

## PREGNANCY IN ADOLESCENCE AND EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE

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### ABSTRACT

This article aimed to understand the school life experiences of pregnant adolescents. This is a qualitative and descriptive research. Participated in the study 14 pregnant adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age who were undergoing prenatal care in the public network of the municipality. A semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant about their school life history. Data analysis made it possible to create two categories: “pregnant adolescents who stopped studying” and “pregnant adolescents who continued studying”. A total of 14 adolescents were interviewed, 10 stopped studying, and four continued studying. The importance of family and school support was observed so that the adolescents could continue their studies. Adolescents sought a welcoming environment at school for their emotional needs, but not all of them had the opportunity to experience it. Support to the school community is essential for it to be able to offer the necessary support to its students.

Keywords: pregnancy; adolescence; school environment.

## Embarazo en la adolescencia y las experiencias da vida escolar

### RESUMEN

En este artículo se tuvo el objetivo general comprender las experiencias de vida escolar de adolescentes embarazadas. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa y descriptiva. Participaron del estudio 14 adolescentes embarazadas entre 15 y 19 años que estaban realizando prenatal en la red pública del municipio. Se realizó una entrevista semiestructurada con cada participante sobre la historia de vida escolar. El análisis de datos posibilitó la elaboración de dos categorías: “adolescentes embarazadas que dejaron de estudiar” y “adolescentes embarazadas que siguieran estudiando”. De las 14 adolescentes entrevistadas, 10 dejaron de estudiar, y cuatro siguieron estudiando. Se percibió la importancia del soporte familiar y escolar para que las adolescentes pudiesen seguir sus estudios. Las adolescentes buscaban en la escuela un ambiente acogedor para sus necesidades emocionales, pero no todas tuvieron la posibilidad de vivenciarlo. El soporte a la comunidad escolar es fundamental para que ella pueda ofrecer el amparo necesario para sus alumnos.

Palabras clave: embarazo; adolescencia; ambiente escolar

## Gravidez na adolescência e as experiências da vida escolar

### RESUMO

Este artigo teve como objetivo geral compreender as experiências de vida escolar de adolescentes grávidas. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa e descritiva. Participaram do estudo 14 adolescentes grávidas entre 15 e 19 anos de idade que estavam realizando pré-natal na rede pública do município. Foi realizada uma entrevista semiestructurada com cada participante sobre a história de vida escolar. A análise de dados possibilitou a elaboração de duas categorias: “adolescentes grávidas que pararam de estudar” e “adolescentes grávidas que continuaram estudando”. Das 14 adolescentes entrevistadas, 10 pararam de estudar e quatro continuaram estudando. Observou-se a importância do suporte familiar e escolar para que as adolescentes pudessem continuar seus estudos. As adolescentes buscavam na escola um ambiente acolhedor para suas necessidades emocionais, mas nem todas tiveram a possibilidade de vivenciá-lo. O suporte à comunidade escolar é fundamental para que ela consiga oferecer o amparo necessário para seus alunos.

Palavras-chave: gravidez; adolescência; ambiente escolar

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is characterized as a particular and unique period between childhood and adulthood. This period, in addition to having physical, anatomical and hormonal transformations due to puberty, is also marked by psychological changes, being characterized by intense experiences in the process of constituting subjectivity and individuality (Fiedler, Araújo, & Souza, 2015).

The adolescents have different experiences during this period of their lives, and pregnancy can be one of them. Worldwide, it is estimated that each year, 16 million women between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth (UNFPA, 2015). According to data from the Information System on Live Births (Sinasc), in 2019 the Northeast was the region with the most children of mothers aged 15 to 19 years, with a total of 136,064, and in second place, the Southeast with 123,516, followed by the North with 65,289, the South with 42,440 and the Midwest with 32,613 live births. In Alagoas, 10,030 mothers aged 15 to 19 years gave birth in 2019 (Secretary of Health Surveillance, 2021).

In the poorest regions of the world, the rate of pregnant adolescents between 15 and 19 years old is four times higher than in high-income regions (UNFPA, 2015). In this direction, other studies show that there is a greater concentration of adolescent mothers in the economically lower classes and with less chance of becoming professionally qualified (Bravo, Toomey, Umaña-Taylor, Updegraff, & Jahromi, 2017; Pires et al., 2015).

