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巴西青少年懷孕現象: 社會建構之分析

The Social Construction of a Social problem: Adolescent  
Pregnancy in Brazil

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巴西青少年懷孕和貧困

# The Social Construction of a Social problem: Adolescent Pregnancy in Brazil

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“To all my friends: human beings and sentients”

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## Abstract

Adolescent pregnancy is a multifaceted phenomenon, which mobilizes researches, public opinion, and policies in many countries in the world. However, the historical background and the changes that surround the elements and the social construction of adolescent pregnancy is less explored nowadays. Moreover in Brazil, there is an assumption that adolescent pregnancy is a set of social problems that feed the cycle of poverty and/or leads adolescent parents into poverty. Regarding the subject of matter, this study aims to examine the past and present features of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil as a social construction.

Keywords: Adolescent pregnancy, poverty, Brazil.

摘要

青少年懷孕是一個多方面的現象，它動員了世界上許多國家的研究，輿論和政策。然而，現在很少探討歷史背景和圍繞青少年懷孕的元素和社會建構的變化。此外，在巴西有一種假設認為，青春期的懷孕是一系列社會問題，它們助長了貧困的循環和/或導致青少年父母陷入貧困。關於物質問題，本研究旨在研究巴西青少年懷孕過去和現在的特徵，作為一種社會建構。

關鍵詞：青少年懷孕，貧困，巴西。



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## Glossary

GRAVAD - Gravidez na Adolescência: Estudo Multicêntrico sobre Jovens, Sexualidade e Reprodução no Brasil (Adolescent Pregnancy: A Multicenter Study on Young Persons, Sexuality and Reproduction in Brazil)

IADB - Inter-American Development Bank

IBGE – Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian institut of geography and statistics)

IDS - Institut of Development Studies

IHA - Index of Adolescent Homicide

IPEA - Institute for Applied Economic Research

ISSP - International Social Survey Program

MS - Ministério da Saúde

NLSAH - National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health

NSFG - National Survey of Family Growth

PNDS-DHS - National Demographic and Health Survey in Brazil

PR - Presidency of the Republic

SDH - Secretariat of Human Rights

SEASM - Serviço de Assistência à Saúde da Mulher

SINASC - Sistema Nacional de Nascidos Vivos - System Live Birth Information

SUS - Sistema de Atendimento Único de Saúde

UNDP - United Nations Development Programs

UNFPA - Fundo de População das Nações Unidas

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

WB – World Bank

WHO - World Health Organization

WVS - World Value Survey

## **Introduction**

Adolescent pregnancy is a multifaceted phenomenon, which mobilizes researches, public opinion and policies in many countries in the world. In this sense, many cases of adolescent pregnancy in impoverished communities were observed through researches. The

view on adolescent pregnancy can be diverse as well as the causes and effects, however, when the feature of poverty comes together with the adolescent pregnancy, doubled attention is required in order to analyze this diversity. Therefore, this study will present the perspective of adolescent pregnancy as a social problem, focusing on disadvantaged people. As the focus of this analysis, the adolescent pregnancy as a social phenomenon based on social construction of ideologies. The main point is to verify if adolescent pregnancy is a trigger to poverty.

Regarding the conceptualization, adolescence is also a period that underpins the body's changes caused by sexual hormones<sup>1</sup>. This process involves behavior changes and the position of this individual in the society in which they live in. In this sense the World Health Organization – WHO, gave the comprehension of the adolescence as human beings aged from 10 to 19 years old that are facing physical, mental and psychological development<sup>2</sup>. In Brazil, adolescent pregnancy, teenage pregnancy or early pregnancy are synonyms and they differ from “regular pregnancies” due to the age, wedlock, religious norms, explained in this thesis. Therefore, in 1990 the Children and Adolescents Statute (Estatuto da infância e Adolescência – ECA)<sup>3</sup>, defined adolescents as human beings aged from 12 to 18 years old.

However, the conceptual development of adolescence period relies on the historical

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<sup>1</sup> Vigil, P., del R  , J. P., Carrera, B  , Ar  nguiz, F. C., Rioseco, H., & Cort  s, M. E. (2016). *Influence of sex steroid hormones on the adolescent brain and behavior: An update*. The Linacre Quarterly, 83(3), 308–329.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.who.int/topics/adolescent\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/adolescent_health/en/)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/Leis/l8069.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Leis/l8069.htm)

and social context<sup>4</sup> that the adolescent belongs to. Considering that social context is capable of shaping thoughts and behaviors and it changes throughout time, adolescence period and adolescent pregnancy doesn't have a steady definition. Adolescent pregnancy has a different meaning in the past and now, this meaning keeps changing in different direction. Humanity still does have different cultures and norms that can shape a whole society, however, human beings are adaptive in terms of knowledge.

Moreover, in Brazil adolescent pregnancy is frequently related to poverty, low socioeconomic status, poor education, disadvantaged ethnic groups and intergenerational family history<sup>5</sup> with fewer or none of the consideration about the social context and the historical analysis of the subject of matter. Therefore, the characteristics that surround adolescent pregnancy is simply to being as a serious social problem of public health<sup>6</sup>, which perpetuates the poverty cycle in the country<sup>7</sup>. Concerning the numbers, the United Nations Population Fund - UNPA, released a report in 2017 about adolescent pregnancy in Brazil, which showed that 65 in 1000 of pregnancies in Brazil are corresponding to girls aged from 15

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<sup>4</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No. 1.

<sup>5</sup> East, P., Reyes, B., & Horn, E. (2007). Association between Adolescent Pregnancy and a Family History of Teenage Births. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 39(2), 108-115. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30042944>

<sup>6</sup> Tereza Alves de Souza, Maria Eliane Maciel de Brito, Amanda Cavalcante Frota, Joyce Mazza Nunes. (2010). Adolescent pregnancy: perception, behaviors and family member's experiences. *Revista da Rede de Enfermagem do Nordeste*.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unfpa.org.br/Arquivos/Gravidez%20Adolescente%20no%20Brasil.pdf>

to 19 years old<sup>8</sup>, which represent 18%<sup>9</sup> of total population. Despite the fact that Brazilian Government considers the numbers high, there are no public policies directly related to adolescent pregnancy, except the distribution of birth control through the public health system, Sistema Único de Saúde - SUS<sup>10</sup>.

Regarding the link between adolescent pregnancy and poverty, the objective of this research is also to understand why this relationship exists and what are the variables that connect them together by analyzing how Brazilian society sees, has seen and deals and has dealt with early pregnancy throughout history. In this sense, the issue is to verify if adolescent pregnancy is a contributor to poverty. In other words, is adolescent pregnancy a trigger to poverty?

The answer for this question were also searched in religion, in order to understand how the religion shape the adolescent thoughts and behaviors towards pregnancy. Since Brazil is the biggest Catholic country in the world, religious norms was identified in Brazilian culture, however, these religious norms were found out as adaptive inside religious communities named Neo Pentecostialism, found in poor communities where the researches about adolescent pregnancy were conducted. The literature review showed that the Neo

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations Population Fund – UNPA

<http://www.unfpa.org.br/novo/index.php/noticias/ultimas/1690-brasil-tem-setima-maior-taxa-de-gravidez-adolescencia-da-america-do-sul>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.brasil.gov.br/editoria/saude/2017/05/numero-de-adolescentes-gravidas-cai-17-no-brasil>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.blog.saude.gov.br/index.php/materias-especiais/51645-saiba-mais-sobre-os-metodos-contraceptivos-oferecidos-pelo-sus>

Pentecostalism established its institutions based on need. In this sense, religion is presented in this research as a pathway to understand adolescent pregnancy and how it is connected with poverty.

This research reveals the higher relevance regarding the social changes that involved the adolescent period and adolescent pregnancy concepts. The past concepts are regarding the adolescence's functionality and utilitarianism<sup>11</sup> in the society. The present concepts are regarding the societal view and ideologies about this period of life, which are presented together with exposition of social changes, since the adolescence came up as a public topic in the 1970's<sup>12</sup>. About the concepts about adolescence pregnancy, they are presented as a biological and natural factor that occurs in this period of life.

By understanding the past concepts regarding the subject of matter, it was possible to understand the social construction regarding the ideologies, which surrounds adolescence period had has an impact in what we understand by adolescence pregnancy in the nowadays.

## **1. The Brazilian Adolescent: Demographic Profile**

By the 1950's, in Western societies, the issue about adolescent period has no clear definition and it was practically invisible to the society<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, as part of Western,

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<sup>11</sup> A concept based on John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) who systematized the utility principle and was able to apply it to concrete questions in various fields of science, based on the idea that actions are good when they tend to promote happiness and bad when they tend to promote the opposite of happiness.

<sup>12</sup> Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). *Destinies of the disadvantages: The politics of teenage childbearing*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

<sup>13</sup> Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). *The history of teenage childbearing as a social problem*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Brazil recognized the adolescence period throughout the law number 8,069 of July 13, which regulate the Statute of the Child and Adolescent – ECA, established in 1990. ECA defined adolescence by age 12 to 18 years old.<sup>14</sup> Since the issues regarding age are different inside Brazilian instances<sup>15</sup>, the WHO definition will be used because it covers the national and international standard.

The last census sample realized in Brazil, exposed the data from the total population, concerning 207.660.929 people<sup>16</sup>, where 11.108.487 are people aged from 15 to 17 years old<sup>17</sup> and 3.682.062 is people aged 18 years old<sup>18</sup>. Concerning 17, 9%<sup>19</sup> from the total population.

Concerning sex and ethnicity, the National Youth Secretariat - SNJ<sup>20</sup> provided statistic information retrieved from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE<sup>21</sup>, which showed that the distribution regarding sex among adolescents is similar to each other.

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/Leis/18069.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Leis/18069.htm)

<sup>15</sup> The Brazilian Ministry of Health – MS, considers as adolescents human beings aged from 10 to 19 years old

<sup>16</sup> <https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimad-a-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias?filters=1,1626>

<sup>17</sup> <https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimad-a-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias?filters=1,1623>

<sup>18</sup> <https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimad-a-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias?filters=1,1624>

<sup>19</sup> <http://portal.arquivos.saude.gov.br/images/PDF/2017/maio/05/LIVRO-SAUDE-ADOLESCENTES.PDF>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2017/08/estatuto-da-juventude-define-direitos-e-garantias-aos-jovens-brasileiros>

<sup>21</sup> sample of last Census from 2010



In this sense, 49, 6%<sup>22</sup> are men and 50, 4%<sup>23</sup> are women. Data from same research shows that 6 from 10 people interviewed, male and females, declared themselves as “Pardo”<sup>24</sup> corresponding 45%<sup>25</sup>, black, corresponding 15%<sup>26</sup> and 34%<sup>27</sup> corresponding white people.

The SNJ’s research believes that there is a growing trend of self-declaration as black color due to the increasing race visibility in Brazil<sup>28</sup>.

By 2013 a demographic research from the Institute for Applied Economic Research - IPEA<sup>29</sup> was released about the Brazilian adolescent profile, with bases in the same source of SNJ.<sup>30</sup> However, IPEA have had combined and fragmented the IBGE’s data together with other sources<sup>31,32</sup>, including IPEA’s past researches<sup>33</sup>. Since most of the studies are outdated,

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<sup>22</sup><http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2017/08/estatuto-da-juventude-define-direitos-e-garantias-aos-jovens-brasileiros>

<sup>23</sup><http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2017/08/estatuto-da-juventude-define-direitos-e-garantias-aos-jovens-brasileiros>

<sup>24</sup>In Brazil, Pardo is a race/color category used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in Brazilian censuses. It concerns a Portuguese word that encompasses various shades of brown, usually understood as "grayish-brown". The other categories are branco ("White"), negro ("Black"), amarelo ("yellow", meaning East Asians), and indígena ("indigene" or "indigenous person").

<sup>25</sup><https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimada-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias>

<sup>26</sup><https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimada-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias>

<sup>27</sup><https://observatoriocrianca.org.br/cenario-infancia/temas/populacao/1048-estratificacao-da-populacao-estimada-pelo-ibge-segundo-faixas-etarias>

<sup>28</sup><http://www.brasil.gov.br/cidadania-e-justica/2017/08/estatuto-da-juventude-define-direitos-e-garantias-aos-jovens-brasileiros>

<sup>29</sup>[http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT\\_n20\\_Adolescente-conflito\\_Disoc\\_2015-jun.pdf](http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT_n20_Adolescente-conflito_Disoc_2015-jun.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE’s census of 2010;

<sup>31</sup><https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas-novoportal/sociais/populacao/9171-pesquisa-nacional-por-amostra-de-domicilios-continua-mensal.html?=&t=o-que-e>

the presented IPEA's research rebuilt the demographic adolescence profile in Brazil. In this sense, the profile of Brazilian adolescence used in this research is the most recently one.

Concerning adolescent's sex, the equality is the prevalence in 2013, concerning 51.19%<sup>34</sup> of men and 48.81%<sup>35</sup> of women. The ethnicity, 58.9%<sup>36</sup> of adolescents aged between 12 and 17 years old declared themselves black and pardos<sup>37</sup>; 40.4% were and less than 1%<sup>38</sup> declared themselves of other races<sup>39</sup>.

| <b>Socio-demographic characteristics of young adolescents aged 12 to 17 in 2013 (%)</b> |                    |                    |         |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Features  | 12 to 14 years old | 15 to 17 years old | Total   |
| Population aged from 12 to 17 years old   | 49,63%             | 50,37%             | 100,00% |
| <b>Sex</b>  |                    |                    |         |
| Men   | 51,54%             | 50,85%             | 51,19%  |

<sup>32</sup>[http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=151&catid=122&Itemid=9](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=151&catid=122&Itemid=9)

<sup>33</sup>[http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?searchword=Adolescente&ordering=category&searchphrase=all&limit=100&option=com\\_search](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?searchword=Adolescente&ordering=category&searchphrase=all&limit=100&option=com_search)

<sup>34</sup>[http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT\\_n20\\_Adolescente-conflito\\_Disoc\\_2015-jun](http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT_n20_Adolescente-conflito_Disoc_2015-jun).

<sup>35</sup>[http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?searchword=Adolescente&ordering=category&searchphrase=all&limit=100&option=com\\_search](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?searchword=Adolescente&ordering=category&searchphrase=all&limit=100&option=com_search)

<sup>36</sup>[https://ww2.ibge.gov.br/english/estatistica/populacao/caracteristicas\\_raciais/default\\_estudos.shtm](https://ww2.ibge.gov.br/english/estatistica/populacao/caracteristicas_raciais/default_estudos.shtm)

<sup>37</sup>Pardo's definition is in the footnote number 72.

