

**WHAT SOCIAL SUPPORTS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACT EDUCATIONAL
ATTAINMENT FOR PARENTING TEENS?**

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CHAPTER 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose

Historically, academics have recognized that adolescents who become pregnant tend to struggle with financial stability, are more likely to drop out of school, make less income, are less satisfied in relationships, and are less likely to graduate (Hoffman et al., 1993; Watson & Vogel, 2017). This study was inspired by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare's Grand Challenges for Social Work project, which aims to solve the most challenging social problems in the United States (Grand Challenges for Social Work, 2021). Ultimately, it is critical to investigate the impediments that hinder teen parents from completing their education because of the negative impact the lack of education has on families, from health disparities to socioeconomic instability. Additionally, this research investigated grandparent support while incorporating faith-based lessons that provide hope to teen parents. Mary, the mother of Jesus, reminds us of the importance of faith when experiencing a challenging situation, as evidenced by her becoming a teenage mother and receiving support from Elizabeth.

Community Engagement

The study incorporated community input and literature review information as a cross-reference to identify gaps. This study utilized the information gathered to develop a social innovation. A qualitative method with open interviews was used to gather data and analyze themes and subthemes. The data collected served as feedback on the literature reviewed and resource accessibility of this population. A complete picture of community collaboration was outlined by cross-referencing the survey results with the literature, using a theoretical foundation of social learning theory and an analysis of the problems described.

Conceptual Model

This research and project development foundation was grounded in social learning theory. Social learning theory helps individuals understand how the behaviors of children, adolescents, and adults are influenced by their environment, family dynamics, peers' interactions, and negative or positive visuals. Social learning theory will give grandparents and teen parents an understanding of how behaviors can be changed to help develop inner strengths, eliminate stigma, and become prepared to be parents while attending school.

Social Innovation

The proposal of a social innovation project was driven by the gathering of literature review, community participants, and stakeholders to develop a grandparent engagement program named "Building a Legacy." Assisting grandparents in understanding their roles will influence academic motivation through a social learning theory model that leads to academic success. The curriculum training is intended to reach grandparents and teen parents, understand multigenerational functioning and barriers, and guide them to achieve academic success. The principle of the curriculum is to impact the Grand Challenges offered by Social Work related to improving individuals' and families' well-being by reducing economic inequality through education.

Evaluation

After each training, a post-evaluation will be given to help the facilitator determine if this curriculum will work. The goal of the post-evaluation is to find out if this curriculum gave helpful background information if it changed their point of view, and if it helped participants learn more about how to deal with being a teen parent and how important education is. The research question that will be looked at is: How has this curriculum helped get grandparents

involved to help teen parents do well in school? By getting feedback, the facilitator will be able to change the curriculum to fit the needs of this group and add interventions that could be helpful in a family system. Using the SPSS program, a quantitative study design will be used to measure the impact of grandparent support on the curriculum to help teen parents. This will be done as part of an assessment of the curriculum.

Conclusion

Even though the rates of teen parenting have decreased, not much is being done in terms of community-based support or grandparent engagement for teen parents to increase their likelihood of obtaining a higher education. It is important to improve social support by involving grandparents to understand the influence they have on their teen parent and how they can role model parenting skills and encourage academic motivation. Grandparents are associated with higher educational outcomes for teen parents, but not enough research has been conducted to investigate their impact and outcomes. To sustain high graduation rates, it is essential to investigate strategies to reduce obstacles and boost grandparent engagement for adolescent parents to increase the likelihood of better academic futures.

Keywords: teen parents, education, grandparents, academic success, academic motivation, strengths perspective, community-based supports

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CHAPTER 2: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND BACKGROUND

According to the Encyclopedia of Child Behavior and Development, teenage mothers and pregnant girls who become mothers are between 11 and 19 years old (Cosden, 2011). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (2019) report *Reproductive Health: Teen Pregnancy* stated that in the United States in 2017, women aged 15 to 19 gave birth to 194,377 children, at a rate of 18.8 per 1,000 women. Young fathers are defined as those from ages 16 to 25, and they face the challenges of not finishing school and may not live with the mother of their child (Young Fathers, 2021). Adolescent parents have significant social and economic implications. The cost to taxpayers is almost \$11 billion each year in "higher health care and foster care, greater rates of incarceration among children of teen parents, and lost tax revenue due to lower educational attainment and income among teen parents (Watson & Vogel, 2017).

Historically, researchers have found that teens who become pregnant have a propensity to struggle with socioeconomic stability and are less likely to graduate, earn higher wages, and be happy in a relationship (Hoffman et al., 1993; Watson & Vogel, 2017). It is important to note that this research project focused on teen parents, grandparents, both fathers and mothers, but due to the more significant impact on their lives, teen mothers were emphasized. The study also explored grandparent support and how a decline in engagement affects educational outcomes for teen parents. The parents of these teen parents are identified as grandparents to clearly identify their role.

Teen parents continue to be viewed as a burden to society due to the circumstances of being a young parent. Teenage parents are stigmatized because they violate parenthood age standards and who often belong to marginalized ethnic or socioeconomic groups (SmithBattle, 2020). Because stigma is pervasive and has negative consequences, it causes further instability.

Title IX was established with the purpose of forbidding discrimination to occur in educational settings. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (hereafter, Title IX) is a federal civil rights statute that forbids sex discrimination and stigma in educational programs and school activities, including pregnancy and parental status (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). In 1975, Title IX legislation passed, mandating equal educational opportunities for pregnant and parenting teens. However, more than 40 years since its passage, studies still show that only 50% of teen parents graduate high school (Watson & Vogel, 2017). It is unclear if the low graduation rates are due to inadequate community resources, grandparent support, mentorship, or academic motivation. The low graduation rates of high school teen parents demonstrate a large gap of students not completing school. However, the consequences of childbirth in the teen years vary based on the individual's circumstances, such as grandparent support, socioeconomic status, and age subgroup (Penman-Aguilar et al., 2013). This country's statistics show an upward trend due to the lack of engagement to follow up with teenagers who do not graduate high school.

In addition to Title IX, legislation for K-12 general education in the United States called the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) was enacted between 2002 and 2015 (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). This statute keeps schools accountable for the learning and achievement of students. This legislation affects teen mothers from disadvantaged backgrounds as many teen parents identify from minority backgrounds (*Reproductive Health: Teen Pregnancy*, n.d.) The purpose of the policy was to provide pupils with additional educational possibilities. The four primary groups for which opportunities are intended are:

- Students from low-income families
- Minority students
- Students with special needs

- Students who speak another language other than English

There has been no probing strategy to track adolescents whom the system has left behind due to their age or dropping out of high school. Inadequate educational attainment among teen parents creates societal challenges for them and their children. The lack of education often keeps young parents in a society dependent on the government.

Around 16 million adolescent women globally give birth each year, representing approximately 11% of all births. More than half of these births occur in six countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, and the United States (Cook & Cameron, 2020). The association between teenage motherhood and education is unambiguous; when adolescents become pregnant and subsequently give birth, they often drop out of school. The principal causes of dropping out of school include stigmatization and prejudice from instructors, non-supportive parents, peers, and the surrounding community (Achoka & Njeru, 2012). Unfortunately, becoming a parent during adolescence contributes to the cycle of poverty. It significantly elevates maternal and child death rates and poor health in many countries regardless of economic level (Olszewski & Diaz, 2019). On a national scale, these conditions will affect the local economy (welfare programs), which also influences the global economy.

The researcher planned to understand how can those closest to teen parents can mobilize change to decrease the cycle of poverty. The research also wants to understand from a biblical stance how grandparent support, an inner-strength perspective, and academic motivation can influence academic success for teen parents. God's intervention in the creation of a child is a crucial part of a biblical woman's story, as evidenced by the story of Mary, a teenager when she had Jesus. Her perseverance, guidance, and faith encouraged her to rise with the support of

Elizabeth (LIFE et al., 2022). How, as a community, is faith encouraged in a young parent's future to persevere?

By exploring gaps in services, the researcher hopes to provide a service that will benefit grandparents and teen parents through interventions that are family oriented to be better equipped the multigenerational family succeed with the objective of accomplishing the teen parents' education. As a researcher member, it is understood that it will be impossible to reach all teen parents. Still, advocacy for these teens creates the change needed to improve systems that do not integrate equality for students who are parents. Change is only made when we provide advocacy for those who do not have a voice simply because they do not have the resources or knowledge to do so. The new generation of teen parents, along with their grandparents, need guidance so that they will not become trapped in a systemic cycle of hopelessness in the process.

Teen parenthood is viewed as a failure by the systemic cycle of perception in society; however, it is an excellent opportunity for many teen parents to become agents of hope, just as Mary did. By becoming their agents of hope through a liaison, access to resources, and knowledge of their educational rights, they will continue to become not only agents of hope but stewardships of God. Pregnancy was a defining moment in the lives of teen parents in which it became an academic devotion and impacted their educational journey (Navarro-Cruz et al., 2020).

According to the Bible, Mark 16:15, God proclaimed, "Go into all the world and share the gospel with the whole creation" (New International Version; BibleGateway, 1973/2011). Through serving, God has led social workers, counselors, and mentors to be agents of hope. According to Philippians 4:13, his servants must remember that "I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (New International Version, 1973; BibleGateway, 1973/2011). Some

individuals have discovered a positive social order to emulate in these biblical stories, in which soft power remains the only form of power available to women (LIFE et al., 2022). These lessons could be highly beneficial to new teen parents. As this information is processed and understood, it is critical to assess other challenges that a teen parent may face, such as childhood traumas, family dynamics, single-parent households, and neglect. These experiences can also guide providers to further their empathetic exploration to support a teen parent. Teen parents' backgrounds can come with emotional and traumatic experiences that can affect their educational attainment. A different area to explore are learning grandparent challenges, language barriers, and educational material accessibility. All these points are necessary for a provider to assess as they attempt to assist a teen parent.

Most importantly, universal human rights must be set forth as a foundation for young people. Everyone has the right to a decent living for them and their families, which includes education, food, clothing, a place to live, and medical care. People also have the right to security if they lose their job, get sick, become disabled, lose their spouse, get old, or have an unexpected loss of income (Mapp et al., 2019). Throughout this project, human rights were centered on empathizing with this population. Advocacy for human rights is imperative, but more so for young parents who do not understand their rights to ensure they are treated equally and given the same opportunities as their older and more informed counterparts. During an exploration of the literature to find meaningful gaps, the review focused on grandparent engagement and faith-based integration as sources of support.

All areas of a teen parent's life must be considered when attempting to understand, provide, and engage with resources. Children born to teens are more likely to have worse academic achievement, higher rates of emotional and behavioral problems, and poorer social

adaptation than children born to older mothers (iResearchNet, n.d.). People should recognize that regarding prevention and intervention, maternal education is one of the strongest predictors of bad outcomes for children and the approach to academic success could have been different.

Universal Human Rights

In its definition of social work, the International Federation of Social Workers stated that “principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversity are central to social work” (Mapp et al., 2019, p. 259-269). The definition clarifies that the international community of social workers engages in work related to human rights. The motivation and justification for social work is to “advocate and uphold human rights and social justice” (Mapp et al., 2019, p.259-269). Teen parents have a universal human right to have their perspectives respected, and it is the responsibility of providers to inform them of their rights. Therefore, providers need to consider teen parents’ human rights through a social work lens.

Literature Review

This section introduces research focused on themes of grandparent support, strengths perspectives, academic motivation, and academic success to understand the underlying factors contributing to low educational attainment outcomes among teenage parents. It is important to note that parents of teens are identified as grandparents in this paper to distinguish between parents and new teen parents. The literature review clarifies the current data findings, identifies gaps in the research, and details a theoretical framework to understand the need to improve approaches and support for teen parents regarding their education through a strength’s perspective that can lead to academic success.

This study was inspired by the Grand Challenge for Social Work project that looks to fill gaps in the research concerning teen parents and their well-being by explicitly considering

whether grandparents' or other support influences their educational attainment. The project is meant to inspire and focus on meeting society's greatest societal needs (Grand Challenges for Social Work, 2022). The project intends to ensure that people from birth to 24 years old have fewer problems with attaining their educational goals. (Grand Challenges for Social Work, 2021). Examining the Grand Challenges for Social Work highlights gaps that require further assessment, such as teenage parents' well-being and socioeconomic status (Grand Challenges for Social Work, 2021). This social innovation is focused on adolescent parents' educational attainment because not achieving an education can limit opportunities, stability, and relationships that can affect their children in the long term.

Furthermore, the objective of the grand challenges overall is to reduce adverse outcomes that significantly impact rates of economic independence, morbidity, and mortality. The threshold objective is to decrease socioeconomic disparities by 20% through the execution of effective preventive interventions by mentors, social workers, and grandparents who come into contact with a young parent (Grand Challenges for Social Work, 2021). The project highlighted the importance of grandparents' involvement and how grandparents can provide short-term support for long-term results. Therefore, the project contributes more constructively to the Grand Challenge's goal in reducing socioeconomic disparities and helping families well-being.