Research indicates that some psychosocial damage resulting from teenage pregnancy can lead to: school dropout, under-qualified and low-paid work activities – due to lack of professionalization – in addition to increased conditions of social vulnerability (Pires et al., 2015; UNFPA, 2015). Another research identified school dropout prior to the girls' pregnancy and linked to situations of intrafamily violence (Miura, Tardivo, Barrientos, Egry, & Macedo, 2020).

On the other hand, it was observed that in the presence of family and social support, the adolescent participant in the research (Esteves et al., 2018) was able to develop motherhood, to get back her studies and her personal life. Winnicott (1965/2005) points to the importance of the family and social environment offering a "protective cover" to pregnant and postpartum women, so that they can immerse themselves in a special state and spontaneously adapt to the needs of their baby, enabling the emotional maturation of both the baby and the mother.

The school should contribute to sustaining pregnant adolescent's maturation, because it is considered as being a social environment for her to live together. In this environment, according to Winnicott (1964/1982), love and care should be present. Some individuals need school mainly as care, even more than in terms of formal

education; they attend school with the vision that the school provides what the home was unable to provide (Winnicott, 1964/1982). "They don't go to school to learn, but to find a home away from home. This means that they look for an emotional situation, a group that they can gradually become part of" (Winnicott, 1964/1982, p. 234). Thus, it is observed that students need to exchange experiences, teaching, guidance, friends and seek this at school, in addition to those deprived of healthy family environments, who seek confident, stable, regular school environments that welcome and meet their emotional needs.

Given the above, this article had the general objective of understanding the school life experiences of pregnant adolescents and, as specific objectives, identifying and analyzing the reasons that led pregnant adolescents to interrupt or continue their studies throughout their school life trajectory.

## METHOD

This is a qualitative and descriptive research. Qualitative for seeking to understand the phenomenon in its depth and descriptive for privileging the observation, recording and description of the researched phenomenon (Prodanov & Freitas, 2013).

The participants were 14 pregnant teenagers, according to the criteria of the World Health Organization (WHO), which considers adolescence from 10 to 19 years old. To participate, the young women had to be undergoing prenatal care in the public network in the city of Maceió, Alagoas.

The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of the responsible institution (Opinion: 1,541,569 CAAE: 55022916.0.0000.5013), and the the research purpose was explained to the participants and the Terms of Free and Informed Consent (TCLE) were signed by the legal guardian of the pregnant adolescents, and the Term of Assent (TA) by the adolescents. In compliance with the ethical precepts of research with human beings, the names attributed to the adolescents are fictitious, and support and psychological support was offered to all participants both at the time of the interview and when forwarding, if there was a demand, to the Applied Psychology Service of the University responsible for this research.

Data collection with each adolescent consisted of an individual meeting with a semi-structured interview, lasting approximately 1 to 1 hour and a half, with the following guiding items: the pregnancy experience; family relationships and with the baby's father; relation with health services; the school life and life projects history. The interviews were recorded and transcribed later for analysis. For this article, only the item pregnant adolescents' school life history was presented, analyzed and discussed.

After the detailed transcription of the interviews, they were read exhaustively, and based on their reading,

two categories were created: 1) pregnant adolescents who stopped studying and 2) pregnant adolescents who continued studying. Within the category of pregnant teenagers who stopped their studies, there are subcategories referring to the reasons why young people stopped studying, namely: pregnant adolescent who stopped studying due to pregnancy, pregnant adolescent who stopped studying before pregnancy, and pregnant teenagers who stopped studying after completing high school. The categories will be presented in more detail and analyzed in the following sections.

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the ages of the adolescents, with a mean age of 16.79 years. Regarding schooling, from the 14 pregnant adolescents, six of them had incomplete high school, three had completed high school, three had not completed elementary school and two had completed elementary school. About the 14 adolescents interviewed, 10 had stopped studying and only four were studying at the time of this research. Regarding the repetition of the research participants, eight adolescents had failed a grade at some point in their school life and six had never failed. As for the age-grade distortion of the adolescents, 11 had an age-schooling discrepancy and three were in the year corresponding to their age.

The data presented below focused on the school

life history of the pregnant adolescents participating in this research.

