



De La Salle University-Dasmariñas

TEENAGE MOTHERS' EXPERIENCES: A CASE STUDY

**An Undergraduate Thesis Presented To the Faculty of
The Behavioral Sciences Department
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ABSTRACT

The research involves interview conducted to ten teenage mothers from Dasmariñas City, Cavite. The interview comprises of two parts: (1) the demographic profile; and (2) their experiences of their teenage pregnancy. With regards to the second part of the interview, the researchers divided it into four parts: (1) experiences with the father of their child; (2) experiences with their family; (3) experiences with their friends; and (4) experiences in school.

The findings show that half of the participants are separated from their boyfriends which reveal that teenage mothers and father of their child do not always end up together. All of the teenage mothers that were interviewed were not able to finish their studies but half of the participants are employed. Also, half of the participants were left by the father of their child and all of them expressed hard feelings about them. Nevertheless, all of the participants received financial and emotional support from their family and encountered changes on their relationship with their friends. Lastly, not all of them received full emotional support by their classmates and teachers which means that the school also became a stressor when they were pregnant.



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A. General

This paper discusses the experiences of teenage mothers during and after their pregnancy with the father of their child, family, friends, and school.

B. Specific

Statement of the Problem

This paper seeks to know:

1. What is the demographic data of teenage mothers in terms of:
 - 1.1. Present age
 - 1.2. Age when she got pregnant
 - 1.3. Civil status
 - 1.4. Education



- 1.5. Employment Status
2. What are the experiences of the respondents in terms of the following:
 - 2.1. Father of their child
 - 2.2. Family
 - 2.3. Friends
 - 2.4. School

Scope and Delimitations

The researchers will interview ten Filipino teenage mothers within Dasmariñas, Cavite whose age were 19 and below when they had their first child. The present age of their first child should be five years and below.

This study will focus on the experiences of the respondents with the father of their child, family, friends, and school during and after they had teenage pregnancy

Because the incident happened for almost 5 years ago, several changes may have already happened. Due to the situation, the researchers respect the possibility that the respondents may have forgotten some of the smallest details regarding their pregnancy. Nevertheless, the results of this case study cannot be generalized to all adolescents who experienced this.



Methodology

In this study, the researchers used the case study method wherein the substance of the data is a basis from the interview that will be conducted through the self-made interview guide.

The respondents in this study are ten selected teenage mothers chosen through snowball sampling. The location of the participants is within Cavite specifically Dasmariñas. Also, their child should be age five years and below to lessen the tendency to forget their past experiences.

The researchers used of a self-made interview guide for this case study and an audio recorder for accurate analysis of data. It contains the demographic profile and personal experiences of the participants.

The researchers decided to have ten participants for the case study who are from Dasmariñas, Cavite. Through snowball sampling, the researchers have asked their friends if they have friends who experienced teenage pregnancy.

The data is treated through qualitative analysis. After the interview process, the researchers have discussed the nonverbal and verbal observations as the respondents will respond to the questions. The actions and the respondents' thoughts will be considered and will be vigorously examined to obtain the necessary information.



Findings

1. Half of the participants were in the age of 18 and 19 years old when they got pregnant.
2. Nine out of ten participants were already on twenty years old above when the study was conducted. The ages of the five participants when they had their teenage pregnancy ranges from 18-19. The youngest participant had her first pregnancy when she was fifteen years old.
3. Four out of ten participants are unmarried. Four others are currently living-in with the father of their child. The two others are married with the father of their child but one of them was already separated with his husband.
4. Six out of ten participants reached college level in which three of them are studying in the present. Two other participants graduated from high school. Furthermore, two participants were high school undergraduate.
5. Five participants are employed at the time of study; one was self-employed; while the others were unemployed.
6. Seven of the participants narrated that the father of their child took responsibility of their pregnancy; they received full support. However, three other participants said that they were given care and love by the father of their child yet declined their responsibility later. Thus, two of them received only initial support and the other one considered that she was not totally supported.



On the other hand, only one of them revealed that she had no serious problem encountered with the father of her child during her pregnancy. Three of the participants mentioned that they had misunderstandings with the parents of the father of their child which they perceived as their parents-in-law though they were still unmarried. Moreover, two participants said that money was their main problem because it was difficult for them to find a job; two others indicated that the immaturity and unpreparedness of the father of their child was their problem. The other two has either of these challenges; health issues and the unwillingness of the father of their child to take his responsibility.

Four of them perceived changes in their relationship during and after the pregnancy were that the father of their child became less sweet and caring; four others became more thoughtful, sweet, and mature; while the other two had no changes at all.

After their pregnancy, three encountered no particular difficulties; two had financial problems; two considered their separation with the father of their child as a difficulty; one disclosed that it was hard having disputes between her family and the family of the father of her child; while the other one said that there were adjustments made as a new parents. The adjustments they made to keep harmonious relationship with the father of their child was mostly adjusting their behavior or *pakikisama* according to the six participants; three



said they had serious conversations; and the other one had seek advice from her mother.

