

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
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DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES**

**DETERMINANTS OF THE PERMANENT SCHOOL DROP OUT OF PREGNANT
GIRLS IN ZIMBABWE**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF BACHELOR OF HONOURS DEGREE IN
MATHEMATICS EDUCATION**

RELEASE FORM

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DECLARATION

I, Muvirimi Memory, do hereby declared that, except for references to other peoples work which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the result of my own research and has neither in part nor in whole been presented in education programme.

Signed: M Muvirimi

Date: 10/07/24

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised, have read and recommend to the University for acceptance and examination a research project entitled: Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe submitted by Muvirimi Memory in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education.

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Date : 16/10/24

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my mother (Mrs. Muvirimi), my husband Lloyd and sister Progress.
Without their support and encouragement, this work could not have been accomplished.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the factors influencing permanent school drop out of pregnant girls despite the policies that allows them to complete school and address these factors in a bid to prevent permanent school drop out of pregnant girls. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach for data generation, analysis and discussion. The researcher used personal questionnaires and personal interviews in generating data. In this study a total of ten affected parents, ten affected girls and five teachers were purposively sampled to participate in the study. Document analysis, personal questionnaires and personal interview were used in generating data for the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data from questionnaires and interviews. The major themes were derived from the research questions and these include: factors influencing permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and ways and strategies to curb permanent drop out. The research study revealed that there are socio-cultural, economic , attitude and institutional factors that affect continuation of education by pregnant girls. The researcher recommends that strategies that address these factors facilitate retention and re- entry of pregnant girls be put in place which include expert guidance and counselling in schools and communities, avoid stigma and discrimination, catering for their needs that paying school fees and others, support from all stakeholders.

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CHAPTER ONE: PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.0 Introduction

Many girls who fall pregnant during school fail to come back to school and complete the course after giving birth due to various reasons despite the fact that there are policies that forbid this phenomenon. This has reduced the number of teenage girls who complete their schooling hence reducing the number of females who further pursue their education. This chapter focuses on the background to the research problem, the statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study, definition of terms, chapter layout and chapter summary.

1.1 Background

Teenage pregnancy has become common place in our communities with social determinants of health, such as low education and low income levels of a teenager's family, contributing to this phenomenon. The pregnant girls and young mothers then face high levels of stigma from their peers at school, from school officials, and from their community which might contribute to students dropping out, discouraging them from re-enrolling. Due to this sad reality, tens of thousands of adolescent girls drop out of school.

In nearly one-third of African countries, young girls who are pregnant face significant legal and policy barriers to continue their formal education, Human Rights Watch has said in a report, but most African governments, now protect education access through laws, policies, or measures for pregnant students or teenage mothers, World Vision International. World Vision International. (n.d.). About us. Retrieved from <https://www.wvi.org/about-us>.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Africa already had the highest birth rate among adolescent girls globally, hence teenage pregnancies have further increased due to school closures, lack of protective spaces for girls, and an increase in violence within communities, World Vision International.

Pregnancies among minors and teenage girls is already one crisis, but what it leads to makes it worse as it is one of the barriers to girls continuing their education and often a consequence of girls dropping out of school permanently.

In Zimbabwe there are policies that allow pregnant girls to continue their education and complete their courses such as the Education Act of 2020 which is seen as a positive step towards improving the life and access to education for the girl child. . The Education Amendment Act states that no child shall be excluded from school on the basis of pregnancy, section 68C, hence ensures that The Education Amendment Act of 2020 Chapter 25.04] fundamental rights and objectives of education in Zimbabwe. The policy framework relating to re-entry and continuation in Zimbabwe is provided for through Circular Minute P. 35, Ref: G/61/4/&G/1/3, dated 20 April, 1999. However, despite the existence of these policies, many girls who fall pregnant end up dropping out of school permanently. This chapter aims to provide an introduction to the research project that investigates the reasons behind this phenomenon and suggest ways to promote completion of school by pregnant girls.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The introduction of the Education Amendment Act of 2020 was targeted at promoting the completion of the course by girls who fall pregnant during the learning period. The Education Amendment Act of 2020 prohibits expelling pregnant girls from school. The Principal Act section 68C states that no child shall be excluded from school on the basis of pregnancy. However the number of girls who come back to school after giving birth is significantly low. This has resulted in the reduced numbers of educated women hence the nation is affected, thereby affecting global social justice and promoting gender inequality. It is in this context that the study seeks to explore factors influencing permanent drop out from school by pregnant girls despite the fact that there are policies that allows them to come back to school and complete their courses and come up with ways that promote completion of school by pregnant girls.

1.3 Research objectives

The main objective of this research project is to identify and analyze the factors that contribute to the permanent school dropout of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe and suggest ways to combat them.

The study aims to:

1. Explore the factors that cause permanent drop out from school by pregnant girls
2. Discuss on measures that can be taken to promote completion of school by pregnant girls

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the factors that contribute to the permanent school dropout of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe?
2. How can completion of school by pregnant girls be promoted?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study findings will be useful in ensuring equal access to education for all individuals, regardless of gender and reproductive status is crucial for achieving sustainable development. The national and international goals include improving the number of women who are educated nationally and internationally. The education of girls plays a pivotal role in breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering communities. Understanding why pregnant girls drop out of school despite policies facilitating their continued education is essential in order to design effective interventions and strategies to address this issue. This is done in an effort to promote equitable education for both boys and girls. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to develop appropriate interventions and support mechanisms for girls who fall pregnant during their learning period to complete their education.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The Ministry of primary and secondary Education Mashonaland East Province has 6 education administration districts namely Chivhu, Marondera, Murewa, Mutoko, Seke and Mudzi. For this study focus was on Murewa district with specific reference on Cheunje high school offering basic education to both males and females. Ethical considerations include obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring the confidentiality of data, maintaining fairness in participant recruitment.

1.7 Limitations of the study

This research project will focus specifically on investigating the reasons behind the permanent school dropout of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe. The study will be conducted through qualitative research methods, including personal interviews and personal questionnaires with various

stakeholders, that is teachers, affected parents, and pregnant girls themselves. However, it is important to acknowledge that the findings and recommendations may not be applicable to other contexts outside of Zimbabwe.

1.8 Definitions of terms

Pregnant girl - girl who has a baby/babies developing in her body American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2019).

Drop out- a learner who stops from going to school before the completing a course

Teenage mother- a woman who has a child before completing school.

1.9 Chapters layout

Chapter 1: Problem and its setting was put into context.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework that forms the lens through which the study will be observed. In addition, the gaps to be filled by this study will be identified.

Chapter 3: Research methodology outlines the strategy through which data for this study will be generated, presented, analysed and interpreted.

Chapter 4: Generated data will be presented, analysed and interpreted with the view to provide answers to sub-questions raised in chapter one.

Chapter 5: Overview of the study will be articulated, resulting in the conclusion and recommendations.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

Discussions on pregnancy and schooling bring up a number of concepts that call for clarification. An important exercise since it allows for the understanding of the phenomenon under deliberation. We bring these terms up for discussion at the commencement of this review: first for their policy implications and second to draw attention to the variations in circumstances of girls who find themselves pregnant before what is considered a socially accepted age.

Terms include teen or early pregnancy, unintended pregnancy, school mothers and mother learners (UNESCO, 2014; Pogoy, Verzosa, Coming, & Agustino, 2014). Though they appear to be describing conditions that are similar, close examination show differences in their emphasis,

either the physical condition of the girl or the social and economic impact of the pregnancy beyond the girl in question. These concepts thus are related to specific circumstances calling for variations in special needs targeting.

In the literature on gendered education, equal access to schooling for girls is argued on the following grounds: equity is an important part of social justice, the education of girls is associated with improved economic or social development, and educated girls produce educated families.

Barriers to schooling are varied, depending on the culture and region of a people, and broadly speaking these barriers range from socio-cultural, socio-economic, attitudinal to institutional barriers.

Independently, or in some cases jointly, these barriers promote the exclusion of girls from schooling hence widening the gap between boys and girls in provision and access to education.

In order to realise equity and inclusion in education, most countries, especially in the developing world, have attempted to put some measures in place in their schooling system.

Interventions have focussed on policy initiatives, community initiatives, the training of more women teachers and more education in general, such as building more schools and in particular the elimination of stereotypes and more sex education.

2.1.Theoretical framework

This section outlines the theoretical framework through which the study was observed. Resiliency theory refers to the ability to adapt and bounce back from adversity, failure, conflict, frustration and misfortune Southwick et al (2014).Some of the proponents of Resilience theory include Michael Rutter, Norman Garmezy, Emmy Werner and Suniya Luthar. Emphasis is on how one can deal with the difficulties rather than the nature of adversities Norman Garmezy (2018) views resilience as the capacity of recovery and maintained adaptive behaviors after a stressful encounter. Resiliency theory provided a framework for considering a strength-based approach to understanding child and adolescent development and informing intervention design Zimmerman & Brenner (2010). Teen pregnancy and teen motherhood come with a myriad of challenges to the concerned girl. Rejection by parents, abandonment by the boyfriend, additional

burden of motherhood, stigma from peers and health risks were some of the challenges. Amidst these challenges and frustrations, it is how one can deal with such difficulties rather than the nature of adversities that matter.