<sup>38</sup>[http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT\\_n20\\_Adolescente-conflito\\_Disoc\\_2015-jun](http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/5696/1/NT_n20_Adolescente-conflito_Disoc_2015-jun).

<sup>39</sup> yellow or indigenous

|                               |        |        |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Women                         | 48,46% | 49,15% | 48,81% |
| <b>Education</b>              |        |        |        |
| No education                  | 0,64%  | 0,52%  | 0,58%  |
| Incomplete basic education    | 93,30% | 27,00% | 59,90% |
| Complete Basic Education      | 3,47%  | 22,33% | 12,97% |
| Incomplete high school        | 0,41%  | 32,58% | 16,61% |
| Complete high school          | 0,00%  | 1,32%  | 0,67%  |
| Incomplete Superior education | 0,00%  | 0,10%  | 0,05%  |
| <b>Ethnicity: color/race</b>  |        |        |        |
| White                         | 40,22% | 40,69% | 40,45% |
| Black                         | 59,22% | 58,62% | 58,92% |
| Other                         | 0,56%  | 0,70%  | 0,63%  |
| <b>Environment</b>            |        |        |        |
| Urban                         | 81,45% | 82,85% | 82,16% |
| Rural                         | 18,55% | 17,15% | 17,84% |

Source: IPEA 2013

Concerning the educational background of Brazilian adolescents among those who are aged from 15 to 17 years old, there is a gap about the schooling period, because these adolescents should be attending high school or they should had completed it<sup>40</sup>.

In agreement with the Brazilian Ministry of Education - MEC, the lagging school among

<sup>40</sup> <http://educacaointegral.mec.gov.br/jovens-de-15-a-17-anos>

adolescents aged from 15 to 17 years old, concerns half of the population from this age group<sup>41</sup>.

In 2013, MEC conducted a research based on IBGE's data, which pointed out that the population out of school from the group aged from 15 to 17 years old are black people, with low socio-economic status, concerning higher levels of vulnerability<sup>42</sup>. The reasons for the school dropout are diverse, however, MEC's research affirms that the people from the aforementioned group normally exchange the schooling period for a sub job or get pregnant.<sup>43</sup>

In this sense, the major challenge mentioned in MEC's research is to build the social profile from the adolescents that dropped out school and the reasons in order to implement their actions to this public<sup>44</sup>.

| Percentage Distribution of young adolescents aged from 15 to 17 years old by occupation (5) |          |                      |        |                            |
|---|----------|----------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| Selected Features   | Students | Students and workers | Works  | Don't study<br>Don't Works |
| White   | 42.15%   | 39.48%               | 37.84% | 34.49%                     |
| Blacks  | 57,16%   | 59,80%               | 61,46% | 64,87%                     |

<sup>41</sup> <http://educacaointegral.mec.gov.br/jovens-de-15-a-17-anos>

<sup>42</sup> <http://portal.mec.gov.br/docman/junho-2014-pdf/15774-ept-relatorio-06062014/file>

<sup>43</sup> <http://portal.mec.gov.br/docman/junho-2014-pdf/15774-ept-relatorio-06062014/file>

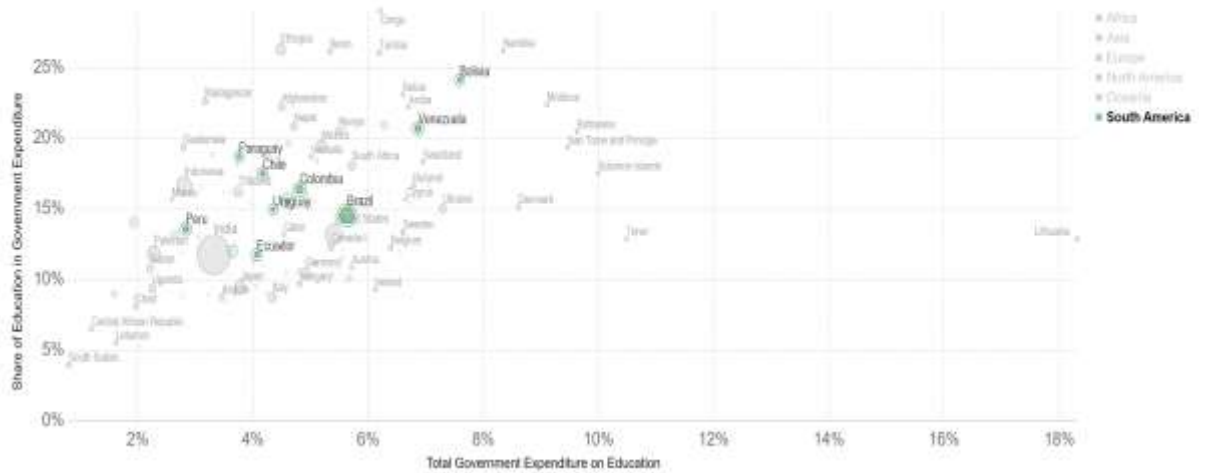
<sup>44</sup> <http://educacaointegral.mec.gov.br/jovens-de-15-a-17-anos>

|  |           |           |         |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Other ethnicity  | 0,70%     | 0,71%     | 0,70%   | 0,64%     |
| Total  | 100%      | 100%      | 100%    | 100%      |
| Men  | 48,16%    | 60,75%    | 70,65%  | 41,88%    |
| Women  | 51,84%    | 39,25%    | 29,35%  | 58,12%    |
| Family income corresponding less than one minimum salary (equivalent of 10.000 NTD)        | 67,11%    | 63,03%    | 65,68%  | 83,50%    |
| Family income corresponding one to two minimum salary (equivalent of 10.000 to 20.000 NTD) | 17,92%    | 24,81%    | 23,48%  | 9,14%     |
| Family income superior two minimum salary (equivalent of 20.000 NTD)                       | 9,85%     | 6,34%     | 4,90%   | 3,17%     |
| Total numbers  | 7.210,636 | 1.763,990 | 584,228 | 1.083,489 |

Source: IBGE

### Share of GDP spent on education vs. Share of expenditure assigned to education, 2010

Government expenditure on education as a share of GDP (X-axis), against government expenditure on education as a share of total government expenditure (Y-axis). Colors represent different world regions. Observations correspond to 2010 data (or the year before/after if 2010 missing).



Source: World Bank

OurWorldInData.org/financing-education • CC BY-SA



### Analytical framework

Understanding the diversity on causes and effects which involve adolescence pregnancy has not been a simple task in the field of social sciences, however, some line thoughts are necessary in order to understand how the subject's base was established. One of the lights that can illuminate one of the possible path is that the United Nations Children's Fund – UNICEF has conceptualized adolescent pregnancy. This was through two principal lines of thoughts frequently found in past literature<sup>45</sup>. First one is that adolescent pregnancy is a social problem and the second one is that adolescent pregnancy is a social phenomenon<sup>46</sup>. The first line is linked to the social problem and recognizes multiple causes of adolescent pregnancy, focusing on the vulnerability and risks that the adolescent parents may face. The vulnerability are about social economic status, education level, disadvantaged ethnic groups, etc., and the risks, in their majority, are related to the health of both: parents and babies, and the school dropout. In other words, the potential factors that jeopardize the future of the parents and the baby born.

The second line, which concerns the social phenomena also recognizes the challenges of early pregnancies, nowsoever, the focus is on the diversity of the causes. By considering that adolescent pregnancy is both, social problem and social phenomenon that concern vulnerability, risks and diversity of causes, the look over the subject of matter, were also diverse inside the social sciences field. A pathway to understand what brings together

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<sup>45</sup> Source: <https://www.unicef.org/>

<sup>46</sup> Source: <http://www.childhood.org.br/a-gravidez-na-adolescencia-no-brasil>

adolescent pregnancy and poverty is the look on diversity of the phenomenon and this study attempts to do that, through three different views, which are subjective to each other.

By 1980, Murcott explained the adolescent pregnancy as a social construction of ideologies on childhood and reproduction, and the problems that these ideologies caused toward the phenomenon. In this sense, the social construction on ideologies and human reproduction theory works as an umbrella that brings reflections on the commonsense that adolescent pregnancy is a social problem in many societies by demonstrating how the ideologies sharpened the society perceptions toward the phenomenon. This theory analyzes this common sense as axiomatic, so the popular opinion or idealization can't not be used as scientific knowledge or even reflect the reality because they are established by deduction or inferences<sup>47</sup>. Despite the axiom present itself as logic and obvious proposition in the first moment, it can't be proved or considered as a theory. In this sense, the aforementioned author also points out the neglected aspect of social construction when adolescent pregnancy is mentioned as a problem without a clear idea why it is a problem.

Moreover, this theory reinforce the problems of ideologies on reproduction, where family, premarital sex, age, wedlock and other variables are involved. Those variables are element of social constructions gives the legitimacy or illegitimacy of adolescent pregnancy in the author's view. Finally, the process of understanding adolescent pregnancy relies on the

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<sup>47</sup> Heath, T. 1956. *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements*. New York: Dover. p200



ambiguity ideologies of childhood, where human beings are biologically getting adult early and sociologically later<sup>48</sup>.

Frank Frustenberg (1976) gave us a second approach, which can elucidate the issues of adolescent pregnancy and poverty by explaining that the outcomes of adolescent pregnancy are diverse. He also emphasized Murcott's (1980) theory, where the social context and its elements are important in the adolescence period. In his studies, it was possible to observe that an adolescent who bearded a child had has fewer differences in their future life than the other adolescent who did not or the adolescents who lived in the same social context and curb their fertility. In this sense, the social context is a crucial point, which will determine the outcomes of an early pregnancy. He also pointed out the fact that statistical analysis would fail in determining the preexistent condition from the adolescent mothers by overestimating the true causal effect in the subject of matter. Moreover, the author well noted that historically, the concerns on adolescence pregnancy emerged from indifference to a moral crisis that shocked society in a short period, taking place on public agenda. In this sense, the sudden interest on issues of adolescent pregnancy is part of the historical components that can explain the social problem of adolescent pregnancy and poverty. These reasons are explained in the chapters and conclusion of this research. This theory also assumes that the adolescent pregnancy has been a target of misunderstanding and

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<sup>48</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). *The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction*. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No. 1.

misinterpretations by scholars, government and public opinion. In this sense, there is an overestimation on the negative aspects of the outcomes regarding adolescent pregnancy. The author does not advocate that early pregnancies would be positive despite his studies shows some cases that a child might be a motivation for emotional, educational and/or economic in adolescents' life because of the shift of priorities in the teenage parents, which are also diverse.

Considering the fact that Brazil is the biggest Catholic country in the world<sup>4950</sup>, a third theory that help to understand the common sense regarding the relationship of adolescent pregnancy and poverty is given by Durkheim (1912), who defined religion as one of the most important social systems that were composed by social ideals<sup>51</sup>. In this sense, the collective ideals prevail instead a group of individuals aggregated in material conditions, where the ideal of moral is the most important feature, in other words, to explore religion in a religious country, beyond a taboo; it is also to study the formation of these moral ideals<sup>52</sup>.

Durkheim showed that religions only could be understood by historical view. Through his analysis<sup>53</sup> the author pointed the human progress by broking the ideology on linearity that

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<sup>49</sup> Source: <https://www.ibge.gov.br/>

<sup>50</sup> <https://veja.abril.com.br/blog/reinaldo/o-ibge-e-a-religiao-cristaos-sao-86-8-do-brasil-catolicos-caem-para-64-6-evangelicos-ja-sao-22-2/>

<sup>51</sup> Camurça, Marcelo. (2008). *Ciências sociais e ciências da Religião: polêmicas e interlocuções*. São Paulo: Paulinas.

<sup>52</sup> HERVIEU-LÉGER, D., WILLAIME, J.. (2009) *Sociologia e religião: abordagens clássicas*. Trad. Ivo Storniolo. Aparecida: Ideias & Letras.

<sup>53</sup> Durkheim, E. (1895). *As regras do método sociológico*.

was present in the Western Culture arguing that history is not alike as a geometric line and humanity were not moving themselves toward the same moral, values or even models of development. This idea was very useful for his own formulation on the concept of religion and its social function. In this sense, he advocated that there is no false religions because all of them will supply a determined condition of human existence. His thoughts on religion also show us that true role of the religion is not supposed to make us to think, and it is not to enrich our knowledge, but make us act and help us to live. This thought proposition can explain Brazilian reality by demonstrating how the religion can influence the society by establishing norms and values which shape their own thoughts and have direct impact on the adolescent pregnancy and poverty.

The purposed frameworks are not supposed to be or to offer solutions regarding the social problem/social phenomenon of adolescent pregnancy, but to explore the implicit and explicit reasons that bring together teenage pregnancy and poverty. In other words, to verify the hypothesis that the poorest is the society, higher the chances of an early pregnancy. This process is given by exploring the social construction of ideologies of childhood and reproduction, the diversity outcome of teenage pregnancy as well as the social institutions who are interested and why, having in mind that religion establishes moral ideologies capable of shaping thoughts and behavior of a society.

Following the theories presented in the analytical framework, this study purposes an

analysis of the social construction of ideologies on age and reproduction about adolescent pregnancy in Brazil. Moreover, the religious feature of the country can shape behaviors and thoughts of Brazilian society. In order to analyze the adolescent pregnancy in Brazil, and how the religious feature connect adolescent pregnancy and poverty together, the socio-demographic profile of people in adolescent period was built. In this regards, we can notice predictors to pregnancy regarding historic aspects, socio-economic status, sex, race/color, educational, and religious-cultural features.

In order to reach this objective, an analytical qualitative research was conducted, where qualitative descriptive studies were the prevalence in order to embody the features that involves adolescent pregnancy. Concerning the exploratory studies, a general guideline to approach is to identify the most relevant features of teenage pregnancy and explore its possible bifurcation. In this sense, the historical approach on the subject of matter were necessary in order to gather the empirical data for testing hypothesis.

The intervene variables regarding adolescent pregnancy and poverty as well as the causes/motivations, are diverse and in big numbers, in this sense, the collection of all of them were not possible to achieve in this study. Some of them were collected from the theoretical framework and submitted to painstaking analysis: social norms, demographic profile, common sense, religious norms and beliefs were explored and organized, starting by the understanding that the concept of teenage pregnancy changed over the years and the concept

were impacted by the social context.

