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Research Article

School Community Responses to Teenage Pregnancy: Basis for School Action Framework

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This research studied the attitude of the school community members—teachers, students, and parents—towards teenage pregnancy in the school setting in the Division of Santa Rosa City, Laguna, for School Year 2024-2025. A descriptive quantitative type of research was employed with simple random sampling to choose public secondary teachers, parent-PTA officers, and student-class officers as respondents. The study involved teachers, parents, and students from four public integrated schools in Santa Rosa City, Laguna, to provide objective perceptions about teenage pregnancy. Teacher-respondents were class advisers, student-respondents were class officers, and parent-respondents were PTA officers. An equal distribution of respondents was considered in the selection process. The study sample consisted of 120 teacher-respondents, 80 student-respondents, and 40 parent-respondents, resulting in 240 respondents. Data were collected through a questionnaire survey. The study used mean to analyze data on school community responses to teenage pregnancy, including policies, support services, stigma, inclusivity, and sexual education. The mean measured the school's support services for pregnant teenagers in terms of financial, academic, social, health, wellness, and awareness. The analysis of variance was used to determine significant differences in responses and support systems, while Pearson r was used to determine a significant relationship between available support services and effectiveness. The research revealed significant differences in the answers to school policies, support services, stigma, and inclusivity as seen by teachers, parents, and students. It also revealed substantial variations in attitudes towards the existing support services for pregnant teenagers. No meaningful correlation, however, was established between the existing support services and their perceived effectiveness in financial, academic, social, health, wellness, and awareness areas. The results underscore the calls for better support services and the need for comprehensive intervention in addressing teenage pregnancy in schools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teenage pregnancy is an alarming issue hindering many teenage girls from fulfilling their educational achievements. Notwithstanding domestic and foreign treaties favoring education for pregnant teens, the increasing rates of pregnancies among adolescents in the Philippines constitute a critical public health issue leading to attendant social, economic, and health complications (Montano *et al.*, 2020). Mathewos and Mekuria (2018) asserts that teenage mothers may find it impossible to complete their education and struggle to find gainful jobs, leaving them dependent on government help or support from their parents or families. Teenage pregnancies are also associated with low socio-economic levels, and this is a very typical scenario for low-income households. In a similar vein, most people view tragedy as the unplanned pregnancy of a female student. Teenage pregnancy has an impact on the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being of adolescents. It is frequently connected to a broad spectrum of emotional reactions, including, but not limited to, denial, guilt, and fury.

Based on Hidayana *et al.* (2016), early sexual behavior, socioeconomic status, and illiteracy are the primary reasons for the high rate of teen pregnancies in the Philippines. There is a need for a bottom-up approach focusing on school policies, support services, stigma, and diversity despite government efforts. The research explores how teen pregnancy behaviors are learned and how school interventions can minimize occurrence based on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

1. What is the response of school community members to teenage pregnancy within the school environment concerning in School Policies, Support Services, Stigma; and Inclusivity?

2. What support services are available in the school for pregnant teenagers in terms of Financial Aspect, Academic Aspect, Social Aspect, Health and Wellness, and Awareness and Prevention?

3. What is the extent to which school support services for pregnant teenagers are effective in the given aspects?

4. Is there a significant difference in the responses of school community members to teenage pregnancy within the school environment as perceived by the three groups of respondents concerning the given variables?

5. Is there a significant difference in the support services available in the school for pregnant teenagers as perceived by the three groups of respondents regarding support systems?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the available support services for pregnant teenagers within the school environment and the extent of its effectiveness?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Teenage Pregnancy as a Social Issue

The Philippines, which has the highest rate of adolescent birth among ASEAN members, continues to experience adolescent pregnancy. The United Nations Population Fund (2017) documents that the rate of adolescent pregnancy slightly decreased from 10% in 2008 to 9%. More than 500 teenage

girls become pregnant and give birth daily, and the live birth rate among teen mothers is still high. This is an important health, social, and economic problem. Teenage pregnancies, for instance, are associated with adverse health outcomes for both mothers and their children, limited job opportunities, and school dropouts.

The World Health Organization (2020) states that the major killer of girls between 15 and 19 years of age globally is pregnancy-related and childbirth complications. The health complications of teen mothers are aggravated by unsafe abortion complications, especially in nations where the abortion process is illegal.

Others include economic challenges, limited sexual education, and lack of awareness of contraception as the major causes of teenage pregnancies (Robles, 2019). Adolescents who become pregnant face stigma, violence, and challenges in obtaining education and employment.

