Perception of Various Stakeholders on the Re-Entry Policy of Teenage Mothers to School in Bungoma County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between the girl's education and economic development has received a worldwide attention for quite sometimes. A number of global organization have been formed to address the issue of girl's education. However, the issue of teenage mothers remains a thorny issue in most developing countries. This category of learners undergo a number of challenges to access and continue with education. Reentry policy of teenage mothers to school mooted in Beijing conference of 1995 is one intervening policy to help address the needs for the teenage mothers. The Kenyan government adopted the policy in 2001. Despite the policy being in place, very few teenage mothers have been returning to school. The objectives of this study to determine the perception of various stakeholders on the re-entry policy of teenage mothers to school in Bungoma County. The critical theory as modified by Habernes was used as the theoretical framework. The convergent parallel mixed method research design was used. The research population comprised of teenage mothers, student girls, head teachers, principals, Guiding and Counselling teachers, Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. The data collection instruments were Questionnaires and Interview schedules. Questionnaires were administered to the Teenage mothers, school girls, Guidance and counselling teachers, while the interview schedule was administered to Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and head teachers. Pilot study was carried out in Trans Nzoia County. Reliability of the research instruments was tested using Spearman Rank Order correlation coefficient. A value of 0.79 was obtained and was considered high enough for the instruments to be judged to be reliable. Validity was determined by expert judgment in the School of Education in the University of Eldoret. Quantitative data were coded and presented using tables and analyzed through frequency distribution and percentages. Qualitative data were organized and broken into themes synthesized to search for patterns and meaning. This study was significant for it shed light on the level of awareness among various stakeholders of the re-entry policy of teenage mothers to school, the perception of the various stakeholders on the re-entry policy, identified aspects of culture that affected the implementation of the re-entry policy and the implementation strategies that are in place to implement the policy. The various stakeholders have a negative perception and attitude towards the teenage mother. Its recommended that there should be a national debate on teenage motherhood to increase awareness of the policy and address the issue of perception and the change in attitude towards the teenage mothers.

Introduction

There are a number of global organizations and declarations that are committed to the elimination of gender inequalities in education such as Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Education for All (EFA), The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Millennium Declaration of 2000, The Beijing Platform for Action, United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Girls and women education has been embedded in these international visions of development priorities (UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2003; MoE Jamaica, 2013; FAWEZA, 2006; UNCRC, 1989; Laiser & Muyinga, 2017; Maluli & Bali, 2014; Mensah & Babayara, 2016; Ncube & Mudau, 2017).

At the United Nations (UN) summit in 2000, elimination of gender inequalities informed goal number two on universal education and goal number three on gender equality, expressing the need to provide universal access to education and to eliminate gender disparities in education by 2015. Goal number two aimed to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere would be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (Salvi, 2014; UNESCO, 2005). Salvi (2014) further observed that goal number three focused on gender by encouraging countries to eliminate disparities in primary and secondary education, by 2005 and at all levels of education. These goals were developed from 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (EFA) and expanded in the follow up World Education Forum (WEF) (UNESCO, 2005; Salvi, 2014; Hanushek, 2008; McCadden, 2015).

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All children have a right to quality education, and realizing this right for girls goes a long way in ensuring a healthy family and a healthy nation.Educated girls grow into women who tend to have healthier and better nourished babies (UNICEF, 2005; Tembon, 2008; MacCadden, 2015) and who most likely will do everything to have their own children attend school as well, thus breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. On the same breath, they observed that educated girls can better protect themselves against Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), human trafficking and various forms of abuse (Hanushek, 2008; MacCadden, 2015). It also means that as a woman, she is empowered and more likely to participate in development efforts, political and economic decision-making. Women who went to school usually manage to increase the household income. The advantages of girls' education thus do not stop at the boundaries of a single child, but ripple through families, communities, and nations.