Since the adolescent pregnancy is frequently mentioned a social problem associated with poverty<sup>54</sup>, it fair enough to recognize that adolescent pregnancy relies on social context where the phenomenon were most observed. And as a phenomenon, the concept of adolescent pregnancy vary through the time<sup>55</sup>. In other words, being adolescent parents in 1950's is not the same that being a adolescent parents in 2010, or being a adolescent parents at 13 years old also is not the same of being adolescent parent at 17 years old, being adolescent parents married or not married, and etc. With regards in concept changes of adolescent pregnancy, from organic to conceptual<sup>56</sup>, this study considered theories that are able to explain these changes by focusing the social context, historical analysis and religious influences that the relationship between adolescent pregnancy and poverty was outlined as an object past studies.

Qualitative data were collected from the literature review, documental analysis, periodic publications from governmental institutions and non-governmental institutions in order to track the profile of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil and the relationship with poverty. Since Brazil is the placed in the international scene as a developing country<sup>57</sup>, poverty is

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<sup>54</sup> Demos, J., & Demos, V. (1969). Adolescence in Historical Perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 31(4), 632-638. doi:10.2307/349302

<sup>55</sup> Dias, A., Teixeira, M.(2010). Adolescent Pregnancy: A view over a complex phenomenon. *Ribeirão Preto*.

<sup>56</sup> Capelatto, I. (2012). A equação da afetividade: Como lidar com a raiva de crianças e adolescentes. 1. ed. *Campinas: Papirus 7 Mares*, 2012. v. 1. 108.

<sup>57</sup> [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print\\_br.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_br.html)

negative feature, capable to curb development. Reinforcing the negativity of poverty, the United Nations established as sustainable developmental global goal that eradication of poverty as the first one of seventeen objectives<sup>58</sup>. In this sense, it's possible to infer that Brazilian society have an global standard to reach in order to hold or enhance its position in the international scenario. Therefore, if adolescence pregnancy is related to poverty, this relation is exposed in a manner that is accepted by the international institution, in this case The United Nations – UN. In this sense, this relation is presented regardless the historical process changes and cultural influences on the observed phenomenon<sup>59</sup>. The track of outcomes regarding adolescence pregnancy is also neglected, because the relationship of teenage pregnancy and poverty already exists and it is accepted by society. However, if adolescent pregnant with low socio economic profile composes 18%<sup>60</sup> of the whole population, poverty, in the same path it can be related to the adolescent pregnancy, it also can give the social context where the phenomenon was observed with more frequency.

For the quantitative analyses, the data were collect from countries' vital statistic report and the database from international organizations such as the United Nations Statistic Division, World Bank and, others International and National Organizations reported in the glossary section of this study. The statistical data is the core of quantitative data in order to show the

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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<sup>59</sup> Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). The history of teenage childbearing as a social problem. *New York: Russel Sage Foundation*.

empirical analysis.

## 1.1 THE ADOLESCENCE PERIOD

Backing to the modern age, corresponding the XV Century, the adolescence's cultural-historic concept was inexistent; however, this is the same century, which correspond the raw differentiation between children and adults<sup>61</sup>. In the past, children's development was seen as an enlargement of physical aspects, belonging to their parents as things, in the same sense as objects<sup>62</sup>. History show us that in the past, the children were considered a small version of men<sup>63</sup> and the components which surrounded childhood development, like physical and mental growing, was a start point to the adolescence period definition<sup>64</sup>, which were mostly represented by ritess passage<sup>65</sup>. In this sense, in many cultures, the differentiation between a child and a man was given by rites passages<sup>66</sup>. The submission of

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<sup>61</sup> Ariés, P. (1962). *Centuries of childhood: A social history of family life*. (R. Baldick, Trans.). New York, NY: Random House.

<sup>62</sup> Ariés, P. (1962). *Centuries of childhood: A social history of family life* (R. Baldick, Trans.). New York, NY: Random House.

<sup>63</sup> Cano, M., Ferriani, M. (2000) Sexualidade na adolescência: um estudo bibliográfico. *Revista Latino Americana de Enfermagem*. Ribeirão Preto, v. 8, n. 2, p. 18-24.

<sup>64</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). *The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction*. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Gennep, C. (1909). *Les rites de passage*.

<sup>66</sup> Turner, Victor W. (1969). *The Ritual Process*. Penguin.

individuals to the ritess passage, where a child boy become a man<sup>67</sup> and was ready for the adult life, regardless his physical or mental conditions. There was a role and expectation towards the “new man”, which should be fulfilled in front of society. For the girls, they became women after menarche<sup>68</sup>. The menarche was a signal that women were ready for giving birth, also regardless they age, mental or physical conditions. In other words:

“Menstruation has always been surrounded by a rich mythology, characterized not only by aspects regarded as positive, but also as negative. As I always emphasize, this periodic uterine bleeding is an important archetypal symbol of women's nature, and its regular occurrence is the more evident external sign of the cyclical feature that characterizes female physiology. The coming of menstruation indicates both the end of a cycle that terminates and the beginning of a new one.” Nelson Soucasaux (1990).

The cycle mentioned by the author is regarding the end of childhood and initiation of adult life<sup>69</sup>.

Every society has its own rites that underpins this passage and construction of concepts about what that passage would mean. For now and regardless any belief system, these

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<sup>67</sup> Pais, J. (2009). *The youth as stage of life: rites of passage to rites of impasse*. *Saúde Soc. São Paulo*, v.18, No. 3, p.371-381.

<sup>68</sup> [http://www.nelsonginecologia.med.br/symbmenstr\\_engl.htm](http://www.nelsonginecologia.med.br/symbmenstr_engl.htm)

<sup>69</sup> Source: <http://www.mum.org/endocrin.htm>



passages named menarche and spermarche<sup>70</sup> were also a symbol of sexual maturity, so people could reproduce themselves after these findings. In this sense, the rites passages concerns a biological factor combined with societal approach that were given in agreement with the time and social acceptance<sup>71</sup>. For example, in the Brazilian indigenous community named Sateré Mawé, it is considered normal to make the differentiation between a man and a boy by exposing the boys to Bullet Ant bites. The bites cause skin eruption, high fever and deep pain; however, if the boy is able to handle the insect bites for ten minutes without crying or fall to the death, he had become a man, a warrior and a hunter<sup>72</sup>, holding a social position between his tribe. The rite were marked the passages, however, adolescence period still hadn't clear definition, in this sense, it is understood that the psychology of the adolescent has a long past with a short history<sup>73,74</sup>.

In Brazil, the process of adolescence development was remarked through social formation. The distinction regarding the life periods among male and females slaves, white men, and women, had happened until the end of the XIX century. Regarding the features concerning the psychologic and social of Brazilian people, Reis (1993) noticed that the end of the first childhood for the slaves and white boys concerned five years old. Civiletti's

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<sup>70</sup> Joseph Suad (2003). *Encyclopedia of Women & Islamic Cultures*. P.68.

<sup>71</sup> Gennep, C. (1909). *Les rites de passage*.

<sup>72</sup> Source: <https://sites.psu.edu/mgeitnerrcl/2013/11/16/satere-mawe-initiation/>

<sup>73</sup> Pfromm Netto, S. (1979). *Psicologia da adolescência*. São Paulo: Pioneira.

<sup>74</sup> Steinberg, L., & Lerner, R. M. (2004). The scientific study of adolescence: A brief history. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 24, 45-54

(1991) studies showed that between six to twelve years old, there are registers of slavery practices in adjunct assistance. From twelve and beyond, male and female slaves were seen as adults regarding work and sexuality<sup>75</sup>. In other words, the essence of slavery was regarding work production and sexual reproduction.

The passage to the adult age had happened in the same age for the white and black people, but the differences were regarding the kind of activities that were developed by white men and the black slaves. The white ones were named "young lord" and the slaves were only adults, ready for work. Different from the European, Brazilians had had the exclusive role on the lordly orders and slavery obedience<sup>76</sup>.

Regarding women, at that time, it was common to get married early with men aged seventy or more. Whether girl's menarche had happened by 12, it was common that after this happening, the aristocrats arranged their daughters get married at that age or even earlier, depending on the political interest<sup>77</sup>. During this time, white and black girls were deprived of education, under the patriarchal tyranny from the lords over their slaves or by their parents, which transferred the tyranny roles to their future husbands<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Reis. A. (1993). O discurso da saúde pública sobre adolescentes grávidas. *Avatares. São Paulo: Faculdade de saúde pública. Universidade de São Paulo – USP.*

<sup>76</sup> Reis. A. (1993). O discurso da saúde pública sobre adolescentes grávidas. *Avatares. São Paulo: Faculdade de saúde pública. Universidade de São Paulo – USP.*

<sup>77</sup> Freyre G. (1966). Casa grande e senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal. 13a. Edição. Liv. José Olympio. Rio de Janeiro

<sup>78</sup> Freyre G. (1966). Casa grande e senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal. 13a. Edição. Liv. José Olympio. Rio de Janeiro

Once the tyranny was above the white girls, they also were capable to transfer that to their slaves by ordering the removal of the black girl's teeth. One of the reasons for this act of cruelty is regarding the white women's husband depravation, which had impregnated the black slaves<sup>79</sup>

This scenario of submission spread the colonial style driven by social interests regarding commerce development<sup>80</sup> from the rural to the metropolitan cities, in this sense women were locked at home and were inexistent to the society. However, the slavery abolition promoted another scenario to the Brazilian women. They abandoned their old internal function regarding deprivation, reproduction, and the exclusive obedience to their husbands by holding their children and exposing them into new social institutions<sup>81</sup>. Women had become an individual that now were seen in the society because the slavers were not permitted anymore. Now these women had the sacred role by becoming mothers<sup>82</sup>.

Over the years the adolescent period recognition that we understand by today started to be drawn only by nineteenth and twentieth centuries<sup>83</sup>. These centuries involved new events

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<sup>79</sup> Freyre G. (1966). *Casa grande e senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal*. 13a. Edição. Liv. José Olympio. Rio de Janeiro

<sup>80</sup> Reis. A. (1993). *O discurso da saúde pública sobre adolescentes grávidas. Avatares*. São Paulo: Faculdade de saúde pública. Universidade de São Paulo – USP.

<sup>81</sup> In this case, churches and schools

<sup>82</sup> Freyre G. (1966). *Casa grande e senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal*. 13a. Edição. Liv. José Olympio. Rio de Janeiro

<sup>83</sup> Hamilton G. (2000). *Mapping a History of Adolescence and literature for Adolescents*. ALAN Conference. Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

regarding, social, demographic, and cultural transformations, as aforementioned, the slavery abolition, the industrial revolution, the world wars, etc. These events seem to have propitiated the establishment of adolescence as a distinct period of human development<sup>84</sup>.

Currently, the contemporary definition of adolescence are:

1 – A period was draw by the World Health Organization – WHO gave the comprehension of the adolescence, human beings aged from 10 to 19 years old that are facing physical, mental and psychological development.<sup>85</sup>

2 - Adolescence is a stage of life in which the personality is in the final phase of structuring. This final phase includes sexuality as mainly structuring element of the identity of the adolescent.<sup>86</sup>

3 – Adolescence starts with the bodily changes of puberty and ends with the social, professional and economic insertion adult society.<sup>87</sup>

4 - Adolescence includes cognitive, social, and perspective changes in life<sup>88</sup>.

5 - Adolescence as the second great leap for life: the leap toward oneself, as an individual being.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Kimmel, D. C., & Weiner, I.B. (1998). *La adolescencia: una transición del desarrollo*. Barcelona: Ariel.

<sup>85</sup> [http://www.who.int/topics/adolescent\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/adolescent_health/en/)

<sup>86</sup> Osório, L.C. *Adolescente hoje*. (1992) 2. ed. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas.

<sup>87</sup> Formigli, V. L. A., Costa, M. C. O., & Porto, L. A. (2000). Evaluation of a comprehensive adolescent health care service. *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, 16, 831-841

<sup>88</sup> Martins, P. O., Trindade, Z. A., & Almeida, A. M. O. (2003). O ter e o ser: representações sociais da adolescência entre adolescentes de inserção urbana e rural. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, 16,555-568.

<sup>89</sup> Kalina, E., & Laufer, H. (1974). Aos pais de adolescentes. *Rio de Janeiro: Cobra Morato*.

6 - At first sight, adolescence is linked to age, therefore, referring to biology - to the state and capacity of the body.<sup>90</sup>

7 - A life stage characterized by growing opportunities, capacities, aspirations, energy and creativity, but also significant vulnerability<sup>91</sup>.

The historical definition of humanity regarding the adolescence period, exposed different definition, however, there is a common sense that adolescence is understood as a process of development, which is under historical-cultural conditions, chronological age, puberty and body changes. However, adolescence period is not a bridge between childhood and adult life, but a phase of adjustments to reach adult life instead<sup>92</sup>.

The concept of adolescence does not concern only the body and mental changes, despite these two key features are the most cited and analyzed by scholars, regardless the social context that the adolescent is part. Thus, the definition of adolescence acquired different meanings throughout the history, and therefore it is only possible to understand it by building a socio-historical profile, which considers the social context as important as the physical and psychological ones.

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<sup>90</sup> Santos, N. C., & Oliveira, R. V. C. (2003). A representação social do ser adolescente: um passo decisivo na promoção da saúde. *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva*, 8, 669-679.

<sup>91</sup> Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, General comment No. 20 on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence, CRC/C/GC/20, <http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents/general-comment-on-adolescence/>

<sup>92</sup> Campos, G.F.(2008). Adolescence: What crisis we are talking about?. *Campinas*.

## CHAPTER 2: THE ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY AND POVERTY RELATIONSHIP: SOCIAL PROFILE: CULTURAL VALUES, IDENTITY AND GENDER

The subject of adolescence pregnancy emerged as an object of research together with the baby boom during the 1960`s when many teenagers gave birth in the US<sup>93</sup>. At the same period, the definition of what would be adolescence period also gained focus international scenario<sup>94</sup> together with other movements (e.g. feminism and gay movements). Before 1960`s pregnancy is accepted that biologically, human beings can reproduce themselves after a certain period<sup>95</sup>. Nevertheless, socially, adolescent pregnancy have a different meaning, explored in this chapter. As aforementioned, adolescent pregnancy is a multifaceted social problem and social phenomena<sup>96</sup> which concerns international attention.