This study focused on the enormous challenges that surrounded re-entry of expectant students and teen mothers in secondary schools in Murewa district, as well as how the girls were able to overcome them and be retained in school to completion. Positive factors that resided within the affected girls, such as self-efficacy and self-esteem were assets while environmental factors such as parental support, adult mentors, youth programs, warmth and supportive teachers and peers were resources that provided the youth with opportunities to build resilience upon re-entry. Resilience theory was of relevance to this study at a time when teen pregnancy and parenthood continued to limit girls' retention for quality educational experiences and outcomes. Resilience theory therefore, opened up new understanding of how expectant students and teen mothers. This study examines parents' perceptions of re-entry, and sociocultural and economic factors responsible for their perceptions.

The social Stigma theory explores how societal norms and attitudes towards pregnancy and education influence the increased rate of permanently dropping out of school by pregnant girls.

This follows an amendment to the Education Act prohibiting the expulsion of pregnant girls from school. Cultural and religious beliefs and fear of family humiliation were some of the sociocultural factors influencing parents' perceptions.

The intersectionality theory analyses how the intersecting factors of gender, socio-economic status, race and other identities contribute to the unique experiences of pregnant girls and their decision to drop out of school permanently.

2.2.Review of related literature

2.1.1 Socio-cultural factors

The available literature on the perceptions of parents on the re-entry of pregnant girls into school is filled with mixed reactions. To encapsulate the reviewed literature on parental perceptions, Umutesi (2014) posited that the common English adage, *a rotten apple spoils the barrel* is a good start in this case. It is noteworthy that most of the factors responsible for shaping

perceptions around pregnant girls' education are tied to cultural beliefs i.e., one has to be married off once they fall pregnant and someone who is pregnant becomes a woman, among others Nsalamba & Simpande (2019). Such cultural beliefs are responsible for the negative perceptions/attitudes of parents, their moralistic views against re-entry, and discrimination against pregnant girls (Mweemba 2019).

It is also clear from past literature that not all parents hold negative perceptions of re-entry (Manion 2011; Samati 2014; Zuilkowski et al. 2015). A good example is from a study that was conducted in the Gambia by Manion (2011) where some parents highlighted that sending pregnant girls to school is a worthwhile investment, despite the negative cultural environment. Social relationships such as premarital affairs with the opposite sex are forbidden. Unmarried girls who become pregnant are either kicked out of the house or forced to marry someone to maintain the family's status in the community, causing those girls to leave school before graduation Lloyd and Mensch (2008). That indicates that one of the leading causes of girls' dropout is early and unplanned pregnancy, which can lead them to enter an arranged or forced marriage to avoid shame and retain respect for cultural norms of bearing children within wedlock. In addition, the study suggests that some girls abort pregnancy, which can leave them with complications that understandably increase the likelihood of leaving school. Sometimes, dropout is connected to the school environment where girls find the school social life hostile or unsafe. Parents often prioritize investment in the education of their sons over that of their daughters Samati (2014). And this has attributed to socio-economic status, regional differences and gender norms Booth (2022). When a girl becomes a mother, the purpose of education is brought into question, Mweemba (2019). Such preferences are rooted in gendered norms and stereotypes that emphasise girls' roles as wives and mothers. In contrast boys are encouraged to receive an education as they are the future providers of their families. Most parents viewed the continuation of teenage mothers in schools as a taboo, whilst schools that accept teenage mothers were labeled as maternity schools (Wekesa 2014).

A study by Laiser and Muyinga (2017) in Tanzania assessed the perceptions of 36 parents on the re-entry of pregnant girls into school. Of the 36 parents, 14 (39 per cent) supported the practice. These argued that education is a basic human right and all human beings need to be given equal opportunities in education regardless of their status or gender. They also supported readmission

based on the economic benefits of educating girls versus the economic burden of having school dropout teenage mothers in their communities (Laiser & Muyinga, 2017). In the study, parents who opposed readmission were 22 (61 per cent) and their perceptions were based on morality and the traditional roles of mothers (Laiser & Muyinga, 2017). They insisted that teenage mothers should be kept away from school, lest they morally pollute other students by negatively influencing them. They also held that teenage mothers were meant to stay at home and take care of their babies.

In a similar study by Maluli and Bali (2011) in Tanzania, parents were apprehensive of the rationale underpinning the readmission of teenage mothers claiming that the practice is controversial. They emphasised that girls should maintain discipline, arguing that the policy would encourage more girls to fall pregnant since they will be assured of readmission after delivery (Maluli & Bali, 2011). Nearly the same conclusions were drawn by Ahikire and Madanda (2011) in their study on re-entry in Uganda. Furthermore, Sifuniso (2006) found out that parents who opposed the re-entry of pregnant children felt that both boys and girls were reckless in the way they conducted their sexual behaviour because of the presence of a re-entry policy. They felt that the re-entry policy has put girls in a vulnerable position because they are being perceived as having low morals, Sifuniso (2006). This concurs with findings from studies conducted by Wedekind and Milingo (2015), Zuilkowski et al. (2019) in Zambia; and Ncube and Mudau (2017) in Zimbabwe.

A study by Manion (2011) in the Gambia established that the re-entry of pregnant girls was seen as a **silent** practice because of the **government's** silence on the issue as it fears the moralistic perceptions of parents. Manion (2011) argued that this has been one of the most controversial policy reforms in the Gambia and government officials were afraid of formalising re-entry because parents would be upset as they will take the move as encouraging teenage pregnancies, thus breaking away from their strong cultural values and that is why it is a **silent policy**. However, some parents were upset that the practice was silent citing the benefits that re-entry can have on the girl child, yet it is not being advocated for and publicised (Manion, 2011). This is buttressed by another study in Zambia, where some parents were against re-entry over fears that it will promote immorality in schools (Mushibwe, 2018).

In another Zambian study conducted by Nsalamba and Simpande (2019) on the academic performance of re-entered teen mothers, issues affecting their academic performance were tied around societal perceptions as they were regarded as morally tainted and often placed in separate classes and sitting arrangements. Though sensitisation programs have taken centre stage for more than two decades, the hostile socio-cultural environment at home and school is a leading cause of teenage mothers dropping out of school (Nsalamba & Simpande, 2019). Studies have also established that some parents hold negative perceptions of re-entry because of the heavy demands associated with childbearing/rearing (Manion 2011; V. Wekesa 2014). Other studies where positive attitudes/perceptions have been recorded have established that parents base their perceptions on the long-term social benefits of sending the girl child to school (Laiser & Muyinga 2017; Sperling et al 2016; Tarus 2020), whilst others see it as a way to end child marriages Wodon (2018), reduce gender inequality, and also empower the girl child according to Tarus (2020). However, the negative consequences seen by parents have been overstated as there are some positive outcomes from teen mothers re-evaluating their priorities with a renewed commitment to school (Estrada 2012; Madhavan & Thomas 2005). In support of girl child education, Lawrence Summers, a World Bank Chief Economist in 1992, said that investment in girls education may be the highest-return investment available in the developing world (Sperling et al., 2016). In support of this, a study of 146 nations from 1950 to 2010 by Barro and Lee (2013) established that schooling has a significant positive effect on output, with the rate of return being a 5 to 12 per cent increase in economic growth for each additional year of schooling in the average population. Female schooling levels played an important role in increasing growth directly and indirectly through its impact on increased life expectancy and lower fertility rates (Barro & Lee 2013).

2.2.2 Economic factors

The human capital theory considers the impact of education on individuals future prospects and potential loss of human capital resulting from the permanent dropout of pregnant girls from school. Economic factors influencing parental perceptions on re-entry. Moreover, the fears of economic loss and the chances of a better future for girls were some of the economic factors influencing parents' perceptions. We then suggested that community sensitization and an explicit reentry policy document are needed if parents' perceptions are to change shall care for

the infant. This makes it difficult for teen mothers and expectant student to continue learning, which precipitates dropouts (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

In many societies, parents see marriage as a more cost-effective option than schooling, and one that provides economic security for their pregnant daughters. Girls Not Brides (2019), noted that accessibility and the quality of schools are irrelevant if parents and sometimes girls themselves do not consider girls' education a worthwhile investment. This is particularly true in societies with limited economic and employment opportunities for women to the extent that most parents think that time spent in school could be spent cleaning, working, or looking after siblings (Tarus2020).

Studies have also established that parental perceptions of re-entry of pregnant girls/young mothers are influenced by economic hardships (Laiser & Muyinga 2017). When parents are impoverished, they see marriage as a better option and they will not support readmission into school (Samati 2014). Worse, parents perceive the pregnant girl child/young mother as an extra financial burden to the family due to the need for extra care (Samati 2014). In the end, parents weigh the burden of sending them to school or having them take care of their children and contribute on a full-time basis towards household labour. This is true in rural areas where there are limited resources and household labour is extensively needed (Kurevakwesu 2021; Laiser & Muyinga 2017).

2.3 School mothering, re-entry and related matters

The Guyana re-entry policy (2018) is one of the most elaborate in the world today. It was a product of collaborative efforts of a wide cross section of stakeholders (Guyana, 2018). The policy goal is both the management of re-entry of expectant teens and teen mothers into mainstream school system and prevention of teen pregnancy. The policy covers key areas of concern such as policy environment, guiding principles, tracking of teen pregnancy, reintegration of teen mothers in formal schools, tracking and support after re-entry, as well as implementation process. It also addresses policy dissemination and awareness, not forgetting monitoring and evaluation of the entire process.

