

# Factors of Teenage Pregnancy Out of Marriage from The Perspective of Social Work Students

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## Abstract

Social problems that occur in teenagers nowadays have become an unhealthy phenomenon in society. The social problems occurred involve misconduct such as teenagers having free sex resulting in pregnancy and so on. The free sex activities carried out by teenagers who get pregnant out of wedlock have contributed to the increase in the number of abortions and baby disposal in the country. Thus, this study aims to explore the factors and effects of teenage pregnant out of wedlock according to the perspective of students. The objective of this study was to identify the factors of teenage pregnancy out of wedlock. The design of this study was qualitative by using depth interview techniques. The informants of this study consisted of six social work students from the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. This study was conducted at the Faculty of Sciences and Humanities. The data for this study were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that the factors of teenagers getting pregnant out of wedlock were the influence of peers, parenting style, self -desire and lastly the influence of the mass media. These occurring factors have affected teenagers who experience it. The effects that occur are the impact on the emotional and mental well -being of teenagers, on the health of teenagers and the impact on national development.

**Keywords:** Factors, Teenage Pregnancy, Social Work Students, Perspective, Qualitative

## Introduction

Nowadays, the lives of teenagers are exposed to many bad things around their lives. These social activities cause them to easily fall into immoral activities and can give a negative impression to them. These teenagers are involved in activities such as robbery, rape, free sex activities, abortion and so on. All these social problems are caused through the widespread use of social media without parental supervision, resulting in the birth of children out of wedlock. According to Norulhuda, et al (2012) stated that unwed pregnancies among Teenager are referring to minors who are pregnant without a valid bond. Teenager who are pregnant out of wedlock belong to the group aged between 13 to 18 years (Khadijah, et al.,). UNICEF (2008) stated that Teenager involved in these unwed pregnancies range in age from 13 to 19 years. The phenomenon of getting pregnant at a young age without having a legal bond will cause anxiety in teenagers so that they choose various ways to hide this

matter. Based on statistics released by the Department of Social Welfare (2018), the number of cases of unwed pregnancies was recorded to increase by 577 cases between January 2014 to December 2018. Most cases of unwed pregnancies involve teenagers.

### **Literature Review**

Based on previous studies, there are several factors that influence the occurrence of unwed pregnancies among these Teenager. It occurs within and outside the country which is closely related to internal factors and external factors that lead to sexual activity resulting in unwed pregnancies. The main factor that Teenager are involved with the symptoms of unwed pregnancy is due to internal factors, namely the desire to try something new that has never been felt or done before (Zainudin & Norazmah, 2011). This sexual desire causes teenagers to start being attracted to people of the opposite sex. This desire is present unnoticed by children in the process of rising to adolescence, especially those who have reached puberty. It continues to be present so that teenagers are attracted to see, hold, grope, flirt and eventually have sexual intercourse (Sari, et al., 2013). Muhyidin (2014) stated that this desire is indeed present to Teenager due to its natural nature but still wrong according to law.

Zainudin & Norazmah (2011), stated that at this age, Teenager will experience changes in terms of thinking, environmental conditions, and age. Things that they have never seen or experienced when these developmental processes exist around the environment. The study of Farahwahida & Norzila (2011), found that the feeling of wanting to try something appears when it is driven by uncontrollable lust that causes Teenager to have sex without thinking about the adverse effects of the act. The most important influence of the social environment in the life of Teenager is from the parents or guardians of Teenager themselves. The role of parents is very important in shaping the identity and noble morals of the children themselves. This importance should not be ignored by parents because the basic failure in the lives of children depends on the initial role played by their parents (Faizal, 2014).

Lack of love and attention from parents in the process of raising children can affect their quality of life. Modernization and busyness in generating family finances can also affect relationships among family members so that it can cause various problems in the family. Parents are an important driver in maintaining the stability of the family. Because of this, education in terms of religious and spiritual values is not given while the children are at home. The belief to teach these noble values is placed on the educators in the school to convey the knowledge to their children. This leaves the souls of the children empty because they are not given input from the religious aspect from an early age which is a bulwark of defence within them from negative external influences.