### Pregnant adolescents who dropped out of school

It can be seen that of the 14 pregnant adolescents, 10 (Bruna, Milena, Lívia, Neusa, Valentina, Raquel, Samanta, Aline, Vitória and Ana) stopped studying for different reasons. Some adolescents stopped studying due to pregnancy (5), others stopped studying before pregnancy (3), and there were still pregnant adolescents who stopped studying after completing high school (2). In this sense, from 12 adolescents, eight were receptive and available and four had more difficulty expressing themselves. However, they all talked, each in their own way, with the researchers about the items addressed.

### Pregnant adolescents who dropped out of school due to pregnancy

The teenagers Lívia (16), Valentina (16), Raquel (17), Samanta (18) and Vitória (18) stopped studying after discovering they were pregnant. Lívia reported that she thought it was cool to go to school and said that she still intends to return one day. The adolescent studied until the 7th grade of Elementary School and, because she was ashamed of the pregnancy, she interrupted her studies. Lívia did not repeat school years.

The adolescent Valentina, as a child, lived in the rural

**Table 1** Relation of Pregnant Adolescents with Age, Schooling, Study Status, Year Repetition and Age-Grade Distortion<sup>1</sup>.

Name	Age	Education	Studies	Failed	Age-Grade Distortion <sup>1</sup>
Bruna	15	Elementary complete	Stopped	No	Yes
Amélia	15	High School 1st year.	Studying	No	No
Milena	15	8th year	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Lívia	16	7th year	Stopped	No	Yes
Neusa	16	9th year	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Valentina	16	Elementary complete	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Diana	16	2nd year High School.	Studying	No	No
Raquel	17	1st year High School.	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Samanta	18	2nd year High School.	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Cátia	18	2nd year High School.	Studying	Yes	Yes
Aline	18	High School Complete	Stopped	Yes	Yes
Vitória	18	High School Complete	Stopped	No	No
Jamyle	18	High School Incomplete	Studying	No	Yes
Ana	19	High School Complete	Stopped	Yes	Yes

<sup>1</sup> The age-grade distortion (or age-education gap) is the difference between the appropriate age for the student's grade and the student's actual age. It is recommended that this difference be zero, that is, that the student be in the appropriate grade for their age" (Portella, Bussmann, & Oliveira, 2017, p. 480).

area and at the age of seven moved to the urban area in order to attend school regularly, which made her miss the activities she carried out in the rural environment. In the eighth month of pregnancy, she dropped out of school, arguing that she needed to stop, but she couldn't say why. "They said that after eight months I couldn't study anymore, but I don't know why" [sic]. The young woman even finished Elementary School, and during her school years she repeated the 2nd and 7th years of Elementary School.

Raquel stopped studying in the 1st year of high school, as she was close to the birth of her son. She repeated the 1st and 6th years of elementary school, due to not knowing how to read and lack of interest, respectively. She believes she had negative influences at school, described as friends who focused on leisure activities rather than studying. The adolescent reported that she started to dedicate herself to school only from the middle of the year, and at the same time she recognizes herself as interested in studies, she states that she likes to study, read, write and understand things. "I'm interested, like, in studies, but there was time when I was influenced, right" [sic]. "The person had time to stop, there was time to go back to studying... It was like me. I spent some time not studying, like, messing around..." [sic].

The adolescent Samanta stopped studying in the 2nd year of high school because of her pregnancy, due to the difficulty in going up and down the stairs at school. She considers that she has always been "that hardworking student, studies when she has a test, and always manages to get a good grade" [sic]. The adolescent repeated the 1st year of high school, explaining that this happened because she changed schools. The main reason for the change of school was the increase in the monthly fee. The teenager reported adaptation difficulties after this change. "So I went there, I didn't like the classes, I didn't like the teachers, but even so, I always tried. I think it was because I was used to the previous method, or something like that, so I got disgusted with school" [sic].

Vitória expressed that in childhood "she did not like to study, she liked to go to school to play" [sic], she said that when she went to school she had no interest, she did not identify with her studies, trying to rescue the games "from the street" [sic], as something that could make the school environment more pleasant. Even though Vitória said she didn't like studying, it was the contact with a teacher, in the first year of Elementary School, that made the young woman feel accepted and safe in the place. However, Vitória had to change schools five times due to changes in residence, losing contact with the teacher, but starting to identify with her, enjoying playing "school" [sic]. The young woman finished high school and started a laboratory technical course that had to be interrupted due to her pregnancy. Vitória showed frustration when noticing that she lives a different lifestyle than her friends

who work and go to the university.