Pregnant adolescent women lose up to 33 billion pesos annually, negatively impacting their education and future income. Expanding social safety, strengthening sexual health education, and improving family planning access are necessary.

2.2. Teenage Pregnancy within the School Environment

Teen pregnancy is an increasing socio-medical as well as socio-economic issue for both developing and developed countries and has a significant influence on education and future opportunities. Tambi and Mesue (2020) found that rejection and parental pressure in response to teen pregnancy have a tendency to lead to school dropout. Parental guidance was recommended to prepare them to help their pregnant adolescents. In Rwanda, Ruzibiza (2020) reported that pregnant adolescents are advised to attend school if health is permitted, yet stigma deters them from being at school. The study highlights that even where supportive policies are in place, contextual barriers should be addressed in order to make it possible for pregnant adolescents to realize their rights.

Teenage mothers in the Philippines are hindered in pursuing education, and only 38% complete high school by age 22 (Viloria, 2020). The absence of proper education translates into menial or no jobs, perpetuating poverty. Postrado (2020) points out that adolescent pregnancies happen more often in low-socioeconomic-status families, where scant resources and absence of sexual education predispose individuals to risky sex. Peer pressure and rape, as identified by Habito *et al.* (2021) and David *et al.* (2017), are of great concern as determinants of teen pregnancies. Peer groups, as opposed to family, greatly influence adolescents' sexual behavior, which increases risks of early pregnancies.

2.3. Support Services for Teenage Pregnancy

Friales *et al.* (2024) revealed, as reflected in the sharing of both school heads and teachers in this study, that early pregnancy has jeopardized the educational attainment of teenagers, most especially female students. It led many of them to drop out of school due to personal, social, and cultural circumstances. The results of this study on the school heads and teachers' perspectives, challenges experienced, and responses hope to provide significant input on the need for collaborations with



other stakeholders, particularly by the local government, barangay, and home, in addressing this issue concerning the learners. Gomez and Omandam (2023) stated that School officials are providing academic support to teen moms to address increased dropout rates and enrollment issues, using strategies like house calls, school materials, and financial and emotional support. Manzanilla *et al.* (2024) identified peer pressure, social stigma, and societal acceptance of adolescent pregnancy as further impediments to adolescent mothers' education, along with financial hardship, interrupted schooling, and inadequate family or partner support. Musyimi *et al.* (2020) further stated that treatment of social, economic, and health conditions among teen mothers can alleviate mental health issues such as suicidal behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

According to McCombes (2019), the study employed a descriptive research design to address the “what,” “where,” “when,” and “how” of adolescent pregnancy and its consequences. The study collected quantitative data through surveys, which were then analyzed for trends and patterns. A descriptive design was best for exploring the school community members' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. The survey method and a self-designed and tested questionnaire were utilized for data collection, which was further analyzed statistically to answer the research questions (Bhandari, 2021).

3.2. Population and Sampling

The study used stratified random sampling to select schools and participants. Four integrated schools in the Division of Santa Rosa City, Laguna, were chosen: Balibago Integrated High School, Don Jose Integrated High School, Santo Domingo Integrated High School, and Sinalhan Integrated High School. Participants from these schools were selected using simple random sampling. Respondents included: 120 teachers (30 per school), 80 students (20 per school), 40 parents (10 per school). In total, 240 respondents participated in the study.

3.3. Respondents of the Study

The study targeted three groups from the school community: Teachers who were class advisers, Students who were class officers, Parents who were members of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). These groups were selected based on their ability to provide

objective perspectives on teenage pregnancy within the school environment.

3.4. Research Instrument

The main instrument used was a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of three sections: School community members' responses to teenage pregnancy, focusing on policies, support services, stigma, inclusivity, and sexual education. Support services for pregnant teenagers, addressing financial, academic, social, health, and wellness aspects. Effectiveness of school support services. The tool was pilot-tested and content validated to establish its reliability, with Cronbach's alpha used to measure internal consistency. Responses were made on a four-point scale: 4 (Strongly Agree/Very High Effectiveness), 3 (Agree/Moderate Effectiveness), 2 (Disagree/Low Effectiveness), 1 (Strongly Disagree/Lack Effectiveness).

3.5. Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection began after receiving approval and ensuring ethical guidelines were followed. A letter of permission and endorsement from the division office was submitted to the school heads. Participants gave informed consent, and the questionnaire was administered. The data were then tabulated and analyzed using SPSS software.

