

DUBLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

LISA LENNON

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY: A MALE PERSPECTIVE

BACHELOR OF ARTS COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

SUPERVISOR: SIOBÁIN O'DONNELL

16TH APRIL 2010

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	Page 3.
ABSTRACT	Page 4.
CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW	Page 5.
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY	Page 13.
CHAPTER 3: RESULTS	Page 17.
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION	Page 22.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION	Page 31.
REFERENCES	Page 33.
APPENDIX	Page 37.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank a number of people for their help with this research. Firstly Siobáin O'Donnell who has offered so much support and guidance from the very beginning of this project, her encouragement and calmness throughout has been a source of great comfort to me.

A word of thanks must be given to all the staff at the library in Portobello whose patience and knowledge has not gone unnoticed, they have made this research project less stressful by their approachable and helpful manner.

Thank you also to Sherie De Burgh from the One Parent Family organisation who from the first contact I had with her was nothing but supportive and helpful – it was a pleasure to have interviewed and learned from her.

Very special thanks must go to my parents who have provided me with the means and support to not only complete, this project but also the last five years in college, without them none of this would have been possible for me and my gratitude to them is endless.

And finally to my daughter Chloe who has kept me going through the last five years and has been my reason for giving this course my all. Her smile and words of wisdom have cheered me up during my toughest moments and her good nature is an inspiration to me.

Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate the area of unplanned pregnancy from a male perspective. In doing so, the issues faced by such men in relation to the unplanned pregnancy will be identified and explored, the questions raised by such an event with regard to the pregnancy continuing and whether or not the men chose to seek counselling to help them through this time are examined. The research also aimed to discover the emotions experienced by the male at this time, and whether or not these men feel that there is adequate help available to them with regard to this issue. This information was obtained by interviewing six men who have had previous experience of an unplanned pregnancy, and also a therapist who works in a crisis pregnancy agency was interviewed in order to get a general overview of the men who present for counselling due to an unplanned pregnancy and the issues they face.

The design of the research was a qualitative approach using an informal style of interview. The interviews were carried out in a number of ways, face to face interviews and also telephone interviews. The interviews were recorded using a digital recording device. The data recovered was transcribed into text and analysed. Another method of gathering data was by sending questions by email this was done at the request of the participants.

The research found that all six of the men who were interviewed had experienced unplanned pregnancy as a highly emotive event, the range of emotions however was diverse from terror to excitement. None of the men interviewed had attended counselling to help them through this event, however the counsellor interviewed reported that the number of men attending for help with this matter was on the increase. None of the men interviewed believed that there was adequate support available to men when it came to unplanned pregnancy.

It may be concluded that due to the high level of emotions experienced by men with regard to unplanned pregnancy that more support should be available to them during this time.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Although the area of unplanned pregnancy is predominantly viewed as a female issue there have been various studies and journal articles published on the issues faced by men in relation to an unplanned pregnancy. The men involved in such an incident and the issues they face seem to be ignored by society in general as most of the studies and programmes which are designed to help during this difficult time are aimed at women. It may be concluded from the studies which have been carried out relating to men in this situation that this is not only unfair but also may have a hand to play when it comes to their ability to be an active and involved father.

Men are often labelled with an unfair stereotype with regards to the area of unplanned pregnancy. Bunting and McAuley (2004) noted how much of the quantitative research relating to teenage fathers resulted in the men being painted in a negative light, however the qualitative research goes some way in showing how these men genuinely want more contact and involvement with their children. The lack of research on this area of unplanned pregnancy has led people to the opinion that these fathers are either absent or invisible (Coleman, 1998). Whitehead (2008) looks at the reason behind the father being absent not only during the unplanned pregnancy but also in the child's life. She concludes that although on some occasions the male does become absent it may not be completely his own choice. She discovered in many occasions the males' inability to provide for his partner and child can result in the breakdown of the relationship and subsequent absence of the male. Further evidence to challenge the stereotypical view of the male involved in the unplanned pregnancy is brought to light by Condon, Corkindale, Russell and Quinlivan (2006) who found that when faced with the hypothetical situation of an unplanned pregnancy 51% of participants took responsibility themselves while 29% shared the responsibility with the female. The

study also found that over 90% of the participants showed a strong loyalty and sense of responsibility to their hypothetical partner.

In 2007 Crisis Pregnancy Agency of Ireland commissioned a study into men's sexuality and experiences of crisis pregnancy although by its own admission the study was relatively small, its findings were very relevant. The study concurred with many others of its kind in that although there can be some truth in the stereotypes of men being irresponsible, incompetent and often a useless father who will abandon his child, the reality is that not all men behave in that fashion some are found to behave in a very responsible manner when faced with an unplanned pregnancy and this needs to be brought into the public domain (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007).

As far back as 1982 there have been articles written about men and unplanned pregnancy in which the stereotypical view of men has been challenged. "Contradicting these stereotypical views is the experience of the caseworkers, who have noticed that teenage fathers do express concern about both mother and baby" (Barret & Robinson, 1982. p.484).

In light of the refuting of widely held stereotypes regarding men and their reactions to unplanned pregnancy it may be wondered what is the reality for these men and how do they really react to such a situation. The first issue worth noting is that unplanned pregnancies happen to men from all socioeconomic backgrounds and no class is exempt from their occurrence (Johnson & Williams, 2005). The difference that has been noted with regards to the various socioeconomic groups is in relation to the response of the men in the different groups. It has been concluded in several studies that men from a lower socioeconomic background view an unplanned pregnancy in a more positive light than those from a higher socioeconomic background. The reason for this is that men from a less advantaged background tend to have low levels of education and income and may be involved in crime or

socially unacceptable behaviour. These men see the opportunity to have a child as a way of making something of themselves and giving their life a new meaning and purpose. This is not to say that these men would purposely get a woman pregnant in order to have a child, it merely means when such a pregnancy arose men in this group were less likely to view it in a negative way (Bunting & McCauley, 2004; Condon *et al.*, 2006; Ferguson & Hogan, 2007; Hogan, 2007; Marsiglio, 1993). Many reported feeling pleased as it confirmed to them their masculinity and they saw the pregnancy as proof of their fertility (Condon *et al.*, 2006; Marsiglio, 1993; Fagot, Pear, Capaldi, Crosby & Leve, 1998; Pleck, Sonnenstein & Ku, 1993; Wei, Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 2002). Interestingly a Canadian study had other findings on this matter with 95% of participants disagreeing that pregnancy or fatherhood would demonstrate manhood or would increase self esteem (Redmond, 1985). Given the positive light and the desire these men have to make something of themselves it is very important that they get the help and support they need in order to fulfil their new role. In contrast to this sub group men from an advantaged background are more likely to deem an unplanned pregnancy a ‘disaster’ as it is thought to hinder their educational achievements and have a negative impact on their career prospects and overall ruin the goals they have set for themselves in life (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007).

