

An investigation into the challenges facing educators with regard to managing teenage pregnancy and child grants receivers and its impact on school performance in Secondary Schools of Vhembe District: A case Study of Nzhelele West Circuit.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of educators' attitudes towards teenage pregnancy in Secondary Schools of the Nzhelele West Circuit of Vhembe District. The Child Support Grant (CSG) is the South African poverty-alleviation strategy targeted at children. Despite its major impact on child poverty, some CSG critics claim that it will 'cause teenage pregnancy'. Yet empirical research has had limited success in unraveling this relationship: 415 out of 4356 mothers receiving the grant are teenaged mothers.

Teenage pregnancy has militated against the educational success of girls in South Africa. Statistics show that four out of ten girls become pregnant overall at least once before age 20. Education is important for these girls in order to break the poverty cycle in which most of them are trapped. Though the girls are allowed to return to school after becoming mothers, they face many challenges in trying to balance motherhood and the demands of schooling. The aim of this study was to find out how teen mothers cope with schooling, hence how much support is rendered to them. A qualitative research approach was used to understand the social phenomena of teenage mothers as learners. The result of the research showed that teen mothers in Vhembe District receive insufficient support (physically and emotionally) and the consequence is that many quit school or do not succeed with schooling.

The findings indicated that educators have positive attitudes and are sympathetic towards pregnant teenagers, but displayed reservations about the level of skills they have with regard to helping teenagers in the times of emergency (like delivery) in the classroom.

The study formulated some recommendations that the researcher hope (believe) will strengthen the relationship between educators and pregnant teenagers in schools.