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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

NO TO A BULGING STOMACH: ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATION
STAKEHOLDERS ON THE ENROLLMENT OF PREGNANT AND MOTHERING
STUDENTS IN MAINSTREAM HIGH SCHOOLS IN GWERU DISTRICT

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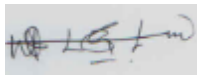
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DEDICATION

This research effort is dedicated to my wife and children for their patience and endurance throughout my studies. I also dedicate this study to my parents for their unmatched role of inculcating in me the value of education.

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ABSTRACT

This research effort was conducted on the backdrop of unprecedented worldwide record of teenage pregnancy and Zimbabwe has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite numerous legal frameworks and policies, high school dropout cases as a result of pregnancy continue to be recorded. To further compound their demise, pregnant and mothering students suffer stigma and discrimination perpetuated by education stakeholders. The researcher's motivation and rationale to undertake this study was based on the need to explore perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools in Gweru District. For an in-depth understanding of the topic under investigation, the study assumed a qualitative approach guided by interpretivist research paradigm. The study utilized Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis research design which enhanced an appreciation of the participants' lived experiences, perceptions and attitudes on the phenomenon under study. Information rich participants were selected through use of purposive sampling technique and the study's participants were eight students, two parents and two teachers. Following data collection process through use of the interview technique, data was analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis method. The study's main revelation is that education stakeholders exhibited mixed reactions on the practice of taking on board pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools. It was concluded that the education stakeholders' held perceptions and attitudes could either have positive or adverse effects on the affected girls' learning outcomes.

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ACRONYMS

MoPSE: Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

PED: Provincial Education Director

WHO: World Health Organization

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter puts into perspective the subject under investigation and the following sub-headings are explored; background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, assumptions, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study and definition of terms.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Worldwide, about 17 million of girls under the age of 20 give birth every year (WHO, 2014) and as a result of the aforementioned fact, the issue of pregnancy related school drop outs remains top in the worldwide agenda. Africa as a continent has not also been spared from the scourge of high prevalent rate of adolescent pregnancy and its adverse effects. The Sub-Saharan Africa region has recorded the highest school drop outs rates in the world as a result of teenage pregnancies whose prevalence stands at;143 per 1000 girls being affected (Maluli & Bali, 2014). Coming closer home, Zimbabwe has the highest teen pregnancy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (Frey, 2017).

The November 2016 pronouncement by the Zimbabwean Minister of Primary and Secondary Education that, “4500 Grade 7 pupils impregnated” startled the nation’s citizenry. The news came as an unwelcome development given the fact that the figure was just for the grade 7 learners, who, all things being equal are aged between 12 and 13 years. Given that status quo, questions such as, “how many secondary learners could be affected by teenage pregnancy?” left many worried on the magnitude of the problem. Again, the nation was baffled by the Minister’s pronouncement on the high figure of impregnated girls which depicted a sharp rise of cases as compared to year 2015 were an estimated number of 3000 Zimbabwean girls were said to be leaving school every year (Mandizha, 2015). At the local context, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2016 report

revealed that 74 learners dropped out of Gweru District High schools due to pregnancy. The figure is very significant given that the District has 41 Secondary Schools and this suggests that every school has had at least one school dropout in 2016 due to pregnancy.

The Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) of 2015 states that nearly 1 in 10 adolescent girls give birth every year. Therefore, at any given time, pregnant and mothering students will always be in existence. Such a revelation suggests that teenage pregnancy is a reality and remains a major challenge even to the world at large. It is on this premise that the researcher was thus motivated to explore perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders towards the education of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools of Gweru District.

Various legal instruments which provide for the right to education for all have been enacted. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC) article 28 provides for the right to education for all children giving equal opportunities to both girls and boys. This therefore follows that even the pregnant and mothering children must be afforded and accorded this right to education.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 provides for inclusive and quality education for all and also promotion of lifelong learning. In an endeavor to fulfill this goal, states are mandated to increase access to education at all levels and to increase enrollment rates in schools particularly for women and girls. Furthermore, SDG 5 puts emphasis on achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. In a way, this also gives the pregnant and mothering student the right to education. Finally, Article 10 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has a clause on the need for states to reduce female student drop-out rates and also organize programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely.

As a result of the universal right to education, countries in the region such as Malawi, Tanzania, Namibia and Kenya have re-admission policies which seek to encourage schools to take on board mothering and pregnant students. Again, since teenage pregnancies remain a disturbing phenomenon, the adoption of re-admission policies by some African countries including

Zimbabwe seeks to, among other aims, facilitate the return to school of pregnant and mothering students and hence curtailing the adverse effects of teenage pregnancy. It is evident that the re-admission policies which obligate schools to take on board mothering and pregnant learners could have been influenced by the realization that education is the foundation to improving people's lives and is a key to sustainable development.

Zimbabwe ratified and has also domesticated various international and regional statutes on the provision of quality education to all. Section 27(2) of the 2013 Zimbabwean Constitution states that measures should be taken by the state to ensure that girls are afforded the same opportunities as boys to obtain education at all levels. Furthermore, section 4 of MoPSE's 1987 Education Act reaffirms the position that no child in Zimbabwe can be refused admission to any school despite any reason. In an endeavor to then operationalize the clause from the Education Act on the right to education, MoPSE went on to craft Secretary's Circular Minute P.35 of 1999 which details the procedures to be followed in admission of pregnant and mothering students in schools.

It can be determined that the cited international and national legal frameworks speak to the provision of education to all and also discourage any form of discrimination. Resultantly, this means that pregnant and mothering students should thus be given an opportunity to continue with their education.

Despite the availability of legislative framework which allows for admission or readmission of pregnant and mothering students at school, high school dropouts figures have been recorded. In addition, pregnant and mothering students have met several challenges in pursuit of their education. In some instances, school authorities are reluctant even to take on board the affected students whilst on the other hand pregnant and mothering students are given derogatory names by their teachers (Girl Child Network, 2011). To add salt to their wounds, pregnant and mothering students also suffer prejudice, stigma and discrimination from their peers. Mandizha (2015) stated that some parents deny their mothering children the right to education claiming that taking them to school was waste of resources. Given the aforesaid, it is apparent that education stakeholders have in some instances exhibited untoward perceptions and attitudes against pregnant and mothering students.

Although it has been noted that several statutes support the education of pregnant and mothering students, it is highly disturbing that statistics of school dropouts due to pregnancy continue to rise. It is on this basis that the researcher was impelled to undertake this research effort of exploring attitudes and perceptions of education stakeholders (teachers, parents and students) with regards to the practice of enrolling pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools.

Numerous studies have been conducted regionally and nationally on the education of pregnant and mothering students. In Zimbabwe, studies by Sithole, Manwa and Manwa (2013), and Ncube and Mudau (2016) are an example. It is important to note that significant developments in the Zimbabwean education sector have taken place after the previously mentioned studies were conducted. The passage of time which goes together with other developments propelled the researcher to delve into this study so as to appreciate the current status quo which can enhance informed and pertinent recommendations.

The phrase, “pregnancy need not put an end to education”, also sustained the researcher’s zeal to undertake the current research effort on perceptions and attitudes by education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools of Gweru District.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Following her pregnancy while at school, Natasha (pseudo name) had this to confess, “they even drew cartoons to illustrate my condition on the blackboard (Mandizha, 2015). Furthermore, the same author puts it in no uncertain terms that stigma and discrimination are two main reasons teenage mothers abandon their education. The most recent Zimbabwe National Education Management System report of 2013 revealed that out of 2289 (males and females) secondary dropouts, 801 females dropped due to marriages whilst 856 female dropouts were due to pregnancy (Kakore, 2015). The researcher was thus driven to undertake this research effort given the evidence that pregnant and teenage mothers might be directly and or indirectly pushed out of school by education stakeholders’ actions and resultantly being denied their inalienable right to

education. Hence, it became of paramount importance for the researcher to seek to understand the perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders towards school enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools.

Given the backdrop of several studies conducted on the education of pregnant and mothering students, one Zimbabwean study by Sithole et al (2013) concluded that the majority of education stakeholders did not support the practice. However, the passage of time which goes together with other developments motivated the researcher to build this current research upon the previous research findings. In other words, the researcher sought to obtain the current status quo which would subsequently proffer well thought out recommendations for the benefit of pregnant and mothering students.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Given the high school dropout rate due to pregnancy, this qualitative study sought to explore perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Explain factors which could influence the perceptions of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students
2. Explore attitudes harbored by education stakeholders with regards to enrolment of pregnant and mothering students
3. Describe school experiences of currently enrolled pregnant and mothering students and those who dropped out of school due to pregnancy

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Which factors could influence the perceptions of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students?
2. What attitudes are exhibited by education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?
3. What are the school experiences of pregnant and mothering students currently in school and those who dropped out of school due to pregnancy?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will be significant to psychology body of knowledge, policy makers and education stakeholders as detailed below;

This research builds upon previous studies by taking into account, among other considerations, time bound gap. In this same breath, the significance of the study stems from the realization that the current findings will represent a true reflection and updated status quo beneficial to the discipline of psychology whose ultimate goal is of improving the wellbeing and quality of life of individuals and communities. Given the aforesaid, the significance of the study therefore is that it seeks to feed into psychology body of knowledge by making a contribution to the concepts of attitudes and perceptions.

Policy makers will be informed on the extent of implementation of the policy which supports pregnant and mothering students. As a result, policy modifications can thus be effected accordingly in an effort of facilitating effective enrollment and retention of pregnant and mothering students in school.

Knowledge on perceptions and attitudes which has an impact on pregnant and mothering students will help teachers to endeavor creating and sustaining conducive and learner friendly school environments for all learners. This study will help parents to positively support pregnant and mothering students to access education.

Students will benefit from this study by appreciating unpleasant tendencies against pregnant and mothering students which adversely affect their learning outcomes. Such an appreciation will enhance a shift in mind set and the subsequent desirable behaviors.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS

The study targeted mainstream High schools located in Gweru District of the Midlands Province and the choice of the District was influenced by the high number of recorded cases of pregnancy related school dropouts. Again, the District's choice was influenced by the fact that the District is easily accessible to the researcher.

Study participants were education stakeholders such as parents, teachers and students including pregnant and mothering students in and out of school. Dropouts due to pregnancy were included in the study because the study sought to elicit experiences which led to students dropping out of school. Education officials from MoPSE were not included because they do not have direct contact with students and hence the presumed insignificance of their input to this study.

The study focused on the perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders towards the education pregnant and mothering students. Focus was confined to the two constructs because, among other factors, behavior is a function of these two. As such, the education stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes have a significant impact on the school experiences of pregnant and mothering students.

To fully explore perceptions and attitudes, an in-depth study becomes ideal and hence the study assumed interpretative research paradigm. Furthermore, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research design was used because the study sought to explore lived experiences of education stakeholders in contact with pregnant students and also the experiences of the affected group. Interview technique was used as a data collection tool. The technique was preferred because it enabled the researcher to proffer follow up questions and to ensure gathering of information rich data. Research participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique was considered because it enhanced the identification and selection of information rich participants ideal for this research effort.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

Given the voluminous data collected from the research study, the study's validity was threatened due to difficulties encountered in the analysis and interpretation of data. This limitation was

overcome by enlisting support from research assistants and by also carefully recording participants' responses through use of voice recorders.

Use of non-random sampling method led to selection bias and hence a threat to external validity. In addressing this limitation, the researcher ensured collection of data until saturation point. Since the interview technique used lacks anonymity, respondents felt threatened to give responses to sensitive questions. The limitation was however overcome by assuring participants of confidentiality of the deliberations.

Finally, social desirability bias where participants responded according to commonly held ideals and not their real experiences or views was another noted limitation. Informed consent was sought after adequate information concerning the nature of the study was provided to participants and in a way, the limitation's effects were minimized.

1.9 ASSUMPTIONS

The study assumed that;

The research participants will be cooperative during data collection process. Cooperation of participants affects the quality and quantity of data collected which ultimately affects the study's construct validity.

Study respondents will be knowledgeable enough concerning issues under investigation. In any research effort knowledgeability of issues being investigated is crucial because it affects both the study's internal and external validity.

1.10 KEY TERMS

- **Perception** is the process of recognizing and interpreting sensory stimuli (Cunningham, 2013) .According to this study, perception relates to how individuals process information about people.
- **Attitudes** are favorable or unfavorable evaluative reactions toward something or someone exhibited in one's beliefs, feelings, or intended behavior (Myers, 2002). In this study attitudes refer to intended reactions and actions of individuals.

