HANDBOOK OF Adolescent Sexuality and Pregnancy

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

EDITED BY
JOSEFINA J. CARD

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PREFACE

Background

The United States has one of the highest rates of teenage childbearing in the developed world (Moore, 1988). Since the early 1970s, a large number of studies have been devoted to documenting the rate of teenage pregnancy, and discovering which teens are at highest risk of becoming pregnant (Hayes, 1987). These investigations proved to be good examples of cumulative and converging social science research. Scientists from a variety of disciplines found that teen pregnancy is rooted in a set of clearly identifiable demographic and social factors (Miller & Moore, 1990) and that early parenthood is associated with poor outcomes for the young mother, her family, her partner, and their child.

That sexual activity is strongly influenced by biological development is clear from studies of the relationships between age, biological maturity, and hormone levels on the one hand and from the incidence of sexual behavior on the other (Udry & Billy, 1987). Gender differences are also striking; despite the earlier physical maturation of girls, the sexual activity rates of boys exceed those of girls for all ages. Both differences in biology (especially testosterone levels) and differences in socialization and social norms probably account for these sex differences in behavior. That social and cultural factors play a strong role in sexual behavior is attested to by the large though somewhat diminishing differences among various religious, racial, and ethnic groups.

The social influences on sexual behavior are many, but family and peers are the primary agents. What parents believe regarding the appropriateness or inappropriateness of sexual behavior for their teen children can be strongly influential under conditions of open parent-child communication (Moore, Peterson, & Furstenberg, 1986). A parent's own behavior is also of great importance; for example, teens living with single mothers who date are more likely to be sexually active than teens with single mothers who are not dating (Moore, Peterson, & Furstenberg, 1984). Peers are also highly influential. Although teens may not accurately report the sexual activity of their peers, their perceptions of the sexual behavior of their friends are highly predictive of their own behavior (Newcomer, Gilbert, & Udry, 1980). Because schools shape the context in which peer groups develop, the composition of the student body sets the boundaries within which peer groups can form. For example, members of minority groups that collectively exhibit high rates of sexual activity will have higher rates of sexual activity themselves if they attend largely minority schools than if they attend largely integrated schools (Furstenberg, Morgan, Moore, & Peterson, 1987).

Personal traits also play a role in influencing sexual activity. Sexual activity is less likely among adolescents who have high educational or career aspirations, who have a greater confidence in their own abilities to affect their environment, and who have a lower propensity to take risks. Even personal skills come into play: high achievers in school and more assertive teens are less likely to become sexually active.

Contraceptive use and frequency of sexual activity are the primary factors determining whether the sexually active become pregnant. Many of the same factors that incline some teens to become sexually active are related to their frequency of sexual activity and to their contraceptive use. However, these factors do not always affect behavior in the same direction or with the same strength. For example, those from very traditional home backgrounds are less likely to become sexually active than those from more permissive homes; however, once sexually active, the former are less likely to use contraception than are the latter. On the other hand, older teens are more likely to be sexually active than younger teens, but they are also more likely to use contraceptives.

Contraceptive use, in addition to being influenced by the personal and social factors of the previous paragraphs, is also affected by more immediate factors, such as knowledge of contraception, the availability of contraceptive devices, and attitudes and beliefs about the morality, side effects, and effectiveness of contraceptive use.

A large body of research literature has grown up documenting these and other causes of teen sexual behavior (Miller & Moore, 1990). An equally large body of research has focused on the consequences of pregnancy and childbearing for the mother and child (Card, 1981; Moore & Burt, 1982). Most of this research has documented a long list of negative consequences: truncated educations, lower-paying jobs, greater unemployment, greater likelihood of poverty, larger families and closer spacing between children, greater likelihood of marital disruption or of out-of-wedlock childbearing, children who are slower to develop and who do more poorly in school when they begin their education. A recent "revisionist" perspective has suggested that previous research may have overstated the scope and magnitude of negative consequences of early parenthood (Geronimus, 1991), but it is probably safe to say that such early parenthood exacerbates the problems of young mothers who tend to be disadvantaged to begin with.

Largely as a result of these findings regarding the consequences of teen pregnancy and parenthood, "care" programs, designed to ameliorate these negative effects, proliferated in the 1970s. These programs generally provided comprehensive pre- and postnatal health services for the young mother and her child. Many care programs also assisted the teen mother to stay in or return to school.

