Abstract

The United States has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the Western countries, with Hispanic females aged 15-19 making up 77% of adolescent childbearing, and the percentage of Hispanic females aged 15-19 repeat births are 16.1%, compared to the rate of 15.9%. The present study aimed to examine the impact of the Adolescent Family Life Program on pregnancy among pregnant and parenting Hispanic adolescents. Researchers hypothesized that the AFL program would reduce second pregnancy rates among Hispanic adolescents. This secondary analysis examined the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research’s (ICPSR) Cross-Site Evaluation of the Title XX Adolescent Family Life Program in 14 States, 2008-2011 study provided by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

Methodology

The current study is the secondary data analysis of the Cross-Site Evaluation of the Title XX Adolescent Family Life Program in 14 States, 2008-2011 study provided by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). Researchers cross-site evaluated projects with experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation designs in this study as well as a matched-group design where researchers match sites receiving the AFL-funded abstinence programming to sites receiving standard curricula making a total of 30 sites (Kan et al., 2013).

Results

The results indicate that it is important to implement further research on Hispanic adolescents on effective interventions and pregnancy prevention programs that can lower teen pregnancy rates amongst the most vulnerable ethnic populations in the United States.

Strengths and Limitations

• Strengths of the current study were:
  • It was studying a vulnerable population and was promoting awareness of pregnancy prevention to a population that was susceptible to teen pregnancy.
  • Researchers used to a culturally sensitive lens throughout the whole study.
  • The completed questionnaires enabled researchers to obtain qualitative data and were able to utilize Chi-square analysis.

• Limitations of the current study were:
  • It is a secondary data analysis that relied on the original research for its framework.
  • The small study sample size, making it difficult to generalize the results to the general population.
  • The participants’ responses were collected through self-reported questionnaires, creating the possibility of bias among the results.

Literature Review

Social Learning/Cognitive Theory

• Social cognitive/learning theory, indicates that behaviors are influenced by the interactions of an individual’s internal and external factors (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 2012).

• The social cognitive theory states that knowledge is key to behavioral change, because it can affect how we think and feel about the behavior so if a program provides participants with the knowledge of consequences of high-risk behaviors and alternative behaviors to reduce those high-risk behaviors, adolescents are more likely to change their behavior (Robbins et al., 2015).

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Pregnancy Prevention with Minorities Adolescents

• One study showed that adolescents, especially minority adolescents, who participate in high-risk sexual activity, like having sex without condoms, expose themselves to higher rates of HIV, and unintended pregnancy, which can lead to severe negative health, economic, and social outcomes (Manlove, Fish, & Moore, 2015; Walsh et al., 2015).

• Another study showed the onset of sexual activities in adolescents is in line with two-thirds of high school seniors already experienced sex and about 40% of United States adolescents not using condoms during the last time they had sex (Tortorella et al., 2010).

Research Limitations

• There is numerous research and data conducted to reduce teen pregnancy among adolescents, however, there is limited research of pregnancy programs targeting Hispanics (Asher et al., 2020; AngusKoes et al., 2014; Bukafield et al., 2012; Kan et al., 2012; Kan et al., 2015; Karoly et al., 2016; Lee, Daeyoung, Florey, & Holm, 2013; Leung et al., 2019; Quelopana and Alcaldle, 2013; Tortorella et al., 2010; Walsh et al., 2015).

• The research on the AFL program is outdated, compares the AFL program to a different program, or inquire about the participants’ experiences in the program rather than obtaining prevention rates (Mckennell & Thompson, 1983; White & White, 1991; Reynolds, 1999; Asher et al., 2020).

Methodological Considerations

• The independent variable for the current study is the AFL program, which is defined as a research program that aids in curricula that provide abstinence sexual education to adolescents to decrease sexual activity by reducing second pregnancy rates (Kan et al., 2013).

• For the current study, the intervention group, labeled as 1, and the comparison group, labeled as 0, had nominal levels of measurements

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>Median: 17.1 SD: 0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Siblings</td>
<td>Yes 4  4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Young</td>
<td>Yes 3  3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current School</td>
<td>Yes 67  67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended School</td>
<td>Yes 67  67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear Another Bhat Before Flash High School</td>
<td>Yes 25  25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

Implications for Practice & Policy

• Social workers working with adolescents can increase awareness and communication about safe sex practices that can aid in teen pregnancy reduction rates.

• Social workers need to offer sex education to adolescents to provide more biopsychosocial services to improve adolescents’ knowledge of safe sex practices and promote positive youth development.

• School social workers can also aid the reduction of teen pregnancy rates by implementing school wide educational programs, like awareness campaigns or classroom presentations, to increase knowledge on barrier methods and other ways adolescents can increase safe sex practices.

• The results indicate that it is important to implement further research on Hispanic adolescents on effective interventions and pregnancy prevention programs that can lower teen pregnancy rates amongst the most vulnerable ethnic populations in the United States.

Reference


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The Effects of the Adolescent Family Life Program on Second Pregnancy Rates among Hispanic Adolescents

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