

**A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TEEN
MOTHERS ENROLLED AT SCHOOLS IN THE LUVUVHU CIRCUIT, VHEMBE
DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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DECLARATION

I, **MUKOSI ENOCH MASWUBA**, hereby declare that the dissertation, “**A Longitudinal Study of the Academic Performance of Teen Mothers Enrolled at Schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province**” is my own work and all sources that I have used, have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: -----

Date: -----

MUKOSI ENOCH MASWUBA

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the following important people:

- I would like to dedicate this wonderful work to my late mom, Mrs. Phophi Maswuba. May your soul rest in peace. Thank you for raising me up.
- My wife, Phophi for her endless love and encouragement throughout the entire journey.
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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal research study investigated the attendance and academic performance of teen mothers enrolled at two schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District, of the Limpopo Province over a period of two years, 2014 and 2015. Apart from this, it also sought out to examine factors in the school and home that influenced the schooling of teen mother learners (TMLs) and the available support that were provided to teen mothers with the aim of improving their poor performance in schools. The study used a qualitative approach and data were collected by means of school documents such as mark schedules and attendance registers and focus group interviews from a total of 40 participants from the two sampled schools. Purposive sampling was used to select 10 teen mother learners, 10 teachers and 20 other learners who were in the same school with the teen mother learners. Tables were used to present data on teen mother learners' school performance and attendance in 2014 and 2015 in order to find out how their performance changed before, during and after pregnancy. Data from interviews was analysed using the thematic approach according to four themes. The main findings from the study were that both schools had over 20 teen mother learners, teen mother learners performance was good to fair in Tshivenda but poor in English and extremely poor in Mathematics and Science and most of them did not have marks in the last two subjects. Every month, teen mothers did not come to school for some days due to home problems such as baby being ill, taking baby to clinic for immunisation, collecting grant money and household duties. The general picture that actually emerged relationship-wise, within the school between teachers and non-mother or ordinary learners could generally be referred to as differing depending mostly on the pregnancy stages. This study revealed that teen mothers had some causes for being absent from school and for not being able to perform well at school. The factors were found both in the home and the school, such as illness during pregnancy, baby sitting and taking baby to clinic for immunisation, home duties, having to collect monthly government child grants, being ridiculed by other learners at school. With respect to support given to teen mothers by the school and the family or in the home, most teen mothers and teachers indicated in the interviews that not much was given to them. Based on little support for

teen mother learners from the school and the home, the study recommended that there should be nurses and counsellors or social workers at schools, extra lessons to be organised by principals, religious leaders to be invited to pray for them and rules to be formulated by the school so that they are not ridiculed by other learners and teachers.

Key words: longitudinal study, teen motherhood, teen mother learners, academic performance, school attendance.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
API	-	Academic Performance Index
CASS	-	Continuous Assessment
CAPD	-	Central for Assessment and Policy Development
DoE	-	Department of Education
DOHHS	-	Department of Health and Human Services
FASD	-	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
HIV	-	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
HSRC	-	Human Sciences Research Council
JOPACH	-	January Issue of Paediatrics and Child Health
LO	-	Life Orientation
LRC	-	Learners' Representative Council
NCPTP	-	National Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy
NCPTUP	-	National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy
TML's	-	Teen mother learners
TB	-	Tuberculosis
TV	-	Television
SABC	-	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SGB	-	School Governing Body
SMT	-	School Management Team
SASA	-	South African Schools Act
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STD	-	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UCT	-	University of Cape Town
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children Fund
YRBC	-	Youths Risk Behaviors Survey

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Teen motherhood is a common problem in South Africa, especially to those in the educational fraternity. In many developing countries, particularly in Africa teen pregnancy has become a major impediment to the educational success of girls (Human Sciences Research Council, 2011:43-47; Runhare & Gordon, 2004:89). Numerous studies conducted in South Africa have shown that by the age of 20, more than 30% of the girls might have given birth at least once (Pillow, 2008:173). Pillow further indicates that “the teens who are predominately implicated in teenage pregnancies are young girls who have been living in impoverished conditions prior to becoming pregnant”. Factors that negatively affect the education of teen mothers might include the cost of school uniforms, transport fees and the maintenance of children in the form of baby-sitting while they are in schools as well as the domestic chores related to baby-caring (Chigona & Chetty, 2007:8).

Unlike boys, teen mothers spend most of their time doing their domestic chores at thereby limiting their time for studying (Jacobs, 2010:13-14). The communities in which they live have a serious impact on their poor school attendance and performance (Malefane, 2012:19). Malefane (2012:9) reports of an incident in one village found in Limpopo Province, where a large group of teen mothers were barred from attending a free adult-based educational program sponsored by the government due to the their parents’ negative attitudes towards teen motherhood (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2011:57). Some communities treat teen mothers as ‘other girls’ who should be considered as ‘outcasts’ according to their traditions and negative perceptions (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012:86).

Even in a school situation, some negative attitudes towards teen motherhood still persist. Davis (2011:3-4) witnessed such negative comments by a Life Orientation (LO)-teacher in one school in Gauteng province and then realised that most teachers hate to teach the pregnant teenagers. Teen mothers therefore, find themselves in

difficult situations that hinder them from performing well in schools due to the rude behaviour of the teachers and non-mother learners. These rude behaviours influence teen mothers not to perform well in most schools. Schultz (2004:201) notes that most of the pregnant girls attending schools have a feeling of being ashamed and hide their pregnancies because they fear that they would be treated as 'other girls' who are not equals to the other girls. Schutz (2004:201) adds that teen mothers are not performing well in schools today because of the rude behaviour of teachers. For example, in some schools there are still educators who go to extent of calling teen mothers by titles like "Mrs" or "So and So's wife" and this influences non-mothers to laugh or jeer at them in front of the other learners.

Ridiculing or making teen mothers the laughing-stock of the non-mother learners embarrasses and frustrates teen mothers in their efforts of trying to study harder in schools (Van Pelt, 2013:113). This means that teen mothers are not being given enough support by both parents and teachers. As a result, this has become an acute problem for all the concerned stakeholders (The Markinor Researchers, 2011:31-34). The Markinor Researchers are currently conducting an investigation on whether the impact of lack of support from parents, teachers and other concerned stakeholders could negatively impact teen-mothers' academic performance. The findings from this research could go a long way in developing interventions for addressing the poor academic performance by teen mothers.

Teen mothers' daily responsibilities of bringing up babies might also be contributing towards their poor academic performance. For example, a baby may cry for the whole night due to some illnesses, resulting in the mother not getting a chance to study at night. Many researchers have often associated baby-caring responsibilities with the obstacles that deter teen mothers from performing well especially in most South African schools (Grant & Hallman, 2006:87).

Teen mothers are forced to bunk classes in order to baby-sit or look after their babies. Other responsibilities such as domestic duties like fetching of woods from faraway places, washing clothes for their relatives and taking care of their brothers and sisters whose parents have long died of HIV/AIDS- infection also distract teen mothers. These responsibilities lead to continuous absenteeism from schools by

teen mothers (Gouws, 2007:213). This was confirmed in findings of a study on teen motherhood and academic performance conducted in the Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province.

Teen mothers do not have any alternative other than bunking classes especially on days when social grants are collected or when they need to take their babies to health centres. Teachers cannot give them permissions because they fear that they would be charged for promoting absenteeism in schools (South African Schools Act. No. 84 of 1996:74-76).

Teen mothers also bunk classes because they are always over-burdened with domestic duties. As a result, one might sometimes encounter circumstances, especially in rural areas where teen mothers have more domestic responsibilities because they are regarded as 'mothers' of their children. In some instances, teen mothers are not even allowed to study at their homes because their biological mothers regard it as a waste of time (Makhado, 2012:7-8). The case of a Limpopo province teen mother, who opened a criminal case against her mother after being forced to sell sorghum beer in her shebeen until late at night instead of studying is illustrative of the extent to which domestic responsibilities undermine teen mothers' academic performance.

As noted above there are many factors that constrain teen mothers from performing well in secondary schools throughout South Africa. However, there is need for a systematic investigation to validate this hypothesis (Hurberman, 2006:18).

The problem of the academic performance of teen mothers has become a thorny issue in most schools in South Africa particularly those schools found under Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province. This study emerges from what is actually perceived as causes and effects of poor performances by teen mothers in schools and focuses mainly on their academic experiences and the outcomes thereof. With regard to all the different obstacles that teen mothers encounter in schools, the Department of Education (Circular No.6 of 2010:4) also points out that the relationship between teen motherhood and poor performance in schools is a result of the following:

- That interested stakeholders in schools are reluctant to offer adequate physical and spiritual support for the development of teen mothers' performances.
- That teachers also lack the right attitudes needed to help teen mothers to improve their academic performance in school.
- That the Department has also not done enough in terms of motivating both teen mothers and the 'other learners' to study together in an amicably way.
- That teachers ridicule or jeer at teen mothers in the presence of non-mother learners.
- That teenage mothers often bunk classes when social grants are collected or when their babies have to be accompanied to the different health centres.
- That most of the stakeholders concerned with school matters seem to be more ignorant in as far as the motivation of teen mothers' performance in schools is concerned.

Brunton and Associates (2009:1-4) concur with the view poor academic performance by teen mothers in secondary schools might be effectively or efficiently tackled through the involvement of parents, teachers and other concerned structures from the communities in which the schools are situated. The main focus of this study is to investigate the issue of teen mothers' performance in schools found under Luvuvhu Circuit between the years 2013 to 2014. The ultimate objective is to identify the the problems or constraints faced by teen mothers in their academic performance in South African secondary schools.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Leedy and Ormrod (2013:27) refer to the research problem as 'the heart of the research process, since the main aim of research is to find a solution to a problem'. In addition, Murray and Beglar (2009:150) emphasise that after the general background one must focus on the specific problem(s) that one is investigating. Informing readers of the problem early in the dissertation or thesis gives them a clear understanding of the purpose of the study and the relevance of their own interests and work. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:45) also stress that a research problem

is a clear and succinct statement that indicates the purpose of the study. Researchers usually begin with a general idea of what they intend to study, such as the relationship of self-concept to achievement, and then they refine this general goal to a concise sentence that indicates more specifically what is being investigated-for example, what is the relationship between fourth graders' self-concept of ability in mathematics and their achievement in Maths as indicated by standardised test scores?

In this study, the research problem relates to teen motherhood and academic performance at two-sampled secondary schools found under Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province, South Africa. In a research conducted recently by (Dzebu, 2013:4-5), it was shown that teen mother-learners are a serious contributory factor to the poor Grade 12-results in most secondary schools in Limpopo province. Teen mothers do not have enough time for their studies because they are always over-burdened with many responsibilities such as 'mothers' of their children. One of the schools that fall under Luvuvhu Circuit, is Thivhilaeli secondary school which in its Grade 12-results, often depicts teen mothers as performing extremely badly in comparison to non-mothers.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:41) note that in defining the object of a study, the researcher is specifying who or what they want to draw conclusions about. There are typically two aspects of these 'objects' that are worth defining: (1) the units of analysis that are the focus of investigation, and (2) the variables, which are features of these objects that are to be observed or measured.

The purpose of a study is normally also explained in three stages, namely; (1) a general statement of what the research aims to discover, (2) an account of where these aims come from, the importance of the findings, and a rationale for the research, and (3) specific hypotheses or questions that the researcher is investigating in the particular study (Maree, 2011:84).

The main objective of this study is to investigate how teen motherhood affects the academic performance of learners who choose to continue with schooling after birth. In line with this main objective, the other objectives that guided this study are to investigate:

- How teen mothers attending school perform before, during and after pregnancy;
- The main factors that influence the school performance of teen mothers before, during and after pregnancy;
- The available support mechanisms that exist for teen mothers who attend school.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Du Plooy (2009:76) maintains that research questions are used in research for a variety of reasons. Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:104) indicate that a research question is something which should, typically appear right from the beginning of one's research report since the research question is the single most important measure of whether one's research is good or not. Furthermore, a research question is an aspect that specialises in what intrigues one to write about the problem and focuses on what one wants to study. It also guides one over months or years of research as one strives to find answers to the research question. For the purpose of this study, the main research question is:

- How does teen motherhood affect the academic performance of learners who choose to continue with schooling after giving birth?

The sub-questions of the study are:

- How do teen mothers who attend school perform, before, during and after pregnancy?
- What are the main factors that affect the academic performance of teen mothers, before, during and after pregnancy?
- What support systems are available for teen mothers who attend school?

1.5 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:85), a literature review involves searching for, reading, evaluating and summarising as much as possible, the available literature that relates both directly and indirectly to one's research topic. In this sense, the word 'literature' is used broadly to refer to all kinds of published information, including textbooks, journal articles and material available online. To produce a good literature review, one needs to show that one has read widely and researched on the topic as much as possible. Babbie and Mouton (2010:46) note that literature review refers to the scrutiny of all relevant sources of information. Gibson and Brown (2009:19) argue that literature review is an important opportunity to work through one's own interests and concerns in relation to the work of the other people. Reviews are just a matter of providing a critique from an already formulated position, but are also ways of thinking through issues.

