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Young Adult Fertility and the Intendedness of Births

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Abstract

Context: Unintended births have adverse social psychological consequences for the well-being of the mother and the father, and these consequences may differ by gender.

Methods: Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth – Young Adult sample (children of the NLSY mothers) are used to profile the fertility patterns of a sample of young men and women. Logistic regression analyses examine the correlates of unintended fertility and whether unintended fertility is predictive of subsequent adverse consequences and whether there are differences in these consequences associated with gender.

Results: We find that factors associated with unintended family is similar for men and women. Unintended fertility is strongly associated with age, race, education, labor force status and parity. We also find that having an unintended birth has deleterious effects on self-efficacy and self-esteem, such that both are reduced following an unintended birth.

Conclusions: Focus on women in fertility research may hamper our understanding of the dynamics of fertility decisions, including partners' conflicting desires and intentions, and negotiation and resolution of these conflicts. Unresolved conflict between partners may be a major cause underlying unintended pregnancies.

Young Adult Fertility and the Intendedness of Births

Adolescent childbearing has been a social and public health problem for a very long time. While birth rates for women under 20 have been declining over the last fifty years, nonmarital birth rates and the ratio of nonmarital births to all births have steadily increased during the same period (Joyce et al. 2002; Ventura 1995). More significantly, these births are disproportionately unplanned and unwanted. In the United States, 45 percent of all pregnancies occur to unmarried women and 46 percent of these pregnancies end in abortion, and more than one-half of the resulting births are unintended (Henshaw 1998). The abortion rate in the U.S. represents one of the highest in western industrialized countries (Brown & Eisenberg 1995; Rodriguez & Moore 1995).

The processes that lead to a first birth outside of marriage remain concentrated in the teen years and early twenties (Wu, Bumpass, and Musick 2001) and two thirds of all births to 15-19 year old women and nearly 40 percent of all births to 20-24 year old women are unintended, including both unwanted as well as mistimed births (Henshaw 1998). Pregnancy and parenthood are challenging life events that are difficult to negotiate under the best of circumstances. However, when the potential parents are young, and when the pregnancy is unintended, the inherent challenges are exacerbated by developmental readiness issues, and by socioeconomic circumstances that render young adults particularly vulnerable to negative consequences of unintended fertility. When the developmental stages of adolescence and young adulthood are compressed and adulthood is hastened by an unintended pregnancy, the failure to accomplish developmental tasks at each stage places the young men and women at greater risk of further developmental difficulties (Rodriguez & Moore, 1995).

The social consequences of unintended pregnancy have been well-documented. In a thorough Institute of Medicine report (Brown & Eisenberg 1995), the authors conclude that “the consequences of unintended pregnancy are serious, imposing appreciable burdens on children, women, men and

families (p.1). Women with unintended pregnancy are less likely to obtain early prenatal care, and are more likely to continue smoking and drinking and thus expose the fetus to harmful substances (Brown & Eisenberg 1995; Korenman et al. 2001). Unintended babies, especially those born to teen mothers, are more likely to be low birth weight and less likely to be breastfed (Korenman et al. 2001) and are at greater risk of developmental, physical, and social deficiencies (Henshaw 1989; Baydar 1995; Joyce et al. 2000; Korenman et al. 2001). The mother of an unintended child may be at greater risk of physical abuse, relationship dissolution, economic hardship, and depression. For example marriages that occur following an unintended conception have a higher likelihood of dissolution (Wineberg 1992, 1991; Teachman 1983).

Unintended pregnancy increases the likelihood of depression during pregnancy (Orr & Miller 1995); women who reported a mistimed pregnancy were twice as likely as those reporting an intended pregnancy to suffer from depression, while those reporting an unwanted pregnancy were nearly four times as likely to experience depression. Women who carry their unintended pregnancy to term are also more likely to suffer from postpartum depression as well (Salmon & Drew 1992; Najman et al. 1991). In another study among first-time mothers and fathers, the intentions of the female respondent's partner was a stronger predictor of post-partum depressive symptoms than the respondents intentions (Leathers & Kelley 2000), pointing to the importance of considering men's roles in fertility decisions as well. Domestic violence and physical abuse are also more common among women during an unintended pregnancy (Gazmararian et al. 1994). Teenage childbirth is also associated with lowered educational expectations (Beutel 2000), lower educational attainment (Marsiglio 1986; Marini 1984), and poor employment and earnings prospects for the parent (Geronimus & Korenman 1992; Rubin & East 1999).