Africa offers a mixed situation. Human Rights Watch (2018) states that African countries among them Gabon and Malawi, have adopted continuation or re-entry policies and strategies to

ensure that expectant teens resume learning after child birth. Implementation of laws and policies frequently fall short, and monitoring of teen mothers re-entry to school remains weak overall. Complex re-entry processes and stringent conditions for re-admission in Namibia negatively affect teen mothers re-entry and completion of education. Expectant learners can continue to attend school until four weeks before the expected due date of the child. After 26 weeks of pregnancy, the learner is required to provide a medical certificate confirming that it is safe for her to continue to attend school. In order to be allowed back to school, she has to fulfill all the requirements.

Twenty four African nations, mostly North African nations, lack policies on re-entry of expectant school girls but instead impose heavy penalties and punishment. Morocco and Sudan apply morality laws that criminally judge teen girls with adultery, indecency or extra marital sex. In Tanzania, the expulsion of a pupil from school may be ordered where a pupil has committed an offence against morality. School officials often interpret pregnancy as an offense. Girls are subjected to disciplinary measures such as forced pregnancy tests and expulsion causing dropout. In some communities and cultures, there is a widespread belief that permitting pregnant girls and adolescent mothers to continue their education could normalize extra-marital pregnancy, excuse the girls of their wrongdoing and encourage more girls to become pregnant (Akwilapo, 2016).

However some nations are focused not only on combating barriers to re-entry but also root causes to teen pregnancy. Benin, Cape Verde and Senegal for instance, have reversed their hitherto punitive policies on expectant and teen mothers. In Cape Verde and Senegal, schooling teen mothers are accorded time for breast feeding, time-off when babies are sick or to attend clinics among other concessions (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In Zambia, teen mothers have the option of attending morning or evening shifts while Gabon has set up childhood centres and nurseries close to schools. Rwanda offers financial support for girls at risk of dropping out via girls education strategies, as well as free primary and secondary school education to promote universal access (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In South Africa, after a comprehensive South African National Report (2009) on pregnancy, focus shifted to re-entry and retention. As a result, the situation has improved slightly. Expectant students and teen mothers receive financial assistance, access to sexuality education and contraceptives methods besides safe and legal

abortion. However, schools still lack clarity regarding day-to-day support and management of expectant learners and teen mothers (RSA, 2009), which this study would wish to address.

The government of Kenya developed more guidelines and legislations to strengthen the re-entry policy to ensure that expectant girls and teen mothers continue with their education with minimum disruption. Among the major documents that have strongly support re-entry policy on expectant students and teen mothers to school are the Constitution Kenya and the Children s Act, 2013. The Constitution of Kenya calls for implementation of affirmative action to ensure school age children, including girls, access relevant education and training. While the Children s Act, 2013 tasks the National Education Board with the responsibility to ensure that all children attend and remain in school to complete basic education.

Kenya came up with the re-entry policy for expectant learners and teen mothers in 1994 to ensure girls resume school after child birth. The 1994 Ministry of education policy stipulated that expectant teens should continue schooling until when due and be re-admitted upon childbirth to the same school or alternative school, to reduce psychological and emotional trauma (Ministry of education 1996). Additionally, it advocated for sensitization of teachers, learners and the entire school community to support the reintegrated teen learners. However, when this circular was sent to the District and Provincial offices, uproar ensued against it forcing it to be shelved. This slowed down the implementation of re-entry policy since interpretation and decision making were left to the discretion of individual head teachers (Forum for African Women Educationists [FAWE], 2004.)

2.3.4 Institutional factors

At school level, some head teachers were skeptical to retain expectant teens in school or re-admit teen mothers as it would taint the school image and encourage promiscuity among other girls despite the policy provisions. Studies conducted in several counties in Kenya (Kiambu, Nakuru, Homa Bay, Bungoma and Migori) have indicated that principals and other education stakeholders were not aware of the policy and its provisions besides the inconsistencies cited in its implementation. For instance, in Homa Bay County, Undie et al. (2015) found out that parenting learners continue to be locked out of education and schooling as indicated by 66 per cent of out-of school girls in the county.

The Care and Protection of Child Parents Bill (2016) specifically required county governments to supplement the national government by building and maintaining childcare centres to support teen parents. Implementation of the re-entry policy at county level is hampered by the twin challenges of insufficient resources and little legitimacy. In Nakuru County, the re-entry policy has objectives but lacks implementation, monitoring strategies, the financial and human resources to be effective. The policy objectives are obscure without clear guidelines. Consequently, re-entry procedures depended on the head teacher's discretion with varied outcomes based on teachers' interpretation on a case by case basis (Mwenje, 2015).

The Homa Bay County government in collaboration with STEPUP (an NGO) illustrated the potential of local innovations to support school re-entry. The County Department of Education documented and tracked the re-entry of out-of-school girls in all primary and secondary schools. It also awarded prizes for the top two primary and secondary schools that had substantively supported girls' school re-entry. Several positive outcomes were attributed to the STEPUP project. These included a reduction of the traditional negative perceptions of teenage pregnancy and towards one of understanding, and support. Retention increased among out-of-school girls in the county due to the multiple local innovations that supported re-entry (STEP UP, 2016).

The recently issued 2020 National Guidelines for school re-entry in Basic Education by Ministry of Education was aimed at providing a framework for enhancing re-entry policy of 1994. The government was concerned that despite committing immense resources into education besides passing legislations to ensure 100% transition, there was still significance wastage. The 2020 Guidelines therefore sought to clearly point out the re-entry procedure for teens that drop out of school, outline the role of various stakeholders in re-entry, as well as reinforce existing legislations, policies and guidelines on access to quality education and bring efficiency in monitoring of the re-entry policy implementation. This is the most resounding government voice on re-entry of expectant learners and teen mothers in the history of this country. It is similar to the Guyana policy only that, the Guyana one was passed by parliament and has strong clauses on tracking and support to expectant, and teen mothers. The present study therefore seeks to investigate the implementation of the re-entry policy in Vihiga Sub-County, Vihiga County in view of all these support legislations and guidelines.

The re-entry of pregnant girls into school has been met with mixed feelings from parents with most parents rejecting the practice Moyo (2020). The media has alleged that parents are not embracing what they feel are foreign and alien ideas or belief systems that seek to defile society and loosen its moral values by allowing uncontrollable pregnancies in schools (Moyo 2020; ZimFact (2019). Disconcertingly, this is happening at a time when such an idea if successfully instigated can be helpful since the pregnant girl child is still being deprived of her right to education in Zimbabwe Moyo (2020). Moreover, teenage pregnancies are increasingly becoming a problem in Zimbabwe due to, inter alia, poverty, peer influence, a lack of sex education, religion and a lack of contraceptives among teenagers (Mukoyi, 2015; Mutanana & Mutara, Citation 2015). According to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), in 2018 alone, 12.5 per cent of the country's roughly 57 500 school dropouts permanently stopped attending classes due to early pregnancy Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of Zimbabwe (MoPSE) (2019).

It is also disturbing that parents, who are the key stakeholders in any thrust that involves their children, are rejecting the idea. This is not only a Zimbabwean issue but something that has been recorded across many African countries (Manion, 2011; Mwansa, 2011; Nsalamba & Simpande, 2019; Salvi, 2019; Samati, 2014). It is one thing to have a right to remain in school whilst pregnant, and another to have an environment that supports such a right. As such, without support from parents, the re-entry of pregnant girls or young mothers into school can remain a pipe dream. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that sub-Saharan Africa suffers from adolescent pregnancy (2020). Most of these pregnancies are unplanned and many happen in the context of child marriages UNICEF (2020). African countries account for 15 of the 20 countries with the highest rates of child marriage globally (UNICEF, Citation 2020). In response to this conundrum, many countries have embraced re-entry programs for pregnant girls and many countries including have made this a policy issue (Manion, 2011; Mwansa, 2011; Nsalamba & Simpande, 2019; Samati, 2014).

In line with international and regional conventions and treaties for instance, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) all girls have a right to education regardless of their

pregnancy, marital or motherhood status, something clearly stated in the recently amended Education Act (Chapter 25:04) of Zimbabwe. However, the right of pregnant and sometimes married girls to continue with their education has evoked emotionally charged discussions across the world in recent years, particularly in Africa (Wekesa, 2010; Manion, 2011; Wedekind & Milingo, 2015). These debates often focus on arguments around **morality**, that pregnancy outside wedlock is morally wrong, emanating from personal opinions and experiences, and wide-ranging interpretations of religious teachings about sex outside of marriage (Wekesa, 2010; Omwancha, 2012; Salvi 2019; Samati 2014). According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), in some African countries, girl child education is seen as a privilege that can be withdrawn as punishment when one falls pregnant (Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2018). As a result, girls are disadvantaged in education and therefore deserve special attention as they drop out more easily compared to boys. To prevent girls from dropping out of school because of pregnancy, the UNCRC committee emphasise the elimination of the interpretation of pregnancy as a disciplinary offence (Bank, 2007).

The Zimbabwean government heeded the call to provide access to education for the formerly relegated pregnant girl child through the amendment to section 4, subsection 2b of the Education Act (Chapter 25:04) in 2020. The major concern now lies in the keenness of parents to create a favourable environment for the success of this thrust. Parents are important in this regard because giving girls the green light to continue in school after pregnancy is one side of the matrix and the other one lies in creating a conducive home and school environment that will ensure their successful re-entry Chinkondenji (2022). With Bulawayo being recognised as a hotspot for teenage pregnancy, antagonistic sentiments from parents defeat the whole purpose of government efforts. It is from this background that this study focuses on **parents** perceptions of the re-integration of pregnant girls and teenage mothers into school, and the socio-cultural and economic factors influencing their perceptions in Cowdray, Bulawayo. In the subsequent section, we reviewed literature from past studies on re-entry before we gave a thorough exposition of the methodology that we adopted.