In the early 1980s, program planners began to look more to prevention as an effective way to address the problems of teen pregnancy and parenthood. New programs, programs aimed at preventing the early pregnancy or birth from occurring in the first place, began to emerge. A variety of different approaches were tried, based on the research literature summarized above as well as program planners' ad hoc ideas about what would be effective in preventing pregnancy (Miller, Card, Paikoff, & Peterson, 1992). Among the approaches tried: "Just say no" approaches, which teach young people the benefits of abstinence and the skills to refuse unwanted advances; *contraceptive provision* approaches, which facilitate access to contraception by the sexually active, for example, by opening school-based contraceptive clinics; *sex education* approaches, which focus on teaching teens about the reproductive process and about contraception; *contraceptive negotiation skill development* approaches; and more general *life option* approaches, programs with

broader activities such as academic remediation, job training, or adult mentoring, which are founded on the premise that the belief in a compelling personal future or goal is a strong incentive to avoid a teen pregnancy.

Objectives and Approach

By providing a starting point for measuring a wide range of theoretical and empirical concepts, I hope in this book to facilitate the planning and instrument development phases of (a) research projects dealing with the causes and consequences of adolescent pregnancy, and (b) evaluation projects aimed at assessing the impact of ameliorative or preventive strategies for combating the problem. The book is divided into four parts.

In Part 1, items measuring key antecedents and consequences of adolescent pregnancy are provided. The items are taken from four leading national surveys: the 1988 National Survey of Family Growth; the 1988 and 1990 National Survey of Adolescent Males; the 1979-1990 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth; and the 1976-1987 National Survey of Children. Adolescent pregnancy researchers and evaluators can use the items in Part 1 as is, "mix and match" them, or adapt selected items for their own purposes. Use of measures included in leading national surveys has many advantages–such measures have a greater probability of being reliable and valid; also, researchers can directly compare their findings with those from large, nationally representative samples.

Parts 2 and 3 present starting points for evaluation data collection instruments to assess the impact of: "care programs" for pregnant teens, teen moms, and their infants (Part 2); and widely diverse teenage sexuality and pregnancy "prevention programs" (Part 3). The instruments in Parts 2 and 3 were initially culled from a variety of existing instruments by a small working group of experts, after detailed examination and discussion of existing evaluations. The Part 2 instrument has since been updated.

Part 4 provides abstract descriptions of other, more specialized instruments in the public domain. Space limitations have precluded our including these instruments in their entirety (the instruments, taken together, span 4,862 pages). Unabridged versions of the instruments abstracted in Part 4, along with raw data from the original study that developed/used each instrument, are available from a public data archive, the Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention. Information on how to obtain each instrument, or the associated data set, is provided in Part 4.

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The book represents the collaborative effort of many institutions and individuals.

Part 1

William Pratt, William Mosher, Freya Sonenstein, Frank Mott, and James Peterson provided consulting guidance on measures to include (from the 1988 National Survey of Family Growth, the 1988 and 1990 National Survey of Adolescent Males, the 1979- 1990 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, and the 1976-1987 National Survey of Children, respectively).

Part 2

The conference on *Evaluating and Monitoring Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Teens* was organized and co-chaired by Josefina J. Card and Deborah Klein Walker, with funds provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the U.S. Office of Population Affairs. The conference commissioned Dennis McBride to cull the Minimum Data Set for Care Programs from the best existing instruments in the field.

Part 3

The conference on *Evaluating Programs Aimed at Preventing Teenage Pregnancies* was organized and chaired by Josefina J. Card, with funds provided by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The conference commissioned Marvin Eisen and Claire Brindis to cull a Minimum Data Set for Prevention Programs from the best existing instruments in the field.

Part 4

All the instruments in Part 4 are available from the Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention (DAAPPP). DAAPPP is operated by Sociometrics Corporation under the directorship of Josefina J. Card, with funds provided by the U.S. Office of Population Affairs. Toni Deser, Evelyn Peterson, and the DAAPPP archivists assisted with creation of the instrument abstracts.

Review

Christine Bachrach, Brent Miller, and Susan Newcomer provided support throughout the process, reviewed the manuscript, and provided many helpful suggestions for improvement.

