

Home Leaving and Risk Taking Behaviors of Youth: The Case of Zamboanga Peninsula

Rosalyn R. Echem, Grace R. Mateo, and Jasmin Sorita

Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City
rosalynchem@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper describes the risk-taking behavior of young adults aged 15-24 of Zamboanga Peninsula who have experience living away from home. It identifies significant background factors that determine their engagement in non-sexual and sexual risk behaviors. It also specifies possible interventions based on the findings. The findings show that more females ever experienced living away from home compared to their male's counterpart. The level of smoking, drinking, drug-use and premarital sex is higher among male youth than their female counterpart. The multivariate analysis that age, schooling status, participation in religious activities and urban exposure are considered risk factors for smoking among female adolescents. However, religiosity has a protective effect on smoking among the females. For home-leavers, the results shows that both male and female home-leavers are twice more likely to drink than non home-leavers. Increasing age and urban exposure are predisposing factors for drug drug-use among male adolescents. Moreover, age, marital status, urban exposure and employment are risk factors for engaging in PMS. However, being in school protect adolescents from engaging in PMS. Sexual risk behaviors and non-sexual risk behaviors are interconnected in the findings. Smoking increases the odds of drinking for both sexes. Male smokers are 6 times more likely to drink than non-smokers. On the other hand, female smokers are 5 times more likely to drink than non-smokers. Smoking and drinking also significantly increase the odds by 5 times or more to engage in drug use for both sexes. The findings also reveals that those who smoke and use drugs are more likely to engage in premarital sexual behavior.

Keywords: Home Leaving, Risk Taking

INTRODUCTION

The Filipino youth's risk taking behaviors have been the focus of many studies, which endeavored to find out factors affecting these behaviors and the consequences of such behavior (Raymundo and Cruz, 2004; Cruz, Laguna and Raymundo, 2002; Frias, 2000; Umali, 1999). Some of these studies found that home leaving experience is one of the factors affecting the risk taking behavior of the Filipino youth (Marquez and Galban, 2004; Laguna, 2001; Umali, 1999; Raymundo

and Lusterio, 1995). In the recent YAFS survey, 44.7 percent of the youth said they have experienced living away from home, where more females lived away from home (49.2 %) than males (39.8 %). Top reasons for living away from home are school and work related (Berja, 2005).

Living away from home is a major life event that shapes the transition to adulthood (Berja, 2005). This is the time when a youth experiences independence and comes in contact with a new environment. In the study of Young (1987 in Gabriel, 2000), it was noted that young adults see home leaving as a beginning of their independence and non-family living. As the youth starts to move away from home due to economic or educational reasons, they become more exposed to a number of risk-taking behaviors like smoking, drinking, substance use and abuse, premarital sex and other sexual risk behaviors. Studies show that living away from home becomes a factor influencing the likelihood of Filipino youth to engage in premarital sex (Umali, 1999; Raymundo and Lusterio, 1995).

The increase autonomy that comes with home leaving gives the young adults more freedom to explore multiple-risk behaviors than when they lived with parents (Galambos and Tilton-Weaver, 1998 Umali, 1999; Raymundo and Lusterio, 1995). It is equally essential to look at the local level to see if the influence of home leaving on involvement in risky behaviors holds true. This study aims to do that using Region IX as its specific context because of the high prevalence of home leaving in this region (at top eight among all the regions in the Philippine), as found by the 2002 YAFS survey.

THE YOUTH OF ZAMPEN: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Based on the 2000 Census, nearly one fifth of the population in Region IX is comprised of those in the 15-24 age group or commonly known as youth or adolescents (NSO, 2000). In the Survey on Children 5-17 years old conducted by the National Statistics Office in 1995, it was found that there were 921,000 Filipino children aged 5 to 17 years in Western Mindanao. Findings of the study also revealed that 31,000 youth have experienced living away from home, presumably away from their parents, to work, study, look for work, or engage in a combination of these activities. Of those who have lived away from home, 75.8 per cent were aged 15 to 17 years (ILO 2001). Eighteen per cent of working children who were living away from home were in Metro Manila and the rest were in other places. Most of them were working for private households. It is presumed that poverty has pushed these children out of their homes to look for opportunities elsewhere. The desire to improve their family's living conditions drove most of these children to continue working (ILO, 2001).