A Malawian study by Samati (2014) established that family-level attitudes towards the value of female education have significantly influenced the implementation of **Malawi's Readmission Policy**. Findings from **Samati's** (2014) study substantiated a UNICEF (2000) study in Malawi

where 50 per cent of teen mothers reported that they were not allowed by their parents to go back to school and were forced instead to marry (Samati, 2014). In some of Malawi's rural areas, teen pregnancy is viewed as a source of pride especially for mothers because it reflects the maturity of their daughters and increases their standing in the community, and in some communities, girls can face harsh criticism from society for becoming pregnant (Sarmatia, 2014). Parents may also feel the money spent on sending their daughter to school is wasted if she becomes pregnant (Samati, 2014). It has been seen that girls have little support in childcare from parents if they wish to return to school, either preventing their return or pushing them to drop out completely (Samati, 2014).

School mothering, re-entry and related matters Important factors that facilitate the decision of pregnant girls to return to school and pursue their academic work to completion are social, economic and cultural as well as institutional. Socioeconomic and cultural factors shape the constructions of female sexuality, motherhood and associated stigmatisation and possibility of exclusion that pregnant girls are likely to face in their communities (Riordan, 2002). While their performance influences the decision to return and remain, in school, the economic standing of their families might determine the kind of support they will offer Birungi (2015). These are in addition to the biological impediments such as disruptions in sleep due to nursing babies at night, which affect class attendance and performance. The resolution of the school girl to return to school and the family's decision to support her are but the first steps. Next are institutional hurdles that have to be overcome, once the girl re-enters school. We examine in detail, the social and institutional barriers identified in existing literature in the sections that follow.

2.4 Social, economic and terrain for re-entry

Social and cultural obstacles, arise out of socially constituted gender orders as expressed in cultural values that legitimise what is considered a good woman or parent. Reactions of stigmatisation and exclusion shape parental or familial attitude to girls' pregnancy and determine whether they will support their daughters who get pregnant and deliver while in school. the main socio-cultural factors influencing the re-entry of girls who fall pregnant were gendered customary practices such as patriarchy or female subordination and early marriage. They established in addition, a close link between inability to return to school after childbirth and vulnerability in the area of study.

Thus, widespread poverty which predisposes school girls to early pregnancy can limit further their ability to return and complete their schooling. We have noted earlier how in discussions on factors promoting teenage pregnancy, the role of discourses dominate as not only leading school girls into pregnancy, but also responsible for their eventual dropping out. Here we turn our attention to how these same discourses facilitate or limit their re-entry into school after delivery irrespective of the existence of policies. We highlight in addition to those regulating gender power relations noted earlier, the intersection of social divisions, education as a responsibility and contamination (Karimi, 2015). Where the prevalent social environment stigmatises school mothers, thus inhibiting their re-entry. Studies have concluded that the existence of predominantly negative attitudes and perceptions among pupils, teachers and parents regarding teenage motherhood greatly undermine the re-entry of young mothers. Karimi (2015) refers to Mac and Ghails (1988) work which highlights discourses around the intersection of social divisions of hierarchy such as gender, age, class and race (ethnicity in our case) as influential in re-entry processes. Messages about the right age to bear children for instance are set within such intersections. Any woman who delivers outside the prescribed age is considered a deviant and must suffer for it. Social heterogeneity is manipulated to exclude some social groups considered as not befitting of such rights as access to education as well as economic and political assets (Karimi, 2015). Having a baby while still schooling, at a young age, when one is not economically active therefore serves as a precipitating factor to social exclusion of pregnant girls with a cyclic effect. Achoka and Njeru (2012) found out that stigmatization and discrimination by teachers, parents, fellow students and the immediate society are the major causes for discontinuing school. The worst part is the self-blame where girls believe that they deserve to be punished through social isolation and hostility for getting pregnant and therefore drop out of school. And after delivery, they are too shy from self-blame to return to school (Achoka & Njeru, 2012). Another influential discourse examined by Chingona and Chetty (2008) in South Africa is the discourse of education as a responsibility. The deal is that basic education is a right for all children of school going age. Any girl who gets pregnant while in school loses this right.

Education turns from a right to a privilege that pregnant girls have to strive to access. This is a responsibility they owe their children and themselves. The motivation for someone is to break the chain of inadequate schooling, for their wellbeing and future life chances. Undoubtedly, such a discourse impacts the attitude of policy makers and other significant actors in the education

sector and schools, justifying their reluctance to provide support systems especially for pregnant school girls, while putting pressure on pregnant girls to seek education at the same time. Chingona and Chetty (2008) report that much of the resistance to allowing girls to remain in school while pregnant or re-enter after delivery in most of Africa and particularly South Africa, emanates from the discourse of contamination. This refers to community perceptions such as fear of a second pregnancy or bad influence on others (Onyango, Kioli & Nyambedha, 2015).

The discourse of contamination emanates from the perception that teenage mothers are immoral or deviants and therefore bad examples to other girls who may be innocent and unwilling to engage in early or premarital sex. Good girls should therefore be protected from contact with teenage mothers. A related fear is that re-entry might be interpreted as rewarding immorality or encouraging promiscuity leading to increased cases of STDs/HIV infection. Again it is thought that the pregnant girl returning to school will lower standards, leading to loss of discipline in educational institutions where they dominate (ZARD, 1997). Girls might not value education and as a result lose respect for teachers. Discourses are not always debilitating. Thus, babies can be the motivation for re-entry into school, according to Pillow (2004). The fact that school mothers are determined to complete schooling for the sake of their babies is rooted in discourses or messages they receive from society. It is driven by power of other sorts, one of which Mosedale (2004) refers to as power within, the internalisation of assets such as self-esteem and the belief that one's actions can have positive effect. Adulthood outcomes are cited by Chigona and Chetty (2008) as a related discourse which facilitates the motivation of school mothers to complete their schooling. These examples of positive discourses notwithstanding, indications from the literature, reveal more discourses inhibiting school mothers' re-entry than those facilitating return to school. At the base of it all is the burden of discourses rooted in gendered perceptions about the phenomenon which influence parents, teachers, and other learners to resist the continuous stay of pregnant girls in school or support re-entry and retention.

2.5. Institutionally located barriers

These institutional obstacles include exclusion from mainstream schooling, negative school experiences, financial needs including for childcare. We like to add others like barriers to accessing existing alternative education and training opportunities, lack of external counselling

and support programmes (Riordan, 2002). In the UK, it has been found out that poor experiences associated with school life during pregnancy is a major inhibiting factor for re-entry despite an enabling policy for re-entry (Evans & Slowley, 2010). The school environment can shape female response in terms of targeting their performance and motivation to remain in school. Schools have been noted to be most effective when it comes to providing education on family life and reproductive health that help to reduce attraction to unsafe sex, alcohol and drug abuse (UNESCO, 2014; Simigiu, 2012). This observation on the role school-based reproductive health education and educational achievement plays in teenage and school girl pregnancy points to the importance of the school environment not only as a facilitator of re-entry and successful completion for school mothers, but also as a major player in the prevention of school girl pregnancy. Ultimately however, we believe that the suggestion of Oronsaye, Ogbeide and Unuigbo, (1982) for improved formal family life education and access to family planning methods should be accompanied in a large measure by gender equality provisions to deal with cultural norms and values that shape attitudes to female sexuality and dispose them to the risk of early sex and its attendant unwanted and unplanned pregnancies. It is important however, for research to identify the most important causal mix of factors exerting force on school girls in the communities in which they are located. Evaluating the policy terrain in Africa Birungi et al. (2015) grouped existing policies into three, expulsion, re-entry and continuation. The expulsion policies which they captioned as the original, are those prescribing immediate dismissal of girls upon disclosure of pregnancy, with no offer for re-entry. The second are those offering re-entry with compulsory leave of absence before and after delivery. Leave of absence duration differs from country to country, often with re-entry into a different school. The third, the continuation policy, they label most progressive, does not insist on compulsory leave from school and pregnant mothers can remain in school as long as they wish or are able to (Birungi, et al., 2015). They note however that one strategy that cuts across most countries is the second option: maternity leave on disclosure of pregnancy and re- admission after delivery. In the case of Kenya, pregnant girls are permitted to remain in school for as long as they wish and can. They also have the option of re-entry after delivery when they desire and are able. Otherwise, they are supposed to be given support to gain admission into another school if they find the school environment unsupportive as a result of stigma and discrimination. Elsewhere continuation policies are more explicit and inclusive of school fathers. The UK Equality Act of 2010 not only

allows pregnant girls to be in school till they request for maternity leave, it enjoins schools to ensure that girls return to school after no more than 18 weeks leave Helpdesk Report (2015). School fathers are also allowed to take paternity leave from school.

2.6 Chapter summary

Literature was reviewed in this chapter on the factors which lead to permanent school drop out of pregnant girls. Intervention strategies were identified on how to facilitate retention and re-entry of pregnant girls. Methods which were used to meet the research study objective were discussed on the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The following subtopics are going to be covered research design which is a strategy for answering the research questions using empirical data, research paradigm which is a set of ideas, beliefs or understandings within which theories and practices can function and act as a guideline for creating research methods and carrying out research most legitimately and reasonably , research instruments to be used which are interviews and questionnaires, population consisting all pregnant girls, parents whose daughters dropout of school permanently , and sample of en girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy and affected parents and teachers , sampling procedure used is purposive sampling, data collection procedures, data presentation and analysis procedures, validity and reliability and ethical considerations as the chapter unfolds. Chapter summary will crown it all at the end.

