

YOUNG MOTHERS IN APPALACHIA: THE ROLE OF KIN

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BACKGROUND

Young Parenting Trends

Overall decrease in teenage pregnancies

Large Urban¹-18.9 births per 1,000

Small-Medium Urban'- 24.3 births per 1,000

Rural¹- 30.9 births per 1,000

- Lowest decreases in rural counties¹
- Teen birth rates amongst the highest in Appalachian region²

^{1.} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, November). Teen Birth Rates for Urban and Rural Areas in the United States, 2007–2015 (No. 264). Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db264.pdf.

^{2.} University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. (2018). County health rankings key findings 2018. Retrieved from http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore healthrankings/rankingsreports/2018-county-health-rankings-key-findings-report

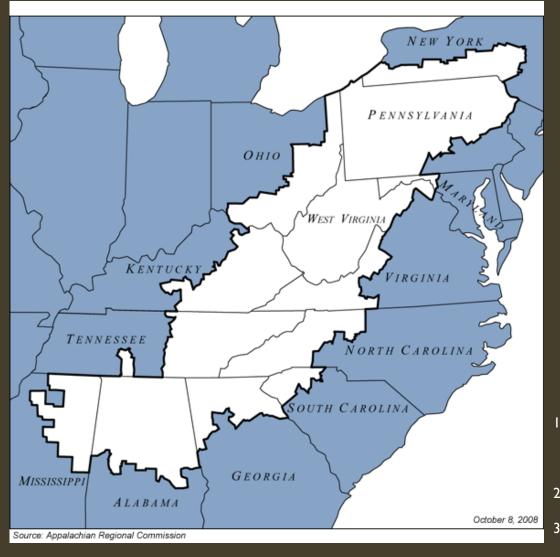
INTERGENERATIONAL SUPPORT

Instrumental and emotional support

Mixed findings: both negative and positive outcomes

 Rural Appalachian families may employ intergenerational caregiving in response to barriers

STUDY CONTEXT: APPALACHIA



- Non-Hispanic white (82.5%)
- Poverty¹ & Unemployment²
- High school drop out rates²
- Substance abuse disorder²
- High marriage & homeowner³ rates
- CDC and Prevention. (2015, May). Increases in hepatitis C virus infection related to injection drug use among
 persons aged ≤ 30 years-Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, 2006-2012. Morbidity and mortality
 weekly report, 64(17), 453-458.
- 2. University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. (2018). County health rankings key findings 2018.
- 3. Mather, M. (2004). Households and Families in Appalachia. Retrieved from https://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/HouseholdsandFamilies.pdf.

PURPOSE & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

examine the lived experience of young mothers within the Appalachian context of young childbearing and intergenerational family support.

- Theoretical Background:
 - Symbolic interactionism
 - Life course perspective
 - Kinscripts framework

What is the nature of young mothers' experiences as it pertains to young childbearing and caregiving support within the family context?

METHODS

- Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA)
 - lived experience and the process of meaning making around family support

- Semi-structured interviews
 - "Tell me about a time when you felt good about, or appreciated, the care you were receiving from your family member. Why was it helpful, or how did it help you?"

SAMPLE

- 9 women between the ages of 18 and 27 (M= 23.3)
 - Most phenomenological studies include 1-9 participants¹
- Between 15 and 18 whenever their first child was born (M = 16.6)
- 8 participants reported being White; I participant reported being Biracial
- 78% fell below the poverty threshold

ANALYSIS

- Deconstruction of data text
 - essence of each mother's lived experience

Repeating themes (units of meaning) condensed onto a coding grid

Units of meaning clustered into overarching themes

- Contextual information: victimization and substance abuse in Appalachia
 - 6 of the 9 mothers reported physical and/or sexual abuse and/or experiences with substance misuse.

- the meanings of help from family
 - Help as a tool for facilitating parental autonomy
 - Support by teaching parenting skills

Danielle: "But like, um his mom would help with the bath and I didn't like that at all. Like, I liked that she helped but like she was "you're doing it this way, you're doing it this time, this is what you do". Like she wasn't like okay well you do this, you help me. It was "let me do it", let — she wasn't teaching. She was "well let me have her, let me do it."

Amber: "She was supposed to do, I mean in my opinion. I mean if I'm there livin under your roof, and your rules, and you still get to be the boss of everything I do, then I think you should at least be a parent to your teen. Help me be, help me be a better person and a better parent ... What do I do, you know I need help! ... not havin the support sucked. The support that I needed like instead of just trying to do it yourself, I needed to learn how to do it."

Deeper meanings ascribed to help are the feelings associated with the self and role of mother

- Lack of autonomy = feelings of inadequacy as mothers
- Autonomy = confidence in abilities to parent
- Help = paradox
- Help = love

Amber: "I mean I was depressed, I thought I wasn't a good parent uh, I would cry because I was just like, "I don't even feel like that's my kid."

Ivy: "I kinda felt- I felt like, even though they didn't make me feel that way, but I felt like I was their burden. You know, like I'm their daughter so they felt like they had to do this and they didn't have to."

Hannah: "It makes you feel like you're not good enough... like you can't do this on your own. You're not worth enough to have this child if you can't take care of it. So why do you need your child?"

DISCUSSION

Victimization and substance use within families

- Perceptions and meanings of help
- Nuanced findings may supplement intergenerational support research
 - Importance of giving power and support to young mothers
 - What types of help are most helpful to young mothers (teaching vs. doing)
 - Intrapersonal processes of needing help but desiring autonomy

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- I. In what ways can the findings of this study inform current policy and/or practice regarding young parents and intergenerational families?
- 2. Researching marginalized populations poses certain challenges. What are some ways we can ensure the "voices of our participants" are "heard" in our research? In other words, in what ways can we give power to our research participants?