One important issue affecting girls' education is low enrollment in many developing countries indicating aspects of social injustice and gender inequality in education. A number of reasons have been identified for learners dropping out of school leading to low enrolment. These include disenchantment with school, lack of support at home, negative learning experiences and having to repeat years because of poor performance (OECD, 2008). However, not all girls face the same challenges in educational participation. Pregnant school girls and young mothers' learners in school face unique challenges in ensuring that their new mothering roles and identities do not translate into premature exit from formal education (Karimi, 2015)

Teenage pregnancy has been identified as one of the main causes of low enrollment of girls in school. It's evident from research, that pregnancy is one of the major reasons for girls dropping out of school especially in many developing countries (Meena, 1996; UNICEF, 2008; Chigona & Chetty, 2008; Jackson & Abosi, 2007; Laiser & Muyinga, 2017; Mwenje, 2015). It has remained a tangible source of concern as it occurs during those years generally devoted to formal schooling and as such, motherhood is likely to cause conflicts with human capital investment, thereby, raising the opportunity cost of time spent in education. Subsequently it's listed among the main causes of school dropouts where it accounts for approximately 18% of all female dropouts in secondary schools and 7.3% in both secondary and primary school (Chigona & Chetty, 2007; Women's United Nations Report Network, WUNRN, 2007). In Kenya for example, it was estimated that between 10000 and 13000 girls leave both primary and secondary schools each year due to pregnancy alone (Mwenje, 2015). This is better than in South Africa where by the age of 18 more than 30% of the teenage girls had given birth at least once (Mahy & Gupta, 2002)

The policy of the re-entry of teenage mothers to school is one of the outcomes of the Beijing conference of 1995, a conference in which the women's movement drew up its own priorities and action plan. The conference demanded that girls who dropped out of school because of pregnancy should be readmitted (Mwansa, 2011). By allowing pregnant teenagers to remain in school and return after giving birth is both considered significant in delaying a second birth and also in offering young women increased opportunities to get education and increase their economic standing (Bhana, Morrel, Shefer and Sisa, 2010; Mwansa, 2011; UNESCO 2013).

On paper, Kenya has a very progressive "return to school policy" for teenage mothers introduced in 2001. A girl that gets pregnant is really supposed to be allowed to remain in school until she is about to be due. After delivery, she is supposed to be allowed to come back or be given support to gain admission into another secondary school where she feels comfortable and not stigmatized or discriminated against. The policy also says that pregnant school girls and their parents should receive counselling to enable them cope with their new status of their teenage mothers (Migiro 2014). In their study, Koskey, Changach and Kipsoi (2012) identified first-hand information from teenage mothers and other key respondents on challenges facing teenage upon readmission to school. They exposed the difficulties of simultaneous parenting and schooling despite the teenage mothers' tender age and inexperienced health and emotional issues related to premature birth which pose great difficulties in the learning process.

Southern Africa Gender Protocol Report (2010) has noted challenges in the implementation of re-entry policy since it's not a law but a policy. Since 2002, there has been a consistent pattern of between 38% and 40% of girls who might otherwise have dropped from school being readmitted and completing their studies.

There's lack of consistent support for teenage mothers from their families. Teenage mothers have to jump lessons in order to look after their babies and this is of less concern to the parents because they have babies while still very young and have to face the consequences (Smith battle, 2010).

In Tanzania, the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training issued a statement in 2010 clarifying that no official policies exist in preventing girls from returning to school after giving birth, producing guidelines to schools about the responsibilities as educators to support young mothers in achieving their studies, while the guidelines state that schools must readmit young mothers, schools still deny them enrollment since their status as mothers is deemed to set a bad example to fellow students (Sik, 2015).

There are conflicting views as to the value, nature and implementation of the policy. There is a concern of lack of awareness and understanding of both the policy and the guidelines (Omwancha, 2012). Even though school's policy in Kenya is to encourage girls to return to school after they give birth, many girls are feeling stigmatized or have no house help to look after their children and therefore are staying away or are getting married (Chilisa, 2002; Wanjala, 2013,).

