

**Teachers' Experiences and Practices of Support for
School-going Teenage Mothers in Namibia**

by

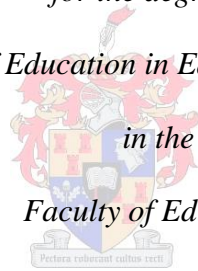
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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The exclusion of girls who fall pregnant while attending school has long been a contentious issue in the literature as it normally ends their schooling. Namibian school-going girls who become pregnant while attending school are no longer excluded from continuing with their education, as new policies in education prevent such exclusion. This qualitative research explores teachers' experiences of and support practices for school-going teenage mothers in Namibian secondary schools, given this policy context of inclusion. The study was framed within Bronfenbrenners' bio-ecological system theory focusing on teachers' interactions with teenage mothers.

Eight participants were selected purposively from two secondary schools in the Oshikoto region, Namibia, provided that they were secondary-school teachers and had taught teenage mothers in the past three years. Data were collected in the form of semi-structured focus groups, follow-up individual interviews and field notes. Each focus group was represented by four teachers from the same school, two males and two females. Qualitative content analysis was used as a method of data analysis.

The themes that emerged included the following: teachers' responses to the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools, unpacking teachers' perceptions on the policy of inclusion of teenage mothers, and support practices. The results revealed that there was a lack of resources and teachers' felt burdened, not only in the classroom but generally in the school. Teachers, nevertheless, did have empathy for mothers as learners. They also felt both satisfied and dissatisfied, often blaming the inclusion policy for their difficulties in managing classroom dilemmas when teenage mothers were present. They displayed conditional caring and raised concerns about gender and care, as well as expressing a need for comprehensive information. The key finding was that teachers made a distinction between pregnant and parenting learners when thinking of support. The physical appearance of a pregnant learner played a role. Therefore teachers cared for a pregnant learner because they feared that something might happen to the pregnant learner *while in their care* in the classroom. This resulted in teachers seemingly providing "strategic caring" based on the condition of the pregnant learner. From the findings, it is recommended that pre-service and in-service training of teachers should pay attention to the practise of inclusion of teenage mothers in schools.

OPSOMMING

Die uitsluiting van meisies wat tydens hul skoolloopbaan swanger word, is lank reeds in die literatuur 'n netelige saak aangesien dit gewoonlik die einde van hul skoolloopbaan beteken. Namibiese skoolmeisies wat swanger word terwyl hulle nog skool bywoon, word nie meer verbied om hul skoolloopbaan voort te sit nie aangesien nuwe onderwysbeleide sodanige uitsluiting voorkom. Hierdie kwalitatiewe navorsing ondersoek onderwysers se ervaring van en die ondersteuningspraktyke vir skoolgaande tienermoeders in sekondêre skole in Namibië gesien uit die hoek van 'n beleid van inklusie. Die studie val binne die raamwerk van Bronfenbrenner se bio-ekologiese sistemiese teorie en fokus op onderwysers se interaksie met tienermoeders.

Agt deelnemers is deur middel van doelgerigte steekproefneming uit twee sekondêre skole in die Oshikoto-gebied in Namibië gekies met die voorbehoud dat hulle aan 'n sekondêre skool onderwys gegee het en in die voorafgaande drie jaar tienermoeders onderrig het. Data oor onderwysers se ervarings is versamel deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde fokusgroepe, opgevolg deur individuele onderhoude en veldnotas. Elke fokusgroep is verteenwoordig deur vier onderwysers van dieselfde skool waarvan twee manlik en twee vroulik was. Kwalitatiewe inhoudsanalise is gebruik as metode om data te analiseer.

Die temas wat te voorskyn gekom het, sluit in: onderwysers se reaksie ten opsigte van die insluiting van tienermoeders in skole, hul opvattinge oor die beleid van inklusiwiteit van tienermoeders asook ondersteuningspraktyke. Die resultate het openbaar dat daar 'n tekort aan hulpmiddels was, dat onderwysers gevoel het dat 'n las op hulle geplaas is, nie net in die klaskamer nie, maar ook in die algemene skoolopset en ook dat onderwysers empatie getoon het teenoor leerders wat moeders was. Hulle het terselfdertyd tevrede en ontevrede gevoel en het dikwels die inklusiwiteitsbeleid blameer vir die probleme wat hulle ondervind het om dilemmas in die klaskamer te hanteer waar tienermoeders teenwoordig was. Hulle het voorwaardelike sorg aan die dag gelê, besorgheid oor geslag en versorging uitgespreek en het 'n behoefte aan omvattende inligting gehad. Die belangrikste bevinding was dat onderwysers 'n onderskeid getref het tussen swanger leerders en leerders wat reeds ouers was wanneer ondersteuning ter sprake gekom het. Die fisieke voorkoms van 'n swanger leerder het 'n invloed gehad. Daarom het bevindings veronderstel dat onderwysers besorgd was oor 'n swanger leerder wat in hul klaskamer was omdat hulle bang was dat iets met die swanger leerder kon gebeur terwyl sy in hul sorg in die klaskamer was. Dit het tot gevolg gehad dat

onderwysers selfgerigte of strategiese sorg verleen het op grond van die toestand van die leerder. Na aanleiding van die bevindings word aanbeveel dat voordiens- en indiensopleiding van onderwysers aandag moet skenk aan die praktyk van inklusiwiteit van tienermoeders in skole.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FAWENA: Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia

GCO: Girl Child Organisation

HIV & AIDS: Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

MFMC: My Future is My Choice

SRE: Sexual Reproductive Education

SRH: Sexual Relationship Health

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

WOH: Window of Hope

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter of this research will present the background and motivation of the study. This extends to the problem statement, purpose and aims of the study, which lead to the research question. In this chapter, the overview of the research design and methodology chapter will be given, as well as the theoretical framework that underpins this study. The terms used in this study will be explained and, finally, the summary of each chapter will be outlined.

1.2 Background to the study

Teenage pregnancy is regarded as a worldwide phenomenon. For the purpose of this study the researcher presents some of the international statistics, as well as national statistics on teenage pregnancy which have given rise to this study. Teenage pregnancy has been one of the major barriers to educational access for girls in many countries (Chigona & Chetty, 2007) and is considered by many researchers to be a social problem. It is viewed as being brought about by societal factors which could be damaging to all concerned (Bonell, 2004).

In 2010, the United States (US) teenage birth rate between the ages of 15 and 19 decreased to 34.3 births per 1,000, below the 2009 rate of 37.9 births per 1,000 (Hamilton, Martin, & Ventura, 2011, p. 3). In comparison to the United Kingdom (UK), the US teenage birth rate is virtually double - more than in the UK (25 per 1,000) - which has the highest birth rates in Western Europe (Fast Facts, 2012). However, in the past decade “dramatic declines in teenage fertility have been reported in the US and to a lesser extent in the UK through a number of focused policy strategies” (Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod & Letsoalo, 2009, p. 27). The 2010 statistic is the first lowest rate reported in the history of US teenage birth rates.

In South Africa, the General Housing Survey of 2011 reported an increase in the prevalence of teenage pregnancy with age. According to this survey, nearly 11% of 19 year old girls are more likely to have been pregnant than 13 year old girls (0.2%), leading this survey to conclude that “about 4.5% of all females in the age group 13-19 years were reported to be pregnant during the reference period” (Statistics South Africa, 2012, p. 18). Furthermore, these statistics are consistent with the 2009 and 2010 data, and explain the fact that just over 2% of girls between the ages 7 and 24 years who were not attending any educational institution blamed pregnancy for dropping out of school (Statistics South Africa, 2012, p.

18). To a certain extent this is true, as statistics in Namibia confirm these findings. In 2009 Namibian statistics on pregnancy-related school drop-outs indicate that a total of 1735 learners dropped out, of which 96% are girls (Gender Research & Advocacy Project Legal Assistance Centre, 2012). The researcher argues that the blame for school drop-outs should not be placed merely on pregnancy, as there seem to be other factors that may contribute to girls falling pregnant. At some point girls may lack sex education, be sexually active, be irresponsible by practising unsafe sex, lack contraceptive skills, be forced into sex, be raped, desire to have a child and lack support from the systems in which they function. This could also include the microsystem in which teenage mothers are in active interaction with their teachers. Such factors that may lead to learners becoming pregnant while at school, which may then result in their dropping out in situations where support provided is insufficient.

National statistics in Namibia indicate a descending trend in teenage pregnancy. However, teenage pregnancy is still a concern in some regions of the country (Arowolo, Hoebes & Mtengu, 2011). The Namibia Demographic and Health Survey of 2006-07, estimated that one in six women aged 15-19 had already started childbearing, nearly 13% were already mothers, and another 3% were pregnant with their first child during the period of the survey. The regional variation in teenage pregnancy is evident and ranges from 34% in the Kavango region, followed by Kunene (31%), Oshikoto with 14%, and Khomas with the lowest, 6% of young women who having begun childbearing (Namibia, Ministry of Health and Social Services, 2008). The Oshikoto region is 1% below the national figure, which is 15% (Arowolo et al., 2011). Additionally, in the recent Namibian news it was reported that about 1493 schoolgirls between the ages of 13 and 17 fell pregnant in 2010, converting into nearly four learners falling pregnant each day (Kazondovi, 2012). This shows the prevalence of teenage pregnancy at large, and specifically for school-going girls.

Although there is a policy on Prevention and Management of learner pregnancy, it has long been one of the most pressing challenges facing Namibian society, especially with regard to access to education for teenage mothers (Sister Namibia Annual Report, 2009). In the past there was no written policy on the management of teenage pregnancy: girls who fell pregnant were expelled and the decision whether to readmit the teenage mother after delivery of the baby remained that of the individual school authority (Hubbard, 2009). In the same way, boys at school responsible for the pregnancy were also expelled, in what has been referred to as the exclusion paradigm. This exclusion of pregnant learners from schools has led some African countries to call for an international convention on gender equality in education in the inclusion paradigm. This movement urged some African countries, amongst others South

Africa, Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Cameroon, to develop national policies protecting teenage mothers from being educationally discriminated against (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012).

Namibia is one of the countries that have made a shift towards a more progressive way of thinking by not discriminating against teenage mothers in schools. In order not to have learner pregnancy as a barrier to learning, the country has taken a decision that aims for the inclusion of teenage mothers (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d). The intervention of allowing teenage mothers to stay in school and to return after giving birth is considered to be significant in postponing a second birth. It furthermore offers young women increased opportunities to get an education and improve their economic standing (Grant & Hallman as cited in Bhana, Morrell, Shefer & Ngabaza, 2010). Education is a basic human right and inclusion of teenage mothers in schools promotes principles of gender equity. Inclusion of teenage mothers in schools is also important to ensure that teenage mothers have equal educational rights, just like other learners (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012).

The current Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Namibia highlights six guiding principles: the right to education, the need for prevention, information, respect and support, and respect for cultural and family values (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d). This study shows how, in cases where prevention measures fail and learners become pregnant, these principles may enable teachers to give support to teenage mothers to continue with their education. It appears that teachers may collaborate with other systems to provide a successful support network, for instance the family, support persons, teacher counsellors, regional school counsellors, social workers, or community organisations (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d). It is against this background that the study attempts to investigate teachers' experiences and their support practices for teenage mothers in schools. The argument is based on the ideology that every teacher at school has a responsibility for learners in his or her classroom. In this study, a classroom can be seen as a system, whereby a teacher is in a proximal relationship with teenage mothers. Teachers may need to be supported in order to implement the inclusion policy, advocating for an environment that is conducive to teenage mothers' schooling.

1.3 Motivation for the study

It appears that adults find difficulty with the noticeably different physical appearance of the pregnant learner, which seems to disturb the lines between adult/child, teacher/student,

asexual/sexual on which schooling depends (Pillow, 2003). Pregnant learners in schools provide bodily evidence of the capacity of young women to have the same reproductive power as that of their adult female teachers (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012). It could be argued that the pregnant body of the teenage girl does not let society forget about her sexuality (Pillow, 2005). Teenage mothers are also aware of these views and so feel shy and fearful, as they think that they might not be accepted by others (Shaningwa, 2007).

The “pregnant teenager” has been conceptualised by some researchers in the literature as

a black, urban, poor female who is more than likely herself the daughter of a teenage mother. She is probably failing in school, has low self-esteem, sees no future for herself, and now has to deal with the untimely end of her youth and face the harsh realities and responsibilities of adulthood. (Luttrell, 2003, p. 4)

There is a perception that a pregnant learner is a ‘good girl’ who made a mistake but others may view her as promiscuous (Shields & Pearce, 2006, p. 129). They are considered to be “stupid sluts,” rebels, the products of dysfunctional homes, irresponsible, dropouts, and neglectful mothers (Shields & Pierce, 2006, p. 129). However, many African women are aware that their societies do not expect their children to become pregnant at a young age (Jewkes, Morrell & Christofides, 2009), and the social construction of teenage pregnancy and motherhood often leads to teenage mothers serving as scapegoats for negative social trends such as poverty. It seems that once girls become pregnant they are perceived as offenders, and their pregnancies are linked to irresponsibility. Such opinions may have an influence on the implementation of an inclusion policy for teenage mothers (Pillow, 2004, Pillow, 2005). It is further suggested that these constructions have strongly influenced the management of the education of teenage mothers.

There are different approaches to policies that call for inclusion of teenage mothers in schools. Principals and teachers may have different approaches towards a policy like the Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Namibia, which includes interacting with the policy, making meaning of it, or rejecting or negotiating with it (Bhana, Clowes, Morrell & Shefer, 2008). This means that the right to schooling for teenage mothers does not automatically translate into better school access, more positive school experiences or support. Rather, the responses of some schools to the policy and how they translate it into practice are arguably shaped by the historical and current constructions of pregnancy, parenting and sexuality. In addition, teenage pregnancy and parenting are typically pathologised, and moralistic arguments are offered in which teenage sexuality, especially

sexuality outside of marriage, is viewed as unacceptable (Bhana, et al., 2008). Therefore, it might not be surprising that these perceptions can spill over into the school environment. Hopefully, by the end of this study, the researcher should be able to unveil the different ways in which such perceptions are dealt with in the school environment.

Pillow (2005) suggests that a number of discourses about teenage pregnancy typically exist in society. In many ways, these discourses have negative undertones. These are discourses that regard pregnancy as contamination, as a cold, a disease or a disability or as pathology, and education as a responsibility. The “discourse of contamination”, for example, that develops from the belief that the “immorality” of teenage mothers will give a bad example to the other learners at school, is very prevalent (Pillow, 2004, p. 57). Furthermore, Pillow (2005, p. 74) suggests that “discourses of pregnancy as cold or disease” explain various reactions to learners in schools. Responses depend on whether school-girl pregnancy is perceived as being like a cold or like a disease or disability. It is emphasised that schools which adopt the attitude that “teen pregnancy is like a cold” perceive it as a disease that needs resources to cope with it. However, some schools have few support services for teenage mothers. The assumption then is that teenage mothers must have their “illness” cared for outside the context of the school. In addition, pregnancy as a disease views a pregnant learner as somebody who may need some special services and possibly in need of being split-up from the regular school environment (Pillow, 2005, p. 75). Furthermore, the immoral pregnant or parenting learner is not only seen as extremely infectious in her irresponsibility (both immorally and traditionally), but also as a problem in society (Pillow, 2005). Also, teenage mothers are viewed as too fertile, immoral, unacceptable and irresponsible. This may result in the discourses of education as responsibility, whereby, education for teenage mothers is seen as a right that is lost because of irresponsible behaviour. Conversely, allowing teenage mothers to continue with education is seen as a chance for teenage mothers to redress their irresponsibility and make a contribution to society. Therefore, discourses on education as a responsibility have influenced what should be included in such an education, among others, avoidance of a repeat pregnancy and the re-education of morals and responsibilities (Pillow, 2005). This involves discourses that view education for teenage mothers as a right and those that view it as their responsibility. The formed discursive climate may create an interpretation and implementation of educational policy that promotes the rights of teenage mothers (Pillow, 2004). It has been shown that educational research and debates lack what schools can do under the pregnancy policy to support the right of a teenage mother’s access to an education

equal to that of her peers (Pillow, 2004). If such discourses surround teenage mothers, then the motivation of the researcher is to find out how this situation is managed in schools.

School support is a crucial factor in determining whether a teenage mother is able to continue her education. The willingness of school principals to accommodate and support teenage mothers (Morrell, Bhana & Shefer, 2012) is a primary consideration for support. There are schools who view pregnant and young motherhood as a barrier for learners. Such learners find themselves with the double load of being a learner and becoming or being a parent. In addition, the role of the teachers is, amongst others, to respond to the changing needs of these learners. They also need to address perceptions of the wider public concerning the symbolic meaning of teenage mothers in the school (Morrell et al., 2012). As such it is argued that teachers may need professional assistance in supporting teenage mothers in their school experience. In-service training for teachers is important to keep track of the changes that society is facing (Bloem as cited in Chigona & Chetty, 2008). This means that the absence of support personnel could be constructed as a critical problem when it comes to addressing the needs of teenage mothers (Clowes, D'Amant & Nkani, 2012).

Concerning the understandings of challenges of obeying the policy to accommodate teenage mothers in school, Clowes, et al. (2012) suggest that for many, the classroom is not a particularly supportive environment for a learner who is pregnant or parenting. Principals largely agree that schools are not the place for teenage mothers, citing poor role-modelling and the stigmatising of teenage mothers by 'normal' learners and the wider community as explanations for their views (Clowes et al., 2012). In addition, it appears that many teachers perceive the sexuality of teenage mothers as a disgrace and a disruption to the entirety of school life (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012). Teachers emphasise that sexual activities should be reserved for adults and school going children should abstain from them. This has made teachers regard the inclusion of teenage mothers in their classroom as a danger, not only for classroom unity, but also for the whole of school performances. Profoundly, it is argued that without support structures in school, teenage mothers are left with inadequate resources both in and out of school, having to deal with double responsibilities at the stage of adolescence (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012). Importantly, one needs to bear in mind that adolescence is a stage of development where teenagers are no longer children, but have not yet reached the stage at which they could be regarded as adults (Macleod, 2001).

It is this background, as evident from the above literature that prompted the researcher to do a study on teachers' experiences and support practices for school-going teenage mothers. There

seems to be a gap within the microsystems with which a teenage mother is in close relationship, and within the school system itself, which is where teenage mothers interact with other learners and teachers. This gap could also be narrowed to refer to the interaction of a teacher with a teenage mother in the classroom as a single system. A consideration of the above statistics of school-girls falling pregnant and dropping-out, the teachers complaints about the presence of teenage mothers at school, and above all, being a teacher myself, motivated me to carry out this study. If learners are not supported they may not be able to finish their education. It is clear from the statistics on school drop-outs that there is a lack of support, and this could be why these learners are dropping out, despite the inclusion policy. That is why it is important for the researcher to be aware of teachers' experiences and support practices.

1.4 Problem statement

The literature regarding teenage mothers led the researcher to undertake research in the context of Namibian teachers as they interact with young mothers in the classrooms. Teachers are seen as the "key role players in the interface between the learner and their experience at school" (Bhana et al., 2010, p. 873). The literature highlights what is happening in the school environment. It is not clear who should take responsibility for creating a supportive environment for teenage mothers to achieve their educational goals in schools, in spite of a progressive policy existing in the Namibian context. In an ideal situation a professional counsellor helps teachers cope with teenage mothers. The problem arises when in some schools there is no such professional, and the teachers who are not trained in dealing with such situations are the ones who have to deal with it on day-to-day basis. The research aim is to find out how these teachers manage this situation without the professional expertise that is needed, which the previously-mentioned policy advocates for education for all. Doing a study with teachers seem to be important, as what they do may affect the efficacy of policy (Morrell et al., 2012), teachers may experience, respond to and interact differently to the policy regarding teenage mothers at school. Therefore, for gender equality to have meaning for teenage mothers, teachers in their practice and outlook need to be available and willing to provide support (Morrell et al., 2012). For this reason, there is a need for investigations of teachers' experience or practices toward teenage mothers at school. This may help all concerned (that is learners, teachers and parents) to cope with discourses surrounding teenage mothers within the school environment. Also, the teachers and the parents of these learners

need to play their respective roles in supporting these learners to cope with the dual responsibility of parenting and learning.

1.5 The purpose of the study

This study explored teachers' experiences of and support practices for school-going teenage mothers.

1.6 Aims of the study

The aim of this study was to investigate teachers' experiences of teaching school-going teenage mothers in secondary schools in the Oshikoto Region of Namibia. In addition, this study investigated the nature of teachers' support practices for school-going teenage mothers. The research attempts to provide answers to the following question:

1.6.1 Research question

How do secondary school teachers experience and practice inclusion of teenage mothers as learners in Namibian secondary schools?

The research question is further broken down into three questions to best answer the research question:

- What are teacher's thoughts about including teenage mothers in schools?
- What do teachers know about pregnant learners in schools?
- What do teachers think can be done to prevent teenagers from falling pregnant?

1.7 Research design and methodology

A qualitative research design, focusing on interpretive research, is used. In interpretive research, the researcher is interested in understanding the meanings that teachers have constructed how they make sense of their world and how they interpret their experiences in the world (Merriam, 2009). The semi-structured interview guide is used as a research instrument "to gain initial group data, which produces an overall group narrative, and then seek more data on specific components of the narratives" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 177). The researcher utilised the focus group interview as a primary method, and then used follow-up in one-on-one in-depth interviews with participants, who were all teachers. The semi-structured interview refers to more open-ended and less structured questions. It assumes that individuals' responses define the world in unique ways (Merriam, 2009).

The target population of this study are secondary school teachers, who teach grades 8 to 12 in two secondary schools in the Oshikoto region of Namibia. The reason for choosing these two schools is that they have implemented the current inclusion policy of teenage mothers (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d). Furthermore, the participants were selected through purposive sampling based on the criteria that participants are high school teachers who have taught teenage mothers in the past three years.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the focus group interview as a primary research method with eight participants by allocating them into two focus groups. Each focus group consisted of four teachers from the same school and each focus group interview lasted for about an hour and thirty minutes. After a week, the researcher did a follow-up in-depth one-on-one interview with all the focus group participants lasting for about an hour. The aim was to explore specific viewpoints and themes that arose from the focus group interview in greater depth. This follow-up also enabled the researcher “to go back and gain more data where needed to best answer the research question” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 177). The follow-up open-ended one-on-one interview questions were constructed based on responses extracted from the focus group interviews (Hesse-Biber, Howling, Leavy & Lovejoy, 2004).

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. In order not to interrupt the school timetable, the interviews were scheduled by appointment. The information obtained remains confidential and the names of participants and the schools will not be mentioned, but fictitious names will be used. Furthermore, the recorded interview will be destroyed when the thesis has been evaluated. The data will be analysed by using qualitative content analysis.

1.8 Theoretical framework

The current research draws on the bio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner as a theoretical framework. The theory provides a framework for interpreting research findings and may give direction for future studies (Berns, 2007). The bio-ecological theory, as a framework, is also able to link both individual and macro-social understandings of care with marginalised groups such as teenage mothers. Therefore it is a valuable framework to consider for this study.

1.9 Explanation of terms

For the aim of this research the following terms will be used, mainly referring to the following:

1.9.1 Teenage mothers

- Teenage mothers: this term will be used to refer to both pregnant and parenting learners.

1.9.2 Pregnant learners

- This term is used to refer to a learner who is pregnant while at school.

1.9.3 Parenting learners

- This term is used to refer to a learner who gave birth and is still attending school.

1.9.4 Secondary school

- A secondary school in this study refers to schools that offer grades 8 to 12.

1.10 Outline of the study

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the research. The chapter discusses the background and motivation of the study, placing the study into a theoretical framework. Furthermore, this chapter explains the research problem statement and aims of the study, as well as the research question. The research design and methodology and the definition of terms are explained.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review on teenage pregnancy, mainly focusing on inclusion of school-going teenage mothers. The chapter also discusses various discourses associated with teenage mothers in schools, as well as support needs for school-going teenage mothers. Importantly, it presents teachers' responses to school-going teenage mothers in schools as presented in the literature.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology and the ethical considerations that will inform the research. The population of the study, sampling, and the methods utilised in data collection, as well as the methods of analysing the data are discussed.

Chapter 4 presents the interpretation of research data.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of research findings.

Chapter 6 presents the reflection on research findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews earlier studies on teachers' experiences and practices of support for school-going teenage mothers. The literature review enables researchers to identify the theory and content used by previous researchers who have influenced the research area, as well as the methodology used in previous studies (Ridley, 2008, p. 2). Thus the literature review will help to create a foundation on which to build the current study (Machi & McEvoy, 2009, p. 2) which explores teachers' experiences of and support practices for schooling teenage mothers.

Initially, the term "teenage pregnancy" is defined so as to introduce the reader to how it relates to the context of the study. In addition, this literature review examines the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools. This includes the definition of the term "inclusion", and discussion on teenage mothers as learners, both nationally and internationally. This extends to exploring the literature of being pregnant while at school, as well as being a parent and at the same time a learner. It also discusses teachers' experiences in implementing the inclusion policy for teenage mothers. Furthermore, this review looks at support structures for teenage mothers in school who are mainly on educational support, family support and sexuality education programmes. It also discusses the stigmatising of teenage mothers in the school context. Finally, this chapter discusses the "bio-ecological systems theory" as a theoretical foundation for this study.