- **Student** refers to a learner or someone who attends an educational institution (Student, n.d.) This study regards a student as any person enrolled in any high school.
- **Mothering student** is any female student who has a child of her own.
- **Education stakeholders** are any persons with invested interest in the success and welfare of school or education system (Roundy, n.d.). This study defines education stakeholders as parents, teachers and students.
- **Mainstream school** means any school which is not a special school (The National Autistic Society, 2008). For this study, a mainstream school is any formal learning institution which has been conferred with such a status and accommodates students from Form 1 level to Form 6 level.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter put the study into perspective by bringing to light the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, assumptions, delimitations of the study as well as the limitations of the study and key terms to be used in the study. Furthermore, this chapter laid foundation for the next chapter by noting research areas or issues to be tackled in Chapter two's literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 is a highlight and analysis of current information relevant to the topic under study. The literature is organized under sub headings derived from the study's research questions and the sub-headings are as follows;

- The reality of teenage pregnancy
- Consequences of teenage pregnancy
- Legal framework supporting education of pregnant and mothering students
- Determinants of attitudes and perceptions
- Attitudes and perceptions of education stakeholders
- Experiences of pregnant and mothering students

The chapter also provides a theoretical framework meant to determine and maintain the focus of the study. Lastly, the chapter concludes by delving into knowledge gap where the missing elements in the existing literature are identified and analyzed.

2.1 THE REALITY OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Worldwide, about 16 million girls aged between 15 and 19 years give birth every year (WHO, 2014). Furthermore, the global birthrate among 15-19 year old girls is 44 in 1000 (WHO, 2017). Given the aforementioned statistics, it is indeed evident that teenage pregnancy is a reality which cannot be ignored because the affected group (15-19 years) comprises of students who attend High school.

Despite statistics showing an overall decline in adolescent fertility rates over the past decade, WHO (2017) notes that teenage pregnancy remains a disturbing phenomenon throughout the world. The scourge of teenage pregnancy has affected the developed and under developed countries of which the phenomenon (teenage pregnancy) has been perceived as both a health and social problem (Acharya, Bhattarai, Poobalan, van Teijlingen & Chapman, 2010).

In the Western industrialized world, United States has the highest teen pregnancy rate (“Teen pregnancy statistic”, n.d.). As compared to 11 countries namely Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom it must be noted that the United States has averaged more pregnancies and birth per 1000 girls. The teenage pregnancy rate for the US currently stands at 22.3 %.

Developing countries have been hardest hit by the problem of teenage pregnancy. To substantiate this assertion, Changach (2012), asserted that the highest teenage pregnancy in the world was found in Sub-Saharan Africa whose prevalence stands at a staggering rate of 143 per 1000 girls against the world’s prevalence rate of 44 per 1000 girls. It is worth noting that of the 20 countries in the world with highest rates of adolescent pregnancy, 18 are African countries (Yeboah, 2013).

Table 2.1: African countries with highest pregnancy rates in the world

Rank	Country	Birth per 1000 women (15-19 years)
1	Niger	203.60
2	Mali	175.44
3	Angola	166.60
4	Mozambique	142.53
5	Guinea	141.67
6	Chad	137.17
7	Malawi	136.97
8	Cotd’Ivoire	135.46
9	Congo	122.95
10	Sierra Leone	119.60
...		
18	Zimbabwe	110

World Atlas, April 2017

Coming closer home, a National Teenage Fertility study revealed that Zimbabwe has the highest teenage fertility rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (Maveriq, 2017). Findings from the study further

reveal that between 500 000 to 700 000 teenagers fall pregnant every year. The fertility rate in urban areas is half that of the rural areas (Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS), 2015). Going by the afore-stated revelation, there are more pregnant and mothering students in rural areas as compared to urban areas.

The Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) of 2015 further states that nearly 1 in 10 adolescent girls give birth every year. Gweru District, the target for this study has not been spared of the adverse effects of teenage pregnancy. To this end, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2016 report revealed that 74 learners dropped out of Gweru District High schools due to pregnancy.

Given the fact that there are 1.2 billion adolescent girls in the world (WHO, 2017), supporting the girl child means unlocking their full potential to shape humanity's future. Exploration of the attitudes of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students is therefore of paramount importance given that the future and national contribution of this affected group is largely dependent on the reactions of education stakeholders.

2.2 CONSEQUENCES OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

When a girl is impregnated or has a child, her health, education and her entire future may be in quandary, which is, trapping her in a lifetime of poverty, exclusion and powerlessness. To further buttress the negative effects of teenage pregnancy, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Zimbabwe representative had this to say, "...this, therefore requires an urgent attention as teenage pregnancy severely curtails girls and young women's opportunities and hinders their ability to reach their full potential".

In most cases when teenagers become pregnant, a number of challenges await them to which there are no easy answers. The following are some of the challenges faced by pregnant or mothering students;

2.2.1 Educational related

Rudoe (2014) posits that research in educational provision for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers found out that many girls who are pregnant while at school end up dropping out because

of schools' inflexibility. Sithole et.al (2013) noted that in Zimbabwe there is gender equity in terms of enrollment but the disturbing current status quo is of reduced completion rate chiefly as a result of poverty and teenage pregnancy. Girls, especially at secondary level are affected by teenage pregnancy.

Naomi and Rusakaniko (2016) contended that the most published teenage pregnancy consequence is school expulsion. To this end, the authors go on to submit that women who became pregnant in their teens are more likely to curtail their education.

It has been observed that there is a positive correlation between academic failure and teenage pregnancy with the latter impacting negatively on the educational achievement of girls ("National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Why it Matters," 2012). Mpanza and Nzima (2010) further weigh in by stating that teenage pregnancy is associated with low achievement scores and low vocation and aspiration. Low achievement can be a direct function of absence from school by pregnant or mothering students in search of prenatal and postnatal services. Low achievement by students adversely affects the general school's achievement, a situation abhorred by schools. Again, it is a fact that mothering students require more time in parenting the baby at home and this means less time is available for homework and other school related tasks.

2.2.2 Health related

Adolescent pregnancy poses negative health outcomes such as maternal and child morbidity, low birth weight, pre-term births and pregnancy complications like obstetric fistula (Ministry of Health and Child Care, 2015). Given the aforesaid, adolescent pregnancy is therefore a major health concern because of its association with higher morbidity and mortality for both the mother and child.

Nausea sickness is associated with teenage pregnancy and the sickness might eventually lead to mental absence from school which is another function for low achievement. Another health related concern is that of complications that adolescent mothers face during delivery as a result of immaturity of pelvic bones and of the birth canal (Naomi & Rusakaniko, 2016).

Mpanza and Nzima (2010) contend that problems such as medical complications or risks and emotional instability usually accompany teenage pregnancy. Emotional problems usually result

from the choice of what has to be done from the time pregnancy is confirmed. At teenage hood, making such a delicate choice is deemed too abstract for girls' stage of development and age. Pregnant students are said to be surrounded by a plethora of sometimes confusing and contradicting advice (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010). Too much pressure on adolescent has adverse effects on their psychological and mental prowess. As a result, this can lead to undermining of one's self confidence and hence the negative impact also in their ability to cope.

Children born to very young mothers are at an increased risk of illness and death which are due to complications during pregnancy, child birth and post natal period (Naomi & Rusakaniko, 2016).

2.2.3 Poverty related

About 60% of women who have their first child during adolescence are more likely to live in poverty than those who delayed child bearing until young adulthood. Failure to remain in school by pregnant or mothering students in pursuance of educational endeavors leads to another challenge of lack of job skills. As a result of little or no education, adolescent mothers are likely to have fewer skills and opportunities to find a job. Eventually, the affected end up dependent on other family members or on public assistance and hence they find themselves trapped in poverty pits.

2.2.4 Social related

UNESCO (2014) states that conservative attitudes by, for example, teachers towards adolescents also increase cases of stigma and discrimination. In addition, social isolation is another consequence of teenage pregnancy in schools. Pregnant and mothering students are regarded as bad influence and this leads to their isolation by peers (Nava, 2012).

2.3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK SUPPORTING THE EDUCATION OF PREGNANT AND MOTHERING STUDENTS

Mazango (2010) suggested that the issue of female students being impregnated is either an indication of immaturity or vulnerability and hence the need to give lifeline for them to remain in

school. In this regard, there are several pieces of legislation from the international up to national level which support and facilitate the education of all including pregnant and mothering students.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 provides for inclusive and quality education for all and the promotion of lifelong learning. In an endeavor to fulfill this goal, states are mandated to increase access to education at all levels and to increase enrollment rates in schools particularly for women and girls. Furthermore, SDG 5 puts emphasis on achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. In a way, this also gives the pregnant and mothering students the right to education.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979 has a provision for all state parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure a level playing field with men in the quest to access education. Furthermore, the convention states that appropriate measures must be taken to reduce female student drop-out rates. The organization of programmes for girls and women who left school prematurely is another clause provided for by the convention. Since Zimbabwe ratified the CEDAW, it follows that concerted efforts must be put by the state in an endeavor to promote the education of pregnant and mothering students.

Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) emphasizes the need by state parties to make, specifically, secondary education available and accessible to all by every possible means. The suggestion by this article is therefore that all forms of discriminatory tendencies and barriers to education must be discouraged and the right to secondary education be upheld, afforded and accorded to all.

The United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC) article 28 speaks to the need by all state parties to recognize the child's right to education. This right to education should be achieved progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity. Hence, equal opportunities are therefore supposed to be provided to all including pregnant and mothering students.

Article 1 of UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) is against depriving any person or group of people access to education of any type or at any level. Furthermore, the article is opposed to practices such as infliction on any person or group of

persons conditions which are incompatible with the dignity of man. Consequently, any group of persons, in this case, pregnant and mothering students should be allowed access to quality education.

Africa also enacted numerous pieces of legislation in support for the right to education for all. For example, Article 11 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), unequivocally states that every child has the right to education. The article further provides for states to;

- take special measures in respect of females, gifted and disadvantaged children to ensure equal access to education for all sections of the community
- take all appropriate measures in ensuring that children who become pregnant before completing their education are given an opportunity to continue with their education on the basis of their individual ability.

The African Charter which was enacted in 2006 expects governments to accord the right to education of good quality to every young person. It is against this backdrop that pregnant and mothering students must be supported to continue with education since they perfectly fit under the young persons' category. It is important to note that Zimbabwe is a signatory to various pieces of legislation discussed above and it is on this premise that the country cannot afford to turn a blind eye against the education of pregnant and mothering students.

To show its commitment to international and regional legal instruments providing for the right to education, Zimbabwe has domesticated and localized the provisions of these instruments. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No 20) Act of 2013 stipulates under section 20 that the state must promote free and compulsory basic education for all children. Furthermore, the state is expected to take measures in an effort to ensure that girls are afforded the same opportunities as boys to obtain education at all levels. Since the supreme law of the land has dictates which provide for the right to education to all children, it therefore means that even the pregnant and mothering children who are students must be accorded the same right.

Section 4 of the Zimbabwean Education Act of 1987 has a provision for children's fundamental right to education. In addition, the Act further submits that no child in Zimbabwe shall be refused

admission to any school or discriminated against by the imposition of onerous terms and conditions in regard to their admission to any school. In a way, Zimbabwe is committed to the provision of education to all including pregnant and mothering students.

In pursuit to promoting access to education of pregnant and mothering students, several countries introduced policies to retain this group of students in school. Ncube and Mudau (2016) contend that among other things, school retention policies seek to facilitate equal and full access to education of the girl child. Although the policies may differ from one country to the other, their common denominator is to alleviate the plight of the girl child by providing educational lifeline.

Below are sampled countries that have put in place policies to manage and support pregnant and mothering students;

2.3.1 Botswana

The amended section 34 of the 1967 Botswana Act requires a student who has fallen pregnant to withdraw from school. Re-admission to the former school can be anytime after delivery provided there is a certificate of fitness from a medical doctor. Section 34 of the same Act, further declares that a pregnant student cannot be allowed to write an examination at a school while she is pregnant. On the other hand, the student can only be allowed to write an examination atleast 6 months after delivery period.

2.3.2 Kenya

Biringu et al (2015) posit that Kenya has at its disposal policies that directly support the education of pregnant and mothering students. These policies are the 1994 Return to School Policy and the 2009 National School Health Policy. It must be noted that the Return to School Policy provides for the returning to school (preferably at a different school) by girls after giving birth. However, the period of leave is not stated.

2.3.3 Malawi

The revised 2006 Ministry of Education re-entry policy for adolescent mothers offers an immediate one year suspension upon discovery of pregnancy. Re-admission to school is only possible at the beginning of the next academic year following their suspension. The policy

however does not state whether or not the affected student returns to the same school (Ncube & Mudau, 2016). As per Malawi's policy, a boy who impregnates a student faces one year suspension and his re-admission is the same time with the girl.

2.3.4 Namibia

The Namibian Policy allows for the pregnant school student to stay in school until the time of her confinement or an earlier date as per medical practitioner's advice (Ncube & Mudau, 2016). After giving birth, the girl shall have the right to admission to the same school within 12 months of the time she left school. Another available option is of returning to another school. Furthermore, should the girl decide not to return to a full time school, there is another route provided for the education of the affected girl child.

