

Early Birth: Analysing the Situation in Russia.

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Extended abstract.

Worldwide problem of childbirth, age, social position and status of the mother has been and still remains relevant. The question of child's birth before the attainment of majority has certainly always been in the top of the most discussed and important problems of sociology, demography, and other disciplines that are affected by the aspect of young people behavior.

The present research work is devoted to studying a problem of early motherhood and the associated negative social factors. Russian Federation without a doubt is of great interest to study, because of its historical events. During the 20th and early 21st century the whole territory of the state was subjected to strongest social unrest, changes in policy, structure of the country, the social status of the inhabitants, as well as the moral values of society. Such developments had a direct influence on a reproductive behavior of young people. In recent decades, the problem of young mothers becomes more and more important due to the lowering of the age of sexual debut, the growth of adolescent sexual activity, their low contraceptive culture, an increasing number of pregnancies and births of girls under 18.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the dynamics of the early fertility and also to identify the consequences of early pregnancy in Russia.

The subject of the work is the study of phenomena that affect the birth rate since the beginning of the early 20th century to the present days.

Information sources: data from the website of Federal State Statistics (Rosstat), Human fertility Database, articles in scientific journals and periodicals, demographic studies. The work contains information of Russian and foreign authors, for instance E.S.Sirotkin, S.V.Zakharov, L.E.Darsky, I.P Ilina, A.G.Vishnevsky, Jean-Pierre Dalla Zuan.

The paper is divided into three parts: introduction, main part and a conclusion.

The introduction outlines the main facts about teenage reproductive behavior (definition of early fertility, reasons for its occurrence, information on the conduct of statistical studies of the problem).

The main body of the presented work shows a research aspect of the work (analysis of early births from the early 20th century to the present day). In the end there is a statistics analysis of abortions and extramarital births to girls, their contraceptive behavior.

The conclusion consists of summarized information and the conclusions about the problem. Among other things, some methods of helping young mothers and the possible behavior of the state to solve the problem of teenage pregnancies is shown in the end of the work.

First of all, we need to understand what teenage pregnancy is. Teenage pregnancy is a condition of pregnancy underage teenage girl videlicet at the age of 13-18 years. Determination of the age interval is associated primarily with the physical preparation of the woman to the process of fertilization and gestation of the child.

The causes of early births are different, but there are some obvious and widespread ones: lack of public education on the issues of sex and contraception, the transformation of marriage and family relations, propaganda of sexual permissiveness in the media, poor sex education for children in the family, stress etc.

At different times there were different reasons and, therefore, the number of births to young mothers varied depending on country standards and laws.

At the beginning of the 20th century up to the 1950-s the problem of early motherhood has not been studied, the statistics was not carried out at all. Most of the information can be found in the tables of marriage. Knowing the age of marriage, it is not difficult to determine the approximate age of the birth of the first child. In 1920-s Russian entry into first union was implemented only after the completion of their studies, job placement and leaving the parental house. The birth of the first child followed quickly after marriage, therefore the mean age of first birth was rather high. However, over time the age of onset of sexual activity, and the number of young people that entered into early marriage starts to grow. This can be seen in the table below:

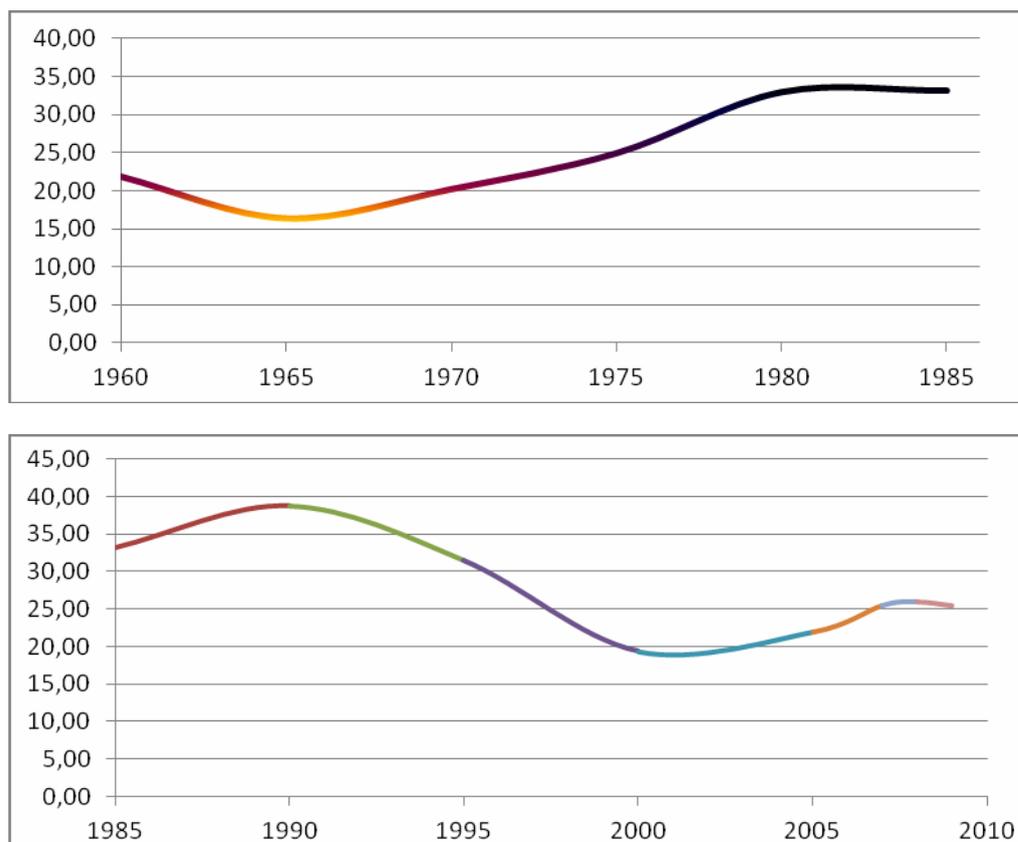
years	the percentage of women under 20 years old married first time(%)
1920	14
1930	18
1940	27
1950	30
1960	34

In the second half of the 20th century it is possible to distinguish two periods of variation in age at first marriage: steady decline until the middle of 1990s, and the sharp change in the trend since the 1990s, with rapid growth of age at marriage. At the same time the early

birth rate among Russian girls is growing, and then after 1990 it is falling as total fertility across the country.

Until the 1990s, Russia like the rest of the world has undergone rapid changes in society: the high prevalence of non-marital conception, development of contraceptive culture, changing morals and a gradual transition to a new type of marriage spread throughout the world.

For a more detailed analysis of the problem specific birth rates and fertility rates were calculated. These rates also made it possible to visualize the dynamics of early births over the years. All bends of the line on the graph are explained by the political and social situations in the country. The Second World War, the crisis and devastation in 1990s, the election of a new government in the 2000s - all this undoubtedly affects the behavior of young mothers.



Dynamics of age-specific birth rates in Russia for years (1960-2010)

Pregnancy at the age under 18 years is accompanied by a number of difficulties. Girls usually do not have time to get a secondary education; they are unable to get a job. In addition, they are economically dependent on their parents and the immediate environment.

Major consequences of early pregnancy are quite obvious:

- Interruption of education. Rejection of higher education.
- Underpaid work. The lack of work.
- Misunderstanding and stress in the family.

- Insulation teenager from friends.
- Extension of the period of financial, housing, psychological dependence.

Nevertheless there is an action, which is worse and more dangerous than all of the above – it is abortion. This issue is the most important problem of teenage pregnancy because due to such operations most girls die or get considerable damage to health. Russia is called “a country of abortion” because of enormous number of abortions during 20th century. Subsequently the absolute number of abortions of women under 19 decreased by 3 times from 1990 to 2008. However, the rate of decrease in the number of abortions is less than the rate of fertility decline. As a result, there is a tendency to increase the proportion of early births.

Another problem of young mothers is non-marital births. From the beginning of the 21th century the average number of births has not changed, it remains at the level of 30-35%. Demographers also notice the end of growth of "forced marriage" because of pregnancy. Government has created a lot of social programs for young mothers, which allows to have a child regardless of whether there is or not supporting father near.

State tries to help young mothers, to prevent unwanted pregnancies, change population policy to improve the situation in the country for the better. But this issue should be studied in more detail, looking at the experience of other countries and studying the statistics.