For those men who experience an unplanned pregnancy regardless of what background they come from help and support is essential to them, as many of them report feeling ‘shocked’ and experience feeling overwhelmed and isolated also feelings of anxiety and concern for their girlfriend were reported (Holmberg & Wahlberg, 2000). Barrett and Robinson (1982) reported a level of emotion not normally seen in adolescent males who were experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. This study goes on to report how the social agencies working in this field fail to reach out to these young men, even though it was found that most were willing to participate in counselling and were willing to accept responsibility for their girlfriend’s

pregnancy. The sample in this study reported their failing to seek help from these agencies was based on an uncertainty they felt surrounding their belief in the agencies genuine interest in them. Although this study is now twenty eight years old it is still relevant as we can see when we look at a more recent report within Ireland. Ferguson & Hogan (2007) carried out interviews with men who had experienced an unplanned pregnancy. In its findings it discusses how most of the men reported that the interview process had been useful to them and they had learned something about themselves, for most of these men the interview for the research had been the first opportunity they had to talk about their experiences and feelings surrounding the event. This was due to the perception the men held that there was no place for them to go to talk about such things and get the necessary counselling they required. One man in the study did report seeking counselling at the time but had not continued as he felt he did not receive the help and respect for his situation as he deserved, he felt the agency viewed the issue as a female issue.

A study from Australia (Condon *et al.*, 2006) found that for first time father's pregnancy may be the most stressful time in his life with high levels of anxiety reported during pregnancy. If we add on top of this many of the extra issues that are faced by an unplanned pregnancy we can conclude that support needs to be in place for these men. Quinlivan & Condon (2005) stated that prior to their research there was no data relating to the psychological symptomatology experienced by teenage fathers. They concluded that there were indeed higher levels of symptomatology in teenage fathers compared to non teenage fathers. They also noted that there was no difference in the levels of either group seeking help in a counselling or psychiatric form, both groups had low levels of attendance at such agencies.

The Teen Parents Support Programme (Hogan, 2007) reports that when many teenage fathers discussed their involvement in an unplanned pregnancy they described feelings of shame, fear, upset, embarrassment, remorse at having hurt the woman involved and having put her in

a very difficult position. They revealed how they were unable to talk to parents or peers on the matter as they were respecting the wishes of the woman to keep the matter private. Similarly Condon *et al* (2006) reports that of the participants who took part 98% claimed that an unplanned pregnancy was a significantly life changing event, the study also concluded that overall the results showed “a fairly empathetic or supportive approach” to the woman involved. These findings can also be supported in several other studies Jonson and Williams (2005) conducted interviews with males with previous unplanned pregnancy experience. There was a strong level of emotion reported during the interviews with some men being ‘disgusted’ with themselves for not preventing the pregnancy. One man reported that the situation ‘disturbed’ him and left him feeling very emotional. Other feelings reported in this study were with regards to irresponsibility and denial. It has also been found that although males may feel remorseful and confused they show a willingness to share responsibility and offer support to the female throughout the pregnancy or termination (Weinstein & Rosen, 1994). The study by The Crisis Pregnancy Agency (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007) had similar findings also. Many of the men interviewed reported feeling scared, confused and uncertain when they first heard the news of the pregnancy, however most of the men went on to engage with the woman to resolve the crisis. Bunting and McCauley (2004) concluded that the higher the level of involvement the males have in the decision making process regarding the pregnancy the higher the level of involvement they have with the child after the birth. It can therefore be seen how it is of great importance that men are not excluded from the decision making process as to do so may result in a lack of involvement later which may have a damaging effect on the child. (Marsiglio, 2008; Vaz, Smolen & Miller, 1983).

A study on the involvement of the male partner in the adolescent pregnancy (Vaz *et al*, 1983) revealed that male partners appear to experience some of the same stress as the female involved, almost a third of the sample reported feeling depressed during the pregnancy with a

number also experiencing social isolation. Similarly Elster and Panzarine (1980) found that of their sample of teenage fathers less than half were coping well with the pregnancy, while a significant number were suffering with clinical depression. With this fact in mind it may be concluded that help and support should be provided to males in the circumstances of unplanned pregnancy as they are a vulnerable subgroup of society. The other issue concerning the importance of the male's role in the unplanned pregnancy is the level of support and stability he can provide for the pregnant woman. The involvement of the male in decision making is therefore not only beneficial to himself but also his partner and the subsequent child (Vaz *et al*, 1983).

When it comes to the emotive issue of Abortion as a solution to unplanned pregnancy we can see a contrast in opinions between the various studies. Ekstrand, Tyden, Darj and Larsson, (2007) found that the attitudes of seventeen year old Swedish boys toward abortion were ambivalent. There was a level of ambiguity expressed toward unplanned pregnancy. On the one hand it was viewed by the boys as a 'catastrophe' and many admitted if faced with the problem they would encourage the girl to have an abortion. However the ambiguity arose when it was revealed that most of the boys agreed with the point that girls had the unrestricted right to decide to have an abortion or not. This shows that within this study the attitude towards abortion may be ambivalent in theory but positive in practise.

Other studies on abortion have reported that men did want to be involved in the decisions surrounding an abortion but also they did require professional and individual support at this difficult time (Holmberg & Wahlberg, 1999; Holmberg & Wahlberg, 2000). Marsiglio and Shehan (1993) reported that many men researched did want to be involved in the decision making process involving abortion and they did not believe that the decision to abort a pregnancy should be left exclusively to the woman (Shostak & McLouth, 1984). Another report found that 30% of those questioned strongly agreed that an unmarried 20 year old

prospective father should be given the legal right to prevent his partner from going ahead with an abortion, that is, if he is willing to pay all medical expenses and also has the intention of raising the child himself or with the aid of his family (Marsiglio, 1992). The Men's Rights Association maintains the fact that men regardless of whether they are married or not have equal rights to decide on the fate of their unborn child (Doyle, 1985). A similar attitude is reported by Marsiglio & Shehan (1993) their study found that 61% of the sample felt that it was wrong for a woman to have an abortion if the male involved in the pregnancy objected. This report also found that the majority of young men felt that they had an important part to play in the resolution of an unplanned pregnancy and deserved to be consulted on the issue of abortion.