To affect this population of teen parents in a community setting it be necessary to identify how providers currently serve and how services can be improved to aim at the 20% threshold. The grand challenge initiative helps to understand at a macro level how social work continues to be needed in the effort of developing interventions that will affect the micro level communities. To help teen parents who are not doing well in school, it is crucial to focus on barriers at the

micro level, explore current support systems, and determine how to expand what we know works or needs to be adjusted.

Teen Parents

As they journey into parenthood, teen parents will likely confront several obstacles. Without a high school diploma, it is difficult for adolescent parents to pursue careers that can effectively sustain a family (Ricks, 2016). Consequently, adolescent parents who drop out of high school put their future success at risk. Being a teen parent significantly diminishes the likelihood of escaping poverty. Furthermore, young fathers are 25% to 30% less likely to complete high school than their peers who are not fathers. As for teen mothers, only 40% finish high school versus their peers (*Postcard: Teen Pregnancy Affects Graduation Rates*, 2013). Young dads also exhibit impatience and intolerance toward their children due to being emotionally and intellectually unfit for fatherhood (National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, n.d.). However, when fathers receive proper guidance and training, theories of father engagement and most data imply that children with participating fathers are likely to have improved behavioral and developmental outcomes (Lewin et al., 2014). Recent research has revealed that engagement among adult fathers is connected with favorable outcomes for children's cognitive development and educational performance and fewer behavioral and mental health issues across the life span (Lewin et al., 2014). Working toward both parents' well-being can ensure favorable outcomes for the family as a unit.

Grandparent Support

The phrase *multigenerational living* refers to many generations of a family sharing obligations such as paying bills, cooking, caring for children, and other family chores. According to the Pew Research Center, 64 million Americans lived with several generations in 2018 (Passel

& Cohn, 2018). Between 20% and 26% of adolescent moms reside with or strongly rely on their mothers for instrumental and emotional assistance when raising a newborn or very young child (Sadler & Clemmens, 2004). Furthermore, maternal grandparents, particularly grandmothers, appear to be more interested in their grandchildren's lives than paternal grandparents (Barnett et al., 2010). Evidence suggests that high levels of social support are related to favorable results for both mother and child (Logsdon et al., 2002; as cited in Huang et al., 2013). However, grandparents report obstacles in the process of supporting their grandchildren due to age and physical health. Grandparents have more difficulties with everyday tasks. In addition, caregiver stress may exacerbate health issues, causing challenges among family members related to helping one another (Kelley et al., 2010). Grandparents often report experiencing physical fatigue, less privacy, and less time with friends, family, and spouses (Sampson & Hertlein, 2015). In multigenerational families in which mothers and grandparents raise small children together, complicated intergenerational roles and obligations must be balanced and negotiated.

Few studies have examined the relationship between mother–grandmother traits, conflict, and parenting and child development in three-generation families (Barnett et al., 2012). Nevertheless, research found that grandmothers felt ambivalent about their duties when they would ordinarily have concentrated on their own lives and ambitions and were “too young” to be grandmothers. In various studies focused on teen moms and grandparents, grandmothers experienced a sense of life uncertainty (Paskiewicz, 2001; See et al., 1998; SmithBattle, 1996, 1997; as cited in Sadler & Clemmens, 2004). A rapid and unanticipated shift in roles often occurs, initially accompanied by feelings of astonishment, anger, and despair. Grandmothers also expressed a sense of role overload while attempting to satisfy the demands of their children and their daughter's children (East, 1999; SmithBattle, 1983; Voran & Phillips, 1993; as cited in

Sadler & Clemmens, 2004). Emotional experiences also have a heavy effect on grandparents due to prior tension related to their teenager making the wrong decisions and feelings of resentment for having to take on this new role.

In addition to parenting a teenage parent, aiding a grandchild, raising other children, and maybe caring for older parents, these grandparents encounter other obstacles that are a formula for multifaceted stress (Grant, 2021). Stress-related challenges with emotional, financial, and relational domains between grandparents and a teen parent can cause conflict in the family. Care and role transitions are a stressful process for families that is exacerbated by many pressures. Exposure to substance abuse, family instability, mistreatment, neglect, and loss prior to placement with a grandparent can contribute to emotional, behavioral, and academic challenges for children (Choi et al., 2016). Up to 72% of grandparents care for a grandchild who has had at least one trauma exposure, according to studies researching trauma exposure in families (Choi et al., 2016). The reality for grandparents is much different than only caring for their grandchildren; it also involves dealing with the stressors of the parents as well.

Grandparents face other challenges: A third live below the federal poverty line, and almost another third have incomes less than 200% of the poverty level (Dunifon et al., 2014). Grandparents in such families are less likely than parents in other family structures to be employed and married. Some of the most vulnerable families in this category do not receive the same childrearing assistance as other families facing similar economic and social risks (Dunifon et al., 2014).

To offer teen parents a chance at academic success, it is important to address the challenges grandparents face in their efforts to support the teen parent with a child. When exploring interventions, it is important to keep in mind that teenage parents who have a healthy

relationship with their grandparents will have a more significant relationship with God according to Ephesians 5:20-22 (New International Version, 1973; BibleGateway, 1973/2011). For this topic of grandparent support, grandparents must also be involved in the journey of accessing resources to help them and their teen parent overcome the barriers that may exist in the household. By providing the teen's grandparents with access to understanding the benefits of education, mental health services, resources to groups support, and guidance, they will empower the teen to explore their educational goals (Anglely et al., 2015). Grandparents can influence academic motivation, inner strength, and much more that lead to academic success.

Although challenges exist between grandparents and teen parents, the situation can also be viewed as an opportunity to create a positive relationship that will continue to be fruitful. There is a correlation between living in multigenerational families with numerous sources of support and an increased likelihood of high school graduation for adolescent parents (Gordon et al., 2004; as cited in Huang et al., 2013). Multigenerational families can help teen parents adjust psychologically during this stage of development. Having healthy relationships with grandparents can provide teen parents with the hope and support they need to get through a challenging phase.

According to studies, the likelihood of a mother and child having excellent outcomes is significantly increased when social support is present (Logsdon et al., 2005). Consequently, stronger family functioning influences parenting skills and is linked with pleasant parenting experiences for teen mothers. People closest to teen parents may be the most supportive and offer the most resources as they move from the phase of adjusting to their new position as parents to the next phase of parenthood (Anglely et al., 2015). The disadvantage of not assisting young parents is that research indicates that adolescents with poor relationships with their caregivers are

more likely to participate in high-risk behaviors. Negative parenting styles can be both predictors and outcomes when working with teenagers (Olszewski & Diaz, 2019).

The research on grandparents, friends, and social capital by Anglely et al. (2015) indicated the need for initiatives that enhance support. Assistance must be maximized to give adolescent parents the best possible chance of success. Research has demonstrated, for instance, that grandparents and teachers positively affect Latinx adolescents, given the inherent relational orientation in the family system, which is rooted in culture and traditions (Fripp & Carlson, 2017). Researchers found that children with positive ties with their parents do better academically (Gordon & Cui, 2012). Therefore, grandparents of adolescent parents must be made aware of their vital role in their children's lives to encourage scholastic achievement regardless of the circumstances by assisting their children in discovering their character strengths.

Strengths Perspective

The strengths perspective is a method of social work that places the strengths and resources of individuals, groups, and their settings at the center of the aiding process rather than their problems (Principles of the Strengths Perspective, 2022). In contrast to the medical paradigm, the strengths viewpoint posits that all individuals, families, and communities possess internal and external resources, regardless of their circumstances. These assets serve as advantages. The strengths viewpoint is based on nine assumptions, per Saleebey (1992), as cited in Ricks (2016).

1. Regardless of the difficulty of their circumstances, everyone possesses strengths that may be utilized to enhance the quality of their life.

2. Even the most isolated places have resources that can be used to solve problems and make life better.
3. The unknown is the highest boundaries of a person's ability for growth and development.
4. Even though they can have terrible effects, trauma, abuse, illness, and other problems can be sources of challenge and growth.
5. Consistently emphasizing the customer's stated qualities promotes client motivation.
6. Supporting self-efficacy, personal power, choice, control, and commitment may bestow empowerment.
7. Professionals are not experts on what customers want; instead, they are part of the empowerment process.
8. Discovering clients' strengths requires a collaborative effort involving both clients and experts. The customers' hopes for the future and the skills they have shown in the past should be considered.
9. Focusing on clients' strengths enables practitioners to understand their talents and how they have managed to adapt and thrive despite adversity. Strengths empower clients and distract practitioners from the urge to blame the victim or otherwise pathologize their circumstances.

After considering these ideas, people should acknowledge that although having a child while still in high school is not ideal, it is not defined as sign of failure but an opportunity for the parent to advance their education. These associations are reminders that teen parents can develop strengths that will continue to be helpful throughout their lifetime if given the tools and guidance. What typically occurs according to a study by Navarro-Cruz et al. (2020), separation

from institutions begins in high school and continues throughout higher education among adolescent mothers (Jones et al., (2019). Providers serving adolescent parents must enhance their preparenthood character strengths through collaborative efforts with teen parents.

According to Conn et al. (2018), strong evidence suggests that unlike their adult counterparts, adolescent parents are stigmatized and condemned by social networks, which affects their psychological development. They are subjected to pressures, role constraints, and social isolation due to stigma. Teenage parents' negative self-image and sense of how the world regards them are affected by internalized stigma resulting from their settings, cultural beliefs, and societal norms (Jones et al., 2019). Struggling to cope with internalized stigma from an early age inhibits them from feeling good enough for themselves and their kids. The feeling of not being strong or competent enough discourages teen parents from believing that they are good enough to accomplish academic success.

To properly comprehend stigma, one must be aware of how religion views stigma and the two types of stigma individuals face (SmithBattle, 2013). Biblical stigma was seen as "bodily marks or pains resembling the wounds of the crucified Jesus and sometimes accompanying religious ecstasy" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Even during the times of Jesus, stigma was painful, and the bodily marks were a representation of this pain. Personal stigma and perceived stigma are two kinds of stigma typically seen. Personal stigma is a barrier to individuals' attitudes and self-beliefs regarding positive results, reducing their motivation to achieve remarkable things, such as acquiring an education (Benuto et al., 2019). In contrast, perceived stigma refers to how people view others and in the case of teenage parents, involves negative attitudes regarding their identity connected with their motherhood (Jones et al., 2019). Educating young parents to have a new perception of what stigma becomes a barrier as they struggle to move passed the irrational

thoughts. Stigma from a biblical view resembles what teen parents experience when they do not feel accepted or wanted by society.

People need to be mindful about how teen parents experience negative perceptions. Negative perceptions causes hardship and holds individuals back from their abilities (Ricks, 2016). How can people be mindful about how adolescent parents may gain access to and use community resources to build their inner (mental) and outer (confidence) abilities. A well-known prayer of Mother Teresa advises us to have an easily remembered “business card.” “The result of silence is prayer; the result of prayer is faith; the result of faith is love; the result of love is service, and the result of service is peace”, (Elmer, 2006). How do community leaders provide business cards to teen parents who need prayer, faith, love, peace, and service? Modest research has been conducted on how neighborhood churches may enhance outcomes for young parents by giving access to community resources.

In research by Perrin and Dorman (2003), adolescent moms were interviewed and asked about their spiritual experiences. These remarkable women from the research discussed the value of spirituality in their lives from various perspectives and life experiences. “I am at peace with myself; I am satisfied,” one participant said (Perrin & Dorman, 2003, p. 288-293). Seven respondents indicated they were not affiliated with a religion, whereas three others said they had church support. Four mothers discussed their bond with a God that was beyond their comprehension. One participant stated, “My relationship with God is what has kept me going. It is urgent and close” (p. 288-293). Another woman stated, “I now understand the industry’s growth” (p. 288-293). Spirituality gives young parents hope, but other strengths might not be enough for inner support, especially after learning about pregnancy (Perrin & Dorman, 2003).

When examining the exterior strengths of teen parents, such as their link to community leaders, religious resources, and education, the question is how these services are utilized to their benefit to accomplish educational goals. God said, Timothy 4:12, “Let no one look down on you because you are young; rather, set an example for the believers in speech, conduct, love, faith, and cleanliness” ((*Bible*, 2001). Taking a faith-based approach can give students the confidence and inner strength to achieve their educational goals.

In a study by Conn et al. (2018), teens noted that it is vital that researchers focus equally on positive views, such as positive characteristics and optimism, because many young parents have the drive to be excellent parents. Having realized they will become parents, many teen parents are ambitious and desire a prosperous life (Ricks, 2016). Applying a positive perspective to adolescent parenting settings enables social workers, therapists, and other professionals to be more attuned to these parents’ needs and frame their practice around their strengths (Conn et al., 2018). Teenage parents can discover their inner strengths using self-centered statics on strengths that incorporate spirituality. By finding or developing inner strengths can help teenage parents be motivated, further discover new forms of motivation to do well in school. Positive community interactions with teen parents can help eliminate negative automatic negative impressions that create obstacles rather than opportunities for teen parents.

