

Educational Challenges of Teenage Student-Mothers in Don Honorio Ventura State University

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Abstract

Brown and Amankwaa (2007) explained that the beginning of engaging in sexual relationships increases the probability of pregnancy among female college students. As this happens, only women take all the consequences and challenges of contraception and even child care. In most cases, teenage mothers were not capable of returning to school after giving birth to a child (Macleod and Durrheim, 2003). But as of the moment, other universities and colleges were doing —return to school arrangements| where pregnant students were in the meantime prohibited to attend school until the child was born (Okeyo, 2011). The researchers aim to explore and describe the educational challenges experienced by teenage student-mothers in Don Honorio Ventura State University and to design recommendations which can help these students to cope with these challenges. The participants of the study were 5 DHVSU teenage student-mothers who were selected through purposive-convenience sampling. They participated in in-depth interviews lasting from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. Transcendental Phenomenological research design was used to analyze the data. Results showed that pregnant students in DHVSU faces social discrimination upon the discovery of pregnancy, insufficient study time, absenteeism, dropping out and lack of support from the teachers and school administrators.

Keywords: Teenage Student-Mothers, Educational Challenges, Absenteeism, Dropping Out, Teacher and School Administration Support.

Educational Challenges of Teenage Student-Mothers in Don Honorio Ventura State University

According to Philippine Statistics Authorities (2013) one out of ten young Filipino women aged 15-19 had already begun childbirth. Among younger adult women aged 20 to 24, 43% had been already mothers and 4% had been pregnant with their first child. These age ranges 15-19, 20 to 24 were the frequent age of the college students. Caring for a child is regarded as a full-time job and may additionally be very stressful on female college students if being pregnant is unplanned. Being a mother and student is a very stressful role. Schooling is crucial to a younger woman's life, because the amount of schooling a woman obtains would affect the future aspects of her existence (Brown & Amankwaa, 2007).

Conceptualizing of Teenage Student-Mothers

Student mothers are also in a process of learning and changing, and deserve attention (Funiba, 2011). In this sense, college assets should empower student mothers to seek after their academic work in a way that will benefit them. This implies that the tertiary institution should be mindful of the challenges faced by student mothers and should give direction and help back within the support of student mothers (Barnes, 2013; Mayer, 2009).

Students who seek after tertiary capabilities whereas parenting have a different involvement in college compared to students who don't have children (Mamabolo et al, 2009; Nelson et al, 2013). Despite the fact that there are numerous perceptions of motherhood, studies also examined student mothers in connection to the effect that the romanticized mother forces on their experiences. Being a mother presents one with consistent stress almost the well-being of one's family, especially one's children. The method of motherhood can be exceptionally difficult for a woman, and it influences her physical and mental well-being (Buteau, 2007). In spite of the challenges of motherhood, numerous women get their part as ladies in agreement with what society accepts to be acceptable and perfect (Barnes, 2013; Mamabolo et al, 2009). Student mothers can encounter a positive or a negative change to their lives (Youngleson, 2006). They have to perform dual roles, because the commitment that is required in motherhood is also required in their studies (Mayer, 2009; Taukeni, 2014).

According to Kelly (2000) and Lutrell (2003) negative images of teen mothers are a social problem. Kelly (2000) outlines how teen mothers are —culturally devalued and are subject to —unequal participants in creating culture. She details the various negative stereotypes attached to the —teen mother such as —stupid sluts, —children having children, —teen rebel, —the girl nobody loved, —welfare moms, —dropouts and —neglectful mothers. Kelly (2000) critiques the stereotypes and cites research that offers a more complex picture of teen mothers and the different contexts of their lives. Then she discusses the media

images of teen mothers, highlighting the stereotypes and stigmas teen mothers face. For those worried about the breakdown of traditional lines of authority, the teen mother represents rebellion against parents and other adults. Teen mothers represent dropouts who refuse to compete yet expect the welfare system to support their —poor choices (Kelly, 2000).

SmithBattle (2007) and Zachary (2005) have addressed the impact of motherhood on the teen mother's state of mind toward schooling. They examined how pregnant teens experience school and how their convictions about school were influenced by their pregnancy and parenthood. SmithBattle conducted a longitudinal study examining teen mothers' descriptions of being students before and after giving birth and the impact of parenting on their educational goals and school progress. Regardless of their school status prior to pregnancy, the anticipation of parenting led the teens to re-evaluate their priorities and motivated them to remain in or return to school. The transformed meaning and significance of school in the lives of these teens was apparent in improved grades, in their resolve to graduate, and in their new interest in attending college. However, SmithBattle found that —their renewed commitment to school was often thwarted by competing work demands, family responsibilities, and school policies and practices.

