The Influence of Open-Mindedness and Knowledge on Attitudes Toward Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Among Home Economics Teachers.

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THE INFLUENCE OF OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND KNOWLEDGE ON ATTITUDES TOWARD TEEN PREGNANCY AND PARENTING AMONG HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The School of Vocational Education

by

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the influence of knowledge of teenage pregnancy/parenting, open-mindedness, and selected demographic characteristics on the attitudes of home economics teachers toward teenage pregnancy/parenting.

The target population for the study was defined as secondary school home economics teachers employed in Louisiana during the 1993-94 school year. A simple random sample of 200 teachers was selected from the defined population.

The instrument used in this study consisted of four parts. The first part was the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale and was used to measure attitudes toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. The second part of the instrument was the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale which was used to determine the respondents' degree of open-mindedness. The third part of the instrument consisted of the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory and was utilized to measure level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy/parenting. Finally, the fourth part of the instrument was a demographic survey including selected personal and school characteristics.

Data were collected by mailed questionnaire. After three mailings and a telephone contact, the researcher received a 96% useable response rate.

Findings of the study revealed that home economics teachers teach a large number of pregnant students and have positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents. In addition, home economics teachers were found to be slightly open-minded.
Multiple regression analysis was used to identify a model which explained 26.4% of the variance in the attitudes of home economics teachers toward pregnant adolescents. The six variables that contributed significantly to the model included: open-mindedness/dogmatism, number of pregnant teens taught, number of in-service programs attended, age, whether or not the teacher was married, and whether or not the teacher was widowed.

In addition, teachers with more knowledge regarding teen pregnancy tended to have more positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents ($r = .14, p = .03$). Also, home economics teachers that are more open-minded tend to have more positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents ($r = .39, p = .001$).

The researcher recommended that the home economics program in Louisiana place a greater emphasis on the role it can play in addressing the problem of teen pregnancy/parenting.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Rationale

Teenage pregnancy has continued to emerge as a national crisis with consequences that frequently have been devastating to individuals and with serious implications for society (Hong and Wellen, 1993). Recent statistics on incidence of adolescent pregnancy and early childbearing indicate the problem is of epidemic proportions (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993; Vance, 1985; Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987; Committee on Labor and Human Resources, 1989; Panel on Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing, National Research Council, 1987). Every year in the United States, more than one million teenage women become pregnant (Hong & Wellen; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Vance; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1990; Hardy & Zabin, 1991). The statistics represent approximately 11% of the nation's female adolescent population (Voydanoff & Donnelly). Of these million teenagers who become pregnant, nearly one-half will give birth and 400,000, or 4 in 10, will terminate their pregnancy by abortion (Voydanoff & Donnelly; Hardy & Zabin). The remainder of these pregnant teens will experience miscarriage or later fetal or infant death (Hardy & Zabin). Of the nearly 500,000 adolescents who give birth each year, 96% will choose to keep their babies and almost two-thirds of these young mothers will face childbearing and parenting as single parents (Hong & Wellen; Kelly, 1988).
Although the adolescent pregnancy and childbearing crisis is certainly not limited to the United States, the rates are higher in the United States than in any other developed country (Zehr, 1993; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1990). Jones, et al., (1986) indicated that the United States has the highest rates of teenage pregnancy, childbirth, and abortion among westernized countries with similar socioeconomic characteristics. The Alan Guttmacher Institute (cited in Zehr, 1993) reported that "the United States (pregnancy) rate is twice that of England, Wales, France and Canada; three times higher than Sweden's; and seven times as high as in the Netherlands" (p.17).

The Alan Guttmacher Institute (1981), which produced one of the most frequently cited research reports regarding teen pregnancy, indicated that within the United States the three states that ranked highest in incidence of teen pregnancy were Mississippi, Wyoming and Louisiana, in that order (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987). According to the Louisiana Office of Public Health (1990) 42 high school students become pregnant in Louisiana every day. In 1990 a total of 12,659 Louisiana adolescent females ages 14-19 gave birth, while 2,562 had abortions, and 120 reported stillbirth or fetal deaths. Those figures represented one in nine high school females in Louisiana (Louisiana Office of Public Health, 1990). The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (1992) reported similar results which indicated 12,830 Louisiana teenagers, ages 19 and below, gave birth in 1992.

The epidemic nature of adolescent pregnancy is reflected not only in the large numbers of babies being born to teenagers on both a national and local level, but also in the adverse consequences associated with these teenage births. Although teenage
mothers and their children are not doomed to failure, they are without a doubt immediately confronted with a myriad of problems they might otherwise have avoided. These problems have been described in the literature as pervasive, epidemic, life changing and irrevocable (Hong and Wellen, 1993; Voydanoff and Donnelly; 1990; Hardy and Zabin, 1991). Research has consistently indicated a host of negative outcomes that teen parents face, including:

1. truncated education - 70% of adolescent females who become pregnant leave school before receiving a diploma (Kelly, 1988);

2. inadequate employment skills and higher risk of unemployment - "adolescent childbearing is associated with lower employment levels, lower skill levels and occupational status, and lower earnings" (Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1990, p. 84);

3. increased risk of both physical and emotional health problems - teens face a 39% higher risk of premature birth and low birth weight babies (Jensen, 1986);

4. substantial increase in the probability of living as a single parent in poverty - 75% of the families headed by single mothers live below the poverty line (Ennis, 1987);

5. increased likelihood of long-term welfare dependency - "teenage mothers are likely to be long-term welfare recipients" (Duncan, cited in Hong & Wellen, 1993, p. 258).

The link between teenage pregnancy and poverty has profound effects on the communities in which these young mothers live, as well. The negative impacts associated with adolescent pregnancy such as those mentioned above, lead to substantial
expenditures that affect every member of society (Plotnick, 1992; New York State Council on Children and Families, 1987). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1993) stated that "the medical, social and economic impact of the teen pregnancies places an enormous burden on teenagers, their families, and society" (p. v). Hardy & Zabin (1991) stated that, "teenage childbearing is enormously costly to society" (p. 47). Numerous status reports (Burt & Hoffner, 1986; Hardy & Zabin; Harriman, Wilson & Hale, 1989; Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987) indicated that nationally, teenage childbearing costs taxpayers approximately $20 billion per year. Estimated public costs of teenage pregnancy include funding from sources such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid, Food Stamps, and the program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Other public assistance may include prenatal care, parenting classes and infant care for teens to return to school. Mitchell and Brindis (1987) reported the cost of providing support services can range from $3,000 to $6,000 per teen mother per year. In the state of Louisiana in 1991 alone, "the taxpayers of Louisiana spent an estimated $335,015,000 of federal and state funds to aid families that were started by teenagers" (Louisiana Office of Public Health, 1990, p. 4).

In light of these and other similar descriptive status reports, it appears to the researcher that the majority of research has focused on possible predictors and program solutions to the dilemma of adolescent pregnancy. In the last two decades, the resulting programs have failed to reduce the rate of pregnancy among teens in the United States. The Alan Guttmacher Institute (1981) reported that, "teenage pregnancy and
childbearing is a major unsolved problem in the U.S., and . . . although we have most of the knowledge and resources needed to solve it, we have failed to do so" (p. 67).

The one common theme that has emerged from the past two decades of research, however, is the significance of the role of the school in addressing the issues of adolescent pregnancy. The Alan Guttmacher Institute (1981) reported that a major obstacle in implementing solutions to the teen pregnancy problem is in getting the programs to the teenagers. "By the time they come to a social agency or to a family planning clinic for help, many teenagers are already pregnant or parents" (Alan Guttmacher Institute, p. 69). The fact that the schools have a captive audience is of tremendous value for school-based programs. In addition, Brindis (1990) indicated the extreme importance of the school, teachers and administrators by stating, "The school's role is critical, because young people . . . spend more time there than anywhere else except home" (p. 6). Reaching teens where they are is critical to any effective program.

Jensen (1986), St. Pierre (1980), Tucker (1980), and Zellman (1981) reported that within the school the teacher's attitude and willingness to accept pregnant teens greatly affects the school's retention rate of pregnant teens and the success of any pregnancy prevention program which the school initiates. Humanistic psychologist, Carl Rogers (1983), stated in his book, Freedom to Learn for the 80's, that "the attitudinal climate of the classroom, as created by the teacher, is a major factor in promoting or inhibiting learning" (p. 129). Rogers indicated that the primary condition for learning is the "attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between
the facilitator and the learner" (p. 121). He further pointed out that such findings were first noted in the field of psychotherapy and that, "now there is evidence that shows these findings apply in the classroom as well" (p. 121).

Attitudes toward teen parents often range from insensitivity to blatant discrimination. In fact, prior to 1971 thousands of pregnant adolescents were suspended or expelled from school. These students are recorded in historical documents as dropouts but in actuality many of them were forced out. (Hill, cited in Jensen, 1986; Scharf, cited in Jensen). While Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments gave pregnant teens the legal right to stay in school, it did little or nothing to affirmatively change attitudes and biases (Jensen). Zellman (1981) reported that "the limited research relating to the attitudes of educators toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents suggests that many school policies and practices may continue to limit educational opportunities for pregnant and parenting students by allowing the attitudes of school personnel to dominate" (p. 87). Since the empirical evidence that has been reported regarding factors that influence educators’ attitudes toward pregnant teens is limited, this is a topic that, in the opinion of the researcher, clearly needs to be further addressed.

Doswell (1983) found that teacher’s race, social background, and religion have some influence on attitudes of secondary teachers toward pregnant students and school-age parents. In addition, Doswell reported age and the presence of young, unmarried children in the teacher’s home to be predictive of attitudes toward pregnant teens. Jensen (1986) examined factors influencing school personnel’s attitudes, knowledge and
open-mindedness associated with pregnant teens and identified the following contributing variables: whether or not schools have teen pregnancy programs, teachers' level of education, age, years of teaching experience and number of pregnant adolescents advised.

Little empirical evidence exists with regard to open-mindedness and attitudes toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. However, a study by St. Pierre (1980) has suggested that vocational educators who were more open-minded appeared to have more positive attitudes toward pregnant teens and school-age parents. In addition, Jensen compared open-mindedness of school personnel from schools with Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills (GRADS) programs to schools without a structured program. Findings indicated the degree of open-mindedness varied considerably among school personnel regardless of whether they worked within schools with GRADS or without GRADS programs.

On a broader spectrum, studies of successful school innovations suggest that the amount of change that takes place as a result of innovations is associated with how successfully teachers' attitudes are altered. Maijoribanks (1980) stated, "For meaningful innovation there has to be a movement from traditional to more progressive attitudes" (p. 433). This author further suggested that if dogmatism is strongly associated with attitudes toward education, then successful school innovations may require not only changing educational attitudes but also influencing teachers' overall open-mindedness as well.
Another area that seems to have some potential for study is the relationship between knowledge of the problem and attitudes toward pregnant adolescents. St. Pierre (1980) suggested that vocational educators who have a higher knowledge of the problem tend to have more positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents. Jensen (1986) sought to determine the relationship between knowledge of pregnant adolescents and the presence of a structured program within the school. Findings from this study with regard to the influence of knowledge varied considerably and no differences were identified among schools with or without GRADS programs. However, Jensen did find moderate to very high correlations between school personnel's knowledge of adolescent parenthood and attitudes toward adolescent parents in schools with and those without GRADS programs.

The attitudes that should be of primary interest are those of the school professionals who are most likely to deal directly with the pregnant teens. Jensen (1986) reported that home economics teachers possess more positive attitudes toward pregnant teens and are more knowledgeable regarding teen pregnancy issues than other school personnel. Jensen further indicated that home economics teachers seem to be the most qualified school personnel to address the needs of pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. There are at least three reasons that home economists are the most probable teachers to have success in working with pregnant teens. First, home economists are uniquely qualified to work with pregnant teens because of the focus of their education. Home economists are required to take courses in human sexuality, pregnancy and childbirth, nutritional needs during pregnancy, and child care and
parenting. Second, many home economics programs nationwide have initiated teen pregnancy and parenting programs in the last decade. One such program, Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills (GRADS), has become the nationally recognized exemplary program for pregnant teens. GRADS was initiated by the Ohio Vocational Home Economics program ten years ago and today serves over 10,000 Ohio students. They report a 14.22% dropout rate among students enrolled in GRADS as compared to the national dropout rate for teen parents of 60% (Children's Defense Fund, 1990). Third, the American Home Economics Association has made the issue of teen pregnancy a national focus and priority issue for the last decade (Harriman, et. al., 1989; Kelly, 1988; Kister, 1987; McFadden, 1987).

Because home economics teachers are in the best position to influence teens regarding issues of pregnancy, and since the attitudes of teachers have been shown to have such a profound impact on student learning, it seems that determining what factors influence the attitudes of Louisiana home economics teachers with regard to teen pregnancy would be a productive direction for research designed to address this problem. Such a conclusion is even more compelling when taking into consideration the severity of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana.

**Purpose and Objectives**

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the influence of knowledge of teenage parenting, open-mindedness, and selected personal and school demographics on the attitudes of secondary school home economics teachers toward teenage pregnancy and parenting.
Specific objectives formulated to guide the researcher included to:

1. describe home economics teachers in Louisiana on selected personal and school demographic characteristics;

2. determine the attitudes toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale;

3. determine the level of knowledge of home economics teachers in Louisiana regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory;

4. determine the open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale;

5. determine if a model exists which explains a significant portion of the variance in Louisiana home economics teachers' attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting from the following measures:

   1) open-mindedness, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale;

   2) knowledge of adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory

   3) selected school and community characteristics including: size of school, size of community, presence of teen pregnancy or parenting program in the school, percent of males in the home economics program, and number of pregnant adolescents taught in the last three years.
4) selected personal characteristics of teachers including: ethnic group, age, years of teaching experience, marital status, education level, size of community in which the teacher grew up, presence of minor and/or adult children in the home, and number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy/parenting.

Based on previous research findings, objectives six and seven were written in the form of research hypotheses as follows:

6. A positive relationship exists between knowledge of home economics teachers in Louisiana regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale;

7. A positive relationship exists between open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale.
CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Status Reports on Adolescent Pregnancy

Global

Teen pregnancy is not a new phenomenon nor is it a singular or isolated problem. Adolescent childbearing profoundly affects individuals on the local and state levels and has become both a national and global concern in recent years. Crews (1989) reported, in a study entitled *Teenage Parents: A Global Perspective*, that teenage childbearing and parenting issues are gaining increased attention from a worldwide viewpoint. Perceptions regarding teenage pregnancy, however, vary dramatically from country to country. In many cultures the transition from childhood to adulthood is brief and occurs early in life. Women often are expected to marry as soon as they are physically mature enough to bear children. In these societies teens are considered to have the skills necessary to lead a productive life. It should be noted that in such cases, teen pregnancy most often takes place within the parameters of marriage. In addition, societal attitudes may actually encourage pregnancy, and teenage childbearing is not viewed as a problem in such cultures (Crews; Boss & Hooper, 1980).

In other cultures, however, the transition from childhood to adulthood is much longer and with this brings the expectation for teens to develop their life skills and to mature before taking on the responsibility of marriage and childbearing. In more developed countries, teen parents usually are not married and often are viewed by
society as a problem. This divergence in attitude appears to result not so much from mere cultural differences as it does from the practical necessity of having more experience and skills when confronted with a complex society. Adolescent childbearing often is viewed as a significant threat to the teenager's future opportunities for a successful and productive life (Crews, 1989).