2.3.5 South Africa

Maluli and Bali (2014) contend that the South African government enacted in 1996 a policy which allows logistical and financial support to pregnant and mothering teens to continue with schooling. This therefore follows that the government, through its human rights framework, has undertaken to promote all young people's rights to education through the South African Schools Act 108 of 1996 (South African Schools Act, 1996) including young women who may fall pregnant and decide to parent while at school. The Act, which is derived from the South African Constitution, emphasizes that educational opportunities must be provided for all learners, abolishing the exclusion of pregnant learners from mainstream learning. Furthermore, in the year 2007 the National Department of Education as guided by the Schools Act also implemented guidelines on managing pregnant young women in schools (Ngabaza & Shefer, 2013).

2.3.6 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe put in place Secretary's Circular Number P 35 of 1999 to deal with pregnant and mothering students. Where pregnancy is due to rape, the policy has a provision for the girl to be assisted to stay in school as long as possible before taking leave to deliver. Then, at the parents' request, the student is allowed to return to school after three months from the date of delivery. However, an earlier return to school is allowed provided the girl is ready to do so.

Where pregnancy resulted from a mutually agreed sexual relationship, the female student should take leave from school. Re-admission to school is only possible when both the mothering student and guardian wish so. However, it must be noted that the exact time when the girl should take leave and the duration of leave is not stated.

2.3.7 European and Asian countries

UNSECO (2014) contends that countries such as Russia, Ukraine including other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have policies which afford pregnant girls the right or home to continue their school education. Students are given a choice between attending classes at school or home based education classes. Pregnant students are further privileged to take a leave of absence or postpone final examinations if needed for medical or other reasons.

2.3.8 United States of America

American education policy holds as illegal the practice of excluding pregnant students from participating in any part of an educational program (U.S Department of Education, 2013). Furthermore, a school must excuse a student's absences because of pregnancy or child birth for as long as the student's doctor deems the absence medically necessary.

It is quite evident that several countries including Zimbabwe have localized various international and regional legal frameworks supporting the right to education for all children. In this end, policies specifically supporting the education of pregnant and mothering students were crafted and are being implemented. Therefore, this translates to the realization that governments have unequivocally shown their commitment to give lifeline to pregnant and mothering students in pursuit of their educational endeavors. Being a key education stakeholder, the Zimbabwean government has thus shown a positive stance towards the education of pregnant and mothering students, a stance which is highly commendable.

2.4 DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

2.4.1 Age

In a study by Sithole et al (2013), it was revealed that the majority of education stakeholders opposed to the education of pregnant students belonged to the older generation probably due to

their conservative perceptions. On the other hand, the younger generation of teachers and parents accepted the policy with some reservations and modifications. Contrary to these research findings, Mpanza and Nzima (2010) had earlier noted that there was no significant relationship between the ages of educators and their attitudes towards teenage pregnancy.

2.4.2 Culture

UNESCO (2014) reports that pressure from parents, communities and religious authorities result in girls being excluded from school. It has been noted that cultural norms can also prevent parents and communities from supporting and appreciating the re-entry policy for mothering students. Chiweshe (2010) chips in by stating that Zimbabwean culture influences perceptions towards pregnancy where values and norms such as that early marriage is a taboo impact on the perceptions people have towards the pregnancy of teenage girls.

As part of culture, religious beliefs become one of determinants of perceptions. A study by Maluli and Bali (2014) revealed that one of the faith leaders argued that the policy of taking on board pregnant students was against child right of the unborn baby as the practice would make mothers abandon their children and thus denying them of breast feeding privilege and mother's love. Chiweshe (2010) submitted that church leaders consider it a taboo to allow girls to get pregnant and let alone introduce policies or practices which promote it. Furthermore, a study by Mpanza and Nzima (2010) concluded that there was a significant relationship between religious affiliation and educators' attitudes toward teenage pregnancy.

2.4.3 Context

Teachers are afraid to deal with pregnant and mothering students in a classroom set up as they may see girls as adults who do not fit with the school environment (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010; Shaningwa, 2007). Consistent application of the re-entry policy may not be realized as a result of lack of support and other mechanisms for implementation. As a result, the perceptions of the stakeholders are adversely affected. In a study conducted by Mpanza and Nzima (2010) it emerged that some teachers were not willing to allow pregnant learners to continue attending school due to beliefs that schools were not meant for pregnant students.

2.4.4 Assumptions and myths

Assumptions held by education stakeholders have shaped their perceptions on the practice of educating pregnant students. Schools and educators believe that giving a chance of education, teenage mothers will encourage more girls to become pregnant (Maluli & Bali, 2014). Furthermore, Chiweshe (2010) contends that; the practice removes consequences of irresponsible behavior, girls are liable to become victims of unprincipled teachers and adults at school who may want to take advantage of their situation , allowing them back to school promotes promiscuity. To reinforce the submissions made above, Runhare (2010) posits that accepting back to school pregnant and mothering students permits a permissive climate and reinforce moral decay.

2.4.5 Teaching experience

In their study, Mpanza and Nzima(2010) noted that there was a significant relationship between teaching experience and educator's attitudes towards teenage pregnancy.

2.4.6 Knowledge of legal provisions

Matlala, Nolte and Temane (2014) stated that the teachers' perceptions are influenced by their awareness of the constitutional right to education of pregnant students. The same authors contend that even if they know the legal obligations for continued access to education, some teachers do not accept them for the fact that they are pregnant. In a study by Maluli and Bali (2014), many respondents asserted that education is the basic right for all children including pregnant and mothering students and expelling them violated their rights.

2.4.7 Social isolation and social environment

The social environment at school is one of the major factors affecting perceptions on the re-entry policy. To this end, Onyango (2016) posited that the social environment characterized by isolation (34%) and stigmatization (20.4%) could influence students' perceptions.

2.4.8 School behavior of pregnant students

Increased absence from school has been noted as characteristic of pregnant students. As a result this is followed by low achievement which affects the general school's achievement, a situation abhorred by schools (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010). In a study conducted by Sithole et al (2013) it was revealed that some pregnant students are arrogant and as a result tend to challenge their teachers. Because of these untoward behaviors the perceptions of educators are adversely affected as the behaviors are thought to increase indiscipline in schools.

2.5 ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Whilst several countries including Zimbabwe have school re-entry policies to support pregnant and mothering students, this does not translate to their successful inclusion and being adequately supported in their educational endeavors. Thus why Sithole, Manwa and Manwa (2013) noted that the seemingly favorable legal framework is not matched by actions on the ground in many spheres of life and more so in education. As a result, the extent of their inclusion can partly be influenced by attitudes and perceptions of education stakeholders. It therefore becomes of paramount importance to explore the perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders towards taking on board pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools.

2.5.1 Schools and teachers

Despite the regulatory framework which supports the education of pregnant or mothering students in mainstream schools, Mpanza and Nzima (2010) posit that schools still force students indirectly and or directly to leave school. Schools and teachers view negatively the practice of accepting pregnant and mothering students in mainstream schools. The negativity is partly due to observations that these students are sometimes arrogant and in some cases tend to challenge teachers (Sithole et al., 2013). The same authors also state that the practice of having pregnant students in school tend to be misinterpreted by other students to mean that it is part of their human rights to be pregnant and be given leave. Given the aforesaid, the teachers therefore feel the continued presence of this group of students in schools is a green light to other students to be impregnated whilst at school.

Mufukai's (2010) opposition to according lifeline to pregnant students to continue with their education after giving birth is based on an assumption that the female student is an employee who must be allowed maternity leave whilst on the contrary, she will be under the guardianship of her parents. Furthermore, Mufukai submits that the practice of taking on board pregnant and mothering students in a way celebrates negativity and moral looseness. Allowing pregnant and mothering students to remain in school is, as viewed from another angle, against the Zimbabwe's law which prohibits marriage of persons under the age of 18. As such, being allowed to remain in school seems to give room for someone less than 18 to behave like adult and married persons while they are still dependants.

Zimbabwean schools have no provision for the demands of pregnancy in terms of activities and facilities. The expectation is that they are supposed to behave and perform like any other children (Sithole et al., 2013). In this same vein, Mpanza and Nzima (2010) state that lack of education and equipment in managing pregnant and mothering students has been given as a causal factor for unfavorable attitudes among educators. Teachers are not aware of their responsibilities when faced with the challenge of teenage pregnancy in schools. In a way, it can be concluded that to a certain extent schools are not friendly to either pregnant or mothering students and this in turn can impact adversely the perceptions and attitudes of other education stakeholders such as teachers and students.

On the other spectrum it must be noted that some teachers and schools have exhibited positive attitudes and perceptions towards teen pregnancy and their education (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010). For example, in some white dominated South African schools, effective care and support is rendered to pregnant and mothering students.

2.5.2 Students

Students view the practice of accepting pregnant and mothering students in mainstream schools as unacceptable. The students' perceptions and attitudes on this matter are shaped by sociological views which suggest that beliefs and morals are passed from one generation to the next and shared by individuals who make up the society. Sociologists further note that people create their culture which in turn shapes behavior of individuals. Children are therefore aware of their moral

codes which are given to them and as a future generation they are trained to preserve those (Sithole et al., 2013). Given the foregoing, the students' negative attitudes against the education of pregnant students are to a certain extent shaped by their parents' attitudes.

Mutisi (2010) established that the majority of girls were against the practice of letting pregnant and mothering students remain in school with the argument being that the practice encouraged promiscuity when in actual fact they were supposed to be serious with their school work. On the other end, Mutisi noted that very few girl students supported the practice of letting pregnant or mothering students remain in school since it brought about gender equity.

Stigma and discriminatory tendencies displayed by students is an indication of unfavorable perceptions and attitudes towards pregnant and mothering students. In this regard, pregnant and mothering students have suffered teasing and bullying tendencies in the hands of other students (SmithBattle, 2013). In addition, Luttrell (2013) noted that pregnant and mothering students are attacked by boys at school through direct and verbal comments. One respondent in a study had this to say, "I do appreciate the way the girls are treating me compared to boys who in a number of cases use bad words such as some of you are old women, why are you here...?". This is reflective of a position that less boys than girls are empathetic towards pregnant and mothering students (Luttrell, 2013).

2.5.3 Parents

Falling pregnant at school is considered a disgrace to family (IRIN, 2012). Consequently, the girl child suffers both at home and school as a result of Zimbabwe's conservative culture which disapproves school attendance by pregnant students. It has been noted that the seemingly unfavorable perceptions and attitudes against the education of pregnant or mothering students is further worsened by the Zimbabwe national culture. The culture assumes existence of a "son syndrome" or first dollar to male child and this entails giving preferences to sons over daughters and placing value on the male child as compared to the female child (Gaidzanwa, 2012).

As key education stakeholders, parents are deemed to exhibit attitudes and perceptions about teenage pregnancies that could have positive or negative impact on their children. Old generation of parents especially those above 40 years have spiritedly opposed the idea and practice of taking

on board pregnant and mothering students in schools (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010). Gaidzanwa (2012) reiterates that the majority of people who were against the practice belonged to the “old school” possibly due to their conservative perceptions. The “old school” was of the notion that it was a punishable offence to even allow pregnant students to access tertiary education. On the other hand, the younger generation of teachers and parents accepted the practice of taking on board pregnant students, however with some reservations and modifications.

It has been established by Chiweshe (2010) that parents of conservative groups such as churches consider unacceptable and taboo in an African culture to allow girls to get pregnant and let alone introduce policies which promote it. Again, cultural norms such as early marriage is a taboo and this influences perceptions people have towards the pregnancy of the teenage girl.

There are several assumptions not yet subjected to scientific scrutiny which have been suggested as having an impact on individuals’ perception and attitude with regards to the practice of educating pregnant and mothering students. The misgivings propelled by Chiweshe (2010) are that the practice;

- Promotes promiscuity and also cultivates a permissive climate at a time children are generally thought to be experimenting with sex
- Removes the consequences of irresponsible behavior on the part of the student
- Might expose the girls to unprincipled teachers and adults at school who may take advantage of their situation
- Fails to address the stigma that girls suffer at the hands of teachers and fellow students

Furthermore, Sithole et al (2013) report that attitudinal challenges against the education of pregnant mothers is based on the arguments that; this could increase teenage pregnancies, increase school indiscipline and poor educational standards. Resultantly, parents feel that pregnant teenagers should be confined in special schools to prevent contamination of other students (Runhare & Vandeya, 2012).

Omwanda (2012) contends that parents hold negative perceptions on the practice of accepting pregnant and mothering students in schools. The practice is said to expose girls’ shame since

pregnancy before marriages is generally believed to bring about social stigma and embarrassment to self and family.

On the other end, given the anticipated gains from the education of pregnant and mothering students, some parents remain with positive attitude towards their education. The education of pregnant or mothering students according to Runhare and Vandeyar (2012) allows them to become independent even if they remained single mothers. Again, parents' positivity is premised on the importance of adherence to basic human rights and also the need to ensure and promote gender equality and equity.

Given the observations made above, a general observation has been noted that key education stakeholders have a conviction that pregnant and mothering students must be kept out of school as their continued presence in schools can be construed as moral decay (Ncube & Mudau, 2016).