Teachers are usually seen as people who are supposed to support and motivate girls including young mothers to stay in school. However, stigmatization and discrimination by teachers is different and often more complex. Teachers contribute to stereotype by describing the young mother's learners in their school as lazy, distracted, low performing and also at risk of contaminating their fellow female learners with bad behavior (Runhare & Vanderyar, 2012; Maluli & Bali, 2014; Maluli, 2011; Chigona & Chetty, 2007). Lucker (2010) and Thembi (2012) blamed stigmatization on the media as they do not highlight the complex and troubling truth of teenage motherhood and what they go through on a daily basis.

In some cases, there might be reluctance at the school level for girls to reenter and the intimidating social context experienced by returnees. While policies may allow re-entry, this information may not be clearly conveyed throughout the system or communities may continue to adhere to their own

cultural norms preventing girls from attending schools (Dunne & Leach, 2005; Kane, 2004). Grant and Hallman (2008) pointed out that the re-entry may depend to some extent on whether the girls become primary caregivers to their children or whether they are able to share or relinquish the child care responsibilities.

In Botswana, while girls are allowed to re-enter it has been found that many girls do not return to school due to fear of ridicule, intimidation, social branding and harassment by the school community (Chilisa, 2002; Assey, 2014). Wamahiu (1995) further observed that in Botswana less than 30% of teenage mothers return to school after delivery due to lack of information about re-admittance or lack of places for individual learners. The evidence points to the fact that even where there are policies in place regarding re-admittance of these girls, the policies are interpreted variously.

The re-entry of teenage mothers is still a major problem in many Namibian schools. The problem of refusal to readmit young mothers in school and other related problems still exist in Namibia. The Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA) has been advocating for the crafting and implementation of policies that address the issue of school girl pregnancy. Young mothers are experiencing problems in returning to school. Some teachers did not want to accept teenage mothers whose infant died after a few weeks. Those teachers argued that they acted in accordance with the policy of teenage pregnancy which state clearly that the teenage mothers must wait for twelve months before they can be registered. As a result, those young mothers whose babies died were required to stay at home regardless of whether there was a child or not (Ijombonde, 2003).

Readmission is not always a straight forward issue because of the moral stigma often associated with the teenage mothers. Some school principals are not sympathetic enough to give teenage mothers space in schools (Nyambura, 2000). The educational stakeholders in Tanzania are skeptical about teenage mother's readmission in secondary schools for fear of having double standards in schools especially when it comes to condemning bad behavior and disciplinary matters. They also feared that the child care roles might cause teenage mothers to report late to school in the morning and be absent from schools for many reasons. Psychological pressure (stress) and stigmatization by fellow students, teachers, financial constraints and lack of child care support, instability due to lack of guidance and counselling services in schools, time pressure due to role conflict (schooling and child care) were other challenges which were identified and lastly the negative influence of teenage mothers to other students (Assey, 2014; Laiser & Munyinga, 2017; Maluli, 2011; Arlington, 2004; Mweemba, 2014)

SAGPA (2010) reports that in Zambia the re-entry policy allows these girls to be out of school for a short period of six months and after that go back to school. This becomes a challenge for many school girls who have no caregivers to look after their babies. The guiding and counselling service to be given is sketchy. There are also inadequate funds for the implementation of the policy so that all girls who require government assistance can access it including for the up-scaling advocacy programs.

Among the challenges teenage mothers face is lack of support by both the parents and school environment. Teachers need professional guidance on how to handle teenage and their situations and they need in-service training to keep track of the changes that the society is facing. The assumptions is that teachers should help teenagers under such circumstances.

Unfortunately, some teachers consider the teenqge mothers' situation a private matter and none of their concern (Olivier, 2000; Bloem, 2000).

Motherhood is a challenge requiring support and community involvement regardless of the mothers' age and social economic position. They propose that different social structures could be used to support motherhood occurring at any point in the life course so that motherhood could be successfully combined with education and employment in any order. Post-partum adolescents have increased needs for emotional, material and informational support (Logdson & Koniak-Grifin, 2005; Breheny & Stephens, 2007).