In this study we examine the determinants and consequences of young adult fertility. While most studies of unintended childbearing have focused on adult and adolescent women, we focus on the antecedents and consequences of an unintended birth among both young men and young women.

We first describe the incidence and prevalence of unintended fertility then examine the correlates of unintended fertility. Lastly, we investigate the social-psychological consequences of young adult fertility by examining the effect of fertility intentions and childbirth on measures of self-esteem and mastery.

Data

We use data from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth Young Adult sample. Beginning in 1994, children aged 15 and over of the NLSY79 mothers became eligible for inclusion in the Young Adult sample, and were administered a series of interviews and self-administered questionnaires biennially. The Young Adult survey items focus on the transition to adulthood, with detailed questions on employment and income, education, family background, and personal experiences. Our sample of 3,580 respondents consists of the children of the NLSY79 mothers who entered the Young Adult sample between 1994 and 2000.

This sample is not representative of the same age young men and women in the United States. Rather, the Young Adults represent children born to a nationally representative sample of women who were between the ages of 14 and 21 on December 31, 1978. It has been estimated that these children in the sample typify approximately the first 80 percent of childbearing to a contemporary cohort of American women, but nonetheless, they should not be thought of as representative of all American children in a birth cohort (U.S. Department of Labor 2002).

Because the original NLSY sample included males and females who were 14-21 years old on December 31, 1978, the children of NLSY mothers who were eligible to be interviewed in 1994 as part of the young adult sample (i.e., 15 years and older) were all born to women who were 13-22 years old at the time they gave birth. In fact, 66 percent of the children were born to mothers aged 18 and younger at child's birth (U.S. Department of Labor 2002). Although the sample is skewed toward those with young mothers, by combining four birth cohorts who became eligible in 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000, we expanded the range of mothers' age at birth to 13-28 years, such that in the

2000 sample only 15 percent of the young men and women were born to mothers age 18 and younger. Cooksey et al. (2002) compared the maternal and family characteristics of youth born to young NLSY mothers (13-26) with those of a cross section of children born to all NLSY mothers aged 33-40 in 1998. Despite some notable differences in socioeconomic circumstances between the two groups of mothers, they characterized their sample of children born to young mothers and their families “as falling primarily within the American socioeconomic mainstream [p.119].” Nevertheless, because of their mothers’ young age at birth, the young adults in our sample were likely at higher risk of early sexual activity, pregnancy, and childbirth than a cross section of their peers who were born to women who were older at childbirth.

Measures

The intendedness statuses of births to the males in our sample were determined by the young man’s response to the survey item, “*Just before [Name of child from pregnancy]’s mother became pregnant that time, did you want her to become pregnant when she did?* Response items included a) *yes* b) *didn’t matter* c) *no – not at that time* d) *no – (none/no more) not at all*.

The intendedness statuses of births to the females in our sample were similarly determined by the young woman’s response to the survey item, “*Just before you became pregnant that time, did you want to become pregnant when you did?* Response items included a) *yes* b) *didn’t matter* c) *no – not at that time* d) *no – (none/no more) not at all*.

In describing the intendedness of births we use a dichotomous variable distinguishing those who had an *unwanted* birth (d above) and those who had a *mistimed* birth that was not intended at that time (c above), from those who felt ambivalent about the birth (b above), that is the birth was neither wanted nor unwanted, and those who did not have any birth. This was done because the young adults in our sample had so few births that further categorization of the intendedness status of the births would have rendered statistical analyses meaningless. The categorization scheme also enables the evaluation of causes and consequences of having unplanned births relative to those who did not

have any births. Thus, the intendedness variable is the dependent variable in the first part of the multivariate analyses and is used as a predictor variable in the second part of the multivariate analyses.

Because this sample is relatively young and was designed to include respondents at the beginning of their transition into adulthood, very few births had yet occurred in each survey year. Thus, we use an observation period for births that spans the 1994-2000 surveys, and the most recent birth occurring to the respondent during the 1994-2000 period is the birth identified by the intendedness status variable.

The time-varying covariates used in the analyses are measured as of one year prior to the birth of the child indexed by the intendedness variable. For those who had no birth, the time-varying covariate measures are fixed to the values of the survey year in which the respondent entered the Young Adult sample. The descriptive statistics for all the covariates in our analyses are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 about here

While marital status is strongly associated with birth intentions, less than seven percent of our sample had been married by year 2000, as the sample was still quite young at this survey. Therefore, we do not use marital status as a predictor or control variable in our analyses.