2.6 EXPERIENCES OF PREGNANT AND MOTHERING STUDENTS

To depict unpalatable experiences they face in school, one adolescent mother had this to say, "Like I say being pregnant can be a setback in your journey sometimes..." (Wilson-Mitchel et al., 2014). Notwithstanding the availability of policies which support the education of pregnant and mothering students, there are incongruities between policy implementation and young women's lived experience in schools (Ngabaza & Shefer, 2013).

Pregnant students' self esteem has in some cases been affected by their bodily physical changes not accommodated by the school uniforms (Sithole et al., 2013). As a result of these physical changes, the girl child usually feels out of place and this has led, in some instances, to school dropouts

Stigma still is a challenge to pregnant students and it is believed that within the black community, it is quite a stigma for a girl to fall pregnant (Mpanza & Nzima, 2010). Furthermore, pregnant girls cannot derive maximum benefits in their learning when other children are taunting them. In one study, it was revealed that pregnant girls were mocked and unfairly treated by teachers to the extent that they would leave school without the knowledge of the headmaster.

Shame and gossip is another thorn in the flesh for pregnant and mothering students. Substantial gossip when teenage pregnancy occurs seems to be the order of the day (Nava, 2012). To make matters worse, the gossip is usually associated with instillation of fear. Shame is also closely related to teenage pregnancy and as result of shame some pregnant students naturally withdraw themselves from others.

From the submissions made above, it can be ascertained that pregnant and mothering students have had nasty school experiences as they are continuously subjected to ridicule from fellow students (Ncube & Mudau, 2016). Malahlela (2012) posit that they also suffer inferiority complex, low self esteem and lack of confidence as a result of assuming that others are laughing and gossiping about them.

2.7 THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

2.7.1 Bronfenbrenner ecological theory (1979)

American psychologist, Urie Bronfenbrenner, formulated the Ecological Systems Theory to explain how the inherent qualities of a child and his environment interact to influence the child's development ("What is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory", 2013). The ecological systems theory further explains how human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems. Ettekal and Mahoney (2017) contend that contemporary theories of human development suggest that development occurs over time as part of a complex process involving a system of interactions within the individual and between the individual and the environmental contexts of which he or she is a part. In 1979, Bronfenbrenner's seminal work on ecological systems theory described the child's ecology in terms of a set of nested levels of the environment. Ettekal and Mahoney further suggest that in 2006, Bronfenbrenner revised his original theory, adapting the name to bioecological systems theory, emphasizing the active role of the individual in the developmental process.

There are four interrelated types of environmental systems in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, namely, the (1) micro-, (2) meso-, (3) exo-, and (4) macrosystems. These levels range from smaller, proximal settings in which individuals directly interact to larger, distal settings that indirectly influence development (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). It is vital to note that

the various levels within ecological systems theory are often presented graphically as a series of four systems surrounding a focal individual as represented below;

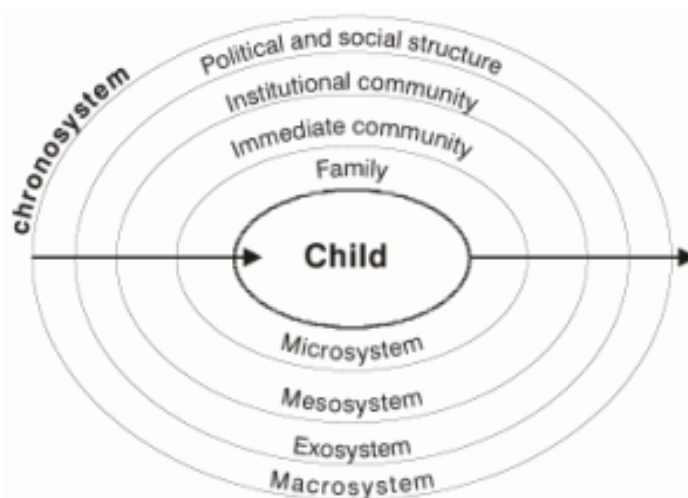


Figure 1 - Ecological theory of development¹⁵

The Urie Bronfenbrenner model organizes contexts of development into five levels of external influence. The levels are categorized from the most intimate level to the broadest and are presented as follows;

2.7.1.1 The Bronfenbrenner Model: Microsystem

The microsystem is the smallest and most immediate environment in which the child lives. Since the microsystem is the small, immediate environment the child lives in, children's microsystems will include any immediate relationships or organizations they interact with, such as their immediate family, peer group, community environment or caregivers and their school or daycare.

Interactions within the microsystem typically involve personal relationships with family members, classmates, teachers and caregivers, in which influences go back and forth. How these groups or individuals interact with the child will affect how the child grows (Oswalt, 2015). Similarly, how the child reacts to people in his microsystem will also influence how they treat

the child in return. More nurturing and more supportive interactions and relationships will understandably foster the child's improved development.

Given two individuals experiencing the same microsystem, however, it is possible for the development of the two siblings to progress in different manners. Each individual's particular personality traits, such as temperament, which is influenced by unique genetic and biological factors, ultimately have a hand in how he is treated by others ("What is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory", 2013). Furthermore, one of the most significant findings that Urie Bronfenbrenner unearthed in his study of ecological systems is that it is possible for siblings who find themselves within the same ecological system to still experience very different environments.

Furthermore, how a child acts or reacts to these people in the microsystem will affect how they treat her in return. Each child's special genetic and biologically influenced personality traits, what is known as temperament, end up affecting how others treat them.

2.7.1.2 The Bronfenbrenner Model: Mesosystem

The mesosystem encompasses the interaction of the different microsystems which the developing child finds himself in. It is, in essence, a system of microsystems and as such, involves linkages between home and school, between peer group and family, or between family and church ("What is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory", 2013).

If a child's parents are actively involved in the friendships of their child, invite friends over to their house and spend time with them, then the child's development is affected positively through harmony and like-mindedness. However, if the child's parents, for example, dislike their child's peers and openly criticize them, then the child experiences disequilibrium and conflicting emotions, probably affecting his development negatively.

2.7.1.3 The Bronfenbrenner Model: Exosystem

The exosystem pertains to the linkages that may exist between two or more settings, one of which may not contain the developing child but affects him indirectly nonetheless. Other people

and places which the child may not directly interact with but may still have an effect on the child, comprise the exosystem (Oswalt, 2015). Such places and people may include the parents' workplaces, the larger neighborhood, and extended family members.

The exosystem level includes the other people and places that the child herself may not interact with often but that still have a large effect on her, such as parents' workplaces, extended family members, the neighborhood, etc. For example, if a child's parent gets laid off from work, that may have negative effects on the child if her parents are unable to pay rent or to buy groceries. However, if her parent receives a promotion and a raise at work, this may have a positive effect on the child because her parents will be better able to give her physical needs.

2.7.1.4 The Bronfenbrenner Model: Macrosystem

The **macrosystem** is the largest and most distant collection of people and places to the child that still exercises significant influence on the child. It is composed of the child's cultural patterns and values, specifically the child's dominant beliefs and ideas, as well as political and economic systems. These things can also affect a child either positively or negatively. Children in war-torn areas, for example, will experience a different kind of development than children in communities where peace reigns.

2.7.1.5 The Bronfenbrenner Model: Chronosystem

The chronosystem adds the useful dimension of time, which demonstrates the influence of both change and consistency in the child's environment ("What is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory", 2013). The chronosystem may thus include a change in family structure, parent's employment status, in addition to immense society changes such as economic cycles and wars.

By studying the different systems that simultaneously influence a child, the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory is able to demonstrate the diversity of interrelated influences on the child's development. Awareness of contexts helps in the sensitization to variations in the way a child may act in different settings. For example, a child who frequently bullies smaller children at

school may portray the role of a terrified victim at home. Due to these variations, adults concerned with the care of a particular child should pay close attention to behavior in different settings or contexts and to the quality and type of connections that exist between these contexts.

2.7.2 Relevance and applicability of the theory

Given Bronfenbrenner's revised bioecological theory, the process of human development can be precisely defined and explained. Development, that is of attitudes and perceptions for this study, is assumed to be the joint product of four defining properties: (1) person, (2) context, (3) process, and (4) time (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). First, person factors refer to the individual variables like age, gender, and competency and these variables or characteristics interact with the setting to influence development. The second aspect which is context factors includes the first four systems of Bronfenbrenner's original ecological systems theory described earlier.

The primary mechanism of development is stimulated by the third property, termed process factors, which represents the interactions between person and context factors. Process factors are the complex reciprocal exchanges between an active, evolving human organism and its immediate external environment, termed proximal processes. Development is largely influenced by proximal processes that occur on a regular basis over extended periods of time (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017).

To adequately describe the dynamic nature of development, proximal processes must be understood with reference to the fourth defining property of development, namely, time. Proximal processes occur in a specific time and place and within a specific historical context. Time is construed at various levels of the ecological system. Microtime refers to specific episodes of proximal processes (e.g., minute-by-minute exposure), whereas mesotime captures the periodicity of proximal processes, such as over longer intervals like days or weeks. Time is conceptualized at the macrolevel as the chronosystem and is concerned with the historic changes in society across generations.

The theory suggests that everything that humans do takes place in social contexts: in a culture, a setting (workplace, school, playground or home) and in a set of personal relationships (Kloos et al., 2012). In other words, human behaviour must be viewed from an ecological perspective which is based on the argument that people have to be understood in their social contexts. To

understand why a particular behavior occurs, it is necessary to investigate the person and his or her environment, and the fit of the person-and-environment.

Therefore, the utility of Bronfenbrenner theory in this study is that it will help explain and explore various aspects in the ecosystem which impact on the attitudes of education stakeholders with regards to enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools.

2.8 KNOWLEDGE GAP

Chireshe and Makura (2013) posit that delving into research gaps is an effort to indicate what other scholars or researchers in the area under study have done. Moreover, research gaps identify what the current researcher intends to do. In essence, the gaps are an addition to the existing body of knowledge in the area under investigation. Mapfumo as cited by Chireshe and Makura (2013) propose the following types of research gaps; conceptual, geographical, methodological, population or sample, time bound and discipline gaps.

The study considered the following gaps;

2.8.1 Conceptual gap

It has been noted that the most recently published Zimbabwean research studies by Sithole et al (2013) and Ncube and Mudau (2016) sought to assess the perception of education stakeholders on the acceptability and desirability of the policy on pregnant High school girls. On the contrary, this research effort sought to focus on education stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions towards the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in High schools. Hence, the researcher seeks to compare results from this study which focused on an animate variable (pregnant and mothering students) with previous studies which focused on non animate variable (policy on pregnant High school girls).

2.8.2 Time bound gap

The research studies by Sithole et al (2013) and Ncube and Mudau (2016) were conducted under different conditions which are not obtaining currently. The previous studies were for example, conducted when the schools were under the old curriculum regime. Since year 2017 the education sector is implementing a new curriculum which presents a change of context under

which the study is conducted. This study has therefore been conducted so as to appreciate and note any differences in the findings resulting from the passage of time in comparison with the previous studies' findings. Again, the rationale of undertaking this study is premised on the need to inform education policy makers who are currently modifying policies to be in line with the constitution of Zimbabwe and the new curriculum. Therefore there's a dire need for a current research study to inform policy makers accordingly.

2.8.3 Discipline gap

It has been noted that the majority of research studies on the topic under study have been conducted by educationists and or lectures. Since the variables: attitudes and perceptions have a bias towards psychology profession, this has motivated the researcher who is a psychologist to conduct this study. Through the utilization of the ears and eyes of a psychologist, this research study might come up with interesting findings not captured by previous studies.

Finally, some literature was not a result of scientific enquiry (research based) but the authors' positions were informed by mere speculation and assumptions. For example, Mufukai (2010) suggested that education stakeholders have unfavorable attitudes on letting pregnant and pregnant students remain in school. The view by Mukai cannot form an authoritative basis as it was not informed by research. Hence, the undertaking of this research study cannot be over emphasized as it is the only way to authoritatively contribute to body of psychology knowledge.

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter presented identified research studies already completed in the area of study and also an analysis of current information relevant to the topic was proffered. Bronfennbrenner theory (1979) formed the study's theoretical framework. Although vast literature suggested mixed feelings on the practice of accepting pregnant and mothering students in mainstream schools, it can be ascertained that the majority of education stakeholders exhibit negative or unfavorable attitudes and perceptions towards the practice.

Lastly, chapter 2 underpins the next chapter in that the research design and methodology will be influenced and directed by among other variables, theoretical framework and research gaps.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the aspects which eventually led to generation of knowledge under the following themes; research paradigm, research approach, research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis, data trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study adopted a qualitative research approach guided by the interpretivist paradigm. A paradigm is simply a belief system (or theory) that guides the way things are done. Put in other words, a paradigm is a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed. Creswel (2003) as cited by Thanh and Thanh (2015) then contended that a research paradigm can be characterized by their: epistemology, ontology and methodology. It is vital to note that these characteristics create a holistic view of how knowledge is viewed. Epistemology raises many questions including:

- how reality can be known
- the relationship between the knower and what is known
- the characteristics, the principles, the assumptions that guide the process of knowing and the achievement of findings
- the possibility of that process being shared and repeated by others in order to assess the quality of the research and the reliability of those findings.