When looking at the report from The Crisis Pregnancy Agency it is possible to draw some clear insights into the emotions that men experience when faced with the issue of abortion. Many expressed feelings of sadness, despair and anger along with a sense of relief and a second chance to make something of themselves. While others felt the experience was both negative and positive, positive in the sense of relief they felt while at the same time negative with the sense of guilt felt afterwards. Some reported the abortion as having a very negative impact on them with no redemption felt and one claiming the experience had ruined his life and another reporting a suicide attempt soon after the abortion. Although all the men bar one reported having recovered from the experience all wished it had never happened (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007). The area of abortion is an aspect of unplanned pregnancy that requires particular attention to not only the woman but the male also, it is for most a very difficult and stressful time and as research shows it is a situation that many men will not discuss (Redmond, 1985; Ferguson & Hogan, 2007).

When it comes to support and help provided for males involved in an unplanned pregnancy all the studies come to the conclusion that more needs to be done to help this vulnerable

group in society, many believe that these men and their needs have been ignored for too long, it is also noted that in some cases no help is provided by the families of these often very young men. Many men report not being contacted by any health care professionals or social workers, this leads to not only a risk to the men's mental health as we have already seen with the high levels of symptomatology in this group. It also fails to provide the necessary support the men may require in order to have a positive and active role in the pregnancy and subsequent child (Bunting & McAuley, 2004).

The study by Quinlivan and Condon (2005) concludes by calling for greater attention to be paid to fathers within the setting of teenage pregnancy due to their high levels of anxiety and symptomatology, they believed that assessment and intervention would be beneficial for these men. Corkindale, Condon, Russell & Quinlivan (2009) agree that understanding the male perspective on the issue of unplanned pregnancy can have a positive affect on the counselling process. Smith, Buzi and Weinman, (2002) cited that young fathers need more emotional support than is on offer from the present programmes available, staff in these programs had noted many of the young fathers feeling hopeless and depressed.

Although the amount of programmes and help for these men needs to be addressed and needs to be increased another area of improvement that needs to be looked at is developing awareness within men that there is help out there for them even if it may be limited at the moment, more needs to be done to make these services acceptable and accessible to these men so that they do not feel isolated and stigmatised for their involvement in an unplanned pregnancy (Finer, Darroch & Frost, 2003).

Chapter Two: Methodology

The research is a qualitative study which aims to discover the emotional effects of an unplanned pregnancy on the male involved, to determine the feelings experienced by the male on learning of the pregnancy and also the attitudes of those men toward seeking counselling for such an issue.

Data was collected through a combination of semistructured interviews consisting of open ended questions and individually adapted follow up questions and emailed questions that were then filled out and returned by email. There were seven participants interviewed for the study. Four of which were men who had previous experience of an unplanned pregnancy resulting in the birth of a baby. One of the participants was a male who had experienced the termination of an unplanned pregnancy, one had experienced an unplanned pregnancy which had ended with a miscarriage while one of the above mentioned participants had experienced both a termination and a baby resulting from two unplanned pregnancies. The remaining participant was a professional counsellor who worked in the area of unplanned pregnancy and single parent family issues in a registered agency. It was felt that due to the different experiences faced by several of the participants that specific questions would be asked to the various participants, for example some different questions were asked to the male who had experience of a termination and also the male who had experienced a miscarriage. The counsellor was asked questions pertaining to her experience working in the field of unplanned pregnancy counselling. The interview with this participant was carried out in an office in the agency they worked for. Three of the other interviews were carried out in the homes of the participants this was at the request of the participants for their convenience, two were carried out via email and the final interview was carried out over the phone by request of the participant due to time constraints and work obligations on their part.

Participants were recruited by gatekeepers. As the sample required for the study was very limited – male with previous experience of an unplanned pregnancy it was felt that this was the most reliable and time efficient way of finding willing participants. As participants were not allowed to be presently experiencing an unplanned pregnancy or currently attending therapy for ethical reasons it was felt that advertising for participants in counselling agencies would not be effective. None of the participants were known to the researcher prior to the interview and were recommended as suitable by colleagues who acted as gatekeepers. Contact was made with the participants through a mixture of email, phone calls, or text and interview times and locations were discussed and agreed on via these mediums. With regards to the professional counsellor interviewed the agency they worked for was found on the internet and the participants name was on the website as a person contactable within the agency. An email was sent to the participant asking if they would be interested in partaking in the study, the interview was setup and confirmed by a number of subsequent phone calls.

All interviews apart from the two carried out by email were taped using a Dictaphone obtained through the college the interviews were then downloaded onto the researcher personal computer and transcribed verbatim into text by the researcher. All interviewees were informed about the technical details of the tape recording. The procedure of the interview was explained and started when the participants were ready. Following the transcription into text the audio recordings were wiped from the computer in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of the participant. This is in accordance with The Data Protection Act of 2003, section 2(1)(c)(iv) of the Act which states that "the data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes". No identifying information was put into the text and any names given or places referenced were changed to protect anonymity of the participants.

Questions relating to the males interview were put together based on the finding of the literature review, the research was concerned with discovering if the information found in previous research was relevant to the sample of men questioned. The questions put to the counsellor were concerned with discovering the issues those males that do seek counselling for this issue face, also what type of socioeconomic background these men came from and whether or not that influenced their reaction to the pregnancy. Questions also related to the availability of services for men with regard to the issue of unplanned pregnancy, and who the men seek help from.

Data were examined line by line to identify the participants descriptions of thought patterns, feelings, and actions related to the themes mentioned in the interviews. The information found in the literature review was noted down and the answers given by interviewees were compared with the previous findings to determine any correlation between the literature review and the interview data. The data obtained from the interview with the counsellor was also examined line by line and was then compared with the data from the males interviewed this was done again to determine a link between the small sample of men interviewed and the experience of a professional working in this field.

It was explained to participants that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, their participation was voluntary, and their anonymity was assured. They were also given a consent form granting permission to be interviewed and for the information collected to be used in the research project. All participants were given a chance before the interview began to ask any questions they may have about the research or the interview about to be carried out.

The research was carried out within the guidelines of 'The Belmont Report' which states the three basic principles of research involving human subjects as respect for persons, which

concludes that all participants must be autonomous, voluntary and given adequate information, beneficence which relates to the Hippocratic oath of 'do no harm' which in turn equates to maximising benefit and minimising harm to the subject, and finally justice which states that all subjects must be treated equally. In keeping with ethical boundaries all participants had previous experience of unplanned pregnancy and none were currently seeking counselling for this matter.