In examining the consequences of young adult fertility, we use the Pearlin Mastery and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scales. The Pearlin Mastery Scale is a measure of self-concept and references the extent to which individuals perceive themselves in control of forces that significantly impact their lives (Center for Human Resource Research, 2001). This scale consists of seven items, each a statement with which the respondent is asked how strongly they agree or disagree on a 4-point Likert scale, for a possible score ranging from 1 to 28. Higher scores indicate higher levels of mastery. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale measures the self-acceptance aspect of self-esteem and

consists of ten items answered on a 4-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Possible scores range from 1 to 40. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-esteem.

In order to control for baseline levels of self-esteem and mastery prior to the indexed birth, these items are measured in the year prior to the birth and are included in the models as controls. For those respondents who had no birth during the observation period, initial measures on these variables are taken from the year in which the respondent first entered the sample. The outcome measure is taken from the respondent's last available survey if no birth occurred during the interval.

Results

In this section we present our findings on the fertility of the children of NLSY and the intendedness of births, correlates of unintended fertility, and the consequences of young adult unintended fertility.

Young Adult Fertility

The average annual age-specific birth rates of the NLSY Young Adult sample by sex and intendedness of births between 1990-2000 are shown in Figure 1 and Table 2. Birth rates for women are typically higher than the birth rates for men until about age 24, after which the birth rates appear to converge. However, only a small proportion of our sample respondents are over the age of 25. As the sample matures, birth rates at older ages will increase and the age of peak fertility will shift to about 28, as observed among the members of the original NLSY cohorts who were born between 1957-1964 and were 36-43 years of age in year 2000 (Tanfer & Huang 2002). Unintended birth rates for females are also consistently higher than rates for males until about age 25, after which point there is a reversal at older ages when the unintended birth rate among males surpasses the unintended birth rate among females. Again, however, this is likely an artifact of the small number of older men and women in the sample.

Figure 1 and Table 2 about here

Among teenage females both total and unintended birth rates increased between 1994 and 1998, while the proportion of births that were reported as either unwanted or mistimed declined. In 1994, 81 percent of births to 15-19 year old women were unintended as compared with 61 percent in 1998. Of all births occurring to teenage women between 1990 to 2000, almost two-thirds resulted from pregnancies that were not intended. In contrast, among women 20-24 years of age, the unintended fertility rate declined from 98 births per 1000 in 1994 to 39 births per 1000 in 1998, and importantly the proportion of births that were unintended dropped from 57 percent to 28 percent during the same period.

The birth rates for females in our sample are higher than the national average birth rates, and while teen birth rates have been declining nationally (Martin et al. 2002), among our sample of teenage women birth rates show an increase. The reason for the inconsistent rates and patterns are in part due to the fact that the women in our sample represent the children born to a nationally representative cohort of women sampled in 1978. As NLSY is a longitudinal survey, sample attrition among mothers as well as their children is likely to have introduced some amount of selection bias favoring women and their teenage children who are at a higher risk of an unintended pregnancy. Further, the children of these women who reached age 15 in a given survey year were born to relatively young mothers, many of whom were teenagers themselves at the time the young adults in our sample were born. As such, the respondents in our sample are likely to have been at a higher risk of having an early birth, and thus at a higher risk of an unintended birth than a national cross-sectional sample of teenagers in the United States.

Among teenaged males, unintended birth rates and the proportion of births that were reported as unintended declined steadily from 24 unintended births per 1000 in 1994 (71% unintended) to 8 unintended births per 1000 in 1998 (32% unintended), while overall fertility of teenage males remained relatively low. However, among 20-24 year old men the unintended birth rate is higher in

1996 and 1998 than the birth rate in 1994, while the proportion of births that were unintended remained stable.

On average, birth rates among women are higher than that reported by males, among both adolescents and adults. Further, the proportion of births that were reported as resulting from unintended pregnancies is larger among women than among men. This is in part due to the likelihood that the partners of women, particularly the partners of teenage women, tend to be older. For example in 1995, among 15-19 year old women, 62 percent had a partner 0-2 years older and 38 percent had a partner 3 or more years older than themselves (Darroch et al.1999). Among 20-24 year old women 20 percent were 3-5 years younger than their partner, and 17 percent were six or more years younger than their partner. Older partners are more common among married women; 53 percent of teenagers and 43 percent of the 20-24 year old women had marital partners who were 3 or more years older than themselves. Importantly, 80 percent of the pregnancies to teenage women with partners 3-5 year older, and 68 percent of the pregnancies to teenage women with partners 6 or more years their senior were unintended. Hence, not only are younger women at higher risk of having an unintended pregnancy relative to older women, but this risk is considerably elevated if the woman's partner is older than she by 3 or more years. Thus, the young adults in our sample are particularly vulnerable to unintended pregnancies and births.