In this study, the preliminary literature review is explicitly summarised by means of the following sub-topics:

1.5.1 The Impact of Teen Motherhood on School Performance

Mokgalabone (2009:60) argues that pregnancy is one of the most serious causes of poor performance in schools, particularly in secondary schools found in either rural or peri-urban areas. However, it also seems more likely that in many cases of this nature, the birth of babies to teen mothers marks a crucial era whereby teen-mothers inherit the tendency of doing almost all the school activities in a wrong way. Most of these factors will depend solely on the teenage mothers' ability to manage logistics and finances (Kaufman & Stadler, 2011:68). Teen mothers are no longer barred from continuing with their education even after giving birth to their babies. For example, Tshikhudo (2012:3-4) reports an incident where a group of teen mothers were stopped from attending a free government-sponsored Adult-Education-based education program by their parents. According to their parents, they have to attend the "Vhusha" initiation rituals first before enrolling for such a program. There also appears to be challenges that those teen mothers who go back to school after giving birth encounter. For example, in respect of their home situations, these 'mothers'

are expected to baby-sit their children, cook food for the relatives and also wash big bundles of clothes. In case of a school situation, rude behaviours from both teachers and non-mother learners furthermore embarrass and frustrate the teen mothers' aims of improving their performance in schools.

Arlington Public School Journal (2009:16-18) highlights that adolescent teen mothers in most schools encounter some difficulties, and bear undue pressures from parents, peers, relatives and their own teachers. Grant and Hallman (2006:111) support the previously-mentioned statement by acknowledging that teen mothers usually receive very little support from either their teachers or parents, and they, in one way or another, and are often misunderstood. The situation of teen mothers is further worsened by the fact that the 'fathers' of their babies are unemployed and could definitely not afford to support them. In some cases, one might also find that in some societies, teen mothers' child-bearing is associated with numerous taboos (Theron & Dunn, 2006:73).

Going to school on an empty stomach might lead a teen mother to performing badly in school. There also exist circumstances where teachers in some schools refuse to repeat the activities done during the teen mothers' absence (Daniels (2011:3). In spite of all the recommendations given by different studies, it is clearly evident that teen motherhood still has a severe impact on teen mothers' academic performance in most secondary schools in South Africa (The Markinor Researchers, 2012:29).

1.5.2 Portrayal of Teen Motherhood in Schools

Bouchard (2006:26) argues that teen mothers in both primary and secondary schools are these days affected by the shameful consequences, namely, the fact of a pregnancy syndrome and poor academic performances which are particularly being demonstrated by teen mother-learners in every school. This crisis of seeing teen mothers performing below par in comparison to their teen-mother counterparts shows that non-mother learners do experience some difficulties after giving birth. Teen mothers, especially those from single parent families are the most affected by poor performance in schools. For any student to perform well academically, he or she must prepare thoroughly (Masakona, 2012:7-8). In this context, if a teen mother

lacks adequate time to do her homework and even get well prepared before attending classes the end result is the repetition of the same grade for several times.

Mojapelo (2012:7) reports of an incident in a Limpopo province school, where from a class of fifty students, only fifteen (15) have managed to pass with bachelors while the majority who failed were teen mothers. South African researchers have also shown that teen mothers are faced with many difficulties, especially in schools or at their homes. These teenage mothers resort to quitting school in order to earn a living by doing odd-jobs. Seemingly, the same teenage mothers consider quitting schooling as being a better option than repeating the same grades for some years. Jacobs (2011:13) blame teen mothers' poor performances in schools, stopping from schooling, failure to do school activities properly and their rate of higher absenteeism from schools, and even lack of support from parents. Reay (2008:63) also cites aspects like baby-sitting, looking after their brothers or sisters and the amount of household duties assigned to 'teen mother-learners' as contributing factors hampering them from performing well in school activities.

1.5.3 Lack of Adequate Educational Support for Teen Mothers

Parents have a pivotal role to play towards leading their children to becoming responsible adults. Gouws (2007:279) contends that teen mothers are, in one way or another, failing to perform well as non-mother learners due to the fact that they are not adequately supported by parents. Researches have shown that parents usually ignore teen mothers owing to the stigma culturally attached to their pregnancies. Parents who see young pregnant teenagers walking tall on their way to schools carrying 'big tummies' regard this as a taboo because they suspect it has a negative influence on the other learners. There is also a perception that it is disgraceful for to have its teenage girls give birth before their actual ages. Some parents even stop talking to their daughters during their pregnancies until they give birth. For this reason, parents are blamed for the poor performance displayed by teenage mothers especially in schools.

Some parents do not even attend school events like shows, student matters' seminars, workshops, teacher-parents conferences, concerned parents meetings

and student affairs 'indabas'. Motherhood negatively affects the academic performance of teen mothers because of teachers' negative attitudes, inadequate support given to teen mothers by different stakeholders, shortage of counselling committee structures in schools, the unavailability of the concerned community structures, lack of fellow student counselling committees, lack of regular classes for teen mothers' counselling, shortage of human resource personnel and finally, shortage of appropriate guidance by trained educators. Collective efforts appear to be the best mechanism to minimise poor performance by teen mothers in schools.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of a research project relates to the philosophical basis on which the research takes place, and forms the link between the theoretical aspects and practical components of the investigation undertaken (Neuman, 2006:123). Terre Blanche', Durrheim and Painter (2006:113) maintain that the theoretical framework, "has implications for every decision made in the research process". The same researchers also add that the theoretical framework discloses the methods, methodology, theoretical perspective (underlying philosophical assumption about the researchers' views of the world within and the social life within the world), and epistemology (the philosophical basis, nature and limits of human knowledge underpinning the research).

Kerlings (1998) cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2005:14) that there is no right or wrong theoretical framework to use when examining one's topic since every topic can be looked at from different perspectives. For example, an essay on 'apartheid' in South Africa could be examined from a social perspective - the relationship between whites and blacks, or between blacks and their masters (whites); or either from an economic perspective. Joan (2008:103)'s gender studies theory examines how the notion of gender structure is a reality or not. One often finds that gender theories have been influenced by the post modernism, and further, one might also get a chance of arguing that gender is not a fixed category, but rather a social construction.

Joan Scott's gender theory examines how gender discourse has served to construct and legitimise hierarchies. The topic of the study under discussion seeks to investigate how teen mothers perform, before, during and after pregnancy, especially from the two-sampled schools found under Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. A thorough examination of Joan Scott's gender theory reveals that it has assisted women in the developing countries to be promoted to higher parliamentary positions. Furthermore, the Joan Scott's theory might also have contributed towards the scrapping of the pass laws and the abolition of laws which advocated for the expulsion of the pregnant teenage learners in South African schools.

Joan Scott's gender theory is suitable to this study because it recognises the issue of gender equity as part of the working places. Today there are many women who occupy positions, something that was taboo during the apartheid era. Zikalala (2012:3) reports of female leaders who occupy 'LRC's' chairpersonships in most South African universities. According to the South African Schools Act. No. 84 of (1996:4), every person, irrespective of gender, colour, race or creed has the right to education. This means that teen mother learners have also the right to enrol at any educational institution of their own choice. To this extent, there is a relationship between Joan Scott's theory and the topic under study since the term 'gender' is central to both. The suitability of Joan Scott's gender theory to the topic under study is also demonstrated by the fact that the present study focuses on the academic performance of teen mothers in secondary schools.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Below is the definition of the key concepts:

1.7.1 Longitudinal Study

Babbie and Mouton (2006:93) refer to a 'longitudinal study' as a study that is designed to permit observations over an extended period of time. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:266) concur that the term 'longitudinal study' is used to describe a variety of studies that are conducted over a period of time. For the purpose of this

study, the term 'longitudinal study' refers to a study that gathers data over a period of time. For example, its long term of investigation might take several weeks or months; whereas its long term can be extended over years. In this study the period was of two years, namely 2014 to 2015.

1.7.2 Learner Performance

Daniels (2006:102) stresses that the term 'learner performance' refers to doing a piece of work or any scientific task carefully. In this study, the term 'learner performance' refers to a process through which any learner is engaged in doing some activities as prescribed by the school curriculum.

1.7.3 Teen Motherhood

Marotz, Cross and Rush (2007:31) defines 'teen motherhood' as a situation whereby a female of between 15-17 years has a child and at the same time is still a student. On the other hand, Chigona and Chetty (2008:263) define 'teen motherhood' as a situation where a girl who is between 13 and 19 years has a baby but still keeps on schooling. For the sake of this study, the term 'teen motherhood' refers to a situation whereby teen girls who are still schooling have babies.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 Research Design

According to Gray (2009:84), a research design is the overlapping plan for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Typically, a research design describes the purpose of the study and the kinds of questions being asked, the techniques to be used for collecting data, approaches for selecting samples and how the data are going to be analysed. Kothari (2004:43) confirms that a research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted and that it also constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

In this study, the qualitative research design was used because it gives a researcher a chance to study document and also conduct focus group interviews easily. Maree (2011:43) notes that a qualitative research design also offers a researcher enough chance to explore and understand a central phenomenon, which is the concept or process explored in a qualitative research. Another opportunity is given to the researcher in terms of examining the continuity of responses and also observing changes over a period of time (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014:77).

1.8.2 Research Methodology

Mauler (2006:91) indicates that methods used in a research project may range from being strictly qualitative to being entirely quantitative. However, it is not possible to classify any single approach as strictly empirical or theoretical. In actual fact, what this means is that methods used to investigate any problem are often a combination of both qualitative and quantitative in nature. On the other hand, De Vos, Fouche' and Delport (2005:41) define the term 'research methodology' as a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of natural phenomena, guided by both theory and hypothesis about the presumed relations amongst such phenomena.

In this study, I utilised a qualitative research method because it allowed me to use study document analysis as well as conduct focus group interviews (Gravetter and Forzano, 2009:69). Welman et al. (2005:3) maintains that during observation, which is also one of the most important aspects of a qualitative research researchers are inclined to study that which fits in with their perceptions or prejudices, and ignore that which differs. A qualitative research methodology is also suitable to this study because it interprets or sheds light on the actions and or respondents (Maree, 2011:48). In this context, qualitative approach was appropriate because it gave a researcher the chance to make use of focus group interviews. By so doing, the researcher had a chance to select individuals from whom to obtain vast information through the use of either purposive or snowball sampling in order to select people with the relevant information on the topic such as teen mother learners and their teachers (Polit & Beck, 2012:113).

1.8.3 Study Population

Du Plooy (2009:108) defines the word 'population' as not only referring to people but also to a group or aggregate of individuals, organisations, social artefacts/ objects (e.g. mass media messages) or social interactions and events. According to Brink, Van der Walt and Van Rensburg (2006:123), the term 'study population' is referred to as the entire group of persons or a set of objects and events the researcher intends to study.

In this study, the population was composed of teen mother learners, subject educators and registered educators. In this regard, both teen mother learners and educators were purposively selected from two purposively sampled schools, i.e. school A and B respectively.

1.8.4 Sampling Methods

A sample is often drawn from a population which refers to all possible cases of what we are interested in studying (Monette, Sullivan & De Jong, 2005:34). Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:98) refer to 'sample' as a procedure by means of which a given number of subjects from a population is selected to represent that population.

In this study, purposive sampling was used because it gives the researcher an opportunity to rely on the experience, ingenuity and /or previous findings to deliberately obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample they obtain may be regarded as being a representative of the relevant population (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:63). Besides this, purposive sampling is an acceptable kind of a sampling for specific situations such as in the case where in-depth information was sought on the effects of teen motherhood on learning from teen mother learners themselves and their teachers. In this context, purposive sampling was ideal in that it assisted the researcher to access those people who are likely to possess the needed information and are indeed willing to share it with the researcher.

1.8.5 The Study Sample Size

This study was carried out at two secondary schools which were chosen because they had an adequate population of teen mothers who are attending school. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:143) observe that a 'sample' is actually the size of an adequate sample that depends solely on how homogeneous or heterogeneous the population is or how alike or different its members are, in terms of the characteristics of research interest are also correctly selected. The sampling size would definitely play an important role in determining the validity and reliability of the results during the analysis of data.

Using purposive sampling, the following participants were selected because they were involved with the smooth running of schools on behalf of the teen mothers in schools:

Table 1.1: Study Sample Size

Respondents	Number
Teen mother learners	10
Subject educators & register educators	10
Ordinary learners	20
Total	40

1.8.6 Instrumentation

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:120) concur that instrumentation refers to changes in the measurement of a dependent variable rather than in the independent variable itself. The process of instrumentation therefore, involves unreliability of the measuring instruments in the texts. Gravetter and Forzano (2009:163) support this view by stating that 'instrumentation' refers to changes in the measuring instrument that occur during a research study in which participants are measured in a series of treatment conditions.

For the sake of this study, document analysis and focus group interviews composed of the selected respondents were conducted as a means of data collection.

1.8.7 Data Collecting Strategies

Neuman (2005:28) contends that in a longitudinal research, the researchers examine features of people or other units at more than one time. In addition to this, during data collection, time series research (longitudinal research) the researcher uses the same type of information that is collected on a group of people or other units across multiple time periods. This gives the researcher a chance to observe stability or change in the features of the units or to track conditions over time.