3.1 Research design

A research design refers to the detailed plan created to conduct a study or research in a specific field Creswell (2014). In carrying out this study, a case study research design was used. A case study research was used since it allows the researcher to make boundaries about the case under investigation. For example in this study institutional boundaries were made. This can be supported by Morrison (2007) who are argues that the use of a case study allows the researcher to mark boundaries about the case under study. Furthermore, Cohen et al (2007) asserted that through the use of a case study, the researcher is able to generate rich data about the causes of school dropout by pregnant girls. Thus, in this study, case study design aided the researcher in having a vivid understanding on the experiences that affect pregnant girls to come back to school.

A qualitative research approach which concurs with the research data type was adopted in the study. Qualitative research is a method used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, motivations and opinions thereby providing insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypothesis for potential quantitative research Creswell (2018).

3.2 Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. This study was made up of ten girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy, ten parents who have had their children drop out of school due to pregnancy and five

teachers. Purposive sampling technique is a type of non-probability sampling that is most effective when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within Jarvis et al. (2004). The sampling technique was used in this study since the study assume the respondents to be equipped with relevant knowledge needed for better results.

3.3 Research instruments

3.3.1 Interview

Minichiello, et al (1990) defined them as interviews in which neither the question nor the answer categories are predetermined. Punch (1998) described unstructured interviews as a way to understand the complex behavior of people without imposing any a prior categorization, which might limit the field of inquiry. In this study unstructured interviews were used in order to solicit all necessary information relevant factors that cause permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and strategies curb that without limiting the respondents views and suggestions. Themes were generated basing on the information provided by the respondents in the study as per determinants of permanent dropout of pregnant girls. Aspects related to the field of study

3.3.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is simply a list of mimeographed or printed questions that is completed by or for a respondent to give his opinion in this study Cohen (2000). In addition a questionnaire used as it enables qualitative data to be collected in a standardized way so that the data are internally consistent and coherent for analysis. The questionnaire has covers the introductory part and giving a brief purpose of the study to the respondents, position of the respondents and themes and questions guided by the project s research questions on factors contributing permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and teenage mothers and strategies to curb this phenomenon ranging from family support and influence to access to health care.

3.4 Data collection procedures

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables in an established systematic fashion, which then enables one to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes Cohen et al (2000). During the data collection process, firstly the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the University. The letter allowed the researcher to seek permission to

conduct the study in the selected case study. Furthermore, the researcher sought permission from the school head where the study was carried out.

Moreover, potential participants were selected using purposive sampling technique and the researcher personally distributed questionnaires which the respondents were asked to answer. Apart from the introductory part on the section A of the questionnaire, the researcher orally explained the objective of the study and assured respondents of their confidentiality. After the answering stage, the researcher collected the answered questionnaires from the respondents.

3.5 Data analysis

A qualitative content data analysis method was done during the data analysis process. By definition, content analysis is the analysis of what is being said, written or recorded through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns from the research data Shannon (2005). Responses from personal questionnaires and personal interviews for the teachers, affected girls and affected parents pin pointed the factors contributing to permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and teenage mothers and strategies to curb this phenomenon.

3.6 Integrity of the study

This section covers the following: validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

3.6.1 *Validity and reliability*

Validity is defined as a measure of the truth or falsity of the data collected using the research instrument. According to Tuckman (2010) validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure all assessment of validity was subjective opinions based on the judgement of the researcher. To improve validity of the instruments, the researcher carried out a pilot study and administered the instruments to few respondents. The researcher also read the questionnaire before administering it and clarifies where necessary during administration.

Reliability is defined as the degree of consistency with which the instrument measures an attribute Mugenda (2003). It is the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument yields the same results under comparable conditions Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana (2010). To improve on reliability, the researcher used a standardised questionnaire. Standardisation was done during pilot study and researches on other questionnaires used in

various researches. The researcher also derives both interview questions and questionnaire items from research objectives and research questions to improve on reliability.

3.6.2 *Ethical considerations*

Ethical considerations are the codes of conducting research Tuckman (2012). Ethics in research are considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad during research. The researcher must act in a moral and responsible way when conducting research. In order to do that, the researcher conducted the interviews in such a way that they elicited cooperation, trust, openness and acceptance with respondents.

The researcher tried by all means to protect the confidentiality of the respondents from other people in the study and from the general public. Respondents were assured that the information that they provide would be treated with strict confidence and be used for academic purposes only. The respondents had a right to decide when, where, to whom, and to what extent his or her attitude beliefs and behaviour were to be used. The respondents right to privacy were not violated by the unauthorised use of one way mirrors, microphones and cameras or any other methods that may interfere with privacy.

3.7 Chapter summary

The chapter presented the following components of the methodology: research design, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis, and research integrity. The next chapter is going to focus on data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the strategy for data collection, presentation, analysis and discussion. Chapter four is focusing on presenting the results found in the study. The results were guided by the pre-mentioned research objectives. The chapter will also present respondents characteristics as well as a subsection of result discussion. A chapter summary will be presented.

Research question 1

What factors contributed to permanent school drop out of pregnant girls?

They can be categorised as those emanating from personal disposition of the girls or significant actors in their lives like their parents, teachers and other learners; as well as socio-cultural, economic and institutional factors. The personal factors relate to the girl's own motivation to return to school or otherwise. In fact the very challenges they faced were the determining factors facilitating or inhibiting their return and retention.

4.1 Socio-cultural factors

4.1.1. Community or family rejection

The study revealed that community or family rejection affected pregnant girls to continue with school and teenage mothers to re- enter school. This information came from 2 teachers and 8 parents and 6 teenage mothers who affirmed that community and family rejection strongly affected learning and academic performance of teenage mothers in schools. The study revealed that three of the learner-mothers were chased away from home by their guardians. As a result of this, 3 out of 10 teenage mothers said that they ended up getting into early marriages because they were chased away from home after they were discovered to be pregnant. Additionally, one teacher said that some parents stopped paying school fees for the pregnant girls. As a result of this, some teenage mothers ended up getting married to their boy-friends so that they get support. Besides, two teenage mothers pointed out that they ran away from their parents and resorted to stay alone for fear of rebuke and retribution. The current findings conform to those of Banda (2005), who found that majority of young single mothers ran away from home to live in rented small rooms in nearby places, others looked for shelter from well-wishers which lasted for only weeks or few months.

4.1.2 Child care and teenage parenthood

All the 10 learner mothers said that it was not easy for them to take care of their babies at a tender age. Similarly, teachers and parents who participated in the study also added that caring for the child and being a young parent affected teenage mothers decision to continue with secondary schools. The responses came from all the 25 participants. Therefore, the current results are consistent with a study conducted showed that teen mothers faced challenges of child care and parenting among others. Additionally, 5 learner-mothers said that the challenge of child care and teenage parenthood made some of their colleagues to drop out of school completely. In the same vein 9 out of 10 teen mothers said that their parents and other family members were not supporting them in terms of child care. As a result of this challenge, their academic commitment was affected at large. One of them had this to say: When I tell my mother to look after my child when I want to come to school, she says that, *handisini ndakakupa nhumbu kuti ndichengete mwana wako*” (It’s not me who impregnated you for me to look after your child).

4.1.3. Parental attitude

When girls get pregnant, they are sent away, often by force, to the house of the persons responsible. Even when it is a school father, the expectation is for his parents to cater for the pregnant girl's upkeep. Five teenage mothers said that their parents do not force them into cohabitation but maltreat them till they find their homes so unbearable that they leave to cohabit with the fathers of their unborn children. This was confirmed by one teenage mother. She explained that, even though almost two years have passed since she delivered, her parents constantly taunt her with going to her husband's house, they deliberately overburden her with house chores and they still refuse to mind her baby. She then has resolved not to go back to school.

4.1.4 Early marriage and cohabitation

Parents send their pregnant girls into early marriages. The patrilineal inheritance system provides an additional justification for the actions of the parents. Culturally, children belong to their paternal lineage. The fathers of the girls especially feel cheated that they have to care for the pregnancy and eventually a baby, who does not belong to their lineage. Therefore cohabitation and early marriage among pregnant school girls was found to be the greatest inhibition to re-entry into school. 6 out of 10 of the girls in Chikupo village who had dropped out due to pregnancy and child birth had been given away in marriage or at least were living in the households of the men responsible for their pregnancies. Once in the husband's house, they assumed marital responsibilities and felt more like married women than school girls. It also came out clearly that hardly will the families of the boys encourage pregnant girls to re-enter school after delivery.

4.2. Economic factors

4.2.1 The challenges of poverty

The study revealed that re-entrants were affected by poverty. When participants were asked whether poverty affected adolescent mothers to re-enter school, 92% of them agreed to that effect. All the participants further said that poverty had led to some teen mothers to engage into promiscuity so that they earn a living. Some teachers and parents added that due to poverty, some girls got pregnant and had children without fathers which became a burden for teenage mothers. This finding is in agreement with that of Mutombo et al (2010) who in their study on

the review of the re-entry policy on ordinary learners in Zambia found that high poverty levels and peer pressure were factors leading to teenage pregnancies. Some teachers further stated that some of the teenage mothers engage into early marriages due to poverty. Three parent also said that: I fail to look after my child so that she can re-enter school because I am poor, not working and I do not have any child who can support me and the family. Its better I allow my child to be married so that she can be taken care of by her husband to reduce on my burden of looking after many children. The narrations above reveal other reasons why parents send their pregnant girls into early marriages. There is extra financial burden accompanying pregnancy and childbirth.