The increasing number of cases of these unhealthy symptoms is also due to the influence of peers. This cannot be denied because these days teenagers spend a lot of time with close friends by doing activities that do not bring benefits. At this early age, Teenager are in the process of forming personalities and finding their own identities so that they are easily influenced by peer pressure (Salina, et al., 2012). This will cause the children to place full trust in their friends. This close relationship will make it easier for teenagers to follow the negative behaviour shown by their friends. In addition, Teenager spend more time with friends at school than with parents Unfortunately, encounters with troubled peers who like to do negative activities have encouraged teenagers to do things outside the boundaries of religion

and societal norms. It is the beginning of this free activity that causes teenagers to have free sex until they get pregnant out of wedlock. According to Hashim et al (2008), Teenager who became pregnant out of wedlock were forced to discard the baby due to the insistence of a partner who did not want to be responsible, shame, and to avoid secrets known by parents.

Matters related to sex are the most popular search among internet users. Those who surf the internet are of various ages, including teenagers. This is said to be so because, easily accessible access to sex-related websites is very fast without any restrictions (Khadijah et al. 2012; Amirul, et al., 2020). The issue of access internet freely must be given attention because many social problems among teenagers starting from his early influences through the website of the nature of sex. Teenager are often said to be a group that is easily tempted to try the lustful and violent acts that they watch to engage in early teenage sex, prostitution, homosexuality, and others. The sophistication of technology allows Teenager easy access to and distribution of pornographic material to be the cause of the increasing number of Teenager who become pregnant out of wedlock and abort babies. According Norulhuda, et al (2020), teenager who reach the age of 'puberty' are the most likely to browse pornographic websites and become the easiest targets due to emotional desires that are prone to sexual misconduct.

### **Methodology**

This study uses a qualitative method with in-depth interview techniques. This qualitative study is used to help researchers understand the environment and provide an explanation of social phenomena that are or have occurred. This qualitative method was chosen because it is appropriate to the scope of studies related to the human living environment, especially to explore in more depth in terms of behaviour and emotions that are difficult to measure through quantitative studies that are numerical studies. The selection of this qualitative method is in line with the researcher's desire to explore in more depth the factors that influence Teenager pregnant out of wedlock according to the perspective of students. Next, researchers will also be able to find out the effects that will be experienced by Teenager pregnant out of wedlock according to the perspective of students.

The researcher chose this in-depth interview method because this method is effective in enabling the researcher to obtain information related to the factors that affect the adolescent pregnancy out of wedlock according to the perspective of the student and the impact experienced by the adolescent. The interviews were conducted informally to enable the informants to be comfortable and able to answer the questions asked with confidence. In addition, semi-structured interviews are also used when interviewing informants based on the interview protocol and subsequent questions will be asked based on the informant's answers. The interview protocol is a list that contains questions that will be asked in the interview session conducted. In this study, the data obtained were analysed using thematic analysis method. This data analysis process is the most complex process in qualitative research. This is said so because, sincere research is needed when analysing the data to obtain accurate research data.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This study involved six social work students of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia aged between 21 years to 24 years. Table 1 has shown the background of informants which

consisted of three males and three females, namely two first year students, followed by two in second and third years. All informants selected are Malays. Next, looking at the level of education of all informants is at the bachelor's degree level.

Table 1: Profile of Informants

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Religion</b>
1	Male	22	Malay	Islam
2	Male	23	Malay	Islam
3	Male	21	Malay	Islam
4	Female	24	Malay	Islam
5	Female	22	Malay	Islam
6	Female	23	Malay	Islam

This study will focus on the factors of adolescent pregnancy out of wedlock from the perspective of students. This factor occurs among Teenager which covers the interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of adolescence that lead to this problem of unwed pregnancies occurs.

#### ***i. Peer influence***

Individuals who have peers who have had unprotected sex resulting in pregnancy are more likely to engage in this matter because of the solicitation of their partner (Mariam, et al., 2019). The findings of the study showed that the opinion of the informants stated the influence of peers is the main factor of Teenage pregnant out of wedlock.

