

A099 HSCI

The Effect of Community-Level Poverty on Rates of Teenage Pregnancy

Abstract

Introduction: Teenage pregnancy can be defined as a pregnancy or birth occurring in an adolescent female between the ages of 13 to 19. It is well documented that teenage mothers have lower education attainment and earnings than women who delay motherhood. Risk factors that increase an individual's odds of becoming a teen mother include lower education rates, low maternal knowledge of contraception and human reproduction, substance abuse, low self-esteem, and adolescent marriage. From these risk factors, scholars have conducted numerous studies to understand the relationship between these factors and the prevalence of teenage pregnancies. While much research has been conducted to identify individual-level risk factors and social outcomes of teen pregnancy less research has focused on community-level demographic risks.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to identify whether community-level poverty and income attainment are correlated with the rate of teenage pregnancies within these communities.

Methods: Correlational analysis will be used to examine the relationship between the average median income and county data related to births of mothers at or below 19 years of age. Data sources will include Tennessee Vital Statistics registries, the Kaiser Family Foundation's County Health Rankings, the US Census, and indexmundi.com. A Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient will be calculated using IBM SPSS statistical software.

Results: The results of this study are still pending.