

## **A DESCRIPTION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND UNWANTED PREGNANCY IN ADOLESCENT SINGLE PARENT MOTHERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Unwanted pregnancy in adolescents may have negative impacts on physical, psychological, social and spiritual condition. The physical impact could endanger the teenage mothers and even their infants. Psychological stress could trigger a trial to have an abortion which can lead to death. Other psychological effect, the teenage mothers will try to escape from responsibility or keeping to continue their pregnancies by compulsion. Meanwhile, besides, social judgement and scorn, as well as banishing made by surrounding community, the community will also reject the children with unclear parents and they are considered illegal children of adulteries (Husaeni, 2009). Based on data from the Directorate of Maternal Health, the biggest cause of teenage maternal death is bleeding as a result of premature pregnancy. The purpose of this study was to determine the socio-cultural, economic of an unwanted pregnancy in single parent of adolescent mothers. This type of research is qualitative with a phenomenological and ethnographic approach. The population and sample are pregnant women and single parent mothers (having toddlers). The sample size is 9 people. Purposive Sampling Data collection by in-depth interviews (In-depth interview) to adolescents. The research was conducted in TTU District, East Nusa Tenggara. Research Results: 100% teenage single parent mothers do not work, age 15-19 years with the average education of junior high school to senior high school. Socio-culturally, teenagers imitate city life, lack of or abandon themselves from spiritual life in the family, and having trend to try new things. Teenage pregnancies are mostly unwanted as they happened accidentally. It was due to unsafe sex which was partly triggered by feeling bored with life in dormitories, adopting city life, lack of control from parents and family when teenagers return home, low or none of sexual education, simply following others, mutual consent, forced by boyfriends, poor knowledge Lack of knowledge on reproductive health and the influence of social media causes teenagers to have sex which causes unwanted pregnancies and poor socio-economic conditions. Suggestions The importance of preventing unwanted pregnancies in adolescents in schools should be started from the elementary schools by introducing health reproduction. Promotional materials related to reproductive health should be adapted to the age and development level of adolescents. In communities, especially those with low economic status, increasing awareness and knowledge about maternal and infant health is carried out through continuous health promotion.

**Keywords:** economy; single parent; social culture; unwanted pregnancy

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unwanted pregnancy in adolescents may have negative impacts on physical, psychological, social and spiritual condition. The physical impact could endanger the teenage mothers and even their infants. Psychological stress could trigger trials on abortion which can lead to death. Other psychological effect, the teenage mothers will try to escape from responsibility or keeping to continue their pregnancies by compulsion. Meanwhile, besides, social judgement, scorn and banish

made by surrounding community. the community will also reject the children whose parents are not yet clear and they are considered illegal children of adulteries (Husaeni, 2009).

WHO estimates that there are 200 million pregnancies per year which is 38 percent are unwanted pregnancies. Two-thirds of women terminated pregnancy intentionally, 40% of which were done unsafely, which contributes 50% of maternal deaths (WHO, 2013). The biggest cause of maternal death is bleeding, and it is closely related to premature pregnancy (Ministry of Health, 2020). Basic Health Research (Riskesdas, 2013) shows the proportion of women who are married under the age of 20 years is 13%. They married before their reproductive organs developed optimally. Riskesdas data shows that early marriage for women aged 16 years is 15.66%, married at the age of 17-18 years is 20.03%, married at the age of 19-20 years is 22.96% (Riskesdas, 2018).

The teenage pregnancy rate in East Nusa Tenggara Province is quite high, namely 48 per 1,000 women at aged 15-19 years. Meanwhile, the number of unwanted pregnancies in adolescents is 104 per 100,000 Live Birth (BKKBN, 2015). A study made by UNICEF in 2012 in Kupang City found that the teenage pregnancy rate of 13-19 years was quite high (70-88%), of which around 15% is 15 year olds teenage; 35% is 18 years old; and 19.1% is 17 years old. Sixty seven percent (67%) of all adolescents with unwanted pregnancies were unmarried adolescent couples. TTU District is one of the districts bordering the State of Timor Leste. In the district there is a university that have many students who come from outside the TTU district. Generally, the students live in boarding houses without parental supervision and practice promiscuity, and many are at puberty who are at risk for unwanted pregnancies.