One of the weakness of the re-entry policies is that they are founded on gender based ideologies and harmful traditions practices on marriage, childbearing and breast feeding (Runhare *et al*, 2014). Thus Chilisa (2002) is of the view that because of their connectedness to traditions and institutional repressive ideologies, re-entry policies have failed to address the quality of life of the girl mothers in the school, their retention and other structural barriers that militate against retention.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Bungoma County in Western Kenya. The study adopted constructivism as its epistemological perspective. Constructivism claims that meaning does not exist in its own right, rather it's constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation. It recognizes that reality is a product of human intelligence interacting with experience in the real world. Constructivism accepts reality as a construct of human mind and therefore reality is perceived as subjective. For constructivism reality is socially constructed (Oleary, 2004; Andrew, Pedersen & McEroy, 2011). Constructivism was used since the researcher relied on participant's view of the situation being studied. It sought to generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning. The study population was used to present their views about the re-entry policy of teenage mothers the perception of the policy and cultural practices that tend to inhibit effective implementation of the policy. In this study, Convergent parallel mixed method research design was used. It is used when the researcher uses concurrent timing to implement the quantitative and qualitative strands during the same phase of the research process, prioritizing the methods equally and keeps the strands independently during analysis and then mixes the results during the overall interpretation in other words, it collects and analyses two independent strands of qualitative and quantitative data at the same time in a single phase. The methods are prioritized equally and keeps data analysis independently, mix the results during the overall interpretation. The researcher tries to look for convergence, divergence, contradictions or relationship of the two phases (Creswell, 2009). The study targeted the Teenage mothers, 40866 School girls, 1015 Head teachers, 1015 Guidance and Counselling teachers and 9 Sub County Quality Assurance Officers (SCQASO). A Simple random sampling, purposive sampling and Snowball sampling technique were used to identify the samples. Gay (1992) said that 10% of the population sample is representative enough when dealing with survey. Gay (1992) and Krejcie and Morgan (1975) Table was used to identify the sample size. There are a total of 9 sub counties in Bungoma County. 2 SCQASO were selected using simple random sampling. 10 primary schools, 2 girls' schools and 1 mixed secondary school were selected using simple random sampling.

Sample Frame Table

RESPONDENTS	POPULATION SIZE	SAMPLE SIZE
SCQASO	9	2
Primary Schools	797	90
Sec School (Girls and Mixed Sch)	208	27
Students (Girls)	19826	378
Pupils (Std 6, 7 And 8)	21040	378
Head teachers (Primary)	797	90
Principals	208	27
G/C Teachers	1005	117
Teenage Mothers	-	25
TOTAL	0	1129

Source: Bungoma County Education Office, 2016.

The main instruments for collecting data were questionnaires and interview schedule Validity of the research instruments was tested for the content validity and face validity. Test retest method was used to determine the reliability of the research instruments. The correlation coefficient was computed and the Spearman rank order correlation co-efficiency was used to determine reliability. A correlation coefficient of 0.79 was gotten and was considered high enough to judge the reliability of the research instrument. The analysis of qualitative data assumed the descriptive and explanatory analysis. Explanatory analysis involves examining and explaining relationship between variables while Descriptive analysis includes the aspect of examining, organizing and identification of categories, themes and patterns. Qualitative approaches used include indexing, manual and verbatim or writing and organizing data into themes. Quantitative data were coded analyzed using multiple analysis of variance since there were several independent variables against one dependent variable (Oleary, 2004; Creswell, 2014), and were then be presented using tables.

Findings of the study and discussions

The school girls were asked how the various stake holders i.e the students, parents, head teachers and teachers view the teenage mothers. The results are presented in the Table 1 below.