Recent studies revealed that problem behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and engaging in premarital sex are also found among the ZAMPEN youth. The Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study regional data on ZAMPEN showed prevalence on smoking, drinking, drug use and premarital sex among the youth in the region (YAFS 3 Regional Datasheet). This finding is further supported by the results of the study conducted by Health Action Information Network (HAIN) and UNICEF in 2006, particularly in the Zamboanga region.

Premarital sex prevalence for the region is at 20 percent (YAFS 3 Regional Datasheet).

Results of the 2005 Family Planning Survey also showed that Western Mindanao has one of the highest pregnancy rates among minors and that the percentage of women in the region aged 15-19 years who got pregnant slightly went up from 6.2 percent to 6.8 percent (as cited in Mindanews 2006). In light of these findings, this study hopes to contribute to the greater understanding of the ZAMPEN's youth risk behaviors by focusing on the influence of home leaving on these behaviors. Home leaving was chosen as the focus because previous studies have established the interconnection between home leaving and the risk taking behavior of the youth, and because home leaving occurs significantly in Region IX.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To fully understand the risky behaviors of young people and factors that are likely to affect these behaviors in the Zamboanga Peninsula, this study made use of the data from the 2002 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Survey, which includes a representative sample of the youth in the region.

This study has several objectives, as follows:

1. To determine the extent of and differentials in home leaving among adolescents in the Zamboanga Peninsula.
2. To determine the level, trends and differentials in involvement in non-sexual risk behaviors and premarital sex among adolescents' in Zamboanga Peninsula.
3. To determine the extent to which departure from home leads to premarital sex and non-sexual risk behaviors.
4. To identify risk factors other than home- leaving associated with engaging in PMS and non- sexual risk behaviors among adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were taken from the Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study conducted by the Demographic Research and Development Foundation and UP Population Institute in April to June 2002. Respondents consisted of about 20,000 Filipino males and females aged 15-27 years. The analysis, however, will only utilize data from Zamboanga Peninsula composed of 880 respondents aged 15-24 years.

Variables and Measures

The study focuses on risk behaviors of adolescents such as smoking, drinking, drug use and engaging in premarital sex. Data for premarital sex involvement were derived from three questions, namely, whether the respondent went 'all the way' during first date, whether the respondent went 'all the way' on other dates, and a direct question that asked whether the respondent ever engaged in sex before marriage. Engaging in non-sexual risk behaviors was measured by

asking the respondents if they have ever tried the following substances: cigarettes, alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs Individual characteristics that were considered in this study include sex, age, marital status, schooling status, highest educational attainment, religious activities, urban exposure, and employment status. The experience of having ever lived away from home for three months or more was also included, as it is considered an important determinant of ever engaging in non-sexual and sexual risk behaviors. Frequency of interaction and contact with parents while living away from home were also considered.

Method of Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to present the socio-economic characteristics and risk taking behaviors of adolescents in ZAMPEN. Chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between certain indicators and risk behaviors. Binary logistic regression analysis was used to identify the background characteristics that predicted risk taking among youths in Zamboanga Peninsula.

Three separate logistic regression models were done for predicting the likelihood for drinking, drug use and engaging in premarital sex. Two separate logistic regression models were done for predicting the likelihood for smoking. Separate models were run for the male and female sub-samples, given the differences in their propensity to engage in risk talking behaviors.

FINDINGS

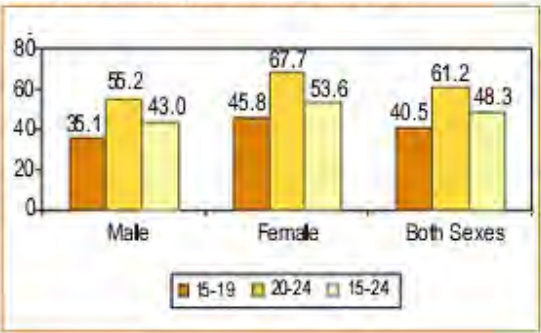
Home Leaving

Nearly half (48%) of the adolescents in Western Mindanao have experienced living away from home (Figure 2) for three or more months. More females (54%) ever experienced living away from home compared to their male counterparts (43%). Among the ZAMPEN youth, the major reasons for leaving home are: job-related (35%), to study (44%) and to join kin in place (17%). There are slightly more males (40%) than females (33%) who leave parental homes for work (Table 2), which is an indicative of the prescribed role for men to take the financial responsibility of the family. Moreover, those who left home for economic

reasons even at an early age probably did so to augment their family's income. NSCB data for 2005 estimated that the poverty incidence in the region rose from 38.5 in 2000 to 44.1 in 2003. The increasing poverty among ZAMPEN families could be one of the reasons driving the youth to work instead of study.

