Teenage pregnancy and Education
Girls’ right to education and how it is affected by pregnancy before the age of eighteen
2012

By Despoina Georgiadou
Supervised by Dc. Sylvie Langlaude

Academic Year 2011-2012
Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to shed light on the ways the right to education of teenage mothers is affected in the cases of Greece and Northern Ireland. For the assessment of this right are used the 4As scheme for evaluating whether education is accessible, available, acceptable and adaptable and states’ obligations of respect, protection and fulfilment. Despite the fact that the right to education is protected by various international, national and domestic legal documents in the two referred countries, reality differs from theory. Teenage mothers face lack of policies and insufficient monitoring of the existing ones with regard to their education. They are unaware of their rights in order to claim them and when this is not the case, bureaucracy hardens the realisation of their rights. Schools neither adjust to the needs of school age mothers, nor prepare them for the job market and most of the times schools’ personnel defines their educational future. Lack of benefits and tutors for their due date, uniform changes and difficulties in transportation towards their school, child’s nursery and home enhance the disengagement of teenage mothers from education. This thesis presents the weaknesses between theory and practice, but on the other hand by the analysis of these cases, the author highlights the situation within Europe and specifically in Greece and in Northern Ireland.
Acknowledgements

Looking back at this dissertation, I realise that its successful completion was a multi-factor result. First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to E.MA for my overall experience and the chance that I was granted to enter Human Rights field and to make a dream come true. Many thanks to my supervisor with whom we managed to combine two different sciences into a piece of work and to shield a gold cooperation. Sincere thanks to the participants of my research and the organisations that helped with the realisation of the conducted interviews.

Special regards to my unique family for their support. They were my inspiration and my driving force to every step in this journey.

I could not neglect to mention and thank my housemate, who filled my legal gaps with patience and smiles. Every “knock” on the door was worth it.

Last but not least, I devote this dissertation to my friends who believed in me, encouraged me a lot and they wanted to finish my dissertation successfully more than anyone. “Guys, we did it!”
**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AED</td>
<td>Additional Educational Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENI</td>
<td>Department of Education Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHSSPS</td>
<td>Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHR</td>
<td>European Convention on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOSOC Rights</td>
<td>Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELB</td>
<td>Education and Library Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSC</td>
<td>General Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCPR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICESCR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAED</td>
<td>Manpower Employment Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEK</td>
<td>Worker’s Housing Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>School-Age Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEU</td>
<td>Social Exclusion Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPS</td>
<td>Teenage Pregnancy Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPU</td>
<td>Teenage Pregnancy Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

Abstract ......................................................................................................................... ii  
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... iii  
Acronyms ...................................................................................................................... iv  
Table of Contents ......................................................................................................... v  

**Chapter I: Introductory chapter** ................................................................................. 1  
Teenage Pregnancy as a Problem .................................................................................. 1  
Aim and Significance of this Study ................................................................................. 4  
Research Problem and Research Questions ................................................................. 6  
Research Approach ......................................................................................................... 8  
Overview of Chapters ..................................................................................................... 9  
Terminology ................................................................................................................... 11  
Factors Associated with Teenage Pregnancy .............................................................. 12  
Summary ....................................................................................................................... 21  

**Chapter II: Methodology** ............................................................................................ 22  
Working with Teenage Mothers .................................................................................... 22  
Rationale for Qualitative Analysis and Ethnographic Methods .................................... 22  
Research Methods ......................................................................................................... 24  
Research Design ........................................................................................................... 28  
Participants’ Portrait ....................................................................................................... 31  
Analysis ......................................................................................................................... 33  
Ethical Considerations ................................................................................................... 34  
Methodological Strengths and Weaknesses .................................................................. 36  
The text ......................................................................................................................... 38  
Summary ....................................................................................................................... 39
Chapter III: The right to education: legal framework, definition and policies...... 40
Defining the right to education................................................................. 40
The Right to Education at the International level................................. 40
The Right to Education at the European level...................................... 45
States’ Obligations towards Economic, Social and Cultural Rights .......... 48
4As framework ....................................................................................... 54
Policies in Northern Ireland.................................................................... 58
Policies in Greece .................................................................................. 61
Summary................................................................................................. 64

Chapter IV: Teenage Mothers’ Right to Education: An Obstacle Course ......... 65
Tutor for Due Date .................................................................................. 66
Forced Change of School ....................................................................... 67
Adjustment of Educational Institutions’ Rules to the Needs of Pregnancy .... 68
Educational Connection to the Job Market............................................. 70
Bureaucracy .......................................................................................... 71
Timely Information on Provisions and Policies ....................................... 72
Benefits ............................................................................................... 73
Stigmatisation ....................................................................................... 74
Transportation ...................................................................................... 75
Uniform ............................................................................................... 76
Summary............................................................................................... 77

Chapter V: Conclusion............................................................................. 78

Bibliography.......................................................................................... 81
Appendices ............................................................................................ 89
2012

Teenage pregnancy and education: girls right to education and how it is affected by pregnancy before the age of eighteen

Georgiadou, Despoina

https://doi.org/20.500.11825/711

Downloaded from Open Knowledge Repository, Global Campus' institutional repository