

Reviewing the psychological effects of teenage pregnancy psychology essay



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\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

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1. [Sense of Identity](#) \n \t
2. [Self- Esteem](#) \n \t
3. [Social Relationship](#) \n \t
4. [Education & Career Choice](#) \n \t
5. [Conclusion](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

On my journey to find a piece of art for my term paper, I was excited because this was the first time I had gone to the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and I felt it was going to be a experience to last a lifetime. I wanted to pick a painting that was attractive but rather in depth. As I walked through MOMA, I had seen several paintings that I can choose but I decided to check one more floor and came across, Girl before a Mirror illustrated by Pablo Picasso (1932). This piece of art was rather fascinating and interesting due to the image of a young pregnant woman possibly viewing herself from past to future. After this, many ideas came to mind, such as the problem we have with teenage pregnancy and how pregnancy can affect a sense of identity, self-esteem, social relationship and education

To me, Girl before a Mirror painted in the year 1932, shows a young pregnant girl confronting herself in a mirror. As the girl looks in the mirror one can see both her as a young pregnant girl and as a mature woman who will be soon transforming into a mother. This clearly symbolizes moments of sacrificing the image of one self, which may cause a significant loss of a

sense of identity. On the left side of the mirror, there is a reflection of a young girl who is confused and worried. Her face is youthful looking, eyes round and narrow, and her pregnant body is developing rapidly. On the right side of the mirror, one can see a supernatural x-ray of the girl's soul, her future, and her fate. Her face appears darkened, eyes round and hollow, and her pregnant body is twisted, as she looks older and more anxious.

Pablo Picasso was born in Marlage, in the Southern Spain, on October 25, 1881. Was Pablo Picasso a famous painter? Yes, A naturally gifted draftsman, " Born into an artistic family it is said that Pablo could draw before he could talk. (Mason, P. 5) Picasso father was a painter and art teacher who taught and encouraged him. Picasso an attractive and unpredictable artist mastered realist early in his life, then moved to classical paintings and on to abstract painting. Impressionism was a name given to a group of artist including Picasso as he tried to evoke a scene by using quick brushstrokes. This was the breaking up of colors into bright dots. In fact, Picasso interest only included what the emotions of a painting would convey. Even though, he died on April 8, 1973, Picasso was one of few artists to be appreciated and celebrated during his lifetime.

Girl before a Mirror, a masterpiece of color and design indicated Picasso was also capable of succeeding Surrealist. Surrealist included work that was inspired by dreams and imagination. The interest was realm of fantasy rather than reality. Picasso posed a golden-haired young woman, which is a portrait of his new love, the twenty-year-old Marie- Therese. She considers her reflection, a dark distorted and altogether sinister. The Byzantine richness of the patterned background and the continuous moving lines of the ovoid
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shapes reinforced a modern revival of the ancient; however, the exact meaning of the painting remains enigmatic. (Jacobus & Wheler, P. 300) Using this as my inspiration, I decided to examine the factors involved in teenage pregnancy, especially some of the psychological factors implicated in becoming pregnant at an early age. Furthermore, I will attempt to identify issues related to self-esteem, identity, and self-worth among young mothers and how these factors play a role in their psychological adjustments to motherhood.

Teenage pregnancy is very common all over the world but, the United States have the highest pregnancy and births among adolescents. (Coley & Lansdale, 1998, P. 153)

Teenagers who reside in communities with higher rates of poverty and raised in poverty by single parents are more prone to teenage parenthood. There are also large differences among teenagers of different racial and ethnic groups. According to literature review done by Coley and Lansdale, (1998), studies show that white teens have lower rates of teenage births than Hispanics and African Americans (P. 152). As more African Americans become more upwardly mobile, the rates of teenage pregnancy appear to decline. For example, in the last two decades, the rates of teenage pregnancy among African Americans have decreased, while the rates among Latino populations have increased. Pregnancy is a major life transition requiring changes, challenges, and adaptation of many kinds. According to researchers, parenthood continuous demands and responsibilities leaves little or no time for most teen concern; such as, peer relations, dating, academics and career choices. (Coley & Lansdale, 1998, P. 155) For <https://assignbuster.com/reviewing-the-psychological-effects-of-teenage-pregnancy-psychology-essay/>

instance, the image of the young girl in *Girl before a Mirror* expresses the psychological effect of teenage pregnancy, which is the loss of identity resulting in the consequences of developing low self-esteem.

Sense of Identity

Identity refers to the sense of ones self or a unique character over a period of time. A strong sense of “ self” is dependent on early relationships, gender differences and support that allow adolescents to develop their own unique identity. The teenage years can be full of turmoil and changes that can have a detrimental affect on girls. According to the literature review done by Coley & Lansdale, (1998) studies show that teenagers faced with setting and determining their sense of identity on their own while learning independence from their parents(P. 155). This simply indicates that while learning to cope with changes, they must also be concerned with self-image. At this stage many teenagers try to find out: (1) who they are; (2) what they are about, their interest and personalities; and (3) where they are going, in order to discover their place in life. Negative thoughts about one’s body can interfere with the development of other attributes. As one look at the young girl portrayed in the painting, one can notice her pregnant body appearing twisted, perhaps reflecting some elements of her identity being threatened. The dramatic physical changes that happen during teenage pregnancy- such as, weight gain, breast enlargement and swollen of the body, generally makes a pregnant teen feel anything but, at home in ones body. Body image is a prime concern during adolescent years and is only part of a person’s identity. In most cases the lack of physical attractiveness affects social relationships and the way one perceive oneself innermost , one’s sincerity,

intelligence and personality. Adolescents are also confronted with career choices, romantic entanglements and responsibilities that are new experiences in which they make decisions or adjustments to attain their own identity or success. Meanwhile, they are entering a new phase of role requirements creating a turning point of new directions for changes and adaptations; such as the plan to have a baby, pregnancy, childbirth, and care for the baby. According to researchers, earlier findings show that parenting is one of the woman's key development tasks and considered to be an important part of an individual current and expected future identities. (Aro, Nurmi, & Halmesmaki, 2000 P. 180) In other words, because humans are essentially social beings, we are most concerned about how we fit in and measure up.