2.2 What is teenage pregnancy?

Pregnancy presents a girl or woman with the unique challenge of becoming aware of two people surviving beneath one skin (Luttrell, 2003, p. 4). The term "teenage pregnancy" refers to a teenage girl who becomes pregnant between the ages of thirteen and nineteen (UNICEF Malaysia Communications, 2008). This suggests that a specific developmental stage is attached to the term "teenage pregnancy". Before the 1960s, the terms 'illegitimacy and unwed mothers' were used, and the term "teenage pregnancy" started to be used in the early 1960s (Wong, 1997, p. 273). The terms "unwed mother" and "illegitimate child" were used to describe these young women who conceived (Macleod, 2011), which implied a moral judgement. These words were replaced by the more neutral term "teenage pregnancy". In fact, Wong (1997, p. 277) argues that the term "teenage pregnancy" does not only relate to

pregnant teenage women in general, but it mainly relates to “pregnant young women” who are not yet married. This view is not, however, applicable in all social contexts, as it is in Namibia.

Teenage pregnancy has been one of the major barriers to educational access for girls in many countries (Chigona & Chetty, 2007), including Namibia. As such, it is considered to be a result of social practices and seems to be hurtful to the affected females, their offspring and families (Bonell, 2004). Accordingly, Nkani and Bhana, (2010, p. 112) argue that “teenage pregnancy is situated within a discourse of sexual stigma and a violation of age generational hierarchies”. In such a situation, a school-going teenage mother or pregnancy may provide bodily evidence of the same reproductive capacity as that of their adult female teachers (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012). The changing body of the pregnant learner may make the school focus only on her sexuality (Pillow, 2005). However, revisionist scholars argue that “early childbearing represents a rational and conscious choice for disadvantaged teen-aged women for whom there is little advantage in delaying pregnancy” (Macleod, 2011, p. 57). In this view, teenage pregnancy and early childbearing are not seen as problematic.

The social construction of teenage pregnancy and motherhood then often leads to teenage mothers serving as victims for negative social trends such as poverty (Shields & Pierce, 2006). It seems that most of the literature has examined the negative consequences of early reproduction, specifically for school-going teenage girls. Amongst other researchers, Macleod (2011, p. 11) pointed out schooling disruption, disadvantages of a socio-economic kind, ‘poor child outcomes, health risks, ‘welfare dependency and demographic concerns’ as consequences of early reproduction. Therefore, teenage pregnancy may lead to school drop-out and shatter the feminist agenda striving to improve teenage mothers’ life chances (Nkani & Bhana, 2010). This study finds it relevant to look at teachers’ experiences of support practices offered to teenage mothers in order to stay in school, ensuring that there are supportive environments available to teenage mothers in schools. When it comes to teenage pregnancy, the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools is also important, to ensure that they have equal educational rights, just like other learners (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012).

2.3 Inclusion of teenage mothers in schools

This part of the literature review focuses on the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools. This includes geographical areas where teenage mothers are allowed to continue with their schooling and where teachers’ experiences of the implementation of policies that encourage

teenage mothers to attend school, will be discussed. In order to do this, it is important to define and discuss the concept of inclusion.

2.3.1 *What is inclusion?*

According to Culham and Nind, (2003, p. 73) “at the heart of *inclusion* is the right to not be excluded and for individuals, whatever their difference, to be treated with respect and given opportunities”. This means that inclusion is connected with the recognition and removal of obstacles. It is about the presence, participation and achievement of all learners, including the specific involvement of those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement (Swart & Pettipher, 2011).

The term inclusion also has other different meanings (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2011; Dyson, 2001; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Traditionally, inclusion is used when one refers to the inclusion of learners with disabilities such as visual, hearing, physical impairments, mental disorder, into a mainstream school. Equally important, inclusion is not only meant for children with special educational needs, but rather for all children or learners that are identified to be marginalised (Messiou, 2006). In the context of this study, the researcher argues that teenage mothers could be marginalised in the school environment as a result of societal discussion about teenage pregnancy (Chigona & Chetty, 2007). In this study, inclusion refers to the inclusion policy for school-going teenage mothers which advocates - educational opportunities for all.

The process of inclusion influences an educational system, as it advocates for no discrimination, inclusion policies, as well as highlighting how schools should respond to diversity (Armstrong, et al., 2011). As mentioned in Chapter 1, inclusion policies are found in many countries supporting continued education for teenage mothers (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012). Yet, “in many cases inclusion has been reduced mainly to a change of language rather than of practice, and the more the language of inclusion is used in practice the more evasive it becomes” (Armstrong et al., 2011, p. 37). In addition, the way in which teenage mothers are perceived may incorporate aspects of inclusion and exclusion (Sookrajh, Gopal & Maharaj, 2005). This means that inclusion of the pregnant and parenting learners into schools will not happen automatically. Florian (2012) suggests that as the educational policy changes, this may also call for teachers’ professional development to enable them to practice inclusion.

Education is a basic human right, and the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools advocates for values of gender equity (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012). The right to education has been

interpreted at the international level as including the right of a learner not to be discriminated against or “disciplined” because of pregnancy. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has called upon all UN members to eliminate obstacles which limit access to education for pregnant girls (Hubbard, Munyinyi, Enggerman, Schulze-Allen, Carew-Watts, Holt, et al., 2008). Namibian schools are prohibited from discriminating against teenage mothers under the Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy. Teachers and stakeholders are expected to ensure that teenage mothers have the same rights as their peers, as well as a school environment free from discrimination or harassment. By doing this it will promote inclusion of all learners, despite their differences. When discussing inclusion it is also important to look at the perspectives of teenage mothers, nationally and internationally.

2.3.2 Teenage mothers: National and international perspectives

In some countries teenage mothers have been granted permission to stay in school while pregnant and to return to school after the birth of their children. This is often because teenage mothers need to prepare for their future and that of their children. For example, in Cameroon and Madagascar, pregnant girls are allowed to go back to school right away after delivery and are not forced to take maternity leave (Chilisa, 2002). In addition, teenage mothers in Cameroon can negotiate with their schools about the period of their maternity leave, so that the school can organise for additional lessons that will keep them on track with their peers (Chilisa, 2002).

Equally, a study done in Kenya suggested that it is seen as vital for teenage mothers to continue their education when they become pregnant while in school (Sarah & Muthoni, 2012). Support for every child at school age to complete their studies effectively is also apparent in South Africa. The national policy advocates for gender equality, which includes learners who are already parents and those who may become pregnant while at school (Shefer, Bhana & Morrell, 2013). Similarly, Namibia is no exception. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a policy that allows pregnant and parenting learners to stay in school. This policy will enable Namibia to reach the 2030 goal of educating all children including teenage mothers (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d). Inclusion of teenage mothers in schools could, however, be seen as conceding that every child has the right to education, thereby, advocating education for all.

When talking about teenage mothers, a distinction should be made between those mothers who are pregnant and those who have had babies and are back at school. This distinction

appears to be important for the discussion of teacher attitudes and practices towards teenage mothers. It is equally important to note what the literature suggests about a pregnant learner and a parenting learner in schools.

2.3.2.1 Being pregnant while attending school

According to the Namibian learner pregnancy policy (n. d) a pregnant learner may choose to remain at school until four weeks before the estimated date of delivery. This policy is flexible, meaning that a learner may take leave before the four weeks due date. Being pregnant while at school is a challenge because bodily evidence makes the pregnancy difficult to hide when most pregnant teenagers would like to hide the pregnancy. Shock and distrust are the initial reaction experienced by most teenage girls when they realise that they are pregnant (Ngabaza, 2011). In addition, pregnant learners are aware that pregnancy at their age is not acceptable. Hence, due to ‘fear, secrecy and shame’ a pregnant learner may try to hide her pregnancy until she can no longer do so (Ngabaza, 2011; Shefer, Bhana, Morrell, Manzini & Masuku, 2012, p. 128), which entails a delay in informing the school about her pregnancy. This fear and shame could also lead to them taking risks of aborting the unborn babies and without proper guidance they may not take precautionary measures when faced with complications which could lead to miscarriages. For example, “one of the Welwitschia [junior secondary school] girls allegedly experienced a miscarriage at the hostel in October 2012 and was rushed to the Khorixas State Hospital” (Nakale, 2013). The teenage mother may not only be challenged during the period of the pregnancy, but also experience difficulties in being a learner and a parent after the birth.

2.3.2.2 Being a learner and a parent

The double responsibility of being a learner and a parent is apparent in most cases and has direct implications for the performance of the learners at school. Some of the challenges faced by learners who have babies are “sleepless night attending to their crying babies, less time with friends, and a need for efficient time management skills to balance the demands of teenage motherhood and schooling” (Chohan & Langa, 2011, p. 90). The parenting learners face the very difficult choice of prioritising between their children and their studies. The choice varies according to the “health of the child, familial childcare support and the attitude of the school” (Shefer et al., 2012, p. 137). It was also found that parenting learners who have to take their sick babies to hospital “experienced punitive and unsympathetic treatment from the teachers” (Shefer et al., 2012, p. 146), causing a drop in the academic performance of teenage mothers (Shefer et al., 2012, p. 146). Therefore, “leaving the teen mothers without

support to complete schooling, would mean condemning both the girls and their children to eternal poverty and its effects” Chigona, 2007, p. ii). It is however important to establish what the literature suggests about teachers’ experience of teenage mothers in schools.

2.3.3 Teachers’ experiences: Implementation of inclusion

There is a paucity of research concerning teachers as the primary care-givers for teenage mothers at school. Early work by Bhana, et al. (2008, p. 78) points out that even if teachers do care for and help teenage mothers, it is likely that many teachers’ responses to teenage mothers in school will be ‘judgmental and moralistic’. In support of this, a study by Bhana et al. (2010) on South African teachers’ responses to teenage pregnancy and teenage mothers in schools found that “teachers’ attitudes and practices” were the main issues controlling what teenage mothers went through. On the other hand, Shefer et al. (2013, p. 8) argue that teachers should not be viewed as bad individuals who are responsible for the negative views that they have about teenage mothers, since teachers’ responses to teenage mothers are “also shaped by their social and cultural context”. The cultural influence on teachers’ responses is also supported by the findings of (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012), who focused their study on life orientation teachers and guidance counsellors.

Another study on the inclusion policy of teenage mothers by Runhare and Vandeyar (2012) asserts that the lack of basic skills is apparent, as teachers had no idea on how to assist the pregnant learners to cope with dual responsibilities. The study revealed that pregnant learners were not provided with the attention and help they required while at school. Because of this inattention to teenage mothering, no records existed of how many pregnant learners were at school at the time of research. This correlates with the findings of Ngabaza and Shefer, (2013, p. 112), who suggested that “teachers should be trained in supportive measures, and guidance on dealing with pregnant learners should be made available.”

It seems that “schools probably do not have the resources and have too many other demands to give this issue any attention” (Shefer et al., 2012, p. 146). Pillow (2005) felt that different responses towards pregnant learners in schools could be as a result of “discourses of pregnancy as cold or disease.” If schools see pregnancy as a disease this means they will require special facilities to cater for that need. Shefer et al. (2012, p. 145) found that “teachers’ [had] concerns for learners’ safety and the lack of birthing resources”. This may, however, indicate that “young girls generally suffer the most from school exclusions and prejudice” (Bhana et al., 2008, p. 89). On the other hand, “young fathers remain largely invisible” (Bhana, et al., 2008, p. 89). This finding is also supported by Shefer and Fouten

(2012, p. 149), who stress that dual responsibility for parenting is gendered. They highlighted that “young female learners have a very different experience from young male learners”. Equally, their study found that a cultural gender stereotype existed; as men may be seen as “breadwinners and heads of households” while “women may be viewed as nurturers, responsible for reproduction and caring” (Shefer & Fouten, 2012, p. 167). However, another study suggests that teenage fathers may also need “support and assistance” in order to disrupt the “cycle of absent fathers” (Swartz & Bhana, 2009, p. viii).

Conversely, it seems that not all teachers are happy with teenage mothers being at school. Shefer et al. (2012) found that some schools could even interfere with teenage mothers’ educational progress. Teachers felt that having teenage mothers in the classroom threatened classroom unity and academic performance (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2012), while teenage mothers may be seen as an extra burden. Some schools may feel that the challenge of pregnancy and parenthood is the individual’s personal problem – which “places the burden of pregnancy and parenthood onto the learners themselves and generally onto girls rather than boys” (Bhana et al., 2008, p. 89). A recent article in the Namibian newspaper by a Namibian teacher entitled ‘The Reality – Student Pregnancy Policy’ (Nambinga, 2012b) mentioned that policy makers have no idea of what is happening in schools, implying that policy makers are living in a “theoretical world”, while teachers are living in a ‘real and practical world’. Concerning teachers’ experiences of inclusion of teenage mothers, it is also crucial to look at support for teenage mothers in schools.

2.4 Support structures for teenage mothers in schools

“Pregnant learners and learners who become parents shall be supported to complete their education in a manner which takes into account the health and welfare of the newborn child” (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d).

2.4.1 Educational support

The above extract comes from the Namibian educational policy (n. d.) which was implemented in 2009. It explores the educational support that may motivate teenage mothers to complete their studies. Educational support programmes are intervention programs that aim to provide young people with the chance to build the academic and social skills necessary for them to have a positive school experience (Bond, 2009). With teenage mothers in schools such support would be advantageous in helping them cope with the dual responsibilities of being a mother and a learner at the same time.

Chigona and Chetty, (2008) argue that lack of support to promote a healthy environment for teenage mothers at school resulted in teenage mothers being unsuccessful in their education. Their study aimed to learn about the support provided to teenage mothers in order to continue with schooling. It can also be argued that in order to provide support for teenage mothers, a shift that advocates for gender equality are required (Bhana et al., 2010). The authors extended this to include the understanding that the burden of care is unjustly divided between men and women, due to the common societal mould of gender inequality. According to Bhana et al., (2008, p. 88), “female teachers do a great deal of care work which is unacknowledged and invisible”.

Even if some schools are ‘sympathetic and supportive’, the inclusion of teenage mothers is still seen as an extra burden on the work load of teachers (Bhana et al., 2008, p. 89). Collaboration is necessary between the Ministry of Health and Education to enable teachers to support teenage mothers (Bhana et al., 2010), which could involve the availability of health services to schooling teenage mothers. It was also stressed that health “service location and opening hours can also pose a barrier to access for young people, so young people need to be able to access services at a time, and in a place and style, that they feel comfortable with” (Emmerson, 2009, p. 3). Teachers should, therefore, inform learners about the availability of health services and encourage them to use contraceptives. Yet, it is argued that “there is no one-on-one correspondence between knowledge of contraceptives and usage thereof” (Macleod & Tracey, 2009, p. v). It is also found that even if there are various sources of contraceptives; teenager may only go to the family planning centres after having been involved in sexual intercourse several times. Their reason could be that of “financial resource constraints, stigmatisation by service providers, travelling distances to clinics, and difficulty in getting to the clinic during school hours” (Macleod & Tracey, 2009, p. v). Bhana and Ngabaza, (2012) state that schools with no support structures have restricted resources for teenage mothers to deal with the dual responsibilities of their schooling and parenting. Chigona and Chetty (2007, p. 1) revealed that with “insufficient support (physically and emotionally)” teenage mothers may end up dropping out of school. Bhana and Ngabaza, (2012, p. 60) found that teachers provided “sympathy and support” to teenage mothers when they understood the situation that had led to them being pregnant. Schools can become very important social networks of support for children and adolescents, but in the absence of social networks at school, some adolescents depend on their families to support their dual roles as teenage mothers and learners. The literature that examines teenage motherhood, family support and education will now be explored.

2.4.2 Teenage motherhood, family support and education

Family networks and support are regarded as a positive attribute for teenage mothers' schooling (Domenico & Jones, 2007). Family support is seen as crucial to a teenage mother's ability to cope. Domenico and Jones (2007) agree with Stapleton (2010, p. 73) that a teenage mother with a supportive family is assisted with 'financial, social, and emotional, support', unlike a teenage mother with no family support. This implies that a teenage mother requires a supportive environment at a younger age, and family support is one of the most important factors. The Namibian inclusion policy for teenage mothers respects and includes cultural and family practices and values in its policy. Various family and cultural decisions are permitted, such as deciding the period and way in which learners may take up the opportunity to continue their education (Namibia, Ministry of Education, n. d).

Teenage mothers are mostly children who are still under their parents' supervision. Research shows that "the availability of strong family support is likely to impact on the length of a learner mother's stay away from school after the birth and on her ability to complete schooling" (Shefer et al., 2012, p. 146). The literature also demonstrates how the families and parents may play a role in supporting teenage mothers "by providing child care assistance so that teen mothers can complete the necessary school tasks and homework in order to be successful" (Christenson & Reschly, 2010, p. 323). In addition, a study done in South Africa revealed that teenage mothers who participated in the study received support from their families and community, enabling them to continue with their schooling (Nelson, 2013). Support from family members appears to reduce stress among teenage mothers (Letourneau, Stewart & Barnfather, 2004, p. 516).

According to Shefer et al. (2012), a teenage mother with a supportive family would be more successful, while a teenage mother with an unsupportive family may have painful experiences. In Nigeria, a study on teenage mothers revealed that a lack of support from family, friends and society is usually apparent (Melvin & Uzoma, 2012). A teenage mother who is not supported by family, friends and society may find it difficult to continue with schooling. It might also be that parents' response to supporting the teenage mother would be influenced by the notion that a teenager's pregnancy is not acceptable. In some cultures when a teenage girl becomes pregnant, "it brings shame to the rest of the family" (Wekwete, 2010, p. 27). In that view, the family, friends and society may not support a teenage mother as she has gone beyond the moral boundaries of the society. The literature on sexuality education will now be discussed.

2.4.3 Sexuality education programmes

It seems that talking about school-going teenage girls becoming pregnant has prompted the researcher to examine the literature on sexuality education. This section will help us to understand what measures are in place to prevent school girls from falling pregnant. Sexuality education is “pre-eminently a matter of education and is related to all issues concerning the particular sex of the child, being typical boy or girl” (Van Rooyen & Louw, 1994, p. 25). Sexuality education takes place by means of a permanent set of values and norms – education and moulding are the primary aim, while sex information is transmitted for the sake of information and the message of information without implying a requirement of propriety or norms (Van Rooyen & Louw, 1994). It is therefore crucial to distinguish the difference between sexuality education and sex information. In sex information, sexual information is provided without any purpose of educating a child, whereas sexuality education entails educating a child about sexuality, personal and social development (Van Rooyen & Louw, 1994). Concerning the definition of sexuality education, it is expected that education should start from home and therefore the literature on parents and sexuality education will be examined

Research on teenage sexuality is concerned with parents’ input. Talking about sexuality-related issues is traditionally regarded as taboo in many African cultures, including some cultures in Namibia (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011). It is argued that parents are still not talking to their children about teenage sexuality-related topics (Ngabaza, 2011). This is supported by (Macleod and Tracey, 2009, p. iv) who pointed out that most of the parents found it difficult “to talk about sex with their children”. But discussions on “menstruation, pregnancy and HIV/AIDS” do take place, mainly between mothers and their daughters (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011, p.120). It seems that parents talked to their children by providing them with information about menstruation and by warning them about pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. However, parents in Namibia “support the idea of family based sex education to combat HIV but are reticent about personally getting involved in teaching their own children about sex” (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011, p. 129). This means that parental education on how to teach their children about sex is needed (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011; O’Regan, 2002). This is needed because the silence around sexuality related topics may lead to children to learn from their peers (Macleod & Tracey, 2009, p. iv). It is also argued that if schools, parents and caregivers can speak the same language of sexuality to children, it will help to pass the message on faster (O’Regan, 2002, p. 19). Regarding the parental role in educating

their children about sex-related issues, this is equally the role of the school and other ministries.

Namibian teachers and health workers have agreed to teach Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) to young people (Mufune, 2008, p. 155). However, teaching sexuality education to school children seems to be a challenge to teachers in terms of resources (Westwood & Mullan, 2007). Due to lack of training in SRH, lack of appropriate teaching methods, and a lack of teaching materials, sexuality education remains a problem for Namibian teachers (Mufune, 2008, p. 155). In the United Kingdom, the study found that most teachers do not feel adequately equipped to teach Sexual Relationship Education (SRE). Amongst others, teachers preferred assets such as videos, quizzes and worksheets, which require consistent updating (Westwood & Mullan, 2007). This means that a variety of methods in teaching sexuality education may be required in order to tackle all the learners' needs. It is argued that a "one size fits all" model may not be suitable to address all learners' needs. Sexuality education that puts more emphasis on abstinence may delay the opportunities to convey 'safer sexual practices in the future' (Smith & Harrison, 2012, p. 11). It is argued that "SRH teachers and health workers are also parents in a cultural context where parents do not discuss sex issues with children" (Mufune, 2008, p. 155). This implies that teachers might leave out some parts of the syllabus or teach male anatomy to male students only and vice versa. This suggests why some female teachers are shy to teach sexuality education.

Sexuality education seems to be neglected in most schools, as there are no full-time teachers specialising in this, and the absence of specialised teachers may lead to individual teachers feeling a lack of information and assets to deliver SRE (Westwood & Mullan, 2007). This could however be because teachers were trained to teach subjects other than SRH, and suggests that more training of SRH teachers is required in Namibia (Mufune, 2008). This reinforces the view of Westwood and Mullan, (2007, p. 156) that "a greater emphasis must be placed on continuous professional development and updating of both teaching skills and knowledge base" if teachers are going to be expected to contribute to SRE. Equally, Mufune, (2008) suggests that for sex education to be valued by teachers and students there is a need for the students to be graded in sex education. In the light of schools' and teachers' concerns about teaching sexuality, it is important to look at what the literature says about measures designed to eliminate teenage pregnancy.

There is currently an on-going debate on condom distribution in schools (Bureau, 2013; Cullinan, n. d; Eisner, 2013; Kigali, 2013; Neshiko, 2013), and opinions differs, as some

support the idea and others do not. It is believed that “there will be a problem if teachers distribute condoms, as they will be seen to be promoting sexual activity” (Cullinan, n. d). Conversely, condom distribution may not stop teenage pregnancies, unless accompanied by ‘sex education and moral education’ (Nambinga, 2012a). Ho and Wong (2006), writing from Hong Kong, suggest that a combination of the above approaches may be helpful, which may include curricular and extra-curricular community-based approaches and interventions. This echoes teachers’ suggestions that persons and programmes from outside the school be brought in to provide instruction and interventions in sexuality education and HIV prevention (Smith & Harrison, 2012, p. 6).

This could include organisations that promote girls’ education in Namibia, such as the Girl Child Organisation (GCO) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA) (Tibinyane, 2004). In addition, in Namibia there are two extra-curricular life-skills programmes, My Future is My Choice (MFMC), catering for grades 8 to 12 learners (Salom, 2011) and Window of Hope (WOH), catering for grades 4 to 7, aged ± 9-14 years (Sakaria, 2011). These programmes were designed to educate young people about the issue of HIV and AIDS. The MFMC programmes are facilitated by volunteer community members after school (Salom, 2011) while the WOH programmes are facilitated by two selected teachers from each school (Sakaria, 2011). These programmes only accommodate a limited number of learners. Due to lack of funds these programmes are not offered at all the schools.

Moreover, sexuality related issues are taught in Namibian schools. This can be confirmed from the cross-curricular configurations for grades 8 to 10 extracted from the Life Skills Syllabus presented in Table 2.1 These show how sexuality related issues are brought to the attention of learners (Namibian Ministry of Education, 2006). It is argued that accurate information on sexuality enables teenagers to make informed decisions (Katz & Finger, 2002). Therefore, “before having sex, young people need to know that sexual intercourse carries with it the risk of pregnancy and concomitantly of parenthood; the risk of sexuality transmitted diseases and of course the risk of infection from HIV/AIDS” (O’Regan, 2002, p. 11).

Table 2.1

Cross-Curricular Table Grades 8-10

	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Environmental learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible citizen • Environmental care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean environment 	
HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing/care for HIV/AIDS • Socio-economic effects of HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories & myths about HIV/AIDS • Values & attitudes towards HIV/AIDS & people living positively with HIV/AIDS • Care & support for persons living with HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing & counselling • People affected by HIV/AIDS
Population education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex & sexuality • Attitudes towards sexuality • Personal sexuality & preferences • Peer pressure & intimate relationships • Sexuality transmitted diseases • Gender roles • Different types of families • Family needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early & arranged marriages • Preparing for marriage • Roles & responsibilities in the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal health • Sexuality transmitted diseases • Dangers of teenage pregnancy • Abortion • Abuse • Rape • Choosing dating partner • Breaking up relationships
Human rights and democracy education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural differences • Responsible citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons of authority • Respect for authority • Human & child rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline • Harassment & bullying • Voting requirement
Information and communication technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Basic financial records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career research • Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing • Application forms & letters • Saving

Adapted from (Namibian Ministry of education, 2006, p. 3)

In conclusion, most researchers think that providing sexuality and moral education to the young may help to reduce the high number of school-going learners now becoming pregnant. Also, involvement of other ministries and organisations would help to run campaigns with relevant education. The literature revealed that if schools, parents and caregivers can speak the same language of sexuality it will help to pass the message across to children. To achieve this, parents and caregivers should be provided with education, as encouragement to talk to their children about sexuality (O'Regan, 2002, p. 19).