The analysis of the data revealed that 8.7% (N=66) of the students strongly approve of the teenage mothers, 8.3% (N=63) are approving, 17.3% (N=131) are not sure, 29.0% (N=220) disapprove while 36.5% (N=176) strongly disapprove. The analysis of the data also revealed that 6.3% (N=48) of the parents strongly approving of the teenage mothers, 10.2% (N=77) approve, 15.6% (N=118) are not sure, 32.1% (N=243) disapprove while 35.7% (N=270) strongly disapprove.

The analysis of the data also revealed that 9.4% (N=71) of the teachers strongly approve of the teenage mothers, 11.9% (N=90) approve, 16.9% (N=128) are not sure, 24.4% (N=185) disapprove while 37.3% (N=282) strongly disapprove. The analysis of the data also revealed that 9.9% (N=75) of the head teachers strongly approve of the teenage

mothers, 10.4% (N=79) approve, 14.9% (N=113) are not sure, 32.2% (N=244) disapprove while 32.4% (N=245) strongly disapprove. From the analysis of data, it's evident that most students, parents, friends, teachers and head teachers disapprove the teenage mothers.

From the interview, most head teachers especially in primary schools and mixed secondary schools have no issue with the teenage mothers but principals of county schools and extra county schools especially pure girl schools seem not to like these teenage mothers in their schools. Once they are found to be expectant, they are released from the school quietly to go and deliver and look for other schools. This act is against the re-entry policy.

One Principal said:

"This is a county school and we don't have pregnant school girls here in-fact the moment we realize one is pregnant we ask the parent to come and collect the daughter and take her home. We don't allow them here"

Field notes, 18th Feb 2017

This resonates with Mwenje's (2015) findings where she observed that some principals are unsupportive to the teenage mothers especially those in "big" schools and they were unwilling or reluctant to accept these teenage mothers in school.

She further observed that some head teachers were only concerned about the school mean grade and felt that readmitting the teenage mothers would lower it. One Principal said that:

"This is a big School and the parents and the education office have a high stake in this school, we can't allow teenage mothers in this school for they could lower the schools' mean grade"

Field Notes 18th Feb 2017

Others thought that the girl could be a bad example to the rest of the students.

"This school has had a reputation of being a disciplined school how then can we stoop so low to allow the teenage mothers here? They will set a bad example to the rest of the girls and in-fact if the parents hear that we have tolerated them here they will withdraw their daughters from this school"

Field Notes 18th Feb 2017

This view was shared by a number of head teachers and principals. Most school heads do not want to give teenage mothers space in schools. They continue to believe that giving a chance of education to teenage mothers will encourage more girls to become pregnant.

One Principal added

"What picture will the teenage mother be portraying to the rest of the students? That it's okey to be expectant while in school? I just can't allow it in this school. Let them find another school"

Field Notes 18th Feb 2017

Table 1. Perception of different stakeholders towards the teenage mothers as viewed by the school girls.

Items	Strongly approve	Approve	Not Sure	Disapprove	Strongly disapprove
Perception of students towards teenage mothers	66 (8.7%)	63 (8.3%)	131 (17.3%)	220 (29.0%)	276 (36.5%)
Perception of parents towards teenage mothers	48 (6.3%)	77 (10.2%)	118 (15.6%)	243 (32.1%)	270 (35.7%)
Perception of head teachers towards teenage mothers	75(9.9%)	79 (10.4%)	113 (14.9%)	244 (32.2%)	245 (32.3%)
Perception of teachers towards teenage mothers	71 (9.4%)	90 (11.9%)	128 (16.9%)	185 (24.4%)	282 (37.2%)
Perception of their friends towards teenage mothers	103 (13.6%)	95 (12.5%)	123 (16.2%)	169 (22.3%)	266 (35.1%)

As a result, pregnant and mothering students are still expelled from schools and some are struggling to continue with studies under difficult situation (Tjombonde, 2003; Maluli & Bali, 2014,). There is no data to back the fear of the head teachers and teachers that the re-entry of the teenage mothers in school will encourage other girls to be pregnant.