SmithBattle (2007) and Zachary (2005) used a grounded theory approach to analyze the perspective of nine young mothers in a teen parents' program and determine how these women reflected on their educational experiences both before and after their pregnancies. Zachary's study investigated how having a child may have affected teen mothers' self-understanding, particularly as it related to their schooling. Her findings revealed that having a child substantially influenced the teen mothers' perspectives of both their schooling and their future. While each participant stated that her pregnancy initially led her to drop out of school, the participants as a whole argued that —having a child increased their interest in their education and pushed them to see how education would help them provide a better future for their children, increase their employment opportunities, and help them get off public assistance (Zachary, 2005).

Conceptualizing Educational Challenges

The primary learning challenges faced by higher education students are namely: cognitive challenges, becoming an active learner, dealing with reading materials, educational problems, language barriers, time management, task pressures and cultural differences in higher education. Based on the findings, it was suggested that higher learning institutes would emphasize knowledge building through active engagement between lecturer and students, becoming a forum for students to address the learning challenges they faced in higher education (Chan & Sidhu, 2015).

According to Karande & Kulkarni (2005), education is one of the most important aspects in the development of human resources. Poor school performance not only results in a low self-esteem for the child, but also causes significant stress for the parents. There are many reasons for the lower performance of children at school, such as medical problems, underaverage intelligence, specific learning disability, hyperactivity disorder with attention deficit, and even environmental causes.

External and Internal Classroom

As cited by Mushtaq & Khan (2012), Hansen in 2000 identified two types of factors that strongly affects the performance of the students namely the internal and external classroom. Internal classroom is one factor which happens inside the class setting. These include students' competence, class schedules, class size, textbooks, test results, learning facilities, homework, environment of the class, complexity of the course material, teacher's role in the class, technology used inside the class and exam systems. External classroom factors includes extracurricular activities, family problems, work and financial, social and other problems. According to Hansen (2000), as mentioned by Mishtaq and Khan in 2012, research studies show that students' performance depends on many factors such as learning facilities, gender and age differences, etc. that can affect students' performance.

Learning Facilities

As mentioned by Mushtaq and Khan (2012), Karemare in 2003 found that students' performance is related with satisfaction in academic environment and the facilities of library and computer laboratory in the learning institution. According to Norhidaya Ali et. al., (2009) as cited by Mushtaq and Khan in 2012, the students' efforts and proper use of equipment provided by the institutions which can be used to their proper learning styles has a significant effect on their academic performance.

Proper Guidance

As mentioned by Mushtaq and Khan (2012), Hussain in 2006 states that the guidance of parents and teachers affect the performance of the students. Students face a lot of problems in developing positive study attitudes and habits. Guidance is one factor to improving students' academic achievements. The students who are properly guided by their parents and teachers have performed well in the exams.

Family Stress

Cited by Mushtaq and Khan (2012), Zajacora, Lynch and Espenshade in 2005 identified the factors which affect students' performance. These are the socio-economic factors namely

the students attendance in class, family income, parents' education and the presence of trained teachers in school.

As mentioned by Maganga (2016), the Ministry of Education and Vocation Training (2007:37-38) explained guidance and counseling as follows, —Effective social and moral education appropriate to the age level of learners shall be ensured in order to address the whole range of problems/challenges of youths such as drug abuse, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancies, induced abortions and unemployment. These and other adverse emerging issues in the society shall be addressed across the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. Guidance and Counseling services shall be established in schools to help students to face the life challenges and become responsible and committed members of the community. Learners need guidance in selecting appropriate carriers upon completion of their studies. They also need counseling services that will help them to cope with the prevailing situations in the community and address various problems and challenges. Guidance and counseling skills provided in schools shall help learners to develop abilities such as negotiation, assertiveness, communication, decision making, coping with peer pressure and development of attitudes such as compassion, self-esteem, tolerance and rolemodelling.