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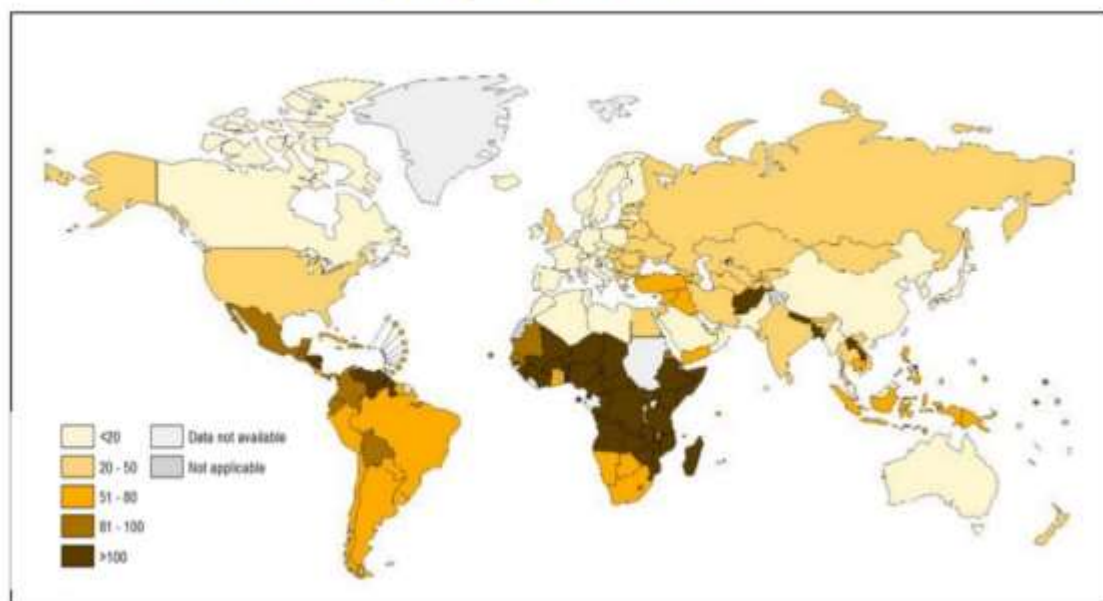
<sup>93</sup> Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). *Destinies of the disadvantages: The politics of teenage childbearing*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

<sup>94</sup> Demos, J., & Demos, V. (1969). Adolescence in Historical Perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 31(4), 632-638. doi:10.2307/349302

<sup>95</sup> Source: <https://www.webmd.com/baby/understanding-conception#1>

<sup>96</sup> Source: <https://www.unicef.org/>

Adolescent fertility rate per 1,000, 2000-2010



Source: WHO, 2012d

In this sense, the social context that the adolescent is part, and the social activities developed and practiced inside this context, employment, educational background, color and gender are elements that build not only the Brazilian adolescent's profile, but they are also predictors to the adolescent pregnancy.<sup>97</sup>

Given the profile of the popular adolescent in Brazil, this chapter analyzed the social spheres where the phenomenon of adolescent pregnancy occurred in higher frequency, considering the fact that adolescent pregnancy is not a synonym to unwanted or unplanned pregnancy or childbearing. In this sense, adolescent pregnancy in Brazil has identity and characteristics that are beyond causes and effects, in other words, adolescent pregnancy also

<sup>97</sup> Mollborn, S. (2010). Exploring Variation in Teenage Mothers' and Fathers' Educational Attainment. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 42(3), 152-159. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20752641>

has gender and motivations<sup>98</sup> that relies on cultural features.

Regarding the context of adolescent pregnancy and its definition, the adolescent female side is emphasized while the male side of adolescent pregnancy is few explored. Since the gap on gender was identified, the female side was also focused in this study, citing the adolescent male side as always as possible. Notwithstanding the above, studies from the Institute for Applied Economic Research - IPEA<sup>99</sup>, through UNDP's data pointed out that there were a pattern in growing numbers of poor people around the world and the biggest part of these numbers were made of women. In this sense, the Institute brought the concept of poverty's feminization in its research in order to verify this phenomenon in Brazil.

Diana Pearce first gave this concept in 1978, was responsible for the concept of poverty's feminization in the United States, where she demonstrated that the proportion of regular women and women chief family among poor people was growing in a disproportional numbers, if compared with men in the same socio-economic situation<sup>100</sup>. Studies on gender and poverty leveraged in the international scenario since 1975<sup>101</sup>, caring for the same issues: women and poverty. Since then, the United Nations Woman had had promote conferences

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<sup>98</sup> Bion, W.R. (1962). *Learning from Experience*. London: Tavistock.

<sup>99</sup> [http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4726](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4726)

<sup>100</sup> Pearce, Diana (1990). The Feminization of Poverty. *Journal for Peace and Justice Studies* 2 (1):1-20.

<sup>101</sup> -First World Conference on Women, Mexico City, 1975.

- Second World Conference on Women, Copenhagen, 1980.

- Third World Conference on Women, Nairobi, 1985.

- Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995.



regarding poverty's feminization and the major issues were about gender equality, anti-violence measures and poverty. Regarding poverty's feminization, the United Nations says:

“In the past decade the number of women living in poverty has increased disproportionately to the number of men, particularly in the developing countries. The feminization of poverty has also recently become a significant problem in the countries with economies in transition as a short-term consequence of the process of political, economic and social transformation. In addition to economic factors, the rigidity of socially ascribed gender roles and women's limited access to power, education, training and productive resources as well as other emerging factors that may lead to insecurity for families are also responsible. The failure to adequately mainstream a gender perspective in all economic analysis and planning and to address the structural causes of poverty is also a contributing factor.” – United Nation Women, IV Conference, Beijing, 1995.

The Fourth UN's Conference in 1995<sup>102</sup> referred an increasing number of women in poverty about two decades ago, nevertheless, the IPEA's study pointed out that despite of the growing pattern of poverty's feminization in the word it was not found in Brazil, from 1983

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<sup>102</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/poverty.htm>

to 2003<sup>103</sup>. However, IPEA advocates that studies related to gender should be promoted in Brazil, especially studies on women public policies.

Despite the world and the IPEA's perception toward the importance of research on women, poverty is an independent variable concerning all genders, however, the issues of adolescence pregnancy have a high burden on women than men<sup>104</sup>. The academic production regarding adolescent pregnancy are more focused to the female side as a judgmental issue, in the sense, the ones who have a womb are the entire responsible to take care of the outcomes of a pregnancy, including the poverty heritage.

In this sense, Cruz, Carvalho and Irffi (2016)<sup>105</sup> researched exclusively the female side of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil, regarding socioeconomic, demographic, cultural, regional and behavioral characteristic of Brazilian women aged from 10 to 19 years old based on National Demographic and Health Survey in Brazil - PNDS-DHS' data in its third edition that concerned the year 2006, through *logit* methodology. The research was on behalf of the Brazilian Center of Analysis and Planning – CEBRAP, in 2009. This study found out that color women<sup>106</sup> aged from 10 to 19 years old, living in rural areas and in Northeast region from Brazil, raised out of religious principles, which did not used any contraceptive methods

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<sup>103</sup> [http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4726](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4726)

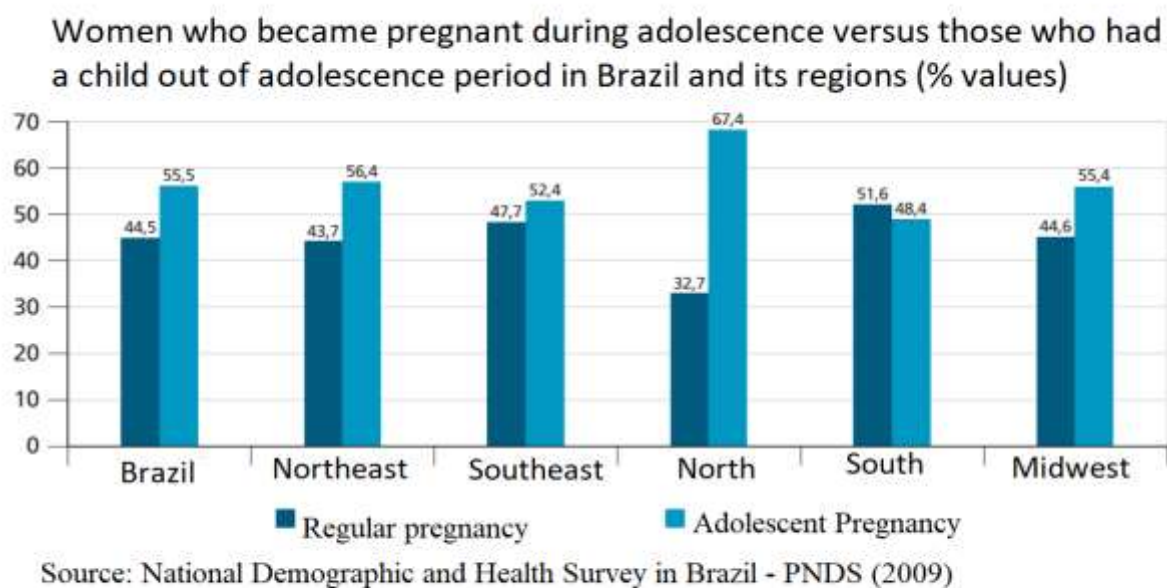
<sup>104</sup> Source: <http://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/RevistaGauchadeEnfermagem/article/view/4634>

<sup>105</sup> Cruz MS, Carvalho FJV, Irffi G. Perfil socioeconômico, demográfico, cultural, regional e comportamental da gravidez na adolescência no Brasil. *Rev. Plan. Pol. Públicas*. 2016;46:243-66.

<sup>106</sup> This data was retrieved from IBGE's 2010 census

have had a higher chances to be pregnant at adolescent period. The study described adolescent pregnancy as negative happening in women life, however, there are not any register or further studies regarding the outcomes of adolescent pregnancy.

The tables below, showed the adolescent mothers in Brazil and the demographic concentration from them. The graphics concern women data only.



The table 10 showed that most of adolescent pregnancies in Brazil occurred in the North region, concerning almost 70% of the total amount before 19 years old.

Women who became pregnant during adolescence by age group in Brazil and regions (% values)



Source: National Demographic and Health Survey in Brazil - PNDS (2009)

Table 11 - Midwest, North and Northeast are the regions where adolescent pregnancy were registered in higher percentage. These areas correspond the less developed areas in Brazil<sup>107108109</sup>.

<sup>107</sup> Araújo, T. (2000) Ensaios sobre o desenvolvimento brasileiro, heranças e urgências. *Rio de Janeiro: REVAN, FASE..*

<sup>108</sup> Benko, G., Lipietz. (1994) A. O novo debate regional: As regiões ganhadoras – distritos e redes: os novos paradigmas da geografia econômica. *Lisboa: Celta, Oeiras, 1994.*

<sup>109</sup> Viana, M. (2005) A articulação regional no Grande ABC. In.: CRUZ, José Luiz Vianna da (Org.). Brasil, o desafio da diversidade: experiências de desenvolvimento regional. *Rio de Janeiro: Ed. SENAC Nacional.*



The GDP data from table 13 confirms the developmental regions in Brazil, where the numbers of adolescent pregnancy cases are higher.

Figueredo (2001) researched the risks related to the adolescent pregnancy and prevention throughout female side of the subject of matter. She explained the adolescent pregnancy as a non-normative event of the society<sup>110</sup> because the adolescent mother is not ready to assume the motherhood role due to cognitive, emotional, social and economic issues. The emphasis is regarding the mental health of adolescent mother, including the body acceptance and identity development. The author's perception showed that the major causes of the adolescent pregnancy are related to the lack of education regarding sexual

<sup>110</sup> Figueiredo, B. (2001) Maternidade na adolescência: Do risco à prevenção. *Revista Portuguesa de Psicossomática*, vol. 3, núm. 2, pp. 221-238.

development<sup>111</sup>, emphasizing that the adolescent period in itself means the lack of knowledge regarding sexuality.

Considering the roadblocks of identity during the adolescence period, adolescents tends to anticipate plans for future (in this case maternity) seeing those plans as remedy that is capable to ameliorate the adolescent's social situation, and this is a trigger that guiding them throughout unconsciously behaviors and future idealization without measuring childbearing demand<sup>112</sup>. Still on identity issues, this factor subdivided the adolescent pregnancy, by differing the concepts of non-planned, planned and unwanted pregnancies. The adolescence period is a process of development, where the individuals search for their position in the society, in this sense, being a mother or a father is also an identity<sup>113</sup>.

Based on the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health – NLSAH and the National Survey of Family – NSFG, Rocca, Doherty, Padian, Hubbard and Minnis (2010) conducted a research regarding the pregnancy intentions among Latinas adolescent. In their studies, they found out that by 2002, the desire for pregnancy is also a key factor for understanding the subject of matter among adolescent Latinas. In agreement with this research, the feature that Involve the Latinas adolescents toward the pregnancy desire are

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<sup>111</sup> Wellings k., Wadsworth J., Johnson A., Field J., *et al.* (1996) Teenage sexuality, fertility and life chances. A report prepared for the Department of Health using data from the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles.

<sup>112</sup> Sorensen R. (1973). Adolescent sexuality in contemporary America. New York: World Publishing.

<sup>113</sup> Capelatto. I. (2012). A equação da afetividade: Como lidar com a raiva de crianças e adolescentes. 1. ed. Campinas: Papirus 7 Mares, 2012. v. 1. 108.

positively associated to risk factors: lower socioeconomic status, poor education (including low education aspirations) and old male partner, controlling younger female<sup>114115116</sup>.

In between the risks factors, the authors brought a cultural perspective regarding adolescent pregnancy, advocating that the cultural context, familiar and individual factors are capable to shape the intentions of pregnancy among Latinas adolescent<sup>117</sup>. In this sense, the research understands that Latinas get pregnant in order to gain respect from their community and family. Once adolescent Latina got pregnant, they became someone beyond the conflictual identity aspect of adolescent, they became mother<sup>118</sup>. The structural risks factors and adolescent pregnancy in the author's view is caused, in part, by adolescent pregnancy intentions, by measuring pregnancy wantedness among Latinas.

In Brazil, the search for identity and self-acceptation during the adolescent period were also pointed out as one of the motivations for pregnancy. Neuhouser (1998) explained how

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<sup>114</sup> Bruckner H, Martin A and Bearman PS. (2004), Ambivalence and pregnancy: adolescents' attitudes, contraceptive use and pregnancy. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 36(6):248-257. 10.

<sup>115</sup> Jaccard J, Dodge T and Dittus P.(2003) Do adolescents want to avoid pregnancy? Attitudes toward pregnancy as predictors of pregnancy, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 33(2):79-83. 11.

<sup>116</sup> Cowley C and Farley T. (2001). Adolescent girls' attitudes toward pregnancy: the importance of asking what the boyfriend wants. *Journal of Family Practice*, 50(7):603-607. 12.