Once permission to conduct the research was granted from the district manager, the researcher approached the principals of the two sampled secondary schools and the traditional leaders under whose leadership the parents of the teen mothers fall. The researcher sought consent from both the principals and the traditional authorities so that he could conduct an investigation with the participants who had been given permission to participate in the study. In this instance, teen mother learners and other learners' data was obtained through studying of their academic documents (e.g. progress reports, statistical results and also CASS marks).

With regard to collecting data from teen mother learners and their teachers, focus group interviews were used. For the sake of obtaining the reliable and valid data interviews were conducted through the use of a tape recorder on oral questions that were asked to the study participants. Immediately after the collection of data, data, I recorded and transcribe the information as it was. This was to ensure validity and reliability during the data collection and analysis process (Royse, 2008:96).

1.8.8 Data Analysis

Boeije (2010:117) maintains that 'analysis' is the breaking up, separating, or disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements or units. During this process, facts are broken down into manageable pieces, then the researcher sorts and sifts them properly; searching for types, classes, sequences, processes,

patterns or wholes. The major aim of this process is to assemble to reconstruct data in a meaningful or comprehensive manner. In addition to this, Rubin and Rubin (1996) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2012:202) note that data analysis constitutes the final stage of hearing what the respondents have said. Zikmund (2004:115) acknowledges that 'analysis' is the application of reasoning in order to understand and interpret the collected data.

In this study, two processes, namely: coding and editing were used during data analysis. The reason behind this is that before data is processed, it often starts with the coding and editing of the collected data (Burns & Grove, 2012:89). Most importantly, editing usually involves the checking of the collected data forms in order to check the omissions, legibility and consistency in classification. Each interview is then transcribed as soon as it is finished. Before data can be tabulated, meaningful categories and character symbols are established for group responses. As far as the coding of data is concerned, rules of interpreting, categorising, and finally the recording of the collected data are applied. Then, data collected by means of studying the document analysis and conducting of focus group interviews was analysed through the use of themes that emerged from the narrative data gathered from teen mother learners and their teachers. The information was used to explain how teen motherhood affects school attendance. Participation and performance was indicated on attendance registers and academic progress reports which were collected over a period of three years, as this was a longitudinal study.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

All research projects must have a starting point and an end point, which necessarily means that one should have set distinct boundaries. This of course, served to orientate the readers and to make one's study a manageable one. To delimit a study area requires analytical thinking. To be able to do this, one needs to highlight certain aspects that are embedded in a seamless web of issues. In the context of the foregoing statement, it then means that one should break the whole into its constituent parts, and to examine the various elements that make up a whole. It therefore, means that one's proposal needs to demonstrate that one has been able to demarcate or delimit one's area of study (Bak, 2011:66).

This research study was conducted at two schools found under Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province, which are referred to as School A and B.

1.10 LIMITATIONS

Murray and Beglar (2009:156) define the term 'limitations' as the act of stopping something from happening in the way it should occur. This study only used two schools and 10 teen mother learners due to time limitations. The main limitation of the study is therefore that although the results of the study were quality controlled for validity and readability, the results cannot be generalised to other situations.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Punch (2005:37) observes that: "Ethics involves the responsibilities of the researcher towards those who participate in a research, those who sponsor it; and those who are the potential beneficiaries of it". Leedy and Ormrod (2005:51) indicates that within certain disciplines, be it in sciences, education, criminology, medicine and similar areas of study- the use of human subjects in research, is of course, quite common. In cases where human beings are the focus of an investigation, researchers must look closely at the ethical implications of what they are proposing to do. In respect of this study, only four categories of ethics are addressed, namely, informed consent, right to privacy, protection from harm and finally, voluntary participation:

1.11.1 Informed Consent

Even before a study in the form of documentary analysis and focus group interviews are administered to the participants, the researcher firstly ensured that all the selected learners, teachers and parents of the teen mothers had completed their informed consent forms from their leaders. By so doing, all the sampled subjects participated freely and it also protected the researcher in case any wrong action might have prevailed during the investigation.

1.11.2 Protection from Harm

Prior to the start of this investigation, the researcher informed all the respondents that there were no physical risks that might befall them during the investigation since the study only involved discussions. However, they were assured that no names would be disclosed in the report that could harm their personal integrity.

1.11.3 Right to Privacy (Confidentiality)

Before the data collection stages, the researcher explicitly explained the issue concerning the participants' rights to privacy. He informed them that their names and surnames would not be published to any media before and after the investigation. He also gave them opportunity to ask any questions before they agreed to participate in the investigation. The researcher assured them that he would never reveal the findings together with their identities to any person or n change the views they expressed. The main reason for doing this was to restore their dignity and integrity even after the investigation.

1.11.4 Voluntary Participation

Before the start of the investigation, the addressed the participants about their rights of voluntary participation. He used debriefing sessions to remind them that they should participate freely because nobody is forced to participate in any investigation. If, for instance, a participant could, after a while feel like withdrawing, he or she was at liberty to do so. This includes a period even after the investigation has begun, if one could then feel not comfortable to continue they were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

1.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Creswell (2005:134) states that significance of the study as a process which primarily involves those who will benefit from the study in one way or another. The section on significance of the study also discusses the importance that the study in

reality bears towards the beneficiaries such as people or generation about whom the investigation is conducted.

This research study might indeed add value to the body of knowledge for all the legitimate or interested stakeholders who include the beginner researchers as well as the leadership of the Department of Basic Education. Apart from this, the findings of this study might also assist the School Management Team (SMT) to apply the proper ways and means in helping teen mother learners in order to improve their performances in schools. In this regard, the SMT leadership might also invite the motivational and religious leaders to always motivate teen mothers so that they could improve their ways of doing their school activities.

Parents of the teen mothers may also benefit from the study in the sense that they could devise some strategies of improving the academic performance of the teen mothers. In other words, the leadership of the department might also benefit after reading the findings of this study because they would then know the exact mechanisms to be given first priority in an attempt to help teen mothers to improve their performance in their school activities. Nevertheless, all the stakeholders mentioned in the previous paragraphs might only benefit through the use of the findings of this study, if they could work in unity towards motivating teen mothers in different secondary schools.

1.13 THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The study was structured as indicated below:

Chapter 1 focuses on the introduction of the study, background of the study and the research questions.

Chapter 2 reviews literature related to the study.

Chapter 3 covers research design and methodology.

Chapter 4 presents analyses and interprets the collected data in order to produce the study findings.

Chapter 5 highlights and discusses the findings of the study in relation cited literature and the study's theoretical frame work.

1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this introduction chapter, I presented the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, research objectives and research questions, the preliminary literature and methods that were used to gather data. I also presented the population and sample of the study and the research instruments used to collect the data. More details on all these issues will be given in the next chapters. In the next chapter, the literature review is discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and discussed the introduction of the study, namely the background, statement of the problem and purpose, study's objectives, research questions and the significance of the study. In addition, the theoretical framework, research design, data collection strategies, sampling, delimitations, limitations and ethical considerations have also been explicitly explained. Lastly, I have defined the key concepts and outlined the structure of the chapters for this dissertation.

Babbie and Mouton (2010:78) state that literature review is an important opportunity to work through one's own interests and concerns in relation to the work of the other people. Hart (1998), cited in (Murray and Beglar, 2009:103) concurs with the view that literature review usually provides the framework of the research and also identifies the area of knowledge that the study is intended to expand. This literature review, therefore, helped to place the study in the existing literature and research with the aim of identifying the gaps in the existing knowledge. Recent researches conducted in South Africa have shown that by the age of 18 more than 50% of the teens will have given birth at least twice (Mahy & Gupta, 2006:23). Additionally, Mokgalabone (2009:61) contends that pregnancy is among the most serious causes of school disruption, particularly at secondary-school level in South Africa. It means that in many instances the birth of a baby marks the end of schooling for teen mothers (Grant & Hallman, 2009:134).

Teen motherhood is a growing phenomenon globally and South Africa is no exception (Human Sciences Research Council, 2014:13). However, while the situation concerning motherhood and schooling is not often accounted for in Africa, it is widely accounted for globally (Pillow & Mc Dowell, 2008:124). For example, in Kwazulu-Natal Province found in South Africa one might find girls aged twelve to fourteen being given permission of getting married (Lengane, 2015:3).

In order to enable the readers of this dissertation to have a common understanding pertaining to the topic under discussion, sub-topics will be used as indicated below, so that the other researchers' views and comments could be utilised comparatively:

2. DEFINITION OF THE CORE-TERMS TEEN MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.2.1 Teen Motherhood

This section engages with previous literature in order to situate the present study in its proper context. Key terms such as 'teen motherhood' and 'academic performance' will also be explained.

According to Chigona and Chetty (2007:13), the term 'teen motherhood' is refers to as a process in which a teenage girl has given birth to a baby, and, in one way or another, is still registered with a South African educational institution as a student. Chigona and Chetty (2007:11), stress that those teen mother-learners should at least be ranging from the age of thirteen to nineteen years and still be attending schools. Brunton and Associates (2013:4-5) define the term 'teen motherhood' a teenage girl who has given birth to a child, and is still schooling in one of South African's educational institutions. Teen mother-learners should actually be between the ages of 13 to 19 years but officially registered with South African's educational institutions after the year 1994 (South African Schools Act. 84 of 1996:5).

2.2.2 Academic Performance

Bell (2015:5) asserts that 'academic performance' refers to the outcome of education, especially the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved its educational goals. It is further stressed that 'academic performance' is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment, but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important- *procedural knowledge as skills* or declarative knowledge as *facts*. For example, in California, the achievement of schools is measured by the Academic Performance Index (API) whereas in South African schools; the academic performance of learners

is measured in terms of quarterly-tests or examinations (Norms and Standards for Educators, 2013:11-12).

Davis (2013:7) defines the term 'academic performance' as a process which involves reading and studying rather than doing practical or technical skills. For example, an 'academician' in one way or another, refers to a person who teaches and / or does research at either a university or college. According to the Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2012:13), the term 'academic performance' is defined as a learner or any person who is fully involved in doing some educational activities in institutions whose aims are to achieve the pre-determined goals through the use of skills, knowledge and factual aspects in life.

The literature in relation to the topic under discussion reveals that knowledge of the previously-mentioned core-terms would also help to pave a way for beginner-researchers and readers to fully-comprehend its contents.

2.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING TEEN MOTHERHOOD

Various factors seem to have contributed to teenagers becoming teen mothers or might have aggravated the problems that teen mothers are experiencing. Some of these are discussed below:

2.3.1 The Role of Peers' Effects on Teen Mothers' Performance in Schools

Peer pressure is the influence that a group has on its members to fit into a particular way of thinking and acting. Peer pressure usually occurs when the young and in-experienced teenagers want to be like other youths of the same age. This often happens amongst the adolescents who are in-experienced but are eager to be engaged in the activities (sexual activities) but do not have knowledge about it. According to Goldberg (2008:102) teens get involved in unprotected sex owing to the fact that they want to be accepted or accommodated by their peers.

Teens are a rarely strong-arm of influencing each other into trying risky things. The main aim being that they always want to do as others do or probably as 'adults'

behave. For example, in cases where teenagers could see their peers smoking cigarettes,; they might end up also doing likewise. Time and again, parents should always know that friends do play a more subtle role in their children's decisions. For instance, teens are more likely to hang out with other teenagers who do the same things as they do (Barker, 2014: 34). Additionally, these teens also reveal that they also use drugs or alcoholic beverages before getting involved in sex because these influence them to commit such activities unaware. Dinkmeyer, Mac Kay and Dinkmeyer, 2010:88 note that peer pressure has frequently been identified as more likely than one of the fiercest causes of teenage pregnancy amongst the teens.

It has been observed that South Africa teen pregnancy as a higher rate of more than Botswana (Mangolele, 2011:69). It has been noted that the adolescents from these two countries have a tendency to 'live in it' (sexual activity), and also a desire to belong to the peer groups. They have a tendency of surrendering to the peer group and participate in the same activities. These activities include amongst others, similar beliefs, likings, and even following the same dress code. Bezuidenhout (2012:111) contends that in the early stages, especially for adolescents to have sex almost occurs as part of a group activity.

Teenagers going through adolescents often feel pressure to make friends and fit in with their peers. This means that these teenagers will from that moment start doing whatever their friends would be doing. However, many a time these teens let their friends influence their decisions to have sex- even when they do not fully understand the consequences of such acts. Teenagers do have sex as a way to appear cool and sophisticated but in many instances the end result is an unplanned teen pregnancy (Dalaird, 2010:73). According to Brookes (2014:4), approximately 75% of 15 to 19-year olds become pregnant each year, though unaware that by engaging in sexual activities they would ultimately become pregnant. The Kaiser Family Foundation states that more than 20% of pregnant teenagers reported that they had felt pressured to have sex, while 33% felt that they were not yet ready for sexual relationships but proceeded anyway because they feared ridicule or rejection (Varga, 2013:117).