Correlates of Unintended Fertility

In evaluating the correlates of unintended fertility among young adults, we first estimated the likelihood of having an unintended birth relative to having no birth at all during the observation interval (Table 3). Not unlike the findings from studies of adult unintended fertility, young adults' unintended fertility is associated with age, race, education, labor force status, and parity. Interestingly, young women were more than two and one-half times as likely to report a birth as unintended as young men were. This may be due to the greater actual and perceived opportunity cost of childbirth that women generally bear. We found no effect of religious affiliation on the likelihood

of experiencing an unintended birth. Both Hispanic and black young adults were about 40 percent more likely than their white counterparts to have had an unintended birth during the observation period.

Table 3 about here

Education has a very strong effect: young men and women who had eight or fewer years of education were 67 percent more likely to have an unintended birth than those who had gone to high school, and 12 times more likely to do so than those who had gone to college. Further, employed respondents were less than half as likely to have an unintended birth than those who were enrolled in school. Young adults who have higher levels of education may perceive the opportunity costs associated with early childbearing to be greater than respondents with lower levels of education, and thus they are more likely to avoid having an unintended pregnancy both by abstaining from sexual activity at young ages and using efficient contraception when they are sexually active. Similarly, respondents who are employed are likely to perceive greater opportunity costs to their careers associated with childbearing, particularly at what is likely to be the early stages of career development, than young adults who are unemployed or still enrolled in school. On the other hand, this is probably a case of reverse causality, such that young men and women who have a child while in school may be forced to drop out of school; and once out of school with not much education and not much skill they are likely to have a hard time finding employment. Moreover, young women in these situation are saddled with the added responsibility of taking care of their child and thus are further impeded from seeking employment.

Young adults who already had one or more children were nearly three times as likely to have reported a birth occurring in the 1994-2000 interval as being unintended compared to respondents who had no prior births. Those young adults who already had a child may be less likely to have wanted another child at this young age. In addition, relative to those respondents who already had one or more children, the birth of a first child may be less likely to be perceived as unwelcome.

Next, we disaggregated the sample and ran the same analyses separately for male and female respondents (Table 3). The correlates of unintended fertility remain fairly similar across sex. Age is directly associated with the likelihood of having an unintended birth among both males and females. The effect of race remains statistically significant among young men but not among young women. Black and Hispanic men are, respectively, 60 percent and 69 percent more likely than white men to have had an unintended birth during the six-year observation period. While the race effects among men are significant only at $p < .10$ level, nonetheless, race appears to be a stronger predictor of unintended fertility for men than for women.

The effects of education and employment status on the likelihood of unintended fertility remain constant across gender, such that the likelihood of having an unintended birth diminishes drastically with higher educational attainment, and employed men and women were significantly less likely to have had an unintended birth than those who were unemployed, or were enrolled in school. These findings are consistent with previous research findings showing that employment opportunity decreases adolescent childbearing (Olsen and Farkas 1991).

Parity also remains a significant predictor of an unintended birth for both sexes, but the effect appears to be greater among men, such that young male respondents were five times more likely to label the birth in the 1994-2000 interval as unintended if they had at least one prior birth. Among young adult women, having one or more prior children is associated with a two-fold increased likelihood that the birth in the observed interval is unintended.

Are the factors associated with an unintended birth unique? To examine this question we used the same variables in separate logistic regression equations predicting the likelihood of having a birth, regardless of the intendedness status, also separately by sex (Table 4). We find that the correlates of having any birth are not very different than those predicting unintended births (as well as first births--not shown), which suggests that young men and women may not think much about their childbearing desires and intentions, until after they actually have a child.

Table 4 about here

We find that age, sex, ethnicity, education, labor force status, and parity are all significant predictors of fertility. Women were more likely than men to have had a child, and Hispanics were more likely than whites to have done so. As in the case of unintended births, the probability of having a child decreased with higher education, and employment, and was higher among unemployed respondents than among those who were employed or enrolled in school. While the opportunity cost of having a child is higher for the better educated and the employed respondents, those who have a child while in school are less likely to complete their education, which also reduces their chances of finding employment. Curiously, respondents who already had a child were more likely than zero parity respondents to have another child during the observation period. Since this was true in the case of the unintended births as well, it might mean that those who are unable to avoid having a first birth are equally unable to avoid having a subsequent one.