Twenty four percent of the respondents have ever

Figure 2. Youth who ever lived away from home, by sex and age: Zamboanga Peninsula, YAFS 2002



lived in a dormitory or boarding house. Among those who have ever lived in a dormitory or boarding house, majority visited their home or was visited by their parents at least once a week. More females (81%) than males (71%) visited their home or were visited by their parents.

Table 2. Experience of home leaving, by sex: Western Mindanao, YAFS 2002

REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
Job related	39.7	32.6	35.8
To study	43.9	44.1	44
To marry/change residence	0.0	2.1	1.2
Presence of kin in place	15.9	17.8	16.9
Calamities/Peace and Order/Other	0.5	3.4	2.1
N of Cases	189	236	425
Ever lived in a dorm or boarding house			
Yes	22.7	25.6	24.1
No	77.3	74.4	75.9
N of Cases	441	442	883
Frequency of visits to/from parents*			
At least once or twice a week	71.4	81.3	77.2
Once a month/Seldom	28.6	18.8	22.8
N of Cases	56	80	136

Note: * For those who ever lived in a dorm only

Table 3. Youth who have Ever Lived Away From Home, by Sex and Selected Background Characteristics: Western Mindanao, YAFS 2002

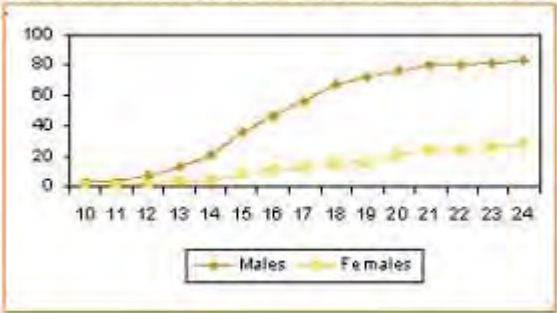
BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
Age			
15-19	35.1	45.8	40.5
20-24	55.2	67.7	61.2
Mean Age Left Home	15.6	15	15.2
Marital Status			
Single	41.9	48.4	45
Currently Married	50.0	64.4	61.1
Currently Living-in	(60.0)	81.3	74.5
Div/Sep/Wid	0.0	(100.0)	(100.0)
Schooling Status			
In School	38.3	47.0	42.9
Not in School	48.5	61.7	54.9
Educational Attainment			
NS/Elem	34.1	53.5	42.6
HS Undergrad	36.2	41.8	39.0
HS Grad/Voc	46.1	53.3	49.8
College +	57.7	69.6	64.1
Residence			
Urban	42.9	65.2	54.5
Rural	43.0	51.3	47.1
Employment			
Working	45.5	70.8	52.7
Worked Before	49.4	76.7	66.1
Never Worked	37.9	36.6	37.1
N of Cases	189	238	427

Risk Behaviors: Levels, Trends and Differentials

A. Smoking

Findings reveal that 40 percent of youth 15-24 years old in Region 9 have ever tried smoking (Table 5). The proportion of males who ever tried smoking is almost three times higher than that for the females (63% vs. 17%). Smoking among youths happened earlier among the males than females(Table 4). In addition, males have higher probability of smoking than females. At age 16, nearly half of young males in ZAMPEN would have experienced smoking cigarettes. The proportion rises with age such that by age 24, about 80 per cent of the young males