Research regarding the global status of teenage pregnancy rates indicate that the United States leads the developed countries. "The United States bears the unfortunate distinction of having the highest adolescent pregnancy, abortion and birth rates in the developed world" (Ohio Department of Education, 1990, p. T-1.21g). Jones, et al. (1986) reported that in 1981 the pregnancy rate of girls between 15 and 19 years of age was 9.6%. When compared with other developed countries this rate is more than twice as high as England and Wales (4.5%), France (4.3%), Canada (4.4%), Sweden (3.5%), and the Netherlands (1.4%) (Jones, et al.). Jones, et al. further stated that the U.S. has as many or more teenage abortions than the total pregnancy rate in these countries. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1993) reported that "rates of teenage pregnancy and birth rates by state in 1990 exceeded those in most developed countries" (p. 1).

National

While the United States has focused much attention on the causes and cures of adolescent pregnancy, the problem has not gone away (Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1981). Several important trends have been identified regarding recent patterns in teen pregnancy in the United States. While births to teens rose steadily throughout the
1970s, recent years have indicated a decline in teenage childbearing (Congress of the U.S., 1990). Hardy and Zabin (1991) stated, "The interpretation of statistical data pertaining to teenage pregnancy and its outcome during the past 15 years is complex, and results can be confusing unless the whole picture is considered" (p. 35). Unfortunately, this decline in teen pregnancy that is often reported cannot be attributed to the effectiveness of programs and aid directed to the pregnant teen. Rather, these declining birth rates are primarily a result of a decline in the teenage population and an increase in the abortion rate (Hardy and Zabin; Congress of the U.S.). In 1970 the United States' abortion rate for pregnant adolescents was 20% and this rate has doubled to an astounding 40% of all pregnant teens in the 1980s (Congress of the United States). The reality is that the overall pregnancy rate for teens, age 15-19, increased from 94/1,000 in 1972 to 110/1,000 in 1982 (Hardy & Zabin; Congress of the U.S.). In addition, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1993) stated that teen pregnancy and birth rates are increasing in the 1990s.

Another recent trend indicated an increase in unmarried teenage women having babies. The number of births to unmarried teens was more than five times as great in the 1980s (312,000) as it was in the 1950s (56,000) (Congress of the U.S., 1990). In addition, "while total births to teenagers declined by about 25% between 1970 and 1988, the number of births to single teenage mothers increased by nearly two-thirds" (Congress of the U.S., p. 5). A report from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals revealed a total of 10,018 births to unmarried teenagers in Louisiana in 1992 (Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, 1992). An overview of the nation's
adolescent pregnancy patterns reveal an increase in abortions, a decrease in the teen population, an increase in pregnancy rates among teenage women and an increase in births to single teenage mothers.

State

While much national and even worldwide attention has been focused on the enormous problems associated with adolescent pregnancies, the residents of several states particularly are affected by these issues. The state of Louisiana ranks third, after Mississippi and Wyoming, in its rate of births to teenage mothers (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987). Current figures regarding state rankings were no longer available due to missing data from 10 states (Stephanie Vertura with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, personal communication, August 11, 1994). Louisiana residents must deal with the consequences of over 12,000 babies being born to teenagers in the state every year. In 1986 the Louisiana State Department of Education was awarded a one year federal grant to assess the pregnancy and drop-out rate in the state of Louisiana as well as to assess educational programs available to minors and to determine current state procedures regarding legislative compliance. This comprehensive report was titled "Project TEEN" and has provided the state with a baseline of data addressing Louisiana’s current status regarding adolescent pregnancy. To emphasize the severe nature of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana the report introduction stated that the youngest mother who participated in the project was not yet a teenager: she was only 9 years of age (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987).
The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (1992) reported the most current figures regarding teen pregnancy in Louisiana which indicated that 18.1% of the births in Louisiana in 1992 were to teenagers. In addition, this report revealed that 14.1% of the births in Louisiana in 1992 were to unmarried adolescents. These findings indicate that Louisiana continues to contribute substantially to the national dilemma of adolescent pregnancy.

Consequences Associated with Teen Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy begins the unending struggle not only with the obvious and almost immediate problem of disruption of lifestyle, but also with a host of other less immediate but far more devastating consequences for the ill prepared and often helpless teen. Studies have consistently shown that for many, teenage pregnancy and parenthood is the beginning of a cycle which results in reduced career opportunities, welfare dependency, and disruptions to the normal process of adolescent development (Marx, 1987). While these problems are significant in and of themselves they are compounded by recent findings that they tend to be cyclical among future generations. The negative consequences which naturally flow from teenage pregnancy generally can be categorized into those of health, education, and economics.

Health

The teenage mother and her baby are at a high risk for both physical and emotional health complications. While teenage years usually are the healthiest time of an individual’s life, teen mothers tend to suffer more health problems than do mothers
aged 20-34 years (Crews, 1989). Worldwide, among 15-19 year old females, medical problems related to pregnancy are the main cause of death (Crews).

A report by the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (cited in Ennis, 1987) summarized the nationwide health status of childbearing adolescents by stating:

Only about half of the adolescents who give birth receive prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy. The infant mortality rate rises for the children of adolescent mothers—as does the percentage of low birth-weight babies, a factor in the rates of infant mortality and developmental disabilities (p. 3).

The Washington DC Children’s Defense Fund (cited in Ennis) continued the summary regarding the nationwide health status of teen pregnancy by reporting:

Many of the pregnancy risks for girls ages 15 or older can be eliminated through early and comprehensive prenatal care, but the risks for younger girls remain, even with medical care. These adolescents suffer more complications during pregnancy and delivery, and they are more likely to die giving birth (p. 3).

Health risks for Louisiana teens are described in "Project TEEN" (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987) and include higher incidence than non-teenage mothers of both physical and emotional health risks that the teenage mother and her baby are likely to face. The teen mother is more likely to be undernourished and to suffer premature or prolonged labor (Louisiana State Department of Education). Pregnant teens are less likely to see a doctor during the first trimester. In addition to the lack of prenatal care, these mothers also typically have poor eating habits, and are more likely to smoke and use alcohol and drugs (Louisiana State Department of Education). The result of these behaviors greatly increases the health risk of the baby.
The most immediate health problem for the child is low birth weight (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993). These babies who are born too small and too soon are likely to have immature organ systems that lead to health problems such as underdeveloped lungs, heart and brain, as well as difficulty in controlling body temperature and blood sugar levels (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987). Premature babies are at a much higher risk of dying in early infancy and are more likely to be mentally handicapped than are normal weight babies of 5 1/2 pounds or more (Louisiana State Department of Education). According to Dr. William Gill, a neonatologist at the Tulane Medical Center, "on the average, the smallest babies spend three months in intensive care after birth; heavier babies spend about a week. The cost is about $1,000 a day" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 26). This tremendous expenditure by taxpayers emphasizes the point that all members of society are financially impacted by the increased health risks of both teen mothers and their children.

"Project TEEN" (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987) also reported that over 50% of the teen mothers questioned did not seek medical attention until the sixth month of their pregnancy. In addition, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (1991) reported that in Louisiana the percentage of women ages 15 to 19 who gave birth and had adequate prenatal care was 49.17% compared to 66.98% for all age categories. It is not surprising that in 1991 Louisiana's infant mortality rate was 10.5 deaths per 1,000 live births which is higher than the 9.2 national infant mortality rate in 1990 (Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, 1991).
Other related health findings reported by Jensen (1986) note that recent research indicated not only higher incidence of health problems related to mother and child at the time of pregnancy and childbearing but also that these health problems may impact the course of later development. "Related subsequent delays and disabilities include hyperkinesis, intellectual impairment, and academic achievement problems" (Jensen, p. 9). Jensen (p. 9) continued, "Children of adolescent parents are also at risk of being abused and neglected." Levering (cited in Jensen) referred to "a study conducted by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect which found a significant negative correlation between the age of the delivering mother and the potential neglect of the child" (p. 9). Moore (1983) indicated similar concerns in Louisiana. Young Louisiana mothers without adequate support systems are at high risk for both abusing and neglecting their children (Moore).

Education

Teenage pregnancy has been documented to have a profound effect on future educational attainment of both the mother and child. Interruption or termination of the educational process carries with it a multitude of long range problems that affect many life outcomes such as career opportunities, income potential and overall socio-economic status. The likelihood of truncated education is indicated in the following quote by Upchurch and McCarthy (cited in Congress of the U.S., 1990). "Just over half of all women who were ages 14 to 22 in 1979 and who first had children before they were 18 had graduated from high school by the mid-1980s, compared with three-fourths of
those who first had children when they were 18 or 19 and over 90 percent of those who delayed childbearing into their twenties" (p. 11).

The inability to continue or complete one's education naturally follows from factors such as time constraints due to childcare responsibility and the necessity of pursuing employment to financially support the family. Although the unusually bright or talented child may overcome these adversities, they are certainly more the exception than the rule. And those who do not possess these exceptional capabilities have little if any hope of breaking out of the negative spiral which often terminates the educational process and thus their economic future (Marx, 1987).

Unfortunately, Louisiana not only experiences the same host of problems seen on a national level but sees those same problems on an intensified level due to its own unusually high pregnancy rate. During the 1986 school year, 376 Louisiana girls indicated pregnancy to be the reason they quit school (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987). Louisiana's worst-in-the nation graduation rate mirrors its ranking in the nation for teenage pregnancies (Louisiana State Department of Education). The dropout problem is of alarming concern in Louisiana. The state had only a 57% overall graduation rate in 1985-86 (Louisiana State Department of Education). Compounding the problem in Louisiana, "teen mothers are at a greater risk of unemployment and welfare dependency due to the lack of education and employment" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 18).
Economic

Major economic difficulties for the mother, the child and the community in which they live are associated with high rates of teenage pregnancy. Jensen (1986) indicated that "the age at which a woman has her first child is also closely correlated with the likelihood that she will be living in poverty" (p. 11). In 1985 and 1986 over 40% of all teen mothers in the United States were in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (Jensen). In contrast, mothers who delayed childbearing until their twenties had a poverty rate of 24%. This trend appeared to continue over time as well: "33% of mothers ages 25 to 29 who first gave birth when they were teenagers were poor in 1985 and 1986, compared with 15% of the mothers of the same age who delayed childbearing" (Congress of the U.S., 1990, p. 13).

As a result of truncated education, family responsibilities, low educational attainment, and poverty level existence, many teen mothers must rely on the public welfare system to survive. The economic implication is that adolescent pregnancy does not fall on the adolescent and her family alone. The cost to society can be staggering. Henry (cited in Ennis, 1987) reported, "Despite large state expenditure, the fact that a child has an adolescent single parent is the best single predictor that the child will live in poverty" (p. 2). A report by the Washington DC Children’s Defense Fund (cited by Ennis) indicated that, "seventy-five percent of the families headed by single mothers live below the poverty line" (p. 2).

Extensive, long term public assistance has become the norm for many adolescent mothers. Hong and Wellen (1993) stated that "teenage mothers tend to receive higher-
than-average benefits and that teenage pregnancy costs taxpayers about $20 billion per year" (p. 247). In addition, Jensen (1986) stated that "considering that the children of teen parents are nearly twice as likely to become teen parents themselves as compared to the children of older parents, the cycle will continue to escalate societal costs" (p. 12).

A report from the Washington DC Children's Defense Fund (cited in Ennis, 1987) indicated the significant financial expenditures to society that are often the result of teen pregnancy:

The cost to society of these pregnancies among young adolescents is higher than the cost of other pregnancies. For example, 30 per cent of the total cost of hospital deliveries to adolescents is paid by Medicare. One reason for this high percentage is that many of the pregnant girls who qualify for Medicaid have low birth-weight babies. These babies often must be placed in intensive care, and that cost is high—between $10,000 and $15,000 per child (p. 3).

Figures regarding governmental expenditures in Louisiana alone are staggering. "Adolescent pregnancy is costly to Louisiana in both human and fiscal terms" (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987, p. 7). Teenage pregnancy in Louisiana requires a tremendous disbursement of public funds. In fact "Project TEEN" stated, "The average cost of a single birth to a teen who does receive welfare is estimated to be $37,500 for a single year" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 7). "In 1986, Louisiana spent $441,644,779 on families that were begun when the mother was a teenager" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 8). "In that same year, the United States spent $17.93 billion on families that were begun by a teenage mother" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 7).
Further, more than 10,018 babies were born to unmarried adolescents under the age of 19 and another 2,718 babies were born to married teens in 1992 (Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, 1992). Since babies born to teenagers are twice as likely to die before their first birthday as babies born to mothers aged 20 through 29, this places more than 12,000 Louisiana babies at risk of infant death. In 1991, the Louisiana infant mortality rate was 10.5 deaths per 1,000 live births and the national rate of infant mortality was 9.8 in 1989 and 9.2 in 1990 (Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, 1991). It is estimated that three times the number of babies who die live with permanently handicapping conditions, many which could have been prevented (Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987). It costs the state an estimated $955,550 to provide a lifetime of care for one severely handicapped child" (Louisiana State Department of Education, p. 7).

The Impact of Teacher Attitudes

A determination of how teacher attitude may influence the success of educational programs that are directed at pregnant adolescents and school-age parents is a necessary step in this study. For the purpose of this study, Milton Rokeach's (1976) definition of attitude as a "relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner" (p. 112). Rokeach explained that the reference to a "predisposition to respond" can be either a verbal expression of an opinion of some form of nonverbal behavior, and he further emphasized that an attitude predisposes one to make a preferential response."
The review of literature revealed that research specifically documenting the importance of teacher attitude in addressing the needs of pregnant adolescents in the educational setting is somewhat limited. However, more general studies have consistently demonstrated a relationship between teacher attitude and the success of educational programs.

With regard to the overall importance of teacher attitude to the educational setting, Carl Rogers (1983) indicated that one of the most important factors that promotes learning is the quality of the relationship that exists between the teacher and the students. Rogers (1983) and Jensen (1986) reported research conducted by the National Consortium for Humanizing Education (NCHE) which included more than 2,000 teachers and 20,000 students. Data from the NCHE revealed that "teachers operating at low levels of empathy, congruence and positive regard were also responding to students on the basis of stereotypes, whereas teachers operating at high levels of these characteristics responded differentially in terms of the student’s needs and goals" (Jensen, p. 20).

McWhirter, McWhirter, and McWhirter (1993) studied factors that impact at-risk students and reported classroom structure to be important in addressing the needs of at-risk students. They further indicated the relationship between the teacher and student to be a significant consideration in classroom structure. McWhirter, et. al., stated, "the person of the teacher, the caring relationship that can exist between teacher and student, can help meet the needs of at-risk students" (p.77).
Teacher attitude has been found to be a significant factor in determining program effectiveness and student responsiveness in numerous educational settings (Clark, 1993; Rieck & Knight, 1992; Hargrove, 1981). Clark investigated the effects of teacher attitude on student achievement of FFA proficiency awards. The findings indicated that the number of awards was significantly related to teacher attitude toward proficiency awards and supervised agricultural experience programs. Clark further reported a positive teacher attitude to be predictive of an FFA chapter's likelihood of having students win proficiency awards on the district and state levels.