Consequences of Unintended Fertility

The negative impact of unintended and early childbearing on well-being has been amply demonstrated in the research literature. There is a consistently strong association between early and unintended childbearing and adverse social, economic, and health outcomes. This has in part been attributed to the fact that such births are concentrated among already disadvantaged groups, and the observed adverse outcomes would have occurred whether or not there was a birth. However, facing childbirth during young adulthood is an emotionally difficult experience, regardless of intendedness status. The consequences of young childbirth might manifest in a wide range of deleterious emotional responses, such as anxiety, anger, and dissatisfaction. Below, we examine the effect of having a birth, and an unintended birth on self-esteem and feelings of self-efficacy or mastery of one's environment.

Mastery: The Pearlin Mastery Scale was designed as a measure of the extent to which individuals perceive themselves in control of forces that affect their lives in significant ways. In Table 5 we

show the OLS regression estimates of the effects of having a birth, and having an unintended birth on levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem, also separately by sex. As noted above, higher scores on the Pearlin Scale indicate higher levels of self-efficacy and higher scores on the Rosenberg scale indicate higher self-esteem. In both models we control for individual characteristics that may also effect self-esteem or self-efficacy. For example, age, education, and employment are likely to be positively associated with both measures.

As expected, having an unintended birth in young adulthood is associated with a decreased sense of mastery, controlling for levels of mastery prior to the event of the birth, as well as controlling for age, sex, race, religion, education, labor force status and parity. However, we found no significant sex-specific effect of an unintended birth on the perceived self-efficacy of mothers and fathers¹.

Table 5 about here

Our results examining the effects of having any birth (i.e., regardless of intendedness status) on mastery, however, tell a slightly different story. While having any birth is associated with a decrease in mastery, separate analyses for males and females show that the effect remains for young men, but not among young women. It may be that young women are better prepared for having a child than young men are, and do not suffer a decline in their sense of mastery following the birth of their child. Further as young men are more likely to perceive contraceptive use as the responsibility of their partner, and since whether or not to have the baby is ultimately the woman's decision, young men may feel more vulnerable, powerless, and not in control of events in his life.

Self-Esteem: Young adults appear to suffer a decrease in self-esteem in the year following the birth of a child, whether or not that birth was intended. When disaggregated by sex, the negative relationship between the occurrence of a birth and self-esteem remains intact; both men and women display a reduction in their self-esteem score following the birth of a child. However, when we

¹ This is in part caused by the reduction in the sample size, and particularly because in each sex-specific model the number of births are reduced to roughly one-half of that in the model when sexes are not separated.

examine the effects of unintended births only, the sex-specific results are no longer significant. The seemingly disparate results may be an artifact of reduced sample size when the sample is disaggregated by sex. When we estimate sex-specific models the magnitude of the effects decrease, but the direction of the relationship (sign of the coefficients) remains stable, suggesting that the relationship may still hold in larger samples, with more births represented.

Discussion

Adolescent and young adult birth rates may have been declining, but this decline seems to be in marital births, only. The nonmarital birth rate does not show any secular decline, and the ratio of nonmarital births to all births have been increasing. Disturbingly, a great majority of the nonmarital births result from unintended pregnancies that were not terminated by abortion.

Consistent with previous research, we find that young women are more likely to report a birth as unintended, and young women's educational attainment to be a particularly strong predictor of unintended fertility, suggesting that since the costs of childbearing are borne largely by the mother, and as the opportunity costs of childbearing increase with educational achievement, the likelihood of having an unintended birth decreases with education. In fact, consistent with an "opportunity cost" explanation of unintended fertility, we find that educational attainment is negatively associated with young adult fertility, regardless of the intendedness status of the pregnancy.

The effect of employment status is also a strong predictor of fertility, particularly for the young women in our sample. Previous studies have found a negative relationship between earnings opportunities and women's fertility, such that as the employment rate increases, the fraction of women remaining childless increases. Our findings corroborate this, as we find a significant effect of labor market participation on fertility. Employed young adults were significantly less likely to have a child, and particularly less likely to have an unintended birth relative to young adults who were unemployed or who were not in the labor force, yet. As in the case of education, this too supports an "opportunity cost" explanation. However, such explanations assume that education and employment

affect fertility and not the other way around. Yet, we know that women who become pregnant while in school are more likely to drop-out of school, especially if they keep the child, than women who avoid becoming pregnant while enrolled in school. Hence, pregnancy and childbirth truncate education, and lack of education and skills makes finding employment difficult. This reverse causality implies that fertility adversely affects the education and employment opportunities of young men and women.