There shall be school counsellor/guardians who are well abreast with the current life challenges and capable of designing appropriate programmes to address such challenges. Issues of HIV/AIDS, gender relations, sexual and reproductive health and related problems need to be addressed strategically depending on the needs of the community. In addition, there should be a strengthened peer education programme in the school where there shall be two peer educators elected in each stream based on gender in co-education schools. Peer educators will be guided by school counselors or guardians in their day-to-day activities. Relevant documents shall be consulted to support the establishment of effective guidance and counseling services in schools such as MOEVT strategic plan for HIV/AIDS and Guidelines for implementing HIV/AIDS and Life-Skills Education Programme in Schools, (2004).

Experiences of Student-Mothers in School

According to Shaik (2013), student mothers experiencing humiliation and discrimination by their co-student, because of their age. Student mothers are disregarded to some activities, like playing that ordinary students do. In addition, De Villiers (1991) and Creatsas (1993) as cited by Shaik (2013), explained that peer pressure and school environment affect student mother emotions. Student-mothers need awareness of the possible challenges that they may meet, if they would like to go back to school.

Moreover, Bautista et al. (2014-2015) reported that student mother hardness of responsibilities can't be avoided, because being a student mother has a dual role. Being a

student who needs to complete paper works and other activities in school, and as a parent who is responsible for her child or children.

In the study of Taukeni Simon (2014), it was concluded that the most common challenge that student-mother's experience is when they have to choose between being a mother or being a student. Results show that student-mothers also experience anger, loneliness, and restlessness. Some also have to skip lectures. On the other hand, the study of Manalang, Liongson, and Bayubay (2015), showed that the social life of the student-mother affects them a lot. Some can't attend school activities because of the responsibilities that she has to attend to. However, the results showed that even if they are having a hard time because of the dual role, they can still manage it because of the support they get from their family and friends.

Motivations of Students-Mothers to Return to School

In today's society having a college degree is very beneficial as it opens many doors and many opportunities to everyone. According to Atlas (2015), more opportunities, greater benefits, job satisfaction, job, stability and benefits to your children are some of the benefits of having a college degree. Further studies showed that student-mothers having an average level of characteristics, still continue schooling even though it is challenging and difficult. They are giving up their time to concentrate with their studies, spend time with their child, and time for themselves. Student-mothers experienced difficulty in finance, but that did not stop them from quitting and finishing their studies. The timing of their motherhood was tied to the stress they were experiencing, as well as the struggle to fulfill the daily duties of a mother to their child and responsibility as a student. They had to give up their time on the personal and social needs to give their child and studies a priority. The student-mothers were motivated by their child and also by their parents, to make up for getting pregnant at a very young age while studying. They are also motivated because they believe that having a college degree would lead them to success (Bullecer and Yang, 2016)

According to Zachry (2005), studies revealed that motherhood may also be a factor to help women to re-evaluate their view about school and the importance of education to their lives. Participants stated that being a pregnant woman almost led them to quit school, but the other participants argued that having a child strengthened their interest about education and enabled them see how education will help their child to have a better future, job opportunity, and help them to gain public support.

Educational Challenges among Student Mothers

Combination of being a mother and a student taking responsibility at the same time is a —great dilemma for student mothers. According to Springer et. al. in 2009, when it comes to school, academic activities and challenging competitions were connected which caused a

burden to student mothers' shoulders. The academic community focuses mostly on how to become successful, development, and never-ending competitions without giving any support. In other words, being a mother and a student at the same time is not considered normal in universities. Unpleasant emotional pressures and receiving negative feedback from academic settings, indicating that study should be first priority is what a student mother usually experiences. In addition, dislike towards student mothers, labelling them unproductive or inactive students, and even receiving discrimination from other students. Therefore, Williams et. al. in 2006 states that student mothers avoid bringing a child at school to hide their motherhood role (as cited by Moghamad et. al. 2017).

The study of Dankyi et. al. (2019) found that student mothers' academic struggles such as lack of ability to attend school and take lectures regularly because of tiredness, child sickness, regular baby check-ups, and the lack of facility in school for breastfeeding. It was also found that student mothers struggle with examinations whereas their attention is divided into taking care of the child and to learn effectively for the exam. And also financial struggle, not just for the baby's needs but also for transportation fees and printing and photocopying of learning materials.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to describe and explore the educational challenges experienced by teenage student-mothers in Don Honorio Ventura State University. Specifically, it aims to discover the reasons for these teenage mothers to return to school, their motivations and their ways on how to deal with the educational challenges given by their circumstance. It also aims to design recommendations which can help these students to cope with these challenges.