Figure 3. Estimated probability of smoking at exact ages



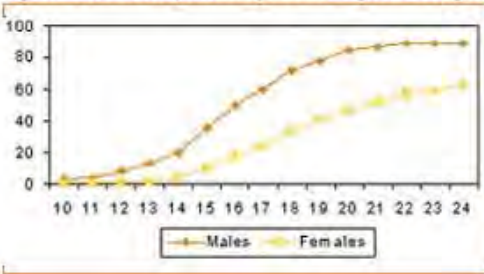
have experienced smoking. In contrast, young females have lower probability of smoking: by age 18, only 4 out of 10 females would have ever tried smoking (Figure 3). Smoking among the youth in ZAMPEN declined from 44 percent in 1994 to 40 percent in 2002. The smoking prevalence among the males declined while it slightly increased among the females. Data on mean age that the youth started smoking reveal an earlier onset from 15.9 years in 1994 to 15.5 years in 2000 (Tables 4 & 5).

Further analyses reveal significant differentials across background characteristics among the adolescents who have ever engaged in smoking. Specifically, higher level of smoking is noted among those who are not in school, with low educational attainment, seldom attend religious activities, who are living in urban area or with urban exposure, and who are currently working (Table 6).

B. Drinking

The Filipino youth are more prone to drinking than smoking. At the national level, one out of two adolescents have ever tried alcoholic beverages (Cruz, et al, 2002). In ZAMPEN, more than half (55%) of the youth have tried drinking. The level of who ever tried drinking is quite higher for males than females (71% vs. 55%). A majority of those who tried drinking are in the older age group (Table 5). Furthermore, mean age of alcohol initiation slid from 16.4 in 1994 to 16.1 in 2002 (Table 4). Adolescent males have higher probability of drinking than females. At age 16, about 50 percent of adolescent males and 20 percent of adolescent females in ZAMPEN would have experienced drinking. At age 18, the proportion of males drinking would be 80 per cent and 40 per cent for females (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Estimated probability of drinking at exact ages

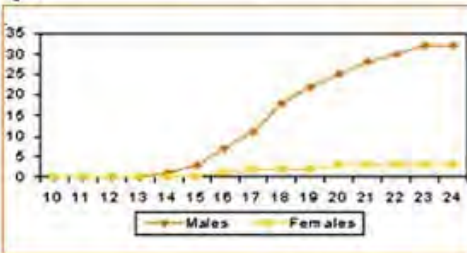


Differential analyses across background characteristics revealed that those who are not in school, with college education, are Catholic and seldom attend religious activities have higher levels of drinking. Furthermore, higher levels of drinking were also noted among those who live in urban areas or had urban exposure, currently employed and have ever lived away from home (Table 6).

C. Drug Use

Although less than 10 percent of the youth in Region IX have tried using prohibited drugs, this is still alarming when translated

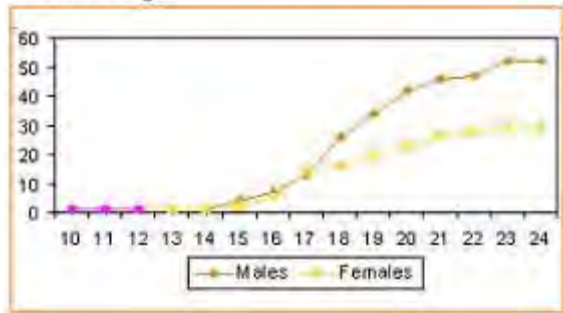
Figure 5. Estimated probability of using drugs at exact ages



to absolute numbers. A much smaller percentage (2%) of females admitted having tried using prohibited drugs compared to the males (17%). This shows how risky the behavior of males are compared to females. Males in the older age group exhibited higher prevalence for trying illegal substances than those in the younger age group.

Unlike smoking and drinking, the mean age of drug use initiation among the youth in ZAMPEN rose from 17.0 year old in 1994 to 17.2 year old in 2002. Mean age of initiation is almost the same for both males and females. However, males have higher probability of using prohibited drugs than females. At age 18, almost 20 percent of young males in ZAMPEN would have experienced using drugs while only 3 percent of their female counterparts would have tried using drugs (Figure 5).

Figure 6. Estimated probability of engaging in premarital sex at exact ages



proportion of males having engaged in premarital sex is twice as high as that females (26% vs. 13%). This risky behavior of males does not come as a surprise since this kind of behavior is typically associated with males. Premarital sex is more likely among the older respondents (20-24) for both the males and females. Mean age of sexual initiation for ZAMPEN adolescents is at 18 years for both sexes (Table 4). The probability of engaging in premarital sex is higher among males than females. At age 18, almost 30 percent of them would have experienced engaging in premarital sex. On the other hand, only 19 percent of females would have experienced PMS at the same age(Figure 6).