Production

Evelyn Peterson, with assistance from Alanna Edwards, typeset and laid out the manuscript in able fashion.

The contribution of each of these institutions and individuals is acknowledged with great appreciation.

CONTENTS

PART 1.
ITEMS AND SCALES
MEASURING ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY AND ITS ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES

Compiled by James L. Peterson and Josefina J. Card

TABLE OF CONTENTS, PART 1

Table of Contents, continued

CORRELATES

INTRODUCTION

In Part 1 we present items measuring key concepts relating to adolescent pregnancy. The items have been selected from four leading national surveys that include teens in their study population: the 1979-1990 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY); the 1976-1987 National Survey of Children (NSC); the 1988 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG); and the 1988 and 1990 National Survey of Adolescent Males (NSAM).

These four surveys offer differing advantages to the potential user of benchmark data drawn from the surveys. Three surveys--NLSY, NSC, and NSFG--provide data on females and three--NLSY, NSC and NSAM--provide data on males. One survey, NFSG, is a replicated cross-sectional survey (though only items from the latest round, 1988, are presented here) providing good trend data. Because the NSFG sample spans a large age range, cross-sectional time comparisons between and within cohorts are possible with these data. The other three surveys are all longitudinal cohort surveys, providing panel data on narrower cohorts as they mature over time. Two of the surveys--NSFG and NSAM--focus narrowly but in depth on fertility and sexuality. The other two--NSC and NLSY--have a much broader set of foci, being therefore, rich in correlated data. Two of the surveys provide rich cross-generational data: the NLSY--through its Child Supplement--provides extensive data on the children of the respondents in the regular sample; the NSC, a sample of children, provides cross generational data in both directions: data on the parents of the sample children, and data on the children's own children as they mature into youth and young adulthood.

A brief description of each of the four surveys follows. Additional information is provided in Part 4 of this book.

The 1979-1990 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

In 1977, the Department of Labor decided to initiate a new youth panel of the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Force Behavior, adding to the four panels begun in 1966 to 1968 (young men, young women, mature men, mature women). The surveys were designed primarily to analyze sources of variation in the labor market behavior and experience of Americans. Data from the new panel replicate much of the information obtained on young people in the earlier cohorts and thus support studies of changes in the labor market experience of youth. In addition, the new data on youth permitted evaluation of the expanded employment and training programs for youth established by the 1977 amendments to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). A supplementary sample of persons serving in the Armed Forces permitted the study of the recruitment and service experiences of youth in the military. The supplementary military sample was terminated following the 1984 survey round. Although the focus of the NLSY is on labor market behavior, extensive data have also been collected regarding many issues of interest to family researchers: family background and structure, fertility, marriage and divorce, educational progress, migration, health, delinquent behavior, and financial status.

In 1986 the Department added a child supplement to the female portion of the youth panel. The purpose of the supplement was to collect child development data on the children born to female respondents in the NLSY, thereby creating a large, nationally representative data resource for the study of child outcomes. Given the rich data available about the youth participating in the National Longitudinal

Survey, data about child outcomes creates an unprecedented opportunity for studying such family issues as the effects of parental characteristics and experiences on the well-being and development of young children. The 1988 through 1992 data collections continued to follow these "children of the NLSY."

For more information (e.g., to obtain the full, unabridged questionnaires, or to obtain national norms for a given item) contact:
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921 Chatham Lane, Suite 200
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The 1976-1987 National Survey of Children

In 1976, the Foundation for Child Development sponsored the first nationally representative survey of children in which the child (ages 7-11) was the focus of study and was personally interviewed. The purposes of the survey were to assess the physical, social, and psychological well-being of different groups of American children; develop a profile of the way children live and the care they receive; permit analysis of the relationships between the condition of children's lives and measures of child development and well-being; and replicate items from previous national studies of children and parents to permit analysis of trends over time. The focus of the 1981 follow-up was the effects of marital conflict and disruption on children. The goals of this wave included developing a profile of the behavioral and mental health of children at various stages in the marital disruption process and examining the influence of child, parent, and family factors that are thought to influence the risk of childhood problems associated with marital disruption. A third survey wave was conducted in 1986 to examine the social, psychological, and economic well-being of sample members as they became young adults. In particular, their sexual and fertility behavior was a focus of interest. Included in the data base available from the Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention are a total of 4,118 variables from 1,423 children who participated in all three survey waves.