Academic Motivation

Academic motivation comes from social support such as mentorship, grandparents, and groups to keep adolescents visualizing a future that inspires higher academic success (Fripp & Carlson, 2017). Academic motivation is an essential determinant of behavior for students wanting an education (Blašková et al., 2019). High schools and universities foster an environment in which school and pregnancy are opposed creating a detachment from feeling

academic motivated to persist higher education (Navarro-Cruz et al., 2020). Pregnancy and childrearing are seen as interfering with the student experience. Based on the literature, institutions and community leaders are focused on barriers rather than opportunities to change outcomes for teen parents. According to Parr and Crites (2015), the energy and approach required to reach teens must be deliberate and tailored to their conditions. Community services such as churches, schools, and recreations centers can provide support where student parents can find community to stay academically motivated. Creating this type of community can help create the self-concept needed to build an academic character.

Academic motivation refers to an individual's abilities, intentions, goals, and relevant emotional responses related to education (Blašková et al., 2019). The lack of academic motivation or self-doubt can create barriers for newly teenage parents. However, God says to do your best to present yourself as one who has been approved, as a worker who does not need to be embarrassed, and as one who correctly handles the word of truth (*Bible*, 2001, 2 Timothy 2:15). Although psychosocial factors influence teen parents' initial commitment to pursuing higher education, their children often become the most significant source of their persistence and inspiration (Navarro-Cruz et al., 2020). By focusing on the significant aspirations of their children, parents can help teens maintain a connection to the educational goals they set for themselves. Finding out what motivates and inspires teen parents could help them stay interested and build their character as they progress through school.

Based on research, academic motivation is also affected by religion and how teen parents connect in the community. McBride (2012) studied the effects of religion and maternal parenting style on African American youth's academic performance and risk behavior. Student religiosity was positively connected with self-regulation, environmental regulation, and academic

motivation. Not enough literature has explored how having a faith-based foundation can provide motivation in any aspect of life. However, academic motivation plays an essential role in the life of a teenage parent. During parenthood, teenagers face challenging decisions such as whether to stay in school that could affect them academically.

According to research, motivation is the most influential factor in determining an individual's academic success or failure during the learning process. Motivation is a crucial concept for both teachers and students to comprehend in order to comprehend the causes of educational success or failure (Sivrikaya, 2019). Understanding how academic motivation is created can be examined by social learning theory. Examining family dynamics through social learning theory can help explain prior behaviors that related to academic motivation. Understanding the historical significance of academic motivation can help reduce a teen's impairments. The purpose of understanding where academic motivation is rooted or created is to increase the support needed to help teen parents visualize a promising educational future. Therefore, understanding grandparent–child interactions can explain how academic motivation emerges and persists.

Consequently, examining parent–child interaction through a social learning theory lens can allow researchers to identify communication styles that influence motivation and help modify behaviors that create further stigma and delay progress. Based on existing research, there is not enough information regarding grandparent communication styles and the influence of a teen's motivation on teen parents' educational attainment outcomes; however, grandparent behaviors make a difference in academic motivation (Gordon & Cui, 2012). By gathering information about parenting styles, culture, and teen motivation, community organizers can

provide interventions that involves grandparent and teen parent to increase motivation, inner strengths, with the hopes to keep the teen parent on track to succeed in school.

Academic Success

Early academic achievement is determined by academic grades and characteristics of social and emotional ties, language and cognitive development, and consistent attendance (Sektnan et al., 2010). Academic performance is acknowledged as a long-term undertaking by embracing, adapting, and disseminating resources that recognize teen motherhood as a nontraditional but viable route to graduation and postsecondary ambitions. The documented association between adolescent parenthood and poor socioeconomic results is primarily attributable to inadequate education. Academic success matters to a teen parent because it will affect their children.

Education is associated with other aspects of an individual's life as well. Education is associated with noneconomic advantages such as improved health, relationships, and declines in abuse and neglect (Mollborn, 2010). Education level, a significant socioeconomic determinant of health, is among the most accurate predictors of life expectancy. It is important to understand how having good health also goes a long way in how families connect and deal with day-to-day challenges. The connection between health and other outcomes of an individual's life has deepened during the past two decades, putting our nation's schools at the forefront of initiatives to improve outcomes for teen parents and erase health and socioeconomic gaps via education. Regarding educational possibilities, accessible contexts and resources that enhance educational success may represent additional unassessed intervention options (Ryberg et al., 2020). Like teenage life expectancy, the distribution of educational options for teen parents is uneven (Ryberg et al., 2020). According to Ryberg (2020), the difficulties children often face if teen

parents are not academically successful. According to studies by Evans et al. (2021), academic achievement may be achieved through various means such as grandparent support, motivation, and embracing inner strength to achieve academic success. However, less access to qualified instructors, lack of grandparent participation, and demanding academic material in communities can result in poor outcomes regarding academic success.

As a consequence, several social initiatives aimed at adolescent parents seek to enhance their academic performance through mentorship programs that promote academic achievement. According to data from the National Schooling Longitudinal Study used in Melhado's (2007) study, adolescent parents had an average of 11.9% more years of education than those without children. On average, they have 13.9 years of schooling (Melhado, 2007). According to studies, the connections between health inequalities and education have reciprocal implications for the grand challenge of generating healthier families and family well-being. According to research, educational possibilities explain a modest but substantial fraction of the difference in life expectancy between populations. Consequently, education can benefit not only financial standing but also other aspects of a parenting teen's life.

Continuation schools must be evaluated for educational opportunities provided for adolescent parents to prepare them for college. Teenage parents can attend alternative schools, but these schools often lack the courses necessary to prepare them for college success (Mapp et al., 2019). Moreover, alternative programs are an excellent option for pregnant and parenting adolescents. Nonetheless, the rigor and availability of advanced courses must be enhanced for adolescent moms who aspire to pursue careers requiring a graduate degree (Brouwer et al., 2018). Alternative education providers' role is to deliver college-prep courses at a higher level and in different settings to adolescent parents and other students. Teenage parents want

respectable employment and better prospects, which can only be obtained if they are academically successful. Teen parents deserve the opportunity to complete their high school education and pursue higher education to succeed in college.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of community engagement is to explore gaps in interventions used to mentor teen parents. Based on the literature review and collaboration of data received by community input, grandparent involvement has not been well connected to teen parents' academic journey. According to the literature, grandparent support is critical in encouraging teen parents to complete their educational goals. The research findings in the community indicated that there were not enough teen parent programs—none involved grandparent support or educators who provided continuation of services beyond high school.

The researcher connected with community stakeholders: the Norco College EOPS program and Purposely Chosen, two organizations that work with former and teen mothers. Norco College's EOPS program works with individuals from low-income families who are first-generation students, single parents, or in foster care. According to the coordinator, many individuals in the EOPS program were former teen mothers. After discussing teen parenting issues, the coordinator provided her personal and professional feedback that will help with the social innovation. The coordinator also identified as a former teen mother and emphasized the importance of offering support to this population.

The researcher also connected with the director of Purposely Chosen, which serves teen mothers in foster care. The director shared that some challenges in her organization are not having staff members who can help teen mothers interested in higher education to connect with colleges. As the director, she does her best to assist teen mothers who want to attend college, but it can be difficult at times due to the multiple responsibilities she must fulfill. She expressed the need for an agency or someone willing to focus on connecting these teen mothers to higher education, to guide them and provide follow-up support that would lead to academic motivation

and success. Due to the protocol for this research and the age of teen mothers from Purposely Chosen, this researcher did not collect data from this organization. However, the feedback was well documented to guide the development of the social innovation.

Community-Based Participatory Research

In this study, a social innovation program was implemented using a theoretical approach, leadership skills, and the notion of transformational leadership to engage and establish connections with community members who serve teen parents or former teen parents such as Purposely Chosen and EOPS Norco College (Berkovich, 2016). Transformational leadership is one of the most effective and powerful leadership methods in educational administration, and it fit well with this project (Bush, 2014; Hallinger, 2003; as cited in Berkovich, 2016). Transformational leaders aim to establish relationships with community providers to empower others by educating them to perform at a better level, culminating in a value system (Xu, 2017). Studies have indicated that leadership goal-setting is an integral component of any organization's framework (Hamstra et al., 2013). The objective and vision to lead providers in providing support systems for teen parents have been supported by implementing goals via a community leader component. Given the significant uncertainty in contemporary global business environments, it is evident that firms will demand transformational leaders to be more innovative and creative, especially when working with teen parents (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). According to Carter and Goldsmith (2019), emotional competencies such as emotional attentiveness play a crucial part in the development of leaders, which can aid in eradicating stigma. Emotional skills include the emotional attention, clarity, and repair components of an individual's emotional intelligence, which require empathy. Emotional intelligence is essential for leadership and getting along with others, particularly student parents, teammates, and community providers.

The researcher benefited from transformational leadership abilities in generating and formulating ideas regarding why the development of this social innovation project is significant and innovative. This project's social innovation is intended to address gaps in services and support evidenced in the literature and validated by the survey responses of community members. The survey questionnaire and informed consent were sent to the Norco College EOPS program and community members, with the disclaimer that participation was voluntary. The survey questions were designed to elicit themes and subthemes such as grandparent support, academic motivation, a focus on strengths, and academic achievement. The obtained input aided in incorporating these critical elements into the curriculum.

Despite engagement attempts with Teen Success, Inc, a teen parent program in Fresno, California, the researcher experienced difficulty finding someone to collaborate with regarding teen parent support networks. A staff shortage prevented the adolescent program from assisting the researcher with developing an innovative social initiative. Based on a review of its website's list of offerings, no programs are oriented toward grandparent engagement. This experience, together with purposefully selected input, led the researcher to assume that the significant staff shortage also indicated a lack of resources for teen parents, including the engagement of grandparents and other services.

Who is responsible for encouraging and enforcing an adolescent parent's educational accountability? According to Watson and Vogel (2017), young moms think it is their obligation to obtain an education. Despite this, 50% of teen moms do not complete high school. Policymakers and educators should deliver Title IX-compliant services that protect human rights (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Researchers continue to demonstrate that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood are societal problems, yet little is being done to reevaluate the

information and assistance offered by community providers to these individuals. Teenage parents know they are not receiving the assistance and resources they require.

It is crucial to highlight that although this initiative was intended for young parents, the survey was only distributed to those aged 18 or older, due to institutional review board and ethical considerations. Norco College EOPS affirmed its willingness to assist with this social innovation initiative by collaborating with former adolescent parents and other community service providers. Future iterations of this initiative may involve training providers to engage families with adolescent parents to discuss findings. This social innovation initiative has the potential to have a significant impact if young parents are prepared to accept grandparent engagement toward the goal of obtaining an education.

Demographics

Participants provided information on their age, profession, and gender.

Methods

Qualitative methodology was used to identify themes that reflect the meanings of supports needed to improve educational outcomes in teen parents. In addition to a constructivist perspective, the lead researcher also adopted a critical social learning theory perspective with the hope that modeling new behaviors through motivation would increase academic motivation to change societal perceptions and influence further research on the educational experiences of teen mothers.

Pseudonyms are utilized to ensure the confidentiality of all participants. The recruited participants were reached by social media, networking with organizations, emails, and recruitment flyers to administrative offices that serve former teen parents, work with teen

parents, or know of a teen parent. This paper focuses on participants from the Norco College EOPS program and community participants. Some participants were former teen parents.

Results

Answers to 16 interview questions were analyzed to explore the effect of social supports on educational attainment among parenting teens. The research analysis relied on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. Data analysis using the latest NVivo software revealed the respondents' views in the form of major themes and subthemes derived from initial codes. During the data analysis, a codebook was generated, followed by project maps using NVivo software.

This exploratory research study was based on the following research question: What social supports significantly impact educational attainment for parenting teens?

Participants responded to the following 16 interview questions:

1. What types of parental supports are important for a teen parent to obtain their educational goals?
2. Are familial relationships an important factor influencing a teen parent to stay in school?
3. Why are friendships vital to establishing an emotional support system for teen parents to attain their educational goals? Please explain:
4. How would providing words of encouragement to teen parents impact their willingness to explore their inner strengths to assist in achievement educational goals?
5. What are the benefits of a teen parent who achieves their educational goals?

6. What strengths are needed for teen parents' perseverance to obtain their educational goals?
7. In what ways can community leaders aid in the academic success of teen parents?
8. Do you believe that group supports can help teen parents stay academically motivated?
9. How does personal motivation contribute to a teen parent's academic success?
10. What are some reasons teen parents might be motivated to complete higher education?
11. How might the faith-based community provide supports to a teen who is navigating motherhood and education?
12. How can high schools and universities bridge educational gaps for parents who identify as a teen parent?
13. Do you believe teen parents are aware of their educational rights provided by Title IX?
14. What types of resources currently exist to support teen parents to achieve their educational goals?
15. What additional resources are needed to support teen parents to achieve their educational goals?
16. In your opinion, why is obtaining an education important for the life of a teen mother and their child?

The analysis revealed findings in the following five areas:

1. Importance of education for teen parents
2. Role of motivation in educational attainment of teen parents

3. Role of community institutions in supporting teen parents' educational attainment
4. Role of family (grandparents) and friends in teen parents' educational attainment
5. Provision of resources for teen parents' educational attainment

Importance of Education for Teen Parents

The first main area of study that emerged from the data analysis revealed the participants' views about the importance of education for teen parents. This theme further consisted of the following subthemes:

1. Teen parents' awareness about their educational rights provided by Title IX
2. Importance of education for the life of a teen mother and their child
3. Benefits of achieving educational goals for a teen parent

Teen Parents' Awareness of Their Educational Rights Provided by Title IX

The first subtheme of the initial main theme consisted of following initial codes:

- Hope someone in the school system will offer this information
- Not aware

The analysis revealed a desire that someone would provide awareness to teen parents about their educational rights provided by Title IX. However, a few participants confirmed that they were not aware of these rights.