A study by researchers at Columbia University shows that teens are six times more likely to have had sex if their friends are doing it (Pike, 2013:94). In this regard, teenagers often feel an internal pressure to do things they see their peers doing. An earlier study observed how six teenagers, three boys and three girls aged between 14 to 19 years who have went to a picnic party and two of teenagers started having sex in front of the others under the influence of alcohol. Seemingly, the rest had no other alternative by but do likewise, and at the end of the day they all had an unplanned or unintended sex. In the light of this, the issue of engaging in sexual activity was not part of their plan but peer pressure forced them to so (Spiker, 2013:66). This shows that peer pressure is more likely to have played a subtle role on teenage pregnancies happening in schools today (Winkler, 2010:46).

2.3.2 Family Dynamics and Teen Mothers' Performance in School

Teen girls are more likely to get pregnant if they have limited or no guidance from their parents. Many parents have busy lives that prevent them from providing guidance and support that young teenagers need to make good decisions on issues such as sex (Parent Dish, 2010:56). Dinkmeyer, McKay and Dinkmeyer (2010:111) contend that if a teenager does not feel that she can talk to her parents about sex either because they forbid sex talk or because they are not around, she will more than likely turn to friends for direction on whether or not to have sex; resulting in misinformation and possible pregnancy. Previous literature also notes that parents of teens have a pivotal role to play in as far as guiding them towards sexual life. If such guidance is not strictly adhered to the rate of pregnancy by the teenagers will keep on escalating especially in secondary schools because it is an environment where teens are likely to experiment whatever they cannot comprehend well (Boreham & Shaw, 2009:103).

2.3.3 The Media and Teen Mothers' Performance in School

According to Edwards and Stern (2008:75), the movie industry and the media contribute to teenage pregnancy by glamorising teen pregnancy in news stories and movies. Zikalala states that:

How many times have we watched female celebrities being shown over the televisions or even in movies displaying pregnancies? After watching these demonstrations over the media, teenagers will have no other alternative but to become very eager to emulate the actions that they have seen; resulting them being involved into unsafe sexual activities. Besides this, media do not even warn the teens about the consequences of the sexual actions they display in movies or soapies.

Movies that publicly depict teen pregnancy as something to be desired are unaware that they will be influencing teenagers to engage themselves into reckless sexual activity, according to South African Broadcasting Corporation's e-TV, program "Scandal." During adolescence, teenagers become more focused on their appearance and how their peers perceive them. For example, watching world's famous singer displaying her pregnancy proudly in the media; might, in actual fact, also influence the teens to follow suit. In this regard, it would obviously mean they will also engage in sexual activity which at the end of the day might result in them falling pregnant so that they should resemble their prominent singer. In such an instance, it means that those teenagers would want to be seen as part of their favourable world renowned singer. Over and above, it also stands to reason that if teen pregnancy is viewed as acceptable in their school or amongst their friends, they may also eagerly seek to become pregnant as a way of gaining social acceptance (Francis, 2015:2).

2.3.4 Knowledge on Sexuality and Consequences on Teen Mothers' School Performance

Guttmacher (2012:114) maintains that teenagers who are uneducated about sex have a greater possibility of having unintended pregnancies. Some teens do not fully understand the biological and emotional aspects associated with having sex. These teens might get incorrect information from their friends, videos, sitcoms, soapies and/or movies. Many times, teenagers do not have the knowledge needed to make informed and responsible decisions about whether or not to engage in sexual activity that can alter their lives. According to Plotnick (2009:324), most teens are responsible when it comes to sexuality, but lack knowledge about sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and their consequences is a concern. Research published in the January issue of Paediatrics and Child Health found that 27% of

teens were sexually active at a mean age of 15 years. In this regard, those teenagers when being interviewed revealed that the last time they had sex, 76% had used a condom according to the findings.

Frappier (2008:104) asserts that:

...they don't even know about many of the STI's that are common and they don't know about the consequences of the STI's. They do not know about chlamydia, which is more common. Very few teens will be HIV positive but a certain percentage will be chlamydia positive in their teens; and that they don't mention it...

Five per cent of the sexually active teens said they had been diagnosed with STI. Moreover, the surveyed teens overestimated the prevalence of HIV compared to other sexually transmitted infections. Sixty-nine percentage of teens surveyed could not find the information they were looking for about sex, whereas 62% reported obstacles in getting information. Welling (2009:101) supports the view that parents have responsibility to make information on sex and sexually transmitted infections available to their teens. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they have to deliver a lecture on STI's 101 at breakfast table but should can do this using other means.

Still on the issue of how parents should, in actual fact help their teens with regard to information on sexuality and other STI's consequences; they should rather give brochures, point out interesting websites and newspaper articles that provide information, and make an effort to find how much their child has learnt at school. On the other hand, Sullivan and Res (2007:123) notes that quite often, information from parents about sex has to be repeated if the child is ready to hear it. The other issue that parents always have to be aware of about teens is that teens do not necessarily want to know about technical issues, but rather have questions about dating, violence in relationships, how to say 'no' and how to know when they are ready.

Frappier (2008:105) again argues that: "Teens are not at the same level at the same time. A 13-year-old can be ready to hear the information and another one can be miles away from that, which obviously will show that he or she is not interested." The study found out that at the age of 17,45% of those surveyed were sexually active. Amongst those who were not sexually active, 71% of the girls said they

weren't ready, compared to 54% of the boys. About half of those who were not sexually active- both boys and girls- said they hadn't found the right person.

With regard to, whether teens are indeed fully-informed by their parents when they engage in sexuality activities or not; 29% of the girls said they wanted to wait until marriage, compared to 13% of the boys. In terms of the role models, 75% of the mothers surveyed believed that their teenagers' friends were significant role models when it came to sexuality; and 50% mentioned entertainment celebrities. But in fact, 45% of the teens regarded their parents as their role models, ahead of friends (32%) and celebrities (15%) respectively (Senderowitz & Bill, 2005). In addition, the study also mentioned that 86% of the girls said they were attracted to girls only, while 87% of the boys said they were attracted to girls too. Still with regard to the same issue under discussion, Lewayne and Gilchrist (2007:68) maintain that it is normal at an adolescent age children have questions about their sexual orientation. The same researchers also noted that the minority responses would include those teens identifying themselves as gay, as well as those who might have had a one-time attraction to someone of the same sex. Some scholars note that teenagers are not given enough guidance or information in terms of sexuality and the STI's.

2.3.5 Sexual Abuse and Teenage Mothers' Schooling

Teen pregnancy was the norm in previous generations, but it has become more common for women to delay, and for falling birth rates. Teen pregnancy is highest when these factors do not apply to the same degree. These account for the apparent association of some social problems with teen pregnancy (Benjamin, 2013:17). Teens can become pregnant as a result of sexual abuse or rape. The Guttermacher Institute states that between 43% and 62% of the teenagers acknowledge that they were impregnated by an adult male, two-thirds report that their babies' 'fathers' are as old as 27 years. Approximately, 5% of all teen births are the result of rape (Guttermacher, 2012:33).

Saewyc, Magee and Pettingell (2008:98) state that since the early 1990's the rates of adolescent sexual initiation and pregnancy in the United States have declined, while teenagers' contraceptive used has increased. Nevertheless, each year in the

United States more than four million adolescents receive a diagnosis of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). The risk of becoming pregnant or getting someone else pregnant is higher for some teenagers than for others, and continued progress in reducing unintended pregnancy and risky sexual behaviours among teenagers requires targeting interventions to groups at greatest risk. In comparison with the South African situation, one group potentially at increased risk is teenagers who have been sexually abused (Human Sciences Research Council, 2014:5-6). In the Limpopo Province, studies conducted by Runhare and Hwami (2014:114) have shown that, sexual abuse can alter perceptions about sexual behaviour and influences judgement informing intimate relationships, thereby leading to earlier sexual debut, more sexual partners and increased risk of sexual violence in intimate relationships.

Sexually abused adolescents experience violation of their most intimate boundaries, which can create a sense of powerlessness in relationships and may impair their ability to negotiate contraceptive use. As a result, sexually abused adolescents are less likely than their non-abused peers to use condoms or other forms of birth control (Wray & Kuhns, 2011:97). Adolescents want to experience for themselves what they see the adults doing with regard to sexuality. Methods of coping with abuse may, in one way or another expose teenagers to the risk of pregnancy. Studies show that there are two common sequences of sexual abuse, namely, substance abuse and running away from home. With regard to the former, it usually happens when substance is used before intercourse resulting in increased risk of multiple partners and unprotected sex (Francis, 2013:2). Physiological changes in the brain which result from the use of mood-altering substances makes teens to become chemically dependent thereby making them turning to sex work to support their substance abuse.

Dingane (2014:4) reports of incidents that usually occur in places like Hillbrow in South Africa, where, especially during the New Year period, teenagers have sex in public while under the influence of substances. This moral degeneration leads to teens becoming pregnant sooner rather than later. In South Africa, especially in Venda, there are places like “Ha-Benji and Free Riders”, where many teenagers from the secondary schools not far away from these places are found dancing nude

in front of the fans who have paid while under the influence of substances. Eventually, these teens become pregnant and are more vulnerable to the STI's.

In some situations, teenagers are victims of sexual abuse by family members or people known to them. If the perpetrator is a family member the; adolescents attempts to escape this ordeal by running away from home. By so doing, this leaves the adolescent with no other alternative but to resort to living on the street and engaging in survival sex, or they may be placed in foster care or another out-of-home arrangement after disclosure of the abusers. Sexually abused youths are more likely to have a history of sexual abuse than other youths are (Winkler, 2009:133).

Previous studies gathered in relation to the topic under study, have suggested that there exists a like between sexual abuse history and teenage pregnancy, although the strength of the relationship has varied according to the sample and design, and the definition of sexual abuse used. In these studies, 40%- 70% of teenage mothers reported a history of sexual abuse. Other studies, involving samples from child protecting services or clinical cases have been limited to teenagers with a history of sexual victimisation. Widom and Kuhns (2012:108) who studied substantiated abuse cases from the court system found relationships between sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy among children aged 11 or younger at the time of the abuse. Such a sample is unlikely to represent the wider population, because the risk of sexual abuse is both under-reported and less likely than other forms of abuse to be adjudicated (Bradley & Mc Auley, 2008:66).

According to Saewyc, Maggee and Pettingell (2009:98-105), it is reported that during the 1990's in Massachusetts in America several population-and school-based surveys used one or more questions about sexual abuse. These included some of the state-wide Youths RISK Behaviour Surveys (YRBS), which are conducted every few years by the centres for Disease Control and Prevention and similar surveys that are repeated in multiple years. In South Africa, a number of studies have revealed that there is a strong link between sexual abuse history and teenage pregnancy (Human Sciences Research Council, 2013:12-14). Studies on teenagers' sexual abuse history in several secondary schools in Venda found in the Limpopo Province

have also acknowledged that there is a more powerful connection between sexual abuse history and teenage in the above-mentioned place (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012:126).

A study by Bezuidenhout (2011:56) found that that amongst males in South Africa and other countries, 10% - 14% of non-abused respondents compared with 61%-68% of those reporting both abuse types, had run away, 6%, compared with 17%-23%, were not living at their homes. In South Africa alone, about 47% of the reported abused youths were living in street corners since the age of eight. It was also found that most secondary schools, particularly in Venda, in the Limpopo Province had the highest percentage of the abused teens whose ages ranged between 11 and 13 years old. The Markinor Researchers (2012:17-18) rated Venda secondary school teenagers second in terms of the teens abused while still in early ages, compared to Kwazulu-Natal.

Generally speaking, abuse is associated with larger differentials in risk behaviour amongst males than females. There are a few exceptions. Neither males reporting incest only in 2006 nor females reporting incest in either survey year have elevated odds of having had multiple partners in the past year. The difference between non-abused adolescents and those reporting either incest or non-familial abuse only differ in the likelihood of living away from home is similar for males and females, except for males reporting incest only in 2003. In one instance, females reporting both types of abuse had higher odds than males reporting both types of abuse of living out of home (Buku & Kuhns, 2009:43). Most of the scholars seem to agree seem to agreeing that sexual abuse and rape are influential factors in teenagers becoming pregnant.

2.3.6 Teenage Drinking's Effects on Teen Mothers' Performances in Schools

Teen drinking can cause unexpected pregnancy, according to the website 'Love to Know' program. Many teenagers start experiencing unsafe sex while under the influence of either drugs or alcoholic beverages. Drinking lowers the teen's ability to control her impulses, contributing to 75% of pregnancies that occur between the ages of 14 to 21 today (Calorie, 2015:5). Approximately, 91% of pregnant

teenagers reported that although they were drinking at the time, they did not originally plan to have sex when they conceived. The best defence against teenage pregnancy caused by drinking is communication. Both parents and teens need to be open with each other about sexual activity, birth control methods and alcohol abuse. If one still has time, one should start early to talk about his or her view on sex and alcohol abuse. Some scholars argue children should also be given a reason why is it important to refrain from sex, birth control pills and substance abuse. Teaching them the consequences of both unsafe sexuality and alcohol should be a daily routine until they are ready for their own responsibility (Klaw, Rhodes & Fitzgerald, 2010:125).