2.5 Stigmatisation of teenage mothers

Stigmatisation of teenage mothers seems to be one of the factors impacting negatively on teenage mothers at school. "The concept of stigma is based on understandings of social relationships wherein individuals or groups are signified as 'different', often on account of behaviours judged as failing to meet socially prescribed norms of morality" (Stapleton, 2010, p. 9).

The study carried out in Kenya found that teenage mothers stop schooling as a result of 'stigmatisation and discrimination', indicating that this is often due to the negative practices that possibly involve stakeholders. In addition, teenage mothers may not return to school as a result of shame and the moral judgement from those who believe that they are promiscuous (Sarah & Muthoni, 2012). The Kenyan media reports the stigmatised experience of teenage mothers in schools, with one learner saying, "[M]y classmates in my former school would laugh at me when they realised I was pregnant." She continues, saying "[T]hey even drew cartoons to illustrate my condition on the blackboard just to ridicule me. It was really stressful and when my mother insisted that I go back to school after taking care of my son for two years, I cried. By then I had given up my dream of becoming a lawyer one day" (Oyaro, n. d). This article suggests that teenage mothers may leave their education due to teachers' attitudes of 'stigma and discrimination'. In addition, teachers and learners seem to be the cause of stigma and shame, which may cause vulnerability in teenage mothers in the school context, resulting in school dropout (Bhana & Mcambi, 2013). Similarly, Stapleton (2010, p. 10) shows that teenage mothers' susceptibility is apparent, due to their low 'credibility' in the community.

It could be argued that some teenage mothers might think that being stigmatised by a certain group may have affirmative effects on them (Yardley, 2008). Although teenage mothers experience the hardship of being stigmatised, this may motivate them to work hard to be

successful in their education. Considering the literature on teenage mothers' stigmatisation, it is also important to examine the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

2.6 Theoretical framework: Bio-ecological systems theory

This study draws on the theory that describes the interactions between individual people and groups at different levels of society (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010, p. 35). Bronfenbrenner, the founder of this theory, stated that this theory deals with direct and indirect influences on a child's being by referring to various levels of context. It is, however, important to note that this theory is a "multidimensional model of human development", suggesting that due to mutual relationships, what happens in one system may affect and may be affected by other systems (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 11). This implies that everything that happens in a child's environment may have an influence on how a child develops and grows. This could possibly be the result of the whole system being affected by all its parts. It is from this theory we learn that a child's development does not happen in isolation from the social context, nor "does the child exist outside of an acutely unique socio-political, historical, and ideological set of circumstances" (Hook, Watts & Cockcroft, 2012, p. 313). This theory is therefore important for this study, as it will help us to understand the significance of the various interactions between the development of individuals and the environment within the individual social context (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 11).

This theory suggests that there are four interacting dimensions central to the child's development. These dimensions include proximal process, person characteristic, context and time (Bronfenbrenner, 2001; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Face-to-face and long-term relationships are the most important interactions in shaping the child's development. This could be a close relationship between a mother and her child, a teacher and a learner, or a child and a close friend. These kinds of relationships are what Bronfenbrenner refers to as proximal interactions, which may be affected by a person's "factors" as well as social contexts within which they occur (Donald et al., 2010). The person's factors may include impulsiveness, feeling of insecurity, shyness, uncertainty and violence. These then are what have been referred to as "dispositions", the power that can mobilise proximal processes and sustain their operation, or interfere with, limit or even prevent proximal processes (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). This extends to the bio-psychological resources and support that influence the ability of the person to effectively participate in proximal processes, for example, genetic defects, low birth weight, physical impairment or brain damage. This also includes characteristics that can prove or discourage reactions from the social environment that either

foster or disrupt psychological processes of growth for instance: fussy and happy baby, hyperactivity as opposed to passivity (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). According to Bronfenbrenner, the child's development takes place within four nested systems, namely micro-, meso-, exo- and the macro-system. He continues, elaborating that these systems all interact with the chronosystem (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Each of these systems will now be discussed.

The first nested innermost layer of Bronfenbrenner's theory is the "microsystem". This system forms the "pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations experienced between individuals and the systems in which they actively participate, such as the family, the school or the peer group" (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14). This is where proximal processes are active, where an individual is involved in direct relationships with familiar people (Donald et al., 2010). According to Bronfenbrenner (2001, p. 6), "proximal processes are posited as the primary engines of development". In the context of this study, a teenage mother's school and a family member could be regarded as two different microsystems in which a teenage mother functions. Others could be interactions that take place on a daily basis that shape many aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual development. These may include the classroom or schoolwork, peers and neighbourhood interactions.

The second level is the "mesosystem". This system refers to the continual interactions between sets of microsystems with one another (Donald et al., 2010). For instance, the "family, school and peer group interact with one another, modifying each of the systems" (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14). In the context of this study, interaction between the teacher and the family of a teenage mother would be considered as interactions between sets of microsystems. If it happens that there is a lack of support from a teenage mother's family, which may make a teenage mother "anxious and insecure" (Donald et al., 2010, p. 40), a caring teacher who is able to provide a positive environment may enable the teenage mother to increase her "self-esteem and sense of security (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14). The teachers' experiences, interacting with teenage mothers in the classroom, may influence how the teenage mothers interact with peers and the family and vice versa.

The third level is the "exosystem", which refers to context or other systems that influence the child indirectly, and in which a child is not involved (Donald et al., 2010), for instance, "the education system, health services, the media, a parent's place of work or local community organisation" (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14). In the case of teenage mothers as learners, the health services may not be easily accessible to them in terms of contraceptive and family

planning, and this may lead to further pregnancy. In the same way, a parenting learner may be absent from school due to her sick baby, and such a situation may influence the teenage mothers' interactions with teachers, parents, peers, and adversely affect her school work.

The fourth level is the "macrosystem". The macrosystem refers to the context that is far away from a child, and involves dominant social and economic structures (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011), for instance, societal beliefs, the media, and government policies. This may influence all other social systems, the latter influencing the proximal interaction of the child's microsystem, and Swart and Pettipher, (2011) stated that inclusion policy falls under this level. In the context of this study, and in the Namibian context, learners who become pregnant while at school were expelled from school. However, the current policy of inclusion of teenage mothers had influence teenage mothers to continue with their schooling. This means that teachers who are dealing with teenage mothers at school may also be influenced by such a change, since they now have to find ways to practice inclusion of teenage mothers. It is suggested that the inclusion policy that keeps pregnant learners in school may have an influence on all the social systems. This would also mean that all the stakeholders in education may need to work together, so that the aims of inclusion of teenage mothers can be achieved successfully.

The fifth level, which is the last one, is the "chronosystem", which refers to the dimension of time and relates to the interaction of various systems over a period of time and their influences on individuals' development (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). The change in policy from exclusion of pregnant learners to inclusion of pregnant learners could indicate the shift that has been made. A pregnant learner in the past had to experience the difficulty of their work and how that impacted on their education, but with the current policy teenage mothers are influenced to continue with their studies, even if they are pregnant.

Why I chose the ecological framework as a theoretical framework in this study? Systems theory was used to understand how teachers experience and support school-going teenage mothers in Namibian secondary schools. I found this theory to be useful because it can be used as a theoretical framework for understanding classrooms, teachers' practices, schools and families, by viewing them as systems in themselves (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). An ecological framework is appropriate to this study as it will help us to understand the broader interaction of different systems. If one of the systems is not functioning well, then it may affect the other systems. The rationale of using this theoretical framework is that teachers need to be supported by other systems in order to support the teenage mothers in schools. In

this theory, a teenage mother is placed in the centre (see, fig. 2.1.). This means that if teachers are not trained on how to deal with teenage mothers, particularly pregnant learners, they may not provide the support these learners may need. On the one hand, the interaction of different microsystems convinced the researcher to use this theoretical framework in this study. This is because teachers need to work together with parents of teenage mothers to support a teenage mother to continue with her education. Although this study only focused on teachers, this does not mean that I do not consider the entire system in which a teenage mother functions. One can only get a precise understanding of a child by attending to relations within the family, school, peer group, and neighbourhood (Brendtro, 2006, p. 163).

Furthermore, “every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her” (Brendtro, 2006, p. 163). In relation to this study, a teenage mother would need the teachers’ support to provide a school environment that is conducive to learning. Teachers as care-givers may also need to be supported by other systems in order to support the teenage mothers. However, a teenage mother “requires caring parents, supportive teachers, and positive peers” to reach her full potential (Brendtro, 2006, p. 163).

In conclusion, educators may need to have a bio-ecological view in order to see how things might change in relation to the education process. It is believed that it is through accommodating the constant and active interaction between these various contextual influences that we can comprehend why things are as they are at any level of development of an individual child in a class, or of any other level of the system which is concerned with the development of the whole school (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002, p. 53).

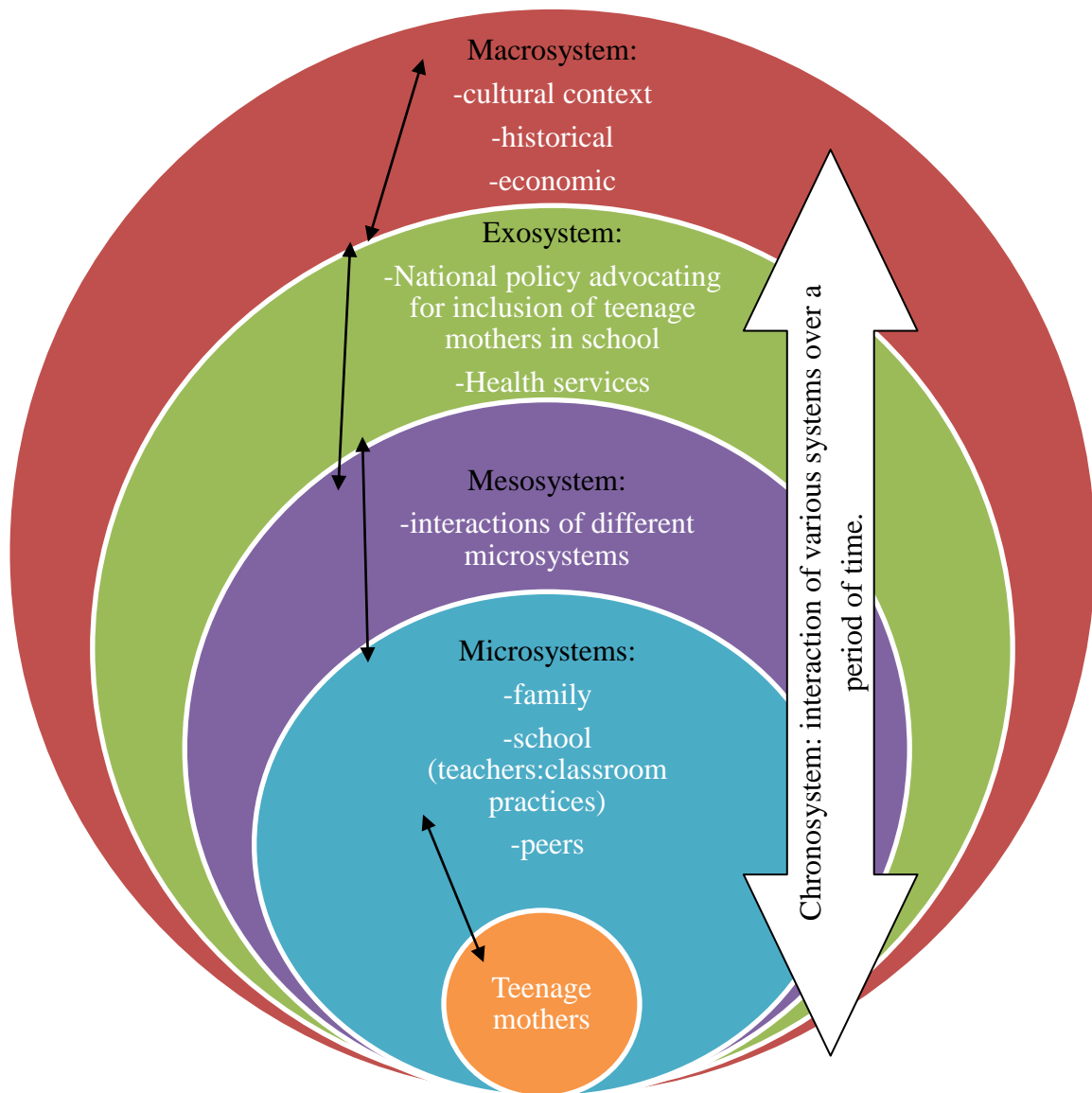


Figure 2.1. The Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological system theory

Adapted from (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 13).

2.7 Summary of Chapter

This chapter gave an overview of the related literature review. The reviewed literature included the terms teenage pregnancy, inclusion of teenage mothers in schools, support structures for teenage mothers in schools, stigmatisation of teenage mothers as well as Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory as a theoretical framework of this study. In Chapter 3 this thesis looks at research design and methodology, while taking into consideration what the literature says about teenage mothers in schools.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

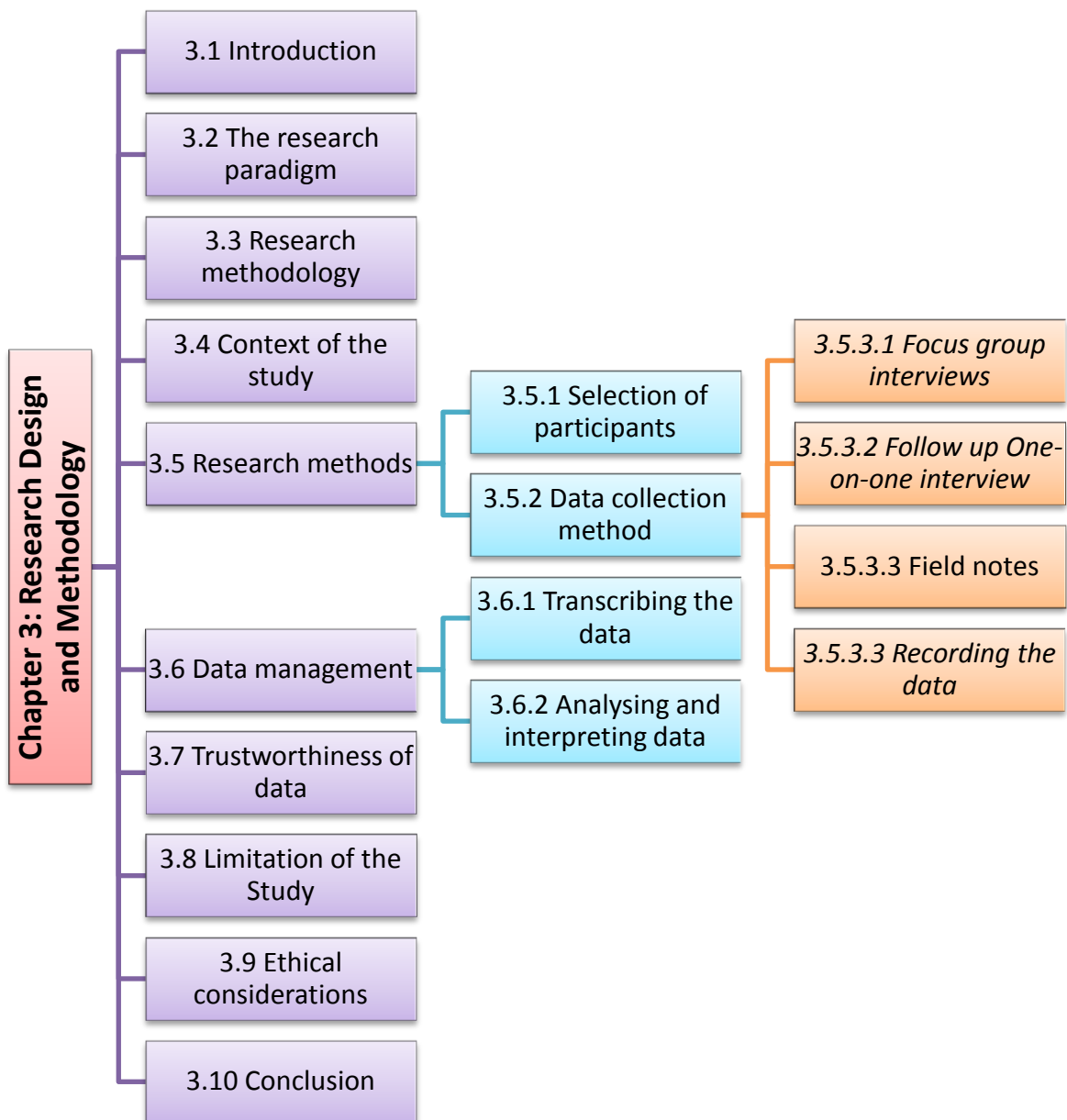


Figure 3.1. A schematic presenting the research design and methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the research design and methodology as shown in Figure 3.1 above. The explanation of this process includes the research paradigm and methodology on which this research is based. This extends to an explanation of the context of the study. The context of the study is followed by the research methods utilised to collect data, data management, data trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations. The researcher followed this process by gathering data in order to answer the research question posed by the study. The research question of this study is: “How do teachers experience inclusion of teenage mothers in Namibian secondary schools?” The steps followed will be discussed below.

3.2 The research paradigm

Holloway (1997, p. 114) defines a paradigm as “a philosophical *model* or framework originating in a world view and belief system based on a particular *ontology* and *epistemology* and shared by a scientific community”. The research paradigm functions as a plot or guide for scientific societies, determining vital problems or issues for its members to address and defining suitable theories or explanations, methods and techniques to work out defined problems (Usher as cited in O’Donoghue, 2007, p. 8). It gives the largest framework within which to carry out the study. This means that researchers work within the world view of the paradigm chosen for a particular study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). There are significant paradigms that influence social science practice today, and these include the positivist, interpretive and constructivist (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6). The paradigm of this study influences the nature of reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it (ontology). In addition, it also influences the nature of knowledge and the relationship between researcher (knower) and what can be known (Epistemology), and how the researcher (knower) goes about practically studying whatever he or she believes can be known (methodology) (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6).

This study is based on the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm recognizes that realities under investigation consist of people’s subjective experiences that are valid, multiple and social constructions from the outer world (ontology). The researcher believes that one can understand the experiences of others through interaction with them and by listening to them (epistemology). Accordingly, qualitative research methods are best suited to interpretive paradigm tasks (methodology) (Mestrens as cited in Adams, Collair, Oswald & Perold, 2004, p. 356). “The assumption is thus made that reality should be interpreted through the meaning

that research participants give to their life world” (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2011 p. 309). The methodology used for this study focuses on gathering data based on the meaning and experiences the participants have about dealing with teenage mothers.

3.3 Research methodology

This study is qualitative in nature, focusing on interpretive research. Qualitative research allows the researcher to go to some selected institutions/places to converse with research participants. Data is collected from participants who are experiencing the issue under investigation (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative method enables the researcher to study phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret behaviours and events in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2009). The interpretive researcher is interested in understanding the meaning participants have constructed, how they make sense of their world and how they interpret their experiences in the world (Merriam, 2009). The researcher collects data on her own through interviewing participants (Creswell, 2007). In this study, data was collected from teachers who had taught pregnant or parenting learners.

This is a qualitative case study which can be described as “an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases” where “a case can be limited to characteristics, traits, or behaviour” (Lichtman, 2010, p. 81). A case study studies is the phenomenon in its natural settings. A case study is not limited to a single person, group or situation (O’Hanlon, 2003). On the other hand, Silverman (2004) stressed that a case refers to data gathered from one or few sites, and the number of participants are relatively small. According to Merriam (2002, p. 8) “the case study is an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit as an individual, group, institution, or community.” “This approach seeks to describe the phenomenon in depth. The unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation, characterizes a case study.” The unit of analysis for this study is the teachers’ experiences and only eight teachers were selected for the study. The data was collected from the context as described below.

3.4 Context of the study

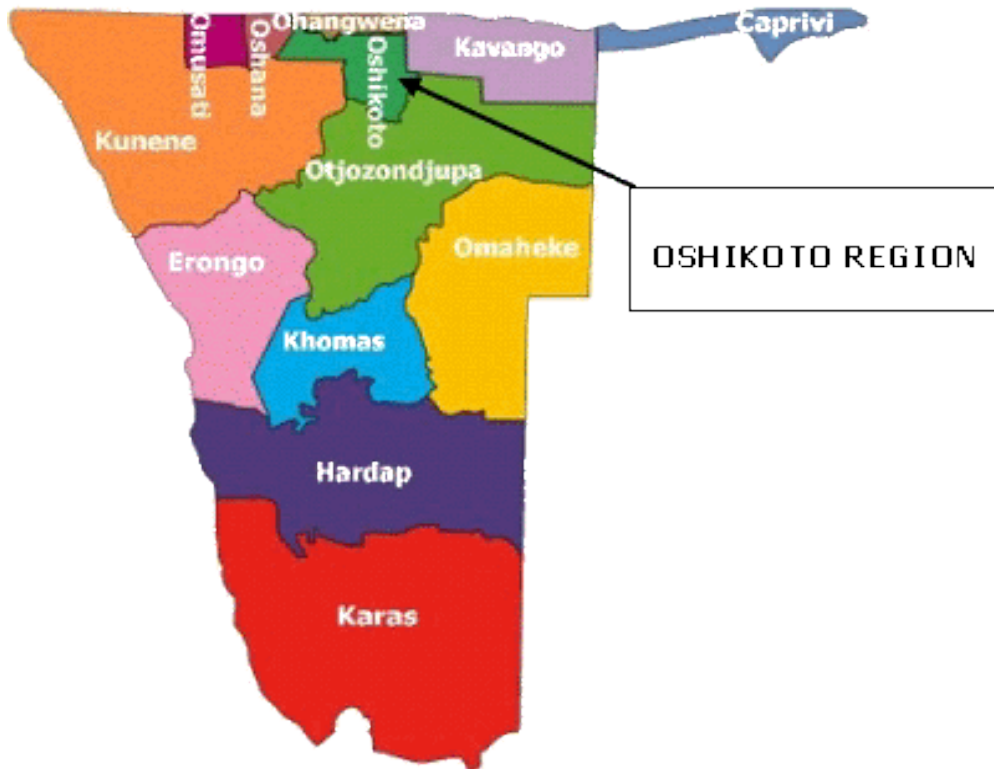


Figure 3.2. A Namibian map showing geographical location: Oshikoto region. Adapted from <http://oshikoto-rc.org/geographics/index.html>

This study was conducted in two secondary schools in the Oshikoto Region. The Oshikoto region is one of the thirteen regions in Namibia, as shown in Figure 3.2 above. This region is situated in the northern part of Namibia. Two secondary schools were selected from amongst other secondary schools in the region due to the schools' closeness to the researcher's base in Namibia, which made it easy for her to access them. These two schools are similar in that they are both secondary schools with classes from grade 8 to 12, and they accommodate learners from different parts of Namibia. Despite the schools being similar, they also have some differences. The following are the differences: school 1 differs from school 2 in the following ways: school 1 is a boarding school, so most of the learners reside in school hostels. In the hostels there is a responsible person for supervision. Learners who live in the hostels only get a chance to leave the school campus during weekends and public holidays. The school accommodates about 711 learners and has 26 teachers. Furthermore, the school is about 7 kilometres from residential areas, though it is within the town council jurisdiction. School 2, on the other hand, is a day school with no boarding facilities. Most learners from this school stay in houses that are in areas close to the school. This means that learners are either staying with their relatives, non-relatives or biological parents. Learners in school 2 are

faced with challenges such as finding accommodation which is closer to the school in order for them to come to school in time. Unlike school 1, school 2 is located within the township. This means that school 2 is close to business areas such as open markets, shopping malls, coca shops or shebeens, and all varieties of social events. Within the context of this study, it is important to look at the research methods used in collecting the data.

3.5 Research methods

This section sets out the research process. It shows how the participants were selected by following a hierarchical procedure from the regional Directorate of Education to school principals of the schools concerned. In addition, the methods used to collect data will also be elaborated on.

3.5.1 Procedure

The researcher started this process by writing a letter requesting permission from the Directorate of Education of the region concerned. She also submitted copies of the same letter to the school principals of the concerned schools. The researcher was then granted permission from the Directorate of Education and the two school principals to undertake research in the two secondary schools. This permission to do research was one of the requirements needed to complete the application for clearance to do human research from the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities). The researcher submitted the ethical clearance forms, which first went through the Departmental Research Committee before being forwarded to the University Research Ethics Committee. The departmental research committee reviewed the ethical clearance forms before allowing the researcher to submit them to the University Research Ethics Committee. After permission was granted to continue with research (see Appendix F), the researcher then began to gather data from teachers in the selected secondary schools. Accordingly, the schools' principals assisted the researcher by informing the participants about the research and by asking the volunteering teachers who met the research criteria (see 3.5.2) to meet with the researcher. The participants were selected based on criteria which will be explained below.

3.5.2 Sampling of participants

The population of this study comprised 8 teachers, who were selected from two secondary schools in the northern part of Namibia. Four teachers were selected from each school upon meeting the criteria for this study.