#### ***Pregnant adolescents who dropped out of school before pregnancy***

The adolescents Bruna (15), Milena (15) and Neusa (16) stopped studying before finding out they were pregnant. Bruna started studying when she was four or five years old, when she went to live at her grandmother's house; before, the teenager reports having suffered abuse at her sister's house where she lived. The young woman recalls some episodes from school, "ah! We walked around, messed with the people from the school, sat at the back of the room, something like that..." [sic]. Bruna said she still kept in touch with some people in the class, but showed sadness when emphasizing not having a close friendship and someone she could trust at school. The young woman did not fail school, and reported that she lost interest in continuing her studies, causing her to drop out of school after completing Elementary School, even before becoming pregnant. "At first I liked to go, but then I got bored" [sic].

Milena said she was a good student at school. The adolescent dropped out of school in the 7th grade because she started to experience difficulties with transport, since her husband stopped taking her. "It was difficult for me to go to school, because my husband arrived tired... And he was the one who took me. And the school is a little far. Then... I had this difficulty" [sic]. In addition, the adolescent mentioned feeling alone in the school environment, which would also have motivated her to give up studying. Milena repeated the 6th grade due to the number of absences.

Similar to Milena, Neusa said that she was studious and that she liked school in the years before the eighth grade, but when she met her partner in the eighth grade, she started to stop studying because her mother wouldn't let her date. "Then, when I skipped school, I was going to stay with him, my mother wouldn't let us date... Then I skipped, I didn't want to study, I got like this, rebellious..." [sic]. The young woman came to repeat the 8th grade.

#### ***Pregnant adolescents who stopped studying after completing High School***

The adolescents Aline (18) and Ana (19) completed High School and they are currently not studying. Aline often saw school as something boring, as she was not very communicative and did not have many friends at school. "I went to school, studied and went home, you know? But to make friends and have that interaction, I didn't have it. So, for me, sometimes it was something boring, but I always, like, sometimes I got a good grade" [sic]. The young woman dropped out of school a few times, accumulating absences or dropping out due to health reasons and poor grades. Aline preferred to complete her studies through the supplementary course: "So, I finished high school this year, beginning of 2017. At

school, my last three years, I was like, you know? Wanting to give up. It wasn't like that anymore, like it was before. I wasn't getting good grades..." [sic].

Ana, on the other hand, always liked to study. She only repeated the first year because she had to leave school for family reasons, which she did not detail. She intended to finish High School and soon enter college, but with the pregnancy she had to postpone the plans. The young woman reveals that what she misses most in life is studying.

### **Pregnant adolescents who continued studying**

It was observed that of the 14 pregnant adolescents, four of them, Amélia (15), Diana (16), Cátia (18) and Jamyle (18), continued studying at the time of the interview, during the gestation period.

At school, Amélia considers that there have been changes in the way she feels within that environment due to the changes that pregnancy causes. "It's not the same thing as "okay" let's say, you're in a little group... now you're too lazy to even get up from the chair, more "quiet" like that". [sic] "I was never one to "okay" messing around, nor "okay" up and down" [sic]. Amélia says she enjoys being at school: "I feel better than staying at home doing nothing" [sic]. About her relationship with friends, she considers that there was no change in the way they act. She claims that living with classmates is good and that they have good teachers. "Normal. I was never one for "okay" or "coloio"<sup>1</sup>. So... I talk to everyone in my class. There are girls that I'm closer to and others that I'm not so close to, but I talk to everyone. Normal" [sic]. At school: "I like a little bit of everything.... I don't know what I don't like..." [sic].

Diana always liked to study and had no failed a year. Therefore, she worries about the months that she needs to stay away from her studies after the birth of her child, the young woman wants to stay away as little time as possible. She reports that she has had difficulties keeping up with new subjects in the disciplines, having some difficulties in passing the 1st year, especially after she knew that she was pregnant and had to be absent for exams and going to a doctor.

Cátia stated that she enjoyed attending school and that she is still attending. She showed to be good for being cared for by friends and school professionals. "It's... it's good because... it's... it's always more careful... the directors are always more careful with the meals they give... Yeah... with the students, the schoolmates, always stays there caring, asking if everything is ok" [sic]. About this care, she says: "It's very good too. They get worried when I say I'm feeling some pain, then they take me to the hospital right away, and so on" [sic].