On the same note, every parent should be ever prepared to consider birth control medication as a “just in case” method of protecting one’s child. Today, the average age the American girl has her first drink is 13 years; for a boy, it is 11 years. All over the world, underage drinking is a big problem with serious consequences (Human Sciences Research Council, 2013:133). South Africa is by no means an exception. In Kwazulu-Natal Province girls are permitted to marry around the age of 12 while boys marry between the age of 12 and 14 years (Mtimukhulu, 2014:6). In Venda, in the Limpopo Province, teenagers are often seen in many nightclubs and pubs performing the striper’s dances late at night for meagre payments while under the influence of alcohol. The teenagers have got a higher risk of falling pregnant without knowing who the real ‘fathers’ of their babies are (Department of Health, Circular No. 3, 2013:12).

According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy (NCPTUP) in America, more than third of sexually active youths aged between 15 and 24 have revealed that the use of alcohol influenced them to do something (Phillip, 2012:32). The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (NCPTP) in South Africa is a campaign against teen drinking because teens become impaired to such an extent that they forget to use the birth control medication when doing sex while under the influence of alcohol. This leads them to becoming pregnant unaware and increases the rate of teen mothers in schools.

The NCPTP (2013:14) released a statistic which showed that 72% of teens in most high schools in South Africa have consumed alcohol. The same study also revealed

that 46%, almost half, of all teen students have had sexual intercourse before the appropriate age. Prior to engaging in teen sexual activity, only 21.6% of these teens drank alcohol. Although teen pregnancy rates have steadily been declining since 2008, unwanted teen pregnancy rates are still upwards of 750, 0000 each year (Senderowitz & Bull, 2013:84). The Centre for Disease Section (2012:6-07) reported that the continued use of alcohol throughout pregnancy can result in severe and sometimes fatal outcomes for the baby, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

However, alcohol has also some destructive effects on teen pregnancy which include, amongst others, possible miscarriage or a possible stillbirth. In addition, teens tend to try some new things and even take risks by either drinking alcohol or taking drugs in because it seems exciting to them (Barker, 2014:14). Teens with family members who have problems with alcohol or other drug-related substances are more likely to have serious substance abuse problems. Some scholars have dismissed the view that drinking is a contributory factor to unwanted teen pregnancies in schools all over the world today (World Health Organisation Report, 2015:5-6).

2.3.7 The Role of Poverty on Teen Mothers' Schooling

Le Roux (2010:76) acknowledges that poverty is a situation whereby a household's income is continuously below the level a normal person or a family should actually have. It also occurs when a family in a society or community is officially declared very poor and is in dire need of assistance. Furthermore, it is also indicated that poverty, in one way or another, influences adolescents' to unwillingly resorting to committing unsafe sexual activities resulting in pregnancy.

According to Ambrossino, Heiferman, Schuster and Ambrissino (2011:58), *poverty* happens generally when any household's income is inadequate in relation to the normal inflation rate. Studies done, especially in South Africa's rural and urban areas have shown that poverty is more likely to be one of the most common problems that influences teenagers to get involved in sex trade. Many prostitutes in South African city streets agreed that they had decided to engage in sex trade due to

poverty. Previous studies found out that most teens found in the sex trade came from families where the parents had died of HIV/AIDS and left children to run families on their own. These children could not proceed with their schooling. As a result, most of them would conceive unaware and became pregnant and sometimes did not know the 'fathers' of their children (Daniels, 2014:3).

It is generally assumed that teens who live in poverty-stricken conditions usually involve themselves in unsafe sexual activities before they could even reach the ages of 12 to 14 years (Gordon, 2001, Manzini, 2008). These are the types of teenagers often found in South African streets today (The Markinor Researchers, 2013:11). As in many other countries, teen pregnancy (teen motherhood) is one of the hindrances to the educational successes of girls in South Africa (Gordon & Kadzamira, 2010:203). Some studies have shown that there are a number of factors that influence the decision as to whether a teen mother should continue with schooling or not even after giving birth in most societies. For example, the issue of baby-sitting or supporting the other members of the family after the death of the parents due to HIV/AIDS is one of them. The ability of a teen mother to progress with schooling depends on the girl' ability to manage the logistics and finances associated with mothering and schooling simultaneously (Kaufman, De Wet & Stadler, 2008:201).

In respect of the foregoing statements, it also stands to reason that for teen mothers to continue schooling after giving birth, the availability of enough finance always plays a pivotal role. Thus, poverty is beyond any reasonable doubt one of the contributory factors towards teen motherhood in schools. Studies reveal how teen mothers are exposed to greater risks of socio-economic disadvantages in their lives than those who delay childbearing until they reach their twenties. McDowell (2009:105) concurs with this by stating that even when some educational programs are being financed by the government in South Africa, there are still also some more extra-courses to be paid by the students. A number of studies have revealed that in cases where teen mother-learners could hardly pay for their schooling, they often resort to befriending the "sugar-daddies" and end up being pregnant. Under normal circumstances, those "sugar-daddies" cannot marry them but can keep on providing them with the little that they might give them. The primary reason behind this is that

those “sugar-daddies” are already married and are still in dire need of the other “sweet sixteen’s” and they could, therefore, not marry them (Mitchley, 2015:2).

2.3.8 The Community’s Effects on Teen Mothers’ Schooling

Previous studies overwhelmingly demonstrate that teen pregnancy might also nowadays be influenced by a community. Chen and Mathews (2009:107) note that if teenagers stay in a community where having a child while in Grade 8 at a school is a passport for being accepted and also recognised as a ‘clever’ girl, they are likely to do the same in order to gain recognition. The same thing may happen in a community where to be accepted as a ‘Makoya’ girl one abuses drugs. Studies reveal that after becoming addicted to drugs, teens may give birth to disabled children (Kekana, 2013:2). In an attempt to control such community style, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in America, is ever committed to continue its efforts to prevent out-of- wedlock teenage pregnancies by encouraging the adolescents to abstain from sexual activities. President Barak Obama, working hand-in- glove with the Hillary Clinton Foundation against Teen Pregnancy and the local communities are ever committed to promoting abstinence education programs and the dissemination of information on promising approaches. The HHS programs are built on the belief that the most effective programs are community-driven and support the involvement of parents and other adults in young people’s lives (Pike, 2015:58-59).

2.4 TEEN MOTHERHOOD AND SCHOOLING BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER PREGNANCY

2.4.1 Before Pregnancy

Not all teenage pregnancies are unwanted, nor are all young mothers having babies in order to receive benefits as revealed by many former non-mothers during an interview (Galanter & Duncan, 2013:113). For example, there are teen mothers who have conceived unaware while being under the influence of alcohol. Many studies reported that learners do actually perform well before pregnancy due to the support they receive from parents, schools, educators, motivational speakers and other

stakeholders concerned with the educational matters (Pollard, 2012:17). Consequently, parents are bound to supervise their children's school attendance to on regular basis and should provide them with the necessary finances. For example, it is the duty of every parent to see to it that his or her own child attends school every day and that they arrive on time.

Parents also have the responsibility of paying their children's transport and stationeries if need be. In this regard, such support will enable them to regularly attend classes on a daily basis. Additionally, it is also the parents' duty to supervise their children's homework, tests, examinations and the other given projects. On the other hand, Gueorguieva, Carter, Mahan and Resnick (2012:201) indicate that learners who are offered adequate support by their parents perform better before pregnancy than after pregnancy. The study has re-affirmed the fact that excellent performance is often displayed by most learners before they become parents rather than after pregnancy.

Several studies cite examples of properly-supported learners who performed well in their school activities before becoming pregnant than after pregnancy. These studies furthermore showed that the learners in question, even obtained distinctions in their tests, exams, given projects and in class assessments that play a decisive role in the promotion of learners to the next grades (Peters, 2015:8). The reason behind this is that non-mother-learners are not over-burdened by domestic duties like the teenage mothers. Mothers of the teenage mothers usually give them some extra-domestic duties because they regard them as 'mothers' of their babies (Colorado, 2008:97).

Despite all support given to common learners so that they succeed academically, the school also has a very important task to play. Biddulp (2003) cited in (Galanter & Duncan, 2013:88) notes that the school must regularly counsel common learners about the consequences of early pregnancy. For example, every normally-run school must let its educators always address the acute problem of teenage pregnancy during the Life Orientation and Life Skills program lessons. By so doing, they would be equipping them with knowledge on the consequences of teenage pregnancy. The issue of how well normal learners might perform especially before

pregnancy solely depends on whether their educators do check their school activities on a regular basis or not. For example, for learners to perform better in the school activities, educators must always supervise their students' home works, tests, exams and class assessments. Extra lessons are important in motivating learners so that they perform well before becoming pregnant. An example was also given of schools that have made use of prestigious awards in order to motivate the common learners to perform well in Mathematics and they did it (Department of Education, Circular. No. 6, 2011:27).

However, some studies have shown that learners who have been given adequate guidance towards teenage pregnancy's consequences usually perform well in all the school activities before pregnancy than after pregnancy. Statistical results as revealed in by the Namibian Youths Education Journal (2012:34-35) indicate that 63% of learners perform well before pregnancy than after they have given birth to their babies in most Namibian institutions today. Benjamin (2014:5) also suggests that mentioning only the other institutions without the inclusion of the motivational speakers would be an incomplete hypothesis. It has been observed that in most situations where motivational speakers are regularly used, academic performance is often better than after pregnancy. Studies have also confirmed that motivational speakers often bring changes, especially where the results of the normal learners have been low to a higher trend (David, 2015: 57).

Tshikhudo (2013:2) reports of an incident in one Limpopo province school, where the school has yearly been a tail-holder in terms of the Grade 12 results, but later on obtained a 100% pass after an address by motivational speakers. This could mean that most learners perform better before pregnancy than after pregnancy (Tshikhudo, 2013:2). This shows that pregnancy negatively impacts on teen mothers' academic performance.

2.4.2 During Pregnancy

Several previous studies revealed that adolescent mothers, just like any other person have goals and aspirations in terms of their future plans for work and family life. For example, they also wish to have good families and drive fancy cars while

occupying higher positions at work places. Sometimes these teen mothers are bound to change their pre-determined goals due to unexpected pregnancy and additional responsibilities. Beutel (2007:68) argues that teen mothers then start experiencing the difficulties due to extra responsibilities such as academic work and parenting. Recent studies have also shown that pregnancy and parenting might, in one way or another, influence teen mothers to change their goals and resort to improving their income status rather than the other way around. For example, scholars note that teen mothers may stop schooling and as a result engage in sex trade (Clemens, 2005: Rutman, Strega & Domminelli, 2008).

Slocum (2015:26) supports this view when he notes that teen mothers face an overwhelming number of difficulties emanating from different angles during their pregnancy. Every teenage girl becomes stressed especially after looking at her pregnancy test. The reason is that other tests might indicate that she would be HIV positive or suffering from Tuberculosis (TB). This may furthermore worsen her stressful situation. For this reason, the previously studies have stated that teen pregnancy is a serious social problem in the sense that some teen mothers even go to the extent of committing suicide after seeing their pregnancy tests (Paige, 2010:99).

Some teen mothers become so stressed during pregnancy to an extent that they start missing classes. The major reason is that they intended to hide their pregnancies from being seen by their peers. As a result, these teenage mothers would automatically fall behind with their school activities which might lead them to failing their grades. Generally speaking, the value of monthly tests, quarterly tests or weekly tests, including exams and continuous assessment projects play a paramount role in terms of promoting learners to the next grades, i.e. in a new curriculum format called Continuous Assessment Project System (Francis, 2012:17). It stands to reason that for a teen mother to miss school even for a day this will reduce her chances of promotion to grade.

However, when teen mothers are asked during pregnancy about their inspirations; they do not say that they want to be on welfare (living on governmental social grants) or drop out of school. They, instead talk of obtaining very ambitious positions in life

and aspirations such as having beautiful houses and driving top of the range cars of the latest models (Boden, Fergusson & Horwood, 2008:71). On the contrary, when these teen mothers are ridiculed by their peers during pregnancy, they definitely fail to absorb such pressure and end up quitting schooling. Nonetheless, taking such decisions would eventually mean that those teenage mothers would have ruined their future aspirations unnecessarily. On the one hand, those teen mothers who survive such an ordeal during pregnancy resort to spending the “slave-like life” by always staying very aloof from the other people and often looking stigmatised (Lazarus & Folkman, 2004:114).

Fatigue is one of the contagious symptoms that affects teen mothers either at school or at home (Gilchrist & Kuhns, 2009:64). One reason for the growing interest on fatigue is that some teen mothers have got a tendency of ‘sleeping’ during lessons. Such behaviours lead to them falling behind with some lessons finally results in most of them repeating grades. Lengane (2012:7) reports of an incident in one Limpopo province school where a pregnant teenage mother nearly gave birth in a class while asleep before she was quickly taken to the nearest clinic. Spencer, Kalil, Larson and Gilchrist, (2010:124) state that fatigue comes from stress of an interaction between a ‘tired’ mind and the pressure from the environment within which a person finds himself or herself in.

Sadler and Catrone (2003:13) maintain that one theory with regard to why teen mothers do undergo more stress and depression during pregnancy includes the inheritance accumulated during pregnancy stage. Some scholars point out that stress and depression are the two inseparable features because they happen concurrently in a teen mother’s mind (Schinke & Mc Auley, 2004:202). In one way or another, the experience that one might encounter in stress may also be found in depression symptoms. These symptoms actually emanate from lack of confidence, lack of moral support from parents and the pressure from peers. One might conclude that the pregnant mother is worried because she does not even know whether the ‘father’ of her child would marry her or not. The reason behind this is that she conceived while being under the influence of alcohol. Several studies have indicated that stress and depression are some of the serious challenges teen mothers’ experience.