3.6. Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical methods were used: Mean determining the response of the school community members and evaluating the available support services and their effectiveness. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to identify differences in perceptions between the three respondent groups. Pearson r to assess the relationship between the availability and effectiveness of support services for pregnant teenagers.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The study conformed to ethical standards through the provision of informed consent by all participants, protection of data confidentiality and anonymity, minimization of biases in data collection and analysis, and abidance by proper citation, referencing, and reporting with an endorsement letter from the division superintendent.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Composite Table on the Response of School Community Members to Teenage Pregnancy within the School Environment with respect to School Policies, Support Services, Stigma, and Inclusivity

	Teacher	Parent	Student	Composite	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
School Policies	3.22	3.12	3.73	3.36	Agree
Support Services	3.20	3.17	3.80	3.39	Agree
Stigma	3.21	3.19	3.81	3.40	Agree
Inclusivity	3.20	3.20	3.85	3.42	Agree

Inclusivity	3.20	3.20	3.85	3.42	Agree
Response of School Community Members to Teenage Pregnancy within the School Environment	3.21	3.17	3.80	3.39	Agree

4 - (3.50 - 4.00) Strongly Agree 3 - (2.50 - 3.49) Agree 2 - (1.50 - 2.49) Disagree 1- (1.00 - 1.49) Strongly Disagree

As indicated in the table, the students, parents, and teacher-respondents have agreed positively on the indicators as their responses on teenage pregnancy within the school environment concerning school policies (WM=3.36), support services (WM=3.39), stigma (WM=3.40), and inclusivity (WM=3.42) with an overall mean of 3.39 and verbally interpreted as “Agree.” These findings imply that the school community members recognize and support pregnant teenagers’ needs through suitable policies, support services, and less stigmatizing efforts to increase their inclusiveness. However, the slight differences in the categories call for improvement opportunities regarding more specific school policies and consistency in the support services for pregnant students. These ways will help make the school environment even more supportive of the inclusion of pregnant students, ensuring they feel valued, included, and empowered without discrimination or stigma but inculcating the positive values to be instilled

in all students on the prevention of early pregnancy among teen students. Consequently, the findings imply the positive responses on teenage pregnancy, not consenting to it as a good action but ensuring the uninterrupted education of pregnant teenagers and protecting their lives as well as their lives with them. The results support Javier’s (2010) claim that adolescent pregnancy is a significant cause of maternal and infant mortality, with complications being the world’s most important cause of death for girls aged 15-19. Pregnant girls face additional health risks and complications, and younger mothers are more likely to give birth to babies. Unwanted pregnancy and childbirth can lead to unsafe abortions, with an estimated 3.9 million girls in underdeveloped countries experiencing unsafe abortions annually. Adolescent pregnancy also causes social and economic suffering for girls, their families, and communities, with a higher likelihood of violence in marriages or partnerships.

Table 2. Composite Table on the Support Services Available in the School for Pregnant Teenagers in terms of Financial Aspect, Academic Aspect, Social Aspect, Health and Wellness, and Awareness and Prevention

	Teacher	Parent	Student	Composite	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Financial aspect	3.15	3.16	3.45	3.25	Agree
Academic aspect	3.13	3.14	3.15	3.14	Agree
Social aspect	3.09	3.13	3.14	3.12	Agree
Health and wellness	3.20	3.03	3.06	3.10	Agree
Awareness and prevention	3.21	3.18	3.20	3.20	Agree
Available support services provided by the school for pregnant teenagers	3.16	3.13	3.20	3.16	Agree

4 - (3.50 - 4.00) Strongly Agree 3 - (2.50 - 3.49) Agree 2 - (1.50 - 2.49) Disagree 1- (1.00 - 1.49) Strongly Disagree

As indicated in the table, on average, the students, parents, and teacher-respondents “Agree” with their assessment of the support services available in the school for pregnant teenagers in terms of financial aspect (WM=3.25), academic aspect (WM=3.20), social aspect (WM=3.14), health and wellness (WM=3.12), and awareness and prevention (WM=3.10), with an overall mean of 3.16, verbally interpreted as “Agree.” These findings imply that the school offers support services for pregnant teenagers to avoid interruptions in their education and meet their needs in different aspects, fulfilling their roles as students and a future mother at a young age. To ensure care for pregnant students and their vulnerable situation, the school may provide intervention in helping the pregnant teenagers

financially, academically, socially, and emotionally to keep their healthy well-being by developing a more accepting and supportive learning atmosphere within and outside the school. Manzanilla *et al.*’s (2024) study reveals that educational barriers include financial difficulties, alternative learning methods, disruptions in the educational process, and support from partners and family. Economic issues include financial hardship, ambitions for future schooling, and plans for well-paying jobs. Social concerns include feeling judged, being accepted negatively, and normalizing pregnancy at a young age. A strategic intervention program focuses on healthy communities, media responsibility, values, religious involvement, parents, and family approaches to address these barriers.