We did not find a significant relationship between religious affiliation and fertility, with the exception of a marginally significant ($p < .10$) effect among Protestant males who were 1.8 times more likely to have an unintended birth than their Roman Catholic counterparts. It may be that at these young ages men and women do not strongly identify with a religious doctrine and so their religious affiliation has little effect on their behavioral outcomes. A more robust measure, such as the frequency with which the respondent attends religious services, may more efficiently distinguish those who do strongly identify with religious teachings from those who do not. Future investigations into the effect of religious affiliation on fertility decisions may do well to incorporate different measures that are better equipped to capture the variation in the religiosity of this age group.

Early childbearing in general and unintended fertility in particular have adverse effects on the psychosocial wellbeing of the individual. In this study we found a significant decrease in the individual's self-esteem and self-efficacy in the year following a birth, regardless of the intention status, after controlling for baseline levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy measured in the year prior to the indexed birth. However, it is not clear whether the measures of the adverse consequences of having a child is equally salient for young men and young women. Young adult men experience a decrease in their sense of mastery following the birth of a child, while young adult women do not. This may be due to women's greater control over fertility decisions relative to men's, and because young women are generally better prepared for parenthood than young men. Also, men may

perceive the cost of their forgone opportunities to be greater than that of women. However, both men and women suffer from loss of self-esteem following the birth of their child.

Because this sample consists primarily of young adults born to young mothers, it may not represent all American youth at these ages. Children of young mothers are likely to be at the forefront of high-risk reproductive behavior, and therefore our estimates of the incidence of unintended childbearing and its consequences might bear a selection bias that results in undue amplification of our findings. Also, there is the question of what exactly respondents understand by the terms used to get at the concepts of “unwanted” (number failure) and “mistimed” (timing failure), and importantly, how the connotation of this terminology may vary by age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status.

Finally, the traditional focus on women in fertility research, driven by an implicit assumption of women’s primacy in controlling their fertility and concordance in partners’ interests, may have hampered our understanding of the dynamics of fertility decisions. Such an assumption disregards conflict and negotiation in childbearing decisions. An unintended pregnancy resulting in a live birth does not necessarily indicate consonance in the desires of partners, nor does it indicate a resolution of conflicting birth intentions. Such unresolved conflict between partners may be a major cause underlying unintended pregnancies, and deserve greater attention. In the absence of couple data, many questions for which answers directly from each partner are needed, will remain unanswered.