Teen pregnancy has long been identified as a risk factor for girls' academic development and the economic child bearing process (Ralitz, Carter, Mahan & Resuick, 2012:212). Thus, teen mothers' biological mothers contribute tangible support and positive feedback; whereas their fathers provide finances. For example, when an expectant mother suffers from any disease during pregnancy, fathers are the ones who quickly drive them to the nearest health centres. There exists always a possibility that the issue of mothers' support is rated the best, because they always buy the right food for them to eat and drink during pregnancy. Mothers' support is also regarded as very crucial in the sense that they are the ones who talk straight to them during pregnancy. In this regard, mothers tell the pregnant mothers what they should expect during pregnancy and how to react towards such a situation. The Markinor Researchers (2013:11) reiterate that teen mothers rely mainly on mothers' support especially during their last days of pregnancy because mothers are often indoors. They could therefore assist them quickly in times of dire need.

According to the March of Dimes Journal (2013:69), approximately three in 10 teenage girls become pregnant before the age of 20. Some scholars indicate that "teen fathers" also face problems due to the fact that they are parents. Nonetheless, March of Dimes Journal (2013: 71) suggests that pregnant mothers are more likely to suffer complications during pregnancy. For example, their babies might experience, premature birth, low birth weight or other serious health problems. Babies born under such conditions are often at a greater risk of suffering from stillborn health problems, disability or death. Also, lack of social support results in strained the relationships between the biological mothers and the expectant teen mothers. Giving birth to a baby does not necessarily guarantee the safety of the baby and teen mother, because they are still faced with challenges such as poverty and physical or mental illness. It does not matter whether it is during or after pregnancy; teen mothers still need understanding, medical care and education-particularly on nutrition and other complications during pregnancy (Calorie, 2010:68).

Amongst several important factors that play a pivotal role during pregnancy, lack of moral support, especially from the parents' side becomes an acute problem when they could hardly provide assistance to the teen mothers, both morally and physically. For example, if an expectant mother becomes ill and the family fails to

pay for medication, the mother-to-be might be very angry. The possibility of such a teen mother suffering from stress or depression is high. Recent studies found lack of parental support as a serious challenge for expectant teen mothers, particularly during pregnancy.

2.4.2 After Pregnancy

Whether or not teen mothers choose to remain in school and/ or advance to higher levels of education after pregnancy remains a topic of greater interest in both psychological and educational literatures. Teenage mothers' academic achievement does not only positively affect future income and occupational status, but also affects the psychological distress (Slocum, 2015:5). As a result, teen mothers like women often choose to continue with their schooling because they consider academic qualifications as a ticket for participating in the labour market and earning lucrative salaries (Mahy & Gupta, 2007:74). It could be argued that teen mothers' dreams and aspirations sometimes end up as nightmares. On the one hand, if aspects like financial support, education, housing and school attendance are seriously considered teen mothers often realise their dreams (Mahy & Gupta, 2007:74). A study conducted in New Zealand by Boden, Fergusson and Horwood (2008: 53) shows that instead of receiving support teen mothers experience misunderstanding and pressure.

While it is no longer common to bar teen mothers from continuing with their education, those who go back to school after giving birth face a number of challenges as teen mother-learners. It also becomes harder for them to succeed because they will be faced with schooling and childbearing simultaneously (Western Cape Education Department, 2008:68). From this study's previous literature review, it appears that most of the teen mothers come from financially challenged families and their parent(s) hardly afford the cost of babysitting for their grandchildren. Even worse, the so-called "fathers" of their children are often unemployed. None of their relatives are prepared to assist them during this time of need (Pillow, 2004:46). As a result, teen mothers would be absent from school for a number of days and will often fall behind with their school activities. Eventually, the repetition of the same grades by those teen mothers becomes the order of the day.

Good Bible: Today's English Version, 2012 (Proverbs.3:1) says "Do not forget what I teach you, my son. Always remember what I tell you to do. My teaching will give you a long and prosperous life...". In comparison with the afore-mentioned statement, a study done in America has indicated that African American adolescent mother-learners who had achieved a minimum of high school degree experienced fewer symptoms of psychological distress, specifically fewer depressive symptoms; and greater self-esteem than those who did not. This suggests that that teen mothers who decide to continue with school after giving birth have a brighter future, However, even after the provision of free education for schools which meet the prescribed quarterlies by the Basic Department of Education in South Africa, teen mothers still experience some difficulties with regard to schooling because they have babies to support (Department of Basic Education, Circular. No. 4, 2013:12).

Previous studies have found that most schools, never mind their location are not in reality making significant contributions towards improving the status of teenage mothers. For example, in South African situation, most teen mothers are often absent from schools especially on days that social grants are collected. The same situation applies when teen mother-learners accompany their babies to health centres for vaccinations (Xolile, 2013:8). In most cases the teen mothers are not even willing to go through the missed lessons. In some instances, they find themselves spending more days in hospital when the babies fall ill.

According to Bell (2012:105), under normal circumstances teachers are supposed to assist teen mother-learners who have missed lessons. However, instead of helping them, most teachers consider the situation in which teen mothers are involved in as a private matter. Owing to the fact that there is no literature to show that the other 'normal' learners who miss school are assisted one could conclude that teen mothers are therefore marginalised. Previous literature also shows that teen mother-learners are not provided with adequate counselling on their return to schools. As a result, they fail to deal with the stigma, parenthood and schooling simultaneously while in schools. Teen mother-learners might also be performs poorly academically because they do not have adequate moral support from the school (Chen & Maxwell, 2008:134).

Schinke, Barth, Gilchrist and Maxwell (2009:117) acknowledge that there are many obstacles standing in the way of teen mothers towards their educational advancement, but housing appears to be the worst. Housing is a basic need for everybody, teen mothers included. While many young mothers live with their parents, some still have to find houses in which to raise their babies. Boehike (2012:34) asserts that teen mothers have to go and look for something that is affordable and convenient. On the other hand, some teen mothers go and rent apartments or a house with other family members which, of course, is the more preferred option for most of them. However, those who are homeless rather seek refuge in halfway houses or homes for teen mothers.

The results of many studies on teen mothers note that most teen mothers perform badly academically because they do not have fixed dwelling places. For example, for a teen mother to stay at the landlord's rental house she must see to it that she is in possession of rental fees, school fees and also money for babysitting her child (Bunting & McAuley, 2008:73). Furthermore, literature pertaining to family support highlights that most teen mothers are likely to rely on their biological mothers for materials than their fathers. Frappier (2010:83) maintains that teen mothers could also rely on support from their sisters, partners, relatives and friends. Previous literature supports this view that housing plays a vital role as far as the teenage mothers' proper schooling is concerned. This is because every teen mother has to find a place to stay in after attending lessons.

Teen mothers, especially those whose children have no supporting "fathers" find it difficult to perform well in schools. As a result, they absent themselves from school for in order to do odd jobs to pay for either transport or the maintenance of the other family members. Other circumstances, like when a teen mother unintentionally contravenes some refuge house-laws may mean that her chances of being expelled become high (Boden, Fergusson & Horwood, 2008:102). Expulsion might mean weeks or months looking for another place of abode. Scholars have highlighted that housing, of all obstacles, that are blamed for hampering the teenage mothers' good performance in schools ranks the worst (Paige, 2010:35).

2.5 PARENTAL SUPPORT'S EFFECTS ON TEEN MOTHERS' PERFORMANCES IN SCHOOLS

Miller-Jones (2008:113) contends that although parents' role in their children's learning evolves parental support as kids grow, one thing remains constant; we are our children's learning models. Our attitude about education can inspire them and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey. In addition to this, Sybil (2008:37) notes that a parent needs to be a positive role model for their child in helping to shape the child's opinions and attitudes about learning.

Out of the realisation that every child, whether a normal girl or a teen mother needs strong support from the parents on her way towards educational advancement. In fact, many studies have indicated that what a family does is more important to a child's success in school than how much money the family makes or how much education the parents have (Colorado, 2008:76). In order to give support to teen mothers who have returned to schools, parents have to seriously adhere to the following aspects:

Good attendance is the most important academic procedure that every teen mother-learner should adopt. Consequently, a slight absence from school could result in a teen mother missing some vital instruction. However, it is the responsibility of the parents to take control over their children's attendance. For example, literature related to this study reveals that failing to attend school today is a serious mistake because learners are promoted to the next grade through the CASS marks (Department of Basic Education, Circular. No. 4, 2014:2). Additionally, parents also have an important duty of encouraging teen mothers to arrive at school on time and should at all costs avoid the tendency of taking learners away before school out.

In order to support teen mothers in schools display an attitude towards a school in general. If a parent has a positive attitude towards a school; a teen mother-learner would be like wise. Consequently, whenever a parent intends to talk about school to teen mother-learners, he or she should be very careful. Furthermore, if a parent displays a negative attitude about school, a teen mother a teen mother might adopt a similar attitude.

Education should at all costs be offered a top priority. Previous literature states that if the school policy stipulates that there should be compulsory Saturday classes and parents must encourage their teen mothers to attend them without fail. The same applies to the after school activities. Parents must make sure that education is their children's first priority. In instances where a teen mother-learner asks for assistance on homework or other special projects, it is the parent's responsibility to do so. Furthermore, in cases where a teen mother-learner intends to find help from outside of the home, parents are again the ones who should hire a tutor for their child.

A more pressing critical issue in relation to teen mothers' education is that parents are the only positive role models for the child. This, in one way or another, helps a lot in shaping teen mothers' opinions and attitudes about learning. For instance, a teen mother who always sees her mother reading every evening before she sleeps will soon or later adopt such an attitude.

According to the Chinese Youth Research Journal Centre (2009:116), in China there exists a high scholar work involvement and control by the Chinese families at their children's work. As a result, Chinese parents are very active in their children's education. The high expectations by the Chinese parents from their children's education influences them to study harder so that they live within their parents' expectations. It also stands to reason that teen mothers' parents should also set higher expectations for their child's behaviour and learning. One could conclude that parental support might assist in improving teen mothers' academic performance in schools.

2.6 STRATEGIES TO ASSIST TEEN MOTHERS ON THEIR SCHOOLING

Chetty and Chigona (2007:10) suggest that:

While many girls who become mothers before completing schooling consider academic qualifications to be important, they may not be able to succeed academically if the support they need to complete their studies is insufficient. Usually, instead of getting support, teen parents endure misunderstandings and pressure. Owing to these difficulties, teen mothers may feel disempowered because they are 'mothered' and consequently; they developed forms of resistance which in most cases may foster their failure as learners.

The following are the factors which might encourage teen mothers to perform well in schools:

2.6.1 Regular School Attendance

Fergusson (2008:104) observes that nearly half of a child's achievement in school can be accounted for by factors outside the school, including parental support. On the other hand, the most important support that any child can receive comes from the parents. This type of support ranges from being responsible for making sure that the teen mother-learner arrives at school well-rested, well-fed, and be ready to learn so that she might achieve the high expectations that are usually set by parents. In addition, to this, the issue of support becomes a pressing issue because it should be normally brought to the children without any failure. According to Colorado (2008:78), good school attendance is one of the most important academic steps that a teen mother should always be prepared to adopt. The main reason behind this is that regular absence from school might result in a teen parent missing some vital instruction. In this process, a teen mother could in reality miss the CASS tests which count much, especially today because they are used in the promotion of learners to the next grades (Norms and Standards for Educators, 2013:204).

2.6.2 The use of Social Workers in Schools

Van Pelt (2012:46) observes that creating a positive climate in all areas of the school setting is very imperative to facilitate teen mothers' engagement and connectedness with the school and ensures that they feel involved and invested in achieving short- and long-term goals. Consequently, a good education can also help teen mothers to beat the odds. In cases where the students feel the environment is supportive, they can be motivated to attend school, and seek out services, and finally consider a social worker as yet another expert in the building with whom they can connect (Roberts, 2009:79). Social workers that the department provides per school should be used effectively so that teen mothers in schools might strive towards performing well. For example, social workers must be offered enough time to demonstrate their expertise in counselling learners from pregnancy up to where they give birth to their babies. This could also be achieved through providing them with prenatal and

parenting classes during the specified time. For instance, every school must make a provision for both social workers and school-trained social workers to help teen mother-learners in coping with the pressure of school activities. At the end of the day, such actions could enable teen mothers to perform well in school. It is through the use of these special classes monitored by social workers where the teen parents might earn knowledge of how the childcare skills could be utilised.

McCoy (2012:84) states that teen mothers might be easily helped through the use of the social workers. It has been observed that children who use school-based childcare or stable childcare in the community experience increased attendance, improved academics, and higher graduation rates. By and large, when social workers do work hand-in-hand with the school-trained social workers students' attendance in most schools improves (Cambry, 2011:93). For example, school attendance could be adversely affected, especially if the childcare near the high school is inconsistent. It would then mean that teen mothers may miss school lessons in order to care for their infants. Seemingly, it would also stand to reason that childcare centres usually found near most high schools have to be well-established so that teen mothers could be helped with their educational advancement. There are also other instances where teenage mothers often continue struggling with their performance due to the fact that social workers are not available at their schools. These teen mothers even find it difficult to complete their high school diplomas in comparison to their fellow non-parent learners.