Living on a farm, Jamyle had to drop out of school when she was little due to the distance she traveled daily and the need to do housework while her mother

worked outside the home. The husband, "Baixinho" [sic], as he was called, made up for the absences and deficits in care received by Jamyle during childhood and enabled the rescue of experiences not experienced by the teenager, such as going to school, which happened effectively when she was fifteen. In this educational environment, she often meets other adolescents who are also pregnant, and she said she was able to build friendships and talk about topics of interest to her.

### **DISCUSSION**

The school as one of the institutions that, in one way or another, is inserted in relationships since childhood, it can be remembered in different ways according to the experience of each one. It is observed that the adolescents who stopped studying even before the pregnancy seem to have no support that would contribute to their permanence in school, in addition to the fragility of identification with colleagues, with professionals, with the study and with the school itself.

In these cases, it is clear that the school was not able to be a social environment to support the emotional demands of the adolescents, which leads us to reflect on the lack of support given to education professionals, because for them to be able to support the emotional demands of their students, it is necessary that they also benefit from a system that offers them physical, psychological and emotional support. Winnicott and Britton (1947/1999) emphasized the importance of caring for caregivers at a host institution, so that they could act therapeutically with institutionalized children and adolescents.

Bruna complains about the lack of a more intimate friendship and of someone she could "count on" at school and Milena complains that she felt alone at school, reporting this as being one of the reasons for having given up studying, which reveals the importance of bonds of friendship in the school environment, corroborating some studies (Nunes & Silva, 2015; Pizzinato, Petracco, Hamann, Cé, & Rosa, 2017). In addition, it emphasizes the importance of the school community being attentive to the emotional needs of its students.

The school can be an opportunity for the individual to participate in a group of equals, making it possible to develop interesting relationships with the group (Winnicott, 1964/1982). In this way, the school should appear in the lives of young people as something beyond just turning to the aspect of programmed teaching, being also an environment for relationships with other people, such as with other young people of a similar age group and education professionals.

The absence of support from the family or close people can be seen when Milena's husband no longer takes her to school; in Bruna's case, the grandmother who welcomed her from the situation of mistreatment seems not to have insisted on her granddaughter's permanence in the school environment and in Neusa's

<sup>1</sup> Popular vocabulary.

case, she dropped out of studies because she wanted to date. These are all reasons verbalized by the adolescents in the only interview with the participants, therefore, it is important to point out that other unspoken issues may be related to school dropout.

It also seems that, in the cases of young women who dropped out of school even before pregnancy, there was no interrelationship between family and school, in order to enable them to continue their studies. Andrade, Ohara, Borba and Ribeiro (2015) point out that financial support and support from the family network are aspects that the adolescent faces to negotiate and guarantee her livelihood, the baby and return to school more quickly. In addition, according to Winnicott (1965/2005), for the mother to be emotionally available for her baby, she needs her environment to offer a “protective cover” to support her demands, because only then will she be able to meet the baby’s needs.

Other studies (Alves, Oliveiras, Caldas, & Nobre, 2016; Vieira, Bousquat, Barros, & Alves, 2017) also identified the abandonment of studies by adolescents even before pregnancy. In order to try to prevent situations of school dropout, Vieira et al. (2017) highlight the need for public policies that consider the heterogeneity of the social group of adolescents who are mothers. For some, for example, greater attention to income generation policies is necessary, for others, special attention to school life, in order to expand the opportunity for studies and life for these young women.

Adolescents who stopped studying due to pregnancy also bring their uniqueness. Lívia reports the shame of being pregnant as the reason for having stopped studying. Raquel, Valentina and Vitória stopped studying close to giving birth and Samanta because of her difficulty going up and down stairs. In these five cases, school professionals could perhaps have contributed to the young women not stopping studying, which again reveals the lack of support from professionals towards students and from the educational system towards educators. Interventions that promote awareness, understanding and acceptance by school professionals, as well as by colleagues in cases of teenage pregnancy at school, could be developed by psychology professionals, for example, enabling a more inclusive space for these young women, such as in Lívia’s case.

