

Teenage Pregnancy

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Introduction

Teenage pregnancy, also known as early pregnancy is that pregnancy occurring in a woman who is usually between thirteen to sixteen years old. At present, is becoming a recurring phenomenon amongst teenagers. Although, there are different perceptions with respect to teenage pregnancy, yet in many societies, teenage pregnancy is considered inappropriate. The issue is inviting global attention mainly because of its worsening consequences. There are several factors in the society that directly or indirectly affect the factors relating to teenage pregnancy: these are demographic, social, cultural factors and others that influence the decision of teen pregnancy. The paper explores the some of the most important health, cultural, and economical considerations relating to the issue.

Discussion

Studies regarding United States reveal that Four out of ten girls become pregnant before the age of 20 years. This results in more than 900,000 pregnancies each year. The age of about 40 percent of young mothers is less than 18 years and the children born to teenagers are more abuse and neglect than children of older parents. It is observed that only four out of ten mothers with age less than 18 years graduate from high school and nearly 80 percent of fathers do not marry underage mothers of their children. Statistics reveal that marriages with adolescent girls fall twice as often as marriages in which a woman is not less than 25 years. Mothers of teenage children are often born prematurely, underweight which increases the probability of blindness, deafness, chronic respiratory diseases, mental retardation, mental illness, cerebral palsy, dyslexia and hyperactivity and death at the stage of infancy (Sagili et al, 2012).

Pregnant teens are at a higher risk of suffering from health problems, including anemia, hypertension, renal disease, eclampsia and depressive disorders. In addition, those who have unprotected sex are at risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease. These babies born from teenage mothers are more likely than others to have low birth weight and exhibit related health problems.

Teen pregnancy also has economic consequences. Having a child at early age can compromise their studies and therefore limit the employment prospects of the young girl in a labor market and leave them dependent. They are also not able to nurture their child and provide them with all the necessities of life. In addition, maintaining an adequate standard of living becomes difficult for adolescents bearing a child, especially those from 15 to 17 years. Studies are evident of the fact that most teenage mothers do not have a spouse who contributes to household income.

Regardless of developed or developing nation status, most countries continue to encourage marriage before the birth of a child. In cultures where young women are married soon after menarche, (the age of first menstruation), the age of first marriage and first pregnancy likely occur to an adolescent woman (Sagili et al, 2012). Globally, subcommunities within each nation that have higher rates of immigrants, minority racial or ethnic populations, poverty or low socioeconomic status, and little educational experience lead to higher rates of teen pregnancy. This also leads to early pregnancies and the issues relating to it.

Conclusion

Teenage pregnancy is now considered a serious problem and inviting global attention. The rate of teenage pregnancy and child birth is highest in the United States. There are several factors which increase the occurrence of teenage pregnancies in the United States.

Studies from Health and Education sectors indicate that to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies, campaigns should be conducted at state levels of complete sex education, access to contraception (both pre-coital, coital and post-coital) and the services of family planning. All teenagers need proper counseling and advice to postpone sexual involvement. They must also be provided with information on how to prevent teenage pregnancy. Teenagers need both motivation and capacity to avoid sexual activities and thus to prevent pregnancies.

References

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