Stadler (2009:112) led a study which involved a young teen mother in America who opened a case against her parent due to the fact that they had failed to provide her with a social worker during her pregnancy and after giving birth to her baby. The teen mother's parents were charged with negligence and paid heavy fines for the offences committed. The Journal of School Health (2012:5) reported that high quality school-based support and childcare centres might assist in improving teen parenting skills, avoidance of subsequent pregnancies and furthermore help teen mother-learners to stay engaged in their school activities. However, a possibility does also exist that teen mothers might be thoroughly assisted in furthering their education through the use of social workers and nurses.

According to Cambry and McCoy (2012:153), teen mothers who usually participate in early childhood education classes learn about parenting skills and child development, the importance of reliable childcare and infant healthcare which are taught by social workers during the special arranged lessons. Moreover, literature related to this study also confirms that either social workers or the school-trained social workers do actually play a vital role in terms of helping teen mothers towards performing well in schools.

2.6.3 Proposed Legislative Assistance

According to the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education (1996:4), as enshrined in the Bill of Rights; a framework and resources to states and school districts are created in an effort to ensure that pregnant and parenting students have equal access to education. As a result of this legislation, it is no longer common to bar teen mothers from continuing with their education as it was the case in the past. In this context, those who go back to school after giving birth to babies still face a number of challenges and that it is hard for them to succeed with their schooling (Kaufman and Stadler, 2008:126). This legislation also helps to address the school climate issues, which include illegal discrimination against and the stigmatisation of pregnant and parenting students.

Previous studies also indicate that the afore-mentioned proposed legislation enables teen parents to also have access to a lot of resources. Teen mothers now have the right to participate in whatever extra-mural activity that is available in schools, but before this law was passed they were forbidden (Roberts, 2009:105). For instance, when activities like netball, softball, tennis and female volleyball are being played teen mothers could now participate without any further hindrances because the legislation empowers them to do so. In this sense, teen mothers could feel accommodated and accepted in schools to an extent that they get engaged in school activities fully, and as a result, also perform exceptionally well.

According to Best (2010:47) all work and no rest makes Jack a dull boy. In light of this the permission the teen parents to participate in whatever extra-mural activity they feel like playing has paved a way for sporting and leisure activities after school.

For example, after teen mother-learners have worked very hard in performing duties like, class work, answering several oral questions, correcting home works and doing group work projects, they might engage in different sports for relaxation (Moloi, 2004:68). A clause in the South African Schools Act, (No. 84 of 1996:5) emphasises that the proposed legislation pertaining to the school matters should be strictly adhered to because it enables teenage mothers to feel free at school. This encourages them to work with full force towards achieving their pre-determined goals in life. Such a situation, especially in black schools caused nightmares during the apartheid era (Dinizulu, 2014:4).

2.6.4 Diverse Staff Dedicated to the Outcomes of the School Programs

Zellman (2005:53) contends that most school-based sponsored programs are aimed at assisting teen mothers in schools to perform well in schools. However, this also offers infinite benefits to both non-parent learners and teen mothers. As a result, most secondary schools are using these school-based programs as a way of helping teenage mothers to attain their educational advancement plans easily. For example, programs like students' extra-lessons, special non-educational classes, invitation of motivational speakers to schools and the ever presence of the religious leaders to schools for exclusive tuition are used in schools to assist in improving the teen mother-learners' performance. Scholars are therefore, generally in agreement that school programs, if properly implemented might benefit teenage mothers to an extent that they may start performing perfectly well in schools. To this extent, school-based sponsored programs could function effectively if they are used in an inclusive curriculum, supplementary curriculum and the non-curricular programs (Department of Education, Circular No. 3, 2013:4). For the sake of a better understanding of how these programs work, a thorough explanation of each of them is given below:

- **Inclusive curriculum program:** In this type of program, teen mother-learners are offered a general educational curriculum, including a range of courses with regard to childcare skills, parenthood or child development. For example, teen parents are taught proper mechanisms to enable their babies grow well and also the healthcare strategies of parenting their children. Inclusive curriculum programs' role is to help pregnant or teen mother-learners by separating teenage

mothers from regular school classes and eventually form the specially-physically and administratively special classes (McKay, 2013:88). During the implementation of the inclusive curriculum program students are provided with the special classes so that they can do their work without the interference of the other learners. In cases, where these students (teenage mothers) might have somehow missed the instruction they are given special time for the cover-up lessons.

- **Supplemental curriculum program:** The provision of relevant courses as well as childcare or counselling of the teenage mothers plays a major role in the implementation of such a program. During this program, teen mother-learners are also bound to attend regular classes, but special lessons should be offered to them at an exclusive time allocated for this program. This also helps teen mothers to deal with the challenges associated parenting thereby enabling them to concentrate on their school work. Most importantly, there also appears to be a possibility that during this program students remain in their regular classes for the rest of the day but in reality, receive credits for participating in the special parenting classes. The main functions of the supplemental program is to offer parental lessons to the teen mothers so that they may be able to perform well in school. Suffice it to say that it is during this time when teen mothers would be given the extra-childcare or counseling lessons so that they could be able to endure the anxieties that might have been caused by heavy school activities' load (Van Pelt, 2012:91).
- **Non-curricular programs:** It is during the implementation of these programs where teen mothers are provided with counseling, medical care and referrals with no school credit participating. Apart from this, most teen parents are keep on attending their regular classes because these programs are administered separately from the regular classes. For example, programs of this nature are primarily attended to in the late afternoons in most schools. For this reason, teen mothers would then still have an opportunity to do other normal school tasks given to them. According to the Centre for Assessment and Policy Development (CAPD, 2008:78), teenage mothers are further protected from discrimination in

the educational system based on gender, pregnancy, marital or parental status in terms of the previously-mentioned policy. In this regard, school districts may not automatically assign either pregnant or parenting students to specific programs without the consent of the proposed policy *per se*. Furthermore, the gist of this matter becomes very much clearer when the granting programs to a certain section of the students without providing the same educational opportunities and experiences to others is forbidden. Consequently, under the CAPD policy, the school districts are not at liberty to bar either pregnant or parenting learners from participating in any program unless being offered a go-ahead by the officials concerned (Zellman, 2008:113). Additionally, the staff dedicated outcomes program also plays an important role enabling teen mothers to perform more effectively in school through the use of the extra lessons strategy.

2.6.5 Psychosocial Factors' Influence of Teen Mothers' School Performance

Chandler (2012:67) maintains that for decades the prevailing wisdom in education was that high self-esteem would lead to high achievement. This theory led to an avalanche of daily affirmations, awards ceremonies and attendance certificates but few, if any, academic gains. Now, an increasing number of teachers are weaning themselves from what some call empty praise. At that important moment, educators aim to articulate a more precise, and scientific vocabulary of praise that will push children to work through mistakes and take on more challenging assignments. McCoy (2012:74) stresses that in relation to the school staff, dedicated teen mother school programs include programmatic activities aiming at building self-confidence and self-esteem, and help to improve decision-making. For example, besides the law that protects teen mothers from any physical or social abuses, teen mothers still display a spirit of isolation and even being stigmatised especially while in schools (Mwamwenda, 2006:118).

Several studies indicate that educators should do everything within their power to make teen mothers have confidence and self-esteem while in schools. Apart from this, parental support might also help teen mothers to respect school attendance. In instances where parents act as role models for the child by shaping his or her opinions about learning, self-confidence, self-esteem as well as the attendance of

school might be finally fostered. For example, if a teen mother could see her mother reading, reading books every day after supper she could emulate her and ending up also becoming a staunch reader (Masakona, 2011:73).

Academic subjects and classes, such as, family consumer sciences and physical education are offered in schools and teachers developing their curriculum and classroom environment. These might also help to foster self-esteem, self-advocacy and life skills development. Furthermore, this could develop skills like career planning, interviewing and communication, if not independent living. At a school level, teen mothers can be encouraged to participate in debates, dramas and other educational communication skills which may help them in building both confidence and self-esteem for themselves.

According to Zellman (2008: 58), there are a number of school practices which could help teen parents at-risk of dropping to complete their high school education. These school practices, include amongst others, creating an attendance policy that does not discriminate against teen mothers, making allowances for home study and grant partial credits for the missed lessons, and finally, the development of students' schedule to allow for transportation to and from childcare. Previous literature shows that the building of self-confidence, self-esteem and the regular attendance of classes could motivate teen parents into performing well in schools.

Roberts (2009:83) notes that both pregnant and teenage mothers can help to increase their chances of finishing school by making a plan while they are pregnant and even after they have given birth to their babies. This could help them establish a solid future plan. Earlier literature reveals that a high percentage of teen parents quit schooling before even obtaining a high school diploma. The reason behind this is that those teen mothers would have not received enough guidance in terms of childrearing or childcare after pregnancy (2012:118). Cambry (2007:59) supports the previous view by acknowledging that the attendance of school, especially on the side of the teen mothers might sometimes adversely be disturbed in case where the issue of childcare is ignored. Consequently, this would lead to them missing classes because teen parents would exactly be concentrating on babysitting their babies.

A study in the *Journal of School Health* (2007:9) reported that a high-quality school-based support and childcare centres may, of course, assist in improving teen parenting skills, and also help in making teen mothers avoid subsequent pregnancies and furthermore assist them to stay focused on their school activities. Recent studies have shown that childcare centres also play an important role in helping some teen mothers in their studies without any further disturbances. For example, some teen mothers leave their babies with their relatives whereas others use childcare centres like crèches to take care of their children. Presumably, it is at these childcare centres where the social workers could conduct lessons on childbearing skills at a specified time. The attainment of parenting skills helps the mothers to take care of their and also pay much attention to their studies (Cambry & McKay, 2012:105).

Childcare centres and social workers should always work hand-in-glove with the teen mothers so that babies must not be an obstacle towards teen parents' good performance in schools. In addition, social workers could then get an opportunity to address teen mothers on aspects like mental health, substance abuse, poverty and past academic failure. For example, it is at these childcare centres where social workers might give teen mothers special lessons on how to fight poverty by using education as a weapon. Mandela (1998:34) said "Education is the key which unlocks the brighter future of all the poor masses, and if seriously pursued; it might drive them from poverty to ever richness...". This statement should help motivate teen mothers to work harder in school because they would know that they would one day become financially viable. Recent studies confirm that education paves a way for teen mothers to obtain thorough knowledge from the childcare centres. The skills and special tuition they received from the childcare centres facilitated by the social workers enhanced their performance in all school activities than previously (Fergusson, 2008:64).

Adopting all the strategies suggested by some of the studies might help to overcoming some of the obstacles that teen mothers face in their endeavour to advance themselves academically (Van Pelt, 2012:201). Furthermore, Hoover (2012:18) indicates that finding a childcare centre within a high school setting, networking with other teen mothers, or using the traditional child day-care options

may also assist teen mothers to finish her degree within a specified period. Studies show that throughout the country high schools with a high teen pregnancy rate have been using day-care options within their schools in order to make a provision for their future babies. It is in such places where the teen parents could actually drop their babies before proceeding to their schools during the day and collect them after attending classes. Using day-care options always pays dividends because teenage mothers are able to finish their education rather than dropping out. Moreover, the issue of killing two birds with one stone could be easily achieved if all teen mothers could ever think of making use of the day-care options in order to fight the poor performance as usually displayed by most teen parents in schools (Best, 2010: 51). In cases where a teen mother has opted to use a day-care for the proper caring of her baby it would mean a double-benefit for her because she will be taught at the high school while her child will be learning at the care centre. Had there been no day-care centres near most high school teen parents would be experiencing more hardships with their schooling (Namibian National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2019:19).

In order to make to make life easier almost all day-care centres found next to high schools are expected to cater the left babies with the diapers, extra clothing, wipes, lotions, and other toiletries as well as formula breast milk, or other appropriate food. All these facilities should be provided with the aim of protecting the babies from the contagious diseases. For instance, if those babies keep on falling ill it means that teen mothers would always be absent from schools. As a result, teen mothers would also be compelled to accompany the babies to the different health centres, some of which are found in faraway places. In this instance, it would furthermore make teen mothers to miss more instructional periods which might ultimately lead them not to perform well academically.

According to the Guttmacher Institute Journal for Youths Pregnancy Prevention, (2008:69), funding is often hard to obtain, especially for the teenage mothers from poor families as the majority of them belong the schools that have a limited amount of spaces available to construct day-care centres. Unlike the traditional day-care centres, most high school programs are often made in such a way as to accommodate those who really qualify. Nonetheless, there are also a number of

caveats attached for using day-care facilities efficiently taking prenatal classes before birth. Some of them might include, speaking to classmates about preventing teen pregnancy, talking to classmates about teen parenting challenges and the use of free periods to feed, and to interact with their children (Dinkmeyer, McKay & Dinkmeyer, 2010:133).