Table 3. Composite Table on the Extent of Effectiveness of the School Support Services for Pregnant Teenagers with Respect to Financial Aspect, Academic Aspect, Social Aspect, Health and Wellness, and Awareness and Prevention

	Teacher	Parent	Student	Composite		
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Extent of Effectiveness
Financial Aspect	3.04	3.19	3.04	3.09	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness
Academic Aspect	3.05	3.20	3.09	3.11	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness
Social Aspect	3.07	3.17	3.08	3.11	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness
Health and Wellness	3.07	3.11	3.22	3.13	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness
Awareness and Prevention	3.05	3.21	3.39	3.22	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness
Extent of Effectiveness of Available Support Services to Pregnant Teenagers within the School Environment	3.06	3.18	3.17	3.13	Sometimes	Moderate Effectiveness

4 - (3.50 - 4.00) Always / Very High Effectiveness

2 - (1.50 - 2.49) Rarely / Low Effectiveness

3 - (2.50 - 3.49) Sometimes / Moderate Effectiveness

1- (1.00 - 1.49) Never / Lack Effectiveness

Based on the assessment provided by students, parents, and teacher-respondents, the school support services for pregnant teenagers were rated as “Sometimes” effective across all indicators, with the following weighted means: financial aspect (WM=3.09), academic aspect (WM=3.11), social aspect (WM=3.11), health and wellness (WM=3.13), and awareness and prevention (WM=3.22), yielding an overall mean of 3.13. This rating suggests that while schools provide support for pregnant students in these areas, the services are not fully optimized and require further development to ensure that pregnant students can fully benefit from them.

The school’s financial, academic, social, health, wellness, and awareness programs are helpful but are not fully streamlined or consistent. Pregnant students may not be able to fully utilize these services, pointing to a need for more effective coordination, availability, and consistency. This finding is echoed by Angwaomaodoko (2024) recommends that deliberate efforts should be made by society to prevent teenage pregnancy, and if teenage students get pregnant, efforts should be made to improve their mental health and self-esteem. They should be given adequate support and not be isolated or thrown out of school.

Gatbonton (2021) pointed out that while institutional and governmental support exist, many regions, particularly those

with limited resources, still struggle with providing sustained support services on the ground. Inadequate financial and social support for pregnant teenagers can significantly impact their educational outcomes. Assini-Meytin *et al.* (2018) suggest that Findings highlight the unique importance of parental financial support, shortly after birth, on teen mothers’ school retention and suggest the relevance of clinical staff in supporting teen mothers in couple relationships to continue their education. Furthermore, Brindis *et al.* (2020) recommendations for future efforts include improving the content, quality, and sustainability of education programs; actively engaging youth in the design of policies, programs, and clinical services; using technology thoughtfully to improve health literacy; expanding access to services through telehealth and other delivery options; and designing programs and policies that recognize and address structural racism, health equity, and inclusion.

In conclusion, while schools are making strides to support pregnant students, there is a need for further improvements to make these services more consistent and coordinated. By enhancing the availability and integration of support systems, schools can ensure that pregnant students receive the comprehensive assistance they need to succeed both academically and personally.

Table 4. Test of Significant Differences in the Responses of School Community Members to Teenage Pregnancy within the School Environment as Perceived by the Three Groups of Respondents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.34	2	6.169	14.544	0.000
Within Groups	100.53	237	0.424		
Total	112.87	239			

The table rejects the null hypothesis, underlining the necessity of tackling teenage pregnancy in schools. It proposes better communication between teachers, parents, and students, especially about policies, support services, stigma, and inclusion.

This would address knowledge gaps and reduce bias, resulting in better handling of teenage pregnancy cases. In addition, engaging stakeholders in policy planning and assessment and support service evaluation can create an inclusive and enabling environment for pregnant students. These findings corroborate the research by Friaes *et al.* (2024), which established that early pregnancy substantially

impinges upon the academic performance of teenager students, particularly women, who tend to leave school because of societal, cultural, and personal reasons. Their research brings to the fore the importance of partnership among stakeholders such as the local government and social organizations to solve the challenges of pregnant students and continue their education.