<sup>117</sup> Rocca, C. H., Doherty, I., Padian, N. S., Hubbard, A. E., & Minnis, A. M. (2010). Pregnancy Intentions and Teenage Pregnancy Among Latinas: A Mediation Analysis. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 42(3), 186-196. doi:10.1363/4218610

<sup>118</sup> Rocca, C. H., Doherty, I., Padian, N. S., Hubbard, A. E., & Minnis, A. M. (2010). Pregnancy Intentions and Teenage Pregnancy Among Latinas: A Mediation Analysis. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 42(3), 186-196. doi:10.1363/4218610



gendered identities arose in the intersection of structure and culture, searching for answers that explain how culture shapes gender roles<sup>119</sup>. Concerning genders, they are not constructed free from structural restraint barrier regarding economic, physical and biological limitations, likewise, people's action is not completely driven through structural location and neither people are independent to build their own behaviors<sup>120</sup>. In this sense, structural and cultural are synonyms because all structures are inevitable cultural<sup>121</sup>. Moreover, structures are constituted by cultural schemas and sets of resources that are capable to empower and strain social action, trending to be reproduce by that action<sup>122</sup>. Therefore, "gendered actions flows from the intersection of a particular set of cultural gender norms with a set of material resources<sup>123</sup>". Considering this perspective, it was possible to infer that inside a cultural context, that embraces all genders and shape thoughts, women and men have different roles, and identity issues are part of these roles.

Regarding the popular Brazilian women, the poverty structure is a limitation that offers

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<sup>119</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>120</sup> Berger, P., Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. Doubleday

<sup>121</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>122</sup> Sewell, W. Jr. (1992). A theory of structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformations. *American Journal of Sociology* 98:1-29.

<sup>123</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.



few positive identities, and being a mother is one of this positive identity, which is reinforced not only by poverty structure but also for the religion belief systems in the country<sup>124</sup>.

Regarding the Brazilian features of the fatherhood in the adolescent period, being a biological father differs from being a social father. Neuhouser's (1998) research showed a consensus between men and women about the social father, who is the one who takes the financial responsibility for keeping the household and their offspring. However, this position is not a simple task due to the kind of job the adolescent men are able to develop, the low salary, unofficial jobs, violence, drug traffic and other stalemates<sup>125</sup>. As the opposite to the women, the identity of fatherhood in Brazil is an option for male adolescent, whether they are not fathers, they also have the possibility to engage in criminality, therefore, adolescents male are more frequently found in criminality than adolescent women<sup>126</sup>.

According to a survey, realized in 2013 by the Secretariat of Human Rights - SDH on behalf of the Presidency of the Republic - PR, showed that the male adolescent profile that were inside criminality.

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<sup>124</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>125</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>126</sup> Presidência da República. Secretaria de Direitos Humanos. (2011). *Atendimento socioeducativo ao adolescente em conflito com a lei: levantamento nacional*. Brasília: SDH.

The adolescents in conflict with the law, that fulfilled socio educative measure of freedom deprivation, 95% were males and about 60% were aged between 16 and 18 years, and 49, 2% declared themselves as pardo<sup>127</sup>, while 23,6% declared themselves as black people.<sup>128129</sup>.

UNICEF reinforced these data in the next year through the Index of Adolescent Homicide – IHA, showed that male adolescent have 13, 52% more chances to be killed through fire guns than adolescent female, black adolescent male have 2, 88 % higher chances to become victim of homicide than white ones<sup>130</sup>.

Culturally, Brazilian identities that surround adolescence period, reinforces the idea that women are supposed to be mothers, even if they are lack of resources for that, they will not abandon the identity<sup>131</sup> and men are expected to show his masculinity through risks behavior, and supply household. In a poverty scenario, where the positive identities are few, women are evaluated through her capacity for bearing a child and men working outside home, no matter the source of the resources (if honest work or criminality).

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<sup>127</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press

<sup>128</sup> Atendimento socioeducativo ao adolescente em conflito com a lei: levantamento nacional. (2011) *Presidência da República. Secretaria de Direitos Humanos. Brasília: SDH.*

<sup>129</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/br\\_sabrep11.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/br_sabrep11.pdf)

<sup>130</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/resources\\_37216.html](https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/resources_37216.html)

<sup>131</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press

The daily life in the environment that surround the Brazilian popular adolescent is one of the reasons that can explain the adolescent pregnancy in the nowadays.

Geronimus (1987) advocated that the preconditions for adolescent pregnancy is poverty and the negativity related to that is due to the failure of researches that did not recognized the relationship between adolescent pregnancy and poverty<sup>132</sup>, in other words, the adolescent who beard a child were living in a scenario of disadvantages before the pregnancy. Moreover, she added that when this scenario is taken in consideration, the adolescent parenting became a trivial phenomenon and even be positive. Positive in the sense that, the newborns can serve as motivations to the adolescents for getting a better life, even if this better life means to rely on governmental welfare system.<sup>133</sup>

## 2.1 THE ADOLESCENT'S SEXUAL LIFE INITIATION IN BRAZIL

In many societies, it is common to observe that the individuals start their sexual life during the adolescence period<sup>134</sup>. The initiation of sexual life among adolescent is a fact that concerns not only the natural and biological issues, but also an exposition into new situations whose aspects vary from sexual and mental diseases and also the possibility, an unwanted and

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<sup>132</sup> Geronimus, A. (1987). On teenage childbearing in the United States. *Population and Development Review*, 13(2), 245-79

<sup>133</sup> Geronimus, A. (1987). On teenage childbearing in the United States. *Population and Development Review*, 13(2), 245-79

<sup>134</sup> Ma Q, Ono-Kihara M, Cong L, Xu G, Pan X, Zamani S, et al. (2009). Early initiation of sexual activity: a risk factor for sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection, and unwanted pregnancy among university students in China. *BMC Public Health* (111):1-8. Doi: 10.1186/1471-2458-9-111

unplanned pregnancy<sup>135136</sup>. In Brazil, the medium age for sexual life initiation is about 15 years old<sup>137</sup>, despite the registered cases of teenage mothers between 10 to 14 years old<sup>138</sup>.

Goldenberg (1984) wrote about the sexual life initiation in Brazil concerning the colonization period, when the Catholic Church played a role in order to eradicate the unofficial relations that were predominant among popular people<sup>139</sup>. In this case, unofficial means the heterosexual relation without the blessing of god. The author showed that the Catholic Church in that period advocated the patriarchal family model. Therefore, the permissiveness for men's lust and sexual pleasure were supposed to happen out of his home and with prostitutes or poorer women<sup>140</sup>. In this sense, these women became the preferred sexual partnership of white men and for sexual life initiation of the white boys.

In the contemporary scene of sexual life initiation, Levisky (1998) adverted about the role of Brazilian TV media. According to him, the popular media<sup>141</sup> focuses on aspects such as egocentricity, seduction and vanity, highlighting a culture of individualism and

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<sup>135</sup> O'Donnell L, O'Donnell CR, Stueve A. Early sexual initiation and subsequent sex-related risks among urban minority youth: the reach for health study. *Family Planning Perspective* 2001; 33(6): 268-75.

<sup>136</sup> Madkour AS, Farhat T, Halpern CT, Godeau E, Gabhainn SN. Early adolescent sexual initiation as a problem behavior: a comparative study of five nations. *J Adolescent Health* 2010; 47(4): 389-98.

<sup>137</sup> <http://www.brasil.gov.br/editoria/saude/2012/04/campanhas-educativas-previnem-a-gravidez-precoce-no-pais>

<sup>138</sup> Source: <http://www2.datasus.gov.br/DATASUS/index.php?area=0205>

<sup>139</sup> Goldenberg, M. (1984). *Sexual Education: A proposal to a challenge*. 2. ed. São Paulo: Cortez.

<sup>140</sup> The author described as poor women the white, black, mixed, and indigenous women.

<sup>141</sup> Popular media differs from Christian media because of accessibility and audience

consumerism<sup>142</sup>. Moreover, he emphasizes the human body's banalization by noticing that people became an object of consumerism. In his view, the banalization is a form of implicit violence that jeopardize the individual's psychic ability to reflect and the capacity for developing affective relationships, and foremost, to analyze the reality. In this sense, the virtual and real are confused with each other in a higher speed, creating and transmitting values that are idealized models of identification<sup>143</sup>.

Brazil is a highly sexualized society regarding cultural aspects. TV soap operas, funk music with explicit lyrics regarding sex, Brazilian Carnaval are elements that confirms these cultural features. In the other hand, Brazil is also the biggest Catholic country in the world.<sup>144145</sup>

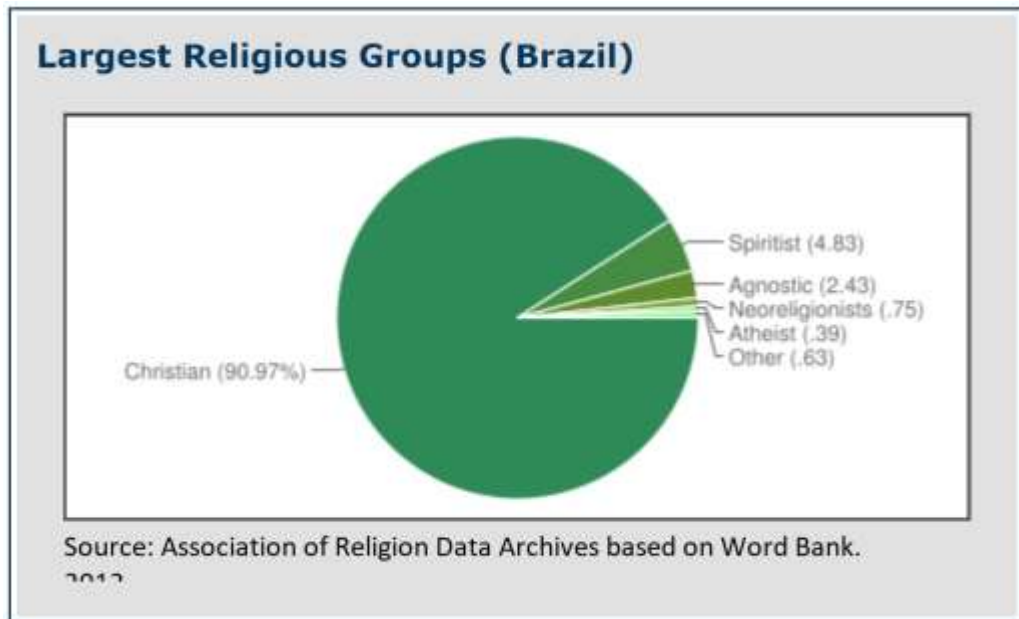


<sup>142</sup> Levisky, D.L. (1998). *Adolescence through the path of violence: Psicanalisis Social Practices* (pp. 145-157). São Paulo: Casa do Psicólogo.

<sup>143</sup> Levisky, D.L. (1998). *Adolescência pelos caminhos da violência: a psicanálise na prática social*. (pp. 145-157). São Paulo: Casa do Psicólogo.

<sup>144</sup>[http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3a28%3bcountryCode%3a76%3bsexCode%3a0&c=2,3,6,8,10,12,14,15,16&s=\\_countryEnglishNameOrderBy:asc,refYear:desc,areaCode:asc&v=1](http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3a28%3bcountryCode%3a76%3bsexCode%3a0&c=2,3,6,8,10,12,14,15,16&s=_countryEnglishNameOrderBy:asc,refYear:desc,areaCode:asc&v=1)

<sup>145</sup>[https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/apps/atlas/pdf/Pag\\_203\\_Religi%C3%A3o\\_Evang\\_miss%C3%A3o\\_Evang\\_pen\\_tecostal\\_Evang\\_nao%20determinada\\_Diversidade%20cultural.pdf](https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/apps/atlas/pdf/Pag_203_Religi%C3%A3o_Evang_miss%C3%A3o_Evang_pen_tecostal_Evang_nao%20determinada_Diversidade%20cultural.pdf)



Therefore, the Christian media also plays an important role in order to reinforce the idealization toward sexual life initiation. Christian people are supposed to live their lives in agreement with god's law"<sup>146</sup>, and the laws are written in the holy bible.

Sexual Immorality "12 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13 You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. 18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person

<sup>146</sup> Holy Bible, Romans 13, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+13&version=TLB>

commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians. Chapter 6 verses 12 to 20. Holy Bible. New International Version).

In this sense, Brazilian people interpreted from the holy bible says that premarital sex is a sin<sup>147148149150</sup>. Despite the guidance from the holy bible regarding sex, love, and marriage, Christians in Brazil have usually developing their own moral codes<sup>151</sup>, which are explained in the next chapter.

Regarding the gender differences in the sexual life initiation, Heilborn (2007), through GRAVAD, noticed that the first sexual relations happens earlier among adolescent males rather females<sup>152</sup>, despite the heterogeneity on studies regarding this subject, the author also noticed that it is not separated by social class, gender and race. Despite this limitation, she pointed out that, there are differences levels concerning the factors that influenced the

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<sup>147</sup> [https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/atos\\_dos\\_apostolos\\_15\\_29/](https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/atos_dos_apostolos_15_29/) Holy Bible book of Acts 15:29

<sup>148</sup> [https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/hebreus\\_13\\_4/](https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/hebreus_13_4/) Holy Bible book of Hebrews 13:4

<sup>149</sup> [https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/1\\_corintios\\_7\\_1-2/](https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/1_corintios_7_1-2/) Holy Bible book of I Corinthians 7:1-2

<sup>150</sup> [https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/1\\_corintios\\_6\\_18-19/](https://www.bibliaon.com/versiculo/1_corintios_6_18-19/) Holy Bible book of I Corinthians 6:18-19

<sup>151</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>

<sup>152</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

adolescents into sex<sup>153</sup>. In this sense, as earlier the adolescent male developed adulthood activities activities, as earlier sexual life initiation begins<sup>154</sup>. Regarding adolescent female, the behavior relied on the diversity of the backgrounds, for example the years of education that the adolescent's female mother had had, the income level of families and environment<sup>155</sup>. Heilborn's (2007) studies showed that the poorest adolescent female were noticed to initiate their sexual life earlier and had another pattern of than boys. In this sense, the girls' choices of partners were given by the stability of the relationship or in a minor part, with husband, and the boys' choices with girlfriends or with sexual workers.

| First sexual relation         | Brazilian Girls (%) | Brazilian Boys (%) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Boyfriends/Girlfriend         | 86%                 | 45%                |
| Husband/Wife                  | 4%                  | No data            |
| Casual Partner/Sexual Workers | 9%                  | 5%                 |

<sup>153</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

<sup>154</sup> Galland, O. (1997). *Sociologie de la jeunesse. Paris: Armand Collin.*

<sup>155</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>



This table was based on data provided by Heilborn based on GRAVAD studies, however, the variable “wife” were not available and is not describe in this study. Regarding adolescent’s contraception in their first sexual intercourse, the data varied between 54% to 84% of the adolescent from both sex, however, this value varied with the increase or decrease of adolescent and adolescent’s parent education level. Poorest the level of education, highest chances of first sexual relation unprotected<sup>156</sup>.