The above data showed that teachers are overwhelmingly opposed to the idea that pregnant girls should remain in school. They prefer the girl to go home and deliver before returning to school for they believe that these students cannot concentrate well in their studies while they are expectant (McCladden, 2015; Ahikire & Madanda, 2011). Teachers are usually seen as people who are supposed to support and motivate girls including young mothers to stay in school (Karimi, 2015). However, stigma and discrimination by teachers is different and often more complex. They contribute to the stereotype of describing the young mother's learners in their schools as lazy, distracted, low performing and also at risk of contaminating their fellow female learners with their bad behavior (Runhare & Vaneyar, 2012; Pillow, 2004; Chigona & Chetty, 2008). Teachers in primary school were more receptive to keeping pregnant girls in school than those who taught in secondary schools. One head teacher affirms this:

"The teenage mothers that am having in my school are very young. By denying them a chance to learn, i will have condemned them to a life of misery for the rest of their life. I accept them back to school and ask the female teachers to see how we can assist her silently."
Field notes 23rd March 2017

Another head teacher said:
"You look at their age, their innocence and you feel the pain they have gone through. There is no need to add more pain to them I just simply readmit them"
Field notes 23rd March 2017

This above views were shared by a number of primary head teachers and Principals. Similarly, it was observed that teachers in day schools were more receptive to the retention of pregnant mothers than mixed day and boarding schools. One Principal said:

"Yes I have teenage mothers in my school but since it's a day school, I don't experience a lot of problems with them. We meet at 8.00 am in the morning and leave at 5.00 p.m. In case of any complications their parents can sort them out"
Field notes 24th March 2017

A Principal from a mixed day and boarding school said:
"It's really complicated to have these students in school. Imagine a student walking around with pregnancy before boys in school, will the boys really concentrate in their studies knowing very well what the girl did? What of the case where the person who impregnated this girl happens to be student in the same school?"
Field Notes 24th March 2017

These varied views of the principal tend to complicate the whole issue of the teenage mothers.

In some of the schools it was noted that these teenage mothers posted very impressive results in their examination. One Head teacher noted:

"I have had two teenage mothers here before who have performed impressively well and they are now in university. In-fact they have encouraged other teenage mothers who are here. I accept them in school with a condition that they work hard in their studies and am happy so far none has let me down"
Field Notes, 23rd March 2017

These results collaborate that of Maluli and Bali (2014) which showed that young mothers were able to cope with schooling. Their quality of work and performance in test and examinations were always complete and according to instructors. Pregnant and mothering students showed great improvement in learning both individually and in interaction with other students in group work when supported financially and psychologically.

From Table 4.10, the analysis of the data also revealed that 13.6% (N=103) of the friends are very approving of the teenage mothers, 12.5% (N=95) are approving, 16.2% (N=123) are not sure, 22.3% (N=169) are disapproving while 35.2% (N=266) strongly disapprove. Treatment that teenage mothers receive from friends and classmates contribute a lot on their attitude and how they settle down in school. The success will depend on how they are received in school. Sinead (2002) says that social stigmatization that may arise from teenage pregnancy may serve to allow adolescent girls to drop out of school for example by creating a perception that pregnant school girls should not be seen in schools. This in turn may be linked to the disappearance of teenage mothers from opportunities for education and training.

Young mother's learners undergo difficulties while in the school environment and they get a lot of misunderstanding in-fact they are stigmatized by their fellow learners who gossip without first finding out why they are in that situation. Hurtful comments lead the young mother's learners to feel isolated from the rest of the class and not supported by other learners. The boys often attack teenage mothers at school with direct and aggressive verbal comments, girls tend to disassociate themselves from the teenage mothers (Karimi, 2015; Chigona and Chetty, 2007).