Pregnancy in adolescence is a phenomenon that requires attention from all parties. Adolescents should not have any pregnancy in their age as they are generally and reproductively immature and lack of knowledge on pregnancies and their caring. This is very detrimental to their future, physical health and their infant. Furthermore, pregnancy in adolescence will affect the teenager himself. From society, they are stigmatized because they violate norms and values and even dropping out of school, having psychological and economic problems, even they may cause problems with families and society. Teenage pregnant women are likely to have less opportunity to continue their education, and are more likely to be unemployed, and have the potential to have many children compared to women who delay having children under the age of 20. Considering that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is still high, it is necessary to conduct research on the Socio-Cultural, Economical and Unwanted Pregnancy in Single Parent Adolescent Mothers in TTU Regency, East Nusa Tenggara (Phenomenological and Ethnographic Studies)

## **METHOD**

This study is a qualitative descriptive study that aims to determine the socio-cultural, economic and unwanted pregnancy in single parent adolescent mothers with phenomenological and ethnographic analysis. The population and the sample are pregnant women and single parent teenagers (having toddlers). The sample size is 9 people. Sampling was carried out by purposive sampling, where researchers chose samples that were considered important and could provide accurate and reliable information (Maleong, 2009). Collecting data with in-depth interviews (Indept interview) to adolescents. Data collection tools used were interview guides, stationery, laptops, notebooks, voice recorders and cameras for documentation. The data that has been

obtained were analyzed using qualitative data analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994) including data collection, data reduction, data display or data presentation in the form of tables, pictures, matrices, descriptions and so on. The last stage is drawing conclusions and verification (Murti, 2013). The research was conducted in TTU Regency, East Nusa Tenggara

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was conducted on 9 (nine) Informants/Participants of Teenage Pregnant Women/Adolescent Single Parents in TTU Regency with the results 100% unmarried and not working. The average education of the adolescent is junior high school ( 55.56% ) high school (44.4%). The results of the Indept Interview show: Social life of teenagers 9 (100%) pregnant teenage girls live in the village with their parents and do not work. After 2 weeks – 4 months of completing their junior or senior high school education, 100% of these youths return to the village. They joined schools in Kefamenanu City totaling 5 people (55.55%), and 4 people (44.45%) attending schools in the village. The marital status of adolescents 9 people (100%) are not married, 1 person (11.11%) had been engaged, 5 people (55.55%) plan to get married on following year as no preparation or other reasons for delayed marriage because their brother/sister had to get married first. 100% of teenagers still lived with their parents. A household consist of 6 – 10 people - consisting of parents, at least 4 children and other family members as well as prospective husbands of pregnant children. Four (4) people (44.45%) young women have no plans to get married because their boyfriend has left them. Socio-culturally, pregnant teenagers have violated the local customs in the community, married at an early age, became pregnant outside of marriage, did not fulfill traditional obligations and had not been formalized in the church and legalized by the government. Young women feel ashamed and regretful, as stated by informants 3,4 and 6 and 9. However, there are young women who feel happy to be pregnant (Informant2)

### *Informant 3*

*“...I was scared and embarrassed when I was pregnant. I got angry from my parents . . . I regret”*

### *“Informants 4, 6 and 9*

*“...I am afraid and sorry for making parents are ashamed as boyfriend is not responsible”*

### *Informant 2*

*“I am happy to be pregnant because I want my child to become a teacher. I'm already engaged but not married because there's a bit problem in the families...”*

Teenage girls fall into free sex mostly because they are forced by their boyfriends (Informants 3 and 4), being afraid of being left by boyfriends (Informants 6 and 7), follow their boyfriend's words (Informant 5), mutually agreed because they had been engaged (Informant 2), being teased by boyfriends (informants 1 and 9), the influence of social media and the internet, teased to watch porn together and continued with sex (informant 8). Meanwhile, the main causes of young women to have free sex is their boyfriend (male) as stated by 8 informants (88.89%) and only 1 informant (11.11%) said they liked each other. The status of the 9 pregnant teenagers (100%) was not working and living with their parents. There are 5 people (55.55%) teenagers with their partners living with their parents. Their parents are their breadwinner. Meanwhile, 4 (44.45%) pregnant teenagers lived separately from their partners or their partners are not responsible for their pregnancy. Teenage future husband also who lived with partners's parents and worked with female parents as stated by Informants 3 and 2.

### **Informant 3**

*"I live with my parents so they can take care of the baby, I am ashamed that my boyfriend ran away and was not responsible... I was forced to do that (to have sex).*

### **Informant 2**

*"...(my) parents help (my) husband by buying a motorbike so that he can use as motorbike taxi... the money is given to parents to pay for motorbikes (credit), my husband usually gives 200 thousand for my personal needs and our child"*

The socioeconomic status of the families of adolescents based on the results of interviews with 7 people (71.43%) are coming from families with low/low economics. 2 people (28.57%) are from Middle Economy. 100% of mothers of teenagers do not work, parents (fathers) of 8 people (88.89%) work as farmers and 1 person (11.11%) works as migrant workers moving on abroad and within the country. The relationship between teenage pregnant women in a family of 5 (55.55%) is good, 4 people (44.45%) are not harmonious because parents feel disappointed with the pregnancy experienced by their children and their boyfriends do not want to be responsible. As stated by Informant 3.