4.2.2. Teenage mothers being learners and bread winners

The study found that some of the learner-mothers faced the challenge of being wives, bread winners and at the same time. This phenomenon was discovered during the research. Besides, 1 out of 10 learner-mothers were married and they said that it was difficult for them to look after their husbands and children at the same time and prepare for school. One of them said that It is not easy for me to work up early in the morning prepare food for my child and my husband then come to school. Sometimes I fail to continue with school because I had to take care of household chores. When I am at school I have to think of what to eat when I knock off because my husband is not working. Furthermore, another teen mother had this to say: When I knock off I have to rush home so that I go and sell vegetables at the market so that I feed my family since my husband is not working and this affects my concentration when I am in class. The study revealed that learning and academic performance of school-age mothers who re-entered school were affected by the challenges alluded to above. Therefore, there was a suggestion from school administrators that relevant authorities should come to the aid of those married learner-mothers so that they can be retrieved from their matrimonial homes in order to enhance their academic performance district.

4.3.0 Attitudinal factors

4.3.1. Girls' aspirations and decision to remain in school

The interaction with the girls in our sample revealed that some were very clear about returning to school, while, others, however had just given up. Contrary to Pillows (2004) assertion that the

motivation for re-entry into school are their babies, the girls covered in this study are rather motivated by their future aspirations. Though these future aspirations, when realised, may help their children, they do not realise that yet. To them, they are in school to become somebody in future. One girl has this to say, "At the time of my pregnancy, my future aspiration was to become a nurse. I still aspire to be a nurse. At the time of my pregnancy, I was third in class and so know if I go back to school, I can become somebody. I still perform well in class. After I got pregnant and my parents got to know, they got angry and told me to go to the boy's house but I did not mind them. I was determined to go to school to become somebody and the father of my baby, he was going to Senior High School by then, he told me that he cannot marry me in future if I did not go to school. When I got pregnant, I decided to move to my boyfriend's parents house. I run away from home. Nobody asked me to go. I did not tell my mother anything because I was afraid. After I moved in with my baby's father, that was when my mother found out. My mother did not agree to the marriage. She felt I was too young to marry. I insisted because of the pregnancy. I was thinking that they could not have taken good care of me and my baby. I assumed my brother, who was taking care of my education would think I did not like schooling and that is why I got pregnant. While personal motivation is key to re-entry, it is not enough to get the girls back to school.

4.3.2. Verbal abuse from peers, teachers and parents or guardians

According to the findings of this study, 23 out of 25 participants said that verbal abuse from friends, teachers, parents or guardians affected teenage mothers and pregnant girls as far as learning and academic performance were concerned. In addition, teenage mothers' experiences as discovered by the researcher are likened to the study findings done by Camfed (2013) in Malawi, where some girls faced hostility from their fellow classmates, who called them different names such as "mhamha avo" (you are parents) which had to be mediated by the school. Furthermore, the current study revealed that verbal abuse contributed to absenteeism and low self-esteem among teenage mothers and pregnant girls. Five teenage mothers further reported that some of their friends opted to leave their homes and cohabite with their boyfriends hence got into premature marriages too. As a result of this aspect, learning and academic performance was affected as well. This indication is similar to the findings of Ntambo and Kabubi (2017) who investigated on the challenges faced by girls who fall pregnant and re-admitted back to school in

schools in Mpongwe district. It was revealed that teen mothers faced verbal abuse from peers and teachers especially females.

4.3.3 Stigma and discrimination

The study revealed that 25 respondents who participated in the study indicated that pregnant school girls and school-age mothers who re-enter school faced stigma and discrimination which led to some of them perform badly at school. Furthermore, one teacher said that some learners, teachers and administrators labelled teen mothers as bad behaved pupils. This revelation sits well with the study by Ncube and Mudau (2017) in Gwanda district, Zimbabwe where one head teacher had this to say on the returning student from maternity leave: the policy benefits the individual but not the school nor the community because the returning student becomes a bad example among other students. This has a big impact on the learning environment, think of a situation where two or more students are visibly pregnant and remain in school until they go on leave; ultimately the pass rate goes down because of naughty individual students. As a result of such assertions, it was also discovered that pregnant girls and girls who re-entered school had inferiority complex, low-esteem and lacked confidence in themselves. In this regard, 7 out of 10 teenage mothers said that they thought other learners were gossiping about them and they were also thinking that their peers looked down upon them due to their status when they got pregnant. Therefore, this finding corresponds with the discovery by Malahlela (2012) in Ncube & Mudau (2017) who reported that pregnant learners usually suffer from inferiority complex, low self-esteem and lack of confidence based on the thinking that others were laughing or gossiping about them hence limiting their association with their peers any more. One teenage mother said that some teachers were making humiliating comments towards teen mothers saying; Some of you are adult people and have children. You are not supposed to make noise or why should a mother allow such behaviour to happen in class? Additionally, 8 out of 10 teen mothers interviewed confessed that some people called them prostitutes and told them that they would never be married in future. Parent-pupils suffered discrimination as the community does not value or recognise them as they call them prostitutes.

4.3.4.Lack of support from teachers, peers and parentsFrom the data collected, 24 out of 25 participants representing 96% of respondents said that teenage mothers lacked moral, material and financial support from teachers, friends, parents and guardians respectively. The study

revealed that the situation had contributed to a number of teenage -mothers to drop-out of school and enter into pre-mature early marriages. In the same vein, 3 teenage mothers interviewed attested to the fact that lack of material and financial support from their parents had contributed to them falling pregnant and getting into premature marriages hence having children at a tender age. One teenage mother also revealed that they were attending school whilst coming from their husbands' homes. In line with the views of parent-pupils, the study conducted by Mutombo et al (2010) in Zambia, found that lack of care and support from parents, both emotionally and financially was a social factor linked to teenage pregnancy.

One teenage mother said that her mother neither showed great love nor treated her with care as she allowed her to be more vulnerable to violence or abuses, as well as denied her the right to access education. In addition, she admitted that her mother contributed to her drop out, claiming that she never provided her the necessary guidance during her decision. She said: Yes, of course. Because she could have hustle and, at least, she could have encouraged me to complete form 4 because I was almost there but she could have encouraged me to continue with the education . I think she has something; she has something to do with my drop out. The feeling of the teenage mother towards her mother is of great concern. Parents are key facilitators of their children's learning in order to shape their behaviour and generally their future. They play a great role from home to school to mould the child through engagement and social support.

4.3.5.Stress and depression as a result of peer and societal pressure

From the current study, it was revealed that 23 out of 25 participants said that learner-mothers get affected with stress and depression due to challenges they faced both at home and in school representing 92% of the total number of respondents. Some teachers said that most of the teen mothers who re-entered school ended up dropping out of school due to stress and depression resulting from the challenges they faced such as lack of financial support and poverty. Three teachers further stated that some of the teen mothers were performing badly at school, some reported late for classes and others ended up dropping out of school due to pressure which came from their bad experiences. The study revealed that some of the re-entrants were fending for themselves and took care of their babies as well. Furthermore, the research findings were that some of the teen mothers came from child headed families where some of them were regarded as bread winners. As a result of the situation, some of them had stress because of being

overwhelmed with family pressure. These research findings therefore, correspond with those of Mweemba (2014) who found that stress and depression were challenges encountered by teenage mothers. Similarly, the study conducted by Boulden (2001) in Australia on estimates of the rate of teenage pregnancy, alludes to the fact that balancing the demands of family and school can cause many teen mothers to feel fatigued and generally stressed. As a result of the situation, some of them had stress because of being overwhelmed with family pressure. Furthermore depression was common among pregnant teens and teenage mothers were also likely to subject their children to abuse and neglect because they feel overwhelmed by their unfair, ever-demanding roles as parents, said five pregnant girls.

4.3.6 Parental attitude and support

Related to early marriage is the willingness and ability of the parents, especially the mothers, to provide child care support for the girls. The other, is of the view that while she is determined to proceed with her schooling, her mother's refusal to nurse the baby meant a whole year's interruption in her schooling and is also responsible for her current weak performance.

When I gave birth, I had to stay, one and a half years to breastfeed the baby because my parents refused to take care of the baby. Now I forced myself back to school but my performance has gone down. If I go home and I want to learn my parents ask me to go to my husband's house. I fetch water and I do all the cooking. When I ask my brother's wife to cook she refuses. So I do everything and after that I take care of my baby. My parents still do not support when I asked for money for soap to wash my uniform, they asked that I go to my husband's house for it.

Some gender differences with respect to the role of the parents were evident from the interviews with parents. Generally, the women felt it was the men who inhibit the re-entry process mainly due to anger. Even the fathers who are willing to support their girls back to school, insist that the responsibility for girls re-entry is largely the mothers. They consider whatever support they can give as secondary.

Sometimes, when you tell fathers not to send their girls away, they are so angry, they do not listen. One parent father said, "Well for me, it will depend on the mother, if the mother insist that her daughter returns to school after delivery, she must know that she has a job to do. She has

to care for the baby and if that is what she wants I will not stop her. My role then will be to provide for her financially just as before.

4.3.7 Ignorance of policies

It is noteworthy that most of the parents and some of the girls were not aware that it was possible to remain in school during pregnancy or return to school after delivery. Some of the parents and pregnant girls covered in the study admitted that they did not know they could go back to school. Ignorance about the possibility of combining motherhood with schooling therefore can cause girls to give up their desire to pursue further education especially at an early age.