The researcher used non-probability sampling, mainly purposive sampling (Merriam, 2009). The reason for using purposive sampling was to identify participants who have the information on the subject under study (De Vos et al., 2011; Merriam, 2009). These pre-selected criteria would enable the participants to purposefully contribute to the topic under investigation (De Vos et al., 2011). The purposive sampling enabled the participants to contribute to the topic under study which aims to explore teachers' experiences of and support practices for schooling teenage mothers. Hence, eight participants were selected, based on the criteria for selection which required that:

- Participants be secondary school teachers,
- Those who have taught teenage mothers in the past three years

The characteristics of participants who participated in this study are described in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Biographical Information about Participants of this Study

School		Age	Gender	Marital Status	Yrs teaching	Yrs experience at school	Subject/s taught
S1 Boarding	Ms D	36	F	M	10	8	Agr
	Ms C	25	F	S	4	4	Bio & Geo
	Mr A	36	M	M	8	8	Bio & Geo
	Mr B	31	M	S	5	4	PS & Bio
S2 non-boarding	Ms X	29	F	M	6	4	Entr
	Ms G	38	F	M	4 & 3 mths	4 & 3 mths	Oshi
	Mr M	46	M	S	20	11	Oshi & Eng
	Mr F	29	M	S	6	3mths	His & Geo

Note: F= female; M = Male; S = single; M = Married; yrs = years; mths = months; Agri= Agriculture; Bio= Biology; Geo= Geography; PS=Physical science; Entr= Entrepreneurship; Oshi= Oshindonga; Eng= English; His= History

Table 3.1 gives a brief description of participants in this study. The participants were all teachers at secondary schools, taught Grades 8-12 and were Oshivambo-speaking¹. The profile of this study included four females and four males, within the age range of 25 – 46. It was interesting to note that each focus group interview was attended by two males and two females at each school. The two focus groups were each represented by two married participants and two single participants. The participants' teaching experience varied from 4 years and 3 months to 20 years. Their teaching experience at the present school ranges between three months and eight years. Being secondary school teachers, the participants teach in classes ranging from grade 8 to grade 12. The participants teach subjects such as Agriculture, Biology, Geography, History, Entrepreneurship, Oshindonga, English and Physical science. Ultimately, the context of the two schools differs, as one has a hostel while the other does not have a hostel.

3.5.3 Data collection method

The researcher utilised the focus group interview as a primary method to generate data from two focus groups of participants. After a week, a follow up one-on-one interview was done with all the participants to further explore the research question with individual participants. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed.

3.5.3.1 Focus group interviews

The researcher used specific methods to gather information about teachers' experiences of and support practices for schooling teenage mothers. Barbour and Kitzinger (1999) argue that if one wants to explore people's experiences, opinions, wishes and concerns, the best tool to use would be focus group interviews. This is because focus group interviews allow the researcher to explore participants' experiences as they operate within a social framework. Supporting Barbour and Kitzinger above, De Vos et al. (2011) put it clearly that focus groups are fundamental ways of listening to people and learning from them, as well as creating lines of communication. For focus groups to be effective the researcher should ensure that participants "feel comfortable, respected and free to give their opinion without being judged" (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Furthermore, the focus group's aim is to promote self-disclosure among participants. It also creates a process of sharing and comparing among the participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009). It also helps the researcher to build rapport with the participants, enhancing trust, effort and commitment.

¹ 'Oshivambo' refers to languages or dialects spoken by the Ovambo people in the northern part of Namibia (Buys & Nambala, 2003).

The focus group in the study shared some characteristics, as described by Krueger and Casey (2009). Initially, in this study two focus group interviews, each with four participants, were carried out. The focus groups were small in order to ensure that participants had equal opportunities to share their insights. Secondly, the participants in this study were secondary school teachers who had taught a teenage mother in the past three years – a criterion which defines participants' characteristics. Lastly, the discussion was based on the focused topic to enable the participants to understand the topic. Liamputtong (2011) agrees with Krueger and Casey (2009), stating several important features of a focus group interview, namely that:

- It involves in-depth discussions with a relatively small number of people.
- It is focused on a specific area of interest that allows participants to discuss the topic in greater detail.
- Interaction is a unique feature of the focus interview. This characteristic distinguishes the method from the individual in-depth interview, as it is based on the idea that group process assists people to explore and clarify their points of view.

Some of the advantages of focus group interviews are that they are 'enjoyable to participants'. It also enables the participants to share their experiences in a very short time. This means that the group's dynamics encourage participants to share their opinions and experiences about the problem at hand (Patton, 1987, p. 137).

Focus group interviews do not only have strengths, but also weaknesses. One of the disadvantages is that the number of questions to be asked might be limited as a result of the large number of respondents. The other could be the researcher's lack of good facilitation skills in conducting focus group interviews, and handling dominant respondents so as to ensure that they are also given a chance to share their experiences (Patton, 1987, p. 137). In this study each group had four participants. This number was manageable for the researcher, who could encourage all participants to participate. Ultimately, participants in this study shared their views in this group context, and in most cases, participants were keen to share their views.

The researcher did a pilot study with three postgraduate education faculty students at Stellenbosch University who have teaching experience with teenage mothers. She wanted to evaluate whether the interview could be conducted within a certain time frame, if any additional and unforeseen questions arose or if questions needed to be rephrased for clearer understanding. The pilot study usually assists a researcher "to refine [her] data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed" (Yin,

2009, p. 92). The participants in the pilot study were not the same people the researcher carried out the research with.

The researcher chose the focus group interview as a method of data collection in order to collect the initial in-depth data in a very short time. These initial data enabled the researcher to come up with follow-up one-on-one interviews to explore the research question and participants' discussion in the groups in more detail. Group dynamics enabled the participants to interact with one another by sharing their experiences of dealing with teenage mothers at school.

3.5.3.1.1 Conducting the focus group interviews

The researcher was responsible for finding a suitable place in which to conduct the interview, and communicated with the participants about the place where the interviews were to be held. The two focus group interviews at the two schools took place in one of the rooms in the respective schools. The interviews were done after school, due to the fact that the participants were only available during that time.

Before starting off with the interview itself, the researcher found it relevant to consider the physical environment, which would have influenced the interaction of the group participants. This was done because, according to Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook (2007), the setting of the focus group allows the participants and the researchers to be actively involved in the group discussion. In this study the researcher ensured that participants' sitting arrangements were favourable to enhancing the focus group discussion. This was done by arranging the tables in a circle, which allowed a degree of eye contact. Stewart et al. (2007) argue that this type of sitting arrangement makes participants more comfortable. In this study the researcher and participants found this group's physical arrangements supportive.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher created an atmosphere of trust and openness (Stewart et al., 2007). This was done by establishing the agenda for the discussion by introducing herself and asking the group members to introduce themselves, so as to build a mutual relationship. The participants were also given a choice to decide on a fictitious name in the form of a letter that was written on a tag. For instance: 1st focus group interview: Mr A, Mr B, Ms C, Ms D; 2nd focus group interview: Mr F, Mr M, Ms X, Ms G. The fictitious names assisted the researcher to recognise the participants for data transcription and this was also assisted confidentiality.

The fact that focus group participants had certain common features made it easier for them to take part in the focus group discussion. Krueger and Casey, (2009) and De Vos et al. (2011) argue that when focus group participants share certain common features it becomes easier for the researcher to conduct discussions with the participants. This enables the researcher to ask questions, opening up the channels of communication and facilitating the process by gaining insights so that the research question is well answered. For example, the participants indicated that there was more to be said by using non-verbal cues, such as stopping in mid-sentence, continuing to look at the researcher after finishing a statement or facial expression (Stewart et al., 2007). During the focus group interviews participants provided answers to the same questions one after the other (Flick, 2011). The interview was conducted in English, but participants were allowed to express themselves in their native language when they could not find a word in English with which to express their idea. The interviews did not exceed 90 minutes.

3.5.3.2 Follow up one-on-one interview

The follow-up on individual interviews was done a week after the focus group interviews with the same participants. The aim was to follow up and get insights from individual participants if there were additional issues that they thought of after the focus group. Interviews were scheduled to last approximately an hour and this was achieved, as most of them did not go beyond 30 minutes. The individual interviews were held in the participants' school environment.

3.5.3.3 Field notes

The field notes were used in this study by recording what was observed, including what O'Hanlon (2003, p. 76) calls the "description of the context, locality, participants, what has taken place and what has been said". The researcher used the field notes to support the audio recording and to describe the research settings. The researcher took the notes while in the field.

3.5.3.4 Recording the data

In this study, the researcher preferred to record the data by using a voice recorder. This was done in order to aid the researcher with data transcription so that, the recorded data could be replayed as often as needed during transcription. The researcher informed the participants that a recorder would be used and the purpose of using it. This means that permission was granted

from the group members to use the recorder during the interview (Stewart et al., 2007). After considering the method used to gather data, we will now look at how the data was managed.

3.6 Data management

This part of the study presents the data transcriptions and the method used for analysis and interpretation of the data.

3.6.1 Transcribing the data

Tapes of group discussions are invariably more difficult to transcribe than ones one-to-one interviews (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). In this study a voice recorder was used. The data were transferred into a computer and then transcribed. The data were computer-secured by means of password access to which only the researcher had access. The focus group interviews were transcribed soon after the interview. This was done to enable the researcher to learn what had been said and what needed more insight and clarification. The researcher shared the data with her supervisor. The collaboration between the researcher and her supervisor led to her coming up with the follow-up individual interviews. The individual interviews were also recorded and transcribed. The transcribed data were then analysed by using the method discussed below.

3.6.2 Data analysis

The qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the transcripts' texts from both focus group interviews and individual interviews. This method of data analysis is favoured by the researcher since "it is easy to access and it works on one level of meaning – the content of the data texts" (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004, p. 102). "Content analysis is based on examination of the data for recurrent instances of some kind; these instances are then systematically identified across the data set, and grouped together by means of a coding system" (Silverman, 2004, p. 183). The main idea of the qualitative analysis procedure is to bring meanings to a context (Rabiee, 2004). This means that the researcher names the codes according to what the data means to her. This kind of open coding is also referred to as an inductive process (Henning et al., 2004). Therefore, during the process, the research "involves identifying coherent and important examples, themes, and patterns in the data" (Patton, 1987, p. 149). In this systematic process the researcher is required to read and re-read the transcripts in order to make meaning of the themes and patterns that emerge from the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For the aim of this study, the researcher chose to do the following, as proposed in Figure 3.3:

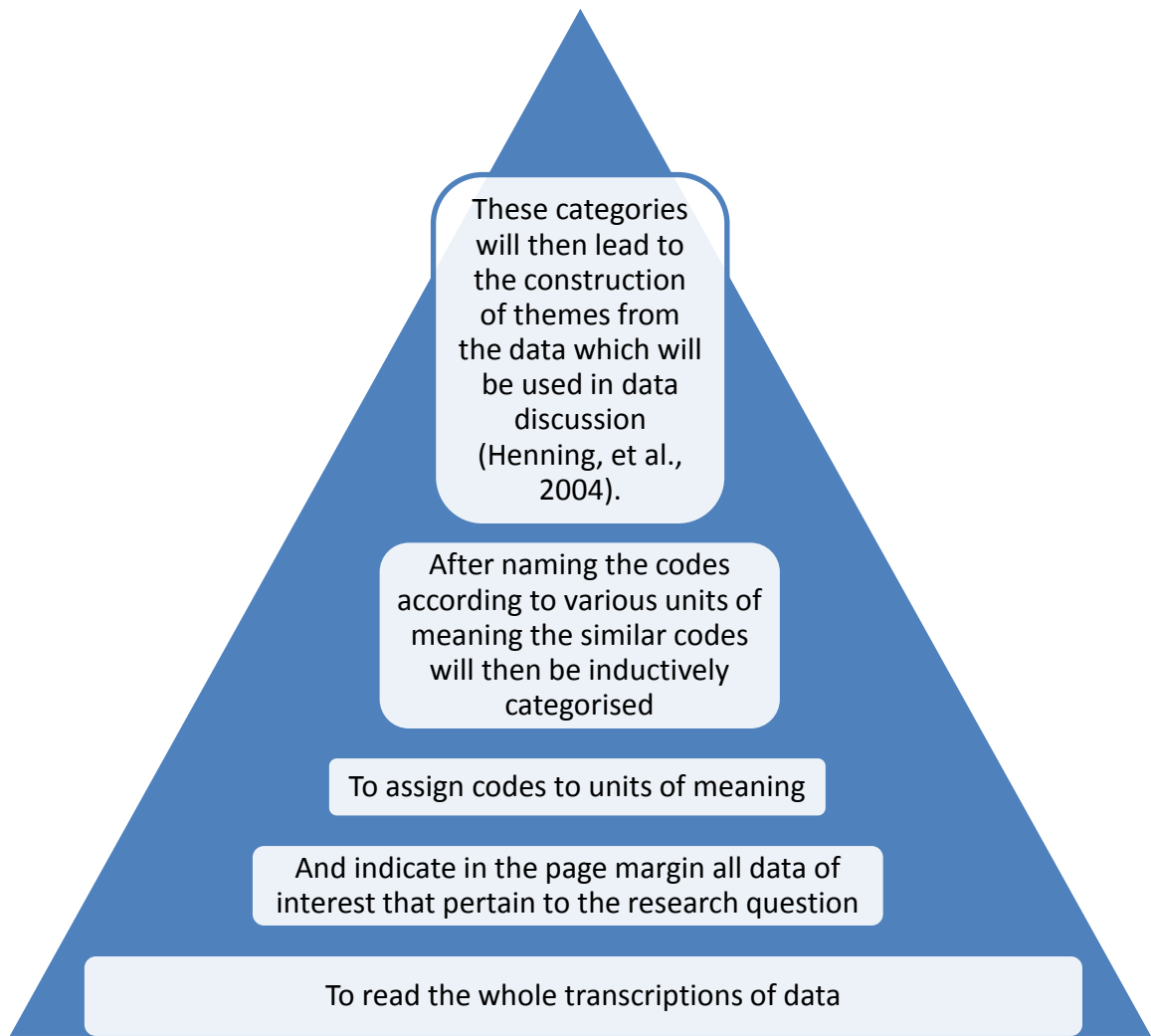


Figure 3.3. A schematic showing steps of data analysis

Henning et al. (2004) point out vital questions to consider in ‘seeing the whole’ when all the data have been coded and categorised:

- “What are the relationships in meaning between all these categories?
- What do they say together?
- What do they say about each other?
- What is missing?
- How do they address the research question(s)?
- How do these categories (together) link with what I already know about the topic?
- What has been foregrounded in the analysis?
- What has moved to the background?
- What additional data gathering and/ or analysis have to be completed?” (p. 106)

Considering the method of data analysis, examining the steps of data analysis is crucial in ensuring the trustworthiness of this study.

3.7 Data trustworthiness

3.7.1 Credibility

According to Lincoln and Guba (2013), “credibility corresponds to the internal validity criterion of positivism and refers to establishing confidence in the findings and interpretations of a research study” (p. 104). One of the conditions to ensure the credibility of this study was to put in place the “tactics to help ensure honesty in informants” (Shenton, 2004, p. 66). The researcher made it clear to the participants before asking them to sign the informed consent form as a sign of agreement “that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and they should not even be required to disclose an explanation to the investigator” (Shenton, 2004, p. 67). The participants in this study were given the power of refusal, so were honestly willing to be part of the study. In addition, triangulation as a criterion to ensure credibility was employed in this study. This included the use of different methods such as focus group interview, individual interview and field notes. The triangulation with data sources was also used by triangulating participants’ viewpoints and experiences against others. In this study member checking was also used. The researcher consulted the participants to cross check whether the data and interpretation were what they meant. This was done in line with what Babbie and Mouton, (2001) as well as Shenton (2004) suggest concerning consulting participants when conducting research. The authors argue that a researcher can do member checking. This process enables the researcher to go back to the research respondents and check both the data and the interpretation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Shenton 2004).

3.7.2 Transferability

Another criterion of trustworthiness for qualitative data is transferability. This matches the “external validity criterion of positivism” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 104). Transferability refers to whether the research findings and conclusions of a particular study can be applied to other contexts and with other participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Shenton (2004) stresses that “since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations” (p. 69). This means that a qualitative researcher does not believe that data from one situation will be generalizable to another situation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), because in qualitative research the data is

influenced by how individuals experience a given situation, which then means that there are multiple realities. In this study transformability was obtained by providing in-depth description of data and the entire process. This was considered because it would lead the reader down the road the researcher took to the conclusions of this study. In addition, this study used purposive sampling to select its participants. The aim was to “minimise the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about that context” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277). Purposive sampling has also contributed to making sure that participants are knowledgeable about the topic under investigation.

3.7.3 Dependability

Thirdly, dependability matches with “reliability criterion of positivism and addresses how the findings and interpretations could be determined to be an outcome of a consistent and dependable process” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 105). Dependability refers to whether the same research findings and conclusions could be obtained if this study were carried out with the same participants and in the same context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Shenton, 2004). Despite the thick description provided to aid other researchers to do the same study over a period of time, this is found to be difficult to achieve in qualitative studies (Shenton, 2004).

3.7.4 Confirmability

In qualitative research the term “confirmability” is similar to objectivity (Lincoln & Guba 2013, p. 105; Shenton, 2004). It therefore requires steps to be followed to ensure that the research findings are based on the information gathered from the participants’ experiences and not the researchers’ subjective ideas (Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) emphasises that researcher bias can be minimised by using triangulation across different forms of data. In this study the research findings and conclusions are based on multiple data sources, such as focus groups, individual interviews and research notes.

3.8. Limitations of the study

Considering the validity of the results, the researcher found it important to be aware of the study’s limitations:

- The results of this study may not be generalised to other schools, because it was delimited to only two secondary schools. However, the results could be generalised to schools that have the same situation as experienced by participants of this study.

- This study was restricted to teachers who had taught a teenage mother in the past three years.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical consideration is very crucial when human beings' experiences are the unit of analysis. In this study the researcher followed the procedures as mentioned (see 3.5.1) in order to maintain ethical considerations. Permission was granted from the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee: Human Research to continue with this study. Before conducting any interview with the participants, the researcher explained the research and ethics process to the volunteering teachers. Using the consent form, the researcher explained the purpose of the research, participants' rights, how results would be handled and how confidentiality would be maintained. The participants were asked to feel free to ask if they did not understand. It was made clear to the participants that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. It was only after this process that the participants were asked if they wanted to be part of the study by signing the informed consent form, as Henning et al. (2004) recommends.

3.10 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has given a description of the research process. The research paradigm and methodology on which this research is based has been discussed. It also explains the context of the study and the research techniques used in gathering data. Finally, it examines the management of data, and the trustworthiness of the data, as well as the research's ethical considerations. In the next chapter, the research findings will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

As was discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, this research attempts to provide an answer to the following question:

- How do secondary school teachers experience and practice inclusion of teenage mothers as learners in Namibian secondary schools?

To best answer the research question, this main question was broken down into three questions as:

- What are teachers' thoughts about including teenage mothers in schools?
- What do teachers know about pregnant learners in schools?
- What do teachers think can be done to prevent teenagers from falling pregnant?

This study was conducted in two secondary schools in the Oshikoto region of Namibia. The data of this study was analysed by using the process of qualitative content analysis. Through this process, themes and categories were identified and will be presented in this chapter. This chapter presents data according to the themes dealt with. Table 4.1 below gives a summary of themes and categories that emerged during data analysis.

Table 4.1

Summary of Themes and Categories

	Themes		Categories
4.2.1	<i>Teachers' responses on inclusion of teenage mothers in schools</i>	1	Teachers' distinction between pregnant learners and parenting learners
		2	Lack of resources
		3	Burdened not only in classroom but also in school
		4	Empathy for teenage mothers
4.2.2	<i>Unpacking teachers' perceptions on policy of inclusion of teenage mothers</i>	1	Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with policy of inclusion
		2	Blaming policy of inclusion
4.2.3	<i>Support practices</i>	1	Conditional caring
		2	Gender and care
		3	A need for comprehensive information

4.2 Research findings

The research findings will now be presented, according to the above themes which emerged during data analysis. These three themes reflect the subjective realities of secondary school teachers' experiences and support practices for schooling teenage mothers. The portions of data extracts are taken from data gathered from the participants through the focus group interviews, individual interviews and field notes. It is important to remember that the term 'teenage mother' in this study refers to pregnant and parenting learners. Having defined what is meant by 'teenage mother' in the context of this study, I will now present teachers' responses on the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools.

4.2.1 Teachers' responses on inclusion of teenage mothers in schools

The teachers who participated in this study had taught a pregnant and a parenting learner, respectively. This means that participants had experience of dealing with school-going teenage mothers. Participants' responses range from the distinctions between pregnant learners and parenting learners, lack of resources, the burden in the classroom and school and the issue of empathy for learners. These categories will then be discussed as follows.

4.2.1.1 Teachers distinction between pregnant and parenting learners

During the interviews at both participating schools, teachers expressed the distinction between pregnant and parenting learners. Mr A expressed that:

“You know these people are in two categories; you have a teenage mother who is pregnant right away in the classroom and you have teenage mother who delivered and have a baby at home”.

This distinction between pregnant learners and parenting learners was supported by several participants. However, the distinctions vary from bodily evidence, sleeping/moodiness, punishment, the way one talks to these learners as a teacher, presenting a lesson, and concentration in the classroom. These aspects of teachers’ views of pregnant mothers will be discussed in turn.

It seems that the bodily evidence of a pregnant learner was the biggest cause of concern for the participants in this study. Some teachers thought that a teenage mother who is pregnant while at school should be treated differently from teenage mothers who have babies. When mothers have babies already, there is no bodily evidence that they are mothers and they can easily “blend in” with learners who are not mothers.

“Yes, the one that has a child is a normal learner. [She] does not have a problem, the child is not there, the child is at home. Currently in the classroom is just a learner, like any other learner. Only that one who is presently pregnant that needs special attention.” (Mr A)

“...we had a learner here at school and then we have to call in the parents, because we realised that tummy is becoming big.” (Ms D)

“When they wear the skirt.... the school uniform... it’s difficult. Sometime they tuck in [demonstrating how girls have to tuck their shirts into their skirts]. She is pregnant but she tucks in. It’s difficult to the teenage pregnant (girl)... it is difficult for the baby to move because the uniform is too small” (Ms G)

Some teachers found it difficult to reconcile pregnant learners’ bodies with their being at school. The reasons ranged from having to give learners “special attention”, to simply worrying about learners’ growing bodies. One the reasons that teachers gave for worrying about learners’ growing bodies was the fact that they were expected to wear a school uniform, but they felt that this was not practical for pregnant mothers as they should wear loose

clothes. Teacher G thought that the baby would not be able to move if learners' clothes were too tight. A teacher from school 2 (Ms X), identified long days and hot weather as possibly being unfavourable for pregnant learners.

“When... when pregnant again with this climate of ours, sometimes it's very hot and [the school hours are] long. You start at eight and end at four, so it's not easy with these teenage pregnant [learners]”. (Ms X)

Some teachers from both schools also thought that a pregnant learner might be sleepy or moody, which may result in them not doing class work.

“I think the problem here is the natural phase that every pregnant woman will have to go through. Mood swings... these learners... these teenage mothers also go through the same process” (Ms X)

“...they are moody whenever they are in the classroom. You find out that the situation at which they are operating, I don't know..... may force them to become moody. Number two is that they are sleepy, so you are teaching and someone you know is just sleeping in the classroom.” (Mr B)

“You don't want to teach learners while they are sleeping on the desks” (Mr M)

Teachers expect schools to be places where rules are followed. When a learner sleeps in class, the rule about being awake in class is broken. This frustrates teachers because they are in a double bind. On the one hand they explain (and so perhaps forgive) pregnant learners for sleeping but cannot extend the same courtesy to all learners, those who are not pregnant. Teachers then end up in a situation where they feel that pregnant learners are getting special treatment in a context where they try to treat all learners the same. Some teachers thought that if they do not know that a learner is pregnant and the learner is sleeping in the classroom, they may end up punishing learners.

“So they are sleeping because they are pregnant but without knowing we usually give them these ... simple... punishment [softly] when they do so” (Ms C)

“Now, ok, let me give an example: stand for 5 minutes or 10 minutes! Ok, the person you are forcing to stand is a pregnant somebody, who can easily collapse or faint.... let me call it that way.... fainting” (Mr A)

“And these teenage mothers cannot handle the punishments. Sometimes you [as a teacher] will end up not punishing them knowing that she already has some problems” (Mr M)

Teachers then apply double standards by disciplining non-pregnant learners and not disciplining pregnant learners for breaking the same rule. This places teachers in a situation where they can be seen as being unfair, yet teachers justify not disciplining pregnant learners because they feel sympathy for them with their “many problems” (Mr M).

Some teachers also thought that learners could not concentrate when they were pregnant, so they may be present in class physically without being able to pay attention “because of energy problems that they are having... caused by pregnancy” (Mr M). Finally, a pregnant learner is described as experiencing various hindrances to her education. Teacher G, during an individual follow-up interview [translation from Oshiwambo], put emphasis on the pregnant learner when she was asked about teenage mothers who sometimes do not do the work given by their teachers in class. Teachers felt that a pregnant learner may not concentrate well due to “moodiness and hatred towards others and the teacher” and also because they were “sleepy”. The pregnancy itself was expressed as the most “difficult period”, one that can make a learner be absent for some days due to her condition, and this may lead her to be left behind.