### **Informant 3**

*"My family and mother have come to the boyfriend's to his family to ask for responsibility, but they are not there and don't want to be responsible.*

*"... (my) Father are temporarily working as a migrant worker in a palm oil plantation in Papua. Previously, He worked in Malaysia. Mama initially worked with father in Malaysia, but after he went to Papua, Mama doesn't join and just stays at home."*

In Indonesia, the number of single mothers is higher than that of single fathers. This is evidenced by the percentage of single mothers of 14.84%, much greater than that of single fathers which is only 4.05%. (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Pregnant women who are not married will later give birth children and are at risk of becoming single parents. According to Turner (1990), common problems faced by single-parent mothers are stress and mental health disorders, role overload, decreased income, decreased living standards, loneliness and isolation, negative views of society, feelings of being trapped. The public's view of the change in status as a single parent mother, cannot be separated from negative imagery, public gossip, and the presence of some people who consider single parent status to be a bad thing so they do not respect the status of a single parent mother (Akmalia, 2003).

Pregnancy in adolescence is something unexpected. However, traditionally, the pregnant teenagers in the TTU District community has to live with their parents as they feel safer. Pregnant young women can be accepted by their families as children must taken cared by the family. In order to live together as a legal husband and wife, there must be a settlement dowery according to local customs as well as paying a fine for disgrace to the family made by the boyfriends before wedding ceremony in church. Social problems, namely people's views on changes in the status of single parent mothers. Single parent mothers are embarrassed to interact with the surrounding community, if there is no dowery settlement according to customs and wedding service in church, so they do not get access to quality health services, Mothers did not attend antinatal care during pregnancy, and attending postpartum and newborn care properly, Mothers do not bring their children for

immunization, and the mother does not detect the child's growth and development. This will cause chronic nutritional problems in infants and toddlers, causing children to become stunted.

Mothers who do not work become a burden on the family. This is in line with Kimmel's (1980) statement that special problems that arise in single parent mothers are difficulty in obtaining sufficient income, difficulty in getting a job, difficulty paying fees for children, and difficulty covering other needs. The economic problem faced by single parents is supporting the needs of their family and children, most women in Indonesia depend on their husbands for their household needs, but this will be different when a wife becomes a single parent where she must struggle to support her needs and the whole household alone (Faradina, 2012). Unwanted pregnancy itself also has an impact on maternal pregnancy complications. Complications of pregnancy can include excessive nausea and vomiting (hyperemesis gravidarum), preeclampsia, bleeding and psychiatric disorders such as postpartum blues, postpartum depression and even postpartum psychosis. Further analysis of Riskesdas 2018 shows that the mother's health condition both before pregnancy and during pregnancy, including the complications experienced are the reasons why pregnancy is not wanted.

The way to overcome socio-cultural problems that exist in society is to maximize the economy of single parent mothers by trying to work and trying to save income by not buying things that are not needed, not living extravagantly and managing expenses according to needs. This is in accordance with Taylor's theory (in Smet, 1994) this can certainly ease the demands of the daily economy. Meanwhile, single parent mothers who do not work and only depend on their parents' gifts need to be accompanied and must be wiser in managing finances for daily life, baby care costs and unexpected expenses. In addition to overcoming socio-cultural problems and economic problems, single parent mothers also have to overcome the psychological problems they face such as feelings of sadness, helplessness, and loneliness by controlling feelings by surrendering or surrendering and getting closer spiritually.

Socio-cultural life that exists in society with its values and norms can be a reference for young women to behave well and fulfill socio-cultural norms expected by the society. Young women also need guidance and education from their parents and families to be focus on achieving their dreams and growing into adults and to be independent worker and being financially independent. Thus, adolescents can prevent unwanted pregnancies which can lead to single parents. The role of parents in providing reproductive health information since childhood or elementary school is very important. Information about sexual and reproductive issues, adolescents often get inaccurate information about reproductive health from their friends, not from health workers, teachers and parents, causing them to experiment, have premarital sex which results in unwanted pregnancies. on Single Parent Mothers.

## **CONCLUSION**

Teenage pregnancy is unwanted by most of the teenagers because they are not ready to become a mother. They are in a relationship with their boyfriends because they feel bored with life in the dorm and adopt city life. Lack of control from parents and family when teenagers return home, low education, lack of knowledge about reproductive health and the influence of social media cause teenagers to have sex leading to unwanted pregnancies. This unwanted pregnancy can affect the

mother's behavior not to do or if she does not do it optimally, antenatal care visits, childbirth, postpartum, and babies, because mothers with adverse events generally hope that their pregnancy will not continue due to inhibiting factors, namely education, not working, and live in the countryside.

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