Rieck & Knight (1992) examined program success in mainstreaming special needs students in the regular classroom. Findings indicated that a major obstacle to mainstreaming was negative teacher attitude. Rieck & Knight suggested that since positive teacher attitude had a significant effect on program effectiveness, that administrators assume the responsibility to provide opportunities for in-service designed to change teacher attitudes.

Hargrove (1981) investigated the effect of teacher attitude toward students on students' academic achievement. Results indicated that the attitude of teachers toward their students was found to be a significant factor in reading achievement of the students. This relationship between positive teacher attitude and student achievement was found to exist in both reading comprehension and reading vocabulary achievement.

Regarding the impact of teacher attitude toward pregnant teens, St. Pierre (1980) examined the attitude of vocational educators toward adolescent parents. St. Pierre stated, "If teacher attitudes toward adolescent parents are not positive, this will be
reflected in their behavior through the teacher/student interaction" (p. 14). St. Pierre further indicated that "teachers play a significant role within components (of programs which address the needs of adolescent parents) in providing psychological and emotional support and thereby contributing to the effectiveness of the total program" (p. 14).

The study that most specifically addressed the impact of teacher attitude on program success, as it relates to pregnant adolescents was conducted by Zellman (1981). Zellman examined how schools were responding to Title IX mandates by evaluating the role of schools and the effectiveness of exemplary programs addressing the needs of pregnant students and teenage parents. The study consisted of twelve field studies around the country in which each of the twelve schools had established a formal teen pregnancy and parenting program. Findings indicated that in the most successful programs, a dedicated concerned person had been able to convince the administration of the need for the program. Zellman stated, "Surmounting the barriers (of a program for pregnant students and teenage parents) depends largely on the dedication of a concerned person in the district" (p. 6). Zellman concluded that, "Given the many factors constraining school district response to student pregnancy and parenthood, the presence of a motivated person seems a necessary condition of the establishment of a special program serving this group" (p. 8-9). Most importantly, Zellman concluded that the merit of this dedicated person’s ideas and attitudes usually determine the quality of the teen pregnancy and parenting program.
The Impact of Schools and School Personnel

The review of literature has indicated tremendous opportunities are available for schools in addressing the issues of teen pregnancy since they are in the unique position of having students as a captive audience. Lindsay and Rodine (1989) stated, "Schools are where the kids are! It's also where their peers are. When we're educating the peer group, we may have a better chance of having our message heard and understood" (p. 55). Ennis (1987) reported, "Schools can move effectively to reduce teenage pregnancy rates by developing academic and work-related skills and improving self-image among at-risk students" (p. 4). Ennis further stated, "Because schools provide the one constant factor in the life of every adolescent until he or she graduates or drops out, school may well be the only way to reach some at-risk students" (p. 1). In addition, Alan Guttmacher Institute (1981), Brindis (1990) and Moore (1983) all point to the critical link that schools can provide in reaching adolescent parents.

Schools offer the adolescent parent the opportunity for a high school education which can significantly reduce the negative economic consequences that this group faces. Hardy and Zabin (1991) reported, "Educational attainment at delivery is of particular interest because of its relationship with long-term outcome" (p. 63). Crews (1989) also stated, "Choices about education made during the teenage years will affect lifetime career chances and income" (p. 3). Moore (1983) reported, "The importance of schooling to the prevention of pregnancy and to the economical and emotional well being of young parents has recently become recognized" (p. 10).
Ironically, pregnancy is a time when teens most need the support and opportunities offered by schools, and yet pregnant teens often are viewed as a negative and hopeless group of individuals. According to Zellman (1981) "Many educators visualize pregnant and parenting teenagers as academically marginal, low-achieving, low income, and usually minority students who might have completed high school without a pregnancy, but only through luck, inertia, and the general tendency of public schools eventually to graduate everyone who shows up for classes" (p. 87). Historically, society has treated pregnant teenagers as outcasts and this is clearly evidenced by the treatment that pregnant teens receive in the school system. Often pregnant adolescents were considered a negative influence for other students and if not asked to leave during the pregnancy were at least discouraged from attending school. At a time when these teens most needed peer support and positive teacher role models, they were often rejected by the school system.

As recently as two decades ago there was little or no legislation or judicial support for the pregnant adolescent. According to Jensen (1986), "prior to a 1971 federal court ruling, Ordway vs. Hargrave, which forced public schools to allow pregnant students to attend regular classes, thousands of students were suspended and expelled from school upon confirmation of pregnancy" (p. 16). However, it was only with the advent of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments that legislative protection was granted to pregnant adolescents.

Although Title IX prohibited discrimination against pregnant teenagers in the school system, it failed to provide programs to support or encourage pregnant teens
Furthermore, Title IX failed to address the tremendous obstacle posed by the negative attitudes that school personnel have toward pregnant adolescents (Jensen). It is apparent that prohibiting discrimination against pregnant teens does little to curb the negative attitudes that have persisted for many decades.

Rogers (1983) reported that the attitude and climate of the classroom, which is created by the teacher, is a major factor in promoting or inhibiting learning. The National Consortium for Humanizing Education (NCHE) has conducted research regarding the issue of person-centered education for seventeen years (Rogers). The NCHE findings have been summarized by Rogers: "Students learn more and behave better when they receive higher levels of understanding, caring, and genuineness, than when they are given low levels of them" (p. 199).

Although research with regard to teacher attitudes toward pregnant teens is limited, Zellman (1981) found the success of school programs for pregnant teens to be dependent on the "dedication of a concerned person in the district" (p. 8). A study by Tucker (1980) examined the perceptions of school personnel regarding unwed, pregnant students and concluded that, "the educational destiny of many single, pregnant girls is at the whim and caprice of some administrators with low levels of perception regarding these students. These low-level perceptions impact negatively upon the student" (p. 3828). Zellman stated, "The presence of a motivated person seems a necessary condition for the establishment of a special program serving this group. Given a leadership vacuum at the federal, state and local levels, the formation and quality of this person's ideas usually determine the form and quality of the district's program" (p. 8).
Zellman suggested that attitudes of teachers may influence school policies with regard to the pregnant adolescent.

**Variables That Are Related to Teachers' Attitudes**

While research addressing teachers' attitudes toward pregnant teens is limited, the review of literature does seem to indicate that open-mindedness, knowledge and certain personal characteristics are the variables that are likely to have the greatest influence. The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale frequently has been used to measure the degree of open- or closed-mindedness of individuals. Rokeach (1960) defined dogmatic teachers as being structured, bound to preconceived objectives and inflexible regarding perception of subject-matter. On the other hand, non-dogmatic teachers exhibit flexibility, an unstructured manner, and attach more importance to students' present needs (Kremer, Moore, & Novat, 1986). Kremer, et al., also report results of a study conducted by Hart and Brown indicating "teachers low in dogmatism were found to be more accurate than highly dogmatic teachers in judging students who had values dissimilar to their own" (p. 19-20).

Flake (1991) used The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale to measure the degree of dogmatism of administrators toward computer and non-computer sources of information. Murrone and Gynther (1991) studied the effects of years of teaching experience and dogmatism on their conceptions of intelligence toward elementary school-age children. Murrone and Gynther (1991) state "The Dogmatism Scale, Form E was designed to measure individual differences in open-or closed-mindedness and is comprised of the most reliable items adapted from four prior forms" (p. 1197).
Their findings indicate that more open-minded teachers are less biased in their expectations of elementary children and that these "flexible thinkers also made more uniform judgments about children's behavior across all levels of intelligence" (p. 1200). Referring (1979) examined the relationship between attitudes toward feminism and levels of dogmatism. Findings indicated that individuals who were identified as high feminist supporters were significantly less close-minded than individuals identified as low feminist supporters. Maijoribanks (1980) used the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale to assess teachers' social attitudes and reported that "teachers expressing more traditional educational attitudes have higher scores on the conservative social attitude measures of dogmatism, authoritarianism, religionism, ethnocentrism, and tough-mindedness and lower scores on humanitarianism and sexual permissiveness" (p. 433).

Research related to knowledge and teen pregnancy most often focuses on the adolescent rather than the teacher. Brindis (1990) indicated that common themes related to reducing adolescent pregnancy cluster around increasing knowledge, skills and options for the adolescent. Brindis further identified the importance of knowledge in the prevention of unintended childbearing. Many point out, however, that tremendous amounts of knowledge and resources have been made available to adolescents in the last decade and that the pregnancy rate has been basically unaffected (Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1981). The Alan Guttmacher Institute further stated, "... Although we have most of the knowledge and resources needed to solve the problem (of adolescent pregnancy) we have failed to do so" (p. 64). Brindis (1990) suggested that what is lacking in our approach to teen pregnancy is convincing these youth that
they in fact do have options other than parenthood. Pittman (cited in Brindis) stated, "The belief among young people that there is a positive, attainable future worth planning and preparing for—that they have promising life options—is a powerful and necessary element of adolescent pregnancy postponement" (p. 46). Brindis (1990) further indicated the importance of training teachers to exhibit high expectations for all their students and to create an environment that is racially sensitive and nonsexist in their approach to the teen pregnancy issues. St. Pierre (1980) examined attitudes of educators toward adolescent parents, their degree of open-mindedness and their knowledge of the problem of adolescent parenthood. "Data from the 432 vocational educators in Pennsylvania who participated in her study indicated that those who were more open-minded tended to possess more positive attitudes toward adolescent parents and those who had a higher knowledge of the problem tended to hold more positive attitudes" (p. 21). It seems that two primary factors that may have implications regarding teachers' attitudes toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents are the degree of open-mindedness of the teachers and the knowledge level of the teachers regarding teen pregnancy.

Numerous demographic characteristics have been examined by Doswell (1983), Jensen (1986), St. Pierre (1980), and Tucker (1980) regarding teachers' attitudes toward school-age parents. School and community characteristics were examined by Jensen (1986) who reported that "attitudes possessed by school personnel seem to be influenced to some degree by the ambiance of the community in which they reside and their perceptions of how residents in the community feel toward sensitive issues such
as adolescent pregnancy" (p. 141). Tucker (1980) studied perceptions of school personnel regarding pregnant adolescents and found significant differences due to school type (rural, urban and suburban).

Jensen (1986) investigated the presence of a teen pregnancy program within the school as a potential factor influencing teacher attitudes. Jensen reported that even though the presence of a structured program for pregnant adolescents did not appear to affect teachers' attitudes toward these students, when classified by years of experience, teachers in schools with structured programs (specifically GRADS) had consistently more positive attitudes than those in schools without programs.

Doswell (1983) explored the influence of teachers who had counseled a pregnant adolescent and reported this factor to be a strong predictor for liberal attitudes toward pregnant adolescents. In contrast, Doswell further reported that the more pregnant adolescents counseled, the less liberal the teachers' attitudes tended to be.

Huh (1991) examined the relationship between school size and principals' attitudes toward sex equity. Findings revealed a significant low positive association, indicating school size was positively related to principals' attitudes toward sex equity for both genders.

Other variables that have been investigated as potential factors influencing teachers' attitudes toward pregnant adolescents include personal characteristics of the teacher. Doswell (1983) explored age as a possible predictor. Age was not found to be associated with the overall attitude score, however, three of the four attitude items were found to be significantly related to age. Doswell reported that age had an inverse
relationship with attitudes and concluded that "liberality generally increased with a
decrease in age" (p. 84). St. Pierre (1980) studied the relationship between age of
vocational educators' attitudes and adolescent parents. Recommendations from St.
Pierre's study included the examination of the variable, age, as related to teachers'
attitudes toward pregnant teens.

Tucker (1980) investigated the influence of race on attitudes of teachers and
administrators and reported significant differences among perceptions of school
personnel due to ethnicity of respondents. Doswell (1983) studied very little regarding
race but recommended further investigation of this and other demographic variables.

Regarding the influence of marital status, Jensen (1986) found some association
between marital status and school personnel's attitudes. Doswell (1983) reported
singles to be consistently more liberal in attitude than married, divorced, separated or
widowed respondents. Jensen (1986) found years of teaching experience to be a
meaningful intervening variable related to school personnel's attitudes toward pregnant
adolescents.

Both Jensen (1986) and Doswell (1983) found significant relationships between
education level and attitudes of teachers toward pregnant adolescents. Doswell reported
educational background to be one of the strongest influencing factors on attitudes. St.
Pierre (1980) recommended the investigation of the influence of education level for
further study.

Doswell (1983) examined the influence of parental status on teachers' attitudes
toward pregnant teens and reported no significant effect due to the number of children
one had. Having unmarried children in the home, however, was found to be predictive of overall teacher attitudes, with a tendency toward greater liberality.

Jensen (1986) explored the influence of in-service education on teachers' attitudes and reported that teachers who had experienced GRADS in-service programs possessed more positive attitudes toward pregnant teens than did other teachers and administrators. Doswell (1983), however, did not find in-service education to be predictive of teachers' attitudes.

Results from Doswell (1983), Jensen (1986), St. Pierre (1980), and Tucker (1980) point to the following school and community characteristics as likely factors explaining teachers' attitudes: the size of school, the size of the community, and the presence of teen pregnancy or parenting programs within the school. In addition, personal characteristics that have been suggested as having a potential effect on teachers' attitudes include: race, age, marital status, years of teaching experience, the number of pregnant teens the teacher has taught, education level, and the presence of minor and/or adult children in the teachers' home.
CHAPTER 3
Methodology

Population and Sample

The population for this study was defined as secondary school home economics teachers employed in Louisiana during the 1993-94 school year. The frame of the population was identified through a listing of home economics teachers in Louisiana compiled by the Louisiana State Department of Education, Office of Vocational Education, Bureau of Secondary Vocational Education--Home Economics. This list included a total of 590 teachers. The sampling plan included the selection of a simple random sample from the defined population. The minimum required sample size was determined using Cochran's (1977) sample size determination formula with the parameters established as follows: acceptable margin of error = 2% and acceptable risk of drawing a biased sample = 5%. The estimate of the variance in the population was based on the primary outcome measure in the study, and the small population correction formula was used to adjust the calculated sample size as appropriate. Sample size calculations are as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
n_o &= \frac{t^2 \cdot s^2}{d^2} \\
&= \frac{(1.965)^2 \cdot (.70)^2}{(.10)^2} \\
&= 36
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
(3.86) (.49) \\
n_0 &= \frac{1.8914}{.01} \\
n_0 &= 190 \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
n &= \frac{n_0}{n_0 + 1 + \frac{190}{590}} \\
n &= \frac{190}{1 + 0.32} \\
n &= 144
\end{align*}
\]

Some over-sampling was employed in an attempt to maintain the established acceptable margin of error in case a less than desired response rate was achieved. With a response rate as low as 72\%, a drawn sample of 200 would have allowed for
maintenance of the established margin of error. Therefore, a drawn sample of 200 teachers was selected from the defined population using a simple random sampling procedure.

**Instrumentation**

The instrument used in this study consisted of four parts. The first part of the instrument was the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. This instrument was used to measure the respondents' attitudes toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. The second part of the instrument was the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. This instrument was used to determine the degree of open-mindedness of the respondents. The third part of the instrument consisted of the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory which was utilized to determine the respondents' level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy. Finally, the fourth part of the instrument was a demographic survey. Items included in this part of the instrument were aimed at describing the respondents on selected personal and professional demographic characteristics as well as selected characteristics of the community and school. A copy of the complete questionnaire is included in Appendix A. Each part of the instrument is described in more detail in the following sections.

**Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale**

The Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale was developed by St. Pierre (1980) and initially was utilized to measure the attitudes of 432 vocational educators in Pennsylvania toward pregnant adolescents and adolescent expectant fathers. This instrument also was used by Jensen (1986) to measure the attitudes of 222 school
personnel toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. The instrument consists of 20-items. Jensen reported:

St. Pierre used a 1974 Likert attitude analysis program from the Pennsylvania State University Computation Center to determine the reliability of the instrument. According to that program, the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale has a reliability of 0.917. Using the Cronbach’s alpha, reliability of the instrument in this study was 0.879.

Respondents indicated their agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale. The higher the respondent’s score, the more positive the attitude, with 100 being the highest score possible (p. 41).

Based on suggestions provided by members of a panel who reviewed the scale for content validity and information derived from the review of literature, one of the existing items on the attitude scale was divided into two items and five items were added to the scale which were taken from the attitude measurement used by Doswell (1983). Following these revisions, the attitude scale consisted of 26 items. The reliability of this scale was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient and was determined to be 0.871.

The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale

The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale was selected to determine the degree of open- or closed-mindedness of the respondents. Open-minded individuals develop autonomous personalities, judge phenomena independently, demonstrate flexibility and are tolerant of individual differences. Closed-minded individuals are likely to possess characteristics such as inflexibility, structuredness, and as teachers, are likely to attach more importance to the transmission of cultural heritage than to the pupils’ future need (Kremer, et al., 1986). This instrument was developed by Rokeach (1960) and has
been used extensively by researchers in numerous fields of study to measure open- or closed-mindedness (Flake, 1991; Marjoribanks, 1980; Redfering, 1979; Murrone & Gynther, 1991; Kremer, et al., 1986; Holt, 1966).

Rosenfeld's (1963) revision of Form E of the fifth edition of the original scale, was selected to be used in this study. This particular form was found to have corrected reliabilities ranging from 0.68 to 0.93. Respondents indicated their reaction to the 50 items by choosing among six choices that range from -3 (indicating strong disagreement) to +3 (indicating strong agreement). The scale does not offer an option for a neutral response. A constant of 4 was added to each item to gain positive scores and the possible range of scores was 50 to 350. Lower scores indicate open-mindedness (Jensen, 1986).

Reliability of the 50 item scale administered in this study was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability of this scale was determined to be $\alpha = 0.899$.

Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory

The Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory was used to measure the respondents’ knowledge of the problem of adolescent pregnancy and parenting. This instrument was developed by St. Pierre (1980) to determine the knowledge of vocational educators in Pennsylvania. This instrument also was used by Jensen to measure knowledge of school personnel in Ohio.

The instrument consists of 25 true/false items and is described by Jensen (1986):

Ten professionals in the field of education and evaluation attested to its content validity. A reliability coefficient of 0.784 was obtained, using
the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20. Reliability of the instrument in this study was 0.371. The instrument was not designed to test the same information through several items. Differences in reliability coefficients may also be attributed to population differences. Scores can range from 0 to 25, with the high score indicating higher levels of knowledge regarding the problem of adolescent parenthood (p. 41-42).

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts and was evaluated by the researcher regarding the currency of the information included in the items. Where needed, items were updated to reflect the most accurate information available to the researcher. In addition, at the suggestion of a reviewer, the title of the knowledge instrument was changed in an attempt to avoid reactive effects that might occur if respondents were aware that their knowledge was being tested. The revised title was Information Inventory Regarding Teen Pregnancy. Reliability of the instrument in this study was assessed using the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of internal consistency. The reliability coefficient of the scale was determined to be $\alpha = .6716$.

**Demographic Information**

The final part of the instrument was a section designed to measure the selected demographic characteristics of the respondents. This section was a researcher designed instrument. Items to be included in the instrument were: size of school, size of community, presence of teen pregnancy or parenting program in the school, number of pregnant adolescents taught in the last three years, ethnic group, age, years of teaching experience, marital status, education level, presence of minor and/or adult children in the home, number of in-service programs attended regarding teen pregnancy/parenting, and percent of male students in the home economics program. The demographic form was reviewed for content validity by a panel of experts.
Permission to Use Scales

Since three parts (scales) of the instrument were taken completely or partially from other research, the researcher sought permission to use these scales in the current study. The first of these was the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. The researcher discovered that other instruments which were developed by Dr. Rokeach were marketed by Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc. This organization publishes the Rokeach Values Survey, but when they were asked about the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, they indicated that they did not publish this instrument. When questioned further about it, they did provide information about two other possible sources for the Dogmatism Scale. Both of these sources were contacted without success. Therefore, since the scale is not listed in Test: A Comprehensive Reference for Assessments in Psychology, Education, and Business (Sweetland and Keyser, 1991) nor in the Mental Measurements Yearbook (Kramer and Conoley, 1992; Conoley and Kramer, 1989; Mitchell, 1985), and the company that markets other Rokeach developed instruments did not publish this specific scale and was not able to provide information leading to the source of the instrument, the researcher felt that all reasonable avenues had been investigated without success. Given this situation, the researcher was compelled to either use the study by Jensen (1986) as the source of the Dogmatism Scale or eliminate it from the study. Since the measurement of dogmatism/open-mindedness was an important component of the study, the former alternative was chosen.

The second and third parts (scales) of the instrument were the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale and the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory. These
were originally developed by St. Pierre (1980) as part of her master's thesis research and were later used by Jensen (1986) in her dissertation. The first attempt to locate St. Pierre was through the various directories associated with the home economics field. When she was unable to be located through this procedure, the institution (Pennsylvania State University) with which she was known to have been affiliated was contacted. A copy of her thesis was acquired from Penn State. Since the program from which she graduated had been eliminated from the university, however, the researcher was unable to locate anyone at Penn State that could identify where St. Pierre was currently located. Since the researcher was unable to locate the individual to acquire a specific letter of permission, and since these instruments were not copyrighted, the researcher utilized the instruments and gave full credit to the original instrument developer as the best alternative procedure.

**Data Collection**

The data for this study were collected by mailed questionnaires. Members of the selected sample were sent a copy of the four-part instrument, a cover letter briefly explaining the purpose of the study and requesting their participation, and a self-addressed stamped envelope for returning the completed survey. In addition, the researcher enclosed a one dollar bill with each of the instruments in the initial mailing. A copy of the initial cover letter is presented in Appendix B. This was enclosed as a token of appreciation for participating in the study and was included only in the initial mailing. Non-response follow-up procedures used in this study included the following: 1. One week after the initial mailing, a post card reminder was sent to the non-
respondents (See Appendix C); 2. Two weeks after the initial mailing the non-
respondents were mailed a second copy of the instrument and a follow-up letter
emphasizing the importance of their participation (See Appendix D); 3. Three weeks
after the initial mailing, each remaining non-respondent was contacted by telephone to
encourage their participation in the study (see Appendix E). For purposes of this
follow-up, contact was defined as receiving an answer to the telephone call and either
speaking to the sample member or leaving a message for the individual encouraging
their response and indicating that if they had questions they could call the researcher
collect at a number specified.

Response rates achieved by the researcher included the following percentages:
The initial mailing resulted in receiving 78 useable responses (39%). In addition, two
refusals were identified from the responses received from the initial mailing. These
refusals were replaced by two additional sample members bringing the total number of
instruments mailed out to 202. After the postcard follow-up, an additional 32 responses
were received bringing the total number of useable responses to 110 (55%). At this
point, telephone calls were made to the remaining 90 non-respondents. A prepared
script was used when making the telephone calls to maintain consistency in the non-
response follow-up procedures used. A copy of the script is provided in Appendix E.
In the process of making the telephone calls, 25 members of the initial sample were
identified as having been frame errors. One of these individuals was reported by the
school as having been recently deceased and the other 24 were reported by the school
as not teaching any longer. The total sample size was reduced by the 25 frame errors
bringing the total sample size to 177. It should be noted here that six responses were received from teachers at schools that were identified to be frame errors. The currently employed teacher apparently responded to the survey in substitution for the original sample member. Each of these responses was eliminated from the useable responses in the study since the sample was individuals rather than schools. Following the telephone calls, an additional 50 responses were received from members of the sample bringing the total response rate to 170 of the 177 sample members or a 96.1% response rate.

Since the final response rate was above the 90% level specified in the proposal the final follow-up procedure was not utilized. This procedure, which involved the researcher drawing a random sample of the remaining non-respondents for an intensive telephone follow-up, was required only if the final response was considered low (below 90%).
CHAPTER 4

Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Findings presented in this chapter are organized by objectives of the study. The first objective was to describe home economics teachers in Louisiana on selected personal and school demographic characteristics. Respondents were asked to provide personal background information in the following eight areas: 1) years of teaching experience, 2) highest level of education completed, 3) marital status, 4) age as of last birthday, 5) ethnicity, 6) number of children in the home, 7) size of the community they grew up in, and 8) number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy.

Participants were asked to indicate their number of years of teaching experience, including the current year. Of the sample of 170 Louisiana home economics teachers who responded to the study, experience ranged from 1 year to 40 years with a mean of 16.32 (standard deviation = 8.52) years of teaching. The category of years of experience with the most responses was 16 to 21 years with a frequency of 38 (22.7%). The category within which the fewest respondents fell was one to three years of experience with only 10 (6.0%), indicating three years or fewer of teaching experience (see Table 1).
Table 1

Years of Teaching Experience Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>167(^a)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Years of experience ranged from 1 to 40 with a mean of 16.32 years and standard deviation of 8.52.

\(^a\)Three teachers did not respond to this item.

Regarding the highest level of education completed, the two groups with the largest number of teachers were in the B.S. Degree category and the M.S. Degree category with 57 (34.1%) responding in each. In addition, the lowest number of teachers reported having completed a doctoral degree or an Educational Specialist certificate with 1 (.6%) teacher in each category (see Table 2).
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.S. Degree</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. Degree</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. plus 30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. plus 15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed. Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>167(^a)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Three teachers did not respond to this item.

Regarding marital status, the majority of Louisiana home economics teachers (119 or 71.2%) reported they were married. Only 4 respondents (2.4%) indicated that they were widowed, and none reported separated as their marital status (see Table 3).

Participating Louisiana home economics teachers were asked to indicate their age as of their last birthday. The mean age of the home economics teachers responding to this study was 43.93 years (standard deviation = 8.49). The ages ranged from the youngest teacher at 24 years to the oldest teacher at 62 years. When examining age data in categories, the largest age group was found to be 41 to 45 years (n = 45 or 27.5%) and the smallest age category represented by this sample was 25 and under with a frequency of only 4 or 2.4% (see Table 4).
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>167</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Three teachers did not respond to this item.

Regarding ethnicity, the majority of Louisiana home economics teachers (129 or 77.2%) participating in this study were white. Thirty-seven (22.2%) teachers were black and 1 (.6%) indicated other as their ethnic group.

Home economics teachers participating in the study were asked to indicate if they had any children living at home. Forty-seven (28.1%) respondents reported that they had no children living in their home. Those respondents who had children in the home were asked to indicate how many were living at home in each of two groups: those under 18 and those 18 and over. Of the 120 (71.9%) who indicated children living in their home, 25 (20.9%) reported no minor children (less than 18 years of age). The number of minor children living in the home ranged from 0 to 4 (mean = 1.27). The largest group of respondents (54 or 45.0%) reported one minor child in the home (see Table 5). The number of adult children (18 years of age and over) reported to be
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥56</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164*</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Age of respondents ranged from 24 to 62 with a mean of 43.93 years and standard deviation of 8.49.

*Six teachers did not respond to this item.

Living in the home ranged from 0 to 5 with a mean of .66 adult children living in the home. The majority of teachers who reported children in the home (66 or 55.0%) indicated no adult children in the home.

Respondents were asked to identify the size of the community in which they grew up as urban, suburban or rural. The majority (94 or 57%) of Louisiana home economics teachers reported that they grew up in a rural community. Fewer than one-fifth (31 or 18.8%) reported growing up in an urban community setting (see Table 6).
Table 5

Number of Children Living in the Home Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>&lt;18 Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>&gt;18 Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Three teachers did not respond to items related to presence of children in the home.

*Number of minor children living at home ranged from 0 to 4 with a mean of 1.27 and a standard deviation of .97.

*Number of adult children living at home ranged from 0 to 5 with a mean of .66 and a standard deviation of .90.

The number of in-service programs that Louisiana home economics teachers had participated in is reported in Table 7. The majority of home economics teachers (101 or 62.3%) indicated they had attended from one to three in-service programs addressing issues on teen pregnancy or parenting. Five (3.1%) teachers reported having attended ten or more in-service programs, and the range for the number of in-service programs attended was from 0 to 20 with a mean of 2.06 (standard deviation = 2.69).
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Community in Which Home Economics Teachers Grew Up</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165 a</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Five teachers did not respond to this item.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of In-Service Programs Attended on Teen Pregnancy and Parenting by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>62.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162 a</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Note. Number of in-service programs attended ranged from 0 to 20 with a mean of 2.06 and standard deviation of 2.69.

 Eight teachers did not respond to this item.
To further examine the data regarding in-service programs, records were obtained from the Louisiana State Department of Education which identified the teachers who attended the GRADS training session. This training session was held in the fall of 1993 for Louisiana home economics teachers throughout the state. From this sample of 170 Louisiana home economics teachers, 32 (18.8%) had attended the GRADS training session while 138 (81.2%) were not identified as having been at the GRADS session.

In addition to the eight questions regarding personal characteristics, the respondents were asked to report information pertaining to school demographics. Background information relating to the school included: 1) number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years, 2) percentage of male students in the home economics program, 3) school size, 4) size of community where the school is located, 5) whether or not the school currently offers a teen pregnancy or parenting program, and 6) teachers’ perception of level of support for a parenting program by the principal, superintendent and school board.

Table 8 summarizes the number of pregnant teens this sample of Louisiana home economics teachers reported to have taught in the last three years. Only 5 of the 167 teachers who responded to this item (3%) reported that they had not taught any pregnant teens in the last three years. The average number of pregnant teens taught by Louisiana home economics teachers was 14.11 (standard deviation = 17.44). In addition, the largest category for the number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years was from one to five with a frequency of 44 (26.4%) teachers (see Table 8). The
majority of teachers (85 or 51.2%) had taught between 1 and 10 pregnant teens in the last three years.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Teens</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \geq 30 )</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>166(^{a})</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The number of pregnant teens taught in the last 3 years ranged from 0 to 175 with a mean of 14.11 and standard deviation of 17.44.

\(^{a}\)Four teachers did not respond to this item.

Teachers were asked to indicate the most appropriate category representing the percent of male students in their program. These data are reported in Table 9. The majority of teachers (85 or 50.9%) reported that from 26 to 50 percent of their students were males. Only two (1.2%) teachers reported no male students in their home
economics programs, and no teachers reported that more than 75% of their students were male.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Males</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-25%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-75%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>*<em>167</em></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Three teachers did not respond to this item.