Regarding the general overview of the Brazilian first intercourse initiation, there is an implicit idea that poorest is a society, more religious it is<sup>157158159</sup>. In this sense, families have had few or none sexual education and consequently, they are not able to talk about sex or bring their sons and daughters to receive the free information and birth control because of the idealization of sexual life initiation based on the Christian mythology.




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<sup>156</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

<sup>157</sup> Source: <http://news.gallup.com/poll/116449/Religion-Provides-Emotional-Boost-World-Poor.aspx>

<sup>158</sup> Source: <https://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2015/04/24/do-strong-religious-beliefs-stifle-innovation/>

<sup>159</sup> Source: [https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/04/opinion/04blow.html?\\_r=1&th&emc=th](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/04/opinion/04blow.html?_r=1&th&emc=th)

### 3. The Social Construction of Ideologies on Childhood and Reproduction

In many circumstances, humanity seems to follow patterns of behavior that repeated through the years. However, once the values change, the norms toward a determined pattern will also change and some features from the old pattern will be kept or aggregated to other patterns or they can simply be forgotten. In other words, we build knowledge that endures while it is pertinent to the society.<sup>160</sup> In the case of adolescence period, it was perceived as changes towards the utilitarianism.<sup>161</sup> It was noticed in Brazil's history that the arranged marriage was seen as normative, as well as women getting pregnant right after their menarche. Through the time, we have seen that ideologies toward age have been constructed and this was a relevant fact to define the adolescence period. Where the presence of groups regarding age, there was societal expectation towards behaviors, in agreement with some patterned behaviors. Groups would be differentiated from each other through those patterned behaviors.

Based on the perception about age, Murcott (1980) exposes the neglected features of the social construction of adolescent pregnancy. She advocated that the illegitimacy and norms

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<sup>160</sup> Plastino, C. (2017). Elementos para uma antropologia além do patriarcado. *Caliban (La Habana)*, v. 1, p. 37.

<sup>161</sup> A concept based on John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) who systematized the utility principle and was able to apply it to concrete questions in various fields of science, based on the idea that actions are good when they tend to promote happiness and bad when they tend to promote the opposite of happiness.

against adolescent pregnancy rely on the contemporary ideologies of the childhood period.<sup>162</sup>

According to the author, these ideologies upon childhood were misunderstood with the idea of socialization; childhood period was misunderstood with children. Therefore, the studies regarding childhood in the past were most about socialization and education. Children were supposed to fulfill educational demands and sociology was in charge of studies on social order by looking over children.<sup>163</sup> In this sense, sociology determined behaviors of children,

based on its socialization and the outcomes of those expected behavior were the deviant<sup>164</sup>.

The other expected behavior is the incompleteness of socialization. In the author's words, "those who break the rules and those who have fully yet to learn the rules". Murcott (1980) found out the process of socialization gave children an exclusive world, through an interactive view, but her major concerns is not about the socialization but the professional

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<sup>162</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>163</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>164</sup> The author mention Deviant as the one who breaks the rules, but as a complemental understanding, other definition was provided in this footnote: Deviant behavior is an unacceptable behavior or action that is unorthodox to social norms and cultural norms. An individual with this behavior deviates from what is truly acceptable in the society or what is expected in a normal pattern. A specific standard behavior is called norms in which people are supposed to act in a predictable manner. Deviant behavior is a violation of this norm although it can be interpreted in many ways as social norms are different from one culture to another. Source: Elisabeth Hartney. PhD. (2017) through the link:  
<https://www.verywellmind.com/socially-acceptable-to-socially-deviant-addictions-22243>

socialization instead. Therefore, people who are able to engage in action governed by rules must be able to hold social competence. Moreover, she advocated that discussions about children concerning their management and behaviors happen outside the children's world. Adults discuss the children's world and these discussions are framed in social order<sup>165</sup>. Concerning the social order issues, there is a lack of attention to the diversity of adult ideologies on childhood period, whether this gap is considered, the adolescence period is a variant of childhood and also a new concept from the modernity as presented in the previous chapter. In the past, if a child would survive the dependence stage, they went straightforward to the adults' world<sup>166</sup>.

The diversity of adults' ideologies concerning the childhood period presented by Murcott (1980) defined children as wonderful and essential to married life. These ideas transformed children into a kind of special patient for the medicine, which includes special spaces in the hospitals, everything surrounding children were supposed to have a touch of happiness. Despite this attention, there is another idea that is pointed by the fact that children are limited and this limitation is seen in the contemporary adult ideology of inferiority, represented by the suppression of inappropriate adults' behavior.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>166</sup> Genep, A. (2011). The Rites Passage. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

<sup>167</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

About behaviors, their acceptance or refusal relies directly in the differences between children and adults, where these two periods are more defined. However, not every child has a potential for being an adult, and to be both, child and adult at once is an impossible deed. So it is here where the social construction of adolescent pregnancy had began.<sup>168</sup>

Backing to the adult ideologies that regard children as inferior beings, the scenario of adults bearing a child is normative and accepted by contemporary society, however, an inferior child is not ready to generate and bear other children, and that's why adolescent pregnancy can insult the adulthood morality.<sup>169</sup>

Regarding children socialization, there is an implicit idea that, essentially, people are supposed to be adaptive to a society and its norms, whether they are savage and bad or good and easily corrupted, children must be taught in some way. In this sense, a whole study to explain the human existence is necessary, however, the limitation on this subject will be emphasized by the rites of passage, where the births are more appreciated, the motherhood is an identity and the very basic idea that marriages without children are incomplete.<sup>170</sup>. All these features reinforce the good and positivity of children in the contemporaneity, despite their inferiority and limitation. In the contemporary society, children, as long as they are

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<sup>168</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>169</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>170</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>

considered good and can be easily corrupted, are also designated to be victims. As example, every bad act committed against a child is seem as worse as possible.<sup>171</sup> When the pregnancy occurs in a period not yet so clear in the modern society, the childhood seems to prevail, and the sexual knowledge is a signal that the innocence is lost<sup>172</sup>, regardless of sexual maturity. The child, previously considered a bless from god, innocent and pure, denounced her sin through a big belly. All those facts can explain the norms against adolescent pregnancy in Brazil and also how physical female capacity of generating life inside their wombs gives a hard burden on women regarding adolescence pregnancy. Men cannot publically denounce his sin for had a child while adolescent, in this sense, women must carry out nor only their big bellies but also the burden of dominant ideologies regarding reproduction that explicitly connects child with marriage<sup>173</sup>.

To conclude this chapter, the major part of the local and international literature reviewed regarding adolescent pregnancy in Brazil are enlightened by dominant ideologies that point out the as a problem. These researches were skewed, in the sense of being performed without identifying the coexistence of adolescent pregnancy and poverty. In this sense, adolescent pregnancy is a common feature among poor people that is also capable to

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<sup>171</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>172</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

<sup>173</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No.

reproduce more people in the same scenario. Curbing adolescent fertility or prohibiting the premarital sex through religion norms will not solve poverty issues, because it will exist independently. As previously mentioned, there is no research regarding adolescent pregnancy in advantaged classes in Brazil, because poverty is the major problem. Adolescent pregnancy is a phenomenon that occurs throughout all society, regardless of ethnicity, skin color or social classes. Regarding the clandestine clinics of abortion found in Brazil. It exists because there are support for these clinics. Specific classes of society search for the abortion illegal services in the country, in this sense researches about these illegal procedures were provided from relevant institutions in Brazil and abroad the country,<sup>174175</sup> based on national data<sup>176</sup>.

In Brazil, the abortion procedures will be practiced daily regardless the juridical norms that forbidden the practices. Finally, if adolescence pregnancy is noticed among poor people, it automatically becomes a problem because society pays the public debts.

#### **4. The Role of Religious Institutions and Moral Norms of Adolescence Pregnancy**

In Brazil, religion plays an important social role. The major part of the population believes in a deity and more than half of the country considers themselves Christians. In

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<sup>174</sup> Alan Guttmacher Institute. *U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*. New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2010.

<sup>175</sup> GRAVAD – Gravidez na Adolescência: Estudo Multicêntrico sobre Jovens, Sexualidade e Reprodução no Brasil (Adolescent Pregnancy: A Multicenter Study on Young Persons, Sexuality and Reproduction in Brazil)

<sup>176</sup> System Live Birth Information (SINASC), 2011. It covers all births in Brazil and not only those that occurred in the SUS. Available in: [http://tabnet.datasus.gov.br/cgi/sinasc/Consolida\\_Sinasc\\_2011.pdf](http://tabnet.datasus.gov.br/cgi/sinasc/Consolida_Sinasc_2011.pdf)

order to understand the role of religious institutions and their impact on adolescent pregnancy, the social theory of Durkheim (1996)<sup>177</sup>, presented in this chapter, explains how religion shapes society's thoughts and behaviors<sup>178</sup>.

In agreement with Durkheim (1996), religious institutions are collective representations, which are capable of expressing the collective reality<sup>179</sup>. The author found out that religion is a source of solidarity, providing a meaning for the human existence. In this sense, religion is not supposed to make us wiser or more intelligent. Religion helps the human sentient to live better<sup>180</sup>. In order to reach this better life, the religious institutions are supposed to be coercive; otherwise, the individuals will not follow their norms and values<sup>181</sup>.

In sociology studies, "norm" refers to a social group's behavioral model. The group is part of society; therefore, this model must be accepted by society, and society should agree with the social groups' values and norms<sup>182</sup>. Thus, the individuals, since their birth, integrate the social groups. Normally the first social group of individual is family<sup>183</sup>. Therefore, the social values and norms that the individual follows normally rely on their socialization with other individual.

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<sup>177</sup> Originally published in 1912

<sup>178</sup> The religious approach is diverse and Durkheim was choose, instead Max Weber, who is contemporary and have different religious approach.

<sup>179</sup> Durkheim, É. (1965). *The elementary forms of Religious Life. The free Press. New York.*

<sup>180</sup> Durkheim, É. (1965). *The elementary forms of Religious Life. The free Press. New York.*

<sup>181</sup> Durkheim, É. (1965). *The elementary forms of Religious Life. The free Press. New York*

<sup>182</sup> Durkheim, É. (1975). *Textes I: Eléments d'une théorie sociale. Minuit, Paris.*

<sup>183</sup> This includes the orphans as well. Because for being orphan, the individual is lack of family.



Still regarding norms, Durkheim (1912) also define the act of follow norms from a social group as collective consciousness<sup>184</sup>. Collective consciousness is shared by the individuals that belongs to a social group or society. Moreover, the collective consciousness is capable of shaping identity and behaviors, and it will prevail in detriment of the individual consciousness<sup>185</sup>. As an example of social norms and collective consciousness is found in Taipei as well as in Brasília: people are used to put their belongings on coffeeshop or restaurant tables in order to indicate that that place is taken. In this sense, people are more inclined to follow this rule by understanding that the place is occupied rather than break this norm; however, it is not written anywhere that people should obey this norm.

Starting from the premise of collective consciousness on norms, Durkheim (1912) advocated that religion is the most important social institution, having its basis on social ideals<sup>186</sup>, and religion has major functions that were identified as cohesion, which concerns rites, ceremonies and discipline, that is, the act of self-control through religious principles. Religion also comprises euphoria, which concerns the individual's capability to overcome and give them the sense of moral values, and the renew belief process which passes those

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<sup>184</sup> Burns, T.R. Engdahl, E. (1998) The Social Construction of Consciousness. Part 1: Collective Consciousness and its Socio-Cultural Foundations. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 5 (1) p 77.

<sup>185</sup> Burns, T.R. Engdahl, E. (1998) The Social Construction of Consciousness. Part 1: Collective Consciousness and its Socio-Cultural Foundations. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 5 (1) p 72.

<sup>186</sup> Camurça, M. (2008). Social Sciences and Religious Sciences: polemic and interlocution. *São Paulo: Paulinas*, 2008.

moral values to the next generation<sup>187</sup>.

Durkheim (1912) perceived religion is a “social cement” that organized the modern society through cohesion. This perception guided this study into the adolescent pregnancy in Brazil regarding the institutions and divisions that are part of the scenario for these individuals.

Regarding social sciences studies, socio-cultural theories have been demonstrating that the history of humanity was not moving into the same morals and values and Durkheim (1912) broke the ideology of linearity. In this sense, once the dependence principle was established under the basic pattern of culture, it was possible to perceive the repetitions of these patterns,<sup>188</sup> which were capable of organizing the societal roles.

In Brazilian impoverished communities<sup>189</sup>, the perceptions of moral and reality have different meaning regarding the culture pattern. Heilborn (2007) mentioned that inside Rio de Janeiro’s slums, the cultural rules are different from the other poorest classes<sup>190</sup> due to the effective control of the drug dealing market and violence was the determinant feature that shaped the slums in Brazil<sup>191</sup>. This research shows that adolescents male are more inclined to

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<sup>187</sup> Durkheim, É. (1965). *The elementary forms of Religious Life*. *The free Press*. New York.

<sup>188</sup> Durkheim, É. (1975). *Textes I: Eléments d’une théorie sociale*. *Minuit*, Paris

<sup>189</sup> Caranguêjo’s City in Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro City

<sup>190</sup> There is no mention about the “other poorest classes”

<sup>191</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

life crime, and adolescent female is the early pregnancy.<sup>192</sup>

According to Mollborn (2010), the female's role follows norms based on the theory of age. In this sense, it is established by Lowe, Moore and Neugarten (1995) that there is an expected behavior, which relies on age<sup>193</sup>, and pregnancy is not supposed to happen in the adolescence period. Whether adolescent females do not fulfill these expectations, the institutions<sup>194</sup> will act based on cohesion<sup>195</sup>. These punishments vary from solidarity or the use of pregnancy as punishment in order to promote the lack of social interaction.<sup>196</sup> Concerning genders, the social norms are perceived as broken through big bellies, while for the boys, the social norms can be invisible<sup>197</sup>. Overall, there are perceived norms against the adolescent pregnancy, where there is an expected behavior to be regulated, however, religious institutions in Brazil are adaptive to the scenario of adolescence pregnancies<sup>198</sup>.