Self- Esteem

Low self-esteem among young mothers lead to many problems while they suffer from lack of confidence and hopelessness. Self- esteem refers to self-worth, self-respect, and how one regards or feels about one self. Simply, it's one's feeling about various convictions of one self as a capable, competent person who have worth. A feeling of worth means having self-respect, which comes as a result of living up to one's own standard of values. Its how much one value oneself, how important one thinks he or she is, how one see one self and how one feel about one's accomplishments. The symptoms of low self -esteem vary for every teen. Some teens may feel constant tiredness, melancholy, sleep problems and lack of concentration. These symptoms if not noticed can lead to acute depression or various emotional and physical disorders. In fact, most teenage girls who are pregnant find it hard to face

reality; that they are worthy and an important person who deserves to feel good every day in their lives and one of the factors which maybe keeping them from enjoying the gift of becoming a mother is their self-confidence and self-respect.

Social Relationship

During adolescents, relationships are very important and they need to be provided with supportive roles. According to researchers, partners may also be at risk for interpersonal problems while experiencing psychological problems connected to adolescent pregnancy. (Moore and Florsheim, 2001, P. 101) This emphasizes that expectant adolescent may experience interpersonal difficulties between motherhood and their partners. The interpersonal and social functioning is important simply because parenting is fundamentally a social process. The emotional adjustment to losing a chapter in life can be difficult to make. Among young mothers who desperately want to be a mom will have to adapt to the change in their social relationship. Most parents would have to give up going to parties and dreaming about their futures. Indeed, once these opportunities are missed, they maybe gone for good. This includes having no free time to see friends. It is important to study expectant adolescent couples precisely because their relationships appear to be at high risk for dysfunction and dissolution which indicates that many teenage mothers and their partners break right up before or shortly after giving birth. (Moore & Florsheim, 2001, P. 102) One of the reasons for this maybe young mothers are faced with the loss of social relationship while missing out on childhood and arduous and engaging in tedious unpleasant responsibilities of parenthood. Motherhood put

tremendous demand upon the time, energy, emotions, and demands on teens, for which they are not prepared. Surely, early parent hood is a response to limited social interactions and relationships, in those who choose to have children at a relatively young age. To sum up, young adolescents continue to exhibit deficits in social relationship disturbances.

Education & Career Choice

Early parenthood also has an effect on adolescent's education. The young mothers are forced to discontinue education after birth. This significantly decreases the individual chances for obtaining a general equivalency diploma (GED). According to researchers, studies have shown that if teenage mothers stay in school, they are almost likely to graduate from high school (73%) as their non-parent peers (77%). (Coley & Lansdale, P. 155, 1998) However, a GED may result in a lower return of future earnings than future earnings with a high-school diploma. The young mothers who lack education are limited to a handful of career choices since jobs require at least a high-school diploma or some college experience. On the other hand, dropping out of high- school is a strong risk factor for early pregnancy and few will return back to school and possibly graduating. This problem causes a concern to the mother as well as the developing baby because of limitations of education and limitations of income. The consequences of education attainment direct a major concern of poverty. Those families with childhood poverty are likely to receive welfare funding during their life course. Overall, 53% of welfare funding is spent on families formed by teenage birth (Coley & Lansdale, 1998, P. 153). This brings us back to the young girl who is who is more likely to face education attainment and poverty as a result of

pregnancy. According to researchers, the perceived cost of early motherhood is from life experiences linked to poverty including isolation of school, unemployment and unmarried parenthood and lack of education and career opportunities. (Coley & Lansdale, 1998, P. 153)

Conclusion

Teenage pregnancy is a problem that continuously occurs in the United States and other countries, despite the pregnancy reduction programs that are available. In fact, among the teenager's who become parents; also, lack knowledge of the consequences that may occur from their irresponsible sexual behavior. However, Pablo Picasso; painting *Girl before a Mirror* (1932) was very inspiring for me to learn more about the social, psychological, and economic factors involved in getting pregnant. Economic's play an important role in teenage pregnancy and is a major concern. Mainly poor income and education leave an individual at risk of remaining in poverty. The social factors that contribute include social relationships as well as peer relationships that may be dysfunctional with the chance of ending before and after birth. In the meanwhile, studies clearly suggest that pregnancy fully requires a psychological adaptation on the physical and mental health which appears to influence the health of the developing baby. On the other hand, it is not only one factor that is responsible for the reason why many teenagers are pregnant and becoming pregnant. I believe that more research should be dedicated to what can be used to stop teenage pregnancy and information about some programs that have been tried out and examined for its effectiveness. There is also a need to encourage the use of contraception's

so that many teenagers won't contract H. I. V, A. I. D. S, and sexual transmitted diseases.