Methods

Participants

Participants of the study were 5 purposely selected teenage student-mothers studying in Don Honorio Ventura State University who were 16-20 years old at the time of pregnancy. Convenience, when it comes to time and location, was also taken into consideration before conducting in-depth interviews among participants.

Instruments

A semi-structured interview questionnaire guide was used to collect the data for the study. The interview guide was divided into four parts.

- The first part contains questions concerning the demographic characteristics of the participants.

- The second part contains questions concerning the reasons or motivations of the participants for coming back to school despite being a teenage mother.
- The third part contains questions asking about the educational challenges they encounter as teenage student-mothers.
- The last part includes questions discovering their ways to deal with these challenges and to continue studying despite hindrances and risks.

Procedure

The participants were given a copy of the research's informed consent informing them about the objectives of the study and an agreement of voluntary participation through their signature. The researchers then explained their freedom to pause or stop the interview at any time they want to. The researchers then conducted the in-depth interview which lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes, varying from one participant to another.

Data Analysis

Moustakas six-step analysis for transcendental phenomenology was used to analyze the data. The first step of the analysis involves bracketing researchers' bias about the topic -- that is having a kid at a young age would eventually make teenage student-mothers quit schooling. After all the in-depth interviews, the data were transcribed and printed for a more elaborate selection of significant statements. Meaning units were then created out of these selected significant statements. After creating themes or meaning units the next step was clustering these themes in order to determine the —core themes of the phenomenon that emerged out of the meaning units generated from the statements. The textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon were then generated out of the core themes. The essence of their experiences was then discovered through combining the textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon.

Ethical Considerations

Pseudonyms were used in order to keep the anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of the data they shared. An informed consent which contained in it the objectives of the study and a voluntary participation agreement was presented and explained to the participants before data collection. No deception or any dishonest act was unnecessarily committed by the researchers.

Results

The following statements reflects participants answers to the initial objective of this study—to identify the reasons of teenage mothers to return to school despite their situation:

Table 1. Student-Mothers Reasons for Returning to School

| Themes/ Meaning Units | Statements and Codes | Total Number of Statements |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| —I'm almost there | <p>rd</p> <p>—Nabuntis kasi ako 3 year college. If di ko itutuloy, sayang naman.¶ -P1:S32</p> <p>nd</p> <p>—Nanganak ako ma'am March 2017 (2 year). March April pahinga at alaga ng bata. Mama ko nagsabi mag-aaral ako ng tuloy kase sayang. Malapit na din naman ako matapos.¶ -P3:S49</p> | 2 |
| Personal Growth | <p>—I think it's about time na I-pursue ko po yung pangarap ko na makatapos. I believe na mas magiging competent ako if meron akong diplomal -P2: S15</p> <p>—Hindi ko nakikita ang sarili ko na tatanda sa company. I want a different career po.¶ -P3:S9</p> <p>—Kasi po ma'am gusto ko po na may marating ako lalo.¶ -P4:S12</p> <p>—Pag natapos ako ng pag-aaral, mas makakahana ako ng magandang opportunity¶ P5: S23</p> <p>—Gusto ko talagang makatapos ng pag-aaral para makahanap ako ng magandang trabaho in the future.¶ -P1:S24</p> | 4 |
| Making parents proud | <p>—Kahit na maaga akong nabuntis in a young age, bumalik ako sa pag-aaral dahil gusto ko pa din matupad ang pangarap ng mga magulang ko na makatapos ako ng pag-aaral.¶ P5:S14</p> | 1 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Child/children' s future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Bumalik po ako sa pag-aaral dahil iniisip ko future nameng dalawa ng anak ko. - P5: 30 —Para mabigyan ng magandang buhay ang aking anak - P5: 25 —Gusto ko pong ipakita sa mga kids ko na importante ang education kaya kahit mahirap, kinakaya ko. - P2:S34 | 3 |
| Partner 's rt Suppo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Ang asawa ko ang nagdecision na mag-aral ako ulit. Para sa kanya, hindi mahalaga kung nahuli nako basta kahit anong mangyari ay makatapos pa rin ako ng pag-aaral habang kaya niya ang pasuporta sa akin. -P3:S13 —Malaking bagay na full support si husband nung magdecide ako na magschool ulit. Naintindihan niya yung gusto ko pa mangyari sa personal life ko. -P2:S15 —Nagdecide ang asawa ko na pag-aralan ako na sa aming dalawa is ako daw ang medyu mahilig sa pag-aaral. -P5:S52 | 2 |

Table 1 shows the reasons that led student-mothers to return to school despite their situation. College graduation, according to them, is an opportunity that is worth pursuing because it can be a key towards obtaining better job opportunities and personal growth. Finishing college is a dream they were not able to forget even after getting pregnant at a young age. Family, which includes their parents, partners and their children, were also mentioned as their reasons to go back to school. They believe that college education will make their family proud. Through studying, they will be able to show people that having a baby is not a hindrance to reach one's dreams.

