

ABSTRACT

The Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Care program aimed to serve pregnant and parenting teens by providing educational, family planning, health, and medical services to support the program goals of reducing repeat pregnancies and increasing educational attainment. This project utilized secondary data from the dataset Cross-Site Evaluation of the Title XX Adolescent Family Life Program in 14 States, 2008-2011, ICPSR 34398. Data was drawn from multiple sites, consisting of experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation designs. This project utilized a convenience sample of 179 Latina teens in selected AFL projects. No significant relationship between the intervention and educational attainment was found. No significant relationship between the intervention and educational attainment within each level of social support was found.

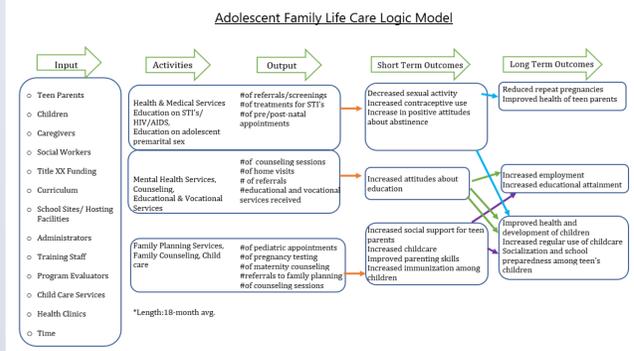
INTRODUCTION

The Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Care program aimed to serve pregnant and parenting teens, including their infants, partners, and family members, and sought to improve the adverse effects associated with teen pregnancy (Kan et al., 2012; Rosenberg, 2013). AFL Care program offered enhanced services with the intent of reducing repeat pregnancies, increase educational attainment, increase contraceptive use, improve child well-being, and increase receipt of childcare among parenting teens. The average duration of services received through AFL Care program was 18 months.

The purpose of this project is to assess the impact that AFL Care program had on educational attainment among Latina teens. The study also assesses if social support impacted the effect AFL Care program had on educational outcomes.

Evaluation Questions:

1. What is the effect of Adolescent Family Life Care Program on educational attainment among parenting Latina teens?
2. Does the program effect differ by the amount of social support the teen receives?



LITERATURE REVIEW

What We Know:

- Social learning theory has been used as a theoretical base for the Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Care program. According to the theory, learned behaviors are facilitated by internal processes such as thoughts, expectations, and emotions, with an incorporated emphasis on observational learning and modeling (Robbins et al., 2012)
- The AFL Care program was implemented due to an increased public concern with teen pregnancy and accompanying outcomes (White & White, 1991)

What We Don't Know:

- If there is a correlation between the AFL Care program and educational attainment among Latinas, including if the effect differs by the amount of social support the teen receives

Key Information:

- Effective programs do produce positive outcomes for parenting teens (Harding et al., 2020).
- Only 40% of teen mothers who become pregnant between the ages of 15 to 17 graduate from high school (Bravo et al., 2016)
- Pregnancy rates are higher among Latina teens compared to their white peers (Huang et al., 2013).
- Parenting Latina teens have endured more hardships than their white peers, such as school dropout (Assini-Meytin et al., 2018)
- School retention interventions positively influenced educational outcomes (SmithBattle et al., 2017)
- Parental support, father support, availability of childcare, and school retention interventions were identified as critical components in the support systems of parenting teens as it relates to educational attainment (Assini-Meytin et al., 2018)

METHODS

Type of Design

- Secondary data analysis
- Dataset: Cross-Site Evaluation of the Title XX Adolescent Family Life Program in 14 States, 2008-2011, ICPSR 34398
- Data was drawn from multiple sites, with multiple designs, and across 14 states
- Experimental and quasi-experimental local evaluation designs

Sampling Strategy

- The study utilized a convenience sample of participants in selected Adolescent Family Life Care projects in 14 states across the United States
- Most of the projects specified that participants were selected via self-referral or a school, doctor, or clinic referral
- 80% of the projects identified that intervention services were commonly available to all teens in need rather than directed towards specific subgroups
- Criteria for inclusion consisted of teenage females who were 19 years old or younger at baseline