Teenage mothers did not see the school as a welcoming environment because of the hurtful and harmful comments by both fellow learner and educators. They were no longer called by their names but were now called elderly women by their peers (Assey, 2014; Shaningwa, 2007). Stigma and discrimination by teachers and peers are some of the reasons young mother's learners abandon their education. Emotional and psychological imbalances together with the age of the young mother's leaners can also be added to factors that hinder full participation in education (IPS, 2008; Karimi, 2015)

The teenage mothers were asked whether the attitude of the parents towards them was good, their responses are presented in Table 2

Table 2. Teenage mothers perception on whether their parents and teachers attitudes are good towards them.

	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Not sure		disagreed		Strongly disagreed	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
Parents	4	16	3	12	0	0	6	24	12	48
Teachers	8	2	6	24	12	3	4	16	10	40

The analysis of the results revealed that 48.0% (N=12) strongly disagreed that the parental attitude towards them was good, 24.0% (N=6) disagreed, 0% (N=0) were not sure, 12.0% (N=3) agreed while 16.0% (N=4) strongly agreed. The analysis of data reveal that the attitude for the majority of parents towards their teenage mothers is not good. This leads them not to support their children. Teenage childbearing is often associated with numerous disruptions for girls when it comes to school attendance (Theron & Dunn, 2006; Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

The teenage mothers need tremendous support to untangle these disruptions. Denying teenage mothers, the support they need to pursue education condemns them and their babies to the vicious cycle of poverty and ignorance (Kunio & Sono, 1996). If society expects the girls to succeed with schooling, provisions must be made for meeting special needs of these learners. Those who receive family support and are psychologically prepared, pursue their studies. (Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

Some parents feel betrayed and their dream shattered. This discourages them from taking their teenage daughters back to school. Parents are key players in the re-entry policy and they have a strong effect on the outcome. Three quarters of the head teachers agreed that unforgiving parents are to blame for the girls not returning to school (Mwenje, 2015; Sulo *et al*, 2014).

Parental support is identified as a key factor enabling students to cope with the stresses of new parenthood and to continue with education. Young mothers' choices in education training and or employment can be restricted by the extent and the level of the family support, particularly where they are dependent upon family support (Sinead, 2002).

When the teenage mothers were asked whether teachers' attitude towards them was good, the analysis of the results as presented in table 4.10.2 revealed that 40.0% (N=10) strongly disagreed that the teachers' attitude towards them was good, 16.0% (N=4) disagreed, 12.0% (N=3) were not sure, 24.0% (N=6) agreed while 8.0% (N=2) strongly agreed. The response by a school teacher to a teenage mothers plays a significant part in determining the extent and the nature of the pupil's involvement in mainstream education. Exclusion may occur from a reluctance on the part of the school to accept pregnant school girls particularly in the absence of specific guidelines on the treatment of pregnant school girls a lack of suitable facilities in schools for pregnant school girls or teenage mothers and negative staff attitude (Sinead, 2002; Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

Young mothers learners who have taken advantage of the policy have had to contend with a hostile school environment, where they are isolated, humiliated and stigmatized by their fellow pupils with hardly any effective interventions from the teachers (Chigona & Chetty, 2007, CSA, 2008). Teachers are also unprepared to deal with pregnant girls and adolescent mothers in the class (Mpanza & Mzima, 2010). Shanigwa (2007) said that teachers see the young mother's learners as adults who do not fit in within the school environment. Olivier (2000) observed that some teachers consider the young mother's learner's situation as none of their concern and a private matter. Wanyama and Simatwa (2011) asserted that pupils shunned young mothers' learners when they attempt to socialize with them.

From the interview schedules, there was mixed feelings among the head teachers and Principal on their perception of the teenage mothers. For some they were not comfortable having these students in school for they fear that they are already spoilt and therefore they may spoil others. One principal said:

> *"When we condone teenage mothers in school, it sends a bad signal to other students that the school is comfortable having them in school and other girls may not see any problem being a teenage mother in school"*
> Field Notes 13th Feb 2017

To others it seemed that even if they came back to school there would not be any improvement in their academic life. One principal said:

> *"How do you expect these teenage mothers to concentrate in their studies when they have children at home? They might be in school physically but their minds are at home thinking about their children. They can't perform well in their examination"*
> Field Notes 13th Feb 2017

These views were shared by a number of head teachers and Principals. This leaves these teenage mothers with very little support they receive in such schools. This may be a factor contributing to the teenage mother seeking not to return to the previous schools they were before they dropped out. This finding contradicts Laiser and Munyinga (2017) who observed that in Tanzania, heads of school have been showing mercy and compassion for some of these girls to either continue with education after delivery or allowed them to sit for their final examination. In as much as some schools provide support to these teenage mothers, some don't provide them with support and feel that they are a nuisance.