The following statements reflect participants' answers to the second objective of this study- to explore the educational challenges experienced by teenage student-mothers in Don Honorio Ventura State University:

Table 2: Educational Challenges Encountered by Student-Mothers in School

| Themes/ Meaning Units | Statements and Codes | Total Number of Statements |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <i>“I feel different from my classmates”</i> | —There are times po na feeling ko di ako makarelate sa mga kaklasi ko na mas bata saken. Sobrang iba ng thinking nila saken.¶ -P2:40 | 1 |
| Absenteeism and Dropping Out | <p>—Pag nagkakasakit yung anak ko kasi priority pa din ang pamilya minsan kahit ayaw kong umabsent kung kailangan ng anak ko is gagawin ko.¶ -P1:S37</p> <p>—Kung papasok nako wala po magbabantay sa baby ko hindi po ako aalis hindi po ako papasok.¶ -P4:32</p> <p>—Minsan hindi po ako nakakapasok pag napupuyat sa pagbabantay.¶ -P1:23</p> <p>—May day na di ako nakakapasok talaga pag wala si mama o may biglang lakad na importante aabsent ako para mabantayan anak ko kahit na may exam sa major.¶ -P5:36</p> <p>—May isang subject na halos 1 month di consistent attendance ko. Midterm yon kase nadengue yung anak ko. 2 years old. Madaming quiz ako na wala pati attendance kaya nung exam hirap na hirap ako. Since matetake pa naman siya sa next sem, dinrop ko na muna para di na maapektuhan grades ko kesa sa 4 or 5 ang makuha ko.¶ P3:S46</p> | 5 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|----------|
| <p>Insufficient study time</p> | <p>—Hindi na masyadong makapagfocus dahil di tulad ng date. Yung pagrereview hindi ko na nagagawa sa bahay sa byahe nalang po okaya pag tulog na baby dun palang.¶</p> <p>-P5:36</p> <p>—Minsan pumapasok ako ng hindi nagrereview dahil inuuna ko yung review ng baby ko.¶ -P1:36</p> <p>—Pag minsan sabay sabay ang examinations, tapos may lagnat ang baby ko. Naiiyak nalang ako.¶ -P3:S24</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>Sleep Deprivation</p> | <p>—Dahil ang pasok ko po 5pm to 2am, matutulog na lang ako sa sleeping quarter tas gigising ng 5am didiretso na ng school.¶ -P2: S45</p> <p>—Hindi maiiwasan ang mga gabi na kailangan mong magpuyat kapag may sakit tapos sabay ng examinations.¶ -P3:S37</p> <p>—Nagiging problem din po yung puyat kana sa baby pag gabe, need pa din pong pumasok sa school.¶</p> <p>-P5:S35</p> | <p>3</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|----------|
| <p>Social Discrimination</p> | <p>—May mga judgemental na tao or classmates na single mother daw ako, kesyo lumandi ng maaga without knowing my history.¶</p> <p>-P5:4</p> <p>—May mga kaklase po ako na hihiramin ang phone ko para lang maghanap ng evidence na buntis ako kase itinatangi ko po talaga. At hindi po sila tumigil sa panunukso sa akin.¶ - P3:S23</p> <p>—Nung minsan sinama ko yung baby ko sa school. Dahil bata medyo magulo nagalit yung iba kong classmates tas ang sabi dinadala ko daw yung problema ko sa school. Problem na pinepertain niya yung anak ko daw.¶ -P1:S29</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>Lack of Support from the Teachers and School Administrators</p> | <p>—May teacher din po na biglang nagbago ang pakikitungo sa akin lalo na po president ako. Naramdaman ko po yung disappointment.¶ -P3:42</p> <p>—May mga times na di daw tinatanggap na reasons pag umabsent kase may sakit ang anak. Ayoko mapahiya kase minsan dami nakakakita. Mananahimik nalang ako.¶ - P1:S45</p> <p>—There was one time po na ayaw akong papasukin non sa school kase kasama ko yung baby ko. Mga 2014 ata yon.¶ -P4:S41</p> | <p>3</p> |

Table 2 shows that among the educational challenges being experienced by studentmothers in the university includes feeling of distance towards their classmates, sleep deprivation, absenteeism and dropping out, insufficient study time, social discrimination and lack of support from the teachers and school administrators. These challenges tested studentmothers' determination to continue their studies. These challenges have put them in situations where they need to choose between education and family. But eventually, as time went by, they were able to adapt to these situations which enabled them to even pursue what they have started.