Dependent Variable

- Educational attainment is defined by grade advancement
- To measure educational attainment, a new variable was created. The highest grade completed at baseline and follow-up were combined to compute a new variable that indicates if a participant moved up a grade level. A zero denotes a participant did not move up a grade level and a one denotes a participant moved up a grade level

Other Key Variables

- Childcare is defined by a child receiving regular childcare and the number of hours the child spends in childcare weekly
- 25 hours or less of weekly childcare indicates a low amount of childcare
- More than 25 hours of weekly childcare indicates a high amount of childcare

- Father support is defined by father involvement, and three original variables were combined to create a father support score
- The father support score ranges from zero to three, where zero signifies a lack of father support, and a higher score signifies a higher level of father support

- Parental support is defined by parental involvement

- Recoded parental support variables were combined to create a parental support score that ranges from zero to two, where zero indicates the absence of parental support, one indicates a moderate level of parental support, and two indicates a high level of parental support

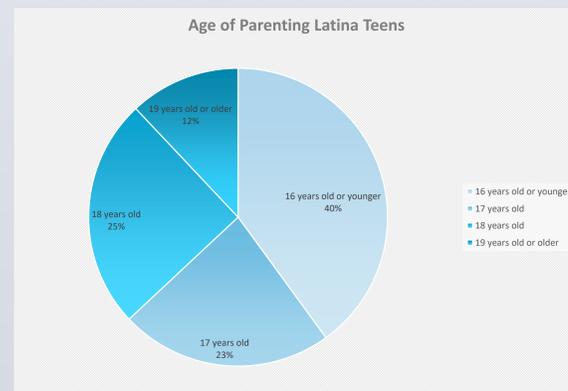
Data collection procedures

- Data were collected via self-administered paper and pencil instruments or computer-assisted self-interviews from parenting teens
- Longitudinal data were collected from intervention and comparison groups before program activities began, establishing a baseline, and at follow-up approximately one year later

RESULTS

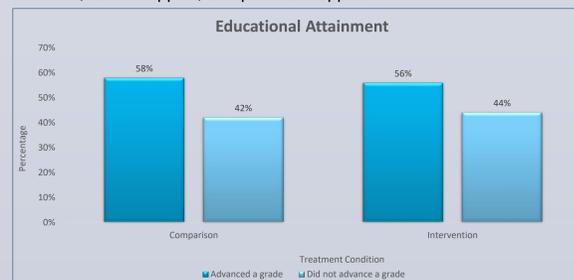
Descriptive Analysis

- The study sample included 179 Latina teens; there were 91 participants in the intervention group and 88 in the comparison group
- Both the intervention and comparison groups reported that graduating high school was extremely important
- Most of the participants were 16 years old or younger in both the intervention and the comparison groups



Inferential Analysis

- Based on a Fisher's exact test, there was no significant relationship between the treatment condition and educational attainment categories
- Based on a Fisher's exact test, there was no significant relationship between the treatment condition and educational attainment categories within the levels of receiving regular childcare, the amount of childcare received, father support, and parental support



DISCUSSION

Implications

- It is recommended that a standardization of services among all program sites is implemented
- Additional research is needed to adapt to current needs and should include a qualitative component to obtain comprehensive input and bridge any gaps in quantitative data, including addressing barriers
- Add a third measurement point approximately two to three years after follow-up to obtain a more accurate representation of program success
- Increase sample size

Study Limitations

- The evaluation design was not uniform
- How participants were selected could negatively impact generalization
- The sample size for Latina participants made it difficult to draw conclusions
- The duration of time between baseline and follow-up may have been too short to determine if the program achieved its intended outcome

Conclusion

Further research is suggested to gain an understanding of how Latina teens are impacted by the Adolescent Family Life Care program or another similar program. Social workers who serve this population are impacted by the findings of this project due to the prevalence of higher pregnancy rates and higher risk of low educational attainment among Latina teens (Assini-Meytin et al., 2018; Huang et al., 2013). The findings of this project grant social workers the opportunity to connect the teen to suitable resources, provide comprehensive and culturally appropriate services, and to work through a shared goal with the teen for positive academic achievement.

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