*“Okay for me, in general, peers are the main factor that contributes to the symptoms of free sex until this teenage girl becomes pregnant. This is because the influence of peers is very big in shaping one's identity compared to parents. This is because I have been through adolescence, and my adolescence is spent a lot with friends because they have the same soul as me ”*

Based on the informant's statement, the influence of at -risk peers greatly affect the lifestyle of a teenager. This is said so because, Teenagers are easy to follow - follow the negative behaviours done by friends rather than positive things. Teenager will start doing things that are always seen from the actions of their friends. It will have a huge influence on teenage behaviour.

#### ***ii. Parenting Style***

According to Salhah, et al (2014), the future of children will be affected when they are involved with social symptoms that stem from the attitude of parents who fail to educate their children so that they cannot be formed into useful and visionary human beings. It is the responsibility of parents to educate their children with full religious education and love so that they can get their rights as teenagers perfectly. In the findings obtained by the researcher, the weakness of parents in educating their children proved that it is one of the

factors that teenager are involved in free sexual activities that lead to unwed pregnancies. Parents or guardians who give complete freedom to children make them feel comfortable to do social symptoms.

*"... Yes, I also feel the openness mother - the father in giving full freedom close to the child - the child has caused them to be involved with this matter. parents or guardians must place a limit near their children to associate with close friends outside. For example, parents must limit the time before maghrib, children must have returned home. They also need to check with whom their children are friends, know their families and so on "*

### **iii. The Desires of Teenagers Themselves**

At this age, teenager engage in free sexual activity thus causing this pregnancy as it comes from a self-desire to try something new that has never been felt or never done before (Zainudin & Norazmah, 2011). This desire is present when children are in the process of growing into adolescence, especially when they reach puberty.

At this age, teenagers will experience a change in their thinking, environmental conditions, and age (Zainuddin & Norazmah, 2011). This situation will also encourage adolescent lust for influence with unhealthy activities such as drinking, drug addiction, sexual activity freely, causing pregnancy.

*"Okay, in my opinion, this teenager started engaging in free sex activities until she became pregnant out of wedlock due to two factors, the first because she wanted to try something due to the influence of movies or dramas that show sexual elements mixed with the influence of uncontrollable lust. This matter is also because this couple does not want to refuse to invite their partner to have sex because they love their partner "*

This sexual desire causes these teenagers to be attracted to people of the opposite sex. According to a study by Nasrudin, et al (2012), this desire is present so that they are attracted to seeing, holding groping, flirting, and finally having intercourse with a partner. This desire does come to teenager due to the nature of fitrah (Norulhuda et. al., 2012), but it does not allow Teenager to have illegal sexual intercourse according to the law - the law that has been set.

### **iv. Influence from the Mass Media**

Often, we heard that most teenagers engage in free sex through easy porn videos on websites access and so on. Sex is the most popular search among internet users regardless of age, race, and religion (Khadijah, et al., 2012). Azah & Zarina (2011) stated that this is because there is no sex-related restrictions on the website.

*"That's right, I strongly agree that the mass media is one of the contributing factors to this free sex activity. This is because of technological advances that make it easier for teenagers to access things related to sex. For example, if you always watch pornographic videos and pornography, eventually teenagers will feel like trying and can't control their desire to do it with their partner "*

According to a study from Malaysia Against Pornography (MAP) 2018 data, as many as 80 percent of children between the ages of 10 and 17 have intentionally watched pornography in the mass media. According to Syamsul (2003), a person who has watched pornography will easily feel addicted and will try to act as what is seen, fantasize and end up with a decision or outcome that shatters one's life.

### Conclusion

The most important factor that causes teens to get pregnant out of wedlock is the influence of peers. Teenager will start to follow - follow the negative behaviours done by their peers. In fact, this unhealthy act is done when they have a lot of time to spend together. Not only that, but teenagers also who are involved in free sex activities that cause pregnancy are because they have been asked by their boyfriends and feelings of affection towards them. Lack of love and perfect attention from parents will result in their growth process is not quality. This leaves the souls of children empty because they are not given input from the religious aspect from an early age which is a protection in them from negative external influences. The use of bad websites such as watching pornographic videos and so on has had a huge impact on teenagers. The issue of accessing the internet freely should be given attention because many social problems that occur among teenagers start from the initial influence through sexually explicit websites. Teenager will be easily influenced and have the feeling of wanting to try after seeing bad actions in the mass media.

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