Ontology tries to respond to the question, “What is the reality?” and this basically refers to nature of reality .Methodology refers to an articulated, theoretically informed approach to the production of data (Edirisingha, 2012). The study assumed an interpretivist research paradigm.

3.2.1 Ontology of interpretivism

As per their theoretical belief, interpretivists suggest that reality is socially constructed and fluid (Angen, 2000). Knowledge or truth is relative, that is, there is no single truth but multiple possibilities. Since constructivists believe that there is no single reality or truth, therefore, reality needs to be interpreted. Multiple realities can only be gotten through use of qualitative methods (The research paradigm – methodology, epistemology and ontology – explained in simple language, 2015). It must be noted that reality is constructed by individuals in groups. Furthermore, reality is dependent on other systems for meanings, which poses a challenge to interpret in terms of fixed realities (Edirisingha, 2012).

Acquired knowledge is socially constructed rather than objectively determined and perceived. Furthermore, truth is always negotiated within cultures, social settings, and relationship with other people. According to Willis (1995), interpretivists are anti-foundationalists, who believe there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge. Different people and different groups have different perceptions of the world and the acceptance of multiple perspectives in interpretivism often leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In this regard, interpretivism paradigm allows participants to provide a detailed in depth descriptions of the event and the associated actions and hence its preference for this study.

3.2.2 Epistemology of interpretivism

The epistemology of interpretivist paradigm is grounded on the notion that the researcher talks to subjects or observe their behavior in a subjective way. It is important to note that the first hand experience of subjects under investigation is believed to produce the best data (Welman et al., 2012). Gephart (1999) argues that interpretivists assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation, hence there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking, reasoning humans. In this same vein, reality must be interpreted because there is no single reality. The paradigm therefore seeks to interpret the underlying meanings of events and activities.

In the quest to generate knowledge, the researcher goes to the field with some prior insight of the research context but assumes this to be insufficient in developing a fixed research design due to

multiple and unpredictable nature of what is perceived as reality. Consequently, the researcher is forced to remain receptive and open to new knowledge throughout the study (Edirisingha, 2012). Researcher and informants are interdependent and mutually interactive. In addition, the researcher views the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants. Hence in seeking answers, these experiences are used to construct and interpret understanding from generated research data (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

The goal is to understand and interpret meanings in human behavior rather than to generalize and predict causes and effects (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This therefore underscores the importance of understanding motives, meanings, reasons and other subjective experiences which are time and context bound. Research focus is on understanding and interpretation.

The understanding of the contextual setup is critical to interpretation of gathered data. As such, the paradigm seeks to understand a particular context and the core beliefs that reality is socially constructed. (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). It can be ascertained from the above discussions that the paradigm doesn't seek answers for studies in rigid ways but they approach reality from subjects, that is, from those who own experiences and are of a particular group or culture.

3.2.3 Methodology of interpretivism

Qualitative methods to research are utilized by the paradigm. Interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation. Thus to observe is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern (Aikenhead, 1997). Reeves and Hedberg (2003) note that the interpretivist paradigm stresses the importance of putting analysis in context. According to interpretivist approach, it is important for the researcher as a social actor to appreciate differences between people (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

The key words pertaining to this methodology are participation, collaboration and engagement (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). In the interpretive approach the researcher does not stand above or outside, but is a participant observer (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) who engages in the

activities and discerns the meanings of actions as they are expressed within specific social contexts.

The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning (versus measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. Accordingly, “interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Thanh and Thanh (2015) contend that interpretive paradigm utilizes qualitative methods since they give rich reports necessary for interpretivists to fully understand contexts. This study therefore assumed a qualitative research approach.

Creswell(2009:15) as cited by Mgutshini (2012) understands qualitative research to be, “ an enquiry of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of enquiry that explore a social or human problem....researcher builds on complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a naturalistic setting”. The following pertinent aspects can be extracted from the given definition;

- is naturalistic inquiry and this means the study is conducted in settings that people live daily. The importance of undertaking the research in a naturalistic setting is that context is considered crucial in understating a phenomenon.
- uses non-interfering data collection strategies to discover natural flow of events
- describes and analyses people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions.
- Has data collected by interacting with people

Gialdino and Irene (2011) contend that qualitative research is interested, in particular, in the way in which the world is understood, experimented, or produced by people's lives, behavior, and interactions. It also takes interest in processes, change and social context dynamics (Mason, 2006), actors' perspectives on their own worlds, and in trying to appreciate those worlds through such perspectives .Furthermore, qualitative research is interested in the senses and in the meanings (Silverman, 2005), in personal narratives, in life stories (Atkinson, 2005), in accounts, in internal life experiences , in the actors' language, in their forms of social interactions, in their different knowledge, and viewpoints and practices and in what people think and what that thinking means, implies, and signifies. Guthrie (2010) weighs in by saying that qualitative research also seeks to describe and analyse individual and collective social activities, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions, then interpret the phenomena in terms of the meaning that participants attach to it. Since the present study sought to explore perceptions and attitude of education stakeholders, the use of qualitative research design is therefore justified.

Marshal and Rossman (2011) contend that qualitative research is based on human experience, hence this study also sought to appreciate the experiences of pregnant and mothering students enrolled in High schools. Experiences of pregnant and mothering students in a way could give an indication of education stakeholder's perceptions towards them. Henning (2004) posits that qualitative research design allows for participants in the study to take part in open-ended interviews during which the researcher can establish the causes as well as the solutions to the research problem. Thus, the qualitative research design proved ideal to the present study because participants were able to express themselves in the face-to face interview conducted in their own language to gain an insight of their thoughts regarding the enrollment of pregnant and pregnant students in mainstream High schools.

It is important to note that qualitative research usually utilizes non probability methods such as purposive sampling in the selection of study participants (Mgutshini, 2012). This follows that selection of participants is based on whether individuals have information vital to the questions being asked. This characteristic enabled the researcher to engage information rich participants such as education stakeholders once exposed to pregnant and mothering students. The same

author also contends that data is collected until saturation occurs. This means that data was collected until there was no new emerging information.

The researcher is not restricted to specific questions or lists. Rather, interviews are in-depth discussions guided by the researcher to yield relevant information. Data collection can be more informal, relaxed, and fun, which encourages subjects to participate in the research (Nyaruwata, 2013). In qualitative studies the researcher is considered the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. The researcher engages the situation, makes sense of the multiple interpretations since multiple realities exist in any given context as both the researcher and the participants construct their own realities. The researcher strives to collect data in a non-interfering manner through observations and interviews, thus attempting to study real-world situations as they unfold naturally without predetermined constraints or conditions that control the study or its outcomes.

Another defining aspect of qualitative research is that it seeks to answer difficult “why” questions (Mgutshini, 2012). Furthermore, it explains, defines, clarifies, elucidates, illuminates, constructs, and discovers (Gobo, 2005). Qualitative research is also inductive since it purports to uncover generalizations and develop hypotheses which can be investigated and tested with other designs that are precise (Nyaruwata, 2013). In sum, qualitative research does not try to explain but rather aims at interpreting participant’s views and experiences. The researchers thus seek to ask broad research questions designed to explore, interpret, or understand the social culture.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The current study utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research design. Taylor as cited by Nyaruwata (2013) suggests a research design to be constructed plans and strategies that are crafted in pursuit of answers to research questions. Based on the aforesaid, research designs seek to specify the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques, and the data analysis to be done.

The design is based on the process of learning and constructing the meaning of human experience through intensive dialogue with persons living the experience. Creswell (1998) conquers by stating that a phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived

experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon. In the human sphere, this normally translates into gathering “deep” information and perceptions through inductive qualitative research methods such as interviews and observation, representing this information and these perceptions from the perspective of the research participants (Lester, 1999).

IPA deals about understanding of lived experience and with how participants themselves make sense of their experiences. Therefore it is centrally concerned with the meanings which those experiences hold for the participants. Smith and Osborn (2007) further state that IPA is a suitable approach to find out how individuals perceive the particular situation they are facing and how they make sense of their personal and social worlds. The aim of IPA resultantly becomes that of the researcher saying something in detail about the perceptions and understanding of a particular group.

Smith and Osborn (2007) state that IPA describes what the participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. IPA is mostly used when people are transitioning or dealing with problems (Tanczer, 2013). Since the study focused on the problematic phenomenon of teenage pregnancy and schooling, IPA therefore proved to be the ideal research design. This research design was also utilized because it allowed for in-depth exploration of participants perceptions on the prevailing situation where pregnant or mothering students are enrolled in mainstream high schools. It can be seen that the phenomenological design also allowed for the researcher to collect and generate soft data in the form of perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders.

It must be noted that observation and interviews are the key data collection methods within phenomenology design (Aspers, 2004). Furthermore, participant sampling uses purposive sampling (Mgutshini, 2012). During data collection, the researcher may return to clarify a response. This aspect therefore enabled this study to utilize an interview technique since the method allowed for clarification on submitted participants’ responses. Since meaning is pursued through a dialogic process (Mgutshini, 2012), this again favored the use of the interview technique in this study.

3.5 TARGET POPULATION

Babbie and Mouton (2007) defined a population as the subjects from whom a researcher wants to draw conclusions. In other words, a population refers to a group of individuals that have desirable characteristics which resultantly make them the focus of a study. Furthermore, the population consists of the total number of units that are to be analyzed and from which the researcher wishes to make specific deductions which are then used to generalize results of the research (Welman et al., 2005).

The population of this study consisted of all students, parents and teachers drawn from two information rich mainstream urban High schools in Gweru District of the Midlands Province.

3.6 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size was comprised of 12 participants drawn from two urban mainstream schools. The participants were disaggregated as follows;

- 2 teachers
- 2 parents
- 2 pregnant or mothering students
- 6 students

It is important to note that a detailed interpretative account of cases can only be realistically achieved when a very small research sample is utilized (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The same authors further suggest a sample size of a minimum of 3 as an appropriate size. Thus, this study utilized a small sample size of 12 participants and this allowed for sufficient in-depth engagement with each individual case.

3.7 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study utilized purposive sampling strategy as follows;

- Snowball purposive sampling for teachers
- Random purposive sampling for students
- Criterion purposive sampling for parents

Tshuma and Mafa (2013) contend a sample to be the group of cases (individuals) selected from all the possible respondents in a population in which the study is being conducted. Therefore, sampling refers to a practice in which the researcher uses a subset of the whole population to conduct the research. It is worth noting that the subset of the population under study is used to obtain data which is representative of the whole (Sarantakos, 2005). Mnguni (2014) suggests pragmatic reasons for the practice of sampling as that; data gathering is less time consuming than use of the whole population, research is cost efficient and accessibility of participants within a short time is made possible.

This study employed non probability sampling defined by Blackstone (2013) as a technique for which a person's likelihood of being selected for membership is unknown. In this same vein, non probability sampling is therefore based on case selection rather than random selection of the population. With purposive sampling technique, individuals are selected based on some defining characteristics that make them the holders of specific data needed for the study (Maree as cited by Tshuma & Mafa, 2013). Certain groups or individuals are sampled on the basis of their relevance to the problem being investigated. As such, the argument for use of purposive sampling procedure lies in the selection of information rich participants which further enhances in-depth study of the phenomenon under investigation.

May (2011) asserts that information rich cases are knowledgeable participants who reflect most of the characteristics, experience, representative or typical attributes of the population. In this regard, all participants in this study were individuals who had direct or indirect experience and knowledge concerning the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools. In this regard, the sample therefore included learners who were currently pregnant or mothering, parents of pregnant or mothering learners, teachers and learners who were once exposed to pregnant or mothering students. As already stated under target population, the participants were drawn from information rich schools, that is, the schools had high recorded cases of pregnant and mothering students.

IPA usually tries to utilize a fairly homogenous sample and as such a purposive sample finds a more closely defined group for whom the research question will be significant (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

3.7.1 Snow ball or chain purposive sampling for teachers

The sampling strategy seeks to identify cases of interest from people who know information rich subjects. Given the heterogeneous nature of teachers such as newly appointees, student teachers and senior teachers, it follows therefore that not every teacher can be a good participant for the study. Hence, to ensure the selection of information rich participants the study employed the snowball sampling technique. In an endeavor to select information rich cases, the researcher engaged the schools' administrators and seniors teachers to help identify suitable teacher participants. The teachers who were finally selected for the research study were the ones whose names were repeatedly nominated by the schools' administrators and senior teachers. Since pregnant and mothering students are not present in schools all the times, the selected participants were teachers who once had contact with pregnant students in schools.

3.7.2 Random purposive sampling for students

Random sampling can be used when potential purposeful sample is larger than can be handled. In this study, purposive sampling targeted all learners who had school contact with pregnant and mothering students. After identifying all the students who were once in the same class with pregnant students, the names of selected participants were then drawn using simple random technique. Names of the target population were put in a hat and then the researcher picked up the required student sample size.