On the other hand, instead of including, the research by Santos, Guimarães and Gama (2016), identified stigmatizing attitudes of the teacher towards pregnant adolescent. In this direction, Quaresma da Silva (2016) reports that the stigmas accompany pregnant adolescents in schools and reduce the mobilization of education and government officials to launch differentiated public policies that collaborate for the continuity of the adolescents’ studies during pregnancy and after the baby’s birth. Inattention to this social problem contributes to the school dropout of most

pregnant adolescents.

A pregnant adolescent may begin to witness situations of visible distancing and exclusion in the school environment, distancing herself from school over time or being discreetly removed from school, with the argument that it is for her own protection. In addition, it was noted that when pregnant adolescents drop out of school, most do not receive attention and encouragement from the school or the Tutelary Council for their return to school, but, on the contrary, the abandonment of these adolescents is seen as normal (Quaresma da Silva, 2016).

In the case of Samanta, one can reflect about the importance of school professionals in caring for their students by promoting an environment with better access, perhaps this would minimize the damage of dropping out, even knowing the difficulty of the physical structure of Brazilian public schools (Haguette, Pessoa, & Vidal, 2016; Torre, 2015).

In the cases of Raquel, Valentina and Vitória, perhaps access to information about their rights, concerning Law number 6.202/1975 ensure that the young women do not abandon their studies, but instead stay away for the period they are entitled to. Ignorance of rights and duties generates social and political damage and this is due to the lack of constitutional legal education and the difficulty in understanding the language of legal texts (Silva, Choucino, & Machado, 2019). The appropriation of legal issues and educational policies in schools needs to happen so that it is possible, in addition to proposing, also monitoring and supervising policies, as well as enabling the exercise of citizenship by the population (Scziminski & Bazzanella, 2015).

In this regard, the United Nations proposes the implementation of “appropriate policies for reintegration into school and resumption of studies, which will allow young pregnant women and those who are already mothers to exercise their right to education” (UNESCO, 2017, p. 7). In this way, it is understood that the dissemination, teaching, reflection and inspection of laws, rights and duties can be potentiating actions for these young people and for the population in general.

In the case of Vitória specifically, one can see her investment in studies that will culminate in her professional training as a laboratory technician in the future. The family environments (in particular, represented by the figure of the husband) and friendships prove to be encouraging for the young woman to return to study after the birth of the child. Her school life story is interesting, at the same time that the identification with a teacher seems to have provided the adolescent with a pleasant and powerful experience, meaning the school as a space that will enable her to achieve countless achievements, such as becoming a professional.

Leão, Dayrell and Reis (2011) warn that the representation of the teacher can come in a positive way as an incentive in studies and life plans, being

someone available and admired for the way he teaches, but can also promote negative representations when he is not open to dialogue or does not present interesting pedagogical practices.

The school environment for Raquel, Valentina, Samanta and Aline seems permeated with ambivalent experiences. The adolescent Valentina reported missing the rural environment and the activities she used to do before moving to the urban area and going to school. In this sense, the school seems to her to be a place that comes to deprive her of childhood pleasures. This separation between school to play or study, leisure time or study time, also appears in young Raquel's report, who from her experiences seems not to see school as pleasant. In the school environment, there does not need to be a separation between the moment of learning, mechanized, being seen as bad, and the moment of playing, of freedom, which is seen as good (Nunes & Silva, 2015).

Samanta expresses that she liked the school before changing schools because it was adapted to the previous teaching method, but she also does not rule out the possibility that there were other reasons that led her not to get used to the new school. In this context, several aspects can influence the adolescent's adaptation to a new school. Pedagogical and affective aspects in relation to teaching are important for students to remain in school (Leão et al., 2011). In addition, living with peers and friendships are relevant in the process of identification and involvement with studies and the school community (Pizzinato et al., 2017). The change of school makes the student have to adapt and live with new colleagues and with another school structure, and this can lead to the evasion process when the student does not get support to carry out this transition, which was what happened in the case of Samantha.

As for the adolescents who continued studying, it was possible to observe numerous aspects that contributed to the permanence of the young women in the school environment. Amélia, Cátia and Jamyle talk about relationships with school friends. Cátia says she is cared for by friends and professionals at the institution. The young women also report their physical difficulties resulting from pregnancy, but this did not prevent them from continuing to study. The four teenagers demonstrated to like the school environment. In these cases, this environment proved to be welcoming, potentiating the construction and strengthening of relationships, a significant space for the adolescents, who continued studying during pregnancy.