The data further show that those who are currently living in are more likely to admit to have experienced PMS, followed by those who are currently married. Education-wise, those who are not currently in school and have finished college education are more likely to have engaged in premarital sex than those attending school and those with lower educational attainment. Urban dwellers and those with urban exposure are more likely to engage in PMS than rural dwellers and those without urban exposure. The youth who have experienced ever living away from home are more likely to engage in PMS than those who have not left their home.

Table 4. Mean Age Started Smoking, Drinking, Drug Use and PMS, by sex and age: Western Mindanao, YAFS 1994 and 2002

MEAN AGE	1994			2002		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.2	16.3	15.5
Mean Age Started Drinking	16.2	16.9	16.4	15.7	17.2	16.2
Mean Age Started Using Drugs	17.1	16.5	17	17.2	16.7	17.2
Mean Age at first PMS	18.1	18	18.1	17.9	17.5	17.8

Table 5. Risk behaviors, by sex and age :Western Mindanao, YAFS 2002

SEX AND AGE	RISK BEHAVIORS							
	1994				2002			
	EVER SMOKED	EVER DRANK	EVER TRIED USING DRUGS	PMS	EVER SMOKED	EVER DRANK	EVER TRIED USING DRUGS	PMS
Male								
15-19	61.2	63.9	6	10.2	56.7	63.2	9.4	13.4
20-24	66.3	94.2	17.3	35.3	72.8	69.7	26.8	46.2
15-24	72.7	77.6	11.1	21.6	63	70.8	17	26.3
Female								
15-19	11.1	24.1	-1	4	14	34.3	1.7	7
20-24	25.5	45.8	-1.7	1.7	31	40	2.5	24.2
15-24	16.1	31.5	-2.3	5.5	16.7	39.4	2	13.1
Both Sexes								
15-19	33.8	42	3.3	6.8	34.6	46.2	5.2	10.1
20-24	80	73.1	11.4	27.6	48	66.7	16.8	35.6
15-24	44.3	54.5	6.7	15.1	40.8	55.1	8.5	19.7

0 Less than 10 cases

Table 6. Risk Behaviors by Selected Background Characteristics: Western Mindanao, YAFS 2002

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	NON SEXUAL			SEXUAL
	EVER SMOKED	EVER DRANK	EVER TRIED DRUGS	EVER HAD PMS
Marital Status				***
Never Married	40.1	56.5	9.6	14.3
Currently Married	39.4	42.6	-8.5	41.1
Currently Living-in	32.6	56.5	-10.6	63
Div/Sep/Wid	-100	-100	0	0
Schooling Status	***	**	**	***
In School	32.4	50.6	6.6	12.2
Not in School	48.5	60.6	13	28.9

Table 6...continuation

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS	NON SEXUAL			SEXUAL
	EVER SMOKED	EVER DRANK	EVER TRIED DRUGS	EVER HAD PMS
Educational Attainment	**	***	***	**
No Educ/Elem	48.1	51.2	-3.7	20.4
High School Undergrad	34.3	45.8	7.1	13.9
HS Grad/Voc	36.8	59.3	12	19.6
College +	43.5	67.5	15.4	26.8
Religion		***		
Catholic	39.7	61.7	10.5	20.2
Non-Catholic	40	39.2	6.9	18.8
Frequency of Attending Religious Activities	***	***	**	
Frequently	32.8	47.1	6.8	20.9
Seldom	50	66.5	13.8	16.2
Never	42.5	59.4	10.6	21.9
Residence	*	***	***	***
Urban	47.7	77.3	21.2	32.1
Rural	38.3	51.3	7.4	17.5
Urban Exposure		**	***	***
With Exposure	41.4	60.2	11.8	22.9
Without Exposure	34.7	42.9	4.4	11.3