To measure the school enrollments where these teachers were employed, participants were asked to indicate the school size classification for their school. For reporting this information the state athletic association school size classification was used (Louisiana High School Coaches Association, 1993). The number of schools from each classification are presented in Table 10. The range of percentages in these categories was from a low of 4.3% (n = 7) in the A/C category (the smallest schools) to a high of 29.0% (n = 47) in the AAAA category. A large number of teachers (34 or 21.0%) reported that their schools were classified as AAAAA (the largest schools).
Table 10

School Size Classification Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAAA (over 1129 students)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAAA (696 to 1128 students)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA (410 to 695 students)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA (225 to 411 students)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB (93 to 224 students)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC (92 and fewer students)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>162(^a)</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Eight teachers did not respond to this item.

In addition to school size classification, respondents were asked to report the size of the community where the school was located as urban, suburban or rural. The majority of home economics teachers (84 or 51.2%) indicated their school was located in a rural community. Data regarding the size of the community where the school was located are presented in Table 11.

Participants were asked to respond "yes" or "no" to the question, "Does your school currently offer a teen pregnancy or parenting program?" The majority of teachers (85 or 51.5%) reported that their school does offer a teen pregnancy or parenting program. The remaining 80 teachers (48.5%) responded "no" indicating their school does not offer a program.
Table 11

Size of Community Where School is Located Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Community</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Six teachers did not respond to this item.

Home economics teachers also were asked to indicate the degree of support that they perceived for establishment of a parenting program. They were asked to report this perceived support from each of three levels of administration: their principal, their superintendent, and their school board. They were requested to indicate the degree to which they perceived each administrative level could/does support a program on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being the lowest support and 5 being the highest support. The findings in Table 12 indicate the highest perceived support to be from the principal with a mean score of 3.59 (standard deviation = 1.23). The lowest support perceived by these teachers was from their local school board with a mean of 3.13 (standard deviation = 1.19).
Table 12

Perceived Administrative Support for Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Program Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Support</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Board</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Response scale was 1 = lowest support to 5 = highest support.

Attitudes Toward Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

Objective two of the study was to determine the attitudes toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. Participants in the study responded to 26 items regarding their level of agreement/disagreement. To facilitate reporting of these findings, a scale was established by the researcher to guide the interpretation of the responses to the individual items. This scale was developed to coincide with the response categories provided to the respondents and included the following categories: < 1.50 = Strongly Agree; 1.50 to 2.49 = Agree; 2.50 to 3.50 = Undecided; 3.51 to 4.50 = Disagree; and > 4.50 = Strongly Disagree. The items with which the respondents most strongly agreed included: "I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter" (mean = 1.13) and "The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female" (mean = 1.19). These two items were in the strongly agree response category. Respondents strongly agreed
with a total of five items (see Table 13). The item with which respondents most strongly disagreed was, "As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class" (mean = 4.51). This was the only item in the strongly disagree response category. Overall respondents strongly agreed with five items, agreed with two items, were undecided on eight items, disagreed with 10 items, and strongly disagreed with one item.

To further summarize the information regarding attitudes, an overall mean attitude score was computed as the mean of the 26 items in the scale. However, since some of the items were designed as reverse scale items (for example, on some items strongly agree represented the more positive attitude while on other items strongly disagree represented the more positive attitude), the items were recoded so that for all items the higher value represented the more positive attitude. A copy of the attitude scale items is provided in Appendix F which shows the direction of items used for scoring purposes. The response (strongly disagree or strongly agree) which was considered to be the more positive response is underlined in this copy of the scale. After the items were recoded, an overall mean attitude score was computed. This score resulted in attitude measurements ranging from a low of 2.15 to a high of 4.73. The overall mean for the total group was 3.89 (standard deviation = .51). The response category within which the majority of respondents fell was the 3.51 to 4.50 category (n = 120 or 70.6%) (see Table 14).
Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter.</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female.</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for the adolescent mother to continue her education.</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for the adolescent father to continue his education.</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would encourage my pregnant niece to continue school.</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I admire a girl who continues school when she becomes pregnant.</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing economic resources in programs for pregnant teens and school-age parents should be a high priority for our school system in upcoming years.</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Especially in the area of their intimate sexual relationships, most of today’s pregnant student parents are examples of teenagers who lack moral ethics.</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In having to teach pregnant students, today’s teachers are asked to deal with social problems that properly should be dealt with outside of the educational system.</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The majority of pregnant students and school-age parents are academically low.</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table con’d.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Response Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can accept teenage girls who are sexually active if they use contraceptives.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think having pregnant girls remain in school will have a bad effect on the other students.</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interests of average, well-behaved students today are being sacrificed to the special needs of pregnant students and school-age parents.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that an adolescent father should not be stigmatized for his deed.</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An influx of pregnant students in the school will only increase the incidence of premarital sex there.</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a girl gets herself pregnant, I feel she deserves to pay for her mistake.</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant girls deserve the negative stigma attached to being in their situation.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School is no place for expectant mothers.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent fathers are too often victims of scheming girls who want to trap them with a pregnancy.</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that federally funded programs for pregnant adolescents are a waste of money.</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel disgust toward adolescent expectant fathers.</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel disgust toward pregnant adolescents.</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having pregnant teenagers in my class.</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table con'd.)
Pregnant girls should be required to quit school. 4.36 1.09 D
Sexually active teenage girls deserve becoming pregnant, in my opinion. 4.46 .82 D
As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class. 4.51 .78 SD

aMean values based on the response scale 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=undecided, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

bResponse categories based on the following scale established by the researcher: SA-Strongly Agree = <1.50, A-Agree = 1.5 to 2.49, U-Undecided = 2.5 to 3.5, D-Disagree = 3.51 to 4.5, and SD-Strongly Disagree = >4.50.

Table 14
Overall Mean Attitude Scores Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Attitude Scoresa</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50-2.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50-3.50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.51-4.50</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;4.50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean scores for respondents attitudes ranged from 2.15 to 4.73 with a mean of 3.89 and standard deviation of .51.

aHigher scores indicate more positive attitudes toward pregnant teens.
In addition to the overall attitude scores, these data were summarized into two subscores which related to specific attitudes toward males and females. One subscale included 15 items pertaining to attitudes toward female adolescent parents while the second subscale included 7 items that dealt specifically with attitudes concerning male adolescent parents. A copy of the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale is presented in Appendix G which includes an "F" by each item relating to females and an "M" by each item applying to males. The mean score for female items was 3.91 (standard deviation = .60) while the mean score for male items was 4.20 (standard deviation = .42). The individual male and female responses were examined in the same response categories as used for the overall attitude scores. The response categories within which the majority of teachers' scores fell (see Table 15) for both male and female subscales was 3.51 to 4.50 (n = 99 or 58.2% for female items, and n = 106 or 62.4% for male items).

Knowledge Regarding Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

The third objective of the study was to determine the level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory. Respondents were asked to answer 25 questions designed to measure their knowledge of adolescent pregnancy/parenting. Data regarding the total number of respondents who answered each question correctly are presented in Table 16. The item that was answered correctly false by the greatest number of teachers was: "Although their educations are less than their classmates", adolescent fathers and mothers do manage to acquire jobs
of equal prestige." A total of 159 teachers (93.5%) answered this item correctly. Thirteen of the 25 items were answered correctly by more than 70% of the respondents. In addition, the item which was answered correctly false by the smallest number of teachers was "In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are not mothers." This item and three others were answered correctly by fewer than 50% of the respondents (see Table 16).

Table 15

Male and Female Subscale Attitude Scores of Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Attitude Scores</th>
<th>Male frequency</th>
<th>Male percent</th>
<th>Female frequency</th>
<th>Female percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.51-2.49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50-3.50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.51-4.50</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;4.50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Higher values represent more positive attitudes. The mean for male items was 4.20 (standard deviation = .42) while the mean score for female items was 3.98 (standard deviation = .60).
Table 16

Knowledge Items of Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Reported by Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cor</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Although their educations are less than their classmates', adolescent fathers and mothers do manage to acquire jobs of equal prestige.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrary to popular belief, pregnancy among very young teenagers does not deplete nutritional reserves needed for their own growth.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits schools which receive federal funds from excluding a student because she is pregnant or because of any pregnancy-related condition.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The age of a woman at first birth has no influence on the likelihood that her family will be in poverty.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The death rate from complications of pregnancy, birth, and delivery is more than 50% higher for women who become pregnant before they are fifteen.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research has shown that early childbearing is a direct cause of discontinued school, independent of other influences.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In today’s sexually open society, teenagers are well-informed on the physiology of reproduction and the effectiveness of contraception.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although a teenager most likely does not plan her first baby, research has shown that her experience has taught her to plan subsequent pregnancies.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babies born to adolescent mothers are more likely to die before their first birthday than those born to older mothers.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table con’d.)
The greatest medical problem for babies born to teenage mothers is low birth weight.

Completion of high school is about the same rate for men whose wives were pregnant before marriage as for men whose wives were not.

Pregnancy is the reason most often cited by female teenage dropouts for school discontinuation.

Although starting earlier at childbearing, in the long run adolescents have about the same number of children as women having babies later in life.

Because of increased numbers of clinics available to teens today, the majority of teenagers 15 and under do get prenatal care through the first trimester of pregnancy.

Babies born to teenagers are no more likely to be born prematurely and of low birth weight than babies born to mothers in their twenties.

The age at which a woman bears her first child has no relationship to the number of children she is likely to have.

Statistics show that approximately 10% of all U.S. teenage girls become pregnant.

Teen mothers are no more likely to be unemployed or be on welfare than mothers who give birth in their twenties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cor²</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The greatest medical problem for babies born to teenage mothers is low birth weight.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of high school is about the same rate for men whose wives were pregnant before marriage as for men whose wives were not.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy is the reason most often cited by female teenage dropouts for school discontinuation.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although starting earlier at childbearing, in the long run adolescents have about the same number of children as women having babies later in life.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of increased numbers of clinics available to teens today, the majority of teenagers 15 and under do get prenatal care through the first trimester of pregnancy.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babies born to teenagers are no more likely to be born prematurely and of low birth weight than babies born to mothers in their twenties.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The age at which a woman bears her first child has no relationship to the number of children she is likely to have.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics show that approximately 10% of all U.S. teenage girls become pregnant.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen mothers are no more likely to be unemployed or be on welfare than mothers who give birth in their twenties.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table con’d.)
The decision to exclude teenagers who are mothers or who are married or pregnant from public school is now left up to local school districts.

Studies have revealed that adolescent mothers who drop out of school are more likely to do so because of lack of interest in continuing their education than because of the burden of child care.

The girl who remains in school is just as likely to become pregnant again as the one who drops out.

Difference in education, income, and job prestige between adolescent parents and their classmates are just as pronounced among the young fathers as among the young mothers.

At one year after high school graduation, fewer males who are adolescent fathers are likely to have jobs than their classmates.

In comparison to their classmates, both adolescent mothers and fathers have substantially less education than their classmates.

In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are not mothers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cora</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The decision to exclude teenagers who are mothers or who are married or pregnant from public school is now left up to local school districts.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>62.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies have revealed that adolescent mothers who drop out of school are more likely to do so because of lack of interest in continuing their education than because of the burden of child care.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The girl who remains in school is just as likely to become pregnant again as the one who drops out.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference in education, income, and job prestige between adolescent parents and their classmates are just as pronounced among the young fathers as among the young mothers.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At one year after high school graduation, fewer males who are adolescent fathers are likely to have jobs than their classmates.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In comparison to their classmates, both adolescent mothers and fathers have substantially less education than their classmates.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are not mothers.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aCorrect response to the knowledge items.
bFrequency identified is number of respondents that answered the item correctly.

To further summarize these data, a knowledge score was calculated for each respondent as the total number of items answered correctly. A copy of the knowledge
items is provided in Appendix H which identifies the correct response (underlined) for each of the 25 knowledge items. The scores ranged from a low of 7 to a high of 25 (the maximum possible score). The mean knowledge score for the participating teachers was 17.57 (standard deviation = 3.64). When knowledge scores were examined by category of number of correct items the category with the highest number of teachers (n = 74 or 43.6%) was the group containing 15 to 19 correct responses. Only one teacher answered all 25 knowledge items correctly (see Table 17).

Table 17

Overall Knowledge Scores Regarding Teen Pregnancy and Parenting of Louisiana Home Economics Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Scorea</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Knowledge scores for respondents ranged from 7 to 25 correct items with a mean of 17.57 and standard deviation of 3.64.

aA knowledge score was calculated for each respondent as the total number of items answered correctly.
Open-Mindedness

The fourth objective was to determine the open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. Participants in the study were asked to respond to the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale which consists of 50 personal opinion items regarding the respondents’ level of agreement or disagreement. Respondents were asked to mark each statement according to how much they agreed or disagreed with it. The responses ranged from -3 to +3 with 0 being excluded in order to force responses toward agreement or disagreement. For scoring purposes, the scale was then converted to a +1 to +7 scale by adding a constant of 4 to each item score (Rokeach, 1960). The total possible summated score ranged from 50 to 350 for each respondent, with lower scores indicating a higher degree of open-mindedness and higher scores indicating a higher degree of dogmatism (see Table 18). The range of scores for the respondents in this study was from 101 to 295. The overall mean for Louisiana home economics teachers participating in this study was computed to be 188.62 (standard deviation = 38.15). To aid in the interpretation of scores derived from the Dogmatism Scale, the researcher established five response categories corresponding to the possible responses on the instrument items. If respondents strongly disagreed with all of the items on the instrument, their total score would be 50, and if they disagreed with all of the items on the instrument, their total score would be 100, etc. Also, lower scores on the instrument are an indication of higher levels of open-mindedness whereas higher scores are an indication of higher levels of dogmatism. Therefore, the following interpretive categories were established by the researcher: 50
to 75 = high open-mindedness; 76 to 125 = moderate open-mindedness; 126 to 200 = slight open-mindedness; 201 to 275 = slight dogmatism; 276 to 325 = moderate dogmatism; and 326 to 350 = high dogmatism. The majority (102 or 60.0%) of teachers’ scores fell within the 126 to 200 category, indicating slight open-mindedness. In addition, approximately a third (57 or 33.5%) of the teachers’ responses fell in the 201 to 275 range, indicating slight dogmatism. None of the teachers in this study scored below 75 (indicating high open-mindedness) or above 326 (indicating high dogmatism).

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rokeach Dogmatism Score(^a)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-75 (high open-mindedness)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-125 (moderate open-mindedness)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126-200 (slight open-mindedness)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-275 (slight dogmatism)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>276-325 (moderate dogmatism)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326-350 (high dogmatism)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 170 100.0

Note. Rokeach Dogmatism Scores ranged from 101 to 295 with a mean of 188.62 and standard deviation of 38.15.
Exploratory Model Explaining Attitude

Objective five was to determine if a model existed which explained a significant portion of the variance in Louisiana home economics teachers' attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting from the following measures: open-mindedness, knowledge of adolescent pregnancy and parenting, size of school, size of community, presence of teen pregnancy or parenting program in the school, ethnic group, age, years of teaching experience, marital status, education level, number of pregnant adolescents taught in the last three years, presence of minor and/or adult children in the home, percent of males in the home economics program, size of community in which the teacher grew up, and number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy.

This objective was accomplished using multiple regression analysis with attitude of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenthood as the dependent variable. The other variables were treated as independent variables and stepwise entry of the variables was used because of the exploratory nature of this part of the study. In this regression equation variables were added that increased the explained variance by one percent or more as long as the regression equation remained significant.