3.7.3 Criterion purposive sampling for parents and pregnant students

Criterion sampling seeks to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance. Parents and pregnant students' participants were selected based on the specified criterion. For the selection of parent participants the criteria considered was based on those with student children who were impregnated. Based on this criterion the researcher, through the school Head was linked to parents with pregnant and pregnant students. In the selection of pregnant student participants, the criterion was students who were impregnated or mothering. The researcher through the school Head was thus linked to pregnant and or mothering students in the school. It must however be noted that the researcher went further to utilize simple random sampling methodology since the potential purposeful sample was larger than can be handled.

3.8 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.8.1 Interview

Thomas, Nelson and Silvernan (2011) suggest that the interview is undoubtedly the most common source of data in qualitative studies. As data collection tools, interviews involve the direct contact between the researcher and information rich participants who enhance an in-depth understanding of the problem under investigation (Denscombe, 2001). As cited by Tshuma and Mafa (2013), Creswell further state that an interview is a two way conversation or oral questionnaire initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research related information and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, perceptions and opinions of interviewees.

Since an interview can provide access to what is “inside a person’s head”, Cohen et al. (2006) then argue that this makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge and information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person is thinking (attitudes and beliefs). Consequently, the interview technique was ideal for this study because it allowed for exploration of attitudes and perceptions of respondents which is in line with the study’s objectives.

For the purposes of this study, a semi structured, one-on-one interviews were used as data collection method. It must be noted that semi-structured interview contains elements of both structured and unstructured interviewing (Sarantakos, 2005). The structured format which utilizes closed questions is used primarily to gather socio-demographic information whilst the unstructured format allows for use of open ended questions to elicit for open ended answers. A semi- structured interview was preferred because it allowed for greater flexibility in the interview and also provided a more detailed account of participant’s beliefs and perceptions (De Vos et al., 2011).

The choice of the interview instrument was also based on the understanding that it can provide direct human interaction that enable the researcher to probe and clarify answers with respondents, follow up leads, elaborate on the original response and obtain more data with greater detail and clarity.

3.8.2 Focus group interview

Focus group interview is another type of qualitative research technique which employs interviews on a specific topic with a small group of individuals (Thomas, Nelson & Silvernan, 2011). This technique gathers information about several people in one session and the interviewed group is usually homogeneous. In this regard, the group is comprised of individuals with common interest or characteristics. The key element in focus group interview is involvement of people where their disclosures are encouraged in a nurturing environment (Tshuma & Mafa, 2013). In the focus group interview, the researcher is not trying to persuade the group to reach consensus. It is rather an interview.

Patton (2002) argued that focus group interviews might provide quality controls because participants tend to provide checks and balances on one another that can serve to curb false or extreme views. Focus group interviews are usually enjoyable for the participants, and they may be less fearful of being evaluated by the interviewer because of the group setting. The group members get to hear what others in the group have to say, which may stimulate the individuals to rethink their own views. Focus group interview was chosen because it allowed for productive interaction which enhanced the widened range of responses and in the process activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions that otherwise could have discouraged participants from disclosing information (Maree as cited by Tshuma & Mafa, 2013).

3.9 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

One-on-one interviews were preferred to collect data from the parents and teachers whilst the focused group interview was utilized to collect data from students. On an agreed date and time, the researcher individually conducted face to face and focus group interviews. The interviews were conducted from a carefully selected school room which ensured privacy and minimal disturbances and interruption.

Prior to each interview, the researcher clarified the aims and objectives of the study to the participants. Furthermore, the researcher explained the consent form (Appendix E) and

participants were requested to complete and sign the forms. In line with best practice, emphasis was put on voluntary participation and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Interview guides (Appendices F to I) was used to provide direction to the interview process. The researcher did not rigidly adhere to exact sequencing and wording of questions. Although the researcher asked the same questions to all the participants, the order of the questions, the wording, and the type of follow-up questions varied considerable. For those who did not understand English, the interview was conducted in participants' home language. All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder.

Throughout the interviews, the researcher was mindful of non-verbal communication expressed through the actions and emotions of the participants. It is on this premise that the researcher also made field notes during the interview. During data analysis stage, the notes helped the researcher remember what had transpired during the interview process. After every interview, the recorded script was replayed to participants so as to validate the recorded views.

3.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS

While validity and reliability measures are used to gauge the rigor of quantitative research, qualitative researchers use data trustworthiness to measure the credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of the research findings (Morrison & Morrison, 2007).

Credibility points to the extent to which results of the study are truthful given the prevailing social and cultural contexts under which data was gathered (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In an endeavor to ensuring the credibility of data, the researcher utilized member checking strategy to allow participants to have access to the gathered data before inclusion in the research report. The researcher further employed triangulation as a means of enhancing the credibility of data. Hence the use of one-on-one and focus group interviews in this study. Thick description of the phenomenon under study also was another way of ensuring data credibility. Shenton (2004) asserts that a detailed description in this area can be a vital provision for promoting credibility as it helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated and to an extent, the contexts, that surround them.

Transferability refers to the extent to which result findings of a particular study can be applicable to a similar sample of respondents and research setting (Ritchter & Mlambo, 2005). In other words, transferability depends on the degree of similarity between the sending and receiving contexts. To enhance data transferability the researcher; outlined a detailed and rich description of the criterion that was used to select both the study sites and participants. Furthermore, the researcher took note of the socio-cultural variables during the analysis and interpretation of gathered data. Provision of this detailed data was made to allow for comparison to be made.

Dependability speaks to obtaining same findings when the research is replicated on a similar research sample and also under similar conditions. In order to address the dependability issue, the processes within the study were reported in detail. In this regard, the researcher provided a step by step data collection procedures and data analysis method utilized in this study.

Confirmability is the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity (Shenton, 2004). In this same vein, the gathered data should represent the participants' views and perspectives rather than that of the researcher. Data confirmability was enhanced by enlisting professional services for verbatim transcription from audio recording to written scripts. This ensured the accurate capturing of participants' views.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

For data analysis, the study utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Given the submissions by Tanczer (2013), data was analyzed as follows;

1. Data preparation. Audio recorded data was converted into text data.
2. Immersion. The researcher read and re-read the data, making notes of initial observations and thoughts (left hand margin).
3. Identification and labeling of characterizing text sections (right hand margin)
4. Themes listing. Themes were listed and were compared to see if they related to each other
5. Creation of a table of themes
6. Production of a narrative account of the interplay between researcher's interpretation and participant's accounts

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All research effort has to adhere to research ethics and by doing so, a basis for trust is established between the researcher and research participants (Qualitative Research Methods: A data Collector's Field Guide, 2012). Hence, the following research ethics were considered for this study;

3.12.1 Permission

To access the intended schools, the researcher found it prudent to obtain permission from the relevant Ministry. In this regard, permission (Appendix B) to conduct the study in schools was granted by the Secretary for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Furthermore, authorization (Appendix C) was then granted by the Midlands Provincial Education Director to access the intended schools in the concerned Province.

3.12.2 Informed consent

The researcher obtained consent from participants for their participation in the study through signing the consent forms. Before consent was sought, participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the research and their rights thereof. It is important to note that consent from guardians or parents was sought for the participation of students.

3.12.3 Confidentiality

Participants were assured confidentiality in respect to their data. An assurance was also given to protect the individual's confidences from the general public.

3.12.4 Anonymity

Anonymity involves use of pseudonyms instead of the participants' real names and this is done to ensure that participants are not identifiable both in recorded voice or print. For this study, the researcher allocated numbers to participants, for example, "participant 2".

3.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the research paradigm and design, sampling technique and sample size, data collection tools and procedure, data analysis, and ethical issues. The next chapter delves into data presentation and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research findings gathered from the study's participants. The findings are presented under three thematic areas which are:

- determinants of attitudes and perceptions
- attitudes on teenage pregnancy and education
- pregnant and mothering students' school experiences

To relate the verbatim quotations to the study's research questions, the researcher interpreted the quotations.

4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Since the participants were not drawn from a homogenous group, this section therefore details key characteristics of the study's participants. A total of twelve participants were sampled as follows;

Table 3.1: Demographic information of participants

Names (Pseudo names)	Sex	Age	Designation
Participant 1	Female	16	Form 4 student
Participant 2	Female	18	Form 4 student
Participant 3	Female	17	Form 4 student
Participant 4	Male	17	Form 4 student
Participant 5	Male	16	Form 4 student

Participant 6	Female	16	Form 4 student
Participant 7	Female	20	Mothering Form 6 student
Participant 8	Female	18	Pregnant Form 4 student
Participant 9	Female	55	Parent
Participant 10	Male	56	Parent
Participant 11	Female	59	Teacher
Participant 12	Male	52	Teacher

The table above presents information rich education stakeholders utilized in this study. In an endeavor to elicit a balanced view of research findings, both male and female participants were considered.

4.3 DETERMINANTS OF PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

A detailed account of factors which shaped or influenced the participants' attitudes and perceptions on the subject under study are presented.

4.3.1 Legal provisions knowledge

It emerged from the participants that legal conditions have an impact on their attitudes and perceptions with regards to the practice of taking on board pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High school. The following illustrative excerpts are given;

“Given the international, regional and national declaration of the right to education, I therefore fully subscribe to the education of all including pregnant and mothering students taking into cognizance the fact that acting contrary to legal provisions can make one liable to prosecution”. (Participant 10, Male)

“..... as an educationist I go by the policy guidelines because I am not expected to think since everything which needs to be done is clearly stated”. (Participant 12, Male)

“Since the Ministry of Education’s Circular P.35 supports the education of pregnant and mothering students, who am I to decide and act otherwise? My happiness is derived from policy compliance” (Participant 11, Female)

The quotations above reveal that legal frameworks have impacted positively on the perceptions of teachers and parents in line with the education of pregnant students. It can be ascertained that positive reactions do not necessarily stem from individuals’ inward conviction but rather seem to be influenced by the need to be law abiding.

4.3.2 Religious beliefs

The participants revealed that their religious beliefs dictate their views, feelings and actions. The following quotations illustrate the relationship between religious beliefs and perceptions and attitudes;

“... As a Christian who desires to do good just like Jesus and in an effort to seek approval from others, I supported my pregnant child in all aspects so that she could derive maximum benefits in her learning outcomes”. (Participant 9, Female)

“The Bible has a provision for a second chance because mistakes are bound to be made and thus why Jesus instructed the woman who deserved death to go and sin no more”. (Participant 5, Male)

“What I believe in does not encourage exclusion of any form and thus I naturally have no objection concerning their education. I feel pity for the girls who find themselves in this predicament” (Participant 12, Male)

The extractions submitted above are illustrative of the fact that religion is the opium of the mind in both the young and the old. Consequently, it is evident that perceptions and attitudes are shaped by held religious beliefs.

4.3.3 Culture

Cultural undertones have been cited by participants as affecting the way individuals perceive any phenomenon they are exposed to. The following citations are illustrative;

“In our days as adolescents, cases of teenage pregnancy were usually concealed from us because being pregnant at teenage hood was equated to being morally loose” (Participant 9, Female)

“Although in the past pregnant teenagers were equated to societal misfits, nowadays it seems the status quo has changed. A culture of acceptance and tolerance seems to have taken over and for conformity’s sake; I have no objections with regards to subject being investigated” (Participant, 10, Male)

Given the fact that culture is dynamic, it follows that at any given time individuals’ perceptions and attitudes are affected by prevailing cultural conditions.

4.3.4 Assumptions and myths

Participants’ attitudes were influenced by the adage, “a bad apple in a basket can cause other fruits to rot”. As a result, the participants feared the corruption of other students if pregnant and mothering students were allowed in mainstream schools. The citations below illustrate assumptions and myths as determinants of perceptions and attitudes;

“In fear of being contaminated by bad habits, I wouldn’t want to be seen in the company of a pregnant student”. (Participant 3, Female)

“As a way of discouraging the practice of getting pregnant whilst at school and also to make them realize their mistakes, isolation of offenders becomes the solution”. (Participant 1, Female)

“...and most of my teacher colleagues believe that if allowed back to school, pregnant or mothering students are likely to continue behaving in unacceptable ways. In a way, taking them on board is risky since other students can be driven into the same practice”. (Participant 12, Male)

It can be ascertained from the excerpts above that even the views which are not evidence based have an adverse impact on the attitudes of education stakeholders.

4.3.5 Social influence and social environment

The participants submitted that the way they think, feel and act is either affected by an interaction with another person or a group of people and also by the school's social environment. The following are illustrative quotations from the participants;

“What would my peers think if I am seen close to a pregnant student? I don't want to lose my friends because of someone who willingly chose to get pregnant”. (Participant 3, Female)

“I need to belong to some group and being seen befriending a pregnant student can make one to be an outcast”. (Participant 4, Male)

“If seen with a pregnant girl by other students, you are subjected to ridicule which makes one lose confidence and self esteem. I don't want to make my school life miserable just because of these girls.” (Participant 6, Female)

The excerpts above reveal that social influence has an adverse effect mainly on students' attitudes. Partly, this is the case because it is a fact that at adolescence stage most students will be trying to identify who they are and hence approval seeking behavior forces them to conform to group ideals and social environment at the school.