The following statements reflect participants' answers to the third objective of this study --- to determine student-mothers motivation to continue studying despite educational challenges including their ways in dealing with these challenges.

Table 3: Motivations and Coping Mechanisms of Student-Mothers in DHVSU

| Themes/ Meaning Units | Statements and Codes | Total Number of Statements |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| My dreams keep me going | <p>—Nagagawa kong magpatuloy sa pag-aaral sa kabila ng mga challenges is iniisip ko nalang yung goal ko na gusto ko talaga makapagtapos ng pag-aaral. -P1:56</p> <p>—I make sure na yung goals ko po intact. This is my only chance. Pag di ko inayos wala ng oportunidad na dadating. - P2:44</p> <p>—Bago ako bumalik sa pag-aaral, nakatatak na sa isip ko ang goal na dapat kong abutin. May purpose lahat ng pagsisikap. -P3:S46</p> <p>—May pangarap ako para sa pamilya ko at hindi lang ito para sa akin. -P3:47</p> | 4 |

| | | |
|--|--|----------|
| <p>Family's Support</p> | <p>—Malaking bagay yung full support ang husband ko. Kase kahit mahirap kinakaya ko kasi alam ko pong di ako mag-isa. Kasama ko siya sa journey. -P2:47</p> <p>—Sa tulong din ng aking asawa na patuloy akong sinusuportahan sa lahat ng aspeto nagagawa kong lagpasan lahat ng pagsubok. -P3: 51</p> <p>—My parents. Nakita ko na magkamali man ako ng ilang beses, di sila susuko saken. Gusto kong ipakita sa kanila na di din ako susuko na mangarap para sa kanila at sa baby ko kahit wala akong asawa. -P4:S39</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>Time Management</p> | <p>—Yung lunchbreak ko nilalaan ko po sa pagrereview, paggawa ng assignments. Pag may idle time ako sa office, pasimple akong nakikigamit ng computer. -P2:53</p> <p>—Napakaimportante ng time management dapat nagagampanan ko lahat ng tungkulin ko di lang ako isang estudyante na puro school works lang iniisip. Isa din akong ina na umaasikaso sa anak ko. P3:S57</p> <p>—Kung may vacant ako sa school pagrereview na ako para pagdating ng bahay maaasikaso ko ang pamilya at asawa ko. Tsaka mag multi task importante yun sa akin for example tinutturuan ko ang anak habang may pinapagawa ako sa kanya sasabayan ko ng paggawa ng assignment. -P3:60</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>Taking Social Discrimination as Motivations</p> | <p>—Gusto kong ipakita sa mga kamag-anak ko na nagmata saken non na kaya ko pa din matapos ng pag-aaral kahit may anak na ako. P4:S67</p> | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------|
| <p>My child/Children</p> | <p>—Si Liam. Yung anak ko nagbigay ng dahilan saken para taasan ko pa pangarap ko compared nung wala pa siya sa buhay ko. Kinakaya ko kase iniisip ko na ayokong maging kulang bilang ina sa kanya.¶ P1:S56</p> <p>—Nilalakasan ko yung loob ko para sa baby ko. Uuwi ako galing school nakikita ko yung reason kung bakit nag-aaral ako ulit at yun ay ang baby ko.¶ - P4:S36</p> <p>—Kapag po nakakaramdam ako ng discrimination non iniisip ko na wala ako don para sa kanilla kung nasa school ako para sa baby ko.¶ - P4:S35</p> <p>—Lagi kong iniisip na ginagawa ko to kasi dito sure ako na matutustusan ko pangangailangan ng anak ko once natapos na ko ng pag-aaral.¶ -P5:S47</p> <p>—Kung titigil po ako, anong future ang mahihintay sa anak ko? Kahit nahihirapan ako kahit puyat minsan nagkakasakit na, iniisip ko lagi ang reason bat ako nandito kase sa anak ko. Siya nagpapalakas saken. Siguro kung wala siya wala pa din ako pangarap now.¶ -</p> | <p>7</p> |
| | <p>P2:S56</p> <p>—Di ko makakaya to kung wala ang baby ko. Hindi siguro ako tataas ang pangarap kung di ako nagkaroon ng Allaine sa life ko.¶ -P4:S34</p> <p>—Hindi ako sumusuko kase nanay ako. Kahit 19 pa lang po ako non, narealized ko na po yung totoo na pag nanay ka na, wala kang reason na sumuko kase may baby ka kaya dapat lumalaban ka.¶ -P3:S51</p> | |