“On the other hand, a pregnant learner may become moody and also develop hatred towards others and the teacher. She becomes withdrawn and hardly concentrates on her school work, and sometimes also sleeps during lessons. A pregnant learner may also lose some lessons because of absenteeism due to her condition. This may make her miss some tasks, as well as subject content. The pregnancy period is a challenging one. It is even a difficult period for grown-up, mature and married women, what more can you expect from schoolgirls”. (Ms G)

4.2.1.2 Lack of resources

Teachers reported a lack of resources in terms of practising full inclusion of teenage mothers. One of these resources is lack of training. Teachers claim that they were not trained to deal with teenage mothers. The fact that teachers were not trained to deal with teenage mothers made it difficult to practice inclusion of pregnant learners. It therefore seems that teachers need to be supported in order to support the inclusion of pregnant learners.

“Unfortunately no... [mmm]... unfortunately... we were not trained and that is the problem that most of us are facing”. (Mr B)

This idea was supported by other teachers from the same focus group interview as they ‘*nodded their heads in agreement*’ that they were not trained to deal with teenage mothers. The problem of teachers not being trained was not only a problem at school 1. Teachers from school 2 also supported this idea

“No! Not as far as I am concerned. We just have to pick up [how to do this] Learn by experience”. (Ms X)

“We were not trained. We just share ideas [talk to other teachers] and... and opt for suitable ones that we can implement during our lessons”. (Mr M)

Teachers from both reported a lack of training as one of the hindrances to practising the holistic inclusion of teenage mothers, yet it seems that lack of training did not prevent teachers from implementing the inclusion policy. In the process, teachers “learn by experience” and “share ideas” when they have to practice inclusion of teenage mothers, without having received training. However, teachers felt unsupported in implementing the inclusion of pregnant learners, and were worried about having pregnant learners in their classrooms. Due to lack of training, they ‘found it difficult’ to approach the pregnant learner. Teachers thought that they “are not qualified” to talk to the “expecting learners about their pregnancies”. They were also worried that if a pregnant learner falls sick while at school it becomes a problem as they “do not know how to help her”. It seems to be a relief to teachers when a pregnant learner is given “permission to go home”. Teacher G expressed her views in her mother tongue [Oshiwambo] and, translated into English, she said:

“The other thing is that as teachers, we find it difficult to approach an expecting learner, for example to ask her whether she is going for ante-natal care. This is because it may help the expecting learner to know whether the baby is in the right position in the womb, and also give her necessary advice from professionals while expecting. Sometimes, when a teacher approaches the expecting learner and asks her about those things, it might create hatred between them, as the learner might feel embarrassed. I also feel that as teachers, we do not qualify to talk to teenage girls who are expecting about their pregnancies because we are not trained for that. In some instances, the expecting learner may fall sick while at school but, as a teacher, I just do not know how to help her. Luckily, sometime that learner is given permission to go home”. (Ms G.)

Having experienced a lack of training and inability to care for pregnant learners, there seems to be a need for other facilities to help teachers practice inclusion of pregnant learners. Some teachers at school 1 expressed that "...they need special facilities" (Mr B), particularly when they experience labour pains in the hostel.

"So in terms of delivery [when a pregnant learner is about to give birth], we are not provided with facilities that can cater for that [delivery of a baby] and also we look at the issue of transport at the school and the distance from the school to the hospital..."
(Mr B)

This frustrates teachers, as they think of the "distance from the school to the hospital" and the 'issue of transport' to take a pregnant learner who is about to deliver to the hospital. In support of this, another teacher from school 1 gave an example of a learner who had experienced labour pain amongst other learners in the hostel during the night. This was expressed as a challenge because other learners could see and hear how a pregnant learner goes through labour pain. A pregnant learner is supposed to stay in school until 'four weeks before delivery', and teachers felt that this was a result of parents failing to find accommodation close to the school hostel.

"So we were keeping the child in the hostel, just to be told one day at midnight that... [mm]... the child is about to give birth". (Ms D)

Ms D provided an in-depth answer about a learner who experienced labour pain in the hostel during the follow-up individual interview. She highlighted that teachers should "be trained" on how to help a pregnant learner, and gave an example of a learner who experienced labour pain in the hostel. This was supported by Ms C, also in the individual interview, as she pointed out that learners may "deliver before their due dates".

"Umm... alternatively if it is nothing else to be done or to be considered, then teachers should be trained to work with pregnant learners, otherwise it is going to be a burden on teachers' shoulders. I think, if you can remember very well during the group discussion, I mentioned the situation where we had such a pregnant learner, who went to an extent that she was just about to deliver in the hostel. So, we could not help, the supervisor could not help because they have no idea on what to do. All what they did they just take the other learners out of the room and leave her there while waiting for the ambulance to come. So what I am trying to say here is that, if there is nothing else to be done at least to give this people special attention as they supposed

to, then teachers should at least be trained or given just general ideas on how to work with these people like in case if you find yourself in this situation you should do this, if you find yourself in this situation with such a learner you should do this". (Ms D)

"Now the government say that the learners must be in the school up to at least four weeks before they deliver. But sometimes learners may deliver before....the time is due. So they really need to revise that policy." (Ms C)

From an individual interview, Ms G highlighted that teachers were not trained as 'midwives'. She gave an example of a pregnant learner who had been coming to school and delivered one day later, which made her fear that such a learner might 'deliver in the classroom'. This creates fear amongst the teachers, as they think that they may not have the skills to assist a pregnant learner to deliver her baby.

"She had been coming to school while expecting, and then after a day she delivered. My fear is that a learner who comes to school while expecting may deliver in the classroom and, as teachers, we might fail to assist in a safe delivery, since we are not trained as midwives but teachers". (Ms G)

Conversely, school 2 does not have a hostel, so, accommodation was one of the factors that teachers raised as a concern "....why can't the school just get a hostel..." From the teachers' point of view, it seems that there is a need for a hostel and this may require the involvement of other sectors. Learners at school 2 are responsible for finding their own accommodation, as they do not live with their guardians. Teachers are frustrated with the environment in which their school is situated, in that it "is just too difficult for everyone". Teachers felt that keeping these learners in the hostel may provide a conducive environment, away from cohabitating with persons of the opposite sex.

"I think education needs to be assisted by other sectors, and if it's possible why can't the school just get a hostel and then we will have the time that will be limited for them [better controlled over the learners to reduce the rate of pregnancy]". (Mr F)

"So, so they (learners) actually had been cohabitating with men and females and so forth. So the situation and the environment, is just too difficult for everybody". (Ms X)

Typically, many learners at school 2 live far from the school, so they find private accommodation near the school. Teachers suggest that the school should have a hostel. Staying with private people is not always conducive to their well-being, as learners often fall

pregnant by men in whose homes they are living. It is in this context that the teachers are suggesting that if the learners did not have to find accommodation in the town the high pregnancy rate would most likely be lower.

4.2.1.3 Burdened not only in classroom but also in school

Teachers from both schools expressed that inclusion of teenage mothers in schools does not only burden a teacher in a ‘single classroom’ but the ‘whole school’. Teachers felt that this is a burden to the whole school, as it means that a lot of caring is needed.

“...[it] is not easy having these learners [pregnant learners], oh yes having these learners in your class and in the school in general; it means a lot of caregiving”. (Ms X)

“So as a school, we feel burdened when we have these kids [pregnant learners] in our schools”. (Mr B)

Teachers are aiming for better results which may contribute to the whole school’s performance. It seems that teachers felt overwhelmed when practising inclusion of teenage mothers, perhaps because of so “many wide areas”, as part of teachers’ responsibilities, that that they may not provide the support that teenage mothers may need. Teachers also expressed frustration that they have “a syllabus to finish, tests to give and a lot of teaching and marking”. With all of these responsibilities, teachers have shown their concern that they might not provide the care needed by teenage mothers, and especially to pregnant learners.

“At a certain point, one could see that teachers have got too many wide areas to work with [responsibilities] at school, and sometimes we may miss out on these people [don’t have time to care for them]”. (Mr F)

“...we have a syllabus to finish and the test to give and a lot of teaching presentation and marking, so we don’t actually have time to counsel them”. (Ms X)

Considering teachers’ wider responsibilities, teachers illustrated how the inclusion of a pregnant learner in the classroom gives extra responsibilities to teachers. Teachers have indicated that it is their responsibility to ensure that a pregnant learner is “healthy while” in the classroom. Teachers also expressed the concern that caring for pregnant learners with their “mood swings” is not an easy task. It may therefore require “a lot of tolerance that teachers do not have”. With this extra responsibility of caring it seems that teachers feel that the pregnant learner places a “burden of care” on the teachers.

“Having this one now on the other hand, the one who is pregnant in the classroom, that’s now a very big burden to a teacher. It’s the responsibility of a teacher to see..... I have this person [pregnant learner]... [that she] is healthy while in class”. (Mr A)

“So it’s not easy handling them [pregnant learners] in class, with their mood swings, so it needs a lot of patience from the teacher’s side, and a lot of tolerance that teachers don’t have”. (Ms X)

“I feel that teenage mothers, on the other hand, they give a burden to teachers

[uuh]... because you have to treat them with care and... and so forth”. (Ms C)

Looking at teachers’ extra responsibilities, it seems that the burden on their shoulders was the main concern. Ms X highlighted that “there is a burden... extra burden put on the teachers’ shoulders.” With such a burden placed on teachers’ shoulders, some teachers from school 2 indicated that it seems that “teachers are becoming counsellors or social workers”. Teachers felt that through their daily experiences in dealing with teenage mothers they are becoming counsellors.

“I think teachers are becoming counsellors these days or social workers...”. (Ms X)

“I would like to say we are just becoming counsellors, day by day, as we are learning these things throughout”. (Mr F)

Teachers also raised the question of discipline as one of the burdens in classrooms and at school level in general. This could be because teachers sometimes are not aware that there is a pregnant learner in the classroom, and they only find out when classroom discipline becomes chaotic. Teachers reported that when other learners know that “learner A is pregnant” they interrupt classroom discipline. It seems that controlling discipline in such a situation “becomes difficult”, because a pregnant learner is also shy to share about her being teased because of her pregnancy.

“Sometimes teachers feel not supported. You know, you might be in class and learners know that learner A is pregnant and now the discipline in class starts not being a normal one... So it becomes difficult for the teacher to control it, especially when you don’t know and you may find a learner crying in the classroom. [For example] while teaching, learner A is crying at the back, [and I ask] what is wrong? [and the learner says], “No these ones are disturbing me”. It’s the pregnancy [says the teacher, emphasising the cause of her distress and teasing]”. (Mr A)

“Shortly, there now... umh... like what the colleague have said in case now you know that the child is pregnant. It also brings problems because it will make it difficult for you to manage discipline in the class, or neither anywhere in the school surroundings”. (Ms D)

On the other hand, teachers expressed the challenge they faced when they knew that ‘learner A is pregnant’. This places teachers in a dilemma. On the one hand, this makes it more difficult to ‘manage discipline in the classroom or anywhere in the school surroundings’. Teachers may be seen as being unfair, if they treat pregnant learners differently from non-pregnant learners, after they had committed the same offence. So the double standards in discipline may make it difficult for teachers to manage discipline fairly.

In addition to maintaining discipline, it seems that ‘teachers in the system are younger’. By this they mean that young 22 year-old teachers often come across as looking as old as their high-school learners. They think that teenage mothers may take advantage because they appear to be of the same age as their teachers. Teachers highlighted that teenage mothers ‘do not show cooperation’ and they seem to ‘think that they have grown up’. When a disciplinary situation arises, teenage mothers are disobedient and ‘don’t fear their teachers’.

“...sometimes they [teenage mothers] don’t want to cooperate, and especially you know now in the system most of the teachers are young either being a female or male...” (Mr F)

“A teenage mother who has a baby or a child at home might be of the opinion that she is now grown up, and she loose respect for the teachers [thinking she is as old as they are]; she can do whatever she wants sometime [doesn’t owe them such respect]”. (Mr A)

Having presented their findings on maintaining discipline, teachers also highlighted the inclusion of teenage mothers in relation to school disruption and poor academic performance. Most of the teachers reported that the presence of teenage mothers in their classrooms and in the entire school has an influence on their collective academic performance. This is because teenage mothers’ “school performances drop” once they become pregnant. Teachers revealed that teenage mothers “stay in school for the rest of the year” but their performance remains weak. Some of the teachers reported that inclusion of a pregnant learner does not only affect the pregnant learner herself, but also disturbs the friends, the entire class and the whole

system. In the focus group from school 1, teachers suggested that teenage mothers' performance is decreasing:

"...these kids don't do anything.... their performances were very very low when it comes to the national examinations". (Mr B)

"...they are not performing at all. They stay in school for the rest of the year but at the end show no results [poor performance]". (Ms D)

"...at the end of the day performance is down, not only for the child that has a problem with the pregnancy, but even to others [that are not pregnant] that are now psychologically or whatever way influenced". (Mr A)

Participants from school 2 also supported these views about 'weak performance amongst teenage mothers' (Mr M). Teachers seem to be frustrated by teenage mothers' "absenteeism and unsatisfactory participation" (Mr M). Teachers felt sympathy for teenage mothers, because the more they are absent from school, the more a teenage mother will be left behind. Most teachers want to see "good standing performances" (Ms X), but with teenage mothers this may not become the reality, which may make it difficult for the teachers and the entire school to perform well.

"(mmh)...it's just always weak performance amongst those teenage mothers, and also the unsatisfactory participation, because they are absent sometimes and when they are absent then they are left behind". (Mr M)

"It's very disturbing, it's because for every teacher the aim is to achieve good standing performances of the learners, but with these teenage pregnancies, one will not be able to do it. It's very, very, very difficult!". (Ms X)

The burden is not only at the classroom level, but it also at the school level. Teachers seem to be more concerned about the final results, which may also affect the entire school. In the follow-up interview Mr B stressed that "the burden is more on the name of the school when teenage mothers are in grades 10 or grade 12". The teachers seem to be frustrated with teenage mothers' poor performance because it may have an influence on the whole school's academic performance.

"The burden is... it's more on the name of the school when these kids are in grade 10 or grade 12, because the performance of these learners is always... you know what I

have realised, what I have seen is always poor, now it puts the name of the school down". (Mr B)

When it came to teenage mothers' poor performances, teachers also highlighted the teenage mothers' double responsibilities. The issue of teenage mothers having to divide their attention between caring for the baby and attending to their academic work were raised as hindrances to their academic life. Teachers felt that teenage mothers might 'end up caring for their babies and not taking their school work seriously'. Teenage mothers sometimes 'do not do their school work'. This could be as a result of the double responsibilities of parenting and being a learner. So the situation in which teenage mothers find themselves may force them to act in a certain way.

"Yes! Being pregnant or being a parent and a learner at the same time is not easy for this child. In most cases, caring for the baby will mean giving most of their attention to the baby and not putting more emphasis on their school work". (Ms X)

"She is now having a burden of providing for the baby, providing for herself, and thinking of her education". (Mr A)

"...sometime they do not do their work or task that the teacher gave in a class [this could be seen as a result of their double responsibility]". (Ms G)

"It means they are also just being forced by a certain situation to be mothers, parents and, at the same time, to be learners who are treated the same as those who are not parents". (Mr M)

Even if teenage mothers experience double responsibilities, it is made clear from the interviews that the school rules remain the same for all. Some of the participants revealed that:

"Alright meme (Mrs), (ee) the, I would like to say the standard of the school and the classroom and the order of things remains the same". (Mr F)

"They [teenage mothers] are supposed to attend classes, the same as other normal learners". (Mr M)

Teachers furthermore think that the number of learners becoming pregnant is increasing rapidly. The participants stressed that teenage mothers are confusing and influencing other learners to also become mothers.

“...at the same time they are even confusing these other small learners, because the learners are trying to emulate them or they are trying to take examples from them that even if I fall pregnant it is still fine, I can go ahead with school”. (Ms D)

4.2.1.4 Empathy for teenage mothers

Participants spoke very judgmentally about the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools. Yet, they also illustrated their empathy for the inclusion of teenage mothers, as including teenage mothers in schools touches teachers' hearts. Their responses show the importance of education, and the future of these teenage mothers. Teachers felt that teenage mothers need to be encouraged and mentored, to get their life back.

“(Ee) you see, happy or unhappy, this is almost the same thing now, because normally it touches our hearts, we need them to be taught because we got that experience of people losing school just because of pregnancies”. (Mr M)

“They need to be encouraged and mentored [on] how to get their lives back, because this process of being pregnant and coming to school and being a mother at a very tender age is not an easy thing”. (Ms X)

The identification of pregnant learners in school seems to be a concern for most participants. Most of the participants reported that during staff briefings they identify pregnant learners in their classes.

“Yes! In most cases if the pregnancy is confirmed, we usually raised the issue with all our colleagues during our briefing, mini staff meetings that we have”. (Ms C)

“Yes, especially during briefings, we normally have to focus on teaching each other how to handle them and also to quickly identify them in those classes so that we have to be invigilate [keep an eye on them], we look after them, study them always on a daily bases”. (Mr M)

Teachers identified pregnant learners in their classes and shared with colleagues during staff briefings. In addition, teachers talked to other teachers about how to handle the pregnant learners. It seems that teachers had empathy for a pregnant learner. As Mr M highlighted, they identify pregnant learners from their classes so that they can look after them on a daily basis while at school.

Teachers also highlighted the sensitivities of the teenage mothers with regard to issues discussed in class, either by the teacher or by other learners. Teachers stressed that pregnant learners may feel uncomfortable with some of the issues discussed in the classroom. Examples given during class discussion may cause the other learners to relate them to a teenage mother and start laughing. In the follow up interview teacher D, a Life Science teacher, pointed out that if learners “cannot abstain” then they should use condoms. Such explanations could be sensitive to a “pregnant learner as she is already pregnant” as this conveys the message that she “did not use a condom”. It seems that teachers are worried about unprepared topics where all the learners are required to present their own topic. Teachers may be worried because of some learners presenting topics that touch a pregnant learner in class.

“...while they [teenage mothers] are included in a classroom, they tend to be too sensitive to most health topics discussed in the classroom”. (Ms X)

“...even during these presentations - a prepared topic and unprepared topic- when it comes to language, you find other learners you see giving their speeches which touches, those pregnant teenagers and those offend them [learners] also”. (Mr M)

“So if they cannot abstain they should at least use condoms. So you will find out that maybe half of the class is laughing. Why are they laughing? They are laughing because there is someone already who’s pregnant [in the class, and] that means that, that person did not use the condom. So those are some of the things that are making it a bit difficult so, you might find out.... might find yourself not mentioning that, because of a certain situation”. (Ms D)

Stigmatisation by other learners or by the teachers was also raised in the interviews. Teachers felt that teenage mothers become ‘isolated’ once they ‘become pregnant or after giving birth’. Most teachers in this study indicated that non-pregnant learners ‘form groups to gossip’ about pregnant learners at school.

“...if they fell pregnant or even after they have given birth, you will find that they become isolated, maybe because [umm] ... they have this fear they will be stigmatised by others ... teachers or even learners among them”. (Ms C)

“...if other learners find out that a fellow learner is pregnant, they will form some small groups that gossip about this one [the pregnant learner], and that is not going to create a conducive environment for the pregnant learner”. (Ms X)

In addition to teenage mothers being isolated and gossiped about by other learners, Mr F highlighted that teenage mothers are mistreated by other learners by threatening words and not wanting to associate or work in same group. Teachers seem to be concerned about the environment being conducive to learning for the teenage mother.

“Some of the learners might even use words which are threatening or they will not want to associate with the teenage mother, either in the classroom or at school, especially when it comes to group work. We normally say get in groups and start working [learners think] I will not get in the group with this person I would rather get in the group with the other person”. (Mr F)

Teachers reported that they talked to the teenage mothers. But it seems that they wanted to ‘keep it secret’ from other learners. Teachers try to keep it as a secret from other learner’s especially when they are caring for a pregnant learner whose pregnancy is not yet showing. Teachers stressed that teenage mothers ‘hate people who hurt them’. In this study, teachers indicated that they ‘find better words’ to describe the teenage mothers. Hence, teachers seem to find a ‘comfortable time and place’ to talk to them in a different way. It seems that teachers feared that if they mistreated the teenage mothers they might hate them.

“We should try to find better words to describe them [teenage mothers] and talk to them, because we understand that they normally hate the people who hurt them. When you talk to them in the bad way, I think they will just hate you forever; that’s how they function”. (Mr F)

“So you will have to find a comfortable time and place for you to talk to this person [teenage mother]”. (Ms X)

“For example...a teacher can say, I will need two of you. I want to deal with this group and then after that I will come to you [teacher talk to teenage mothers alone not together with non-teenage mothers]. Then you treat them differently, even in the way you speak to them you speak to them, advising them as a mother yourself... as a mother, and then they will feel that love from you and that they are also taken care of, in a way”. (Mr M)

“...but you as a teacher if you know, you do not always want the other learners to know that this kid is pregnant you try to keep that as a secret”. (Mr B)

Although participants reported that they used to talk to teenage mothers as a way of encouraging them to continue with their schooling, it seems that the role of the teacher-counsellor is still equally important. Teachers indicated that if an ‘unfamiliar situation’ arises then they will refer a teenage mother to a teacher-counsellor.

“...but it is also, I mean.... is also fortunate that we have counsellors... teacher-counsellors in case of an unfamiliar situation or in case any learner may be mistreated by others. Then you can take that learner to the teacher-counsellor and the learner can be counselled”. (Mr M)

“[Uumh!] Obviously you have to listen to the learner, and take the learner out of the classroom...without forgetting that your class or lesson is what?...is disturbed, take the learners to whoever have to deal with that”. (Mr A)

4.2.2 Unpacking teachers’ perspectives on the policy of inclusion of teenage mothers in schools

Participants in this study revealed their perceptions on a current policy. These perceptions are very important to this study, as they have showed how other people, like parents, thought about the issue of teenage mothers in schools. This may help to clarify the impact which the current policy on inclusion of teenage mother has on those involved in its implementation. The following categories will be used to lead the discussion: satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the policy of inclusion, and the blaming of the policy of inclusion.

4.2.2.1 Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the policy of inclusion

The presence of teenage mothers at school might not be acceptable to all. It seems that some of the teachers from school 1 were not happy to have teenage mothers in their classrooms and at school. Some teachers seemed to be frustrated, believing that teenage mothers are ‘causing problems’ (Ms D). In their own words:

“[Mmh]... not at all! We are not happy to have them, because, as I said, these people are causing problems”. (Ms D)

“Yes! To add on that, [mmh] we are not really happy to have a teenage mother, as such, in school”. (Ms C)

On the other hand, participants at school 2 seemed to be happy with teenage mothers being in school. Participants revealed the importance of education, and wanted to eliminate school

drop-out in order to keep the teenage mothers in school. Encouraging teenage mothers to come back to school seemed to be a factor in stopping school drop-outs. So the inclusion of teenage mothers might help them ‘to catch up with educational activities, and be like other learners’ (Mr F). However, earlier identification and care-giving to these learners were mentioned as challenges encountered. This is how the group exchanged views in the group interview:

“Yes of course we are happy [that these learners are allowed to stay in school], but it is also a problem on the other side because you have to take care of that person”. (Mr M)

“[ee] in my point of view, we have many street kids who drop out of the school because of the teenage pregnancy. Now we need to avoid this and encourage them to come back to school”. (Ms G)

“Yes, including these teenage mothers in school is really good to a certain extent, but they need to be identified as early as possible”. (Ms X)

“[Iyaa].. I am of the opinion that [ee]... the teenage mothers should be in the system, just to catch up with the educational activity, like the other group”. (Mr F)

4.2.2.2 Blaming policy of inclusion

It seems that not all teachers are happy with the inclusion policy for teenage mothers. Teachers stressed that the policy did not emphasise how to tend to teenage mothers in the classroom setting. It also frustrates teachers, as they feared that other learners would ‘fall into the same pit’. Another teacher from school 2 blames the inclusion policy for being ‘against the cultures and the norms’ of teaching:

“...the policy is saying, the kids should be allowed to attend school but it did not say much as to how we should attend to these children”. (Mr B, ind)

“...it might be an unheard cry from a teacher, but whoever put up this policy that teenage mothers should be included in the classroom; I think it’s creating a burden to other learner’s and also encourage some more teenagers to fall in the pit. [Inclusion of teenage mothers seems to encourage other learners to also become pregnant]”. (Mr A)

“Yes, I think this policy of allowing pregnant teenagers to come back into the educational system is against most of our cultures and norms. Some people are happy with this, but the majority are not”. (Ms X)

In response to what other people say about teenage mothers in schools, most participants indicated that the number of learners becoming pregnant is overwhelming, in comparison to previous years, when pregnant learners were not included in schools. The inclusion policy is blamed because there is no more threat if a child becomes pregnant, since they are allowed to stay in school and to come back after giving birth. Teachers also shared what parents were saying about the inclusion policy. They suggested that the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools might motivate other learners to become teenage mothers.