Table 5. Test of Significant Difference in the Support Services Available in the School for Pregnant Teenagers as Perceived by the Three Groups of Respondents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.13	2	0.064	3.485	0.032
Within Groups	4.38	237	0.018		
Total	4.51	239			

The table shows that the probability value 0.032 is less than 0.05 confidence level, indicating that the null hypothesis on a significant difference test is rejected. Rejecting the null hypothesis implies a significant difference in the support services available in the school for pregnant teenagers in terms of financial aspect, academic aspect, social aspect, health and wellness, and awareness and prevention as perceived by the groups of teachers, parents, and students as respondents. Results of the study show a substantial difference in how pregnant teenagers receive the support services rendered within a school regarding financial, academic, social, health and wellness, and awareness and prevention aspects, as perceived by the groups of teachers, parents, and students. As school community members, the groups view the availability and adequacy of support services rendered differently, signifying divergent experiences, expectations, or degrees of awareness about initiatives on the school’s side for supporting pregnant students. Such consultation mechanisms and avenues for giving feedback should consistently be implemented with teachers, parents, and students to fill adequate gaps, ensuring support services are deemed adequate by all groups and effective in meeting holistic needs among pregnant teenagers. Therefore, through differences, the school is likely to build an even more

welcoming environment for pregnant students, bringing in support and trust among one another. Discovering differences in perspectives across relevant stakeholders can also be the basis for the intervention of the school to lessen teenage pregnancy cases, focusing on the direct consequences on the personal and healthy well-being of pregnant teenagers. Similarly, the teachers seem more involved in the more practical, policy-driven side of services supporting them. However, diverse opinions may cause miscommunication and disagreement, making optimizing support services and their implementation even harder. Thus, it is important to harmonize the various opinions toward a common objective; all stakeholders must develop effective communication and engagement strategies. According to the results, young moms are raised in supportive relationships, develop close bonds with their kids, deal with a lot of conflict in all facets of their life, place a high value on education, and have positive outlooks on their futures and self-worth (Amolo *et al.*, 2024). Based on these results, the researchers firmly believe that more programs and policy changes should be implemented to encourage teen moms to go back to school, particularly in light of the elements that would make the experience more positive.

Table 6. Test of Significant Relationship Between the Available Support Services for Pregnant Teenagers within the School Environment and the Extent of its Effectiveness

		Extent of effectiveness of available support services to pregnant teenagers within the school environment
Available support services provided by the school for pregnant teenagers	Pearson Correlation	-0.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.654
	N	240

The table shows that the probability value of 0.654 is more significant than the 0.05 confidence level, indicating that the null hypothesis on a significant difference test is accepted. Accepting the null hypothesis implies the absence of a significant difference between the available support services for pregnant teenagers within the school environment and the

extent of its effectiveness in terms of financial aspect, academic aspect, social aspect, health and wellness, and awareness and prevention with -0.029 r-value indicating a negative weak relationship. The available support services for pregnant teenagers within the school environment and their extent of effectiveness are

not strongly related, which means that the effectiveness of these services does not necessarily relate to their availability or specific aspects being assessed. This may suggest that variables other than offering support services, like quality, consistency, and accessibility, could play a role in the effectiveness. The results are significant for policymakers and the school to assess the availability of support services and the quality and integration of services across various aspects. There may be a requirement for an integrated approach to identify the gaps left by current services and deliver impact while meeting pregnant teenagers' needs consistently. This way, creating a better supporting environment to enhance the pregnant students' academic, social, and personal outcomes at school is more strongly possible.

The findings support the findings of Harding *et al.* (2020), who found that adolescents who are expecting or parenting have several challenges in achieving self-sufficiency and promoting the healthy development of their offspring. Adolescent parents need help navigating these challenges, and there are a number of organizations that are designed to offer that help. This systematic review analyzes the evidence on programs for promoting proper birth spacing and increasing educational attainment of teen parents so that they can become more independent. The effective programs for serving pregnant and parenting teens differ from one another, which means there is no one-size-fits-all solution for enhancing adolescent schooling and ensuring proper birth spacing. Extensive studies on adolescent parent support programs are needed to enhance our understanding of effective support systems for this group.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study discloses that the school community comprising the students, parents, and teachers perceives the necessity of providing pregnant teens adequate policies, support services, and a less stigmatizing school setting. Despite the availability of services from the school in finance, education, social services, health and well-being, and awareness, service delivery should be more inclusive and standardized. The findings indicate that while the school community has knowledge of the availability of such support programs, they are not optimized, having inconsistencies and coordination gaps, hence diminishing their general effectiveness. The wide disparities of responses across the groups suggest that all stakeholders should be involved in order to increase school policies and support programs. Besides, although there is no direct relationship between the availability of support services and their effectiveness, the quality and accessibility of such services are crucial in promoting the pregnancy experience of adolescents. The study emphasizes greater community engagement, program implementation, and improved policy-making to address effectively the problem of teenage pregnancy.

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