature motherhood is of great social concern to families and other institutions. The causes of teenage pregnancies specifically in Barangay Bambang, Bulacan include but not limited to the prevalence of the family problems and conflicts, the negative influence of peers, and other socio-economic antecedents. These finding of the study clearly indicate the important role of the family, the school, the government and other agencies. An effective program to mitigate pregnancies and its consequences will necessitate an integrated approach that includes Program for Responsible Parenthood, Social and Educational Advocacy Program and Promotion and Facilitation of Youth Development Programs.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following are arrived at:

- i. Socio-economic phenomenon plays an important role in causing teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy is associated with poverty which is common among low-income families, crowded community and low educational attainment. Family Problems/Conflicts like ruptured relationship with parents, broken family and limited parental guidance. Moreover, Peer influences like hanging out with wrong circle of friends, involvement in drinking, sprawl and alcohol misuse.
- ii. Family problems such as Financial Problems, Nourishment of the Child and Early Responsibilities are common problems encountered by Teenage Mothers. They also experienced discrimination acts like feedback about early pregnancy and topic of rumors from the people who are not in favor of their early pregnancy. Going abroad, finishing their studies to support their families are the unmet goals of teenage mothers.
- iii. Getting family support, acceptance of the phenomenon, getting support from the husband's family and finding employment are the coping mechanisms utilized by the participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are thus offered:

- i. The governments should focus on improving economic opportunities to low-income families to improve their life. Each of them need better education and stronger families because lack of education is one of the causes of low income families.
- ii. Provide proper counseling, help, support, encouragement of their family and community, teenage mothers can manage to continue their education in order for them to get a decent job.
- iii. Parents or families of teenage mothers should encourage them to become more responsible in raising and nourishing their child through guiding them to have proper parenting skills that are needed to raise their child very well.

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