Employment Status	***	***	**	***
Currently Working	57.7	69.8	14	28.4
Worked before	36.7	59	11.3	24
Never Worked	32.4	45.7	6.3	13.1
Lived Away from home		***	*	***
Yes	40.7	63.2	11.7	24.6
No	38.9	47.6	7.5	15.1
Total	39.7	55.1	9.5	19.7
N of Cases	352	488	84	174

Note: () Less than 10 cases ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Determinants of Adolescent Risk Taking Behavior

Result of the logistic regression analysis assessing the covariates of risk behaviors are presented in Table 7. Separate models were done for males and females. The effect of individual's characteristics on smoking is different for male and female adolescents. The odds increase with age for males but not for the females. Being in school has a protective effect on males as it decreases the odds of smoking by 70 percent. College education and urban exposure increase the likelihood of smoking among females only. The odds of smoking for adolescents who have higher education is two times than those with secondary or primary education. Female adolescents who have been exposed to urban life are twice more likely to try smoking than their counterparts who have not had urban exposure. In almost the same case as of smoking, drinking varies for males and females. An increase in age also increases the odds of engaging among males only. Marital status acts as preventive factor for both males and females as it decreases the odds of drinking by 85 percent and 50 percent, respectively.

The odds of drinking increases by 46 per cent among female adolescents with college education compared to those with lower education. This could be attributed to the kind of lifestyle that female college students or youth working in urban areas have. In urban areas, there are more opportunities for attending parties or going out on a "gimmick" with friends. These kinds of activities present opportunities for trying substances like alcohol. Being strongly religious protects men from drinking. Males who attend religious activities are less likely to drink alcoholic beverages than those who seldom or do not attend religious activities. The odds of drinking is greater among male and female home-leavers. Both male and female home-leavers are twice more likely to drink than non home-leavers.

Among the background characteristics, drug use among adolescents is only significantly related to age and urban exposure. This finding is evident among males but not among females. Drug use among males increases with age and is greater for those who have lived in the urban areas. The odds of engaging in drug use increases by 12 per cent among young males who have urban exposure.

The effect of the different background characteristics on the likelihood of engaging in premarital sex is different between males and females. Among the males, the likelihood of engaging in premarital sex is greater for those who are married, have college education and with urban exposure. Specifically, those who are married are 3 times more likely to have engaged in premarital sex than those who are single. The odds of initiation to premarital sex among the adolescents are

two times higher for those with college education than those with lower education. Young males who have lived in urban areas are 3 times more likely to engage in premarital sex than those who are living in rural areas. Among the females, being married and employed increases the odds for premarital sex initiation. Those who are married or in live-in status are 15 times more likely to engage in PMS than those who are single. Likewise, those who are working are 28 percent more likely to engage in PMS than those who are not working.

To determine the extent to which risk behaviors influence each other, logistic regression analyses for initiating drinking, drug use and premarital sex were added to the model. Results show that smoking increases the likelihood of drinking for both sexes. Male smokers are 6 times more likely to drink than non-smokers. On the other hand, female smokers are 5 times more likely to drink than non-smokers. Smoking and drinking also significantly increase the odds of using prohibited drugs by five times or more for both sexes. Findings also reveal that those who smoke and use drugs are more likely to engage in premarital sexual behavior than those who are not engaged in said behaviors.

Table 7. Odds ratios of engaging in risk behaviors among Youth, by sex: Zamboanga Peninsula, YAFS 2002

PREDICTORS	MALES				FEMALES			
	SMOKING	DRINKING	DRUG USE	PREMARITAL SEX	SMOKING	DRINKING	DRUG USE	PREMARITAL SEX
Age	1.117*	1.227***	1.309**	1.409**	0.98	1.09	1.04	0.97
Currently Married	1.23	0.137*	0.59	3.079**	1.28	0.495*	1.71	15.676***
Currently in School	0.295**	1.35	0.8	1.68	0.85	0.8	0.98	0.495*
College	1.02	1.07	1.11	0.99	2.090*	1.460*	1.25	1.45
Attends Religious Acts freq	0.9	0.257***	0.82	1.89	0.407**	0.84	0.34	0.97
With Urban Exposure	0.73	1.04	1.112*	3.097*	2.384*	0.67	2.12	0.89
Working	0.81	1.44	0.4	0.6	1.65	1.2	0	2.285*
Lived Away from home	1.41	1.79*	2.48	0.59	1.1	2.115**	0.67	0.91
Smoking		5.589***	5.405***	3.277*		5.334***	5.212*	0.89
Drinking			9.236**	0.55			5.00E+007	2.53
Drug Use				6.576***				10.001**
R ²	0.16	0.33	0.37	0.44	0.17	0.3	0.46	0.33