Table 3 shows the motivations and coping mechanisms of student-mothers for continuing their education despite the challenges they face in the university. A combination of personal motivation, social support and social experiences is their means to deal with educational challenges. Student-mothers' personal dreams, support from their family, time management, discrimination experiences and their children enable them to even pursue and finish their college education.

Conceptual Framework

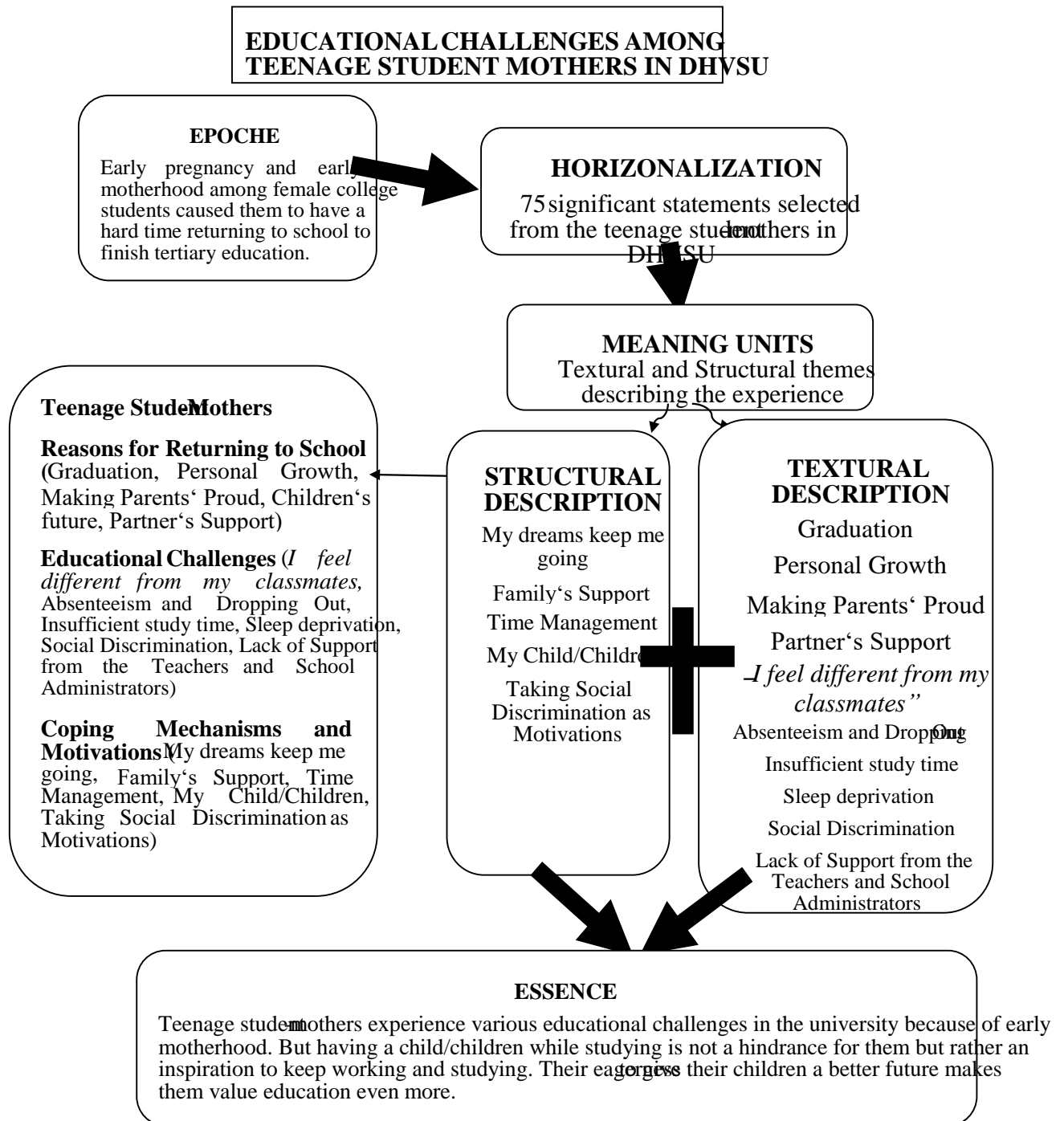


Figure 1. Phenomenological Approach in Understanding the Educational Challenges among Teenage Student-Mothers