“Yes, some people are saying it is not a good example as this influences teenagers to fall pregnant, since they think they are now free to do it. They don’t think that it is forbidden, so they’re just going even to also try it, as it has been tried by their colleagues because they will say ‘yes, [uuh..] my friend has got a baby I wish I had mine, may be next time I will have mine”. (Mr M)

“The learners just continue to go to school, even if they are pregnant, and this increases the number of births... pregnancy here at school, [ever since the pregnant learners were allowed to continue schooling, the number of learners becoming pregnant at school has been growing]”. (Ms G)

“[Iya] I have got almost the same idea as my colleague communicated; the parents at the moment understand that the step to be taken to allow these teenage mothers to stay in school is motivating others also to become teenage mothers in school. With that reason as my colleague has said, the [pregnancy] rate is ever increasing”. (Mr F)

From the follow-up individual interview Mr A compared the outcome of the inclusion policy with the exclusion policy. He emphasised that learners do not care anymore, because “pregnant or not pregnant” you are free to attend school. The exclusion policy learners were ‘scared to practice sexual intercourse’ because they were afraid of being expelled from school.

“The policy I talked about is the policy of pregnant learners to attend school until four weeks before delivery. You see in the past, learners that became pregnant were “suspended” from school then go and deliver and stay with the baby for two years and then after two years they can come back to school. Currently there is a policy that

a child will be at school, pregnant or not pregnant, and those who are pregnant will be at school until maybe four weeks before delivery. With the other policy, the old one, might scare a child from practising sex because she knows once she falls pregnant she will lose her education for more than three years, because she will now have the pregnancy period and have two years again to stay with a baby, so I will lose out that is what she will say. But this one now where is the difference, I can fall pregnant, come to school, do my school work, go and...after four weeks' time I go and deliver my baby and may be after two weeks leave my baby with my mother and come back to school. So they see no danger there because she is losing nothing she is feeling nothing”.

Some participants expressed the belief that teenage mothers are not experiencing the consequences of their actions, since caring for the new-born baby is done by their parents. This could lead to more pregnancies:

“So these learners are supposed to go through or experience the consequences of their work. And now they are getting pregnant, getting children and leaving them with the elders. So they are actually not feeling any punch of their work or of their action, so they are not taking part in any of those responsibilities. And because they don't feel the pain of going through parenting they will probably go back to their old ways”.
(Ms X)

4.2.3 Support practices

Having discussed perspectives on the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools, the final section of data presentation addresses ways of supporting teenage mothers. Supporting teenage mothers is significant as it seem to help them deal with their dual responsibilities of being a learner and a parent. It is also important to support these learners in meeting their classroom and school goals. Teachers' responses will be presented based on the three categories: conditional caring, gender and care, and finally a need for comprehensive information.

4.2.3.1 Conditional caring

In response to support practices for teenage mothers, most teachers indicated that they care for teenage mothers, not because they are special, but because of the ‘condition in which they are’. Teachers revealed that it should be made clear to the learners that what the teenage mother did is ‘wrong and unacceptable’. So when teachers treat teenage mothers differently it

does not change the fact that what they did is unacceptable. It seems that teachers fear that if non-teenage mothers see teenage mothers being treated in a special way, they may also fall pregnant, just to have special treated.

“...they are treated as such not because they are actually special but because of their condition. So you cannot necessary say yes we’ve been treated special so they would influence others, and others would also want to be treated the same... It should just be clear that what they are doing... is not acceptable, but people have just to accept it because it is already there”. (Ms X)

“So we don’t treat them special in the classroom [mmh] only that... now that you think, feel like... she is tired or she is sleeping. That’s now where you have to apply your psychology and see what you can do, that others do not see...”. (Mr B)

It seems that teachers supported teenage mothers because they were worried that if something went wrong with this learner they would be accountable. The teachers highlighted “physical education lessons” and “laboratory activities” as areas where teenage mothers receive special treatment, just because of their condition and fear of harming the unborn baby. Teachers reported that they consider the condition of a pregnant learner, so when other learners have to run, the pregnant learner may not be allowed to run. Also, when working with chemicals in laboratories, teachers consider the inclusion of a pregnant learner, but they regard it as not desirable for the pregnant learner to be in contact with chemicals, as this may harm the unborn baby. Furthermore, other teachers have also spoken about classroom activities, and the special support they give to these learners. In their own words:

“...sometimes you have PE (physical education) for example and these learners may be they supposed to do ... to run or may be to jump. Now with this learner who is pregnant, obviously, knowing the condition of that learner you have to tell them that ok you are not going to run based on your condition. These are some of the special treatment we use to give to a pregnant learner”. (Ms C)

“...for example we are having a science practical in a lab, and now this child not because you don’t want her to attend, but we know laboratories are not that much friendly when it comes to situation like pregnancy. So in such a way you will be forced to may be let this child do practical in another, separate classroom...” (Mr A)

“You can organise...reorganise a very suitable assignment for that person [teenage mother] to go and do it at home, due to the situation the condition involved”. (Mr M)

“But if she did not do my homework, I talk to the teenage mother that you need to study in order to help your baby, because there is no other way”. (Ms G)

4.2.3.2 Gender and care

Caring for teenage mothers at school involves both female and male teachers. Some distinction has been made between the responses of male teachers and female teachers. It seems that some of the participants reported a difference between men and women teachers when it comes to dealing with teenage mothers. The teachers identified female teachers as better care-givers than male teachers, perhaps because women are closer to pregnant learners:

“But if you are talking about men and women, yes both are teachers, yes, both are parents but I only believe and feel that women are more closer to girls, especially those that are pregnant, and I hope they might even or they are likely to give a good care and good treatment or better treatment, compared to men. But I am not saying that men are not good care-givers of teenage mothers”. (Mr A)

Considering female teachers being regarded as closer to pregnant learners, it is also suggested that female teachers are more sensitive than male teachers, because they go through the same process of being pregnant. :

“But I guess a female gets to feel it more, because they go through the same processes; they actually know how it feels. Then their male counterparts probably also feel that, but for them it’s an issue to discuss, and I don’t think they really understand the pain the learners are going through”. (Ms X)

On the other hand, another teacher agreed with Ms X that “female teachers are more sensitive” with pregnant learners, because they have been through the same process. However, she expressed the characteristics of being pregnant as being well known by female teachers and to male teachers who teach biology and life sciences. It seems that, apart from teachers who are familiar with pregnancy traits, other male teachers who do not know anything about pregnancy, may end up punishing the learner:

“[mmmh]....yes! I can say so [aa]... gender...yes gender does play a role in the views... how people view these pregnant teenagers in school. For example, females are more sensitive to these learners, because they know the whole process, because they know that if you are pregnant, they know that now you will be moody, you will be sleepy, and so they treat them with care. But with males, apart from those who teach a

science like biology and life science, they are not really acquainted with these behaviours, or sometimes just punish them, not because they want to punish, but because they are not aware that these are the characteristics of somebody who is pregnant". (Ms C)

Mr F confirms that male teachers are likely not to be good care-givers for teenage mothers. It is stressed that male teachers may "not necessarily care about the condition" of pregnant learners. This could be because male teachers may "blame" a pregnant learner, because of their "irresponsible" behaviours.

"Especially the males will not necessarily care about the condition of these people. They will always blame learners that [uu]) they are pregnant because of A B C D those issues, because they don't behave". (Mr F)

It was very interested to hear from teachers at school 2 that they do gender-based meetings at school. During these meetings a "male teacher talks to the boys" while a "female teacher talks to the girls". It seems that teachers thought that through such meetings learners would be informed on how to deal with sexually- related issues.

"Yes! We actually just have the male teacher talking to the boys, and the female talking to the girls. Not long ago that we had a meeting for the girls actually every term we make meetings for this gendering thing where the female teacher will have to share with the girls and the male teacher shares with the boys". (Ms X)

In terms of support, it seems that most of the teachers focused on the body of a pregnant learner, as they could not identify the teenage fathers. Looking at teenage fathers as learners, teachers have also indicated a distinction when caring for the teenage mother, as it differs from how they treat the teenage father as a learner. School 2 participants expressed amusement when asked about teenage fathers. Teachers highlighted that teenage fathers do not carry the same burden as teenage mothers. So the fact that they have fathered a child does not make them vulnerable, in comparison to a teenage mother carrying a baby for a period of nine months. This may also be shaped by how men are viewed by the "culture", as well as the fact that they are "not the primary care-giver." So teachers thought that teenage fathers "biologically miss out" on that opportunity to be treated in a special way. Below is the focus-group interaction emphasising that there is no need for teenage fathers to be treated in a special way:

“Well, when it comes to the boys it’s different, because normally it is always the mother who has a lot of work to do than the father”. (Mr M)

“Iya aa the thing is becoming interesting now [all participants laugh...I loved it] [iyaa ee] the fact that in our cultures and also the situation they made the man to be not primary care-giver, so due to that fact it means a boy who is also a father will not receive attention to the same extent as the girl”. (Mr F)

“There I think aa... with this teenage father, if we can call them, others are teenage mothers these are teenage fathers, biologically they miss out on that opportunity being treated special because they fathered a child at a tender age. So they are not...haven’t experienced or neither observed them being treated special”. (Ms X)

In the same light, teachers from school 1 also maintained the distinction between teenage mothers and teenage fathers, regarding care given at school. Teachers highlighted the double responsibilities for the teenage mother: “caring for the new born baby” and her education. It is, however, suggested that teenage fathers cannot be compared to teenage mothers because they “did not carry a baby” as teenage mothers do. It seems that fathering a baby does not guarantee teenage fathers to be treated as special.

“A teenage father cannot be compared to a teenage mother, because obviously if you are having a teenage mother in the class they are the one caring for the baby, and this and so on. [...umm] a teenage father on the other hand is quite different, because they did not carry a baby like a teenage mother so to say”. (Ms C)

Another teacher seems to only consider caring for pregnant learners. He pointed out that special attention is only given to pregnant learners. This could be because teachers see parenting learners who have their “babies at home” and teenage fathers as “normal”, and they should blend in with other non-teenage mothers. It seems that the bodily evidence of a pregnant learner made teachers treat them as special.

“No! Even these teenage mothers that are having their children at home they should [and can] do what other learners are doing. So we mostly [have to] give special treatment only to those that are pregnant while in the classroom. ...The father ooh... is normal”. (Mr A)

But it seems that there are times when a teenage father is treated as special. Teachers pointed out that a teenage father may only receive special attention when mistreated by other learners.

It seems that teachers thought that if teenage fathers are mistreated it might cause “dropping out or a drop in their performance”. Another teacher suggested that being given “permission to be in school” is seen as a special treatment. In the participants own words:

“Yes! I think sometimes there are some cases where these special father... teenage father will receive special attention or receive quite different attention. ...It happens that this teenage father impregnates a girl in the same class, which creates a certain situation where others will laugh at him and that will lead to him either dropping out or a drop in his performance. That’s when the teachers will have to step in and start giving attention or counselling, and just encourages a person to go on”. (Ms X)

“We might say they have got also a special treatment being given that permission to be in school”. (Mr M)

4.2.3.3 A need for comprehensive information

Teachers from school 1 and school 2 have indicated that there is a need for comprehensive information to prevent school girls from becoming pregnant.

Some teachers expressed the belief that “lack of information” contributes to learners becoming pregnant while at school. It seems that learners are “not informed” about the consequences of their behaviour. Due to lack of information teachers are calling for holistic *sexuality education*.

“Lack of information: learners are not informed of the outcome of this practises they are doing. That’s why I think it is still needed for someone out there to find a way how pass the message across, learners in school, out of school should not involve themselves in sexual activities and that is now sex education I am talking about here”.(Mr A)

When the teachers were asked if sexuality education is offered at school the majority commented that sexuality education is offered across the curriculum:

“...this sexual education is integrated in most of the subjects. So there is no lessons specifically for sexual education, but in every, almost in every subject of those nine subjects at junior or six subjects at senior there is a chapter on HIV and sex and sexually related issues. So they are tackled from different directions within all, within different subjects [mmh] yes!” (Ms X)

“...sexual education as I can see is across the curriculum, is a cross-curricular subject, meaning that in every subject we talk about teenage pregnancy, HIV and AIDs and so forth [iyaa]”. (Ms C)

The teachers revealed that there is “no lesson specifically for sexuality education”. It seems that across the curriculum there are topics about “HIV, sexuality and teenage pregnancy”. Teachers thought that through the “cross curriculum”, sexuality-related issues are tackled in all subjects.

In response to what should be done to prevent school children from becoming pregnant, most participants indicated that sexuality education should be given to children from as young an age as possible, even if African cultures consider sex as a taboo subject:

“Yes, there are a lot of things that can be done to prevent school children from getting pregnant. One of them is sexual education, so learners even from the primary level, they should be taught about the sexual education. So you know, in an African culture it is taboo to talk about sex”. (Ms C)

This extended to other teachers highlighting the input of the government and community organisations, like the churches and social workers, to also campaign as through preventative education. Teachers seem to be frustrated that “school alone cannot do anything”. Therefore, frustrated teachers suggested that other organisations should also come in to “preach the disadvantage of teenage pregnancy”.

“Iyaa and I think the government can also do more by having educational campaigns, whereby maybe the social workers can visit schools, even on a termly basis, to talk to the learners”. (Ms C)

“...we will give everything in the hands of the government and of the community like the churches, like other civil societies, to preach the benefit or disadvantages of teenage pregnancies. Otherwise the school cannot do anything”. (Mr A)

In addition, most of the teachers have highlighted the need for contraceptive education. Teachers thought that contraceptive education might help to prevent children from “unprepared” pregnancies. So the teachers highlighted the issue of condoms and femidoms. One participant stated that:

“Yes! In addition to that, those children should be educated on how to use the contraceptives; like to use the condoms, to use the femidom in order to avoid unplanned pregnancies”. (Ms G)

Another commented that “turning a blind eye” on these learners will increase the number of teenage pregnancies at school. Therefore, the involvement of other ministries like the Ministry of Health may help to get the message across. She also suggested that learners should be allowed to use a variety of family planning methods:

“I think that we... we need to take other ministries. I mean like the Ministry of Health. I think it should get involved with a family planning, contraceptive education and the learner should be....but again teenage learners should be of a certain age to be allowed to take contraceptives, like pills, and they should be told how to use condoms properly and to be told how to use femidoms, and many other methods of family planning, because if we turn a blind eye on them, assuming they are still young and not been involved sexually, it will result in a lot of teenage pregnancies”. (Ms X)

Furthermore, participants in this study called for parents to be actively involved in educating their children about sexuality.

“(Ee) what may be we need to do is the parents should also give this education, sexual education to their learners... I mean to their children, because if parents do not teach these learners to understand from home then it becomes a problem”. (Mr M)

Teachers felt that parents should give sexuality education to their children. It seems that teachers thought that if learners are not taught about sexuality from home then it “becomes a problem”. In addition to sexuality education, another participant highlighted that morals should also be taught at home. Teachers believed that morals are best “taught at home” and thought that parents should talk to their children about sexuality. This could be because children “learn best from their parents” and may learn “at a much younger age”. A frustrated teacher felt that all these problems could be happening just because of a “lack of morals”.

“I think not necessarily sexual education or sexuality education... I think morals; I think the moral is something that is lacking leading to all of these things. And morals can well be taught at home, like my colleagues have said; the parents should take that integral part in the education of their children. When it comes to sexuality the learners learn best from their parents, and learn at a very young age. So the parents should just expose their children to sexuality [laugh]...”. (Ms X)

Teachers in this study also raised the issue of parents' education. It seems that "education of the parents" may be required to assist them on how to talk to their children about sexuality, which is seen as taboo in many African cultures. The teachers' concern was whether the "adult education curriculum" includes a topic on "teenage pregnancy".

"(Ee) ok another thing that I suggest is the education of the parents. Adult education, yes we are aware that it's taking place, but we are not aware if these people are (ee)... in their curriculum there is an issue that address you know this teenage pregnancy, and now when that adult education is taking place in the communities do they teach parents about these issues?". (Mr B)

On the other hand, teachers blame peer pressure for learners becoming pregnant. Teachers reflect the learners' "peer pressure and acceptance", and may have contributed to learners' becoming pregnant. This could also be because teachers thought that it is not necessary for these learners to be "aware about contraceptives". But, however, "fitting into a group" may also have contributed to the disturbing number of pregnancies among schooling learners. Teachers stressed that learners "want to be accepted in a certain group", and that "if you can't be them" then "join them".

"...when learners fall pregnant, it's not because they are not aware about sexual education as per say. I think the main cause or the main contribution is mainly may be peer pressure and may be acceptance, not necessarily that learners are not aware about the contraception". (Ms C)

"Yes! Acceptance. They want to be accepted in that [particular] group of learners or those learners who are living well. So what should they do? If you can't beat them, you join them. So they join the other group because they cannot leave them so they involve themselves also". (Mr A)

When teachers were asked about condom distribution for school children, the overall response was very negative from school 1. Teachers stressed that there are "no benefits from having condoms at school" because learners don't use them on school premises. Teachers also felt that this could be seen as "encouraging the learners" to practice sexual intercourse. It seems that parents, also, "were not in support" of such a policy. Here is the group interaction from school 1:

"I do not see any benefit in having condoms at school; learners do not practise this in the school ground. ...And giving them again to go out with them for home weekends or

for holidays is like an encouragement [to have sexual intercourse], go and do A while you don't do it at school, it becomes bad". (Mr A).

In agreeing Ms D spoke softly, *"I think it's clear!"*

"I also agree with Mr A. The policy, yes, the policy was there from the ministry that we should distribute condoms in the hostel or wherever in the toilets. But also the parents themselves came out and were not in support with the policy".

Alternative responses from school 2 indicated that it "may work to a certain extent or may not work". This could be because adolescents are "shy", so teachers felt that learners might publicly play with the condoms but "may not use them in practice".

"My opinion is that that strategy may work to a certain extent or may not work. I believe all of us are aware that these children who are still growing up they also have got an issue of being shy and it may be possible that even if you distribute condoms within schools they may not touch them. They may look at them, they may play with them like that in public, but they will not actually use them. That's my opinion". (Mr F)

Despite being too shy to use condoms, every house has its family rules. Teachers felt that parents might not allow their children to bring condoms home. It was stressed that learners may want to take a condom from school but that "condom was not to be seen at home". With such obvious contradictions present, it was suggested that "education" may be needed for parents, so that parents themselves may give condoms to their children. Teachers from school 2, however, felt that condom "distribution should be accompanied by training". It is stressed that "educational programmes" to enlighten learners about the "importance of using condoms" may also be required.

"It depends on the parents. A teenager may be willing to take a condom from school, but that condom is not to be seen at home, where there is another set of rules. Unless condoms should be distributed to schools and also to homes to parents but that will be education first so that even parents will give their children condoms themselves that you might be stuck because you're not an angel then you can use that to protect yourself". (Mr M)

“Yes, they should be distributed, and this should come along with trainings and with educational programmes where the learners will have to be made aware of the importance of using condoms”. (Ms X)

Having presented the research findings, the next chapter provides a discussion of these research findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

With respect to bio-ecological systems theory as a theoretical framework underpinning this study, the research findings of the study will be interpreted and discussed based on this perspective. This chapter places the research findings in the context of the literature and the theoretical framework. The discussion of the data will consider the meaning and implications of the data. Before I start with data discussion, it is important to state the aims of this study, and its theoretical framework.

As was pointed out in Chapter 1 (see, 1.6.1) of this study, the study attempts to provide an answer to the following question: How do secondary school teachers experience and practise inclusion of teenage mothers as learners in Namibian secondary schools? This research study aimed to explore teachers' experiences of teaching school-going teenage mothers. It also explored the nature of teachers' support practices to enable teenage mothers to cope with the double responsibility of parenting and schooling. The participants of this study were selected purposively as mentioned in Chapter 3 (see 3.5.2). It is therefore important to note that all the teachers who participated in this study shared similar characteristics in terms of having taught teenage mothers during the previous 3 years, and were able to share their experiences based on what they encountered on an everyday basis.

The research findings for this study will be discussed in relation to the literature and the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner. By doing this, it may help one to understand teachers' experiences and support practices towards teenage mothers in the school context. The discussion of the research findings will be based on the themes that emerged as shown in the data presentation (Chapter 4). The first theme covers teachers' responses to inclusion of teenage mothers in schools. This extends to unpacking teachers' perceptions on the policy of inclusion of teenage mothers, as well as support practices towards schooling teenage mothers.

5.2 Teachers' responses on inclusion of teenage mothers in schools

Inclusion of teenage mothers can be described as an opportunity that is granted to pregnant and parenting learners to continue with their studies. This could be because education is a basic human right, and including these learners promotes values of gender equity (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012). This ideology of promoting education for girls is an international

phenomenon. Teenage mothers have the right to education and the right not to be discriminated against or “disciplined” because of pregnancy (Hubbard, et al., 2008).

5.2.1 Teachers distinction between pregnant and parenting learners

The findings from this study indicate that teachers appear to have made **a distinction between a pregnant and a parenting learner**. Teachers thought that the growing body of the pregnant learner showed her bodily evidence. This is in agreement with Bhana and Ngabaza (2012), who showed that school-going teenage mothers’ pregnancies may provide bodily evidence. In other words, it is challenging for pregnant girls to come to terms with the fact that they are carrying another human being (Luttrell, 2003, p. 4). It therefore appears that the growing body of a pregnant learner amongst other learners worries teachers most. As noticeable from the findings that a pregnant learner’s body becomes bigger, and the skirt (referring to the school uniform) becomes too tight, some teachers are concerned that it may hurt the unborn baby. This distinction between parenting and pregnant mothers seems to be supported by all the teachers who took part in this study. It appeared that most of the participants’ views are focused on the learners’ body. This suggests that “discourses of pregnancy as a cold or disease” (Pillow, 2005) are quite prevalent. I argue that if teachers see the pregnancy as an illness, it could influence the way they treat a pregnant learner in the classroom and in the entire school.

In systems theory, a pregnant learner can be placed into the centre of the interacting systems. In this context, a pregnant learner would be in immediate interaction with the teachers, other learners, and her family members. Teachers felt that such immediate interaction, created double standards in maintaining discipline. Teachers argue that pregnant learners may lack concentration, and could be moody or sleepy, which is believed to be caused by the condition of being pregnant. The finding therefore indicates that with such a pregnant learner in the classroom, it makes it difficult to manage discipline. Teachers reported that if one is aware of the learner’s pregnancy, then the classroom rules for a learner who sleeps in class, for example, may not be followed. Teachers feared that a pregnant learner might faint, if asked to stand for five minutes, to keep her awake. This describes the level of interaction within the microsystem that forms the “pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations experienced between individuals and the systems in which they actively participate, such as the family, the school or the peer group” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14).

5.2.2 Lack of resources

According to Shefer (2012, p. 146), “Schools probably do not have the resources and have too many other demands to give this issue any attention”. Teachers revealed that there is a **lack of resources** to aid them to practice holistic inclusion of teenage mothers. This is supported by Runhare and Vandeyar (2012) who assert that the lack of basic skills is apparent, as teachers had no idea on how to assist pregnant learners to cope with dual responsibilities. According to Ngabaza and Shefer (2013, p. 112), “teachers should be trained in supportive measures, and guidance on dealing with pregnant learners should be made available.” Teachers think that they were not trained to deal with teenage mothers. It appeared that teachers felt unsupported in assisting the inclusion of pregnant learners. The research finding indicates that teachers have to learn from their experiences when dealing with pregnant learners at school, as they were not trained as midwives but as teachers. The implications of this finding seem to indicate a rationale and argument for dismissing learners at early points in their pregnancy. This could be a result of the proximal relationships of teachers and pregnant learners. The teachers’ interaction with pregnant learners, may, however be interrupted by the *macrosystem*. This refers to the context that is far away from a child. It involves dominant social and economic structures (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011), and a lack of training may be due to social and economic structures. From the findings, the training of teachers may assist them to practise the implementation of inclusion of pregnant learners in schools.

In relation to the lack of training, the literature indicated “teachers’ concerns for learners’ safety and the lack of birthing resources” Shefer, (2012, p. 145). This appears to be a challenge, as “one of the Welwitschia girls allegedly experienced a miscarriage at the hostel in October 2012, and was rushed to the Khorixas State Hospital” (Nakale, 2013). As evident from the findings, a case from school 1 revealed that a pregnant learner experienced labour pain in the hostel where 16 learners were accommodated. In this context, teachers feared that because a pregnant learner was in direct contact with other learners, such proximal interaction might traumatise learners who witnessed the pregnant learner experiencing labour pain. With such situations in the school context, teachers indicated that they find it difficult to approach pregnant learners and they are also worried about long the distance from the school to the hospital and the availability of transport in such cases.

While school 1 expressed their dissatisfaction at including a pregnant learner in the hostel, school 2 teachers expressed the need for a hostel as a measure to reduce learners’ pregnancy. Teachers seemed to be dissatisfied with the environment in which their school is situated, as

they revealed that not all the learners from their school live with their parents or guardians. The findings emphasise that the school environment is not favourable, as it seems that some of the learners are cohabitating with persons of the opposite sex in order to have access to schooling.