Note: Reference categories are unmarried, not in school, no education/elementary and high school, do not attend religious activities, without urban exposure, did not live away from home, did not smoke, drink and use drugs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ZAMPEN youth who have left home for education and to seek for better opportunities may have been driven by the economic conditions in the region where poverty is high. This temporary separation from their family exposed them from engaging in risky behaviors like drinking, smoking, drugs and premarital sex. The level of smoking, drinking, drug-use and engaging in PMS is higher among the male youth in the region than their female counterparts. This is consistent with the general notion of males being more adventurous than the females. Filipinos are also generally more lenient towards males than females with regard to smoking, drinking and sexual behaviors.

The presence and accessibility of varied forms of recreational facilities in urban areas increase the likelihood that adolescents will encounter situations that make smoking and drinking acceptable and desirable. . This is consistent with the findings of past studies showing that sexual activity is strongly associated with drinking alcohol and substance use (Jones & Mott, 1998). Substance use can obstruct a youth's decision-making ability, thereby making sexual activity more likely (Forste and Haas, 2002).

Knowing the factors that enhance or impede risk-taking behavior involvement among male and female youth, this study suggests the following that could help address risk-taking behavior engagement among male and female youth:

1. On home-leaving: Provide educational facilities in the rural areas so that students would not have to leave their parental homes in pursuit of higher education in the cities where the level and degree of urbanization may expose them to activities that promote risk taking behavior. For female home-leavers: provide employment opportunities in the rural areas so that women would not have to leave their parental homes for work in the cities or overseas.
2. On adolescents who leave home to study and live in boarding houses and dorms: Youth counseling services which will actively promote healthy lifestyle among youth can be set up in dorms and boarding houses. To respond to the RH concerns of youth staying in dorms, counseling services should be provided and a referral system should be set up.
3. On schools: Schools have always been a protective institution for the youth and they should be active in educating the youth about the consequences of risk taking behaviors. In connection with this, schools should conduct youth seminars and/or set up peer counseling that will provide information, education and communication materials on the different risk taking behaviors.
4. On the increasing prevalence of smoking, drinking, drug use, and PMS: Local government units should see to it that dormitories and boarding houses are strictly implementing ordinances against smoking, drinking and use of drugs. In areas where there are youth gatherings, the print and electronic media should be used to disseminate information on the negative consequences risk-taking behaviors. Information about adolescent sexuality and risk-taking behaviors should also be regularly included during the conduct of religious activities both for Christians and Muslims. Programs that will equip the youth with life skills, particularly the ability to say "NO" to risk taking behaviors, should be conducted as early as during secondary school.
5. On parental control: Although parental control tends to weaken when children live away from home, parents still play a major role in the lives of a youth. Before the experience of home leaving, the youth spends a great amount of time with parents. This is the opportunity for parents to communicate to their children regarding risk taking and where these behaviors could lead to. Parents must also serve as good examples to their children.