For more information (e.g., to obtain the full, unabridged questionnaires, or to obtain national norms for a given item) contact:
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or

The Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention
Sociometrics Corporation
170 State Street, Suite 260
Los Altos, CA 94022
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The 1988 National Survey of Family Growth

The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), Cycle IV, 1988 queried 8,450 women 15-44 years of age of all marital statuses. The file available from the Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention consists of a "respondent" or "woman" record which contains all available NSFG information about the woman herself plus a significant extract of the pregnancy history file: information from up to 5 (the first 4 and the last) of her pregnancies. Topics covered in the interview included: the month and year of first intercourse; pregnancy, contraceptive, and marital and cohabitation histories; employment and occupation; child care; fecundity and sterility; prenatal medical care; family planning services; birth expectations; ethnicity; education; religion; and income. The complete NSFG Cycle IV tape with information on all pregnancies can be obtained from the National Technical Information Service in Springfield, VA.

For more information (e.g., to obtain the full, unabridged questionnaires, or to obtain national norms for a given item) contact:
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The 1988 and 1990 National Survey of Adolescent Males

This study began as a nationally representative survey of 1,880 never married, non-institutionalized American males 15 to 19 years old, conducted from April to November, 1988. Its primary focus was on the education and knowledge the respondents had about human sexuality, contraception, and sexually transmitted diseases, as well as respondents' history of sexual activity and contraceptive use. There are 956 variables. The survey oversampled for blacks and Hispanics and represents the coterminous United States. The overall response rate was 74 percent. The survey consisted of a personal interview conducted by a trained interviewer in the respondent's home or another confidential location, which lasted about an hour. The sensitive questions were asked in a confidential Self-Administered Questionnaire, which took about 15 minutes to complete.

Follow-up interviews with NSAM respondents were conducted between December 1990 and May 1991. A strong tracking and field effort led to an 89 percent follow-up rate with 1676 completed interviews. Eleven respondents had died between 1988 and 1990. Interviews were face-to-face except for a few telephone interviews with respondents who had moved abroad. Similar to the 1988 survey, the follow-up involved an interview lasting about 1 hour and had two self-administered sections, lasting 10-15 minutes in total. The primary focus of the interview was to collect information about sexual activity, partners, and contraception during the

period between the two interviews. Detailed information about condom selection and use was also obtained. Analyses of attrition indicate no difference on most variables of interest with one exception. Non-responders appear to be slightly older than responders.

For more information (e.g., to obtain the full, unabridged questionnaires, or to obtain national norms for a given item) contact:
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Cautions Regarding Selection and Use of Items

All the items presented here are in the public domain. In designing a research instrument, investigators should feel free to use the items as is, or adapt them to suit the purpose at hand. Use of measures included in leading national surveys has many advantages -- such measures have a greater probability of being reliable and valid; also, researchers can directly compare their findings with those from large, nationally representative samples.

At the same time, users should be cautioned that a good research instrument is not merely a collection of items selected from national surveys. One must begin with a theory and set of concepts, formulate a set of research questions, and specify independent, mediating, and dependent variables. Only then can the task of selecting items to measure these variables be fruitfully undertaken. Moreover, it is likely that, for any given purpose, one will need to look beyond the items from the four surveys that are presented here. Part 4 describes 70 more specialized research instruments all of which are also in the public domain.

The task of drafting a good research instrument also involves attention to the order in which the items are presented. For example, the initial questions must engage the respondent's interest; questions on the same topic should generally be presented together and flow in a natural way, usually from the general to the specific; sensitive questions generally come late in the questionnaire after rapport has been established; and the last questions should allow the intensity of the interview to ease up and end on a positive note.

Although the items have been carefully selected by the compilers and respective principal investigators, the user should recognize that all items are not equally valid and reliable. Items measuring behaviors that some may disapprove of--such as abortion or sexual activity out of marriage--typically lead to underreporting. For some concepts it is difficult to find words or phrases that covey exactly the same meaning to all respondents: marital satisfaction, sexual intercourse, dating, and contraception are among such concepts. Also, respondents may vary in their ability