Importance of Education for the Life of a Teen Mother and Their Child

Data analysis revealed that teen mothers know that education is important for their life and their children. Participants said teen mothers understand that education can give them a better future, financial stability, self-confidence, and personal development (see Figure 1).

Better Future. Regarding discussions of the future, the data analysis derived three initial codes indicating that education is important for a better future. Participants said education would

reduce the likelihood that teen mothers would be exposed to risky behavior and it would give them motivation to be successful (see Figure 1).

Financial Stability. Further, participants mentioned that education will give teen mothers financial stability; thus, they could achieve goals that lead to further financial stability, more opportunities, building of generational wealth, etc. (see Figure 1).

- Because achieving academic goals raises financial stability
- Greater opportunities, build generational wealth, break cycles

Self-Confidence and Personal Development. Participants also stated that education provide self-confidence and personal development, helping teen mothers become role models and be in a position to make better decisions.

- Become role model
- Better decision making

Benefits of Achieving Educational Goals for a Teen Parent

This analysis revealed the benefits of achieving educational goals for a teen parent, including include honor, pride, taking responsibility, and improving living standards (see Figure 1).

Honor and Pride for the Parents. Participants stated that achieving educational goals has many benefits for a teen parent, such as encouraging them to have a sense of self-accomplishment, motivation, and honor (see Figure 1).

- Believe a sense of self accomplishment and motivation
- Break a generational cycle to be successful
- Honor for the parents

Taking Responsibility. Participants also indicated that achieving educational goals also provides the ability to take responsibility for the family and provide a better future for their children. (See Figure 01)

- Able to take responsibility for family
- Better future of child is a responsibility

Improving Living Standards. One participant mentioned that by achieving educational goals, teen parents can achieve higher-paying jobs that create stability for their family, resulting in more employment and productive advantages (see Figure 1).

- Achieve higher-paying jobs and create stability for the family
- Result in employment and productive advantages

Figure 1: Importance of Education for Teen Parents

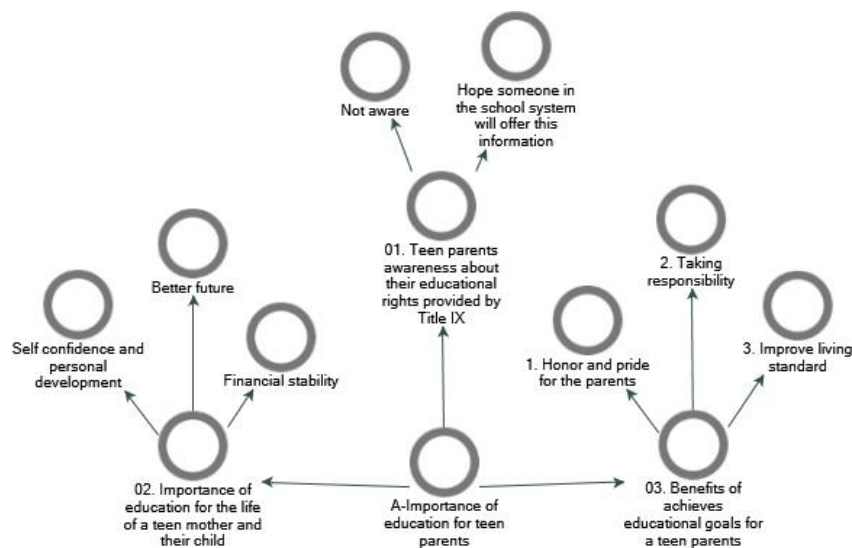


Table 1: Importance of Education for Teen Parents

Themes and subthemes	Initial codes	Quotes from interviews
Teen parents' awareness about their educational	Hope someone in the school system will offer this information	I would hope someone in the school system will offer this information.

rights provided by Title IX	Not aware	No, I was a teen parent throughout my college and university years, and I was never made aware of this.
Importance of education for the life of a teen mother and their child		
Better future	For better future Less chance to be exposed to risky behaviors	Just a better future. The child will have more opportunities less chances to be exposed to risky behaviors.
Financial stability	Motivation to succeed Because achieving academic goals raises financial stability Greater opportunities, build generational wealth, break cycles	To be motivated to succeed because you have knowledge that will change your life. It is important because achieving academic goals raises financial stability that can help the child grow and develop. Greater opportunities. Build generational wealth. Break cycles. Not wanting to be in a statistic. Break the feeling of shame and prove people wrong.
Self-confidence and personal development	Become role model	It is important to obtain a degree because it shows the children how hard you worked for college and the importance. The mother becomes a role model for their child, and it demonstrates resiliency.
	Better decision making	The knowledge gained through good and effective education empowers teenagers to be able to evaluate problems and make better decisions.
Benefits of achieving educational goals for a teen parent		
Honor and pride for the parents	Believe a sense of self accomplishment and motivation	A belief, a sense of self-accomplishment and motivation for their children. Also, a teen parent will be better off financially by being able to acquire a higher-paying profession.
	Break a generational cycle to be successful Honor for the parents	It can break a generational cycle to be successful to even have mental clarity. My son recently wrote me a letter and he said, "It was an honor seeing you change statistics." My child sees the passion I have behind education; thus, we both value education.
Taking responsibility	Able to take responsibility for family	They will be able to provide for their family.

Improving living standards	<p>Better future of child is a responsibility</p> <p>Achieve higher-paying jobs and create stability for the family</p> <p>Result in employment and productive advantages</p>	<p>Now they have a responsibility and want a better future for their child.</p> <p>Achieving educational goals will help teen parents achieve higher-paying jobs, create stability for their family.</p> <p>Achieving educational goals can result in employment and productive advantages.</p> <p>Lessen poverty, violence, and crime rates.</p>
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Role of Motivation in Educational Attainment of Teen Parents

The second main theme of the study referred to the role of motivation in the educational attainment of teen parents. The following three subthemes were identified.

1. Role of personal motivation in academic success of teen parents
2. Reasons behind teen parents' motivation to complete higher education
3. Influence of words of encouragement to teen parents on their willingness to explore their inner strengths to assist in achievement of educational goals

Role of Personal Motivation in Academic Success of Teen Parents

The first subtheme related to the role of personal motivation in the academic success of teen parents. The following initial codes were identified from the data analysis:

- Better future of child
- Essential factor for a teen parent's academic success
- Improves self-esteem and academic performance
- Keep focused through challenges
- Motivated to pursue goals

Participants provided their view about the role motivation has in academic success for teen parents' to give a better future to their child. Motivation is an essential factor for a teen parent's academic success because it improves self-esteem and academic performance.

Participants said that personal motivation keeps them focused through challenges and motivated to pursue their goals.

Reasons Behind Teen Parents' Motivation to Complete Higher Education

The second subtheme offered reasons for teen parents' motivation to complete higher education. This theme related to the following initial codes:

- Financial success and better future of children
- Learning opportunities that change negative outcomes
- Self-determination and acceptance in society

One main reason behind teen parents' motivation to complete higher education is the financial success and better future of their children. Participants said, learning gives them opportunities, and the last reason was being seen as self-determine which is more accepted into society.

Influence of Words of Encouragement to Teen Parents on Their Willingness to Explore Their Inner Strengths to Assist in Achievement of Educational Goals

The third subtheme referred to the influence of words of encouragement toward teen parents on their willingness to explore their inner strengths to assist in achievement of educational goals. The following initial codes were identified from the data analysis:

- For motivation and to be at their best
- Positive affirmations, worthy, and capable of achieving their goals
- Improves self-confidence
- Positive encouragement from family to accomplish their goals
- Self-concept, more encouragement
- Words of encouragement and goals

Words of encouragement to teen parents regarding their willingness to explore their inner strengths to achieve educational goals were used for motivation. So that they can believe in positive affirmations and be capable of achieving their goals, these words of encouragement can improve self-confidence. However, positive encouragement gives them confidence toward achieving their goals. Words of encouragement help develop a positive self-concept for achieving goals.

Figure 2: Role of Motivation in the Educational Attainment of Teen Parents

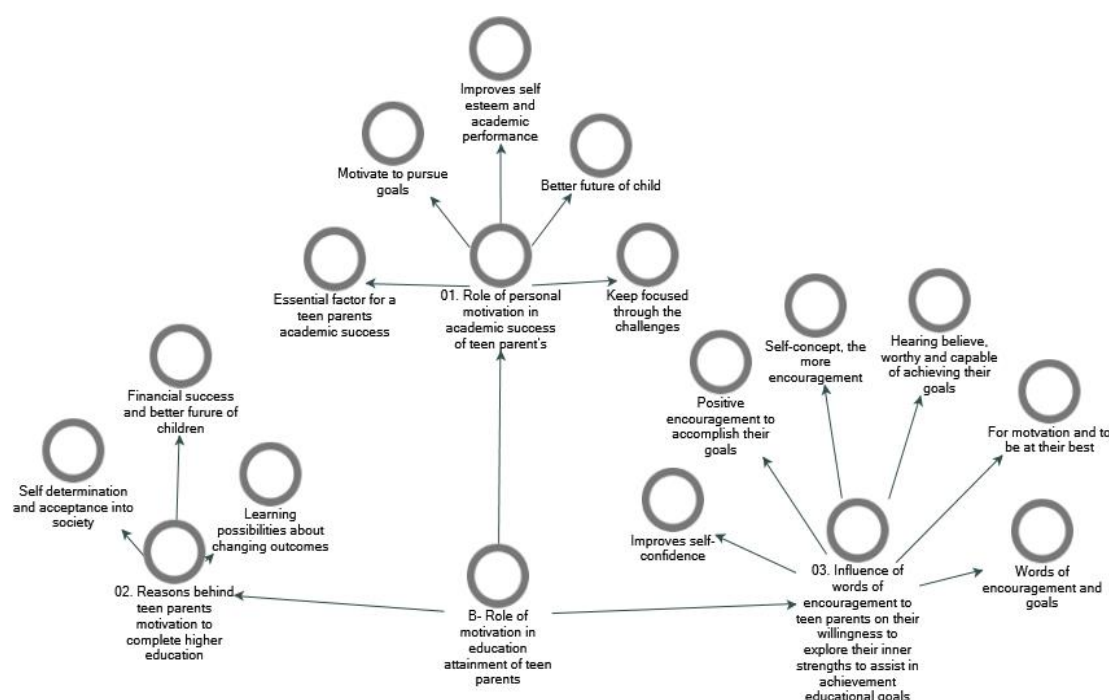


Table 2: Role of Motivation in the Educational Attainment of Teen Parents

Theme	Initial codes	Quotes from interviews
Role of personal motivation in the academic success of teen parents	Better future of the child	They want a better tomorrow for their child.
	An essential factor for a teen parent's academic success	Personal motivation is an essential factor for a teen parent's academic success. Although it does have to be nurtured and supported.
	Improves self-esteem and academic performance	It improves self-esteem, which in turn will improve academic performance.

	Keep focused through challenges	It is all. Finding ways to constantly focus on the prize and working in ways to increase motivation through scriptures, relationships, and envisioning a better future.
	Motivated to pursue goals	It gives you the strength to follow your goals and dreams.
Reasons behind teen parents' motivation to complete higher education	Financial success and better future of children	Financial success, personal satisfaction, love of a career field, and to provide a better life for their children.
	Learning possibilities about changing outcomes	Learning about the possibilities about changing outcomes for themselves and their children.
	Self-determination and acceptance in society	Self-determination, self-worth, fulfill dreams and ambitions, acceptance into society, social circles; independence, freedom; and financial earning potential.
Influence of words of encouragement for teen parents on their willingness to explore their inner strengths to assist in the achievement of educational goals	For motivation and to be at their best	Just keeps them motivated to be at their best.
	Hearing believes, worthy, and capable of achieving their goals	Encouragement is vital for teen parents. Teen parents often struggle with self-doubt and self-esteem-related issues. Hearing words of encouragement can make a big difference for teen parents to believe they are worthy and capable of achieving their goals.
	Improves self-confidence	It can change her mindset by believing in herself.
	Positive encouragement to accomplish their goals	The world is full of negativity, and teen parents need positive encouragement to accomplish their goals.
	Self-concept, more encouragement	Self-concept; the more encouragement teen can hear, the more that they will believe in themselves.
	Words of encouragement and goals	A teen parent may be going through a lot of pressure trying to tackle parenthood at such a young age. Words of encouragement could help motivate and find inner power to help them achieve goals.

Role of Community Institutions to Support Teen Parents in Educational Attainment

The third main theme of the study involved the role of community institutions in supporting teen parents with educational attainment, consisting of the following subthemes:

1. Role of community leaders in the academic success of teen parents
2. Role of group supports in academically motivating teen parents
3. Role of faith-based community support to a teen for navigating motherhood and education
4. Role of schools and universities to bridge educational gaps for a teen parent

The analysis revealed the role of community institutions in supporting teen parents with educational attainment. The first role involved community leaders and the academic success of teen parents, followed by groups that academically motivate teen parents, then the role of the faith-based community, and finally that of schools and universities to bridge gaps for teen parents.