Chapter Three: Results

Six men were interviewed for the purpose of this research at the time of the unplanned pregnancy their ages ranged from 20 to 35 with the mean age being 28. According to the counsellor from the unplanned pregnancy agency the most common age group to experience an unplanned pregnancy was 25 to 35 year olds.

Of the four men interviewed whose unplanned pregnancy resulted in the birth of a baby all still reported having an active role in their child's life. One of the men interviewed had experienced an unplanned pregnancy that had resulted in a miscarriage, while one of the other four men had experienced two unplanned pregnancies the first in his twenties with a previous girlfriend which ended in a termination and the second in his thirties which resulted in a child. The final male had experienced a termination.

Of the four men interviewed whose unplanned pregnancy resulted in the birth of a baby three were no longer in a relationship with the mother of the child, one had subsequently married the mother of his child and had another child with her.

Of the three relationships that broke down the length of time following the pregnancy until the end of the relationship varied from one year approximately to eight months to the same time the pregnancy was learnt of.

With regards to how long into the pregnancy the men were told of it four reported being told as soon as the woman found out, one reported being told a week after the woman found out and one did not specify how long the woman had know but reported being told approximately six weeks into the pregnancy.

When asked if they viewed the pregnancy in a positive or negative light, three reported viewing it as a negative event, while three viewed it as positive. The reasons for viewing the

unplanned pregnancy negatively were similar in all cases, the men all felt they were not ready to become a father, with one admitting to being too immature and felt he was not in a serious enough relationship with the woman to have a child with her. With one stating that at the time society was not accepting of such things and the pregnancy would have been “frowned upon” by his family.

Although all three who viewed it as positive initially admitted to feeling shocked all said this passed very quickly and saw the even as overall positive. With one recounting “we just got on with it.”

With regards to the two participants who had experienced a termination both reported viewing the unplanned pregnancies in a negative light feeling too immature and selfish to have children, this was the reason for the subsequent terminations. Both believed the decision to terminate the pregnancy was a mutual one as both couples felt the same way about the idea of having a child. Both felt that they were able to offer emotional support to the woman and both had accompanied them to England for the termination.

When asked who they felt was responsible for the unplanned pregnancy five said they viewed both parties equally responsible with one citing himself slightly more responsible, the sixth participant viewed the female responsible believing at the time that she should not have allowed it to happen. However in hindsight this participant now believed they were both equally responsible.

Of the six men interviewed none attended counselling to deal with the issue of the unplanned pregnancy. One reported attending couples counselling because the relationship with the woman involved had ended and they sought help, he reported finding the counselling “utterly useless.” The counsellor interviewed also noted that in many cases males who attend counselling due to an unplanned pregnancy do so for help with the relationship they have

with the woman involved, it was noted that men generally attend for practical advice as opposed to emotional support. The reasons given for not attending counselling were similar from all participants they felt that they did not require help of this sort. One did not “believe” in counselling, while the rest reported being able to “cope” possibly due to their age.

When asked who they did turn to for support two said no one, four said friends with one of these claiming his friend was not helpful in anyway.

The emotions experienced throughout the pregnancy were similar for all four men whose pregnancy went full term all experienced a mixture of emotions ranging from trepidation, anxiety, concern, to happiness and anticipation. For the one participant whose unplanned pregnancy resulted in a miscarriage he reported “being in a limbo” this was due to the nature of the pregnancy with his then girlfriend suffering from a complicated gynaecological condition and the pregnancy going full term being doubtful from the start.

On the issue of providing emotional support to the woman involved one felt that he had provided enough emotional support, three felt that they had but were not one hundred percent sure and felt only the woman involved could answer that while one felt that they had not provided enough emotional support this was due to the fact that his girlfriend at the time was living away and he believed that due to logistics he was unable to give enough support.

With regards to having an input into the decision making process involved in an unplanned pregnancy two participants felt they had no control over the situation at all, two felt that they had input into the decision, while two participants reported that there was “no decision” to be made in both these cases termination was not regarded as an option.

On the issue of whether or not the participants would have supported the decision to terminate the pregnancy four said that they would have been supportive of such an outcome,

with one of these respondents such an event had occurred with a previous girlfriend and another unplanned pregnancy. One participant said he would not have supported such a decision this was based on his belief in a “sort of karma.” The sixth participant felt he could not answer that question as it had never been an option so he was unable to speculate on how he would have felt.

The men were asked if they believed a man should have an input into the decision to terminate a pregnancy. Three felt that a man should have input into a decision like that, one responded that they were unsure, while two believed that only if the couple were in a long term or serious relationship should the man have an input both believed that if the pregnancy had resulted from a “fling” or one night stand than the woman should be free to make that decision without the males input.

None of the males questioned believed that there was enough support available to men experiencing an unplanned pregnancy, and although none of those questioned had sought help themselves all felt that there were men out there who would benefit from support and that they would struggle to find support, one participant stated that he was not aware of any agencies or support available to men with regards to an unplanned pregnancy.

All participants whose unplanned pregnancy had resulted in a child felt that overall it had a positive effect on their lives with all claiming that it had changed their lives in every way. Two commented that it had made them “grow up”, one commented that it pushed him to get married but that this had been a positive occurrence in his life but one that would more than likely not have occurred if the pregnancy had not arisen, while the other participant reported that the experience had made him more mature as he now had responsibilities.

With regards to the male who experienced the miscarriage he reported that the unplanned pregnancy had not had any long term effect on him, other than the realisation that the relationship he was in was not working, he reported no other long term impact.

On being told the news that the pregnancy had resulted in a miscarriage the participant reported feeling initially relieved but very soon after experienced a sense of disappointment as they had built themselves up emotionally to deal with the pregnancy and had on many levels “got their head around the idea.” However upon reflection it was felt that the miscarriage was for the best as the relationship was now free to run its course as opposed to being navigated by a pregnancy.

The participant who had experienced a termination reported that there had been a long term effect on his life due to the termination, he felt a sense of sadness and was considering attending counselling to help him cope with this sadness.