In analyzing the data, two variables were constructed from the data collected. For the variable, marital status, "dummy coding" was used to construct four "yes or no" variables. Variables created were whether or not respondents were single, whether or not respondents were married, whether or not respondents were divorced, and
whether or not the respondents were widowed. In each instance, yes was coded as "1" and no was coded as "0".

Dummy coding also was used for the variable, ethnic group, with two "yes or no" variables being constructed. The variables created were whether or not respondents were white, and whether or not respondents were black. Only one respondent reported an ethnic background other than black or white and did not specify what the background was. This response was excluded from the analysis for this variable.

For descriptive purposes, two-way correlations between factors used as independent variables in the regression and teachers' overall attitude scores are presented in Table 19.

Table 20 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis. The variable which entered the regression model first was dogmatism or open-mindedness of Louisiana home economics teachers. Considered alone, this variable explained 15.3% of the variance in attitudes of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

Five additional variables explained an additional 11.1% of the variance in the attitudes of teachers model. These variables were the following: number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years, number of in-service programs attended regarding adolescent pregnancy, age, whether or not the respondent was married, and whether or not the respondent was widowed. These six variables explained a total of 26.4% of the variance in attitudes of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting (see Table 20).
Table 19

Relationship Between Selected Teacher and Program Characteristics and Overall Attitude Toward Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogmatism/open-mindedness</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether or not widowed</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of pregnant teens taught</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of teaching experience</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge b</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age c</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community teacher d</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service e</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult children f</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program g</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent male h</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children h</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School size</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor children j</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School community k</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Number of pregnant teens taught in last 3 years
b Knowledge of teen pregnancy and parenting
c Age of respondent on last birthday
d Size of community in which teacher grew up
e Number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy and parenting
f Adult children in teachers’ home
g Schools offering teen parenting program
h Percent male students in home economics program
i No children in teachers’ home
j Minor children in teachers’ home
k Size of community where school is located
Table 20

Multiple Regression Analysis of Louisiana Home Economics Teachers' Attitude Toward Teen Pregnancy and Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Ms</th>
<th>F-ratio</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
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Variables in the Equation

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Variables not in the Equation

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<td>Percent male</td>
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(table con'd.)
Variables  & t & Sign t \\
--- & --- & --- \\
No children\(^{h}\) & .020 & .984 \\
Education & .567 & .571 \\
Divorced & .542 & .589 \\
Community teachers\(^{i}\) & -.786 & .433 \\
Minor children\(^{l}\) & -.113 & .910 \\
Adult children\(^{k}\) & .516 & .606 \\

\(^{a}\)Number of pregnant teens taught in last 3 years  
\(^{b}\)Number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy and parenting  
\(^{c}\)Age of respondent on last birthday  
\(^{d}\)Knowledge of teen pregnancy and parenting  
\(^{e}\)Size of community where school is located  
\(^{f}\)Schools offering teen parenting program  
\(^{g}\)Percent male students in home economics program  
\(^{h}\)No children in teachers’ home  
\(^{i}\)Size of community in which teacher grew up  
\(^{j}\)Minor children in teachers’ home  
\(^{k}\)Adult children in teachers’ home  

**Relationship between Knowledge and Attitude**

The sixth objective of the study was stated as a research hypothesis as follows: A positive relationship exists between knowledge of adolescent pregnancy of Louisiana home economics teachers, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory, and their attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to measure this relationship. The calculated coefficient was \(r = .14\) (\(p\) one-tail = .034). For interpretation of correlation coefficients, Davis’ proposed set of descriptors was used (Davis, 1971). The coefficients and their descriptions are as follows:
Based on Davis' descriptors, there was a low positive association between knowledge of home economics teachers regarding teen pregnancy and parenting and their attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting. Results indicated that the more knowledgeable respondents were regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting issues, the more positive their attitude. Therefore the research hypothesis was supported by the data in this study.

**Relationship between Open-Mindedness and Attitude**

The seventh objective of the study was stated in the form of the following research hypothesis: A positive relationship exists between open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measure by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was use to measure this relationship. The results indicated a coefficient of $r = -.39$ (p one-tail < .001). Based on Davis' descriptors, this is described as a moderate negative association. It should be noted that lower scores on the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale indicate a higher degree of open-mindedness while higher scores on the Adolescent

<table>
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<td>.70 or higher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 to .69</td>
<td>substantial association</td>
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<tr>
<td>.30 to .49</td>
<td>moderate association</td>
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<tr>
<td>.10 to .29</td>
<td>low association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.01 to .09</td>
<td>negligible association</td>
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Based on Davis' descriptors, there was a low positive association between knowledge of home economics teachers regarding teen pregnancy and parenting and their attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting. Results indicated that the more knowledgeable respondents were regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting issues, the more positive their attitude. Therefore the research hypothesis was supported by the data in this study.

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Parents Attitude Scale indicate more positive attitudes. These findings indicate that teachers with higher levels of open-mindedness tended to have a more positive attitude toward pregnant adolescents. Therefore the hypothesis was supported by the data in this study.
CHAPTER 5
Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the influence of knowledge of teenage pregnancy/parenting, open-mindedness, and selected personal and school demographics on the attitudes of secondary school home economics teachers toward teenage pregnancy and parenting.

Specific objectives formulated to guide the researcher included to:

1. describe home economics teachers in Louisiana on selected personal and school demographic characteristics;
2. determine the attitudes toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale;
3. determine the level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory;
4. determine the open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale;
5. determine if a model exists which explains a significant portion of the variance in Louisiana home economics teachers’ attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting from the following measures:
   1) open-mindedness, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale;
2) knowledge of adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory

3) selected school and community characteristics including: size of school, size of community, whether or not the school offers a teen pregnancy/parenting program, presence of teen pregnancy or parenting program in the school, percent of males in the home economics program, and number of pregnant adolescents taught in the last three years.

4) selected personal characteristics of teachers including: ethnic group, age, years of teaching experience, marital status, education level, size of community in which teacher grew up, presence of minor and/or adult children in the home, and number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy/parenting.

Based on previous research findings, objectives six and seven were written in the form of research hypotheses as follows:

6. A positive relationship exists between knowledge of adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale;

7. A positive relationship exists between open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale.
Methodology

The target population for this study was defined as secondary school home economics teachers employed in Louisiana during the 1993-94 school year. The minimum sample size needed was determined to be 144 using Cochran’s sample size formula. A simple random sample of 200 teachers was selected from the defined population.

The instrument used in this study consisted of four parts. The first part of the instrument consisted of the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale which was used to measure the respondents’ attitudes toward pregnant adolescents and school-age parents. The second part of the instrument was the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. This instrument was used to determine the degree of open-mindedness of the respondents. The third part of the instrument consisted of the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory which was utilized to determine the respondents’ level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy. Finally, the fourth part of the instrument was a demographic survey aimed at describing the respondents on selected personal and professional demographic characteristics as well as selected characteristics of the community and school.

Data were collected for this study by mailed questionnaire. In the initial mailing each member of the sample received a cover letter, a copy of the instrument, a self-addressed stamped envelope and a one dollar bill as an incentive to respond. Following the first mailing, two refusals were identified and replaced bringing the total number of instruments mailed to 202.
Follow-up procedures utilized included a second and third mailing to all non-respondents. After the third mailing, each remaining non-respondent was contacted by telephone to encourage their participation in the study. During this process the researcher identified 25 frame errors which reduced the total sample size to 177. After the three mailings and telephone contacts, the researcher received a total of 170 useable instruments for a 96% useable return rate.

Findings

The first objective of the study was to describe home economics teachers in Louisiana on selected personal and school demographic characteristics. It was determined that a large proportion of teachers responding were white (77.2%) and married (71.2%). The respondents reported an average of 16.32 years of teaching experience and an average age of 43.93 years. More than three-fourths (75.9%) of the respondents had attended at least one in-service program regarding teen pregnancy/parenting.

Regarding school demographic information, respondents were asked to indicate the state athletic school size classification for their school. Half of the teachers reported the schools in which they taught were in the largest school categories (AAAAA - 21.0% and AAAA - 29.0%). The respondents reported the average number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years to be 14.11. In addition, the majority of teachers (51.5%) reported that their school did offer a teen pregnancy or parenting program. Home economics teachers in this study also indicated that they perceived the highest level of administrative support for teen pregnancy programs to be from the
principal (mean = 3.59) and the lowest administrative support to be from the local school board (mean = 3.13).

The second objective was to determine the attitudes of home economics teachers in Louisiana toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. Teachers strongly agreed with the statements: "I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter" (mean = 1.13) and "The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female" (mean = 1.19). The only item with which respondents strongly disagreed was, "As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class" (mean = 4.51). An overall mean attitude score was computed as the mean of the 26 items in the scale. Since some of the items were designed as reverse scale items, these items were recoded so that for all items the higher value represented the more positive attitude. After the items were recoded, an overall mean attitude score was computed. Overall mean score for respondents attitudes ranged from 2.15 to 4.73 with a mean of 3.89.

The third objective of the study was to determine the level of knowledge regarding adolescent pregnancy and parenting of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory. The item that was answered correctly false by the greatest number of teachers (93.5%) was: "Although their educations are less than their classmates, adolescent fathers and mothers do manage to acquire jobs of equal prestige." The item which was answered correctly false by the fewest number of teachers was "In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are
not mothers." To further summarize the data, a knowledge score was calculated for each respondent as the total number of items answered correctly. The knowledge scores ranged from 7 correct responses to a high of 25 (the maximum possible) correct responses. The mean knowledge score for participating teachers was 17.57.

Objective four was to determine the open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. The total possible summated score for this instrument ranged from 50 to 350 with lower scores indicating a higher degree of open-mindedness and higher score indicating a higher degree of dogmatism. Teachers' scores on the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale ranged from 101 to 295 with a mean of 188.62. An interpretive scale developed by the researcher was utilized to summarize the findings. The results of this scale revealed the category within which the majority (102 or 60.0%) of teachers' scores fell was 126 to 200, indicating slight open-mindedness.

Objective five was to determine if a model existed which explains a significant portion of the variance in Louisiana home economics teachers' attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting from the following measures: open-mindedness, knowledge of adolescent pregnancy and parenting, size of school, size of community, presence of teen pregnancy or parenting program in the school, ethnic group, age, years of teaching experience, marital status, education level, number of pregnant adolescents taught in the last three years, presence of minor and/or adult children in the home, percent of males in the home economics program, size of community in which the teacher grew up, and number of in-service programs attended on teen pregnancy. This
objective was accomplished using multiple regression analysis with stepwise entry of the variables.

The variable which entered the regression model first was degree of open-mindedness or dogmatism of Louisiana home economics teachers. Considered alone, this variable explained 15.3% of the variance in attitudes of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting. Five additional variables explained an additional 11.1% of the variance in the attitudes of teachers. These variables were the following: number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years, number of in-service programs attended regarding adolescent pregnancy, age, whether or not the respondent was married, and whether or not the respondent was widowed. These six variables explained a total of 26.4% of the variance in attitudes of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

The sixth objective of the study was stated as a research hypothesis as follows: A positive relationship exists between knowledge of adolescent pregnancy of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measured by the Adolescent Parenthood Knowledge Inventory, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. The correlation between knowledge and attitude was found to be $r = .14$ ($p$ one-tail = .034). These findings reveal a significant positive relationship, indicating the more knowledge respondents had regarding the pregnancy issues the more positive their attitude was toward pregnant adolescents. These data support the research hypothesis in this study.
The seventh objective of the study was stated in the form of the following research hypothesis: A positive relationship exists between open-mindedness of home economics teachers in Louisiana, as measure by the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, and attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting, as measured by the Adolescent Parents Attitude Scale. The correlation between open-mindedness and attitude was found to be $r = -.39$ ($p$ one-tail < .001). These findings reveal a significant positive relationship, indicating teachers with higher levels of open-mindedness tended to have a more positive attitude toward pregnant adolescents. These findings support the research hypothesis in this study.

**Conclusions and Implications**

The following conclusions and implications were derived from the findings of the study:

1. Home economics teachers in Louisiana have a large amount of teaching experience.

   This conclusion is based on the finding that 53.8% of the teachers reported over 15 years of teaching experience, and the average years of teaching experience was reported to be 16.32.

2. There is a high level of male student enrollment in home economics programs.

   This conclusion is based on the finding that 50.9% of the teachers reported that from 26 to 50% of students enrolled in their home economics programs were male and an additional 7.8% of these teachers reported from 51 to 75% male students in their program.
3. A large proportion of schools are not offering programs for teen pregnancy and parenting.

This conclusion is based on the finding that almost half (48.5%) of the teachers reported their school does not offer a teen pregnancy or parenting program.

4. Louisiana home economics teachers perceived a moderate level of support for teen pregnancy/parenting programs from their administration.

This conclusion is based on the finding that indicated the highest perceived administrative support for a teen pregnancy/parenting program to be from the principal with a mean score of 3.59. In addition, the perceived support by these teachers from the superintendent was reported to be slightly lower with a mean of 3.44. The lowest perceived support by these teachers was from their local school board with a mean of 3.13. All three of these means were in the response area on the 1 to 5 scale that the researcher would interpret as moderate support.

5. Louisiana home economics teachers teach a large number of pregnant teenagers.

This is based on the finding that the average number of pregnant teens taught by these teachers in the last three years was reported to be 14.11.

6. Home economics teachers in Louisiana have positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents.

This is based on the finding that Louisiana home economics teachers' overall mean attitude score was reported to be 3.89, on the 5 point scale, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward pregnant teens. In addition, 78.8% of the teachers had overall attitude scores greater than 3.50.
This is consistent with the findings of Jensen (1986) and St. Pierre (1980) who reported positive attitudes of home economics teachers and vocational educators toward pregnant teens.

7. There is room for improvement in the knowledge level of home economics teachers regarding teen pregnancy and parenting information.

This conclusion is based on the finding that the mean number of items answered correctly on the knowledge instrument by teachers in the study was 17.57 (of 25 possible). This represents only a 70 percent correct score on the knowledge items.

8. The majority of home economics teachers in Louisiana are slightly open-minded.

This is based on the finding that 60.0% of the teachers scored between 126 and 200 on the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale with an overall mean of 188.62.

This is consistent with the findings of Jensen (1986) and St. Pierre (1980). The mean scores reported by Jensen (1986) from schools with GRADS programs was 175.28 while the mean score from schools without a structured program was 176.69. St. Pierre (1980) reported a mean of 179.89 for vocational educators.

9. A model was found which explains a significant portion of the variance in home economics teachers' attitude toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

This is based on the finding that six variables (dogmatism, number of pregnant teens taught in the last three years, number of in-service programs attended regarding adolescent pregnancy, age, whether or not teacher was married, whether or not teacher was widowed) explained a total of 26.4% of the variance in the attitude of Louisiana home economics teachers toward adolescent pregnancy and parenting.
10. The more knowledge teachers have regarding teen pregnancy issues the more positive the teachers attitudes are toward pregnant adolescents.

This is based on the finding that the correlation between knowledge of teen pregnancy and attitudes toward pregnant adolescents was found to be $r = .14$, indicating a significant positive relationship.