Conclusions

When the school girls were asked how the various stake holders view the teenage mothers. From the analysis of data, it's evident that most students, parents, teachers and head teachers disapprove the issue of teenage mothers. However, from the interviews, most head teachers especially in primary schools and mixed secondary schools have no issue with the teenage mothers but Principals for county schools and extra county schools especially pure girl schools seems not to like these teenage mothers in their schools. Once they are found out to be expectant, they are released from the school quietly to go and deliver and look for other schools. This act is against the re-entry policy. The perception of the school girls and the head teachers from day schools and primary school seems to contradict with each other. This resonates with Mwenje (2015) findings where she observed that some principals are unsupportive to the teenage mothers especially those in "big" schools and they were unwilling or reluctant to accept these teenage mothers in school.

Because of this bad perception, most school heads do not want to give teenage mothers space in schools. They continue to believe that giving a chance of education to teenage mothers will encourage more girls to become pregnant. As a result, pregnant and mothering students are still expelled from schools and some are struggling to continue with studies under difficult situation (Tjombonde, 2003; Maluli and Bali, 2014,).

The study also observed that teachers are over whelmingly opposed to the idea that pregnant girls should remain in school. They prefer the girl to go home and deliver before returning to school for they cannot concentrate well in their studies while they are expectant (McCladden, 2015; Ahikire & Madanda, 2011).

From the interviews, teachers in primary school were more receptive to keeping pregnant girls in school than those who taught in secondary schools. Similarly, it was observed that teachers in day schools were more receptive to the retention of pregnant mothers than mixed day and boarding schools. In some of the schools it was noted that these teenage mothers posted very impressive results in their examination. This results collaborate that of Maluli and Bali (2014) which showed that young mothers were able to cope with schooling. Their quality of work and performance in test and examinations were always complete and according to instructors. Pregnant and mothering students showed great improvement in learning both individually and in interaction with other students in group work when supported financially and psychologically.

The Study also revealed that most of the friends of the teenage mothers disapprove of the teenage mothers. Treatment that teenage mothers receive from friends and classmates contribute a lot on their attitude and how they settle down in school. Their success in school will depend on how they are received. When the teenage mothers were asked whether the attitude of the parents towards them was good. The analysis of data reveal that majority of parents don't approve their daughters being expectant i.e. majority of parents disapprove teenage mothers. This leads them not to support their children. Teenage childbearing is often associated with numerous disruptions for girls when it comes to school attendance (Theron & Dunn, 2006; Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

When the teenage mothers were asked whether teachers' attitude towards them was good, majority of the teenage mothers said that teachers' attitude towards them was not good. The response by a school to a teenage mothers plays a significant part in determining the extent and the nature of the pupil's involvement in mainstream education. Exclusion may occur from a reluctance on the part of the school to accept pregnant school girls particularly in the absence of specific guidelines on the treatment of pregnant school girls a lack of suitable facilities in schools for pregnant school girls or teenage mothers and negative staff attitude (Sinead, 2002; Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

From the interview schedules, it was evident that some head teachers and Principals do not approve of teenage mothers in school. This finding contradicts Laiser & Munyinga (2017) who observed that in Tanzania, heads of school have been showing mercy and compassion for some of these girls to either continue with education after delivery or allowed them to sit for their final examination. In as much as some schools provide support to these teenage mothers, some don't provide them with support and feel that they are a nuisance.

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