Chapter Four: Discussion

When comparing the finding of previous research on the effect of unplanned pregnancy on males and the research carried out with the participants of this study we can see that a lot of the data recorded are similar. Bunting & McCuley (2004) found that although in many cases the men who experienced an unplanned pregnancy were painted in a negative light when qualitative data was analysed it was found that the men wanted to be involved in the rearing of their children and sought to have more contact with them. This was supported in the research put forward by the Crisis Pregnancy Agency (2007) which found the men involved had responded to the unplanned pregnancy in a very responsible manner. This can also be seen when data for this study is analysed, of the four men who had a child as a result of the unplanned pregnancy had maintained an active role in their child's life in their opinion. When the issue about men not taking responsibility for unplanned pregnancies was put to the crisis pregnancy counsellor who took part in this research, she concluded that of the last fifteen crisis pregnancies she had helped with three of the woman were not supported at all by the men involved. In the counsellors experience many times it may have been the women who keep the men from having a role to play in a crisis pregnancy or subsequent child. Although it must be noted in the case of the three crisis pregnancies referred to it was not specified why these men were not involved. The male participants of this study were asked who they felt were responsible for the unplanned pregnancy all six men now felt that they and the woman involved shared responsibility for the pregnancy with one man feeling that he was even slightly more responsible than the woman. Condon *et al* (2005) asked participants to answer questions on a hypothetical pregnancy the results showed that 51% of the men took responsibility and 29% of participants shared responsibility for the unplanned pregnancy.

Whitehead (2008) looked at reasons why men become absent in the lives of their children and found that in some cases it is not the men's choice to be absent. It has been found to be down

to the inability of the men to provide financially for their child and so the relationship with the mother of the child can break down. When questioned about their experience of unplanned pregnancy all participants mentioned at some point concerns over money, their career and their ability to provide for a child as issues which caused them stress or concern. It may be concluded so that men feel a strong responsibility to provide in a financial manner for their children and that this may cause them not only stress but may also have an impact on their relationship with the mother of their child.

The socioeconomic background of the participants was not determined for the purpose of this study however it has been found that although unplanned pregnancy happens within all socioeconomic backgrounds how the men affected respond to it can differ greatly (Johnson & Williams, 2005). In order to get an over view of the different types of men and how they respond to unplanned pregnancy a counselling service coordinator of a crisis pregnancy agency was asked “Is there a difference in how men from different socioeconomic backgrounds respond to an unplanned pregnancy?” It was noted that although all groups are effected it was clear that there was a higher level of unplanned pregnancies amongst the lower socioeconomic groups there were many possibilities as to why this was for example a lack of emotional support and a higher level of background issues and a lack educational opportunities. It was also noted that men from the lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have a number of children with other women who they are in many cases not maintaining. In many cases an unplanned pregnancy is more acceptable within this background as males in this group are found to have fewer expectations in life and do not view a pregnancy as detrimental to their life. In contrast males from a higher socioeconomic background may be able to provide more practical support to the woman involved and may consider other options such as termination to resolve the issue of pregnancy. The reason for this was speculated as being due to the fact that males in this group felt they had “too much to lose” by having a

child at that particular time. The other difference commented on between the two groups was the level of risk taking with regards to sex and a subsequent pregnancy. Within the lower socioeconomic groups more risks were taken when it came to contraception, possibly due to the fact that an unplanned pregnancy was more acceptable whereas in the higher socioeconomic groups risks may be taken but when a pregnancy resulted from one of these risks the males involved were more likely to consider it “very stupid” with phrases like “how could I let this happen” been used frequently. This is in keeping with the findings of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency which found that men from higher socioeconomic backgrounds considered an unplanned pregnancy a “disaster” (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007).

Although the findings of this study did not determine the socioeconomic background of the participants, two participants viewed the pregnancy in a negative light on learning of it. These were the two youngest participants, further investigation could therefore be warranted on the response to an unplanned pregnancy within various age groups. Of the three other participants who were questioned all said they viewed the pregnancy positively from the start with two believing that their age had a factor in this as they were “old enough to handle that kind of thing.” The crisis pregnancy counsellor who took part in the research confirmed that within her agency and “most of the agencies” the most common age group to experience an unplanned pregnancy were the twenty five to thirty five year olds. This contradicted the common stereotype of teenagers and those in their early twenties being the most common age group to be affected.

With regard to the previous studies on how unplanned pregnancy affects men and the emotions they experience as a result of it we can see that feelings such as shock, fear, isolation, feeling overwhelmed and also experiencing concern for the woman involved (Holmberg & Wahlberg, 2000). All participants in this research recalled feeling shocked with one admitting to feeling “freaked out” while one recalled being pleasantly surprised but going

through the motions of shock and worry because he “felt that was the way he was supposed to react,” whereas in actual fact he was happy. The participant who had experienced the termination reported feeling “terrified” on learning of the pregnancy he was the youngest of the participants at the time of the pregnancy, also the pregnancy had occurred in the nineteen eighties so was still very much “taboo” in Ireland. None of the other participants felt isolated, three felt that they had friends to turn to for support while the other two felt they were able to manage the situation just them and their then girlfriend.

Of the six men interviewed none of them attended counselling the majority felt they did not need help of this kind, when asked if they felt that it may have helped them none of them were able to give a definite answer, one speculated that looking back perhaps it “wouldn’t have hurt” but none felt on reflection that they should have gone or would have liked to have gone. The participant who had experienced a termination had commented that a counsellor would have been very “useful” to talk to however. This finding is in contrast to the study by Barrett & Robinson (1982) in which they found that most of the men who took part would have been willing to go to counselling and felt that they had not been reached out to by the services. The Crisis Pregnancy Agency study also concluded that the men who took part had noted feeling better having taken part in the study after they had been able to discuss the issues they had faced with regard to the unplanned pregnancy for the first time. These men had perceived that there was no help available to them (Ferguson & Hogan, 2007). When asked if they felt there was enough support available to men with regards to an unplanned pregnancy all participants of this study answered no. The men did not feel that there were such services or at least they were not aware of any, however none had actually looked into locating these services as they were not interested in attending for counselling. All believed that there should be more help available for those men who do feel they would benefit from

counselling and support during this time, with one participant reporting that he felt that men are “forgotten about” during this difficult time.