Role of Community Leaders in the Academic Success of Teen Parents

The analysis revealed that community leaders play a role in the academic achievement of teen parents, as indicated by the following initial codes:

- Concrete programs and grants and scholarships
- Childcare facilities
- Support networks
- Removing stigma and connecting with mental health services
- Role models and mentors

Participants said that community leaders offer concrete programs and provide grants and scholarships, childcare facilities, and support networks. As one participant stated, “Leaders’ concrete programs specifically designed to help teenage parents. Provide grants and scholarships that do not have to paid back.” Another said, “Provide support networks, community outreach

programs, affordable daycare, school onsite daycare facilities, tutoring and mentoring programs, stress management programs.”

Participants stated that community leaders also play a role in removing stigma and connecting with mental health services that include role models and mentors.

Role of Group Supports for Academically Motivating Teen Parents

The second identified role was of groups that academically motivate teen parents. The following initial codes were identified:

- Being around like-minded people is essential for goal achievement
- Engage in positive conversations
- Support groups can motivate and encourage

Group supports for academically motivating teen parents included being around like-minded people, which participants viewed as essential for goal achievement. Supportive groups engage in positive conversations with and motivate and encourage teen parents. As one participant stated: “*Yes, I believe that being around like-minded individuals who are working towards their goals is essential for teen parents.*” Another participant said, “Yes, group supports give the teen mother an identity that she belongs and her input matters. Groups are a great way to process and heal.”

Role of Faith-Based Community Support of Teens for Navigating Motherhood and Education

For this subtheme, the following initial codes were identified:

- Able to provide emotional support
- Family empowerment and family networks
- Support and mentorship for teen parents
- Support in all kinds of ways, especially childcare

- Support to heal mentally and physically
- Prayer and support

Participants said faith-based community support for teen parents is important for navigating motherhood and education because it provides emotional support. Faith-based community support helps with family empowerment and development family networks to support and mentor teen parents. It offers support in all kinds of ways, especially childcare, and support to heal mentally and physically through prayer.

Role of Schools and Universities to Bridge Educational Gaps for Teen Parents

The fourth role involved school and universities that bridge education gaps for teen parents.

- Endorse teen parent childcare and grants
- Giving a chance
- Help parents navigate the transition
- Offer support groups and mentorships
- Provide defined career paths
- Provide tools to pursue higher education

These initial codes were identified from the data analysis and highlight the role of schools and universities that provide childcare and grants to help teen parents. They help parents navigate the transition, offer support groups and mentorships, and provide defined career paths. They also provide tools to pursue higher education, as one participant noted:

An easier pipeline. Designate one person that will help the teen parent navigate the transition. It's a huge difference, and that one person could be a mentor and also can

provide them all the information the teen parent needs such as financial aid forms, what classes to take.

Figure 3: Role of Community Institutions to Support Teen Parents with Educational Attainment

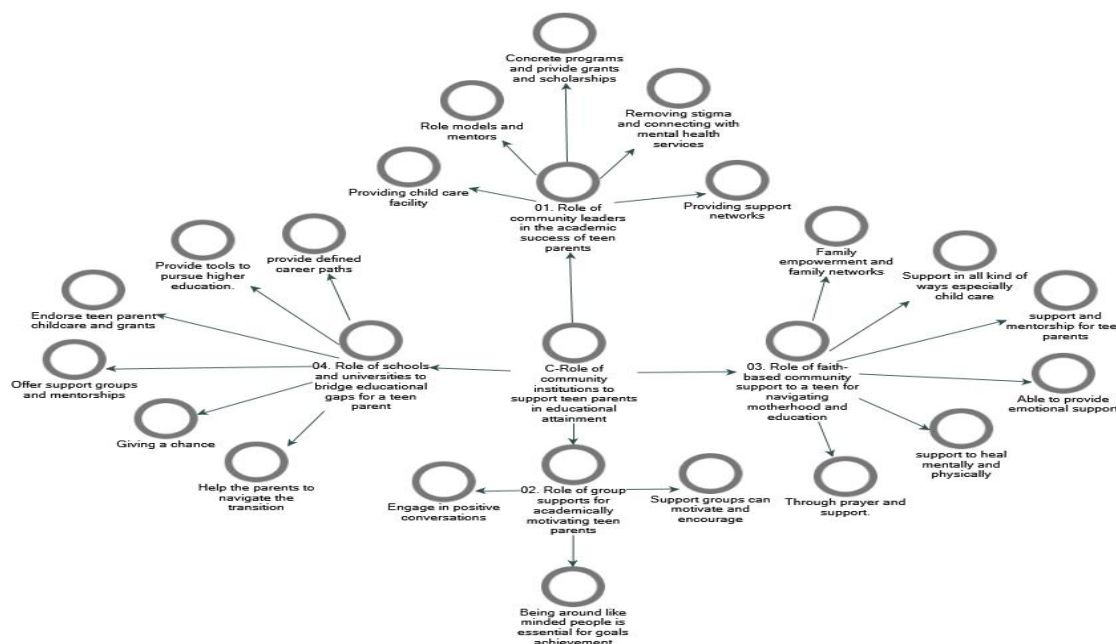


Table 3: Role of Community Institutions to Support Teen Parents with Educational Attainment

Theme	Initial codes	Quotes from interviews
Role of community leaders in the academic success of teen parents	Concrete programs and provide grants and scholarships	Leaders' concrete programs specifically designed to help teenage parents. Provide grants and scholarships that do not have to be paid back.
	Providing childcare facilities	By helping with childcare and allowing them to freely study without the worry of childcare.
	Providing support networks	Provide support networks, community outreach programs, affordable daycare,

		school onsite daycare facilities, tutoring and mentoring programs, stress management programs.
	Removing stigma and connecting with mental health services	Removing stigma, providing a bridge to college, and connecting them with mental health services.
	Role models and mentors	Community leaders could be: role models, mentors, and give teen parents opportunities to build their skills and their networking to open up their horizons.
Role of group supports to academically motivate teen parents	Being around like-minded people is essential for goal achievement	Yes, I believe that being around like-minded individuals who are working towards their goals is essential for teen parents.
	Engage in positive conversations	Yes, by processing their feelings and thoughts can engage in positive conversations.
	Support groups can motivate and encourage	Yes, group supports give the teen mother an identity that she belongs and her input matters. Groups are a great way to process and heal.
Role of faith-based community support for teens with navigating motherhood and education	Able to provide emotional support	They are able to provide emotional support.
	Family empowerment and family networks	Can promote a space for family empowerment, connect or tap into family networks.
	Support and mentorship for teen parents	Faith-based communities can provide a big role in providing support and mentorship for teen parents.
	Support in all kinds of ways, especially childcare	Support in all kinds of ways, especially childcare.

	Support to heal mentally and physically	They can provide support to heal you mentally and physically. Everyone's faith is different.
	Through prayer and support	Through prayer and support.
Role of schools and universities to bridge educational gaps for teen parents.	Endorse childcare and grants for teen parents	Endorse teen parent childcare and grants to be able to continue an education.
	Giving a chance	Giving them a chance.
	Help parents navigate the transition	An easier pipeline. Designate one person that will help the teen parent navigate the transition. It's a huge difference, and that one person could be a mentor and also can provide them all the information the teen parent needs such as financial aid forms, what classes to take.
	Offer support groups and mentorships	Offer support groups and mentorships, and have a list of practical resources.
	Provide defined career paths	Provide an adaptive curriculum, deepen professional development, provide defined career paths.
	Provide tools to pursue higher education	By providing a liaison to guide them and explore their wants about future education. Like what Avid does, prepare them to meet these gaps to connect.

Role of Family (Grandparents) and Friends in Teen Parents' Educational Attainment

The fourth main theme of the study identified from the data analysis referred to the role of family (grandparents) and friends in teen parents' educational attainment. The following subthemes were identified under this main theme:

1. Grandparent supports needed for teen parents to obtain their educational goals

2. Importance of grandparent relationships for influencing teen parents to stay in school
3. Role of friendships to establish an emotional support system for teen parents to attain their educational goals

Grandparent Supports Needed for Teen Parents to Obtain Their Educational Goals

- Communication and support
- Financial, childcare, mentorship, and psychotherapy
- Motivation
- Social, emotional, and academic support

Parents mentioned that grandparent support is needed for teen parents to obtain their educational goals. They use communication and support to help teen parents receive financial resources, childcare, mentorship, and psychotherapy: “Teenage parents need social, emotional and academic support.”

Importance of Grandparent Relationships for Influencing Teen Parents to Stay in School

- A source of motivation, empowerment
- Cope with stress and engage in healthier behaviors
- Grandparent support and encouragement is important
- Grandparent support is important to achieve one’s goals
- More positive outcomes

Under the second subtheme of the fourth main theme, participants highlighted the importance of grandparent relationships in influencing teen parents to stay in school. Participants stated, “Yes, a source of motivation, empowerment, but at the same time, if family is not supportive, they could add an extra layer of stress and can make it more challenging” and “Yes, the more supported or connect a teen parent feels with her family, the more positive outcomes.”

Role of Friendships to Establish an Emotional Support System for Teen Parents to Attain Their Educational Goals

- Friendship is social support
- Friendships help form a sense of identity outside the family
- Healthy friendships allow for connection, support, and self-care
- Motivate a teen parent to reach their goals
- To show and express emotions

Friendship also plays a role in establishing an emotional support system for teen parents to attain their educational goals because they view friendship as social support. Friendships help teen parents form a sense of identity outside the family. One participant stated: “Teen parents go through a lot of emotional challenges in being a parent, often with many financial stressors, and self-esteem and/or mental health-related issues. Healthy friendships allow for connection, support, and the self-care that teen parents need.”

Figure 4: Role of Grandparents and Friends in Teen Parents' Educational Attainment

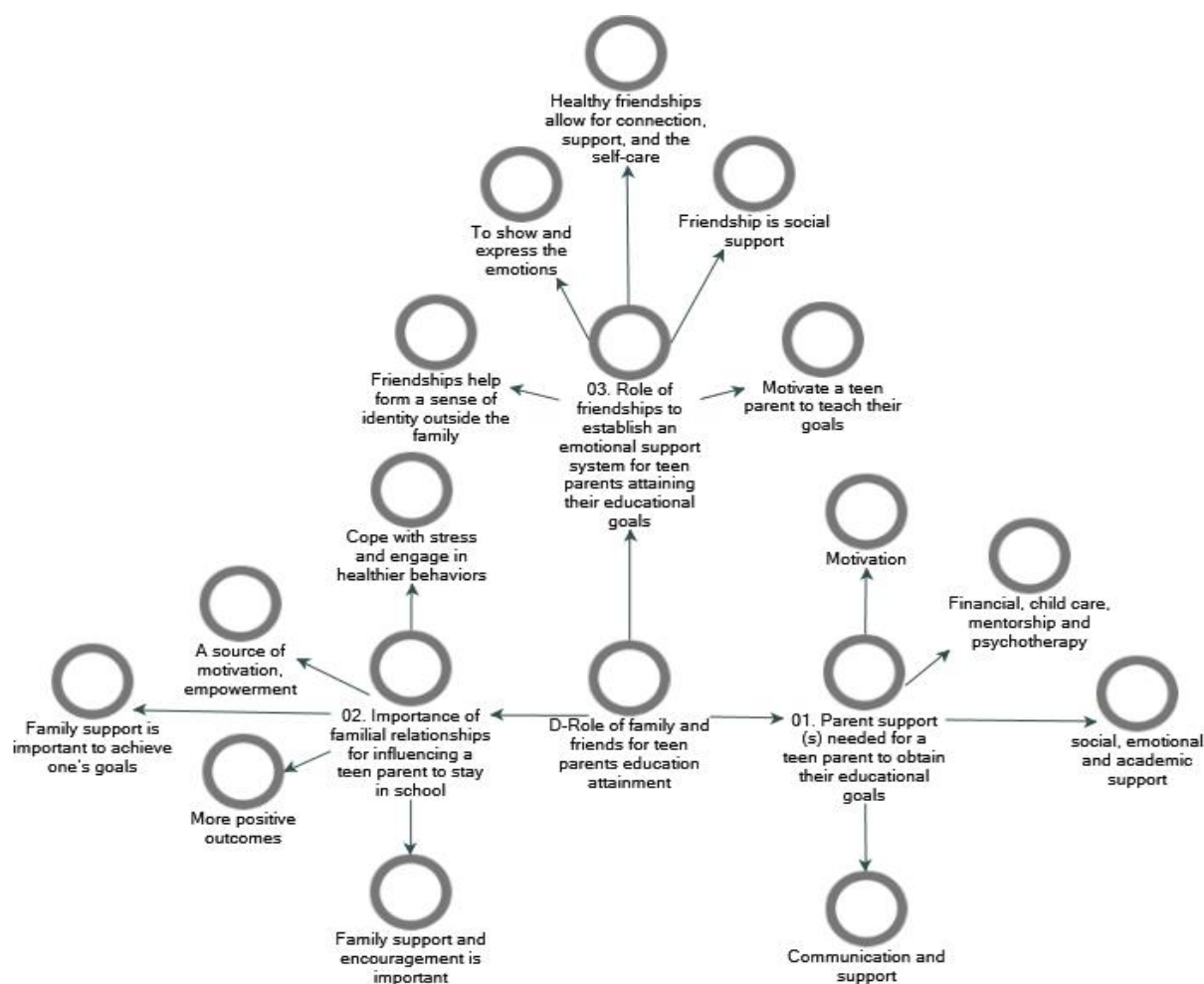


Table 4: Role of Family and Friends in Teen Parents' Education Attainment

Theme	Initial codes	Quotes from interviews
Grandparent supports needed for teen parents to achieve their educational goals	Communication and support Financial, childcare, mentorship, and psychotherapy Motivation Social, emotional, and academic support	Communication and support. Financial, childcare, mentorship, psychotherapy. The type that will motivate and push you for better. Teenage parents need social, emotional, and academic support.