This is consistent with the findings of Jensen (1986) and St. Pierre (1980) who examined attitudes of home economics teachers (Jensen) and vocational educators (St. Pierre) toward adolescent parents and found that those who had a higher knowledge of the problem tended to hold more positive attitudes.

An implication of this conclusion is that pre-service programs for prospective home economics teachers include content specifically addressing information on teenage pregnancy and parenting.

11. Home economics teachers with higher levels of open-mindedness tend to have more positive attitudes toward pregnant adolescents.

This is based on the finding that the correlation between open-mindedness and attitudes toward pregnant adolescents was found to be $r = -.39$, indicating a significant positive relationship.

These findings corroborate the findings of Jensen (1986) and St. Pierre (1980) who examined attitudes of home economics teachers (Jensen) and vocational educators (St. Pierre) toward adolescent parents and found that those who were more open-minded tended to hold more positive attitudes toward adolescent parents. In addition, Kremer, et al. (1986) found significant effects related to dogmatism in teacher education.
practices and suggested that findings be utilized in student selection decisions for students entering teacher education programs. An implication of this conclusion is that when teachers are being selected to work with pregnant teens, that consideration be given to identifying individuals with higher levels of open-mindedness.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were derived from the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. A conclusion of this study was that home economics teachers in Louisiana have a large amount of teaching experience (mean years of teaching experience 16.32). Since the retirement eligibility in Louisiana is 20 years, the researcher recommends that further research be conducted to determine the number of students presently enrolled in home economics teacher education programs that would be available to fill vacancies in the next 4 to 6 years.

2. Based on the conclusion that there is a high level of male student enrollment in home economics programs and since home economics traditionally has been a female oriented program and these levels of male enrollment represent a substantial proportion of the enrollment, the researcher recommends that further research be conducted on the population of teachers with higher levels of male enrollments. This research should be designed to identify recruitment strategies the teachers used to interest non-traditional students in their program. It is further recommended that after survey results are summarized, this information
be shared with other home economics teachers as well as vocational teachers in other content areas.

3. Based on the conclusion that a large proportion of schools are not offering programs for teen pregnancy and parenting and given the extent of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana the researcher recommends that all schools in Louisiana initiate programs designed specifically to meet the needs of pregnant teens, and that educational programs be initiated as preventative measures to reduce the cyclic consequences of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana. Considering that several successful teen pregnancy and parenting programs are available throughout the United States, the researcher further recommends that several of the available teen pregnancy and parenting programs be established as pilot programs in Louisiana with the purpose of conducting further research to compare their effectiveness to aid in selecting the most appropriate program to recommend for statewide adoption.

4. Based on the conclusion that Louisiana home economics teachers perceived a moderate level of support for teen pregnancy/parenting programs from their administration, the researcher recommends that further research be conducted to determine the impact of administrative support on the establishment and success of teen pregnancy and parenting programs.

5. Based on the conclusion that Louisiana home economics teachers teach a large number of pregnant teenagers, the researcher recommends that further research
be conducted to determine the effectiveness of home economics classes on the retention rate of pregnant teens enrolled in these classes.

6. Based on the conclusion that there is room for improvement in the knowledge level of home economics teachers regarding teen pregnancy and parenting information, the researcher recommends that the State Department of Education initiate a statewide in-service program for home economics teachers on teen pregnancy and parenting. In addition, teachers from this study with higher levels of knowledge and more positive attitudes could be identified and contacted to serve as resource persons for these programs.

7. Based on the conclusion that the more knowledge teachers have regarding teen pregnancy issues the more positive the teachers attitudes are toward pregnant adolescents, the researcher recommends that the Louisiana State Department of Education establish a requirement of at least one course in teen pregnancy and parenting to issue a teaching certificate for home economics teachers.

8. Finally the researcher recommends that the home economics program in Louisiana place a much greater emphasis on the role it can play in addressing the overall problem of teen pregnancy/parenting.

The initial basis for this recommendation is derived from the magnitude of the problem of teen pregnancy in Louisiana as well as the large proportion of Louisiana schools that are not offering teen pregnancy/parenting programs. The problems and consequences of teen pregnancy have been described in the literature as pervasive, epidemic, life changing, irrevocable and enormously costly to the communities in which
these young mothers live (Hong & Wellen, 1993; Vance, 1985; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1990; Hardy & Zabin, 1991; Kelly, 1988; Louisiana State Department of Education, 1987; Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1981; Plotnick, 1992). In addition, the findings of this study revealed almost half (48.5%) of the teachers reported their school did not offer a teen pregnancy/parenting program.

This recommendation is further derived from the findings and conclusions of this study regarding the appropriateness of home economics teachers addressing the teen pregnancy problem. These findings include the open-mindedness of Louisiana home economics teachers, the positive attitudes these teachers possess and the level of knowledge already attained by home economics teachers. This is consistent with the findings of Jensen (1986), St. Pierre (1980), Tucker (1980), and Zellman (1981) who reported that within the school the teacher’s attitude and willingness to accept pregnant teens will greatly affect the school’s retention rate of pregnant teens and the success of any teen pregnancy/parenting program the school may initiate.

In addition, the researcher recommends that the Louisiana State Department of Education, Office of Vocational Education, Bureau of Secondary Vocational Education–Home Economics revise degree requirements and curriculum guides in home economics to place specific emphasis on teen pregnancy/parenting issues including the magnitude of the problem and the importance of open-mindedness and level of knowledge regarding attitudes toward pregnant teens. Finally, it is recommended that several pilot programs be initiated in home economics programs throughout the state designed to
address prevention of teen pregnancy, pregnancy problems, and parenting problems and issues.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: INSTRUMENT

Part I. PERSONAL OPINION

The following is a study of what the general public thinks and feels about a number of important social and personal questions. The best answer to each statement below is your personal opinion. The authors have tried to cover many different and opposing points of view; you may find yourself agreeing strongly with some, disagreeing just as strongly with others, and perhaps uncertain about some. Whether you agree or disagree with any statement, you can be sure that many people feel the same as you do.

Mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Write -1, -2, -3, or +1, +2, or +3 depending on how you feel in each case.

-1: I DISAGREE A LITTLE
-2: I DISAGREE ON THE WHOLE
-3: I DISAGREE VERY MUCH
+1: I AGREE A LITTLE
+2: I AGREE ON THE WHOLE
+3: I AGREE VERY MUCH

1. While I don't like to admit this even to myself, my secret ambition is to become a great person, like Einstein, or Beethoven, or Shakespeare.

2. The United States and Russia have just about nothing in common.

3. It is better to be a dead hero than to be a live coward.

4. The highest form of government is a democracy and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are the most intelligent.

5. It is natural for people to be suspicious of those they do not know well.

6. In a discussion I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure that I am being understood.

7. Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.

8. In the long run, the best way to live is to pick friends and associates whose tastes and beliefs are the same as one's own.

9. In this complicated world of ours, the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.

10. If everyone minded his/her own business the world would be a better place in which to live.

11. Most of the ideas which get printed today aren't worth the paper they are printed on.

12. Once I get wound up in a heated discussion, I just don't stop.
12. Once I get wound up in a heated discussion, I just don't stop.

13. It is only natural that a person would have a much better acquaintance with ideas he/she believes in than with ideas he/she opposes.

14. The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.

15. It is irritating to have your plans changed at the last minute.

16. My blood boils whenever a person stubbornly refuses to admit he is wrong.

17. It is only natural for a person to be rather fearful of the future.

18. In times like these it is often necessary to be more on guard against ideas put out by people or groups in one's own camps than by those in the opposing camps.

19. A person who gets enthusiastic about too many causes is likely to be a pretty "wishy-washy" sort of person.

20. It is best to finish all your work before taking time for other activities.

21. In a heated discussion I generally become so absorbed in what I am going to say that I forget to listen to what the others are saying.

22. It is often desirable to reserve judgement about what's going on until one has had a chance to hear the opinions of those one respects.

23. When it comes to differences of opinion in religion, we must be careful not to compromise with those who believe differently from the way we do.

24. There are a number of people I have come to hate because of the things they stand for.

25. There is considerable evidence to support the idea that most people work best under pressure.

26. People on their own are helpless and miserable creatures.

27. There is so much to be done and so little time to do it.

28. If given the chance, I would do something of great benefit to the world.

29. In the history of mankind there have probably been just a handful of really great thinkers.

30. It seems reasonable to suppose that most things will turn out well in the end.

31. In times like these, a person must be pretty selfish if they consider primarily their own happiness.
32. I'd like it if I could find someone who would tell me how to solve my personal problems.

33. A person who thinks primarily of his own happiness is beneath contempt.

34. Most people just don't know what's good for them.

35. Most people expect more of others than they do of themselves.

36. The present is all too often full of unhappiness, therefore, it is only the future that counts.

37. Fundamentally, the world we live in is a pretty lonesome place.

38. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who are for the truth and those who are against the truth.

39. Unfortunately, a good many people with whom I have discussed important social and moral problems don't really understand what is going on.

40. In these days there seems to be too much emphasis on achievement.

41. If a man is to accomplish his mission in life it is sometimes necessary to gamble "all or nothing at all."

42. Most people just don't give a "damn" for others.

43. A person who does not believe in some great cause has not really lived.

44. A group which tolerates too many differences of opinion among its own members cannot exist too long.

45. The majority of people work most effectively when the responsibility is theirs alone.

46. It is only when people devote themselves to an ideal or a cause that life becomes more meaningful.

47. The worst crime a person could commit is to attack publicly the people who believe in the same thing he/she does.

48. Of all the different philosophies which exist in the world, there is probably only one which can be correct.

49. To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.

50. It is only natural that people will be successful if they put forth maximum effort.
**Part II. ATTITUDE SCALE**

The following is a scale of what individuals think and feel about issues relating to pregnant adolescents and adolescent expectant fathers. A pregnant adolescent is defined as a girl 19 or younger who is pregnant, regardless of her marital status. An adolescent expectant father is defined as a boy 19 or younger who is the expectant father of a pregnant adolescent’s unborn child. The best answer to each statement is your personal opinion. You may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others, and perhaps being undecided about some. Please answer all items honestly. Your answers will be kept anonymous. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please circle the letter or letters to the right of each item that best expresses your opinion about the statement in the item. **SA** means Strongly Agree; **A** means Agree; **U** means Undecided; **D** means Disagree; and **SD** means Strongly Disagree. Please mark one choice for each item.

1. Pregnant girls should be required to quit school.  
   SA A U D SD

2. I can accept teenage girls who are sexually active if they use contraceptives.  
   SA A U D SD

3. I feel that an adolescent father should not be stigmatized for his deed.  
   SA A U D SD

4. I think having pregnant girls remain in school will have a bad effect on the other students.  
   SA A U D SD

5. I feel that federally funded programs for pregnant adolescents are a waste of money.  
   SA A U D SD

6. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having pregnant teenagers in my class.  
   SA A U D SD

7. Sexually active teenage girls deserve becoming pregnant, in my opinion.  
   SA A U D SD

8. I would encourage my pregnant niece to continue school.  
   SA A U D SD

9. I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter.  
   SA A U D SD

10. I admire a girl who continues school when she becomes pregnant.  
    SA A U D SD

11. It is important for the adolescent father to continue his education.  
    SA A U D SD

12. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class.  
    SA A U D SD
13. Adolescent fathers are too often victims of scheming girls who want to trap them with a pregnancy.

14. If a girl gets herself pregnant, I feel she deserves to pay for her mistake.

15. An influx of pregnant students in the school will only increase the incidence of premarital sex there.

16. School is no place for expectant mothers.

17. I feel disgust toward adolescent expectant fathers.

18. The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female.

19. I feel disgust toward pregnant adolescents.

20. Pregnant girls deserve the negative stigma attached to being in their situation.

21. It is important for the adolescent mother to continue her education.

22. Especially in the area of their intimate sexual relationships, most of today's pregnant student parents are examples of teenagers who lack moral ethics.

23. The interests of average, well-behaved students today are being sacrificed to the special needs of pregnant students and school-age parents.

24. The majority of pregnant students and school-age parents are academically low.

25. In having to teach pregnant students, today's teachers are asked to deal with social problems that properly should be dealt with outside of the educational system.

26. Investing economic resources in programs for pregnant teens and school-age parents should be a high priority for our school system in upcoming years.
Part III. INFORMATION INVENTORY REGARDING TEEN PREGNANCY

The following items are true and false questions addressing facts and issues related to adolescent child-bearing. Please circle the answer T if you feel the statement is true, and F if you feel the statement is false. Your answers are totally anonymous. Again, do not write your name on this questionnaire. Please answer all the questions to the best of your ability.

T F 1. In comparison to their classmates, both adolescent mothers and fathers have substantially less education than their classmates.

T F 2. The decision to exclude teenagers who are mothers or who are married or pregnant from public school is now left up to local school districts.

T F 3. The girl who remains in school is just as likely to become pregnant again as the one who drops out.

T F 4. Pregnancy is the reason most often cited by female teenage dropouts for school discontinuation.

T F 5. Teen mothers are no more likely to be unemployed or be on welfare than mothers who give birth in their twenties.

T F 6. In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are not mothers.

T F 7. The age of a woman at first birth has no influence on the likelihood that her family will be in poverty.

T F 8. Babies born to adolescent mothers are more likely to die before their first birthday than those born to older mothers.

T F 9. Statistics show that approximately 10% of all U.S. teenage girls become pregnant.

T F 10. Completion of high school is about the same rate for men whose wives were pregnant before marriage as for men whose wives were not.

T F 11. The death rate from complications of pregnancy, birth, and delivery is more than 50% higher for women who become pregnant before they are fifteen.

T F 12. Because of increased numbers of clinics available to teens today, the majority of teenagers 15 and under do get prenatal care through the first trimester of pregnancy.

T F 13. Although their educations are less than their classmates', adolescent fathers and mothers do manage to acquire jobs of equal prestige.

T F 14. In today's sexually open society, teenagers are well-informed on the physiology of reproduction and the effectiveness of contraception.
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T  F  15. At one year after high school graduation, fewer males who are adolescent fathers are likely to have jobs than their classmates.

T  F  16. Contrary to popular belief, pregnancy among very young teenagers does not deplete nutritional reserves needed for their own growth.

T  F  17. Although a teenager most likely does not plan her first baby, research has shown that her experience has taught her to plan subsequent pregnancies.

T  F  18. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits schools which receive federal funds from excluding a student because she is pregnant or because of any pregnancy-related condition.

T  F  19. Babies born to teenagers are no more likely to be born prematurely and of low birth weight than babies born to mothers in their twenties.

T  F  20. The age at which a woman bears her first child has no relationship to the number of children she is likely to have.

T  F  21. Research has shown that early childbearing is a direct cause of discontinued school, independent of other influences.

T  F  22. Studies have revealed that adolescent mothers who drop out of school are more likely to do so because of lack of interest in continuing their education than because of the burden of child care.

T  F  23. The greatest medical problem for babies born to teenage mothers is low birth weight.

T  F  24. Difference in education, income, and job prestige between adolescent parents and their classmates are just as pronounced among the young fathers as among the young mothers.

T  F  25. Although starting earlier at childbearing, in the long run adolescents have about the same number of children as women having babies later in life.
Part IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions relating to you and the school in which you teach.