4.3.6 Context

The participants revealed that the school context does not favor pregnant or mothering students. The following citations are illustrative:

“If one experiences labor pains, the school does not have maternity wards or personnel to render help A school is therefore for students and neither is it for mothers or mothers to be.” (Participant 5, Male)

“No to a bulging stomach..... and being in school makes it a bit awkward as the school loses its “schoolness” in that it can be equated to a breeding ground for deviant behavior. (Participant 2, Female)

“...and if allowed to be in school, who will take care of their needs. Lack of adequate support can further complicate their situation”. (Participant 1, Female)

The illustrations above reveal that it is the context variable rather than the existing phenomenon which affects the attitudes of stakeholders.

4.4 ATTITUDES: TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND EDUCATION

4.4.1 Reactions and actions by parents

Participants’ responses showed that parents are not amused by students who get pregnant while at school. To illustrate this finding, the following excerpts were captured;

“...even our parents cannot allow us as students to befriend pregnant or mothering students because they say we might also be caught up in this bad practice”.
Participant 4, Male)

“In my case, my father has disowned me because of getting pregnant whilst I am a student. He says he cannot be associated with disgrace” (Participant 8, Female)

“Although I was very much disappointed, I continued to provide all the necessary support for my impregnated daughter because I focused on empowering her so that she could lead an independent life and be able to support her child since the child’s father denied responsibility”. (Participant 9, Female)

The above quotations reveal mixed reactions by the parents in that while most are not pleased, their actions towards the affected children differ. The differences in reactions could be a result of a number of factors such as personality, family dynamics and surrounding community.

4.4.2 Reactions and actions by students

The Form four students reacted adversely towards the practice of accepting pregnant and mothering students in mainstream school. The following citations are illustrative;

“Obviously, I cannot be seen befriending a pregnant student thus why we usually isolate them because I have nothing to learn from them”. (Participant 3, Female)

“...talking to pregnant or mothering student can be misconstrued to mean my being keen to copy the undesirable practice. I fear to be regarded as such and will thus separate myself from them.”(Participant 1, Female)

“For me, pregnant students should continue with their education in private schools as in mainstream school they no longer fit because of their experience...”
(Participant 5, Male)

It can be ascertained from the quotations above that most students react negatively to pregnant and mothering students. Being adolescents who are in the period of “storm and stress” the students’ reactions seem consistent with their adolescent stage.

4.4.3 Reactions and actions by teachers

Although the teachers did not condone the practice of being pregnant while at school, their reactions and actions towards the affected students are favorable. The quotations below are illustrative;

“As a mothering student, my subject teachers have been more than supportive in my academic endeavors since they feel education is the only way to give someone a better future” (Participant 7, Female)

“Since we stay with pregnant or mothering students at home, why must we exclude them from school? The law of consistency naturally forces me to be in favor of their education” (Participant 12, Male)

“Despite the fact that being pregnant whilst at school is unacceptable, I am of the view that the affected girls should be given a lifeline to continue with their education which will overshadow their past mistakes” (Participant 11, Female)

The quotations suggest that teachers generally exhibit favorable actions towards the education of pregnant students in mainstream High schools. This can be a result of compliance to the policy which affords the right to education even to pregnant and mothering students in school.

4.5 PREGNANT AND MOTHERING STUDENTS' SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

4.5.1 Happiest moments

One of the interviewed mothering Form six students submitted her encouraging school experiences. The citations below are illustrative;

“When I returned to school after giving birth, my teachers offered me counseling as mandated by education policy”. (Participant 8, Female)

“Realizing the need for extra support due to my temporary absence from school, my friend was more than supportive in that she shared notes of the subjects I had missed whilst away” (Participant 8, Female)

“During my pregnancy and after giving birth, I have never faced any hostile actions from either students or teachers. To them, I am still a student and hence deserve to be treated as such”.(Participant 8, Female)

The excerpts above reveal that favorable experiences encountered by the mothering student participant. The positive response from other students (classmates) could be a result of maturity since the majority is past the adolescent stage.

4.5.2 Saddest moments

One of the interviewed Form 4 pregnant students shared a gloomy picture of her school experiences.

“... and because of the bulging stomach, I am like a tourist attraction to other students, especially, my classmates who continuously ask how it happened”
(Participant 9, Female)

“Even some of my friends are no longer keen to be close to me when at school as they suggest I might be of bad influence to them ” (Participant 9, Female)

“I over hear some of the students calling me names like “moms”. Some of them go a step further by giving me various degrading labels. To them, I don’t deserve to be in school and hence this treatment” (Participant 9, Female)

These unfavorable responses in most cases emanate from students enrolled in forms one to four. Such reactions seem to be consistent with the behavior of students in these levels, who, because of immaturity can decipher any phenomenon from only one view point.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter covered data presentation and the researcher’s interpretation of verbatim quotations. Data was presented under 3 themes which sought to answer the study’s research questions. The next chapter deals with discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The chapter discusses the study's results by drawing comparisons to other previous similar studies. Conclusions which answer the study's research questions are presented. The chapter concludes by submission of recommendations.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Throughout the world, very high rates of teenage pregnancies are being recorded. Although the trend is noticeable all over the world, the problem seems to be greater in developing countries. Zimbabwe has the highest teen pregnancy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa. This study has been motivated by the realization that despite favorable legal frameworks, high school dropout cases as a result of pregnancy have been recorded. Furthermore, pregnant and mothering students continue to be victims of stigma and discrimination in schools. Given the aforesaid, the purpose of the study is, through use of a qualitative approach, to explore perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools of Gweru District. To have an in-depth understanding of the topic under study, the research utilized interview as a data collection instrument. Face to face and one on one interviews were conducted with parent and teacher participants while a focus group interview was conducted with student participants.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Discussion of results is guided by the study's three research questions as given below:

5.2.1 Research question 1: Which factors could influence perceptions of education stakeholders on the enrollment on pregnant and mothering students?

The study revealed that the education stakeholders' perceptions were influenced by the following factors: legal provisions knowledge, religious beliefs, culture, assumptions and myths, social influence and social environment, and context. The finding of legal provisions knowledge as

having a positive influence on perceptions of education stakeholders confirms research findings by Maluli and Bali (2014). The researchers contend that respondents held that education was a basic right for all and expelling pregnant students violated their rights. On the other hand, this study's finding refutes findings by Sithole et al (2013) who revealed that knowledge of some legal provisions can have a negative influence on the perceptions of stakeholders. Therefore, how an individual is influenced by the knowledge of legal provisions might be affected by whether or not the legal provisions support one's enduring beliefs on the practice of educating pregnant students.

On religious beliefs, Chiweshe (2010) submitted that church leaders consider it a taboo to allow girls to get pregnant and let alone introduce policies or practices which promote it. This study refutes research findings by Chiweshe as it revealed that religious beliefs have a positive influence on the perceptions of education stakeholders. Thus, it can be ascertained that religion can shape an individual's perceptions to be in line with specific held beliefs. Again, individuals are likely to behave and act in accordance with the moral standards of those particular beliefs.

This study's finding on cultural factor as having an influence on perceptions of education stakeholders confirms Runhare's (2012) contention that parents were so disturbed about cultural expectations that they thought school pregnancy should be punished as this could work as a deterrent measure to would be offenders. UNESCO (2014) concurs by stating that cultural norms can also prevent parents and communities from supporting the practice of educating pregnant students. Given the value and importance attached to cultural values by, especially, African populace, it could mean that perceptions of education stakeholders naturally must be in line with the order of the day.

The study proffered "assumptions and myths" as another variable which affects the perceptions of education stakeholders and this finding confirms what emerged from other studies. One study found out that schools and educators believe that giving a chance of education, teenage mothers will encourage more girls to become pregnant (Maluli & Bali, 2014). It can be seen that assumptions can instill fear of the unknown in education stakeholders and hence the subsequent influence on their perceptions.

It further emerged from the current study that social influence and social environment could influence the perceptions of education stakeholders. Onyango (2016) concur with this finding by suggesting that the social environment characterized by isolation (34%) and stigmatization (20.4%) could influence students' perceptions. The need for conformity to the prevailing social order as desired by adolescents could affect the perceptions of students either way. Finally, the study established that context could be another determinant factor of perception and this finding confirms other research findings. In a study conducted by Mpanza and Nzima (2010) it emerged that some teachers were not willing to allow pregnant learners to continue attending school due to beliefs that schools were not meant for pregnant students. It can be seen that the perceptions of education stakeholders could be affected by the belief that a school is never expected to accommodate pregnant learners.

The factors discussed above as having an influence on the perceptions of education stakeholders confirm Bronfenbrenner's theoretical submission that behavior should be viewed and understood from an ecological perspective where the environment's impact cannot be overemphasized. As such the perceptions were influenced by various factors within the four layers (micro, meso, exo, and macro system) of the ecosystem.

5.2.2 Research question 2: What attitudes are exhibited by education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?

It emerged from the study that parents exhibited both positive and negative attitudes on the practice of enrolling pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools. The mixed reactions by stakeholders confirm Maluli and Bali (2014) research findings that 17% of parents held negative attitudes against 4% who assumed positive attitudes. On the affirmative end, Runhare and Vandeyar (2012) contended that given the anticipated gains from the education of pregnant and mothering students, some parents remain with positive attitudes towards their education. The mixed attitudes shown by parents confirm one of Bronfenbrenner's theoretical tenets which propose that given any two individuals experiencing the same microsystem, it is possible for their development to progress in different manners.

The study established that students displayed hostile attitudes on the enrolled pregnant and mothering students. It is vital to note that the hostile attitudes were mostly displayed by Form one to four students. This current research's finding confirms what emerged from SmithBattle's (2013) findings to the effect that pregnant and mothering students have suffered teasing and bullying tendencies in the hands of other students. It is worth noting that this study generated extended knowledge in that it established the specific group of learners (Forms one to four) who are mostly hostile to pregnant and mothering students. That the upper school students (Form five to six) did not exhibit hostile attitudes unlike other students from the lower school, can be interpreted to suggest that esteemed maturity levels has positively affected their attitudes.

The study revealed positive attitudes by teachers on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools. This finding confirms research findings by Mpanza and Nzima (2010) whose study revealed that sixty eight percent of the educators were found to have positive attitudes towards teenage pregnancy. Because of the positive attitudes, some teachers were found to be willing to provide social support to pregnant students in an effort to enable them to continue attending school (Matlala et al., 2014). The current study refuted findings by Sithole et al (2013) who suggested that the majority of teachers had negative attitudes on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students. The incongruence between the current research and other studies could be interpreted in terms of the heterogenous research samples from the two studies in comparison.

5.2.3 Research question 3: What are the school experiences of pregnant and mothering students?

It emerged from the study that pregnant students (especially Forms one to four) experience unfriendly and unwelcoming school environments perpetuated mainly by their peers. Among other experiences encountered by the affected, the girl child faces isolation, stigma and discrimination from her peers. Furthermore, name calling and degrading labels become the pregnant student's daily experiences. The aforementioned finding confirms Chirimuuta's (2006) revelation that pregnant and mothering students go to hell with all the jeering, laughing and giggling from fellow students. Mpanza and Nzima (2010) further states that pregnant school girls are stigmatized by other colleagues. It must be realized that this study contributed to extension of

knowledge in the discipline by the revelation that girls from the lower school are the ones who usually experience a hostile school environment as compared to girls in the upper school. The interpretation relating to this status quo is that low self esteem by girls from the lower school could make them highly susceptible to attacks by peers and hence the ugly school experiences.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

5.3.1 Research question 1: Which factors could influence perceptions of education stakeholders on the enrollment on pregnant and mothering students?

It can be ascertained from the study that the education stakeholders' perceptions could be influenced by the following factors: legal provisions knowledge, religious beliefs, culture, assumptions and myths, social influence and social environment, and context. Specific factors related to a specific category of education stakeholders. Apparently, knowledge of legal provisions related to parents and teachers only. Parents were influenced mainly by the cultural factor. The context and social influence and social environment factors affected students only. Religious beliefs factor appealed to all (teachers, parents and students) education stakeholders. Finally, the assumptions and myths variable related to both teachers and students. It is also of paramount importance to note that the factors either influenced education stakeholders' perceptions positively or adversely.

Since religious beliefs influenced the perceptions of all stakeholders, it therefore follows that the perceptions of education stakeholders can be influenced positively by a deliberate move to engage education stakeholders in the comfort of their religious affiliations. Ultimately, positive perceptions would translate to adequate support for the pregnant and mothering student and hence their retention in school.

5.3.2 Research question 2: What attitudes are exhibited by education stakeholders on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?

It is evident from the study that education stakeholders hold mixed attitudes on the practice of enrolling pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools. Although the parents did not condone teenage pregnancy, the majority fully supported the education of pregnant and mothering students. The teachers displayed favorable attitudes as shown by the concerted

support they render in an endeavor to improve the learning outcomes of pregnant and mothering students. It can be deduced from the study that students from lower forms (one to four) of the school exhibited adverse attitudes on the education of the affected girls. On the other hand, the upper forms students displayed tolerant attitudes on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students.