Condon *et al* (2006) concluded that 98% of men who participated viewed the unplanned pregnancy as significantly life changing event. They also found that they exhibited a “fairly empathetic or supportive approach” to the woman involved. This was also found to be the case in several other studies such as Jonson & Williams (2005) and Weinstein & Rosen (1994) which also found that the men were willing to not only share responsibility but also offer support throughout the pregnancy or termination. This was also found to be the case in this study, all four men whose pregnancy resulted in the birth of a child agreed that the unplanned pregnancy had a huge impact on their life. With one saying “it’s changed my life in every way.” Two of the men reported being changed “for the better” as they felt they had matured as a result with one moving the current relationship into a marriage. All viewed it as positive and not as something they would change. However the participant whose experience of unplanned pregnancy ended in a termination reported that ‘yes’ the experience had a long term effect on his life, but that it was not a positive effect. He talked of the sadness he continued to feel for “what might have been” and also resentment toward society for what he went through. With regard to offering emotional support to the woman involved all the men felt that they had offered support with two questioning if they had offered enough support but both concluded that in their opinion they had done. With regard to the area of supporting a termination as a solution to the unplanned pregnancy two of the men stated that at the time of learning of the pregnancy they would have preferred to opt for a termination. Both were quick to point out however that they were glad they had not gone down that route now. One participant felt that he would not have been able to support a termination but as this pregnancy had resulted in a miscarriage the option had not been fully looked into. One of the

participants could not give a definite answer to the question as it had never arisen and he could not imagine in hindsight how he would have felt.

Ferguson & Hogan (2007) described some of the emotions experienced by men during an unplanned pregnancy as shame, fear, upset, embarrassment. In contrast to this the men who took part in this study reported feeling shocked, but only two reported feeling fear this was due to their young age at the time and for one the issue of telling his parents was of great concern to him. One participant experienced guilt. This was linked to the fact that a member of his family had at the time just recently experienced a miscarriage. Other feelings described were anxiety that the pregnancy would run smoothly and the child would be born healthy, worry at how the men would provide financially for the child, and also all men described feeling excited at the prospect of becoming a father with one commenting that this occurred “after I got my head around it.”

This finding is in stark contrast to other studies on this issue, Vaz *et al* (1983) found their sample to be depressed and suffering from social isolation and described feeling the same stress the woman was experiencing. In another study Elster & Panzarine (1980) found that the sample of teen fathers questioned less than half were coping. It is worth noting that both these studies were carried out in the early eighties and this difference in findings may have a lot to do with society and how unplanned pregnancies are viewed now as opposed to men and their ability to cope better in contemporary society.

Of the men questioned for this research two felt that he had an active role in deciding the outcome of the pregnancy, two felt that they did not have a role in the decision process as they would have preferred to have ended the pregnancy by termination, the final two felt that there was no decision to be made this was due to the fact that in one of the cases the pregnancy ended in miscarriage and in the second there was never a question surrounding the

pregnancy they “just got on with it.” In the study by Ferguson & Hogan (2007) they found that although the men experienced confusion and uncertainty most went on to engage with the woman involved and resolve the crisis.

Differences arose between the findings of this research and that of a previous study by Marsiglio & Constance (1993). In their study it was found that 61% of men questioned felt that it was wrong for woman to have an abortion if the male involved objected. They found that many of the men did want to be involved in the decision making process and did not feel that the decision to terminate a pregnancy should be exclusively a woman’s. The study found that 30% of the men questioned agreed that a twenty year old prospective father should have a legal right to prevent a woman terminating a pregnancy that he was responsible for. However the men who took part in this research believed that ultimately the choice to terminate a pregnancy should be the woman’s. Two specified however that in a long term relationship such as a marriage both parties should discuss the matter and try and resolve the issue together but in the case of a casual relationship in which the man can “just walk away” then the choice should be the woman’s.

The Crisis Pregnancy Agencies study questioned men about their experience of a termination those who took part reported feeling sadness, guilt, anger, despair, relief and feeling as if they had been given a second chance at life. Mixtures of both positive and negative feelings were reported. Of the participants who took part in this research two had previous experience of a termination, one of these had occurred many years ago and had happened prior to the unplanned pregnancy he had experienced which had resulted in the birth of his child six and a half years ago. Both participants reported feeling both sadness and relief at the time. The sadness was experienced by one was not because of the loss of the child but because the situation had arisen in the first place. He did not regret the decision made with his previous partner, he recalled it as a mutual decision based on the fact that they were too immature and

selfish to have a child at that particular time. Although he reported not regretting the decision it was noted that the experience had not fully left him and he had on reflection for the purpose of the interview felt a sense of guilt that he had not been more affected by the experience as he speculated that the woman involved had been. He concluded that he had been left with a feeling of sadness regarding the incident but that it related to the fact that he had let it happen to begin with and the not a sadness at the loss of a possible child. The second participant also reported feeling a continued sense of sadness when he thought back on his experience, he also reflected that at the time of the termination he had experienced a sense of relief however a year or so after he felt a “terrible grief” for the baby he never had. This experience of the termination staying with the male albeit in a removed sense is something that is also found to be the case in the research by Ferguson & Hogan (2007). What is also found in that study and in another carried out by Redmond (1985) is the issue of secrecy surrounding a termination. In the case of the participant in this study and the males involved in the studies just mentioned the termination is rarely if ever discussed with anyone besides the female involved.

With regards to the level of emotional support available to men when it comes to unplanned pregnancy finding by Smith *et al* (2002) and Finer *et al* (2003) both found that there was not enough emotional support available to men and that a greater awareness within the public domain needed to be established so that men would be aware that there was agencies out there who were willing to offer them support and help. The men in this study also felt that greater awareness was needed so that any agencies out there that offered help to men were readily available and were within the consciousness of the public. When questioned whether or not they felt that there was enough support for men the counsellor with the crisis pregnancy agency believed that yes there was. The explanation given for this was that all the services that offer crisis pregnancy counselling for woman also offer counselling for the men

and family members affected, therefore if we accept that there are enough services for woman we must also accept that there are enough for men. The question in their opinion was more about whether men felt able to turn to such services, it was felt by this participant that society was changing with regard to the acceptability of unplanned pregnancy and also the level of responsibility that men now take when faced with an unplanned pregnancy, it was noted that the levels of men seeking counselling for unplanned pregnancy were still considerably lower than women but none the less they were on the increase and men were seen by this participant to be taking a more active role in their situation. The issues which bring men to counselling for unplanned pregnancy were of a practical nature according to this counsellor, men sought help in relation to their rights and the issue of how to co parent with an ex partner. It was noted that men may attended with a specific problem relating to the unplanned pregnancy and after two or three sessions they may leave, men were less likely to seek help for the emotions they were experiencing.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine the experience of the men who have experienced an unplanned pregnancy in the past. The aim was to investigate the emotional effects on the man and how they dealt with the issues faced at this time. Much of the findings were in keeping with previous research done on the subject with the men experiencing a range of emotions from excitement to terror. The previous research went some way to quashing the cliché of these men as being all too willing to ignore their responsibilities and leave the woman involved to pick up the pieces, this research also found that these men not only take their responsibility seriously, they engage with and continue to have a relationship with their children regardless of the present relationship with the child's mother.