Given the above, it is remarkable with the data presented, how much interpersonal relationships interfere with the students' will to continue or not in school.

The more we look, the more we see that if teachers and students are living together in a healthy

way, they are engaged in a mutual sacrifice of spontaneity and independence, and this is almost as important a part of education as teaching and learning of the scheduled subjects. (Winnicott, 1964/1982, p. 230).

The reception and listening to the demands of the adolescents by the school community, as well as the bonds and friendships with colleagues, demonstrated the potential of the school space for pregnant young women.

Similar results were found in research by Nunes and Silva (2015), in which high school students from a public school pointed out negative elements at school (conflicts in relationships between students and their peers, teachers and school management and the stress experienced in the difficulties of learn in the classroom) and interesting elements (friendships, forming good bonds).

The data from this research also make it possible to reflect about the importance of the school promoting spaces for dialogue with young people about sexuality and related topics such as teenage pregnancy. On the other hand, it is identified in research (Chaveiro et al., 2015; Ferreira et al., 2018) that this subject is most often worked in schools in a biological way in Science and Biology classes or in lectures given by professionals of health, and it is necessary to broaden the discussions to address sexual and reproductive health in a critical and reflective way in the education and health process.

In addition, the importance of talking about sexuality with young people can be seen in research (Fiedler et al., 2015) in which the young participants in the study demonstrated that they did not know how to use some contraceptive methods. Other studies (Ataliba & Mourão, 2018; Barreto, Santos, Bezerra, & Silva, 2016) identified adolescents' lack of knowledge about Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). It is observed that young people need information about prevention and health promotion, and the school environment appears as a place to work with health education with different themes, one of which is sexuality. "It is possible to prevent early or unplanned pregnancy through good quality comprehensive sexuality education that includes content about gender equality and links with services that ensure the availability of contraceptives" (UNESCO, 2017, p. 7).

However, gender and sexualities discussions were repressed from the 2015 National Education Plan (PNE) (Souza Junior, 2018) and the 2017 National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (Monteiro, Castro, & Herneck, 2018; Moura & Leite, 2019; Souza Junior, 2018) as a cross-cutting theme to be worked in schools, as provided for in the National Curricular Parameters (PCN) approved in 1997. Currently, sexuality starts to be addressed, according to the BNCC of Elementary School, only in the subject Natural Sciences, in the 8th grade (Moura

& Leite, 2019). In view of this, there is a lack of public policies that work with sexuality in the area of Brazilian education these days and that are going in the opposite direction of what the United Nations propose (UNESCO, 2017), which may come to reflect on the ways in which adolescents inform themselves, prevent themselves, behave and perceive sexuality.

### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article sought to understand the school life experiences of pregnant adolescents. It was observed that each young person had a unique and unique experience with their colleagues, teachers and the school community as a whole. These experiences linked to family life enhanced or limited the continuity of the adolescents in their studies, which demonstrated the importance of physical and emotional support from the family to pregnant adolescents in this educational process.

Welcoming institutions, identification with professors, affective bonds with colleagues, friends and/or families who support them are some of the conditions that strengthened the young women in the process of continuing their studies. Unwelcoming schools, changes (school, residence), lack of emotional bond with teachers and classmates and/or lack of family support were identified as conditions that limited the process of maintaining the adolescents' studies.

It was noticed that the adolescents sought at school a welcoming environment for their emotional needs, which is a space that can empower their students to face difficulties, strengthen interpersonal bonds, emotionally mature and develop different skills. As well as, we also identified deficiencies in the care and reception of the school community, which can only offer a welcoming environment for its students if it is not helpless in meeting its own needs.

In this sense, even considering pregnancy as a complex phenomenon at this stage of life, as it has different crossings for each young person, it is still possible that such an experience is not experienced in a limiting way, since the continuity of studies and projects for the future can and it turns out possible. This time, the research addresses that such procedure becomes powerful when the adolescents have family and social resources, thus demarcating that the journey and student performance of the young woman should not be disengaged from family and community support, because when such institutions come together, they can provide momentary and future gains for adolescents in educational training.

This research was limited to the study of the school life experiences of the young women in a transversal way, through the performance of a single interview, making it impossible to deepen the theme at other times. It points to the importance of carrying out studies with this theme in a longitudinal way.

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