Importance of grandparent relationships for influencing teen parents to stay in school	<p>A source of motivation, empowerment</p> <p>Cope with stress and engage in healthier behaviors</p> <p>Grandparent support and encouragement is important</p> <p>Family support is important to achieve one's goals</p> <p>More positive outcomes</p>	<p>Yes, a source of motivation, empowerment, but at the same time, if family is not supportive, they could add an extra layer of stress and can make it more challenging.</p> <p>Yes, grandparent relationships can help cope with stress, engage in healthier behaviors, and enhance self-esteem, resulting in higher well-being.</p> <p>Yes. I think without grandparent support and encouragement, it is difficult for a teen parent to stay in school.</p> <p>Yes, I believe the family support is important to achieve one's goals.</p> <p>Yes, the more supported or connect a teen parent feels with her grandparent, the more positive outcomes.</p>
Role of friendships to establish an emotional support system for teen parents to attain their educational goals	<p>Friendship is social support</p> <p>Friendships help form a sense of identity outside the family</p> <p>Healthy friendships allow for connection, support, and self-care</p> <p>Motivate a teen parent to reach their goals</p>	<p>Social support is important. Having friends is an outlet outside of the family. It's a different vibe.</p> <p>Friendships help form a sense of identity outside the family. Feeling of acceptance and inclusion among peers.</p> <p>Teen parents go through a lot of emotional challenges in being a parent, often with many financial stressors, and self-esteem and/or mental health-related issues. Healthy friendships allow for connection, support, and the self-care that teen parents need.</p> <p>It is important because it could help motivate a teen parent to reach their goals.</p>

To show and express
emotions

A vulnerable side is shown in a friendship in
which you can show your true emotions.

Provision of Resources for Teen Parents' Educational Attainment

1. Available resources to teen parents to achieve their educational goals
2. Required resources to support teen parents in achieving their educational goals
3. Strengths needed for teen parents' perseverance to obtain their educational goals

Available resources to teen parents to achieve their educational goals. Participants mentioned following resources available to teen parents to achieve their educational goals:

- Cal-Safe
- Financial aid
- High school childcare
- Scholarships
- Support groups and books
- WIC and online resources

Required resources to support teen parents in achieving their educational goals.

Participants mentioned the following required resources to support teen parents in achieving their educational goals.

- Childcare, financial education, and mental health support.
- Housing, food aid, group supports, career counseling, mentors, mental health support.
- Mentorship, financial assistance
- Grandparenting skills, teen parent education, career education, nutritional supplements
- Universities should prioritize jobs on campus

Strengths needed for teen parents’ perseverance to obtain their educational goals.

Participants mentioned the following needed strengths for teen parents to persevere and achieve their educational goals.

- Self-confidence, good study habits, and strong work ethics
- Support and flexibility from parents and professors
- To focus and stay motivated

Figure 5: Provision of Resources for Teen Parents’ Educational Attainment

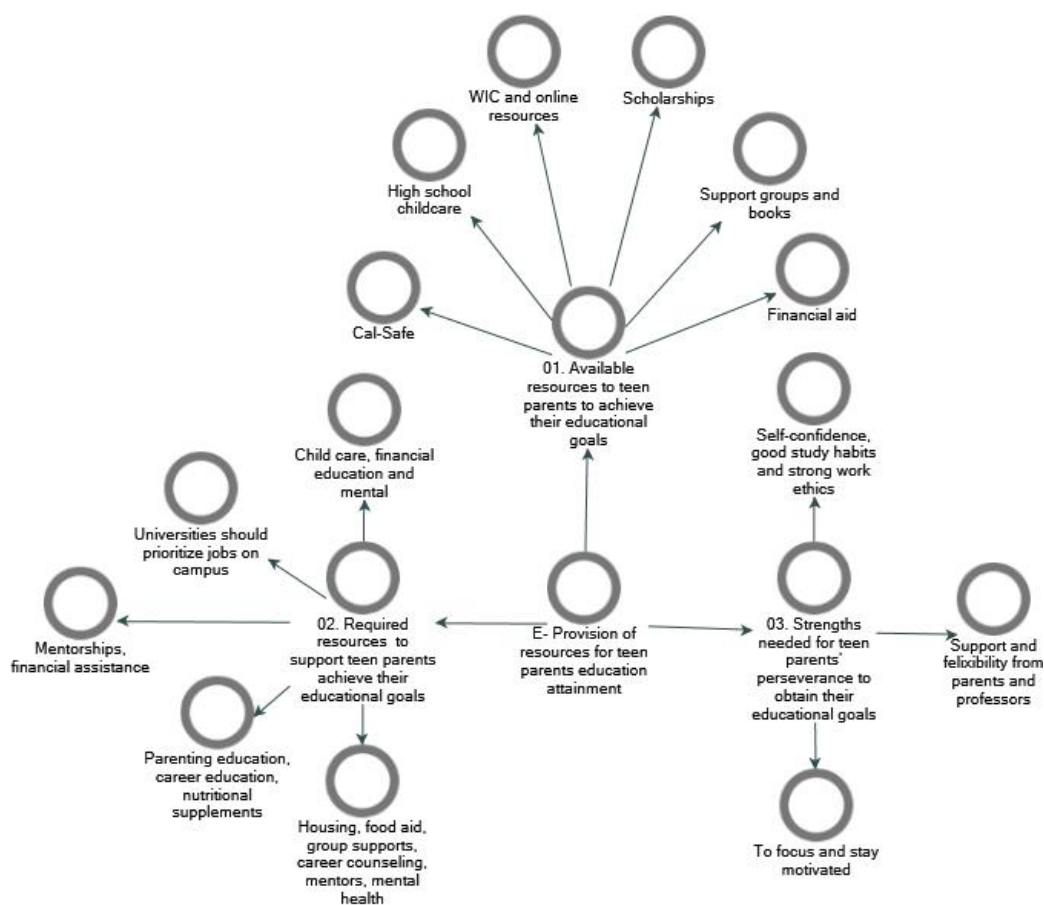


Table 5: Provision of Resources for Teen Parents’ Educational Attainment

Theme	Initial codes	Quotes from interviews
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Resources available to teen parents to achieve their educational goals	<p>Cal-Safe</p> <p>Financial aid</p> <p>High school childcare</p> <p>Scholarships</p> <p>Support groups and books</p> <p>WIC and online resources</p>	<p>I'm only aware of Cal-Safe.</p> <p>Financial aid; not sure of others.</p> <p>I only know about high school childcare.</p> <p>Scholarship.</p> <p>Support groups, books, not sure what else maybe out there.</p> <p>WIC, online resources but not publish often.</p>
Required resources to support teen parents in achieving their educational goals	<p>Childcare, financial education, and mental health</p> <p>Housing, food aid, group support, career counseling, mentors, mental health</p> <p>Mentorships, financial assistance</p> <p>Parenting education, career education, nutritional supplements</p> <p>Universities should prioritize jobs on campus</p>	<p>Childcare, financial education and mental health.</p> <p>Housing, food aid, group supports, career counseling, mentors, mental health.</p> <p>Mentorships, financial assistance, and other practical resources.</p> <p>Parenting education, career education, nutritional supplements, home to school transportation and childcare, access to psychological help.</p> <p>Maybe have universities prioritize a few jobs on campus for teen parents that offer a flexible schedule. If a teen parent is working at the university and their child is in daycare at the university.</p>
Strengths needed for teen parents to persevere and achieve their educational goals	<p>Self-confidence, good study habits, and strong work ethics</p> <p>Support and flexibility from parents and professors</p>	<p>Self-confidence, the ability to ask for help, having a vision, distress tolerance, good study habits, strong work ethic, and love for their family.</p> <p>Role models: mentors who believe in them and give them opportunities; flexibility from both professors and jobs; family support with daycare and babysitting; that they're</p>

building generational wealth for their children.

To focus and stay motivated The key is always to focus and stay motivated.

The data analysis helped inform a curriculum to present to the community and offer services for development of educational growth solutions for teen parents by incorporating essential elements such as openness, acceptance, trust, learning to change, learning biblical foundations, and understanding. According to scripture, “Your word is like a lamp for my feet and a light for my path” (*Bible*, 2001, Psalm 119:105). Words do matter and affect how teen parents perceive themselves. Leaders need to become the light that will illuminate the path to teen parents’ educational attainment. This is the first step of being open to the idea that a parent can become a scholar regardless of their situation. Teen parents yearn to be better parents and students for the sake of their children’s future. Community leaders need to demonstrate trust in young parents. How can we establish promising programs to assist teen parents if leaders lack confidence in the abilities of teen parents and knowledge of which supports are imperative to decrease complex societal problems? Community involvement is required to empower new generations that will be the leaders of the future.

CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Educational Rights

Title IX aligns with human rights because it prohibits discrimination and emphasizes that every person has the right to an education regardless of their sex, ethnicity, language, religion, or socioeconomic status. Furthermore, Title IX prohibits discrimination in schools. Article 1 states that all people are born free and equal and should be treated equally. Teen parents should be treated equally regardless of their status as teen parents. Article 2, which prohibits discrimination, stipulates that everyone has the right to assert their rights regardless of sex, ethnicity, language, religion, or socioeconomic standing. Teen parents have the right to the same treatment as their counterparts who are not pregnant. Article 26 says that everyone has the right to go to school, study as long as they want, and learn, no matter their race, religion, or country of origin (Stand Up for Human Rights, n.d.). Teen parents should be encouraged and receive the same level of educational courses to prepare them for higher education, no matter their status. Ethically, community providers are obligated to advise teen parents and their grandparents about the repercussions of not completing their education—namely, having to rely on their grandparents for a much more extended period. It is a multigenerational undertaking with long-term effects on the child and teen generations. By doing so, we can create a favorable change in their life trajectory.

Social Learning Theory

The principles of social learning theory guided the suggested initiative. Social learning theory, according to research, posits that all people are social beings who have culturally experienced a style of learning in their family dynamic, which has influenced various parts of their behavior, including communication and learning styles (Chavis, 2012). Children acquire

intellectual, athletic, and creative talents from society, gender groupings, peer groups, and their families through the concept of social learning theory (Social Work License Map, 2021). In research of McLeod et al., (2019), the study on learned behaviors suggested that children are surrounded by numerous important role models, such as grandparents, family friends, instructors, and others in the family dynamic, who they observe and mimic (p. 59).

Theoretical evidence indicates that the community influences children, implying that this trend can continue to be influential if we alter how society interacts with adolescent parents. Social learning theory suggests that a person's behavior is shaped by cultural and social experiences, no matter the appropriateness of the behavior (Chavis, 2012). According to the social learning hypothesis, individuals can learn behaviors through observation, interactions, and modeling; in this way, new information and behaviors can be learned, affecting teen parents through their developmental journey as parents (Chavis, 2012). For example, attention entails creating a mental representation of a behavior by focusing on its outcomes; retention refers to the ability to retain a seen behavior in long-term memory for retrieval later; imitation is a long process that is not always instantaneous; and reproduction requires the capacity to repeat an observed behavior.

Modeling behavior is also known as observational learning, which can be implemented among teen parents by educating grandparents about the importance of engagement with their teen parents. Bandura (2019) argued that modeling is the basis for a broad spectrum of child behavior. By seeing those around them, youngsters learn a variety of positive and negative responses. A child who kicks another child on the playground after observing this behavior and a student who is chronically tardy to class because his peers are tardy both demonstrate the effects of observational learning (Zhou & Brown, 2017). It is tough to learn if not attentive to the task at

hand. People often lose interest if they do not believe the resources at hand will provide them with new or original information or if they do not appear to be advantageous. Bandura's (2019) theory posits that learners can also sustain concentration in group settings; for example, if the group is attentive, so is the individual. Exploring social learning theory from a familial perspective provides an overview of how newly adolescent parents observe, interact, and model self-development while learning to be a parent.

Social learning theory helps explain how teen parents learn to stigmatize themselves and allow their environmental experiences to increase these perceptions, which could explain the decline of their ability to complete their education. How teen parents view themselves (personal stigma) and how they believe others view them (perception stigma) also affect their new, potentially negative parenting style and their academic goals. However, the independence of teenage parents requires mentors who model and guide them along a successful path—in this case, an educational path for success. Stigmatization, in a sense, is embedded before learning about pregnancy. Based on this study from Bandura (2019) these negative beliefs are linked to childhood development and parent interaction at a young age.