The age group of the men interviewed for this research was considerably older than the vast majority of the men researched in previous studies. In those cases most of the subjects were teenagers or early twenties, in this research however all were mid twenties and thirties when they experienced the unplanned pregnancy and this seemed to be consistent with the experience of the participant interviewed who worked with those facing a crisis pregnancy.

A second purpose of this study was to ascertain if the men who had experienced an unplanned pregnancy had attended counselling to help them deal with the issue and if they felt that there was adequate help for men at this time. The findings here were quite contradictory, although none of the men who participated had sought help in the form of counselling for this issue, various reasons were given for this, for example not feeling they needed it to not believing in counselling, however all reported believing that not enough help was available to men when it came to this issue. The men felt that help was not readily available and that it was not a service that was openly active within the public domain. The only participant who did believe that enough was done to support and help men through this

issue was the counsellor who was interviewed, she felt that given the fact that all the services that were open to woman on this issue were open to men than one would have to conclude that enough was being done for the men also, arguing “if there’s enough support for woman then there is enough for men.”

It may be questioned therefore does more need to be done to let men know that these services are in fact open and available to them. Did the men interviewed for this research feel that there was no where to go and if they had been aware that these services were available to them would have availed of them? Is it a case that men feel unable to attend to these centres believing them to be for women only or is it as society would suggest, that men do not talk about their feelings and do not need help when it comes to emotional issues. Further study could be carried out into the reasons men do not attend for counselling when it comes to an unplanned pregnancy for it is an issue that effects many men and one which may cause them much fear and anxiety and from what this research has shown one which they go through in many cases alone.

References

Barret, R. L., & Robinson, B. E. (1982), Teenage fathers: neglected too long, *Social Work*, 27 (6): 484-488.

Bunting, L., & McAuley, C. (2004), Research review: teenage pregnancy and parenthood: The role of fathers, *Child and Family Social Work*, 9: 255-303.

Coleman, J. (1998), Teenage parenthood, *Children and Society*, 12, 306-314.

Condon, J.T., Corkindale, C.J., Russell, A. & Quinlivan, J.A. (2006), Processes and factors underlying adolescent males' attitudes and decision-making in relation to an unplanned pregnancy. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 35(3): 447-458.

Corkindale, C.J., Condon, J.T., Russell, A. & Quinlivan, J.A. (2009), Factors that adolescent males take into account in decisions about an unplanned pregnancy, *Journal of Adolescence*, 32: 995-1008.

Doyle, R. (1985), "On abortion and adoption" in E Baumli, ed., *Men Freeing Men*, New Atlantic Press.

Ekstrand, M., Tydén, T., Darj, E., & Larsson, M. (2007), Preventing pregnancy: a girls' issue. seventeen-year-old Swedish boys' perceptions on abortion, reproduction and use of contraception, *European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*, 12(2): 111-118.

- Elster, A.B. and Panzarine, S. (1980), Unwed teenage father: emotional and health educational need, *Adolescent Health Care*, 1(2): 116-120.
- Fagot, B., Pear, K., Capaldi, D., Crosby, L., & Leve, C.S. (1998), Becoming an adolescent father, *Developmental Psychology*, 34(6): 1209-1219.
- Finer, L.B., Darroch, J.E., & Frost, J.J. (2003), Services for men at publicly funded family planning agencies, 1998-1999. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 35, 202-207.
- Ferguson, H., & Hogan, F. (2007), Men, sexuality and crisis pregnancy: A study of men's experiences, *Crisis Pregnancy Agency*.
- Hogan, F. (2007), Teen dads: The neglected parents, *Teen Parents Support Programme, First National Conference*, 18th October 2007.
- Holmberg, L. I., Wahlberg, V. (1999), The staffs view regarding young men involved in decisions on abortions: Preliminary information from a study of outpatient clinics for adolescents in Sweden, *Gynecologic and Obstetric Investigation*, 47(3): 177-181.
- Holmberg, L. I., Wahlberg, V. (2000), The process of decision-making on abortion: A grounded theory study of young men in Sweden, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 26(3): 230-234.
- Johnson, S. D.; Williams, L. B. (2005), Deference, denial, and exclusion: Men talk about contraception and unintended pregnancy, *International Journal of Men's Health*, 4(3): 223-229.

- Marsiglio, W. (1992), Informal self administered survey, *University of Florida*.
- Marsiglio, W. (1993), Adolescent males' orientation toward paternity and contraception, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 25(1): 22-31.
- Marsiglio, W. (2008), Understanding men's prenatal experience and the father involvement connection: Assessing baby steps, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70: 1108-1113.
- Marsiglio, W., & Shehan, C. L.,(1993), Adolescent males' abortion attitudes: Data from a national survey, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 25(4): 162-168.
- Pleck, J.H., Sonnenstein, F., & Ku, L.C. (1993), Masculinity Ideology: It's Impact on Adolescent Males' Heterosexual Relationships, *Journal Social Issues*, 49: 11-19.
- Quinlivan, J. A., & Condon, J., (2005), Anxiety and depression in fathers in teenage pregnancy, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 39(10): 915-920.
- Redmond, M. A., (1985), Attitudes of adolescent males toward adolescent pregnancy and Fatherhood, *Family Relations*, 34(3): 337-342.
- Shostak, A.B. & McLouth, G. (1984), *Men and Abortion: Lessons, Losses and Love*, Praeger, New York
- Smith, P. B., Buzi, R. S., Weinman, M. L., (2002), Programs for young fathers: Essential components and evaluation issues, *North American Journal of Psychology*, 4(1): 81-92.

Vaz, R., Smolen, P. & Miller, C. (1983), Adolescent pregnancy: Involvement of the male

Partner, *Journal of Adolescent Health Care*, 4(4): 246-250.

Wei, E.H., Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (2002), How many of the offspring born to

teenage fathers are produced by repeated serious delinquents?, *Criminal Behaviour*

and Mental health, 12(1): 83-98.

Weinstein, E. & Rosen, E. (1994), Decreasing sex bias through education for parenthood or

prevention of adolescent pregnancy: A developmental model with integrative

strategies, *Adolescence*, 29: 723-732.

Whitehead, E. (2008), Exploring relationships in teenage pregnancy, *International Journal of*

Nursing Practice, 14(4); 292-295.