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<sup>192</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

<sup>193</sup> Neugarten, B., Moore, J., Lowe, J. (1965). Age Norms, Age Constraints, and Adult Socialization. *American Journal of Sociology* 70:710-7

<sup>194</sup> Referred to family or religious community

<sup>195</sup> Mollborn, S. (2010). Predictors and Consequences of Adolescents' Norms Against Teenage Pregnancy. *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol.52 No. 2. Pp303-328. Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

<sup>196</sup> A Brazilian Gynecologist, named Thomaz Gollop mentioned in an interview (<https://drauziovarella.uol.com.br/videos/entrevistas-em-video/aborto-no-brasil-thomaz-gollop/>) that the abortion prohibition is a manner of punishment in the country. This is not the only doctor that hold this position in the country.

<sup>197</sup> Mollborn, S. (2010). Predictors and Consequences of Adolescents' Norms Against Teenage Pregnancy. *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol.52 No. 2. Pp303-328. Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

<sup>198</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

In this sense, religion, government and family can be fertility players regarding adolescence pregnancy. Family and religion are universal institutions<sup>199</sup> that are present in society by any temporality. Regarding the first one, family is one of the first institution that adolescents are engaged. In Brazil, most families are Christian, split in two lines: Catholics and Protestants:

**Religions affiliation distribution, sex ratio, and degree of urbanicity  
Brazil – 1980-2010**

| Religion                    | 1980 | 1991 | 2000 | 2010 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Distribution (%)</b>     |      |      |      |      |
| No religion                 | 1.9  | 4.6  | 6.9  | 8.0  |
| Catholic                    | 88.3 | 82.5 | 73.9 | 65.4 |
| Protestant                  | 3.5  | 4.0  | 4.4  | 4.0  |
| Pentecostal                 | 3.0  | 5.2  | 9.4  | 11.4 |
| Neo-Pentecostal             | 0.0  | 0.3  | 1.8  | 6.7  |
| Other                       | 3.3  | 3.4  | 3.6  | 4.5  |
| <b>Sex ratio</b>            |      |      |      |      |
| No religion                 | 200  | 170  | 183  | 164  |
| Catholic                    | 98   | 96   | 97   | 98   |
| Protestant                  | 80   | 75   | 72   | 73   |
| Pentecostal                 | 76   | 70   | 71   | 73   |
| Neo-Pentecostal             | -    | 45   | 51   | 71   |
| Other                       | 82   | 69   | 67   | 71   |
| <b>Degree of urbanicity</b> |      |      |      |      |
| No religion                 | 87.5 | 89.3 | 88.6 | 90.6 |
| Catholic                    | 69.9 | 76.6 | 81.1 | 82.9 |
| Protestant                  | 74.8 | 82.5 | 87.2 | 88.9 |
| Pentecostal                 | 75.9 | 82.4 | 86.9 | 88.6 |
| Neo-Pentecostal             | -    | 94.1 | 94.8 | 94.2 |
| Other                       | 90.2 | 95.1 | 95.9 | 96.6 |
| Total                       | 71.3 | 78.4 | 83.2 | 85.7 |

Source: IBGE, Brazilian Demographic Censuses of 1980, 1991, 2000, and 2010.

Despite the dropping numbers of catholic Christian, it was possible to notice the raising numbers of Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal denominations in the country. Both denominations have their set of local norms and rules. For the Pentecostal radical groups in Brazil, their primary goal is to live in agreement with the holy bible<sup>200</sup>, and the

<sup>199</sup> Durkheim, E. (1895). The rules of social method.

<sup>200</sup> The God Is Love Pentecostal Church or Igreja Pentecostal Deus É Amor (IPDA) is a Brazilian-based Pentecostal denomination, founded in São Paulo in 1962, by Davi Martins de Miranda. By 1995 it had spread to 30 other countries, with a membership of 800,000 members in 2001 Census. As of 2003, there were 8,140

interpretations from the sacred book can be diverse. As example, Pentecostals females, inside some denominations cannot cut their hair because of god's word written by Apostle Paul in the Corinthians book.<sup>201</sup>

In the other hand, the neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil may understand that to have haircut is not a vanity, furthermore, wearing makeup and coloring nails are not considered sins. In other words, the neo-Pentecostal are supposed to be more adaptive to the local society<sup>202</sup>. Moreover, there is a market for neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil, which Steele (2011) described as “dynamic” and targeted driven. Freston (1995) also noticed this

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churches. The Church's emphasis is on divine healing and exorcism. The IPDA requires its members to adhere to a strict code of living. For example, they are not allowed to watch television. ■

These information were retrieved from the church's official site: <http://www.ipda.com.br/>

<sup>201</sup> “<sup>1</sup> Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. On Covering the Head in Worship: <sup>2</sup> I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man and the head of Christ is God. <sup>4</sup> Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. <sup>7</sup> A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. <sup>8</sup> For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; <sup>9</sup> neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. <sup>10</sup> It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels. <sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. <sup>12</sup> For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. <sup>13</sup> Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? <sup>14</sup> Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, <sup>15</sup> but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering. <sup>16</sup> If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.” – The holy bible, 1 Corinthians, Chapter 11. New International Version - NIV

<sup>202</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>

dynamism by pointing out that the location of these churches was not chosen aleatory.<sup>203</sup> The general rules for establishment of a new church were based on the needier of the cities, in other words, more needier, more churches<sup>204</sup>. The discourse used to attract poor people were based on what is known as “prosperity theology”, which advocates that Neo Pentecostals, are partners of God or financiers of the divine work, thus believed to be prosperous, healthy, victorious and happy in all their endeavors<sup>205</sup>. Soon, the leaders of these churches most show their prosperity through their material goods, like cars, houses, expensive branded clothes, jewels, etc.

These two lines of Christianity, Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal, are well known in the country because of their religious market competition in Brazil and moral adaptability<sup>206</sup>, the scandals regarding public money and their evangelical representation in public media and inside the Brazilian Congress.

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<sup>203</sup> Frosten, P. (1999). Neo-Pentecostalism in Brazil: Problems of definition and the struggle for hegemony. *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 44:145-62

<sup>204</sup> Frosten, P. (1999). Neo-Pentecostalism in Brazil: Problems of definition and the struggle for hegemony. *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 44:145-62

<sup>205</sup> Lindsay, G. (1960). God's Master Key to Prosperity. [S.l.]: *Christ for the Nations Institute*. ISBN 978-0-89985-001-6

<sup>206</sup> The Christianity was considered by religion due to its the prevalence in the country.



This picture was taken by 2016, from left to right, the Priest Edir Macedo, leader of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, the Brazilian president, Dilma Rousseff and Alexandre Raposo, the president of the third biggest TV Company in Brazil, RecordTV, owned by Edir Macedo. The meeting had happened in the Planalto Palacy, the official workplace of the president of republic in Brazil, located in the capital of Brasília<sup>207</sup>.

These new churches recruited many members by adapting the sacred laws from the holy bible into the social reality. An example of that is the acceptance of cohabitation between unmarried couples, emphasizing the high values regarding motherhood and the widespread strong opposition to abortion.<sup>208</sup>

Steele (2011) noted that the traditional religions prohibition of premarital sex seems to be rarely imposed in poorest communities; however, she also demonstrated that the religion

<sup>207</sup> <http://www.aboutbrasil.com/travel/palacio-do-planalto.php>

<sup>208</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>



could keep a set of core doctrines capable of penetrating the cultural context without losing their basic shape<sup>209</sup>. Following this perception, adolescents who find themselves unable or unwilling to follow the strict norms of the Pentecostal churches have the chance to migrate to the Neo-Pentecostal churches where the moral rules were adapted. In this sense, Abumassur (2002) pointed out that Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal churches were successful established in the country because of the cultural identification with the local norms, rather than opposition to them<sup>210</sup>. However, in order to reach the successful adaptability, religious institutions also reinforced some local norms; the higher moral priorities in impoverished communities are preventing the abortion and violence among the followers (praticantes). Aforementioned by Neuhouser (1998), the poor women will keep their mother identity, and if the religious institutions reinforce this identity, there is an expected behavior,<sup>211</sup> in other words, there is a moral control imposed by the religion community, which is emphasized by Brazilian juridical law, concerning the practices of abortion in the country<sup>212</sup>.

The abortion prohibition in the country serves as example about the power of cultural norms by showing how it can shape society's thoughts and behaviors toward a public

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<sup>209</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>

<sup>210</sup> Abumassur, S. (2002). Crisis as Opportunity: Churches Structure in Times of Global Transformations of Religion within a Context of Globalization: The Case of Brazil. *Revista de Estudos da Religião* 2:76-85

<sup>211</sup> Neuhouser, K. (1998). "If I Had Abandoned my Children": Community Mobilization and Commitment to the Identity of Mother in Northeast Brazil. *Social Forces*, Vol. 77, No.1, pp. 331-358. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>212</sup> Appendix A contains the translation for the Abortion in Brazil, unofficial translation.



problem. In this sense, norms can be understood as group levels of evaluation of appropriate behavior<sup>213</sup>, and the existing fact that Brazil is a religious country<sup>214</sup>, imposed to the population's ideology towards sexual life initiation, activities regarding each age, what kind of pregnancies are considered good or bad and who is prepared for bearing and raise a child. In this sense, the popular adolescent pregnancy in Brazil has a script: at the very beginning, it is a shocking moment for themselves, then, adolescents feel a strong opposition about abortion combined with the process of acceptance<sup>215</sup> and finally, the pregnancy is seen as a "gift from god"<sup>216</sup> that couldn't be denied. The discourse that abortion is a sin is quite convenient as a coercive method<sup>217</sup> because the ones who practiced abortion are supposed to be judged, they refused a gift from god and the divine judgment is performed through societal norms. The same discourse is also capable to shape the adolescent's decision against the practices of the clandestine abortion and let prevail the women duty by praising the maternity in the adolescence period. The counterpart concerning the role of religious institutions is the encouragement to overcome the situation through the belief in deities,

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<sup>213</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

<sup>214</sup> [https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/apps/atlas/pdf/Pag\\_203\\_Religi%C3%A3o\\_Evang\\_miss%C3%A3o\\_Evang\\_pentecostal\\_Evang\\_nao%20determinada\\_Diversidade%20cultural.pdf](https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/apps/atlas/pdf/Pag_203_Religi%C3%A3o_Evang_miss%C3%A3o_Evang_pentecostal_Evang_nao%20determinada_Diversidade%20cultural.pdf)

<sup>215</sup> The difficult process of adaptation is for adolescents that figured out the pregnancy and the family acceptance.

<sup>216</sup> Steele, L. (2011). "A Gift from God": Adolescent Motherhood and Religion in Brazilian Favelas. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1), 4-27. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288549>

<sup>217</sup> Durkheim, É. (1996). *As formas elementares da vida religiosa*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes

which encourages the female adolescent to be a good mother. At times, the encouragement comes from their romantic relationships that usually tear apart after the pregnancy is perceived.<sup>218</sup>

Hellborn (2007) mentioned that lack of education is the basic element for explaining the inequalities that surround adolescent pregnancy. Since people are immersed in a scenario of disadvantages, it is difficult for them to perceive the situation in a critical way. Moreover, the recurrence of violence and the intergenerational history of adolescent pregnancies are considered normal despite the moral religious.<sup>219</sup>

Concerning education, the Brazilian Ministry of Education – MEC refers in its recent research that adolescent pregnancy is one of the main reasons for school drop out in Brazil<sup>220</sup>. Education would be one of the intervening variables of adolescent pregnancy scenario and deserves a full research on the topic. Regarding the public and academic perception toward education, it is difficult to understand that education was noted as important but there is total absence on public policies on education continuity of adolescent mothers who are pregnant and the ones who had the babies and are in process of lactation.

If the process of prevention of early pregnancies relies on education, it should have been made widespread many years ago. The lack of education from old generations is also another

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<sup>218</sup> <http://www.periodicos.ufc.br/rene/article/viewFile/4226/3263>

<sup>219</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

<sup>220</sup> <http://educacaointegral.mec.gov.br/jovens-de-15-a-17-anos>

fact that composes the roadblocks on the adolescent development and their sexual life. Since the sex talk is barely inexistent, the parental education as a source about the subject becomes a taboo<sup>221</sup>.

The Brazilian Government provides different types of birth control through the public health systems<sup>222</sup> – Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS), but the challenge of getting this information and guide the adolescent through the process of getting these contraception methods is almost impossible. Clearly, the access to information is not satisfactory yet and this is a fact that can be noticed through the number of unplanned adolescence pregnancies in the country.

Together with the stalemate taboo of sex talks, there is the adolescent counterpart. The access to these public contraception methods is a dilemma. Whether or not they are aware of the religious rules regarding sex, the adolescent who would seek public assistance regarding their sexual life automatically denounces their sexual initiation to society<sup>223</sup>.

Overall, the access to birth control methods, the educational family history and the religious cohesion are components that built the scenario of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil (regardless of the women's wishes on pregnancy) and this scenario is challenging, with few

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<sup>221</sup><https://www.prb.org/brazilconfrontsadolescentsexualhealthissues/>

<sup>222</sup><http://www.blog.saude.gov.br/index.php/materias-especiais/51645-saiba-mais-sobre-os-metodos-contraceptivos-oferecidos-pelo-sus>

<sup>223</sup> Heilborn, M., Brandão, E., & Cabral, C. (2007). Teenage Pregnancy and Moral Panic in Brazil. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9(4), 403-414. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20460941>

options regarding the choice of bearing a child. First, it is due to the fact that abortion is forbidden by law, except in the circumstances of microcephaly or rape cases and danger to the mother's health<sup>224</sup>, the second is due to the religious influences upon juridical law and societal norms.

#### 4.1 Passage Rites and Social Norms

*“The most barbarous and the most fantastic rites and the strangest myths translate some human need, some aspect of life, either individual or social. The reasons with which the faithful justify them may be, and generally are, erroneous; but the true reasons do not cease to exist and it is the duty of science to discover them” Durkheim*

Charles-Arnold Kurr van Gennep (1909) asserted the concept of passage rites, conceptualizing rite as a set of rules determined by society and/or institutions, and the rituals as the procedures how a rite will serve as an instrument or practice. Regarding the rites, the author observed that societies marked the transition of its individuals through three stages: separation, transition and aggregation<sup>225</sup>. Gennep (1909) also noticed that when the individuals are in between these stages, they are a problem to the society because they are out of normative control. Following this perception, individuals should stand at some position in the society, in agreement with societal values<sup>226</sup>, in order to organize their values and vision

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<sup>224</sup> See appendix 1

<sup>225</sup> Gennep, C. (1909). *Les rites de passage*.

<sup>226</sup> Gennep, C. (1909). *Les rites de passage*.

about the world.