Studying and discussing stereotypes is important with this population, too, through the lens of social learning theory. In this society, stereotypes—simplified images or ideas associated with group members—are prevalent (Silva et al., 2020). These prejudices can negatively affect a young person's academic achievement, career trajectory, and ultimate success. This occurrence is referred to as "stereotype threat." Understanding how learned behaviors affect teen parents makes it easier to comprehend how negative stereotypes also affect them. By assigning unfavorable labels to teen parents, a negative belief is created that the teen parents are inadequate and will become another negative statistic in society. Some instances of preconceptions include

teen parents being high school dropouts, living in poverty, and being lousy parents. Bandura's (2019) explanation of the retention process encourages this negative belief system affecting teen parents.

Gender and racial stereotypes and generalized views about the adolescent years may influence individuals' emotions, cognition, and actions and contribute to their psychological adjustment during this stage of development (Silva et al., 2020). Social learning and stereotypes affect how teen parents view and how present themselves in society. Gender stereotypes impact women more than men when society is aware of their being a teen parent. Existing data indicate that teenage mothers and fathers are adversely stereotyped and stigmatized (Weed & Nicholson, 2014; as cited in Chobany & Hull, 2021). Teenage mothers have reported receiving harsh evaluations about their age and unsuitability to be a mother. Some moms are viewed as sexually promiscuous, whereas teen fathers feel pressure to care for and participate in their children's lives (Wilkes et al., 2012; as cited by Chobany & Hull, 2021). Teen mothers are held to significantly higher standards than teen fathers. This pressure has a greater effect on teenage mothers. Teen mothers are disadvantaged in building a prosperous future for themselves and their children.

Despite the prevalence of these preconceptions, stigma is rarely cited as a contributor to teen mothers' health and socioeconomic disadvantages. Because stigmatizing behaviors impair appropriate clinical care, education, and parenting, which contribute to teen moms' many obstacles, practitioners should be concerned about stigma (SmithBattle, 2013). It is essential to treat teen parents with dignity if they are to develop behaviors that help them develop as parents. If the teen parent has a low self-opinion, they will be more likely to respond negatively to their child. Here again, we can observe how the cycle of social learning theory can repeat.

Breaking the cycle of stigmatization involves a universal language that should be adopted globally. Incorporating social learning theory to model dignity is among the essential aspects of human character. It involves being valued and respected for who you are, your beliefs, and your way of life. To treat others with respect, we must treat them as we would like to be treated; social learning theory teaches these behaviors. Every person has the right to live a life of dignity and realize their full potential (Staff, 2022).

The right for everyone to be provided with an education is also connected with providing proper support. Engaging grandparents to model social learning theory will encourage strengths, influence motivation, and help teen parents to become academically successful (Chavis, 2012). Being able to embrace an understanding of social learning theory would be helpful for grandparents to understand how they can continue to positively influence their teens in achieving academic success. Incorporating theory into this social innovation project will help explain how grandparent engagement can aid adolescent parents in comprehending how their educational achievements will affect their outcomes in the long term.

(See Appendix A, Social Learning Theory Model)

CHAPTER 5: SOCIAL INNOVATION

The proposed innovation's purpose is to emphasize the importance of grandparents' support of new teen parents and their children. This social innovation is meant for community-based support that influences more than only teen parents' future. The social innovation of Building a Legacy is a curriculum that will address the importance of including grandparents' support to assist teen parents in developing strengths that will help them stay focused on their academic success while parenting. This social innovation will give grandparents the emotional support and tools needed to manage the challenges of being in a multigenerational family. The facilitator's objective through this training is to help grandparents and teen parents foresee the negative outcomes that could occur if they do not obtain an education. Grandparents should embrace the idea of working together not for short-term solutions but for breaking generational vicious cycles in the family dynamic. (See Appendix B)

By providing services to grandparents and teen parents, this facilitator will provide a different perspective on how to engage, explore, and navigate their journey as grandparents and avoid barriers for the teen parent in attempting to reach their educational goals. Empowering grandparents regarding the benefits of supporting their teen parents could change the trajectory of having teen parents depend on grandparents for too long. The facilitator will emphasize the importance of short- and long-term benefits.

Moreover, including teachers, therapists, social workers, and other teen parents in their support networks can help young mothers and fathers gain an optimistic outlook on their future (Hernandez & Abu Rabia, 2017). A teen's parenting experiences must be empowered during the parenthood phase. Providers and grandparents should know that life will not be linear and difficulties will arise. The conceptual model of this training is intended to teach grandparents

how to navigate the journey along with the teen parent to provide guidance, modeling, and encouragement with coping skills to help regulate their life stressors. Navigating teen parenting alone is a scary journey for a teen. Families and friends of teen parents can do something as simple as giving them verbal praise or acknowledgment.

Society has made it difficult for young parents to have a voice, mainly because of the shame associated with teen pregnancy. The world has allowed social media, bullying, and other forms of faulting to assign value to teen parents. What is being said to teen parents, especially by an authoritative figure, can either build them up to become resilient or demoralize them. A key element to remember is that mothers who learn they are pregnant are immediately in a vulnerable state of mind (Gordon & Cui, 2012). Vulnerability creates open gates to their emotions that can cause feelings detrimental to the well-being of a mother and child. Vulnerability can be a real chance for people in the community to encourage and help teen parents see a bright future, no matter their situation.

Based on a review of the literature in parallel with the engagement of stakeholders, there continues to be a shortage of identifiable social supports such as grandparent engagement to address the low academic achievement of teen parents. The literature indicates that education increases a teen parent's likelihood of decreasing poverty, health disparities, mental health challenges, and risks of abuse and neglect, yet little is being provided to intervene and decrease these possibilities. Education has been identified as an important element in a teen parent's future outcomes, not only for them but also for their children's development and education. Based on research and feedback from stakeholders, there is not enough family involvement in supporting teen parents with academics while navigating other aspects of life. In the community, many programs exist that offer one-on-one mentorship, but teens need a different approach that

is linked to their family dynamics for consistency and growth in their environment, where they experience more influence by grandparents.

An assessment of community mentorship programs offered in California revealed that many leave out a family component on the father's and mother's side that could aid in supporting teen parents' educational goals. Teen parents need a different approach from their grandparents to guide, lead, and help them grow into their best self. This is the time when grandparent involvement or family involvement is critical for a teen parent.

Including grandparent engagement support adds a focus in the curriculum on helping grandparents model healthy relationship building and offering the teen parent tools for empowerment to decrease stigma, gain words of encouragement, and identify resources needed through the journey. Therefore, this training that includes grandparent engagement will give the teen parent a higher likelihood of staying academically motivated, finding inner strength, linking to spiritual support, and staying focused on educational goals by receiving support from family.

The training will assist in confirming pregnant and parenting students' experiences while also working toward collaborating with community providers to develop solutions that improve outcomes for student parents. The training will use a framework from social learning theory that accounts for the desires of teen parents to make sure that parenting students are seen from a strengths-based point of view. It will empower grandparents to help their teen parent stay focused and learn life skills needed to succeed as a parent and scholar.

It will be critical to connect supports, interventions, education, and child-care of what evolves around a parenting teen to help them achieve their educational goals. Every effort that is undertaken to engage teen parents into services will have the overarching goal of addressing the well-being of families. In the course of assisting teen parents, the collection of data will also

assist stakeholders in comprehending how education influences other facets of service, such as health and mental health disparities. Education is an important component to teen parents. The overall goal is to increase the threshold of teen parents graduating school from 50% to 70%.

CESI Model

The curriculum was created based on scholarly research and community input by using the CESI model to identify gaps in services needed by stakeholders. The principles of CESI are to identify, integrate, engage, assess, innovate, evaluate, and disseminate the innovation to support student parents through a leading for success and empowering concept that will be transformational for teen parents' lives. The curriculum was developed based on the social problem addressing gaps in educational services and exploring faith-based lessons that may offer additional interventions (Van Wijk et al., 2019).

The goal is to engage teen parents in services along with their grandparents that can encourage motivation, develop inner strengths, and model positive parenting to develop healthier families, with the goal of addressing the grand challenge of reducing adverse outcomes such as poverty, conflicted relationships, or abuse and neglect that significantly impact rates of economic independence, morbidity, and mortality. The CESI model helps teen parents the most because they focus on exploring barriers, working toward their strengths and connect grandparents to receive support for better outcomes (Annis et al., 2020).

This social innovation project is intended to promote hope by increasing teens' support and access to resources when young parents want to further their education. Parental or familial support can play an important role in helping teen parents reach their full potential. The training process is meant to enhance learning through a different lens for families to guide the teen parent and identified sources of support (parent, family, or friend).

Life is a cycle, people need to realize that change takes time but teen parents must have some determination to see fruitful results later. Eliminating language that stigmatizes and sets barriers could allow young parents to flourish in their self-efficacy (Mulgan, 2019). Teen parents are people, but at times are seen different because society does not accept a teen to become a parent at a young age. It is not a crime nor a disease to be a teen parent. The curriculum “Building a Legacy” has a mission to provide equality, promote dignity, and bring families together while achieving academic success.

Christian Worldview

In addition, incorporating the faith-based community will assist in addressing the obstacles teen parents face on their path to becoming a part of the community and acquiring spiritual resources. Frequently, adolescent parents feel lonely and are forced to navigate a difficult path alone. For instance, according to Navarro-Cruz et al. (2020), Latina mothers reported encountering rejection and severe criticism. At times, students, educators, and staff members were hostile and disrespectful of their experience (Navarro-Cruz et al., 2020). People have been given gifts to utilize as God-honoring stewards. These gifts must be passed on to others in need (*Bible*, 2001, 1 Peter 4:10). God’s gifts, like love, empathy, and humility, must be shared with vulnerable people to bring hope during life’s most challenging changes. According to Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, when two individuals labor together, they receive a greater return on their efforts because they can assist each other if they stumble.

This research investigated the strengths perspectives, and a spiritual component will be evaluated to determine how best to serve teen parents. The initiative will focus on grandparents’ support, academic motivation, and academic performance to enhance educational results and disseminating practical information to grandparents and teen parents. This campaign will attempt

to educate grandparents on how to strengthen their support for their teen's impending parenthood by increasing the teen's education and helping them process their grief. It is crucial to provide individuals with the tools they need to handle motherhood and achieve their educational goals as simply as feasible. It is essential to keep in mind that adolescents are fragile people who require support, empowerment through humility, and spiritual guidance.

According to Romans 5:5 and Psalm 25:10, hope does not bring shame. As a result of God's love, individuals possess a hope that will never bring them disgrace. The Holy Spirit has been granted the authority to instill this hope in the hearts of individuals (2022). This research aimed to investigate all potential avenues of an individual's support system, including faith. Professionals should make every effort to aid young parents in becoming self-sufficient and discovering hope by recalling how God led people in the desert for 40 years, humbling and instructing them. Young parents face psychological stress after having a child. This stress is linked to poor parenting skills and low self-efficacy because they don't have enough social support.

The social innovation, a training program, has been established. The obtained data have been analyzed to better comprehend what supports are important and modify the project to meet the community's needs. Last but not least, the obtained data have helped the researcher increase outreach operations by understanding the concerns of young parents' have and need that will support and strengthen their viewpoint, which will improve academic performance. The training will help grandparents and teen parents understand barriers and how people can hinder decisions about teen parents pursuing higher education (Scheidgen et al., 2021.) This program is intended to affect teen parents through grandparent involvement while also paving the path for their children to have a more pleasant upbringing (see facilitator manual in Appendix B).

However, their lack of connection with their grandparents or their reluctance to include others may prevent adolescent parents from reaching out for assistance. Not getting involved can hinder their ability to connect with valuable services. Other factors could include a provider's refusal to execute the program. Due to familial conflict, teen parents will not want their grandparent involvement. Grandparents may not be interested in participating in programs with adolescent parents.

CHAPTER 6: EVALUATION, METHODOLOGY

Evaluation

In order for the facilitator to explore if this curriculum will be successful, a post-evaluation will be provided after each training. The post-evaluation purpose is to capture whether this curriculum provided helpful background, did it shift their perspective, and if the curriculum helped participants increase their knowledge about navigating teen parenthood and the importance of academic success. The research question to be evaluated through the post-evaluation is: How has this curriculum helped grandparent engagement to support teen parents' academic success? By gathering feedback, it will help the facilitator adjust the curriculum to continue to meet the needs of this population and incorporate interventions that could be helpful in a family system. The post-evaluation questions are:

Post-Evaluation

Date: _____

Trainer 1: _____

Your opinion regarding “Building a Legacy” is important to us. The goal of Building a Legacy is to continually improve and enhance quality of instruction. Please take a moment to complete this form and return it to the trainer at the completion of all training modules.

Gender M or F Ages _____ Title: (SW, MFT, Ed, Grandparent, Teen parent)

1. Do you feel the modules prepared you to become a supported grandparent to the teen parents?

Yes No

2. How did your participation in the training prepare you to become more informative about grandparent support and teen parent academic success?