5.2.3 Burdened not only in the classroom but also in school

Moreover, the teachers identified a **burden** placed on their shoulders in the implementation of the inclusion policy for teenage mothers. Based on the findings, the burden seems to be not only at the classroom level, but at the level of the whole school. Teachers appear to be aiming for better results, which may contribute to the performance of the whole school. But teachers also thought that this may not be possible with teenage mothers in schools. The literature highlighted that it is likely that schools may hamper the educational progress of teenage mothers (Shefer, 2012), which concurs with the findings of this study, where teachers suggest that teenage mothers' school performances drop once they become teenage mothers. Shefer (2012, p. 146) found that teenage mothers "experience a drop in their academic performances and these research findings are consistent with those of Bhana and Ngabaza, (2012,) who found that teachers felt that having teenage mothers in the classroom threatened classroom unity and academic performance. This could be as a result of double responsibilities, as described in the literature. Parenting learners face the very difficult choice and challenges of prioritising between their children and their studies. The choice varied according to the "health of the child, familial childcare support and the attitude of the school" (Shefer 2012, p. 137). The ecological system theory would explain this case as an interaction between a teenage mother and her immediate environment. Interaction between different levels may indicate how a teenage mother is involved in a different context, which may have positive or negative influences on her schooling and motherhood.

Despite the fact that teenage mothers are faced with double responsibilities, the research findings suggest that the school rules remain the same, with teenage mothers expected to do their school work and participate in class discussions like other learners. But, teachers as caregivers at school suggested that there is an extra burden placed on them, as they have the syllabus to finish and tests to mark, as well as caring for teenage mothers. Teachers thought that they were becoming counsellors and social workers as they have to care for and support the well-being of teenage mothers. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Bhana et al. (2008, p. 89), who found that even if some schools are 'sympathetic and

supportive', the inclusion of teenage mothers is still seen as an extra burden to the work load of teachers.

5.2.4 *Empathy for teenage mothers*

Bhana and Ngabaza (2012, p. 60) found that teachers provided “sympathy and support” to teenage mothers, as they understood the situation that had led to them being pregnant. Even if teachers are of the opinion that inclusion of teenage mothers places a burden on their shoulders, it was clear that they had **empathy** for teenage mothers. It stands to reason that the teachers’ empathy for teenage mothers was intended to ensure the well-being of the pregnant learner. The findings suggest that inclusion of teenage mothers into school touches teachers’ hearts. Hence, teachers felt that even if they were not happy with learners’ becoming pregnant while at school, motivation for teenage mothers to continue with their education is important. These results were, therefore, encouraging as teachers communicated with other teachers during staff briefings about learners who are pregnant at school. This means that early identification of pregnant learners at school is seen as important. This also accords with the study done by Bhana et al. (2010), who found that teachers’ attitudes and practices governed the experience of teenage mothers at school. These findings may help us to understand how teachers collaborate with other teachers in order to be aware and be able to provide support where required. Teachers’ empathy correlates with the ideas around the ecological theory that “every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her” (Brendtro 2006, p. 163). It appears that it is through teachers’ empathy that an environment conducive to learning may be formed.

Furthermore, teachers and learners may be the cause of stigma and shame, which may then lead to the vulnerability of teenage mothers in the school context, resulting in school dropout (Bhana & Mcambi, 2013). As evident from the findings, teachers felt empathy for teenage mothers when stigmatised by the teacher or other learners, suggesting that teachers considered teenage mothers as learners, despite their differences. Literature supports the idea that at the heart of *inclusion* is the right to not be excluded and for individuals, whatever their difference, to be treated with respect and given opportunities (Culham & Nind, 2003, p. 73). Yet, teachers also reported that teenage mothers may be sensitive to a variety of class discussions, therefore classroom interaction may make it difficult for teenage mothers to experience inclusion, as a result of stigma. Stapleton (2010, p. 9) describes stigma as: “...based on understandings of social relationships wherein individuals or groups are signified as

‘different’, often on account of behaviours judged as failing to meet socially prescribed norms of morality”.

This interaction with other learners using threatening words or not wanting to work with teenage mothers in the same group may indicate a negative interaction on the classroom level with other learners. Due to a possible stigma, the findings illustrate when teachers care for a pregnant learner whose pregnancy is not yet showing, keeping it a secret was prevalent. Teachers’ empathy is also demonstrated by the support given to teenage mothers who have babies to attend to their sick babies. It seems that teachers could have provided support for teenage mothers in order to keep them at school as, with “insufficient support (physically and emotionally)”, teenage mothers may end up dropping out of school (Chigona & Chetty, 2007, p. 1). However, teachers in this study show their moral dilemma, blaming teenage mothers and the inclusion policy at large, as they felt that having teenage mothers at school made them responsible for their care, even if this is against their moral beliefs that a teenage girl’s pregnancy is unacceptable.

5. 3 Unpacking teachers’ perspectives on policy of inclusion of teenage mothers in schools

5.3.1 Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with policy of inclusion

According to Bhana et al. (2008, p. 78,) even if some teachers are providing care to teenage mothers, it is likely that many teachers’ responses to teenage mothers in school are ‘judgmental and moralistic’. In contrast, Shefer et al. (2013, p. 8), found that teachers should not be viewed as bad individuals responsible for the negative views that they have about teenage mothers. It is likely that teachers’ responses to teenage mothers are “also shaped by their social and cultural context”. The cultural influence on teachers’ responses is also supported by the findings of (Bhana & Ngabaza, 2013). In addition, it is argued that those teenage mothers could be marginalised in the school environment as a result of societal discussion about teenage pregnancy (Chigona, 2007). This could, therefore, lead to the way in which teenage mothers are perceived to form aspects of inclusion and exclusion (Sookrajh, et al., 2005). As evident from the literature, teachers also expressed their perspectives with regard to the inclusion policy. There seemed to be a discrepancy between teachers in this finding. Some teachers from school 1 felt dissatisfaction with the inclusion of teenage mothers and this finding seems to be shaped by the bodily evidence of a pregnant learner. Conversely, teachers from school 2 and some teachers from school 1 seem to be satisfied, in

the certainty that they are emphasising the importance of education of teenage mothers and reducing the number of school drop-outs. The findings indicate that whether teachers are satisfied or dissatisfied with the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools, that is the policy, so, teachers just have to find ways of dealing with this reality.

5.3.2 Blaming policy of inclusion

According to Nambinga (2012), policy makers have no idea of what is happening in schools, thus referring to policy-makers as living in the “theoretical world” while teachers are living in the “real and practical world”. As evident from the literature, it seems that teachers also felt that they were not informed on how to deal with teenage mothers in the classroom setting. The inclusion policy also appears to be criticised as it is seen to be against current cultures and norms. In the context of ecological perspectives, government policy falls into the macrosystem. This is the context that is far away from a child, and it may influence all the other social systems, the latter influencing the proximal interaction of the child’s microsystem (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Findings tell us that if teachers are not satisfied with the inclusion policy, then they may have a negative effect on teenage mothers within their proximal interaction.

Equally important, it seems that there is a gap between the exclusion and inclusion policy of teenage mothers; that the number of learners becoming pregnant is growing. This seems to relate to the *chronosystem* which refers to the dimension of time and the interaction of various systems over a period of time, and their influences on an individual’s development (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Teachers report that becoming pregnant is no longer a threat of being excluded permanently from school. Teachers think that this encourages learners to not take responsibility for not falling pregnant. Even if they fall pregnant they do not have to carry the consequences of being excluded from education, as their parents look after their babies. It is apparent in the literature that parents do play a role “by providing child care assistance so that teen mothers can complete the necessary school tasks and homework in order to be successful” (Christenson & Reschly, 2010, p. 323). From the ecological perspective, parents are most commonly the people in direct interaction with the teenage mother and the ones who play a positive and supportive role at home. When parents care for the teenage mother’s baby while they are attending school, it makes it possible for teenagers to continue their education and improve their life chances.

5.4 Support practices

5.4.1 Conditional caring

As presented in the research findings, teachers indicated that they provided support to teenage mothers, not because they are special but because of the situation in which they find themselves. This finding indicates the **paradox of being both special and not special**. This could be due to the fact that the changing body of the pregnant learner may remind the school about the teenager being sexually active (Pillow, 2005). It appears that teachers felt that teenage mothers should not be treated as special, as they thought that what the teenage mothers did was wrong and unacceptable to society. This correlates with the literature that in some cultures when a teenage girl become pregnant, “it brings shame to the rest of the family” (Wekwete, 2010, p. 27). In addition, pregnant learners are aware that pregnancy at their age is not socially acceptable. Hence, due to ‘fear, secrecy and shame’ a pregnant learner may try to hide her pregnancy until she can no longer hide it (Ngabaza, 2011; Shefer, Bhana, Morrell, Manzini & Masuku, 2012, p. 128). Teachers also seem to fear that if other learners observe teenage mothers being treated as special they may think that becoming a teenage mother is good, as teachers’ would provide them with special attention. The interaction of a teenage mother with different systems may affect classroom interaction, and may negatively influence other learners. Therefore, caring for a person who has gone beyond the cultural norms and morals requires an understanding teacher, somebody who is able to provide a positive environment to enable a teenage mother over time to increase her “self-esteem and sense of security” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14).

Conversely, the research findings indicate that teachers seem to treat teenage mothers, especially a pregnant learner, with special care. This could be due to teachers being worried about anything happening to the learner while she is in his/her class. The research findings therefore indicate that teachers seem to provide conditional caring to teenage mothers. Teachers also interact differently with pregnant and parenting learners. A pregnant learner is perceived as in need of more care in the school and classroom than the parenting learner. In addition, teachers seem to consider a pregnant learner in potentially high risk situations, such as when working in the laboratory as well as during a physical education lesson. In general, it therefore seems that teachers considered the health and safety of the unborn baby by treating a pregnant learner as special, just because of her condition. This is in line concurs with the Namibian Ministry of Education (n. d) recommendation that: “pregnant learners and learners who become parents shall be supported to complete their education in a manner which takes

into account the health and welfare of the new-born child.” This study found that teachers’ caring is based on the condition of the pregnant learner, the bodily evidence and teachers’ fear of anything happening to the pregnant learner while in their care. Relating these findings to the ecological perspectives, they link to the proximal interaction between the teacher and the pregnant learners (microsystem) (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14). Teachers seem to have created a supportive environment for the pregnant learner in their classroom interaction.

5.4.2 Gender and Care

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed differences in **gender and care** as one of the fascinating results. As evident in the data presentation, teachers reported that there is a distinction between male and female teachers when it comes to caring for teenage mothers. The findings suggest that teachers think that female teachers are better care-givers than male teachers. This could be as a result of the understanding that the burden of care is unjustly circulated amongst men and women due to the common societal mould of gender inequality (Bhana et al., 2010). In addition, these results are consistent with that of Bhana et al. (2008, p. 89): “female teachers do a great deal of care work which is unacknowledged and invisible”. According to teachers, female teachers are more sensitive to the needs of teenage mothers as many of them have been through the process of pregnancy. In addition, the characteristics of pregnancy seem to be well known by the female teachers and male teachers who teach Biology and Life Sciences. Teachers thought that male teachers might end up punishing a pregnant learner, just because they are not aware of the signs of a pregnancy, and then do not treat them according to their pregnant condition. Therefore, Bhana et al. (2010) argue, in order to provide support for teenage mothers, a shift that advocates for gender equality is required. These findings may help us to understand how care is practiced in schools where there are both male and female teachers dealing with teenage mothers.

According to Tibinyane (2004), organisations that promote girls’ education in Namibia, such as the Girl Child Organisation (GCO) and the Forum for Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA), may assist girls to know their values as young women and prevent early pregnancy. Teachers from school 2 indicated they have been conducting meetings for boys and girls on gender issues, with male teachers facilitating the boys’ groups and the female teachers facilitating the girls’ groups. Such meetings were also geared towards educating boys and girls on sexuality issues.

Another most interesting finding was that most teachers focused on the changing body of the pregnant learner, and therefore could not identify the teenage fathers. This concurs with the findings of the study done by Bhana, et al. (2008, p. 89) who argue that “young fathers remain largely invisible”. In the current study the findings suggested that there is a distinction made between caring for teenage mothers and teenage fathers as learners. This discrepancy may be due to the bodily evidence of a pregnant learner as well as her dual responsibilities of motherhood and schooling. During the focus group interviews when teachers talked about teenage fathers this caused amusement. The findings tell us that teenage fathers do not carry the same burden as teenage mothers. Bhana et al. (2008, p. 89) emphasise that “the burden of pregnancy and parenthood” is placed “on the learners themselves, and generally onto girls rather than boys”. It is likely that the double responsibility of parenting is gendered. This is supported by Shefer and Fouten (2012, p. 149), who state that “young female learners have a very different experience from young male learners”. The literature confirmed the findings that teenage fathers do not experience parenting and schooling as teenage mothers do. According to the findings, the fact that teenage fathers have fathered a child does not make them as vulnerable as a teenage mother carrying a pregnancy for a period of nine months. One reason for this is the possibility that a teenage mother is the one to deal with the double responsibilities of caring both for the new-born baby and her own education.

Teachers thought that teenage fathers’ missed out on the opportunity to receive support at schools when they become teenage fathers. Teenage fatherhood is shaped by how men are viewed in the culture as not being primary caregivers. This is supported by Shefer and Fouten (2012, p. 167), who found that a cultural gender stereotype exists, as men may be seen as “breadwinners and heads of households” while “women may be viewed as nurturers, responsible for reproduction and caring”. From the findings, teenage fathers are also invisible in the school because they do not undergo physical changes like teenage mothers. They are only stigmatised by other learners if learners know that they fathered a child. In this context, teachers’ views on teenage fathers take into account cultural views of masculinity and boys’ roles in childcare which have been shaped by the macrosystem. This is the context that is far away from a child, such as the beliefs of the society (Donald et al., 2010; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). This finding has important implications for developing teachers’ understanding of teenage fathers as learners when thinking of support for pregnant and parenting learners. As mentioned in the literature, that teenage fathers may also need “support and assistance” in order to disturb the “cycle of absent fathers” (Swartz & Bhana, 2009, p. viii).

5.4.3 A need for comprehensive information

Moreover, as it became evident from the data presentation, teachers indicated that there appears to be **a need for comprehensive information** to help eliminate the number of learner pregnancy in schools. Teachers felt that lack of information may have contributed to learners becoming pregnant while at school. The finding indicates a need for sexuality education. Mufune (2008) suggested that sex education needs to be valued by teachers and students. He argued that there is a need for sex education to be a formal subject, and be assessed, so that learners get marks for the “subject”, as this will contribute to them taking it more seriously. It seems that sexuality-related issues are tackled across the curriculum, but there are no specific lessons. It appears that teachers are frustrated with learners becoming pregnant at a very young age and they suggested that sexuality education should be given to younger children if possible. It is therefore within this perspective that teachers revealed that schools alone cannot do anything to reduce the number of pregnant learners. Teachers thought that other government and community organisations, like the churches and social workers, could run campaigns to educate teenagers about the disadvantages of teenage pregnancy. This concurs with the literature that states: “before having sex, young people need to know that sexual intercourse carries with it the risk of pregnancy and, concomitantly of parenthood; the risk of sexuality transmitted diseases and of course the risk of infection from HIV/AIDS” (O’Regan, 2002, p. 11).

In addition, the findings indicate that there seems to be a need for contraceptive education. The findings inform us that turning a blind eye to these learners, thinking that they are still too young, will increase the number of learners’ pregnancy. It may thus be suggested that the involvement of the Ministry of Health would help to get the message across. As stressed by the literature, the collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Education to enable teachers to support teenage mothers would be required (Bhana et al., 2010). Therefore, denying contraceptives to schooling learners who are sexually active could be a major factor, if not the only one, leading to overwhelming numbers of learner pregnancy. It is stressed that health “service location and opening hours can also pose a barrier to access for young people, so young people need to be able to access services at a time, and in a place and style, that they feel comfortable with” (Emmerson, 2009, p. 3). From the ecological perspectives, “health services” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 14) are examples of the exosystem, a context or other systems that influence the child indirectly, in which a child is not involved (Donald, et al., 2010). Teachers could play a role during their proximal interaction with teenage mothers and other learners, in informing them about health services. Doing this may help parenting

learners to prevent a second pregnancy, and help other learners, who are not yet teenage mothers, to avoid becoming victims of teenage pregnancy.

According to the literature, parental education on how to teach their children about sex is needed (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011; O'Regan, 2002). It seems that this education may bring some changes, as parents are still not talking to their children about sexually-related teenage topics (Ngabaza, 2011). This is also supported by Macleod and Tracey, (2009, p. Iv) that some parents found it difficult to talk about sex related topics to their children. Morals appear to be best taught at home, and teachers felt that children would learn best from their parents. Some parents in Namibia “support the idea of family based sex education for fighting HIV but [parents] are reticent about personally getting involved in teaching their own children about sex” (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011, p. 129). Parental education may help to break the silence around sexuality related talks with children. It is argued that children will learn from their peers if the silence around sexuality related topics continues (Macleod & Tracey, 2009, p. iv). The literature supports the evidence from the findings of this research that there is a need for parental education. Teachers thought that parents may need to be provided with education, to help them with how to communicate to their children about sexuality-related issues. It was also very interesting hearing teachers relating to an adult education curriculum, though a major concern was that an adult education curriculum does not include a section on teenage pregnancy. This finding has important implication for developing an interaction between the home and the school network in supporting schooling teenagers.

It is understood that if schools, parents and caregivers can speak the same language of sexuality to children, it will help to pass the message on more quickly (O'Regan, 2002, p. 19). It is viewed that teenage mothers “requires caring parents, supportive teachers, and positive peers” to reach their full potential (Brendtro, 2006, p. 163). Profoundly, in the context of ecological theory, parents' interactions with their children and teachers' interaction with their learners seem to be all important. This could be because it is through the microsystem that the “proximal processes are posited as the primary engines of development” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6). It appears that these familial relationships may enable a parent to talk to her child about sexuality-related issues and moral education. Equally important, the collaboration between the family and the school may also be seen as equivalent.

Revisionist scholars argue that “early childbearing represents a rational and conscious choice for disadvantaged teen-aged women for whom there is little advantage in delaying pregnancy” (Macleod, 2011, p. 57). From the findings of this study, there seems to be pressure on learners

to become pregnant while at school. Teachers felt that a high number of learners becoming pregnant are not necessarily due to lack of information, but could also be due to peer pressure and acceptance, as they try to fit into a group. So if one cannot beat them, then one joins them. This indicates the negative results of interactions between a learner and her peers (microsystem). This finding tells us that these negative influences from her peers may change a “child’s development” as a learner if they become pregnant at an early age (Donald et al., 2010).

Considering the pressure on learners to become pregnant, teachers from school 1 seem to be very negative about condom distribution to school children, indicating that there is no benefit from distributing condoms to school children as they do not use them on the school premises. In addition, school 1 teachers felt that distributing condoms to school children may be seen as a way of encouraging them to go and try it out. Other studies also argued that “there will be a problem if teachers distribute condoms, as they will be seen to be promoting sexual activity” (Cullinan, n. d). In contrast, findings from school 2 indicated that this measure may work, to a certain extent or it may not work. Teachers from school 2 felt that learners are shy, so they may play with condoms in public but may never use them. At this school, teachers also thought of the parents. It appears that parents may not allow their children to bring condoms into their homes, as at home there are different rules. Teachers opinion are that condom distribution should come with education. The idea of condom distribution is challenged by the notion that that condom distribution may not stop teenage pregnancies, but they may be stopped through ‘sex education and moral education’ (Nambinga, 2012a). These findings may help us to understand which measures would be suitable for reducing learner pregnancy.

5.5 Summary of Chapter

This chapter focused on the discussion of research findings. The discussions of teachers’ interactions were written up by pulling together the findings, the related literature and the ecological system theory. The following chapter will present a summary of the study/ concluding remarks and recommendations, together with the limitations and strengths of the study.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore teachers' experiences and support practices for school-going teenage mothers in two selected secondary schools, in the Oshikoto region, Namibia. The research objectives were to investigate teachers' experiences when teaching teenage mothers. This extended to investigating the nature of support practices for school-going teenage mothers. The study is qualitative in nature, founded in the interpretive research paradigm. The nature of the study allowed the researcher to gather information from the participants in their natural settings. In addition, this process allowed the researcher to understand teachers' experiences, as well as their support practices for school going teenage mothers. Participants shared their experiences through the focus group interviews and elaborated on their answers during the follow-up individual interview.

In Chapter 1, we were introduced to the context of the study and provided a brief literature that gave rise to this study. This was explored further in Chapter 2, in which relevant literatures were studied to discover what previous studies had found concerning teenage mothers in schools. Chapter 3 focused on the design and methodology, and the processes followed in this study. The results of this study were presented in Chapter 4 and then discussed in Chapter 5. The results in Chapter 5 suggested that teachers are concerned about the physical appearance of the pregnant learners, as well as their well-being while at school.

This chapter will present the concluding remarks of the main research findings. This will extend to recommendations as they emerged from the research findings. In addition, the limitation and strengths of the study will be discussed. Finally, possible suggestions for further research, as well as concluding reflections, will be provided.

6.2 Concluding remarks

Teachers, who participated in this study, have various demands which influence their experiences and support practices for teenage mothers in schools. These demands include the need for training and resources to assist them to support teenage mothers successfully. In addition, the workloads required to finish the required curriculum made teachers concerned that at times they might not give teenage mothers the attention they required. Furthermore, teachers felt that sexuality education, contraceptive education and parental education were

essential. Equally, other ministries and churches should also act, as schools alone cannot manage the issue of learners' pregnancy. Teachers felt overwhelmed and burdened to have pregnant learners in their classrooms. It is argued that once a learner becomes a teenage mother her academic performance decreases. This finding is similar to a previous study by Shefer, (2012, p. 146). Therefore, teachers thought that teenage mothers might interrupt classroom unity and school performances. Teachers were more concerned about academic results, and blamed the inclusion policy for including teenage mothers, whose condition impacted on the academic ethos and outcome in schools. In spite of these views, teachers also indicated that the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools evokes empathy from them towards teenage mothers. Teachers emphasised how they supported teenage mothers, and especially those who were pregnant, as opposed to those who already have had their babies and were back at school. In addition, teachers revealed that teenage fathers remain invisible unless pointed out as fathers by their peers. Even if teachers knew that boys were fathers, they felt that from a cultural perspective, and were of the view that boys did not experience what girls did during pregnancy, so they needed little or no attention. This seems to suggest even more that teachers' focus on teenage mothers' physical and associated changes during pregnancy and they pay little attention to boys and mothers who have had babies. These are both groups of teenagers who are parents but do not show bodily evidence.

Most of the teachers' experiences appear to corroborate evidence from previous studies, as evident in the discussion chapter. According to Bhana and Ngabaza (2012), teachers provided care and support to pregnant learners because they understood the situation that may have led to girls becoming pregnant. This is similar to the current study, in the sense that teachers provided support and care to pregnant learners but in the current study this was because teachers were concerned about a pregnant girl's bodily evidence and were worried that something might go wrong with the learner while in the classroom. Furthermore, the current study is different from the one done by Bhana and Ngabaza (2012), as they focused their study on life orientation and guidance teachers only, while the current study focused on teachers who teach subjects other than life orientation and guidance counsellors. It is in the context of this sample of teachers that the current study might help us to understand how teachers who teach subjects other than life orientation and guidance, experience having teenage mothers as learners. It can therefore be argued that listening to teachers' experiences in their proximal interaction with teenage mothers may help to broaden the knowledge about supporting teenage mothers in schools.

Moreover, in this study teachers' relationships with teenage mothers were studied through the bio-ecological framework. Although the current study has only focused on teachers, the importance of other systems was also acknowledged. The findings appear to indicate that the interaction between various systems in which a teenage mother functions or may not function, may have an influence on the way they deal with double responsibilities. In addition, teachers as caregivers appear to be influenced by other social and cultural perspectives, which may shape how they experience and support teenage mothers in schools. The researcher argues that the way the teachers perceive a pregnant learner may influence the way s/he treats the learner in the classroom. The findings of this study indicated that female teachers were more understanding than male teachers about pregnant learners. They explained that it could be because some female teachers have been through the same process of being pregnant. However, from a focus on men, gender and parenting, it is also common for men to leave caring duties to women, and this appears to be reflected in the school system, where women teachers are thought to be "better" carers.

In the context of this study, the inclusion policy seems to contradict established norms and culture. This seems to challenge the teachers in their support of teenage mothers, while at the same time they believe that what teenage mothers did, - be sexually active before marriage - is against their norms and values. This appears to place teachers in a dilemma when they have to think of supporting teenage mothers as learners. This is a real struggle for teachers. The findings, however, indicated that due to teachers' empathy for teenage mothers, they provided support based on the condition of the pregnant learner. Therefore, the fear of being blamed for what may happen to a pregnant learner while in the classroom and in their care was the teachers' greatest concern, and it is what motivated them to care. This almost creates an impression of a self-centred or strategic caring, where teachers feel forced to care so that they themselves are not compromised if something happens to the learner. These findings about the relationship of care between the teacher and the pregnant learner are different from the findings reflected in other studies on teenage motherhood.