For instance, I did not know I could continue schooling, I thought I had no reason for continuing and my mother and uncles brought me to my husband's house by force because they did not want me to be a mother without having a husband. I did not know I could combine school with pregnancy. If I had known I would have resisted my being forced to marry. Knowledge of this possibility evidently has influenced parental decision to support their daughters.

Only 40% of the teenage mothers were aware of the provision to continue with school during or after pregnancy. Despite public awareness of the school re-entry policy only 10% of the teenage mothers was retained in school after pregnancy while the majority had no intentions of returning to school. Childcare responsibilities, lack of financial support, and fear of stigma were some of the cited reasons for not wanting to go back to school. Parents and some community leaders reservations regarding reintegration of the pregnant girls in schools. Parents feared that the reintegrated pregnant and teenage mothers will negatively influence other girls and might result in more pregnancies in the schools.

4.4. Institutional factors

4.4.1. The school environment

The school environment played a crucial role in facilitating retention during pregnancy and after delivery. Head teachers, classroom and special teachers like the Guidance and

Counselling Coordinators played a critical role in setting the school environment. So did the peers of the school girls. We also found the role of the teachers to be important in the re-entry

process. However, it was clear that, like the parents, the role of the teachers was often influenced by factors such as their personal values and the performance of the girls. Teachers, thus both facilitated and inhibited the process of re-entry an observation made by key persons in Murewa district, all four girls who had dropped out of school blamed their school environment, complaining about what they termed the uncooperative attitude and rejection of teachers.

When I became pregnant, I realised that some of the teachers who previously used to open up to me began to shun me and sort of frown upon me. I felt embarrassed and shy in school. I lost some of my best friends as well, as these began to shun my company. I felt lonely and always pitied myself as I became a subject of gossip among both teachers and learners. These were part of my reasons for dropping out. Anytime the pregnant school girls come back to school, the teachers ignore them. They pass negative remarks especially when the girls don not understand what is being taught in class. They tell them that because of the pregnancy or motherhood that is why they cannot understand.

Most female teachers even when they were teaching and saw me passing, they used to laugh at me and the whole class will laugh with them. They laugh because the teacher laugh otherwise they will not laugh at me, no they will not.

When I became pregnant, I realised that some of the teachers who previously used to open up to me began to shun me and sort of frown upon me. I felt embarrassed and shy in school. I lost some of my best friends as well, as these began to shun my company. I felt lonely and always pitied myself as I became a subject of gossip among both teachers and learners. These were part of my reasons for dropping out.

Anytime the pregnant school girls come back to school, the teachers ignore them. They pass negative remarks especially when the girls don not understand what is being taught in class. They tell them that because of the pregnancy or motherhood that is why they cannot understand.

My advice is that pregnant girls should be made to sit at home and only return to school after delivery as of the school suggested during one of our meetings .It was their facilitating roles that were highlighted most.

4.4.2 Lack of counselling services in schools and the community

The study indicated that there was lack of counselling services in secondary schools. 23 out of 25 respondents said that schools were not providing counselling services to teen mothers or pregnant girls.

Furthermore, the current study findings disagrees with the finding of Baa-Poku (2016) who conducted a research in Ghana and found that schools had guidance and counselling units that provided counselling services for all students. The current study further discovered that teen mothers were not being monitored by the relevant authorities to find out how they integrated with other learners in secondary schools and what challenges they encountered at school as well as their communities where they live. Additionally, it was discovered that there were no trained counsellors to offer counselling services to re-entrants in schools as indicated by the teachers. In this regard, all the teachers who were interviewed said that they were not qualified counsellors to handle counselling services in schools. This confession from school guidance teachers corresponds well with Kapenda (2012) in Namibia who found that while many schools had a specific female teacher who counselled girls on issues pertaining to sexuality, either a teacher formally assigned to play this role by the school management or someone who had taken the task out of her own initiative, none of the teachers had specific training in counselling skills, and none have attended workshops on the topic. When the learner-mothers were asked to indicate if counselling sessions took place in their various secondary schools, all the five of them responded that they never received any counselling services before pertaining to their issues. They further revealed that they were not even aware that there were such services in school because they did not even know the teachers who were responsible for counselling services. Therefore, there was a submission from parents that schools and communities should come up with community centres where teenage mothers would access various services such as child care and family planning services.

Research question 2

How can completion of school by pregnant girls be promoted?

4.6.1 Funded education

Data collected indicated that scholarships should be given to pregnant girls and teenage mothers, most of the participants interviewed said that schools did not put in place some measures or strategies to mitigate challenges faced by re-entrants. In this regard, all the 25 participants

outlined some of the measures which were lacking but necessary for learner-parents' well-being in schools. One of them was that schools were not giving free education or putting learner-mothers on school bursaries and this aspect had led to truancy and school drop-outs in many cases.

4.6.1 Provision of physical facilities

Provision of physical facilities in place for accommodating pregnancy and motherhood. However, various proposals were offered in terms of school based-facilities needed to support pregnant girls and teenage mothers. They included the provision of changing rooms, separate toilets for boys and girls, child care centres, nurseries attached to the schools and resting room for teenage mothers during breaks.

All the participants pointed that some facilities were required to support pregnant girls and teenage mothers. They mentioned customized classroom furniture and school uniforms for pregnant girls. Others include baby minding and child care facilities in schools including sick bays, rest rooms, caregivers and nannies.

4.6.2 Role models

The parents and teachers further suggested that the policy should provide for inviting prominent people in the community to share their experiences and act as role models. These people should be women who have been affected but managed to continue their education despite the fact that they had been pregnant whilst in school.

4.6.2.Support from parents, teacher and peers

The parents must provide the needed support including babysitting and childcare to facilitate the easy return of the girl to school, some encouragement would also help in bringing the teenage mothers to school.

Parents and extended families, according the respondents, have very crucial roles to play in supporting the schooling of pregnant girls and teenage mothers. The support that parents provide in school was upheld by all the participants were therefore encouraged to join the through their joint associations with teachers to counsel the school girls, support them, and facilitate their re-

entry. They have to be understanding and must be willing to accept that in spite of the shame, stigma and disappointment their actions might have brought upon the family. The general notion on this subject was that acceptance of the teenage mothers by the parents would reduce stigmatization, anxiety and fear which push pregnant girls into dropping out of school entirely. The family was also urged to assist the pregnant girls and teenage mothers by taking care of them and their babies to ease their return to school after delivery. All the participants revealed that, parents must keep talking to their pregnant daughters till they deliver safely and then support them to get back to school .

4.6.3 Raising awareness of the policies

Also crucial to re-entry is a mere awareness of the possibility. It is evident that some parents as well as some girls are ignorant of the possibility of re-entry lost the chance, since for them there seemed to be no other option than to quit school and marry. The community do not know that there are policies that allows pregnant girls to continue with education during and after delivery.

4.6.4. Fighting gender social norms

There is need for investments in fighting harmful social and gender norms. Policies need to go beyond simply allowing return to school by addressing the supportive conditions required to enable adolescent girls to return to and stay in school. Interventions and education systems may need to intensify access to interim alternative non-formal routes to education for pregnant and adolescent mothers especially in rural areas, while the longer term norms, attitudes and supports are being addressed in formal mainstream schools.

4.6.5 Provision of expert guidance and counselling services

Guidance and counselling services should be given to pregnant girls and teenage mothers. Teachers should be equipped with expert guidance and counselling services, hence need for workshops to ensure that pregnant girls stay in schools. Teenage mothers should be provided with counselling services, family planning services, parenting skills and other available support services.

4.7.0. Chapter summary

In this chapter the collected data was presented, analysed and interpreted with the view to provide answers to issues raised in chapter 1. In the next chapter the project will be summarized, and conclusion drawn.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter the collected data was presented, analysed and interpreted in line with the research objectives formulated in chapter one. With the current chapter focusing on summarizing the project, articulating the conclusion, generating recommendations and identifying areas of further research.

5.1 Summary of the project

Chapter one looked at the research problem and its setting through the following: background to the study and research objectives, assumption of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of terms and **chapters** layout. The identified problem being that pregnant girls and teenage mothers fail to complete their educations due to various reasons regardless of the fact that there are policies that allows them to complete their education. Hence the need to find ways to curb the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and teenage mothers thereby promoting social justice.

In chapter two the gaps in literature were identified through the derived theoretical framework basing on the resilience theory, the stigma theory and the intersectionality theory. The literature covered factors influencing permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and teenage mothers to be socio-cultural, economic, institutional and also attitudinal. Strategies to address these in a bid

to promote completion of school by pregnant girls and teenage mothers range from guidance and counselling, support, provision of physical facilities and funded education.

With chapter three the research strategy that guided data collection, analysis and discussion was articulated. The qualitative approach was used and themes emanated from the responses. Personal interview guides and questionnaire guides for teachers, affected girls and affected parents were used to collect data. Ethical considerations were recognized

In chapter four the collected data was presented, analyzed and discussed guided by the themes derived from the research objectives in chapter one. The factors contributing to permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and teenage mothers were socio-cultural, economic, institutional and attitudinal. Strategies to curb this phenomenon were pointed out.