3. Using the scale below, how satisfied are you with the training? Please mark the box that best describes your level of satisfaction.

Unsatisfactory Satisfactory Excellent

4. Did the modules increase your knowledge on any specific topics discussed?

Explain:

5. Are there any other topics you would like to have included?

Explain:

6. What does multigenerational family mean to you?

__1. One Family_____ _____

__2. Two or more family_____ _____

_or 3. Grandparent, parent, and child __ _____

7. Were all your questions answered to your satisfaction? Yes No (if no, please explain)

8. Were the trainer(s) responsive to your questions? Yes No

Suggestions:

9. Do you have any recommendations, feedback or observations you would like to share with us?

10. Would you recommend this class to other community people? Yes No

Thank you for your time and willingness to be part of giving Hope to our young parents.

Methods

The purpose of using a quantitative study is primarily designed to capture numerical data. This research method helps produce data points when looking at a particular group – such as teen parents. A quantitative form of the procedure will help better identify the roots of certain behaviors in this population. Understanding grandparents and teen parents can help understand issues to develop and incorporate specific interventions to support their behaviors (decision-making). Quantitative data will allow the facilitator to collect data and minimize any follow-ups with participants passively. The facilitator will aimed to collect data from at least 15-20 participants.

Assessment of the curriculum, a quantitative study design will be employed using the SPSS program to measure the influence of grandparent support relative to the curriculum to aid teen parents. Based on the data collection from the post-post-evaluation, human subjects' participation, and the data's planned dissemination, IRB institutional review board approval may be needed, or exemption will be necessary for future analysis. The project will investigate data acquired from post-post-evaluations. A descriptive and exploratory data analysis will demonstrate links between the independent and dependent variables. A statistician will be hired to help analyze all the data sets collected.

Participants will be recruited through email outreach and contacted by hosting and recruitment flyer promotions. Research-based data will be collected and categorized for Building a Legacy's ongoing development using a quantitative approach to simplify personal data collection. The facilitator engaging grandparents in this training will boost knowledge and the likelihood of the teen parent being academically engaged as their grandparent assists. The

facilitator expects the curriculum to significantly impact and assist in how this population is served and supported by grandparents.

Building a Legacy curriculum will comply with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) code of ethics. In the future, it will also involve creating informed consent to understand any ethical difficulties that may arise during collaboration with grandparents, teen parents, or providers. The developer of Building a Legacy will implement a policy prohibiting the disclosure of sensitive or confidential data without following the required procedures.

Project Accountability

This project will be financed through Hope Wellness Counseling, Inc, and services will be provided by this facilitator after completion of her Doctor Social Work program. At the start of services, a few workshops will be offered pro-bono to engage people to get familiar with what Building a Legacy offers to families. Due to budgeting, services will be limited until the project can be fully financed within a year and finance the staff for proper support to expand services. In the process, the facilitator will also collaborate with other organizations to explore the possibilities of piloting this curriculum.

Impact of Social Problem

The facilitator's expectations about this curriculum is that it will create a helpful understanding for grandparents and teen parents about having a support plan for academic success. The facilitator hypothesis is that this curriculum will be successful by evidence of participation and helping grandparents shift perceptions that will give support to teen parents and develop a family goal to accomplish academic success. A post-evaluation will be given at the end of the training with the purpose of proving the effectiveness of educating grandparents about barriers, supports, conflict resolution, and designing goals that will benefit grandparents, teen

parents, and child (multigenerational) in the long term. The idea of facilitating this curriculum is a client-centered approach that helps individuals develop and engage in the development of self-strengths. This curriculum objective is to increase awareness of barriers and how academic success can be achievable when working as a family.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Even though the rates of teen parenting have decreased, not much is being done for teen parents to increase their chances of gaining a higher education that could provide a fulfilling lifestyle and improve health and mental disparities. Although Title IX has protected the educational rights of adolescent mothers for more than 4 decades, teen mothers remain one of the demographics least advocated for in education (Pillow, 2004). Policymakers must give teen parents a voice because many of them are afraid to speak out against the lack of equality in their education on their own, often because they are unaware of their educational rights. However, even though they consider furthering their education a responsibility they must fulfill, half of all teenage mothers do not complete their high school degrees. The provision of services necessary to support their right to an education, as protected by Title IX, falls within the purview of policymakers and educators.

This social innovation will improve familial relationships and give a sense of belonging to teens during the transition of becoming a parent while navigating school. Providers will explore faith-based resources to provide teen parents with another support layer. It is important to remember that all services will be provided or planned through a theoretical social learning model to help teen parents have an excellent academic experience.

Implications

Graduation rates for pregnant and parenting teenagers in the United States will catch up to those of their nonparenting counterparts if policies that affect education are implemented. Pregnant and parenting adolescents have many options when it comes to school. However, the intensity and chances for higher-level classes must be enhanced with support systems for teen parents who want to pursue careers. This curriculum will continue strengthening Title IX in

reducing discrimination against teen mothers and include grandparent engagement for positive role modeling and encouragement. The curriculum can advance policy to encourage school setting to have appointed advocate to ensure that teen mothers receive Title IX benefits and that all educational resources are being implemented. Future research must continue to look at inequalities in family and community-based support and cultural factors like acculturation and ethnic or racial identity to learn about the experiences of parents of teenagers of color that are unique to their culture.

Future Research

The curriculum will continue to improve understanding of the social learning theory model regarding how teen mothers must be approached and guided into educational attainment. Future research also needs to explore how a family model can increase grandparents' and father engagement to increase the chances of more positive relationships. Organizations presently serving this population should pilot this program to enhance services for teen mothers by including grandparent engagement and further evaluate the conceptual model regarding its effectiveness. It will also be necessary to explore further what leads to disengagement between grandparents and teens' parents that hinder positive gains in their lives.

Limitations

These findings contribute to the current body of knowledge by shedding light on the significance of family support for teen parents in achieving their educational objectives. However, there are restrictions that merit noting. First, the significance of education for teen parents was related to their desire for a better future, which may differ from their fundamental understanding of their educational rights. For example, teenagers who do not feel emotionally supported by their professors or counselors are likely to believe that they do not belong, despite

having the same right to education as their peers. This research was limited due to age limits of 18 years and older. The researcher was unable to interview teen parents at this time due to IRB. Future research may benefit from using other measures of school support to capture the many sorts of academic and emotional support gaps experienced by adolescent parents. In addition, the survey questions were answered online, therefore there was no opportunity to pose follow-up questions because all qualitative survey items were answered independently. Finally, this study examined grandparent social support factors that substantially influence the educational success of teen parents.

Recommendations based on this study and past research include the following:

1. Teach teachers about Title IX laws and help them collect better data about the pregnant and parenting mothers they work with and where they go to school. Also, include grandparents to help about the importance for teen parents to attend college after high school.
2. Educators should be trained to work with parenting students in a supportive and no shaming manner. Get rid of shaming behaviors.
3. Educators have a duty to provide services to teen mothers like safe schools, supportive and encouraging teachers, and flexibility with their attendance, curriculum, and other ways to graduate.
4. Policymakers must increase the availability of daycare services for teen mothers to attend school while parenting.
5. All schools and districts must ensure that a Title IX coordinator is hired and trained to help this group of people and get grandparents involved.

6. Grandparent involvement is necessary to provide adequate support by giving academic motivation to assist in navigating education for teen parents.
7. Churches should help teen parents by giving them spiritual support and other spiritual options to deal with problems.

Execution

After the completion of this project, the next phase for this socially innovative project is to deliver services after the researcher completes the Doctor of Social Work program. The service will be provided through the facilitator's private practice, Hope Wellness Counseling, Inc. The facilitator has created a flyer to do outreach sessions and engage in private events to connect individuals to services.

The facilitator will also propose a school district meeting for future collaboration in the next 6 months. The facilitator will promote two free workshops about Building a Legacy to inform people in the community about the benefits of this curriculum. Doing so will raise awareness and prompt referrals. This program will be marketed through social media, Latinx Mental Health Directory website, and other related business websites. Hope Wellness Counseling, Inc. will also provide services on a sliding scale for low-income people and provide workshop training for six or more individuals at a discounted rate. The objective is to get the word out in the community and connect through networks regarding the potential benefits about this curriculum.

Conclusion

High levels of grandparent involvement are associated with positive educational outcomes for teen parents, which in turn can influence their children's socioeconomic stability, health, relationship building, and development. To maintain higher graduation rates, it is critical

to explore ways to decrease barriers and increase social support, such as promoting the importance of grandparents being engaged with teen parents to increase their chances of a promising future. Future studies must explore unique programs that offer services such as support networks, information about students' educational rights, grandparenting health impacts, grandparenting supports, and teen parent education. Updated research should identify conflicts between grandparents and teen parents to explore interventions that could assist in decreasing barriers for grandparents and teen parents as they navigate their new roles in the family dynamic.

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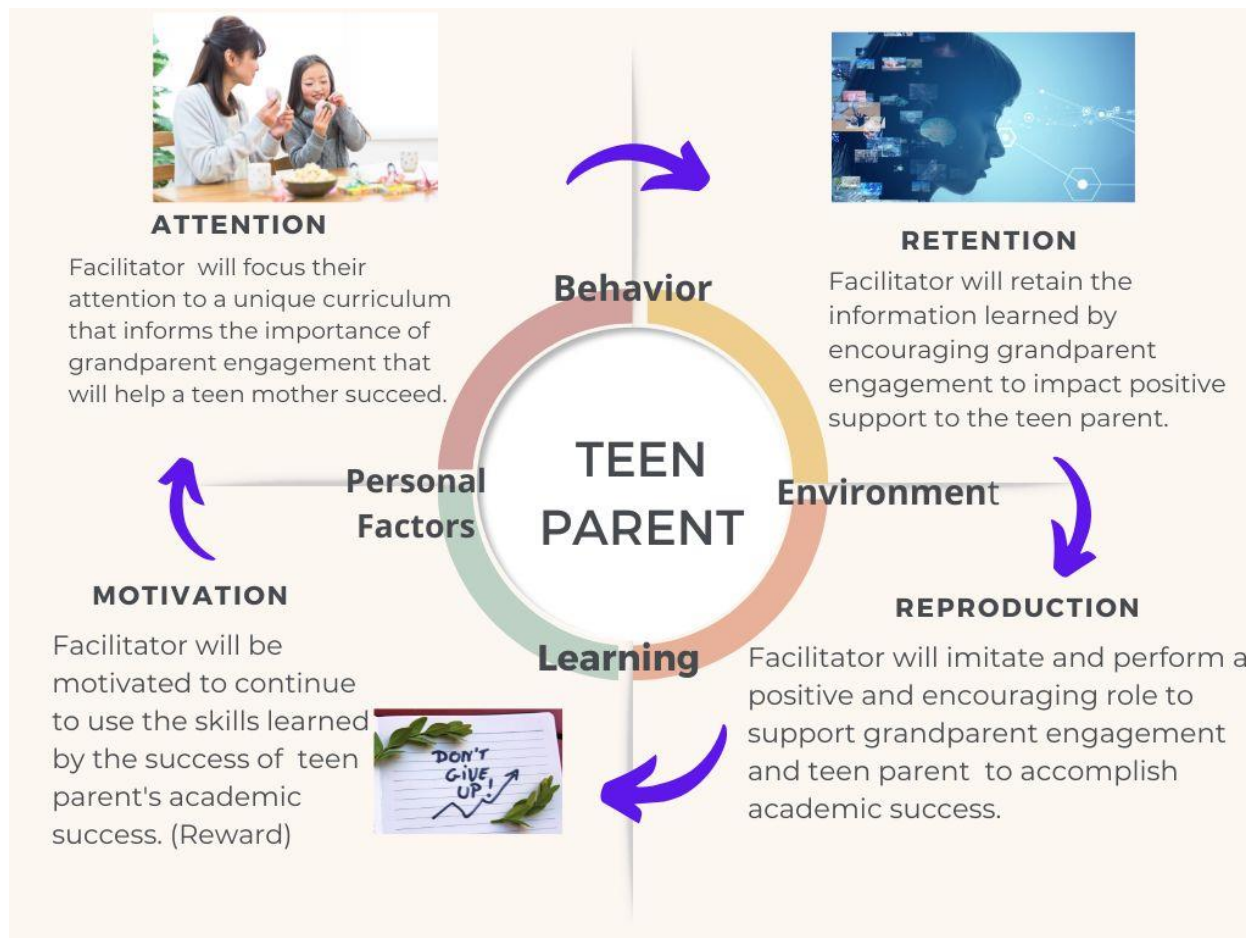
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Appendix A: Social Learning Theory Model



Appendix B: Building a Legacy



Module 1:

- Introduction & Ice breaker
- Grandparents Challenges
- Obstacles
- The Journey
- Moving Forward
- Social Learning Theory- Grandparents

Module 3:

- Grandparent Support
- Academic Motivation
- Academic Success
- Program Overview

Module 2:

- What we understand
- History & Purpose
- The Social Problem
- Social Learning Theory Facilitator
- Stigma & Stereotype
- Title IX
- Strengths Perspective
- Program Breakdown

To request more information on the training curriculum, please reach out to Teresa Serrano, tserrano@hopewellnesscounseling.com