Teachers suggested that they need to be assisted to succeed in helping pregnant learners, or with preventing pregnancy amongst school learners. For inclusion of teenage mothers to be successful, teachers felt that there is a need for pre-service and in-service training of teachers. In addition, a programme for teenage mothers is required to help teenage mothers in dealing with motherhood and education. Teachers called for the government and other community organisations to be actively involved in campaigns for a measure of awareness. They feel that social workers could be invited to visit schools at least once per school term and that other

ministries should get involved in getting the message across about the disadvantages of early pregnancy. The Ministry of Health was called upon to be involved in educating teenagers about family planning and the use of various contraceptives. This extends to teachers thinking that education for parents may be required, to help parents on how to talk to their children about sexuality. This finding also revealed teachers' concern that adult education curriculum should include the topic of teenage pregnancy. Finally, the findings indicated that sexuality education should be given to school children in the early grades and, if possible, should be graded as a school subject.

6.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the research findings and are relevant to teachers, schools and policy makers, especially those who develop educational policy regarding teacher training.

Pre-service and in-service training to teachers: It is important to consider teacher training in dealing with teenage mothers, more especially with pregnant learners. Such training may help teachers find ways to easily approach a pregnant learner. Furthermore, it may also help teachers to assist a pregnant learner if she experiences labour pains at school. In addition, providing schools with a special room to perform such duties may also be required. Overall, teachers may need to be supported in order to support teenage mothers. It is also important to include these areas of training in the pre-service curriculum of higher education institutions that train teachers.

Programme for teenage mothers: There is a definite need for a teenage mothers' programme. This may help teenage mothers with parenting skills. While the study focused on mothers only, both boys and girls will benefit from parenting skills. It may also provide support to teenage mothers on their return to school after delivery. In addition, it may help teenage mothers to deal with double responsibilities and these interventions may reduce the burden that teachers experience.

Recognition of teenage fathers is needed: Teenage fathers as learners may also need to be recognised. This is because recognising their presence would help in providing support, so that they are less likely to drop out of school.

Involvement of other ministries and community organisations: Schools alone may not be able to provide full support to parenting learners, or prevent school-going learners from early pregnancy. There is a need for the involvement of other ministries. For instance, the Ministry

of Health and Ministry of Youth may help to prevent school-going learners from becoming pregnant at an early age. In addition, the involvement of community organizations like churches, social workers, youth and sporting organisations may be helpful. If intervention in teenage pregnancy is tackled from multiple angles, it may help to reduce the mushrooming of learner pregnancies.

Parental education: It is believed that a child can learn best from her or his parents. The issue of talking to children about sexuality-related issues has long been a concern in many cultures, especially African cultures, of which Namibia is no exception. Parental education may be required to educate parents on how to talk to their children about sexuality-related topics. Such an education may help parents to talk to their children, and may help teenage girls to be aware of the consequences of sexual practices. The importance of parents' education would be to promote a synergy between parents and teachers talk about sexuality to their children.

Contraceptive education: There is a need for school-going learners to be educated about contraception. Learners need to be made aware of the availability of different kinds of contraceptives and be educated on how to use them.

School 2 needs a hostel: Whereas both schools can benefit from all the recommendations made here, it is recommended that School 2 should apply to have a hostel on their land. It seems that there is a need for a hostel. This could be because the environment in which school 2 is situated is seen to may have contributed to an increase number of learners becoming pregnant every year. Having a hostel would help to keep learners in a safer environment, as they often have to stay with unknown adults and might be unsafe as oppose to when if staying in a school hostel.

Policy makers: The policy makers need to be engaging teachers and review their perceptions on the inclusion policy in order to come up with a policy that best serve both teachers and learners. It appeared that the current policy only cater for the needs of the teenage mothers and neglected the teachers. Teachers require more direction on how to deal with pregnant learners in a school context.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The scope of the study was limited to two selected secondary schools in the Oshikoto region, Namibia. The nature of qualitative research is that a small number of participants make up the sample, but in-depth information is gathered about the issue under discussion. The results of

the study can therefore only be applied to the schools involved, as the nature of the schools also impact on the outcome and the interventions suggested.

The current study was limited to teachers' perceptions of their support interactions with teenage mothers. Although the study used specific data collection methods to better answer the question, classroom observation may have provided additional data about teachers' interaction with teenage mothers. In addition, it may have improved the study if it had been taken a step further to include parents and teenage mothers themselves. However, the scope of the study is limited in nature, and these areas identified as limitations are areas that can be explored in further research.

6.5 Strengths of the study

The nature and structure of the study prompted the teachers to share their experiences in an in-depth manner. Teachers provided rich answers to the research questions and felt that they had an opportunity to learn from other teachers on how to deal with teenage mothers in schools. They also indicated that such topics need to be discussed, as they reflect what they encounter on a daily basis.

6.6 Further research possibilities

In the light of the limitation of this study, I would suggest a future study that explores parents' involvement in teenage mothers' education. It would also be essential to explore the way parents talk to their children about sexuality education, as a measure to reduce learners' pregnancy. Furthermore, a study on teenage mothers themselves would help us to understand their experiences in the context of the current inclusion policy. Another study with primary school teachers would be needed as well. I would also suggest a study on teenage fathers as learners in Namibia, as this is an invisible and under-researched area in Namibia.

6.7 Concluding reflections

In doing this research, I have gone through what teachers are experiencing in their everyday situation. During the trajectory of this study, I became progressively aware of the wider responsibility that teachers have when implementing the inclusion policy for teenage mothers, with a particular concern for pregnant learners. It was fascinating to reflect on teachers' interaction with teenage mothers in school contexts, as this was informative to teachers as well as to me, as a teacher-researcher. Through the process I have learnt that teachers felt incompetent and therefore fearful in dealing with the physical realities of pregnancy, which

left them feeling burdened when they had a pregnant learner in their classrooms. As a result, I feel that provision of in-service training to teachers may acquaint them with some basic skills to manage the implementation of the inclusion policy for teenage mothers more successfully.

Moreover, throughout this journey, it was clear that teachers experienced a dilemma, as they had to provide support for the outcome of what they thought was unacceptable behaviour suggested by learners' pregnancies. I became aware that many teachers care for pregnant learners because they do not want to be blamed if something goes wrong with the learner while in their care. Throughout the journey of this research, I realised that teachers need other systems in order to get the message across when campaigning to teenagers about the disadvantages of teenage pregnancy. Finally, support for teenage mothers to complete their education is significant. However, teachers would, therefore, need to be supported in order to support teenage mothers successfully.

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APPENDIX A

Anneli Ndapandula Haufiku
Department of Educational Psychology
Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Education
Email: anelihaufiku@gmail.com

Cell: [REDACTED]

.....November 2012

To:

The Director,
Ministry of Education,
Oshikoto Region,
Ondangwa.

Dear.....,

A request for permission to conduct research in two Secondary Schools in Oshikoto Region

I, Anneli, N. Haufiku, am a Namibian citizen studying at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Support. The title of my research is **Teachers' experiences and practices of support for school-going teenage mothers in Namibia**. This research will be conducted under the supervision of Professor R., Carolissen in the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. The essence of this study is tied into the Education Policy on inclusion of teenage mothers in school, which advocates for education for all.

I therefore wish to apply for permission to conduct research in two Secondary schools in the Oshikoto region. The two secondary schools are:Senior Secondary School andSenior Secondary School. Your permission is a requirement to complete my application for ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee. Also, this research will assist me to write my thesis to complete my studies before I return to Namibia.

The research is qualitative in nature, using the interpretive research paradigm. The semi-structured interview guide will be used as a research instrument to collect in-depth data

through group interviews and one-on-one with participants, who will all be teachers. The participants will be selected through purposive sampling based on the criteria that participants are high school teachers who have taught pregnant/parenting learners in the past three years.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher intends to interview a total of eight teachers, four from each of the above schools. The interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed to enable the researcher to get the required answers to the research questions by re-playing and listening to the responses of the different participants. In order not to interrupt the school time-table, the interviews will be scheduled by appointment. The information that will be obtained will remain confidential and the names of participants and schools will not be mentioned. This is for ethical reasons. Furthermore, the recorded interview will be destroyed after the transcription of the data.

I am hoping that the outcome of my research will contribute in a positive way to enable both the researcher and the participants to have a better understanding of how teachers could support young mothers to continue with their education in a healthy and supportive environment.

I will be available in Namibia in December 2012. Thereafter, for any further clarification on any matter relating to my research, feel free to contact me on my cell phone or through email.

Thank you for your assistance

Sincerely

Anneli, N. Haufiku
(MEd Support, student-16568052)

.....

Supervisor
Prof. R. Carolissen
Department of Educational Psychology
Stellenbosch University

APPENDIX B

Anneli Ndapandula Haufiku
Department of Educational Psychology
Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Education
Email: anelihaufiku@gmail.com
Cell: [REDACTED]

.....November 2012

To:

The School Principal,
.....Secondary School,
Oshikoto Region,
Ondangwa.

Dear.....,

A request for permission to conduct research in two Secondary Schools in Oshikoto Region

I, Anneli, N. Haufiku, am a Namibian citizen studying at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Support. The title of my research is **Teachers' experiences and practices of support for school-going teenage mothers in Namibia**. This research will be conducted under the supervision of Professor R., Carolissen in the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. The essence of this study is tied into the Education Policy on inclusion of teenage mothers in school, which advocates for education for all.

I therefore wish to apply for permission to conduct research in two Secondary schools in the Oshikoto region. The two secondary schools are:Senior Secondary School andSenior Secondary School. Your permission is a requirement to complete my application for ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee. Also, this research will assist me to write my thesis to complete my studies before I return to Namibia.

The research is qualitative in nature, using the interpretive research paradigm. The semi-structured interview guide will be used as a research instrument to collect in-depth data

through group interviews and one-on-one with participants, who will all be teachers. The participants will be selected through purposive sampling based on the criteria that participants are high school teachers who have taught pregnant/parenting learners in the past three years.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher intends to interview a total of eight teachers, four from each of the above schools. The interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed to enable the researcher to get the required answers to the research questions by re-playing and listening to the responses of the different participants. In order not to interrupt the school time-table, the interviews will be scheduled by appointment. The information that will be obtained will remain confidential and the names of participants and schools will not be mentioned. This is for ethical reasons. Furthermore, the recorded interview will be destroyed after the transcription of the data.

I am hoping that the outcome of my research will contribute in a positive way to enable both the researcher and the participants to have a better understanding of how teachers could support young mothers to continue with their education in a healthy and supportive environment.

I will be available in Namibia in December 2012. Thereafter, for any further clarification on any matter relating to my research, feel free to contact me on my cell phone or through email.

Thank you for your assistance

Sincerely

Anneli, N. Haufiku

(MEd Support, student-16568052)

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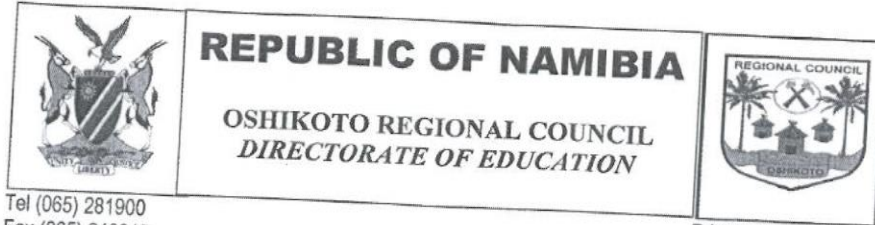
Supervisor

Prof. R. Carolissen

Department of Educational Psychology

Stellenbosch University

APPENDIX C



Tel (065) 281900
Fax (065) 240315
Enq: Mr Lamek T. Kafidi

Private Bag 2028
ONDANGWA
05 December 2012

Mrs Anneli Ndapandula Haufiku
Department of Educational Psychology
Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Education
South Africa

Dear Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSHIKOTO REGION

Be informed that permission is duly granted to visit
sometimes next year in order to carry out your research under the following conditions:

1. You have to make appointments well in advance with the concerned school principals.
2. The exercise must not interfere with the normal school programmes.
3. Any participation will be on a voluntary basis.

Thank you very much for showing interest to do research in Oshikoto Region. It is our sincere hope that the information you are going to get will be quite useful towards the completion of your Master degree.

Yours faithfully


05/12/2012
MR LAMEK T. KAFIDI
DIRECTOR
OSHIKOTO REGION



APPENDIX D

P. O.

Enquiries

05th February 2013

Addressed to: Mrs A. N Haufiku
Department of Education Psychology
Stellenbosch University
Faculty of Education

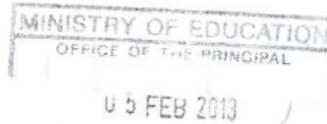
Our Ref: 13/6/1

Dear Mrs Haufiku

Re: Requisition for permission to conduct research at

1. With reference to the subject matter above, permission is hereby granted to conduct an educational research as requested.
2. We have the hope that your research output will directly or indirectly enhance and improve education delivery in Namibia.
3. This opportunity is given to conduct your activity throughout the week days with minimum disruption on the school academic programs.

Yours Sincerely



All official correspondence should be addressed to the Principal

APPENDIX E

IOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

DIRECTORATE OF OSHIKOTO REGION

Tel. /Fax
E-mail:

Private Bag
ONDANGWA

Enquiries

December 5, 2012

Our Ref:

Ms. A. Haufiku
Department of Educational psychology
Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Education

Dear Ms Haufiku

**Re: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

With reference to the subject above, it is my pleasure to inform you that permission is granted for you to conduct your research at this school.

Please supply your dated itinerary so that we in turn prepare for your coming. We wish you success in your studies.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

2012 -12- 05

PRIVATE BAG 77003, ONDANGWA

TEL/FAX: 085-2

TO REGION

APPENDIX F



UNIVERSITEIT-STELLENBOSCH-UNIVERSITY
jou kennisennoot • your knowledge partner

Approval Notice New Application

20-Feb-2013
HAUFIKU, Anneli Ndapandula

Protocol #: DESC_Haufiku2013

Title: Teachers' experiences and practices of support for school going teenage mothers in Namibia

Dear Mrs Anneli HAUFIKU,

The **New Application** received on **07-Feb-2013**, was reviewed by members of **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on **28-Feb-2013** and was approved.

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: **13-Feb-2013 - 12-Feb-2014**

Standard provisions

1. The researcher will remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal, particularly in terms of any undertakings made in terms of the confidentiality of the information gathered.
2. The research will again be submitted for ethical clearance if there is any substantial departure from the existing proposal.
3. The researcher will remain within the parameters of any applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of research.
4. The researcher will consider and implement the foregoing suggestions to lower the ethical risk associated with the research.

You may commence with your research with strict adherence to the abovementioned provisions and stipulations.

Please remember to use your **protocol number (DESC_Haufiku2013)** on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research protocol.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

After Ethical Review:

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required.

The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) number REC-050411-032.

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Medical Research Council Guidelines as well as the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health).

Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility permission must be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Contact persons are Ms Claudette Abrahams at Western Cape Department of Health (healthres@pgwc.gov.za Tel: +27 21 483 9907) and Dr Helene Visser at City Health (Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za Tel: +27 21 400 3981). Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant parties. For approvals from the Western Cape Education Department, contact Dr AT Wyngaard (awyngaard@pgwc.gov.za, Tel: 0214769272, Fax: 0865902282, <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>).

Institutional permission from academic institutions for students, staff & alumni. This institutional permission should be obtained before submitting an application for ethics clearance to the REC.

Please note that informed consent from participants can only be obtained after ethics approval has been granted. It is your responsibility as researcher to keep signed informed consent forms for inspection for the duration of the research.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089183.

Included Documents:

REC Application

Permission letter
DESC confirmation
Permission letter
informed consent
DESC form
permission letter school
Research proposal
Interview guide
Permission letter school

Sincerely,

Susara Oberholzer
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. Conducting the Research. You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.
2. Participant Enrollment. You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use. If you need to recruit more participants than was noted in your REC approval letter, you must submit an amendment requesting an increase in the number of participants.
3. Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.
4. Continuing Review. The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research protocols at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is your responsibility to submit the continuing review report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.
5. Amendments and Changes. If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, number of participants, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You **may not initiate** any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.
6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events. Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouch within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.
7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research protocol and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC
8. Reports to Sponsor. When you submit the required reports to your sponsor, you **must** provide a copy of that report to the REC. You may submit the report at the time of continuing REC review.
9. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.
10. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions, interventions or data analysis) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.
11. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

APPENDIX G



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (Teachers)

Teachers' experiences and practices of support for school going teenage mothers in Namibia

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Anneli Ndapandula Haufiku, a Masters student (Educational Support), from the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will enable me to complete my thesis which is a requirement to attain this degree. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a Secondary school teacher (s) and you have taught a teenage mother in the past three years.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- This study will explore teachers' experiences of and support practices for schooling teenage mothers.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- To answer the questions about your experience of dealing with teenage mothers in school as well as how the teenage mothers are being included and supported in the school.
- To do (one) focus group interview for 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- To do (one) follow-up individual interview with you that will last for about 1 hour a week after the initial focus group interview.
- We can arrange our interviews at times that are suitable for you and me.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

- There are no risks attached to the study.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

By participating in this study, you can contribute to the understanding of how to deal with teenage mothers at school. Your feedback as a primary caregiver at school may contribute

to the understanding of societal involvement in supporting teenage mothers while at school. Above all this research may contribute to the inclusion of teenage mothers in schools as well as advocating for Education for All which is the target in the Namibian context.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There will be no payment for participation.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of password encrypted access as well as by using fictitious names to prevent any identification. The data will only be accessed by me and my study supervisor.

The audio-tape (interview) will only be accessed by the researcher and the study supervisor. The main reason is to re-play and listen to it to finalize the transcription of data. Therefore, upon final completion of this study the audio-tape will be destroyed.

A copy of the thesis will be made available to the University of Namibia library, Stellenbosch University library and the schools that participated. The summary of the study findings will be sent to you as participants.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the following people:

The researcher: Anneli N. Haufiku [REDACTED] (SA).
Email: anelihaufiku@gmail.com

Supervisor: Prof Ronelle Carolissen
Department of Educational Psychology
Stellenbosch University
South Africa
Email: rlc2@sun.ac.za OR [REDACTED]

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development, Stellenbosch University.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me by Anneli Ndapandula Haufiku in English and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.

Signature of Investigator

Date

APPENDIX H

Interview guide (focus group interview)

Thanks for agreeing to have an interview with me. My name is Anneli Haufiku and I am a Masters student at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. I am doing research that will assist me to write my final thesis to complete the degree. I appreciate you taking the time to be part of this study. Before we begin with the interview itself, I would like to confirm that you have read and signed the informed consent form, that you understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, that you may refuse to answer any questions, and that you may withdraw from the study at any time.

Demographic information:

Gender: female

Male

Age:

Ethnicity:

Marital status: Married

Single

How long have you been teaching?

How long have you been teaching at this school?

1. Tell me what you think and feel about including teenage mothers in schools?

Probe questions:

What does this mean for you as a teacher of teenage mothers? Explain (probe for academic and social impacts etc) For example

- Were you trained to deal with teenage mothers as learners? Can you tell me more....
- Are you happy to have a teenage mother in your class? Tell me more about that....
- What has been the effect of learners falling pregnant before completion of their studies?
- When do you regard a learner's pregnancy and parenting as disruptive to academic life and hindrance to school success?

Are there other systems involved in supporting teenage mothers at the school? (If yes, talk to me about them/ If no, do you think other support systems should be involved. Explain)

2. What have you heard other people say about teenage mothers in schools?

Probe Q..

What do other teachers say about teenage mothers in school?

How do members of your community react to teenage mothers in school?

How do the parents of other learners in your class feel about their children being in the same class with teenage mothers?

Do you share these opinions about teenage mothers? Explain

If you know that a learner in your class is pregnant or a mother, do you treat her differently from other students? Explain

Will you do the same if a boy in your class is a father (and of course, if you know about it?)

3. Do you think that there are things that can be done to prevent school children from falling pregnant? Explain (Or Tell me about it)

Probe Q...

Should sexuality education be given to school children?

What is your opinion about distributing condoms to school children as a measure to control teenage pregnancy?

In your opinion, what are causes of learners' pregnancy?

4. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, regarding your experiences about teaching teenage mothers?

Thank you for being part of my study. If I have any further questions or need clarification on anything can I get in touch with you again? If yes, should I do one of the following: a) phone; b) email or c) interview you?

APPENDIX I

Follow-up individual interview with teachers

Thank you for meeting with me last week in a focus group interview. The purpose of today's individual interview is to ask more about issues that arose in the focus group interviews I did. Now I would like to explore the issue I asked about last week in an individual context. So feel free to share with me your experiences and support practices for the teenage mothers in school.

General Questions (all participants)

1. We met last week. Are there any thoughts you had had about our discussion since then?
2. Were there things you disagreed with in the group but felt that you could not say in the group?
3. Were there things that were said in the group that surprised you?
4. Are there things that were said that you would like to emphasise?
5. How comfortable were you when asked to talk about this issue in a group?
6. Did you find it helpful to talk about this issue? (Is it talked about in your school?)
7. Do you think men and women teachers have a different view of pregnant mothers in school?
8. With reference to the statement that arose from the focus group interview that teachers might have to divide their attention between the non-mothers and mothers in the class. It seems that there is an extra burden of care placed on you? Can you explain this?
9. Some people have mentioned that sometimes you teach without knowing that there is a teenage mother (s) in your class. Would this make a difference to your teaching?
10. People all talked about very negative consequences of pregnancy. Do you think that there may be different consequences that may be more positive?
11. It seems that from the focus groups that you were not trained to deal with TM; what do you think of this?
12. Some people have told me that there is a need for the special programme to educate teenage mothers, in order to assist teenage mothers on their return to school to catch up with their school work; what are your views on this?

APPENDIX J

	Portion from the transcription of the focus group interview at school 1	Codes	Comments
R:	Mmh... thank you! Were you trained to deal with teenage mothers as learners?		
Mr B:	(clear throat) Unfortunately no... [mmm]... unfortunately... we were not trained and that is the problem most of us are facing.	Lack of training	Teacher skill: Teachers
	(Other participants nodded their heads in agreement that they were not trained)	Lack of training	were not trained
R:	You said you were not trained, then how do you deal with these learners if you were not trained?		
Mr B:	It's a difficult situation , because sometimes you would find that you have that teenage mother in your classroom, but you can be with that person without knowing unknowingly that this person is a pregnant learner . At times you only realise that after may be when a girl has gone for delivery or she disappeared so sometimes you teach without knowing (iya).	difficult Not informed	Teaching without knowing that there is a teenage mother
R:	Are you happy to have a teenage mother in your class as a teacher?		
Ms D:	(Mmh... cough) Not at all! We are not happy to have them , because as I said these people are causing problems . If I can give a practical example; we had a learner here at school and then we have to call in the parents , because we realised that the tummy is	Dissatisfied Collaboration	Frustrated teacher Informing the parents

	<p>becoming big. Also we have to call in the parents and talk to the parents. We tell the parent that meme this is the situation at school. Why can't you... because the child was accommodated in the hostel, why can't you just take the child out of the hostel and she stay somewhere for the time being, just coming for the class and the (meme: <i>mother</i>) was complaining aaye... no place no accommodation nearby. So we were keeping the child in the hostel, just to be told one day at midnight that... [mm]... the child is about to give birth. So which is very bad to other learners because it was this ee... how do you call it? Labour pain, iyaa... in the hostel while others are also there, so it's not a good example at all. That's why we are saying we are not happy with this. At least if the government can do something else to keep them away from these young ones.</p>	<p>Bodily evidence</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>Labour pain</p> <p>Negative examples to other learners.</p> <p>Dissatisfaction</p>	<p>A case of a pregnant learner who experienced labour pain in the hostel</p>
Mr B:	<p>That's why I was saying, you know these are special kids and they need special facilities. So in terms of delivery (when a pregnant learner is about to give birth), we are not provided with facilities that can cater for that (delivery of a baby) and also we look at the issue of transport at the school and the distance from the school to the hospital also affect.</p>	<p>Special kids</p> <p>Resources: Transport and distance to the hospital</p>	<p>Highlighting lack of facilities/resources</p>
Ms C:	<p>Yes! to add on that, [mmh] we are not really happy to have a teenage mother as such in school because mmh...</p>	<p>Dissatisfaction</p>	<p>Blaming the inclusion</p>

	<p>aa... like my colleague have already alluded they said in most cases these cases... these cases where you have a learner. For example, the experience she has just given you, it has an effect on other learners psychologically, because learners will end up thinking that ooh...! giving birth is such a painful, see other learners when undergoing level pain they are crying they are doing so and so we are really not happy with such learners in our schools or classes.</p>	<p>Negative influences</p> <p>Dissatisfaction</p>	<p>policy</p> <p>Teachers felt that all learners seem to be affected</p> <p>Blaming inclusion policy</p>
Mr A:	Mmmh...!		
R:	Mr A you seems wants to add something on that?		
Mr A:	<p>lyaa... not necessarily that we are against the education of these learners, but primary speaking aaa... the inclusion of these learners or either group of learners is just a negative. It does not motivate any learner a lot of them are coming out having different feelings; 'I will not have a baby in my life, because I have seen how she was crying' or 'no it's good I can have a baby anytime who who have the baby and she is also in school'. That make it a bit difficult and at the end of the day performance is down not only for the child that has a problem with the pregnancy but even to others [that are not pregnant] that are now psychologically or whatever way influenced.</p>	<p>Dissatisfaction</p> <p>Negative influences</p> <p>Poor performance</p>	<p>Blaming the inclusion policy</p> <p>Affecting the whole school</p>