In chapter five, summary of the project on each chapter highlighting major areas of the study is given, then conclusion basing on the research questions in chapter one, recommendations are given in a bid to promote completion of school by pregnant girls and teenage mothers. Areas of further study were noted and the chapter summary given at the end.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that pregnant girls and teenage mothers faced a number of challenges that cause them to drop out of school permanently both at school and in the community where they live. These challenges were poverty, lack of counselling services in schools, lack of financial, moral, spiritual and material support, the challenge of managing both the roles of a young mother and demands of school, early marriages, stigma and discrimination, being teenage wives, bread winners and being learners at the same time among others. The established challenges in the study contributed to permanent school drop-outs of pregnant girls and teenage mothers. Measures to facilitate retention of re-entry of pregnant girls and teenage mothers were provision of physical facilities for child caring, guidance and counselling services, sponsoring education, raising awareness campaigns of the Education Amendment Act that allows pregnant girls to continue with their education.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the results the researcher recommends that:

Noteworthy from the study is how essential a policy with clear-cut guidelines on pregnancy, motherhood and schooling is for the education sector. Our findings reveal immense support for the current efforts of to formulate policy to guide school based actions aimed at facilitation of the schooling requirements of pregnant girls and teenage mothers. The findings, in addition, support context specific policy guidelines targeting existing community discourses that promote factors inhibiting continuation and re-entry. This suggests the need for a robust gender sensitive national policy on teenage pregnancy, parenthood and schooling. Such a policy will have to cover support right from the point where the school girls disclose pregnancy, through the duration of the pregnancy, till delivery and after.

5.3.1 Policy frame and supporting guidelines

We support Vincent and Thomson s (2010) suggestion for a non-judgmental response by schools when a pregnancy is revealed. Such an attitude will bridge the current gap between policy and practice. It will as they explain convey a willingness to accommodate changing needs of the pregnant girl and later her transformation into a school going mother.

Parents should help their daughters in nursing the babies.

5.3.2 Training for school based personnel

Building teacher s ability to offer informed and gender sensitive support is critical for the successful implementation of guidelines designed to facilitate re-entry and retention of pregnant girls and teenage mothers. Teachers will need training to acquire the skills for supporting the pregnant girls and teenage mothers. This is especially necessary for both female and male teachers who have to interact with such situations. An improvement of the counselling services at the schools, especially for pregnant girls and teenage mothers will be a requirement as well. Teachers will need, in addition, gender awareness training to understand the gender dimensions to sexuality. This calls for specialised training for Head teachers, Guidance and counselling coordinators as well as training to build teachers ability to offer informed and gender sensitive support to pregnant girls and teenage mothers and pregnant girls as well as their peers

Gender awareness training to develop positive gender politics;

Training on how to document incidents of pregnancy and motherhood to facilitate monitoring and follow up actions.

5.3.3 School facilities

School facilities are important to make the stay of pregnant girls and teenage mothers comfortable in school. Such facilities should respond to their special needs. They include:

The provision of childcare facilities; (space, caregivers);

customised classroom furniture to accommodate the body of pregnant girls

Flexible time table to accommodate ante- and post-natal clinic attendance as well as breastfeeding breaks. Documentation facilities, systematised and mandatory to guide follow up;

5.3.4 Dealing with poverty

Existing social intervention measures should be expanded to target deprived families and promote responsible parenthood. Cash transfers and other social protection schemes should expand to cover pregnant girls and teenage mothers and immediately while more secure funding schemes are under consideration. Provision of social welfare scheme to reduce the burden of health care costs for pregnant girls and teenage mothers

5.3.5 Giving weight to policy enforcement

Our findings have revealed the need to encourage responsible parenting. But in situations where clear cases of neglect of duty occurs, some form of sanctioning might give weight to policy to secure adherence. Additionally legal provisions on defilement and child marriages should be upheld. Thus, provisions to sanction parents who renege on their responsibilities or send their daughters into early marriages will be necessary.

Making provisions to sanction parents and others who fail in their assigned responsibilities, using provisions from the Children s Act and Domestic Violence Act to support sanctions (e.g. defilement, neglect, child support).

Policies, no matter their content and intentions, are effective only when their intended beneficiaries are capacitated to utilise its provisions. This calls for a clear identification of significant actors and their specific roles in bringing the policy to its intended beneficiaries.

Again, awareness creation among parents and students and the general public about the policy content is important to ensure informed access. Raise awareness within the campaign to get parents to support their girl child to go to school. Lessons from this campaign will prove helpful in making the guidelines to facilitate retention and re-entry of school girls who get pregnant and later become mothers.

5.4 Areas of further study

Since the study was limited to school under investigation, there is a need to look at other factors that influence the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls and strategies to address them in other schools. This will enable interested stakeholder and policy makers to make informed decisions.

5.5 Chapter summary

The focus of the chapter was to draw conclusions from the results obtained from the study, suggesting recommendations in relation to the found results as well as shedding light on areas that require further researching. Thus the chapter has drawn conclusions and suggested recommendations in relation to the found results in the study. Areas of further research were also highlighted in the chapter.

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DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR AFFECTED PARENTS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out a research on ***Determinants of permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe***"

You are therefore kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1. Did your daughter express any concerns or struggles before dropping out of school? If so, what were they?

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2 What factors contributed to your daughter's dropping out of school permanently?

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3. How did you and your family react when you found out about your daughter's pregnancy and decision to leave school?

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4. What kind of support, if any, did your daughter receive from the school, community, or other organizations during and after her pregnancy?

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5. In hindsight, what do you wish could have been done differently to prevent your daughter from dropping out of school due to pregnancy?

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6. What are your hopes and plans for your daughter's future now that she is no longer in school?

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7. What measures do you think can be done to prevent pregnant girls from dropping out of school permanently?

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DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR AFFECTED GIRLS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out

a research on ***Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe***"

You are therefore kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1 Why did you not consider continuing with education after getting pregnant?

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2. What made you decide to drop out of school permanently after being pregnant?

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3. Did you receive any support or assistance from your school, family, or community after becoming pregnant?

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4. How do you feel about your decision to leave school due to pregnancy, and is there anything you wish could have been done differently?

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5. What measures do you think can be taken to prevent pregnant girls from dropping out of school permanently?

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6. What are your plans and hopes for the future now that you are no longer in school?

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DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out

a research on ***Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe***"

You are therefore kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1. Have you personally witnessed or heard of cases where pregnant girls dropped out of school?

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2. What factors do you think contribute to pregnant girls dropping out of school?

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3. What support systems do you think can help pregnant girls continue their education?

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4. How do you think schools can better support pregnant students to prevent them from dropping out?

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5. In your opinion, what policies should be in place to address the issue of pregnant girls dropping out of school?

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6. Have you ever worked on or been involved in initiatives to support pregnant girls in continuing their education?

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7. Do you believe that education is important for pregnant girls? Why or why not?

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 6

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR AFFECTED PARENTS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out

a research on ***Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe***"

You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1. Can you share with us the reasons you believe led to your daughter's decision to permanently drop out of school?
2. How did the school environment and support systems impact your daughter's decision to drop out of school?
3. Were there any challenges or obstacles your daughter faced in trying to continue her education that influenced her decision to drop out permanently?
4. How do you think parents can better support their daughters in continuing their education and preventing permanent school dropout?
5. What kinds of resources or programs do you believe would have been helpful in preventing your daughter from dropping out of school permanently?
6. How has your daughter's decision to drop out of school impacted her aspirations and goals for the future in terms of education and career?
7. What advice would you give to other parents who may be facing a similar situation with their daughters dropping out of school permanently?

8. How do you think communities and schools can work together to prevent girls from permanently dropping out of school?

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out

a research on ***Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe***"

You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1. Can you discuss the challenges you have observed that may contribute to students dropping out of school?
2. How do you support and encourage students who may be at risk of dropping out to stay in school?
3. What resources or programs do you believe would be helpful in preventing students from dropping out of school?
4. How do you think schools can better support students from diverse backgrounds to prevent dropout?
5. What role do teachers play in identifying and addressing the issues that lead to students dropping out of school?
6. Can you share any success stories or strategies you have implemented to help students at risk of dropping out?
7. How do you collaborate with other school staff and community resources to support students who may be considering dropping out?
8. What are the key signs or indicators that a student may be considering dropping out of school?

9. What advice would you give to other teachers on how to prevent students from dropping out of school?

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 8

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR AFFECTED GIRLS

Introduction

My name is **Muvirimi Memory**, a student at **Bindura University of Science Education** studying towards a **Bachelor of Honours Degree in Mathematics Education**. I am carrying out a research on ***Determinants of the permanent school drop out of pregnant girls in Zimbabwe"***

You are therefore kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your participation is voluntary and you are not forced to answer some questions where you feel uncomfortable. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purposes of this research and strict confidentiality will be observed.

Please answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

1. Can you please share with us the reasons that led to your decision to permanently drop out of school when you became pregnant?
2. What challenges did you face in trying to continue your education while being pregnant?
3. How do you think schools and communities can better support pregnant girls to prevent permanent school dropout?
4. In your opinion, what are the key factors that influence pregnant girls to permanently drop out of school?
5. What kind of resources or programs do you believe would be helpful for pregnant girls in continuing their education?
6. How did the pregnancy affect your aspirations and goals for the future in terms of education and career?
7. What advice would you give to schools and policymakers to address the issue of permanent school dropout by pregnant girls?
8. How do you think society can better support pregnant girls in pursuing their education and
9. In retrospect, do you think there were any interventions that could have helped you stay in school?

10. Have you received any support or resources to continue your education or gain other skills since dropping out of school?

11. What advice would you give to other pregnant girls who may find themselves in a similar situation regarding continuing their education?

12. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of being a pregnant girl who permanently dropped out of school?