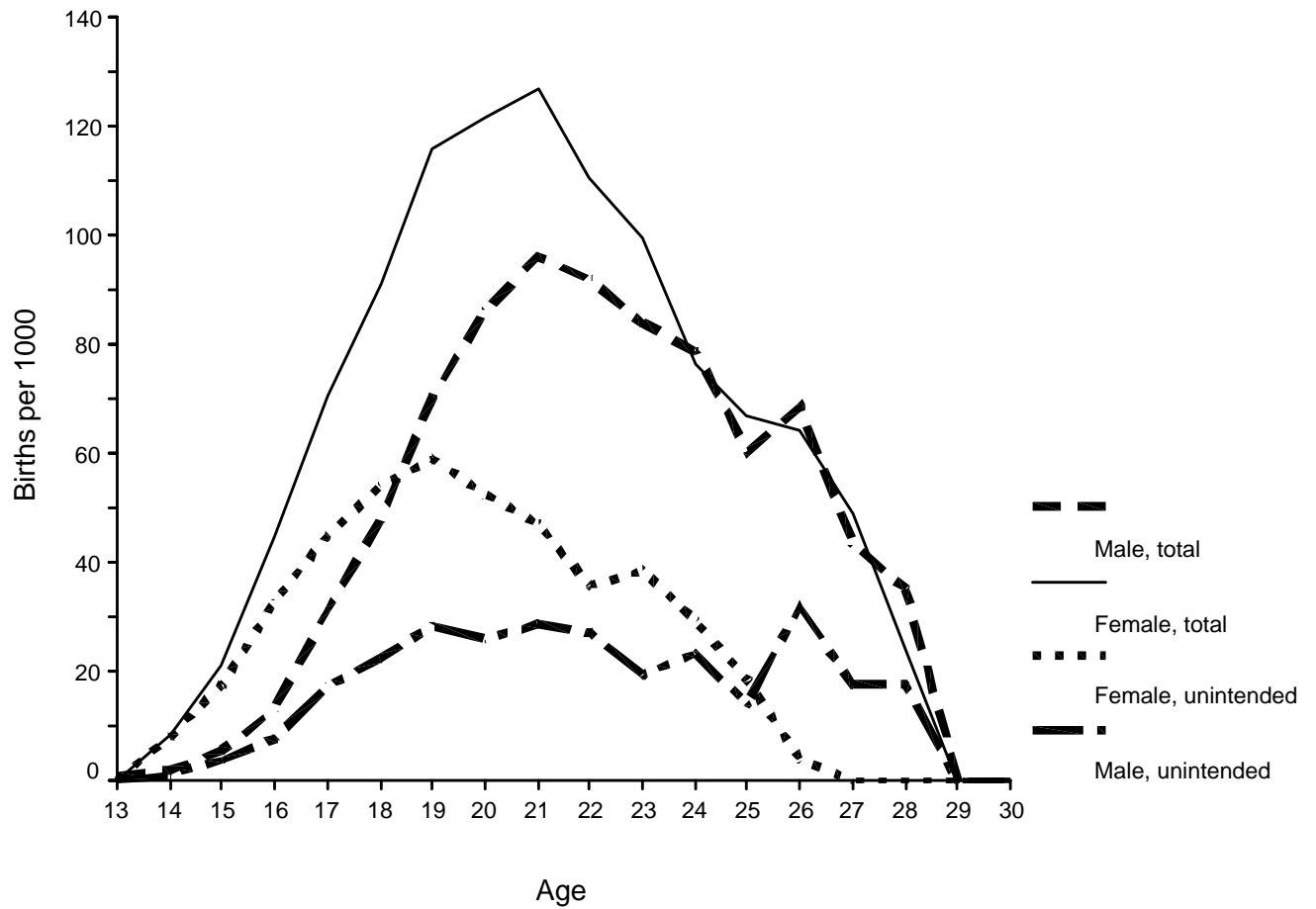
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Figure 1. Age-Specific Birth Rates* by Sex, NLSY-YA, 1994-2000



* Three-year moving averages

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Covariates

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Had a birth	664	18.5
Had an unintended birth	469	13.2
Sex		
Male	1,799	50.3
Female	1,781	49.7
Race		
Hispanic	792	22.1
Black	1,371	38.3
White	1,417	39.6
Religion		
Roman Catholic	793	22.5
Protestant	1,789	50.7
Other	339	9.6
None	608	17.2
Education		
Less than 9 years	649	18.1
9 -12 years	2,565	71.7
13+ years	363	10.1
Labor Force Status		
Unemployed	285	8.0
Employed	1,000	27.9
Enrolled in School	2,294	64.1
Parity		
No children	3,359	93.8
1 or More Children	221	6.2
	Means(SD)	
Age	19.2 (2.9)	
Rosenberg Self-Esteem		
Year Prior to Birth	32.1 (4.1)	
Year Following Birth	32.4 (4.2)	
Pearlin Mastery Scale		
Year Prior to Birth	21.6 (3.0)	
Year Following Birth	21.8 (3.1)	

Table 2. Birth Rates and Unintended Birth rates, and Percent of Births Unintended by Age and Sex, 1990-2000

	Year			
	1994	1996	1998	1990-2000
<u>Females</u>				
<i>Age 15-19</i>				
Birth rate ¹	42.3	55.0	81.8	59.1
Unintended birth rate ²	34.3	40.2	50.1	38.5
% unintended	81.0	73.2	61.2	65.2
<i>Age 20-24</i>				
Birth rate ¹	170.7	95.2	141.1	122.8
Unintended birth rate ²	97.6	40.8	39.0	47.4
% unintended	57.1	42.9	27.7	38.6
<u>Males</u>				
<i>Age 15-19</i>				
Birth rate ¹	33.3	31.0	24.3	26.6
Unintended birth rate ²	23.5	16.8	7.7	12.4
% unintended	70.6	54.2	31.6	50.6
<i>Age 20-24</i>				
Birth rate ¹	105.3	133.3	127.0	92.9
Unintended birth rate ²	26.3	40.0	34.9	26.0
% unintended	25.0	30.0	27.5	28.0

¹ Number of births per 1000.