REFERENCES

- Balane, W. (2006). "Fewer minor-age pregnancies in Mindanao in 2005." Retrieved August 30, 2006 http://mindanews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=756&Itemid=50
- Berja, C. L. (2005). Rural poverty and early leaving of parental homes in the Philippines. Paper presented at the XXVth IUSSP International Population Conference, Tours, France. 18-23 July 2005
- Cruz, G. T., Laguna, E. P, & Raymundo, C. M. (2002) "Family influences on the lifestyle of Filipino adolescents." *Philippine Population Review*, 1(1), 39-63.
- Forste, R., & Haas, D. W. (2002). "The transition of adolescent males to first sexual intercourse: Anticipated or delayed?" *Perspective on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, (34). Retrieved June 17, 2006 from <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3418402.html>
- Frias, N. (2000). Urbanization and premarital sex in the Philippines. (Unpublished graduate thesis). University of the Philippines Population Institute, Diliman, Quezon City.
- Galambos, N., & Tilton-Weaver, L. (1998). "Risk behavior in adolescents and young adults." Retrieved June 25, 2006, from <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/981029/d981029.htm#ART1>.
- Gabriel, M. (2000). "Between homes: A politics of regional youth migration." Retrieved June 25, 2006, from <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/afrc7/gabriel.html>
- Health Action Information Network (HAIN). (2006). Study on the knowledge, attitudes, practices and behavior toward HIV/AIDS and sexual health practices among Filipino Youth. Quezon City: HAIN. International Labor Organization (ILO). (2001).
- "Regional fact sheets: Region 9. ILO-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour." Retrieved August 30, 2006 from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/philippines/report/philip1995/r9/r9pr.htm>
- Irwin, C. E., Jr. (1990). "The theoretical concept of at-risk adolescents." *Adolescent Medicine: State of the Art Reviews*, February 1(1), 1-11.
- Jessor, R. (1991). "Risk behavior in adolescence: A psychosocial framework for understanding and action." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 12, 597-605.

- Jessor, R., & Jessor, S. (1977). *Problem behavior and psychosocial development: A longitudinal study of youth*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Jones-Kowaleski, L., & Mott, F. L. (1998). "Sex, contraception and childbearing among high-risk youth: Do different factors influence males and females?" *Family Planning Perspective*, 30(4). Retrieved June 20, 2006, from <http://www.ama-assn.org>
- Laguna, E. P. (2001). "On their own: Effect of home-and school-leaving on Filipino adolescents' sexual initiation." *Population Series No. 108-19 East West Center Working Papers*. Retrieved June 27, 2006, from <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/stored/pdfs/POPwp10819.pdf>
- Marquez, M. P., & Galban, N. (2004). *Getting hotter, going wilder?: Changes in sexual risk-taking behavior among Filipino youth*. Paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Philippine Studies, Leiden, The Netherlands. 16-19 June 2004. Retrieved June 27, 2006 from http://web.kssp.upd.edu.ph/talastasan/papers/marquez_icophil_paper_revised.pdf
- National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) (2005). *Regional poverty estimates 2000 and 2003*. Retrieved July 2, 2006, from <http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2003/subInc.asp>
- National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB). (2003). *Seven of the country's poorest in 2000 out of the poorest list in 2003*. Retrieved July 2, 2006, from http://www.nscb.gov.ph/pressreleases/2006/06Jun06_PR-200606-SS1-04_poverty.asp
- National Statistics Office. (2001, April). *Census of Population and Housing. Report No.1-I Region IX- Western Mindanao: Population by Province, City/ Municipality and Barangay*. Manila: NSO.
- National Statistics Office and ORC Macro. (2004). *National Demographic and Health Survey 2003*. Calverton, Maryland: NSO and Macro.
- Nightingale, E., & Wolverson, L. (1993). *The rolelessness of the adolescent in society: Adolescence in 1990's*. New York: Teacher's College Columbia University.
- More Mindanao women leaving RP. (2006, July 28). *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Raymundo, C. M., & Lusterio, C. (1995). "Survey reveals factors affecting premarital sex among the youth." *UPPI Survey Features*. Quezon City.
- University of the Philippines Population Institute. Raymundo, C. M., & Cruz, G. T. (2004). *Dangerous connections: Substance abuse, violence and sex among Filipino adolescents*. Paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Philippine Studies, Leiden, Netherlands, 16-19 June 2004.

- Umali, V. (1999). The family antecedents of premarital sexual intercourse among Filipino adults: Male-female differentials. (Unpublished graduate thesis). University of the Philippines.
- United Nation Development Programme (UNDP).(2000). Assessing population movement and HIV vulnerability: Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines linkages in the East Asean Growth Area. South East Asia HIV and Development Project.
- UNDP. Retrieved August 30, 2006, from [http://ciss.insp.mx/migracion/site_library/BIMP.doc+Western+Mindanao,+risky+ behavior&hl=en&gl=ph&ct=clnk&cd=5](http://ciss.insp.mx/migracion/site_library/BIMP.doc+Western+Mindanao,+risky+behavior&hl=en&gl=ph&ct=clnk&cd=5)
- Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Survey. (2002).Regional datasheet and National Sheet