It is seen in Figure 2 that Moustakas (1994) six-step analysis was adapted to analyze the data from the participants. Setting aside the researcher's pre-judgement that early pregnancy and early motherhood among female college students caused them to have a hard time returning to school to finish tertiary education, 75 significant statements are clustered into meaning units/ themes that described what were the experiences and explained how these experiences were dealt by student mothers. Meaning units comprised the reasons for returning to school, educational challenges, coping mechanisms and motivations of studentmothers to continue their college education. Reasons for returning school and educational challenges are what described the experiences of the student mothers while coping mechanisms and motivations explained how student-mothers experienced the phenomenon. And the combination of the two resulted in the overall essence of the experiences of studentmothers in DHVSU.

Student-mothers returned to school because of different reasons. In the case of student-mothers in DHVSU, it was found out that graduation, personal growth, making parents' proud, children's future, and partner's support were. Among these reasons, personal growth leading to greater opportunities, parental support and children's future are consistent with what is written in the literature.

Educational challenges test student-mothers determination to finish college education. Among the educational challenges encountered and are being encountered by student-mothers include the feeling of distance from their classmates, absenteeism and dropping out, insufficient study time, sleep deprivation, social discrimination and lack of support from the teachers and school administrators. Among these challenges, familial stress, internal and external classroom conflicts are consistent with what is written in the literature.

Despite these challenges, teenage student-mothers manage to continue studying because of the coping mechanisms they developed and motivations they uphold through time. Their coping mechanisms and motivations include their aspirations in life, family's support, time management, experiences of discrimination and providing and giving their children a better life. Compared to the coping mechanisms and motivations cited from the literature, only the family as a source of motivation remains consistent with this study.

The essence of the phenomenon of this study states that student-mothers survive in the university despite challenges because of the coping mechanisms and motivations they have. This is consistent with what the literatures have stated; that student-mothers manage to deal with discrimination and challenges in school. But this study was also able to add that although early motherhood is the reason why student-mothers experience discrimination and educational challenges, early motherhood is also what makes them want to pursue education; because they are mothers at the end of the day. This is consistent with what is reported in the literature --- that student-mothers were motivated by their child and also by their parents, to

make up for getting pregnant at a very young age while studying. They are also motivated because they believe that having a college degree would lead them to success (Bullecer and Yang , 2016).

According to Zachry (2005), studies revealed that motherhood may also be a factor to help women to re-evaluate their view about school and the importance of education to their lives.

Conclusion

1. Results show that graduation, personal growth, making parents' proud, children's future, and partner's support were the reasons why student mothers in DHVSU returns to school. Among these reasons, personal growth leading to greater opportunities, parental support and children's future are consistent with what is written in the literature.
2. The challenges student-mothers encounter in school are -- feeling of distance from their classmates, absenteeism and dropping out, insufficient study time, sleep deprivation, social discrimination and lack of support from the teachers and school administrators. Among these challenges, familial stress, internal and external classroom conflicts are consistent with what is written in the literature.
3. Their coping mechanisms and motivations include their aspirations in life, family's support, time management, experiences of discrimination and providing and giving their children a better life. Compared to the coping mechanisms and motivations cited from the literature, only the family as a source of motivation remains consistent with this study.
4. The essence of this study's phenomenon is that student-mothers remain in college despite hurdles due to their coping mechanisms and goals. This is in line with what has been said in the literature: student-mothers are able to deal with discrimination and problems at school. However, this study was able to add that, while early motherhood is the reason why student-moms face discrimination and educational hurdles, it is also the reason why they desire to pursue education; after all, they are mothers. This is consistent with what has been reported in the literature—that student-mothers were pushed to make up for becoming pregnant at an early age while studying by their child and also by their parents. They are also motivated by the belief that obtaining a college diploma will enable them to achieve success (Bullecer and Yang , 2016).

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