² Number of births that were unwanted or mistimed per 1000.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Results Predicting the Likelihood of Having an Unintended Birth, NLSY Young Adults, by Sex, 1994-2000.

Covariates	Total		Males		Females	
	B	Exp(B)	B	Exp(B)	B	Exp(B)
Age	0.421***	1.52	0.426**	1.53	0.430***	1.54
Sex						
Male	Ref.	1.00	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Female	0.938***	2.55	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Race						
Hispanic	0.366 [†]	1.40	0.525 [†]	1.69	0.247	1.16
Black	0.300*	1.35	0.467 [†]	1.60	0.211	1.14
White	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Religion						
Roman Catholic	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Protestant	0.191	1.21	0.594 [†]	1.81	0.005	1.01
Other	0.217	1.24	0.058	1.06	0.293	1.34
None	0.183	1.20	0.441	1.55	0.086	1.09
Education						
Less than 9 years	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
9-12 years	-0.507***	0.60	-0.525**	0.59	-0.482**	0.62
13+ years	-2.576***	0.08	-2.036***	0.13	-2.845***	0.06
Parity						
None	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
One or more	1.080***	2.94	1.695***	5.45	0.710***	2.04
Labor Force Status						
Enrolled in School	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Unemployed	0.017	1.02	-0.441	0.64	0.286	1.33
Employed	-1.212***	0.30	-1.192***	0.30	-1.281***	0.28
Constant	-8.796***		-8.356***		-6.846***	
-2 LL	2069.9		784.7		1264.3	
Chi-Square	675.1***		261.8***		373.4***	
N	3,496		1,746		1,781	

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

Table 4. Logistic Regression Results Predicting the Likelihood of Having a Birth, NLSY Young Adults, by Sex, 1994-2000.

Covariates	Total		Males		Females	
	B	Exp(B)	B	Exp(B)	B	Exp(B)
Age	0.507***	1.66	0.490**	1.63	0.535***	1.71
Sex						
Male	Ref.	1.00	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Female	0.811***	2.25	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Race						
Hispanic	0.342*	1.41	0.409	1.51	0.321	1.38
Black	0.164	1.18	0.328	1.39	0.059	1.06
White	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Religion						
Roman Catholic	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Protestant	0.110	1.12	0.365	1.44	-0.040	0.96
Other	0.179	1.20	0.136	1.15	0.213	1.24
None	0.149	1.16	0.206	1.23	0.180	1.20
Education						
Less than 9 years	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
9-12 years	-0.643***	0.53	-0.649**	0.52	-0.627**	0.53
13+ years	-2.554***	0.08	-2.209***	0.11	-2.787***	0.06
Parity						
None	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
One or more	1.81***	6.09	2.143***	8.53	1.573***	4.82
Labor Force Status						
Enrolled in School	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.	1.00
Unemployed	0.370*	1.45	0.059	1.06	0.627**	1.87
Employed	-0.810***	0.45	-0.598**	0.55	-1.043***	0.35
Constant	-9.315***		-8.561***		-7.901***	
-2 LL	2318.9		1011.1		1291.18	
Chi-Square	1004.2***		446.8***		611.1***	
N	3,527		1,765		1,762	

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

Table 5. OLS Regression Estimates of the Effect of Having a Birth and Having an Unintended Birth on Mastery and Self-Esteem, NLSY Young Adults by Sex, 1994-2000

Covariates	<i>Any Birth</i>			<i>Unintended Birth</i>		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
<i>Effect on Mastery¹</i>						
Had a birth	-0.264*	-0.376*	-0.127	-0.233 [†]	-0.137	-0.209
Baseline Pearlin Mastery	0.742***	0.714***	0.765***	0.743***	0.712***	0.769***
Constant	3.767***	4.628***	2.998***	3.752***	4.693***	2.923***
R ²	0.547	0.521	0.573	0.548	0.518	0.576
N	3,339	1,681	1,657	3,315	1,666	1,648
<i>Effect on Self-Esteem¹</i>						
Had a birth	-0.512**	-0.558*	-0.420*	-0.375*	-0.200	-0.394
Baseline Self-Esteem Score	0.744***	0.712***	0.772***	0.744***	0.709***	0.774***
Constant	6.086***	7.860***	4.466***	6.153***	8.074***	4.420***
R ²	0.560	0.511	0.608	0.558	0.506	0.609
N	3,345	1,686	1,658	3,321	1,671	1,649

¹Controlling for age, race and ethnicity, religion, education, labor force status, and parity.

[†] p < .10 * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.