7. All of the participants revealed that their family was shocked at the time they confessed their condition. Only three of them said that they did not received harsh words at the very time their parents knew their condition. Majority of them shared that their parents got angry and that a gap formed between them. Their relationship got affected. One of them said that there were times that they seldom talk with their family members. Trust became an issue as many of them admitted that the trust their family gave them before the incident decreased as they were now experiencing curfews. Then again, all of them said that their family supported them all through the process of their pregnancy until the present time. They all felt the support of their family may it be financial or emotional support.

Their serious problem during their pregnancy for the two participants was about health; two had financial difficulties; one considered the involvement of the father of her child as a problem; one said that her family's expectations were not fulfilled; one had emotional difficulties brought by conception; one was unprepared of her pregnancy. Nonetheless, the other two encountered no serious problem.



After the pregnancy, four had no serious problem; four find it difficult to take care of their child while the other two had financial difficulties.

To maintain their relationship with their family, all of them said that they do their best to deal with them. They try to understand what they feel and help them in every way they can as an exchange for their family's help and continuous support.

8. Nine among ten participants admitted that there were many changes that happened between their relationships with their friends. Majority of them do not have big spare time to get together unlike before when they were still not a parent but one had a dispute with her friends due to her pregnancy. Moreover, five participants revealed that their friends' treatment during their pregnancy were basically moral support; three said that their friends remained the same; one received financial support; while one became distant with her.

Also, seven of the participants indicated no serious problem encountered during their pregnancy; one were being talked negatively by her friends; one received no acknowledge of her pregnancy; and one said that her friends were disappointed with her. But after their pregnancy, still seven of the participants had no difficulties; two spent less time with their friends; and one participant have seen who really are her true friends.



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In general, all of them just let the problems they had with their friends pass because according to them, there were many things that are worth more important, and that is their baby and how they would face their life as a new parent. Nonetheless, half of them made adjustments such as finding ways to communicate with their friends but half made no adjustments.

9. All of the ten participants' studies were affected during the time of their pregnancy. Only three manages to graduate high school and to continue their studies to finish college; three others are in a college level but unable to continue it; two are high school undergraduate; and two are high school graduate. All of them admitted how they found it hard to cope with their pregnancy as they were all students that time. Three out of ten received negative comments from their schoolmates where some even gives indirect hints and arguments while others received care, advices, understanding and consideration. Then again, the half of the participants received emotional support by their schoolmates and teachers but others did not receive any support.

In addition, five participants experienced no particular problem in school during their pregnancy; three had health issues such as being sleepy and spontaneous headaches; three heard negative feedbacks; and one had low grades.



Their difficulties after their pregnancy were basically the inability to continue their studies. On the other hand, participants who continued their studies find time and attention as the biggest challenge as they were a parent at the same time student at the present time.

Conclusion

Girls have a high tendency to be pregnant while they were teen especially at the age of 18 and 19 because of their curiosity and eagerness to explore things such as drugs and sex. They tend to be interested when it comes to forming relationships with the opposite sex as well as be determined in conceptual ideas like love, political ideology, and spirituality.

Teenage parents were unable to get married because of the law that the country has that any male or female below eighteen years of age may not contract marriage. Even so; if they are now in legal age, it shows that their main focus is their child and most of them have disputes with the father of their child.

It reveals that most teenage mothers were not able to finish their studies because of their teenage pregnancy since they were affected psychologically, physically, socially, and financially during their school years.



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A greater part of teenage mothers are employed for them to provide the necessities of their child. Still, there are some who lessens to find a work because they stopped their former education.

Most teenage mothers were left by the father of their child because of their unpreparedness and immaturity based on studies and as well as the experiences of the participants. Other than that, they tend to experience misunderstandings with the guys' family and financial difficulties that led may lead them to separation.

The family of teenage mothers got shocked when they became aware of the unanticipated pregnancy and most of them got angry. Only a few families tend not to get angry since they cannot do anything about it. Nevertheless, they all received financial and emotional support.

The problems teenage mothers experience with their friends were found to be lower compared to the problems they underwent with the father of their child and their family. The reason behind this is that teenage mothers became distant with their friends and usually spends lesser time with them. Moreover, all of them received support from their friends.

At school, teenage mothers experience problems with regards to their health and some schoolmates. Not all teenage mothers were supported at school because they believe that they will not be fully accepted by their schoolmates and teachers. All of them had difficulties continuing their studies



because they were psychologically, socially, and financially affected and that they would rather choose to work.

Recommendation

After a thorough analysis of the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

1. Teenage mothers are recommended to continue their studies to find a better job even if it requires being a working student.
2. A member of the family should take place to assist every member for better understanding of the situation by making reflection about the situation.
3. For students and future researchers, a more extensive study is suggested to widen the scope of the study by including experiences with the community, having a large number of participants within a particular area, or interviewing the father of the child for a better understanding of teenage mothers' experiences.



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