1. Years of teaching experience (including the current year): ______

2. Highest Level of Education:
   - Bachelor's degree
   - Bachelor’s degree plus 15 credits
   - Master's degree
   - Master's degree plus 30 credits
   - EdS (Educational Specialist)
   - Doctorate

3. Marital Status: Single___ Married___ Divorced___ Widowed___ Separated___

4. Age as of your last birthday: ______

5. Ethnic Group: White____ Black____ Hispanic____
   Other____ (Please Specify____________________)

6. Number of children living in your home in each of the following age groups:
   Under the age of 18____ 18 or over____ No children in the home____

7. Number of pregnant teens your have taught in the last 3 years: ______

8. Percent of male students you teach:
   0____ 1-25%____ 26-50%____ 51-75%____ 76-100%____

9. Number of in-service programs you have attended on teen pregnancy or parenting: ______

10. Size of the school in which you teach (Enrollment in grades 9-12):
    5A (over 1129)____ 4A (696-1128)____ 3A (410-695)____
    2A (225-410)____ 1A/B (93-224)____ 1A/C (92 and below)____

11. Size of the community where school is located:
    Urban____ Suburban____ Rural____

12. Size of the community where you grew up:
    Urban____ Suburban____ Rural____

13. Does your school currently offer a teen pregnancy or parenting program?
    Yes_______ No_______

14. To what degree do you perceive each of the following levels of administration supporting a parenting program or supporting the establishment of such a program: (1 = lowest support, 5 = highest support)
    Principal 1 2 3 4 5
    Superintendent 1 2 3 4 5
    School Board 1 2 3 4 5

15. Please state any additional special concerns or comments you may have regarding teen pregnancy.

____________________________________________________________________
April 13, 1994

1 ~

Dear Ms. 2 ~:

A major issue in America today is the problem of teen pregnancy and parenting. This problem is even more dramatic in Louisiana, which has the third highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation. Every Louisiana resident is affected by this problem, with Louisiana taxpayers spending over 3 million dollars last year to support families that were started by teenagers. Unfortunately, little information is available from those individuals who are, perhaps, in the best position to influence these pregnant teens: the home economics teachers throughout the state.

You are one of a select group of Louisiana home economics teachers who are being asked to share their opinions regarding several aspects of the teen pregnancy and parenting issue. The group that has been selected is relatively small, therefore, it is vital that we receive the needed information from every member of the group.

In responding to this questionnaire, you may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number which will be used for mailing purposes only. This number is solely for the purpose of identifying those who have not yet responded so that they can be mailed a follow-up questionnaire. Your name will never be placed on your completed questionnaire or associated in any way with your individual responses.

When this study is completed, the results will be distributed to the state officials and policy makers that have the greatest potential impact on this important issue in Louisiana today. Hopefully, by developing a better understanding of the problem, the study will have a positive impact on the teen pregnancy problem.

Please be aware that your time and effort in completing and returning this questionnaire is both crucial to the success of the study and sincerely appreciated. I know that there is no way for me to adequately compensate you for your time and dedication to the profession and to the youth of our state; however, please accept the enclosed dollar as a token of my gratitude. Again, thank you for your support of this important activity.

Sincerely,

Peggy C. Rolling, Instructor
Southeastern Louisiana University

Michael F. Burnett, Professor
Louisiana State University
APPENDIX C: POST CARD

May 2, 1994

Dear Ms. 2—:

Last week you should have received a questionnaire concerning aspects of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana. As of this date we have not received your response. The study is designed to provide some vital information in seeking solutions to this critical problem.

If you have already responded, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. The questionnaire was sent only to a small sample of home economics teachers, and therefore, it is crucial that we hear from every member of the sample. Please let us hear from you by May 6th.

Let us again assure that your answers will be held in the strictest confidence. If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or if it has been misplaced please let us know by calling at (504) 549-3696 during business hours or collect at (504) 345-3613 after hours.

Thank you again for your help in addressing this problem.

Sincerely,

Peggy C. Rolling, Instructor
Southeastern Louisiana University

Michael F. Burnett, Professor
Louisiana State University
May 13, 1994

1~

Dear Ms. 2~:

Approximately three weeks ago you should have received a questionnaire seeking your opinions on various aspects of the teen pregnancy problem in Louisiana. As of this date we have not received your completed questionnaire.

This study was initiated because of the alarming extent of teen pregnancy and its impact on the citizens and economy of the state. We hope that the results of the study will help in moving our state and nation toward a solution to this serious situation.

We are writing to you again because of the significance each questionnaire has to the usefulness of this study. Your name was drawn through a scientific sampling process in which every home economics teacher in the state had an equal chance of being selected. Since the study began with a small sample, it is essential that each person in the sample return their questionnaire in order for the results to be truly representative of the opinions of all home economics teachers.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. If you have already responded, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you again for your help in addressing this problem.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Peggy C. Rolling, Instructor
Southeastern Louisiana University

Michael F. Burnett, Professor
Louisiana State University
APPENDIX E: SCRIPT FOR TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP
OF NON-RESPONDENTS

Researcher: "Hello, I would like to speak to Ms. (name of non-respondent)."

"I'm calling for Mike Burnett and Peggy Rolling regarding the questionnaire on teen pregnancy that you should have received earlier this week. We wanted to make sure you received the questionnaire and to ask if you will be able to respond within the next few days?

Respondent: If answer is "No."

Researcher: "Thank you for your time. (Researcher marks as a refusal)"

Respondent: If answer is "Yes."

Researcher: "We appreciate very much your help and cooperation and look forward to receiving your response. (Researcher marks as willing to fill in questionnaire)"

If leaving a message: Peggy Rolling called regarding the questionnaire on teen pregnancy to ask if at all possible to please respond in the next few days. If they have any questions or problems please call collect at (XXX) XXX-XXXX. Thank you.
APPENDIX F: ATTITUDE SCALE WITH DIRECTION UNDERLINED

Part II. ATTITUDE SCALE

The following is a scale of what individuals think and feel about issues relating to pregnant adolescents and adolescent expectant fathers. A pregnant adolescent is defined as a girl 19 or younger who is pregnant, regardless of her marital status. An adolescent expectant father is defined as a boy 19 or younger who is the expectant father of a pregnant adolescent’s unborn child. The best answer to each statement is your personal opinion. You may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others, and perhaps being undecided about some. Please answer all items honestly. Your answers will be kept anonymous. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please circle the letter or letters to the right of each item that best expresses your opinion about the statement in the item. SA means Strongly Agree; A means Agree; U means Undecided; D means Disagree; and SD means Strongly Disagree. Please mark one choice for each item.

1. Pregnant girls should be required to quit school. SA A U D SD
2. I can accept teenage girls who are sexually active if they use contraceptives. SA A U D SD
3. I feel that an adolescent father should not be stigmatized for his deed. SA A U D SD
4. I think having pregnant girls remain in school will have a bad effect on the other students. SA A U D SD
5. I feel that federally funded programs for pregnant adolescents are a waste of money. SA A U D SD
6. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having pregnant teenagers in my class. SA A U D SD
7. Sexually active teenage girls deserve becoming pregnant, in my opinion. SA A U D SD
8. I would encourage my pregnant niece to continue school. SA A U D SD
9. I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter. SA A U D SD
10. I admire a girl who continues school when she becomes pregnant. SA A U D SD
11. It is important for the adolescent father to continue his education. SA A U D SD
12. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class. SA A U D SD
13. Adolescent fathers are too often victims of scheming girls who want to trap them with a pregnancy. SA A U D SD

14. If a girl gets herself pregnant, I feel she deserves to pay for her mistake. SA A U D SD

15. An influx of pregnant students in the school will only increase the incidence of premarital sex there. SA A U D SD

16. School is no place for expectant mothers. SA A U D SD

17. I feel disgust toward adolescent expectant fathers. SA A U D SD

18. The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female. SA A U D SD

19. I feel disgust toward pregnant adolescents. SA A U D SD

20. Pregnant girls deserve the negative stigma attached to being in their situation. SA A U D SD

21. It is important for the adolescent mother to continue her education. SA A U D SD

22. Especially in the area of their intimate sexual relationships, most of today’s pregnant student parents are examples of teenagers who lack moral ethics. SA A U D SD

23. The interests of average, well-behaved students today are being sacrificed to the special needs of pregnant students and school-age parents. SA A U D SD

24. The majority of pregnant students and school-age parents are academically low. SA A U D SD

25. In having to teach pregnant students, today’s teachers are asked to deal with social problems that properly should be dealt with outside of the educational system. SA A U D SD

26. Investing economic resources in programs for pregnant teens and school-age parents should be a high priority for our school system in upcoming years. SA A U D SD
APPENDIX G: ATTITUDE SCALE WITH F/M IDENTIFIED ON IT

Part II. ATTITUDE SCALE

The following is a scale of what individuals think and feel about issues relating to pregnant adolescents and adolescent expectant fathers. A pregnant adolescent is defined as a girl 19 or younger who is pregnant, regardless of her marital status. An adolescent expectant father is defined as a boy 19 or younger who is the expectant father of a pregnant adolescent’s unborn child. The best answer to each statement is your personal opinion. You may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others, and perhaps being undecided about some. Please answer all items honestly. Your answers will be kept anonymous. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please circle the letter or letters to the right of each item that best expresses your opinion about the statement in the item. SA means Strongly Agree; A means Agree; U means Undecided; D means Disagree; and SD means Strongly Disagree. Please mark one choice for each item.

F 1. Pregnant girls should be required to quit school. SA A U D SD
F 2. I can accept teenage girls who are sexually active if they use contraceptives. SA A U D SD
M 3. I feel that an adolescent father should not be stigmatized for his deed. SA A U D SD
F 4. I think having pregnant girls remain in school will have a bad effect on the other students. SA A U D SD
F 5. I feel that federally funded programs for pregnant adolescents are a waste of money. SA A U D SD
F 6. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having pregnant teenagers in my class. SA A U D SD
F 7. Sexually active teenage girls deserve becoming pregnant, in my opinion. SA A U D SD
F 8. I would encourage my pregnant niece to continue school. SA A U D SD
M 9. I would raise my son to feel as responsible for his sexual activities as my daughter. SA A U D SD
F 10. I admire a girl who continues school when she becomes pregnant. SA A U D SD
M 11. It is important for the adolescent father to continue his education. SA A U D SD
M 12. As a teacher I would feel uncomfortable having adolescent expectant fathers in my class. SA A U D SD
M 13. Adolescent fathers are too often victims of scheming girls who want to trap them with a pregnancy. SA A U D SD

F 14. If a girl gets herself pregnant, I feel she deserves to pay for her mistake. SA A U D SD

F 15. An influx of pregnant students in the school will only increase the incidence of premarital sex there. SA A U D SD

F 16. School is no place for expectant mothers. SA A U D SD

M 17. I feel disgust toward adolescent expectant fathers. SA A U D SD

M 18. The male should be equally responsible for contraception as the female. SA A U D SD

F 19. I feel disgust toward pregnant adolescents. SA A U D SD

F 20. Pregnant girls deserve the negative stigma attached to being in their situation. SA A U D SD

F 21. It is important for the adolescent mother to continue her education. SA A U D SD

22. Especially in the area of their intimate sexual relationships, most of today’s pregnant student parents are examples of teenagers who lack moral ethics. SA A U D SD

23. The interests of average, well-behaved students today are being sacrificed to the special needs of pregnant students and school-age parents. SA A U D SD

24. The majority of pregnant students and school-age parents are academically low. SA A U D SD

F 25. In having to teach pregnant students, today’s teachers are asked to deal with social problems that properly should be dealt with outside of the educational system. SA A U D SD

26. Investing economic resources in programs for pregnant teens and school-age parents should be a high priority for our school system in upcoming years. SA A U D SD
APPENDIX H: KNOWLEDGE ITEMS WITH CORRECT ANSWERS UNDERLINED

Part III. INFORMATION INVENTORY REGARDING TEEN PREGNANCY

The following items are true and false questions addressing facts and issues related to adolescent child-bearing. Please circle the answer T if you feel the statement is true, and F if you feel the statement is false. Your answers are totally anonymous. Again, do not write your name on this questionnaire. Please answer all the questions to the best of your ability.

T  F 1. In comparison to their classmates, both adolescent mothers and fathers have substantially less education than their classmates.

T  F 2. The decision to exclude teenagers who are mothers or who are married or pregnant from public school is now left up to local school districts.

T  F 3. The girl who remains in school is just as likely to become pregnant again as the one who drops out.

T  F 4. Pregnancy is the reason most often cited by female teenage dropouts for school discontinuation.

T  F 5. Teen mothers are no more likely to be unemployed or be on welfare than mothers who give birth in their twenties.

T  F 6. In spite of the added emotional stress, the incidence of suicide is no more frequent among teenage mothers than teenagers who are not mothers.

T  F 7. The age of a woman at first birth has no influence on the likelihood that her family will be in poverty.

T  F 8. Babies born to adolescent mothers are more likely to die before their first birthday than those born to older mothers.

T  F 9. Statistics show that approximately 10% of all U.S. teenage girls become pregnant.

T  F 10. Completion of high school is about the same rate for men whose wives were pregnant before marriage as for men whose wives were not.

T  F 11. The death rate from complications of pregnancy, birth, and delivery is more than 50% higher for women who become pregnant before they are fifteen.

T  F 12. Because of increased numbers of clinics available to teens today, the majority of teenagers 15 and under do get prenatal care through the first trimester of pregnancy.

T  F 13. Although their educations are less than their classmates', adolescent fathers and mothers do manage to acquire jobs of equal prestige.

T  F 14. In today's sexually open society, teenagers are well-informed on the physiology of reproduction and the effectiveness of contraception.

T  F 15. At one year after high school graduation, fewer males who are adolescent fathers are likely to have jobs than their classmates.
16. Contrary to popular belief, pregnancy among very young teenagers does not deplete nutritional reserves needed for their own growth.

17. Although a teenager most likely does not plan her first baby, research has shown that her experience has taught her to plan subsequent pregnancies.

18. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits schools which receive federal funds from excluding a student because she is pregnant or because of any pregnancy-related condition.

19. Babies born to teenagers are no more likely to be born prematurely and of low birth weight than babies born to mothers in their twenties.

20. The age at which a woman bears her first child has no relationship to the number of children she is likely to have.

21. Research has shown that early childbearing is a direct cause of discontinued school, independent of other influences.

22. Studies have revealed that adolescent mothers who drop out of school are more likely to do so because of lack of interest in continuing their education than because of the burden of child care.

23. The greatest medical problem for babies born to teenage mothers is low birth weight.

24. Difference in education, income, and job prestige between adolescent parents and their classmates are just as pronounced among the young fathers as among the young mothers.

25. Although starting earlier at childbearing, in the long run adolescents have about the same number of children as women having babies later in life.
VITA

Peggy Campbell Rolling was born in Hammond, Louisiana. She graduated from Hammond High School in 1972. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Dietetics from Southeastern Louisiana University in December, 1975. She graduated from Louisiana State University in May, 1978 with a Master of Science in Family Relations.

Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Campbell, Jr. of Hammond, Louisiana. She is married to J. Mark Rolling, and they live in Hammond where he is an attorney in private practice. They have three children, John Mark, Conrad and Caitlin.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Peggy C. Rolling

Major Field: Vocational Education

Title of Dissertation: The Influence of Open-Mindedness and Knowledge on Attitudes Toward Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Among Home Economics Teachers

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination: 9/2/94