Appendix

Information sheet and Consent form for Research Project relating to Unplanned Pregnancy: A Male Perspective

You are invited to participate in a research study that will form the basis for an undergraduate thesis. Please read the following information before deciding whether or not to participate.

What are the objectives of the study? This study aims to explore the issues surrounding an unplanned pregnancy from a male perspective. The research will determine the effect an unplanned pregnancy has on the male involved and the feelings and emotions experienced by the male. The research also aims to determine if there is an adequate amount of emotional help and support available for men in these circumstances or if better services in the counselling and psychotherapy field need to be provided.

Why have I been asked to participate? The research will collect data relating to unplanned pregnancy and the men who seek counselling to help them through this experience. It will gain insight into the issues these men present with within a counselling setting. All data will be anonymous.

What does participation involve? An audio taped interview will be conducted where questions relating to the participants experience in unplanned pregnancy counselling with males will be explored.

Right to withdraw Participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time for whatever reason. Participants can also request at any time to have their interview data removed from record.

Are there any benefits from my participation? While there will be no direct benefit from participation the study does aim to aid in the understanding of the male involvement in an unplanned pregnancy and in doing so will help in the counselling process of such men.

Are there any risks involved in participation? There are no risks associated with participation. Any inconvenience involved in taking part will be limited.

Confidentiality All information collected as part of the study will be used solely for research purposes. It will be stored safely and will not be publically published without prior consent.

Contact Details If you have any further questions about the research you can contact:

Researcher: lisalennondub@googlemail.com Supervisor: siobain.odonnell@dbs.ie

Consent Form

Unplanned Pregnancy: A Male Perspective

I have read and understood the attached Information Leaflet regarding this study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study with the researcher and I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

I agree to this research being published and used for future reference if required in the future.

I agree to take part in the study.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name in print: _____

Questions for Men where pregnancy went full term.

1. How long ago did you experience an unplanned pregnancy?
2. How old were you when you experienced an unplanned pregnancy?
3. Do you have an active role in your child's life presently?
4. Are you still in a relationship with the mother of your child?
5. If not how long after the unplanned pregnancy did the relationship end?
6. If not how long did you know the mother of your child before the pregnancy?
7. Were you told of the pregnancy straight away?
8. If not when were you told?
9. Did you view your unplanned pregnancy in a positive or negative way when you first learned of it?
10. Can you explain the reason/reasons for this point of view?
11. What feeling or emotions did you experience when you first learned of the pregnancy?
12. Who did you feel was responsible for the unplanned pregnancy?
13. Did you seek counselling to help you during the pregnancy?
14. If not would you have felt it would have been beneficial?
15. If so what were your reasons for not attending?
16. Who did you turn to for support during this time?
17. What type of emotions did you feel during this time?
18. Do you feel you offered emotional support to the female involved during the unplanned pregnancy?
19. Do you feel you had an active role in the decision making process surrounding the pregnancy?
20. If not would you have liked to?
21. Would you have supported the decision for the pregnancy to be terminated?

22. Do you feel men should have an input into the decision to terminate a pregnancy?
23. Do you feel there is enough support available to men with regards to an unplanned pregnancy?
24. In your opinion what has been the long term effect the unplanned pregnancy has had on you?

Questions for males when pregnancy was terminated

1. How long ago did the unplanned pregnancy occur?
2. How old were you when it happened?
3. How did you feel on finding out about the pregnancy?
4. Were you in a relationship with the woman involved?
5. If not how long did you know her?
6. Are you currently in a relationship with this woman?
7. Did you view the unplanned pregnancy in a positive or negative way when you first found out?
8. Can you explain your reasons for feeling this way?
9. What factors did you consider when deciding on the outcome of the pregnancy?
10. Was the decision to terminate the pregnancy a mutual one?
11. If not whose decision was it?
12. How did you feel about the decision made?
13. Did you seek counselling during this time?
14. If not would you have felt it beneficial to have had someone to talk to during this time?
15. If you did not seek counselling can you explain the reason for this?
16. If yes was it helpful to you?
17. Do you feel you offered emotional support to the woman involved?
18. Did you offer physical support to the woman involved? ie. Accompanying her to clinic etc?
19. What type of emotions did you feel before the termination?
20. What type of emotions did you feel after?
21. Do you feel this experience has had a long term effect on your life?
22. If so can you elaborate in what way?
23. Do you feel enough support is offered to men who experience a termination?

Questions for male where pregnancy ended due to miscarriage.

1. How long ago did the unplanned pregnancy occur?
2. How old were you when it happened?
3. How did you feel on finding out about the pregnancy?
4. Were you in a relationship with the woman involved?
5. If not how long did you know her?
6. Are you currently in a relationship with this woman?
7. Did you view the unplanned pregnancy in a positive or negative way when you first found out?
8. Can you explain your reasons for feeling this way?
9. What factors did you consider when deciding on the outcome of the pregnancy?
10. Would you have supported the decision to terminate the pregnancy?
11. Do you feel a man should have input into the decision to terminate a pregnancy?
12. At what stage in the pregnancy did the miscarriage occur?
13. How did you feel on hearing the pregnancy had resulted in a miscarriage?
14. Do you feel you were able to offer emotional support to the woman involved during the unplanned pregnancy?
15. Did you attend counselling to help you through this time?
16. If not did you seek support from anyone during this time?
17. Do you feel this unplanned pregnancy has had a long term effect on you?
18. If so in what way?
19. Do you feel there is enough support available to men with regards to unplanned pregnancy?
20. Can you explain your answer?

Questions for Interview with counsellor.

1. What is your role within the 'One Family' agency?
2. What are the numbers of males seeking help from you agency? (approx)
3. Do the males who seek help from your agency come alone?
4. How many counselling sessions do males seek with regard to an unplanned pregnancy?
(approx)
5. In your experience is there a difference in the male response to an unplanned pregnancy depending on their socioeconomic background?
6. What are the most common issues males involved in an unplanned pregnancy face?
7. Do males come to the agency after prompting from their partners or do they seek help individually?
8. Is there a strong sense of helplessness experienced by males with regards to an unplanned pregnancy?
9. Within their personal or family life do men seek help from example friends/parents etc?
10. Do men, once involved in the counselling process, continue to attend counselling for pre-existing issues?
11. In your experience do you feel that there are sufficient services available to men with regard to unplanned pregnancy?
12. Do you believe that the services available to men with regards to unplanned pregnancy are easily accessible and accepted socially?