

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

Stephanie Rodriguez, MSW, Department of Social Work

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 at 16.1%, compared to the average 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. The current study included participants (N= 179) who were pregnant and parenting Hispanic adolescents aged 19 or younger. Participants were given self-administered paper-and-pencil or electronic outcome evaluation questionnaires at baseline and then completed a follow-up questionnaire 1 year after baseline. The chi-square results indicated no statistically significant relationship between Hispanic adolescents in the intervention group and repeated pregnancy rates. Those in the Hispanic Intervention Group were more likely not currently pregnant and used more methods to prevent pregnancy than the Hispanic Comparison Group. The current study results provide implications for future research and development of evidence-based interventions among pregnant and parenting Hispanic adolescents to reduce second pregnancy rates and promote positive youth outcomes. Implications also include social workers working with adolescents can increase awareness and communication about safe sex practices, like offering sex education and barrier methods awareness, to adolescents that can aid in teen pregnancy reduction rates.

Introduction

Significance of Study

- Teen pregnancy rates in the United States are among the highest in Western countries (Karoly et al., 2016; Leung et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2018).
- Hispanic females aged 15-19 made up 77% of adolescent childbearing in 2017 (CDPH-MCAH, 2019).
- The percentage of Hispanic females aged 15-19 repeat births was 16.1% compared to the average rate of 15.9% in 2017 (CDPH-MCAH, 2019).

Purpose of the Research

- The purpose of this outcome evaluation was to analyze the impact of the AFL program on pregnancy among pregnant and parenting Hispanic adolescents

Research Question

- Does the AFL program reduce second pregnancy rates among Hispanic adolescents?

Hypothesis

- The AFL program reduces second pregnancy rates among Hispanic adolescents

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 risk high-risk behaviors, participants are more likely to change their behavior (Robbins et al.; Walsh et al., 2015).

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Pregnancy Prevention with Minorities Adolescents

- One study showed that adolescents, especially minorities adolescents, who participate in high-risk sexual activity, like having sex without condoms, expose themselves to higher rates of STDs, 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 becoming earlier with more than 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 (Tortolero et al., 2010).

Research Limitations

- There is numerous research and data conducted to reduce pregnancy and sexual activities among adolescents, however, there is limited research of pregnancy programs targeting Hispanics (Asheer et al., 2020; AugsJoost et al., 2014; Brakefield et al., 2012; Kan et al., 2012; Kan et al., 2015; Karoly et al., 2016; Lee, Dancy, Florez, & Holm, 2013; Leung et al., 2019; Quelopana and Alcalde, 2013; Tortolero 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 (Mecklenburg & Thompson, 1983; White & White, 1991; Reynen, 1999; Asheer et al., 2020).

Methodology

Research Design and Data Collection Procedures

- 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., 2015).
- Participants were self-referred or were referred from a school, physicians, or a clinic, and participants had to be females who were 19 or younger at baseline and had to read English or Spanish to participate in the study.
- Participants were given self-administered paper-and-pencil or electronic outcome evaluation questionnaires for the AFL program.

Sample and Sampling Method

- The sample size of the current study was composed of all complete responses of the Hispanic participants to the study questions associated with pregnancy and pregnancy prevention in the original study's dataset 2, which was 179 participants.
- The participants' characteristics in the current study are all the same, except for only focusing on the Hispanic participants in dataset 2 of the original research.

Measures

Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Program

- 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 youth sexual activity by reducing second pregnancy rates (Kan et al., 2015).
- For the current study, the intervention group, labeled as 1, and the comparison group, labeled as 0, had nominal levels of measurements

Second Pregnancy

- The dependent variable is the second pregnancy rates among the participants, which are defined as participants becoming pregnant again while participating in the program.
- Second pregnancy in participants will be measured by the following questions from the survey:
 - Methods participants tried to avoid pregnancy within that month (no method used this month, abstinence (did not have sex this month), birth control pills, and a condom)
 - Have the participants been pregnant since a specific date (yes or no)
 - What ways they tried to avoid pregnancy on the follow-up assessment (does not apply- I am pregnant now, no method used this month, abstinence (did not have sex this month), birth control pills, and a condom
 - If they ever received any of the following since a specific date (a pregnancy test and an abortion)

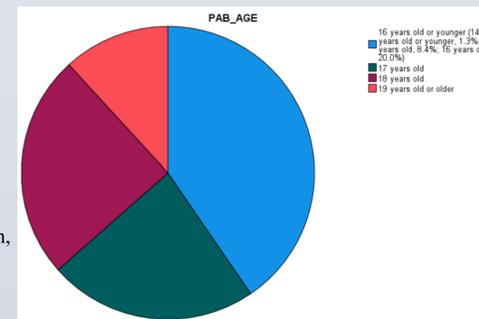
Results

Chi-square Analyses

- Being in the Hispanic Intervention Group was found to have a **clinical significance** relationship to participants being currently pregnant.
 - Researchers found that Hispanic adolescents obtaining the AFL program had lower participants who were not currently pregnant (95.6% vs 88%).
- Being in the Hispanic Intervention Group was found to have a **clinical significance** relationship to participants using no method used to avoid pregnancy.
 - Researchers found that Hispanic adolescents obtaining the AFL program were more likely to utilized safe sex practices and avoid pregnancy (6.7% vs 13.2%).
- There is **no significant difference** among the Hispanic Intervention Group than the Hispanic Comparison Group to repeated pregnancy, however, the comparison group had higher rates of repeated pregnancy compared to the intervention group at follow-up.
- There was **no significant difference** among the Hispanic Intervention Group than the Hispanic Comparison Group in relation to whether participants received a pregnancy test and an abortion.

Table 1
Demographic Information (N=179)

Characteristics	n	%
Age (years)	M=17.08	SD=1.06
How Many Children were Born to Them		
Zero	4	3.1
One	111	87.4
Two or More	12	9.4
Current School Status		
In School or GED Program	77	56.2
Graduated from High School or Completed GED	43	31.4
Dropped Out of School	11	8
Other	6	4.4
Want Another Baby before Finish High School		
No	86	95.6
Yes	4	4.4



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 programs, like awareness campaigns or classroom presentations, to increase knowledge on barrier methods and other ways adolescents can increase safe sexual 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 prominent 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 aimed to use 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.

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