Given the realization that education stakeholders hold mixed attitudes, those with positive attitudes can be useful in an effort to positively influence their fellow colleagues. Peer influence can bring forth desired results of modifying the negative attitudes into desirable ones which can subsequently enhance the learning outcomes of pregnant and mothering students.

5.3.3 Research question 3: What are the school experiences of pregnant and mothering students?

Pregnant and mothering students had different school experiences in the continuum of affirmative to negative experiences. In this same breath, pregnant students from the lower school (Form one to four) had nasty and unbearable school experiences. On the other hand, pregnant students from the upper school (Form five to six) experienced a welcoming and user friendly school environment characterized by positive support from teachers and fellow upper school students.

To improve the wellbeing of students experiencing hostile school environments, support groups which include students experiencing friendly school environments can be formed. Such groups can foster resilience which is so much desired for individuals experiencing unbearable conditions.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The small sample of participants utilized for this study limits the generalizability of results to wider populations.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are proposed on the basis of the findings that emerged from this study;

5.5.1 Community and schools

The wider community and schools should jointly come up with primary prevention strategies or programs aimed at curtailing teenage pregnancies as it is a fact that prevention of deviant (sexual) behavior is better and less costly than solving a problem of teenage pregnancy. Programs such as life skills training targeted at students can be considered.

5.5.2 Policy makers

In an endeavor to ally some of the fears held by education stakeholders on the education of pregnant students, it is recommended that MoPSE's re-entry policy should explicitly address the kind of support to be afforded to pregnant and mothering students.

5.5.3 Awareness campaigns

To dispel myths and assumptions commonly held by education stakeholders, awareness campaigns exposing all members of the community, especially community gate keepers, to the policy's dictates and rationale should be conducted.

5.5.4 Students and teachers

Students and teachers should be psychologically prepared to accept pregnant and mothering students. In this same vein, the counseling sessions become an important tool to foster this psychological preparedness.

Specialized counseling by educational psychologists should be accorded to pregnant and mothering students so that they can cope with the dual roles of being a mother and a student.

5.5.5 Pregnant and mothering students

Despite their situation and condition, the students should continue to behave like students. To positively influence attitudes of education stakeholders, the students should, where practically and humanely possible take part in all school related activities and programs.

5.5.6 Recommendation for further research

Since the present study was limited to two urban schools, it may be necessary to conduct the study on a large scale given the fact that the phenomenon under study is multifaceted.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter presented discussion of the study's results and other research findings confirming the current findings of the study were noted. Conclusions and recommendations in line with the subject under investigation were also given.

Given a plethora of consequences faced by pregnant and mothering students, the study sought to explore the attitudes and perceptions of education stakeholders towards their education. Consequently, the findings can be used to improve the educational endeavors of this affected group of students.

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APPENDIX A



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**DEPARTMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGY**

To whom it may concern:

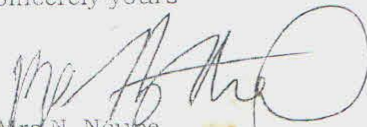
**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH AT
YOUR ORGANISATION.**

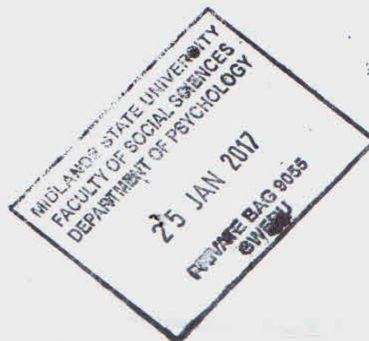
This letter serves to inform you that... **SIFELANI KUNDUSI**
Registration number... **ROS37682** is a bonafide student in the
Psychology Department. She/he is carrying out an academic research
on... **PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS ON THE ENFORCEMENT OF PREGNANT AND MATERNAL
STUDENTS IN MAINSTREAM SECONDARY SCHOOLS**.....

Please assist him/her by allowing him/her access to your organisation so
that s/he can use it as a case study. The research is for academic purposes
only and findings will not be published anywhere. Your privacy and
confidentiality is guaranteed.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely yours


Mrs N. Ncube
A/CHAIRPERSON



All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education
Telephone: 732006
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505



Reference: C/426/3 Midlands
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

23 March 2017

Innocent Sifelani
4473 Mkoba 17
Gweru

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE:
GWERU DISTRICT: HWATA; GUNDE; MABOLENI; MKOBA 1 AND
MKOBA 3 SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned schools in Midlands Province on the research title:

**"PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS ON THE
ENROLMENT OF PREGNANT AND MOTHERING STUDENTS IN
MAINSTREAM HIGH SCHOOLS IN GWERU DISTRICT"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Midlands Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. You are required to seek consent of the parents /guardians of all the learners who will be involved in the research.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

Handwritten signature of M.T. Madzinga (Mrs) in black ink.

M.T. Madzinga (Mrs)

Acting Director: Planning, Research and Statistics
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**
cc: PED – Midlands Province

zimbwabi17

MIN. OF PRY & SEC. EDUCATION
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

23 MAR 2017

MIN. OF PRY & SEC. EDUCATION
POLICY PLANNING RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT
24 MAR 2017
P.O. BOX CY 121, CAUSEWAY
ZIMBABWE

APPENDIX C

All communications should be addressed to "The Provincial Education Director"
Telephone:054- 222460

Fax: 054- 226482



Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O Box 737
GWERU

28 MARCH 2017

Mr/Mrs/Miss: INNOCENT SIPLANI
4473 MKOBA 17
GWERU

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE

Permission to carry out a Research on:-

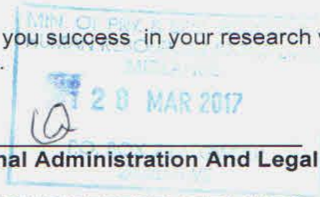
"PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS ON THE ENROLMENT OF PREGNANT AND MOTHERING STUDENTS IN MAINSTREAM HIGH SCHOOLS IN GWERU DISTRICT."

In the Midlands Province has been granted on these conditions.

1. That in carrying out this you do not disturb the learning and teaching programmes in schools.
2. That you avail the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with a copy of your research findings.
3. That this permission can be withdrawn at anytime by the Provincial Education Director or by any higher officer.

The Education Director wishes you success in your research work and in your University College studies.

NATSIWA V.
Education Officer (Professional Administration And Legal Services)
PFOR PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MIDLANDS



APPENDIX D: PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

Good day, my name is Sifelani Innocent, a Master of Science in Community Psychology student with Midlands State University (MSU). As part of my study requirements, I am seeking to explore perceptions and attitudes of education stakeholders (students, teachers and parents) on the enrollment of pregnant and mothering students in **mainstream/ordinary** High schools.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you. The interview will not be more than 45 minutes and will be recorded on tape and the tape recordings will be erased after the report is written.

All information gathered and data collected will be treated with confidentiality. To this end, your name and name of the school will remain anonymous. You may withdraw from the study anytime and you may refuse to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable to answer.

The findings will be reported in form of a research report submitted to MSU and a summary of the findings will be made available to you upon request.

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

I hereby consent to participate in the study. The purpose and procedures of the study have been adequately explained to me.

Name of the participant.....

Date.....

Signature

APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. Tell me about yourself (age, level, whom you stay with, religious affiliation)
2. How do you feel about teenage pregnancy? What do you think about teens having children?
3. How have been pregnant or mothering students treated by other students? In your opinion, is that treatment justified?
4. What are your views and feelings towards the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?
5. Are you aware of MoPSE policy position on the education of pregnant and mothering students?
6. Suppose you were a policy maker, what would be your stance concerning the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
7. Do you have any additional thoughts or comments on the subject under discussion?

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. Tell me about yourself (age, livelihood, level of education, religious affiliation)
2. During your teenage hood period, did you know of any teens that were attending school?
What were your thoughts at that time about that and why?
3. What are your feelings and views now concerning the education of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?
4. Can you share the kind of support you rendered or withdrew towards the support of your pregnant or mothering child's education?
5. How does your local community feel and think about educating pregnant and mothering students in mainstream High schools?
6. Are you aware of MoPSE policy position on the education of pregnant and mothering students?
7. Suppose you were a policy maker, what would be your stance concerning the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
8. Do you have any additional thoughts or comments on the subject under discussion?

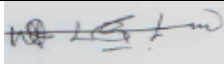

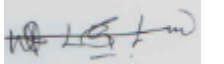

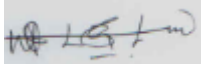

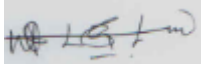

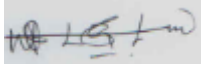

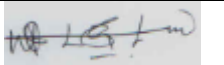

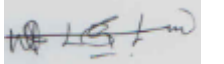

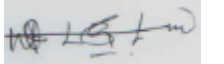

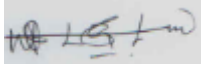

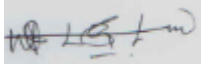

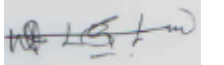

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PREGNANT AND MOTHERING LEARNERS

1. Tell me about yourself
 - How old are you?
 - What is your grade level? If not in school, when did you last attend classes?
 - What is your religious affiliation?
 - How many children do you have and how old were you when you had the first child?
2. When you noticed that you were pregnant, how did you feel with regards to continuing with your education?
3. How did your parents react when you got pregnant? What about your local community?
4. As a pregnant or mothering student, can you share your happiest and saddest moments you have had in school.
5. As a pregnant or mothering student, have you ever contemplated dropping out of school?
6. What are your views and feelings concerning the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
7. Are you aware of MoPSE policy position on the education of pregnant and mothering students?
8. Suppose you were a policy maker, what would be your stance concerning the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
9. Do you have any additional thoughts or comments on the subject under discussion?

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

1. Tell me about yourself
 - How old are you?
 - How many children do you have? Disaggregate the number according to sex.
 - What is your religious affiliation?
 - How long have you been teaching?
2. Can you share the experiences you have had with pregnant or mothering students in school?
3. Comment on the treatment or support that has been rendered to pregnant or mothering students in school by other teachers. In your opinion, is that treatment justified?
4. What are your views and feelings concerning the education of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
5. Are you aware of MoPSE policy position on the education of pregnant and mothering students?
6. Suppose you were a policy maker, what would be your stance concerning the enrolment of pregnant and mothering students in mainstream high schools?
7. Do you have any additional thoughts or comments on the subject under discussion?

APPENDIX J: SUPERVISOR-STUDENT AUDIT SHEET

DATE	ACTIVITY/CHAPTER	STUDENT'S SIGNATURE	LECTURER'S SIGNATURE
11/12/16	Submission of topic and discussion. Proceed to proposal		
30/12/16	Submission of proposal and discussion. Effect changes and proceed		
25/01/17	Submission of chapter 1 and discussion. Re-do .		
13/05/17	Re-submission of chapter 1 and discussion. Proceed to next chapter		
14/07/17	Submission of chapter 2 and discussion. Proceed to chapter 3		
10/09/17	Submission of chapter 3 and discussion. Re-do.		
15/09/17	Re-submission of chapter 3 and discussion. Proceed to next chapter		
30/09/17	Submission of chapter 4 and discussion. Proceed to chapter 5		
05/10/17	Submission of chapter 5 and discussion. Proceed to first draft		
15/10/17	Submission of first draft and discussion. Proceed to finale copy		
20/10/17	Submission of finale copy		

Supervisor's Signature:.....

Date :

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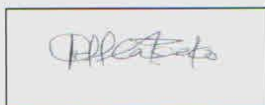
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APPENDIX L: A GUIDE FOR WEIGHTING A DISSERTATION

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

A GUIDE FOR WEIGHTING A DISSERTATION

NAME OF STUDENT REG NO

	ITEM	POSSIBLE SCORE	ACTUAL SCORE	COMMENTS
A	RESEARCH TOPIC AND ABSTRACT: Clear and concise	5		
B	PRELIMINARY PAGES Title page, approval form, release form, dedication, acknowledgement, appendices, table of contents	5		
C	AUDIT SHEET/PROGRESSION Clearly shown on the audit sheet	5		
D	CHAPTER Background, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, assumptions, purpose of the study, delimitations, limitations, definition of terms	10		
E	CHAPTER 2 Address major issues and concepts of the study. Findings from previous work, relevance of literature to the study, identify knowledge gaps, sub topics	15		
F	CHAPTER 3 Appropriateness of approach, design, target, population sample, research tools, data collection procedures, presentation and analysis	15		
G	CHAPTER 4 Findings presented in a logical manner, tabular data properly summarized and not repeated in text	15		
H	CHAPTER 5 Discussion (10) Must be a presentation of generalizations shown by results: how results and interpretations agree with existing and published literature, relates theory to practical implications Conclusions (5) Ability to use findings to draw conclusions Recommendations (5)	20		
I	Overall presentation of dissertation	5		
J	References	5		
	Total			

MARKER..... SIGNATURE.....

MODERATOR..... SIGNATURE