According to Gennep (1909), passage rites are capable to assume heterogenic interpretations, relying on the comprehension of the phenomenon<sup>227</sup>. It means that the passage rites would mix, combine or even be submitted to a process of defragmentation. In this sense, the existent comprehension of the world would disappear and/or can be aggregate to a new one<sup>228</sup>. In every phases purposed by Gennep (1909) there is an *ad hoc* period between them, and adolescent period is right there, in this “between period”, for example, adolescence is in between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is considered a passage. This passage, in societal terms, is becoming a longer *ad hoc* period in the modern society.<sup>229</sup> Regardless of any of these reasons, the adolescence period passed from an organic and functional phase to a conceptual one.<sup>230</sup> This happened because of the changes on societal norms regarding behavior expectations on the adolescence period. Nowadays, adolescents are not supposed to follow the old rules based on the very basic idea of reproduction and arranged marriages due to political interests.

The rites of passage on the adolescence period can have social, community and

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<sup>227</sup> Gennep, A. (2011). *The Passage Rites*. 2. ed. Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

<sup>228</sup> DaMatta, R. (2000). Individualidade e liminaridade: considerações sobre os ritos de passagem e a modernidade. *Mana*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 6, n. 1, p. 7-29.

<sup>229</sup> Murcott, M. (1980). The social construction of teenage pregnancy: a problem in the ideologies of childhood and reproduction. *Sociology of Health and Illness* Vol.2.No. 1.

<sup>230</sup> Capelatto, I. (2012). A equação da afetividade: Como lidar com a raiva de crianças e adolescentes. 1. ed. Campinas: Papirus 7 Mares, 2012. v. 1. 108.

religious features. According to Rodolpho (2004), they are important conceptual tools that allow us to understand the interpretations that social groups give to a determined phenomenon<sup>231</sup>. In the present case, the social groups are popular spheres of Brazilian community and the phenomenon is the pregnancy in the adolescence period. In this sense, Gennep (1909) classified the rites as sympathetic and contagious, direct and indirect, as well as positive and negative<sup>232</sup>.

Sympathetic rites are based on the perspective of the object's actions, which have a certain relation or proximity, like adolescent pregnancy and poverty. While the contagion rites are based on materiality and transmissibility, like having a child while adolescent and intergenerational pattern. Rites are direct when they have an immediate and automatic efficiency, since the indirect ones depend on the intervention of an agent to develop an effect. Positive rites are acts determined by the will, and the negative, is the contrary part to the positive (taboos)<sup>233</sup>.

Moreover, Gennep (1909) presented the analysis on the material passage that is pointed out through limitations as something concrete. The material passage delimits physical spaces of interdiction, therefore, sacred and profane zones. The individual can abandon the previous world to enter a new world passing through rites in zones that can be

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<sup>231</sup> Rodolpho, L. (2004). Rituais, ritos de passagem e de iniciação: uma revisão da bibliografia antropológica. *Estudos Teológicos, São Leopoldo*, v. 44, n. 2, p. 138146.

<sup>232</sup> Gennep, A. (2011). *The Rites Passage*. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

<sup>233</sup> Gennep, A. (2011). *The Rites Passage*. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

neutral or not<sup>234</sup>. As a practical example, the adolescent can abandon her adolescence period by becoming a mother without social judgment regarding her neighborhood because early pregnancies are common inside this kind of community, however, if the same adolescent move into this direction into a religious community, the perception would be different. Individuals or groups of individuals are selected through social aspects, which are framed in the sacred of profane standards. In this context, the forms of relationship among individuals or groups are diverse<sup>235</sup>. For example, the bible says that premarital sex is forbidden in agreement with god's law; however, the holy bible also says that god can forgive individuals despite their action, with exception for blasphemy.

<sup>30</sup> “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” <sup>31</sup> And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. <sup>32</sup> Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” – Holy Bible, New International Version – NIV. Book of Mathew, Chapter 12, 30-32.

Finally, Genep (1909) brought the notion that an individual is all alone, even if he/she is part of a group, coexisting with other groups, composing the society, which, in turn,

<sup>234</sup> Genep, A. (2011). *Os ritos de passagem*. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

<sup>235</sup> Genep, A. (2011). *Os ritos de passagem*. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.

is formed by disintegrations and reconstructions that happen continuously<sup>236</sup>. In this sense, there is a comprehension that rites of passage have an essential meaning in a relative situation holding hierarchies.

Regarding these rites' hierarchies considering the Brazilian popular society, births is seen as superior to death. When a birth happens, it is culturally recognized as a signal of bless and life renovation, regardless of the psychological, economic or social conditions that surrounded this birth. In contraposition, death means the end, something that has not fulfilled its mission, even when it happens at advanced age or terminal diseases<sup>237</sup>. In this sense, the hierarchies on rites and social perception are built based on the religious belief system.<sup>238</sup>

In Brazil, there is a tendency for hiding death. When someone dies, the funeral rite is realized right after the death. On the other hand, Taiwanese culture invests a lot of effort on funerals. Formal paper letters are prepared after the death and distributed through friends and family in order to communicate the event. People may take care of the dead body for several days at home, and in some cases, there is a kind of celebration in funerals<sup>239 240</sup>.

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<sup>236</sup> Genep, A. (2011). *The Rites Passage. 2. ed., Trad. Mariano Ferreira. Petrópolis: Vozes.*

<sup>237</sup> Karnal, L. (2016). *A Origem do Homem e Seus Deuses. 1. ed. São Paulo: Gamba, 2016. v. 3000. 224p*

<sup>238</sup> Rodolpho, L. (2004). *Rituais, ritos de passagem e de iniciação: uma revisão da bibliografia antropológica. Estudos Teológicos, São Leopoldo, v. 44, n. 2, p. 138146.*

<sup>239</sup> These information were take in National Chengchi University, class of Taiwan Religions and Belief System, ministred by the Anthropologist Professor David Blundell in the second semester of the year 2016.

<sup>240</sup> Regarding the celebrations, Dr. Moskowitz, an Anthropologist at the University of South Carolina wrote a book by 2012, named *Dancing for the Dead: Funeral Strippers in Taiwan*. This book demonstrated the diversity of cultures toward the death by exposing how some groups deal with death in Taiwan.



Overall, the rite of passage is an intermediate and temporary period of uncertainty and crisis, which enables the individuals to reflect on their existence in society and realize its own existence.<sup>241</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This study were built toward the question: is adolescent pregnancy a trigger to poverty?

The search for this answer were given through theories that explained that the world have been changed, concepts were constructed in agreement with societal needs. Adolescent pregnancy was seen as normal in the past and by today it is a social problem based on age and belief systems.

Instead of a straightforward answer for the question, reflections were found. Geronimus (1990) identified that adolescence pregnancy is a normative phenomenon if analyzed from the spectrum of poverty. In this sense, cases of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil were found in highest number among poor people. The lack of studies among richest classes can be a factor that highlight the numbers among poverty, but this fact cannot be proved regarding the lack of local research. Furstenberg (2007) found in his researches the “permissiveness” of pregnancy in the adolescent period by pointing out that by 1950’s, girls had parent’s permission for getting pregnant from their arranged husbands, in this sense, the wedlock became a

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<sup>241</sup> Gikovate, F. (2009). *We: The human. MG Editores. 1st. edition.*

precondition for this permissiveness among white girls<sup>242</sup>. Considering the wedlock a valued rite passage in the Western, the adolescent pregnancy also became normative in the poorest society regarding their religious beliefs. In this sense, when there are few options of identity in disadvantaged scenarios, the adoption of the positive identity seems to be “rational” for those who had few choices.

Concerning the local common sense and some of the local research, both were perceived as a bundle of social norms against the adolescence pregnancy, which have their central argument framed in the ideology that adolescent childbearing collaborates with school dropouts, poor education, and lower income. However, girls don't suddenly become poor because of a running sperm, they are in a vulnerable scenario when the pregnancy had happened.

Despite the academic efforts in order to fight against a social phenomenon/problem<sup>243</sup>, little attention was given regarding the interdependence of the predictor elements of adolescent pregnancy. Therefore, the lack of empirical data is the major stalemate to draw the reality of adolescent pregnancy in Brazil. Mollborn (2010), noted that most of the studies regarding adolescent pregnancy are local studies based on local samples, outdated<sup>244</sup><sup>245</sup> and

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<sup>242</sup> Furstenberg, F.F. (2007). *Destinies of the disadvantages: The politics of teenage childbearing*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

<sup>243</sup> Source: <https://www.unicef.org/>

<sup>244</sup> Furstenberg, F. Jr., Books-Gunn J. and Morgan SP. (1987). *Adolescent Mothers in Later Life*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>245</sup> Furstenberg, F. Jr., and Crawford AG. (1978). Family Support: helping teenage mothers to cope. *Family planning perspectives*. 10(6):322-333

gendered focused.

Regarding the relationship that brings together the adolescent pregnancy and poverty, much debate had had rising doubts on their legitimacy, especially if these debates are coming from political spheres or if they are economic driven. The inequalities in the countries due to welfare distribution and the frequent corruption scandals are proof of the lack of properly public management in the country.

Brazilian population and government see the adolescent pregnancy as a social problem that harms the moral of society; however, there are no public policies, which is capable to reach the so-called “problem of adolescence pregnancy”. Instead of public policies, we see law projects that predicts a week against the adolescent pregnancy<sup>246</sup>, but it doesn't specify how and where this law project would be executed. Moreover, one week promoting the education and discussion about the daily issue of adolescence pregnancy, is not enough and seems to be useless.

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<sup>246</sup> <http://www2.camara.leg.br/camaranoticias/noticias/SAUDE/432687-COMISSAO-APROVA-CRIACAO-DA-SEMANA-DE-PREVENCAO-DA-GRAVIDEZ-NA-ADOLESCENCIA.html>

Main ideas of the law project:

The Education and Culture Commission approved on Wednesday (13/12/2012) the Senate Bill 512/11, which establishes the National Week of Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy, to be held annually in the week that includes February 1. The proposal adds a provision to the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (Law 8.069 / 90). The rapporteur of the proposal, Mrs Alice Portugal (PCdoB-BA), emphasized that the objective is to disseminate information on preventive and educational measures that contribute to the reduction of the incidence of pregnancy in adolescence.

"Pregnancy in adolescence presents risk factors for health, compromises school and professional life, as well as causing disorders for the family nucleus of young pregnant women," said the rapporteur.

Since these kind of law project deals with the issue of adolescent pregnancy, it should considerate the “adolescence” before pregnancy, promoting educational attempts rather to expose the negativity of pregnancy for people who are/were pregnant at this period of life. Other public campaigns purposed by the Ministry of Health named familiar planning is also ineffective because of similar reasons. First one is that the campaign is presented in the wrong place (public health unities) when the pregnancy already occurred, so it does not make sense to promote campaign against adolescence pregnancy to adolescents that are pregnant.

Health and education are market in Brazil. A good example that illustrated the precarious health system in Brazil is the fact that by 2014 the whole country was affected with the epidemical spread of Zika virus, which caused microcephaly in many babies born. Several cases was reported by the anthropologist, Dr. Débora Diniz, a researcher from University of Brasília that inaugurated the institute of biotechnology in Yale University in the US. Her findings mobilized the international community and WHO declared the emergence situation in the Brazil. In the same year, the abortion for the registered cases of microcephaly were allowed in the country, but before it, several cases of microcephaly were hidden in impoverished small cities, where the national and local government consider them as inexistent. Doctor Diniz were able to find and write about one of the millions of poor community in Brazil, however, in this year, she reported to the local media that she received many messages with violent content, including death threats, because public exposition

showing the cases of Zika virus in the country<sup>247</sup>. In this sense, Brazilian society had engaged in heated debates about the abortion's prohibition and legalization while adolescent women are dying daily at home, in clandestine clinics and public hospitals as victims of unsuccessful abortion attempts. Moreover, the societal view regarding abortion are male gendered and religious driven. Patriarchal features are reflected in juridical norms, as example the Unborn Child's Statute<sup>248</sup>, purposed by a male priest.<sup>249</sup> The Statute purposes prison sentences from one to three years for those who "wrongfully cause the death of the unborn child"<sup>250</sup> and one to two years for those who induced pregnant women to practice abortion or offer an opportunity for them to practice it. Finally, further research is required about adolescence pregnancy and the social construction of ideologies on that. Brazil is a huge country, which sees adolescent pregnancy as a social problem because of inequalities, however, it is a social phenomenon that happens in all social classes.

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<sup>247</sup>[https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/eu-estudante/ensino\\_ensinosuperior/2018/07/04/ensino\\_ensinosuperior\\_interna,692907/debora-diniz-professora-da-unb-recebe-ameacas-pela-internet.shtml](https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/eu-estudante/ensino_ensinosuperior/2018/07/04/ensino_ensinosuperior_interna,692907/debora-diniz-professora-da-unb-recebe-ameacas-pela-internet.shtml)

<sup>248</sup> Translation provided in appendix A

<sup>249</sup> [https://www.camara.gov.br/proposicoesWeb/prop\\_mostrarintegra?codteor=443584](https://www.camara.gov.br/proposicoesWeb/prop_mostrarintegra?codteor=443584)

<sup>250</sup> By unborn child, the Statute established that the life exists since the very first moment of an egg fecundation regardless brain function.

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## **APPENDIX A – ABORTION LAW IN BRAZIL – UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE PENAL CODE (1940), DECREE-LAW NUMBER 2.848**

Penal Code (1940), Decree-Law Number 2.848, Special Part, Title I, Chapter I, Articles 124-128.

Abortion provoked by a pregnant woman or with her consent

Art. 124 - Provoking abortion oneself or consenting to another person provoking it:

Penalty - imprisonment of one to three years.

Abortion provoked by a third party

Art. 125 - Provoking an abortion without the consent of the pregnant woman:

Penalty - imprisonment of three to ten years.

Art. 126 - Provoking an abortion with the consent of the pregnant woman:

Penalty - imprisonment of one to four years.

Sole Paragraph. The penalty in the previous article is applicable if the pregnant woman is not older than 14 years, or is insane or mentally weak, or if the consent is obtained through fraud, serious threat, or violence.

Conditioned form

Art. 127 - The penalties prescribed in the two previous articles shall be increased by one third if, as a consequence of the abortion or the means employed to provoke it, the pregnant woman suffers bodily injury of a serious nature; and shall be doubled if, for any of these reasons, her death follows.

Art. 128 - An abortion practiced by a doctor is not punishable:

Necessary abortion

I. if there is no other means of saving the life of the pregnant woman;

Abortion in the case of pregnancy resulting from rape

II. if the pregnancy results from rape and the abortion is preceded by the consent of the pregnant woman, or, when incompetent, of her legal representative.