Literature used in this study, has also made mention of a school found in America called Malden High in Massachusetts where a rise in the graduation rate of teen mothers was noticed after the implementation of the day-care facilities and parenting programs. There were teen mothers who would not qualify to leave their babies at childcare centres but could only use the day-care facilities found nearest to their high schools. The American National Campaign for Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy (2013:28) highlights that health services countrywide are also available to provide a list of low-income state day-care facilities at affordable prices. Those teen mothers who could not afford to make use of the most expensive facilities were at liberty to use the low-cost day-care centres provided by the state. On the one hand, local churches, shelters or charity groups are also available to assist teen mothers' babies, especially those who have financial constraints. The bulk of literature discussed in this chapter emphasised the use of day-care centres as one way of motivating teen mothers to perform well in schools (Colorado, 2010:66).

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed literature on obstacles that hinder teen mothers' academic performance in schools. Various strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of teen mothers in schools have also been discussed. Some of these strategies are: the use of social workers for counselling purposes, individual and group support, the building of aspects like self-confidence, self-esteem and regular school attendance in the learners, diverse staff dedicated at improving the outcomes of the school programs, and access to childcare centres. However, these strategies may only be used if properly implemented.

Furthermore, several studies previously have put the blame on many stakeholders who are concerned with the school matters for failing to effectively implement the

suggested strategies. There are still a lot of procedures to be followed until the issue of teen mothers' poor performances in schools are resolved. The reason behind this is that not only one stakeholder could be accused of not taking care of the teen mothers' poor performance in schools, but there are many stakeholders who should be blamed for such a failure. The exclusion of stakeholders such as motivational speakers and religious leaders from participating in programmes meant to improve the academic performance of teen mothers might bring more harm than benefits to the schools. However, it is imperative to conduct more studies in order to gain more insights into the problem of teen mothers' academic performance in schools. Having reviewed literature linked to the present study in this chapter, the next chapter discusses the research design and research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research design and research methodology employed in the study. It also explains the data collection methods, the population, sampling, instrumentation, and the methods of analysing data used in this study.

A qualitative research design was utilised in this study because it offers the researcher an opportunity to make use of observations, open-ended questionnaires and focus group interview as instruments for data collection (Van Rensburg, 2009:136). The previous chapter reviewed literature on factors that influence teen mothers' academic performance in schools. In order to ensure validity and reliability during the data analysis process, the main aim of the study as mentioned in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1); was considered as the pillars of this study and strictly maintained (Gravetter & Forzano, 2010:64). The primary aims of this study were as follows:

- To find out how teen mothers who attend school perform before, during and after pregnancy;
- To identify factors that influence the academic performance of teen mothers before, during and after pregnancy.
- To find out the learning support systems that exist for teen mothers who attend schools.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell (2009:3) asserts that 'research designs' are plans, strategies and procedures for the research study, comprising of decisions from the underlying world views to the detailed methods of data collection and analysis. Schumacher and McMillan, (200:22) support this view by stating that a 'research design' describes how a study was conducted. They add that a 'research design' summarises procedures

for conducting the study, which include when, from whom, and under which conditions data would be obtained.

This study used a qualitative research design because it contains several techniques (e.g. grounded theory, ethnography, life history and conversational analysis). Apart from this, its entire orientation is organised around theorising, collecting and analysing qualitative data. Furthermore, a qualitative research design places emphasis on the social context of the qualitative research so as to understand better the social world (Neuman, 2008:300-301).

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:75) argue that:

a 'research methodology' dictates how data is acquired, arranges data in longitudinal relationships, sets up the approach for refining and synthesising data, suggests how data will be interpreted, and finally yields one or more conclusions that lead to the explanation of knowledge.

On the other hand, De Vos, Fouche and Delport, (2005:41) maintain that a 'research methodology' is a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of the natural phenomena, guided by both theory and hypothesis about the presumed relations amongst such phenomena. The present study is a qualitative study because it seeks to answer such questions such as who, what, when, where and how. Zikmund (2005:55) contends that a qualitative study might be initiated in order to determine how many interviews each student wants to schedule, whether students are able to schedule appointments with certain desirable organisations, and if there are problems with the physical facilities. In this study, the qualitative research method was used because it enabled the researcher to utilise observations and focus group interviews in collecting data. In addition, open-ended questions were used as instruments for collecting data because they also give the respondents to express their views freely and in a manner that they want (Mc Burney, 2006:41).

3.3.1 Population

Babbie (2011:111) indicates that 'population' is the theoretically specified aggregation of elements being studied. He further argues that a 'study population' is the aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. For the purpose of this study, the population comprised teen mother learners and educators selected from the two purposively-sampled secondary schools, namely: school A and B found within Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

3.3.2 Sampling

Sampling refers to participants from the entire population, and it involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours, and/or social processes to observe (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:48). In this study, the sample comprised of ten (10) teen mother learners, ten (20) ordinary learners and ten (10) educators from the two (2) purposively-sampled schools. Purposive sampling was used because it enabled the researcher to rely on the experience, ingenuity and/or previous findings in to order to obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample he or she obtains might be regarded as a genuine representation of the relevant population (Murray and Beglar, 2009:63).

3.3.2.1 Sampling size

In this study, the sample size was indicated as in the table below:

Table 3.1: Illustrates the Participants from the Two Sampled Schools

Participants	Frequency	Sample
Learners	20	(20) Ordinary learners selected from the (2) sampled schools (i.e., school A and B) found under Luvuvhu Circuit.
Teen mother learners	10	(10) Teen mother learners selected from (2) sampled schools (i.e., school A and B) found under Luvuvhu Circuit
Educators	10	(10) Educators from the (2) sampled schools (A and B), found under Luvuvhu Circuit.
Total	40	40

3.3.3 Instrumentation

Babbie and Mouton (2010:207) point out that the process of instrumentation involves measurements which are made by the experimenters, whose standards or abilities might change over the course of the experiment. This study therefore, made use of document analysis and focus group interviews as instruments for data collection.

3.3.4 Data Collecting Strategies

Data collection procedures are methods and instruments used in conjunction with one another to collect data in a painless manner (Holliday, 2005:102). Additionally, Zikmund (2005:103) suggests that once fieldwork has been completed, data must be converted into a format that will answer the decision-makers' questions.

Once permission to conduct a research study was granted from the District manager, I approached the principals of the two purposively-sampled secondary schools so that they could complete the informed consent forms for participants (learners and educators). The main reason for this was that learners were regarded as minors who did not have responsibilities pertaining to such a situation. Before questionnaires were administered to the respondents, a thorough explanation concerning nitty-gritty of the investigation was done. A pilot study had already been carried out so that the larger investigation would be conducted without bias or errors (Olivier, 2008:115). Data collection and the process of data analysis were carried out simultaneously to ensure that valid and reliable findings were obtained (Royse, 2008:104).

The data collection process had already begun with the editing and coding of the data. In this regard, editing involved checking of the data collection forms for omissions, legality and consistency in classification. The editing process corrected problems such as interview errors before data was transferred to a computer, recoded for tabulation. Before data could be tabulated, meaningful categories and character symbols were established for groups of responses. Each interview was transcribed and labelled as soon as it was finished. Immediately after the receipt from the respondents, data were recorded and transcribed.

3.3.5 Data Analysis

Boeije (2010:117) notes that 'data analysis' is the breaking up and the disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements, or units. During this process, facts are broken down into manageable pieces, then the researcher sorts, and sifts them properly, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, pattern or wholes. The primary aim of this process would be to assemble or reconstruct data in a meaningful and/ or comprehensive manner. As this was a qualitative research, data were unstructured, exploratory in nature, based on small samples, and may utilise popular qualitative techniques such as focus groups (group interviews), word association (asking respondents to indicate their first responses to stimulus words),

and depth interviews (one-to-one interviews that probe the respondents' thoughts in detail).

In this study, data collected by means of document analysis and focus group interviews were analysed tables and themes.

3.3.6 Measures to Ensure Validity in a Qualitative Research

In a qualitative research, the researcher is the data collecting instrument. Maree (2011:80) seem to support this statement by stressing that when researchers speak of researches 'validity and reliability', they are usually referring to a research that is credible and trustworthy. Lincoln and Guba (2001) as cited in (Neuman, 2007:64) maintain that 'trustworthiness' should always include the four key criteria, namely, credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability respectively. These criteria are constructed in order to parallel the convention criteria of inquiry into the internal, external, reliability and neutrality.

In order to ensure trustworthiness in a qualitative study, the four criteria mentioned above were explicitly explained in the following format:

- **Dependability**

Dependability is the degree during which the results from an instrument have become repeatable after the data collection process (Creswell, 2008:13).

For example, if two teen mother participants could be interviewed through questions in a focus group form and the results stay the same, the researcher would then conclude that the findings were well-gathered to an extent that they reached the stage of dependability.

- **Transferability**

Olivier (2012:104) notes that 'transferability' refers to the ability to apply the findings of any research to the other contexts.

For example, 'transferability' might be reached, when the findings obtained during the interview of the 'pregnant learners' could be the same with reference to the poor

performa that 'teen mother learners' are displaying in different schools. For that matter, both findings would have reached the stage of transferability.

- **Credibility**

Babbie and Mouton (2009:12) defined the term 'credibility' as the degree through the research's conclusions are more likely sound and good.

For example, after conducting research study on: "The academic performance of teen mother learners at the two sampled schools in Gauteng province," and the findings emerged as valid and reliable. Such findings would be referred to, as credible, thus they would have reached the stage of credibility.

- **Conformability**

Du Plooy (2009:24) emphasizes the 'conformability' in research as being referred to, the accuracy, relevancy or the true meaning of that collected data (findings) in any research.

For example, with regard to the topic of the study mentioned earlier on in this study, if the findings obtained, might be trustworthy and valid in its nature; would also mean that the results obtained at the sampled places, were relevant, accurate and valid to such an extent that they showed findings.

3.3.7 Focus Group Interviews

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:436) state that focus groups are a form of group interviews, though not in this sense of a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. Morgan (1988) cited in Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:122) note that in focus group interviews, participants interact with each other rather than with the interviewer, to extent that the views of the participants can emerge so much so that the participants' rather than the researcher's agenda can predominate. Hence a focus group is a form of interaction of the group in which that data emerged.

Gravetter and Forzano (2009:68) point out that a focus group interview usually consists of between four to eight respondents who are interviewed together. The participants for a focus group interview are selected according to the explicitly-stated criteria. Focus group interviews are conducted in an unstructured or semi-structured way. In this regard, Kruger and Casey (1999) cited in Babbie and Mouton (2007:93) note that the purpose of utilising a focus group interview in a qualitative approach is primarily to promote self-disclosure amongst the participants. They add that using focus group interviews results in displaying what people really think and feel while being interviewed. Babbie (2007:107) notes that a 'focus group interview' is an unstructured, free-flowing interview done with a small group people. During a focus-group interview, participants (respondents) meet at a central location within a designated time and are interviewed. The interviewer introduces the topic to the respondents and encourages the group members to discuss the subject amongst themselves.

Focus group interviews were considered more suitable to this study because they enabled the researcher to investigate a multitude of perceptions in a defined area of interests (Nyamati & Schusler, 2000) as cited in Olivier (2009:114). Focus group interviews are indeed the most suitable instruments for the study because they offer the participants opportunity to give multiple viewpoints or responses that this type of study needed. For example, before a researcher could interview teen mother-learners, he or she might ask them questions about well-known musicians or disk-jockeys (Dj's) in their villages. The reason for posing such questions would be to acquaint them with the interviews so that they should feel free in answering questions. In pursuit of acquainting the participants with the way in which they were expected answer questions during the interviews, the researcher might also tell them about what the Bible means when it says that a child is a gift from God. Winfrey (2014:3) stresses that giving birth to a child does not mean the end of the world to a teenage mother who is in school; hence she could still furthermore achieve her predetermined goals while having a baby.

Focus group interviews are fundamentally a way of listening to the people and learning from them, and also creating lines of communication amongst them. In a focus group interview, the participants do not just keep quiet and look at each other,

but there always exists a continual communication between the facilitator and the participants (respondents) themselves. In cases where the interviewer asks teen mother-learners about their poor academic performances, they will respond by mentioning the challenges they are encountering, then a sweet communication would start (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006:123). It is always during the focus group interviews where a larger process of communication prevails, which ultimately connects the world of a researcher and that of the respondents (Terre Blanche, et al, 2006:26).

Focus group interviews are suitable to this study because they compel a researcher to obtain individuals with whom to conduct an unstructured interview through the purposive or snowball sampling after a pre-test or pilot study, which is usually done before starting with the investigation (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell (2005:113). During the pre-testing process, more often a preference is given to key informants who, on account of their position or experience have more information than the regular group members and /or are better able to articulate the needed information. The use of focus group interviews is suitable because it is during the pre-test process where the respondents would even reveal the real number of the teen mother-learners in their schools and also the number of babies they are having at the two purposively-sampled secondary schools found under Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. The respondents selected during the pre-test are often experienced and possess more information, hence they have been well-inducted before starting the interview. The question of the focus group interviews being suitable to this study needs no further explanation because they cite issues like, experience, positions and also being very informative. As mentioned earlier, purposive sampling involves experience, ingenuity and judgement as its criteria for selecting the characteristics of the sample members. This clearly shows that using the focus group interview is the most appropriate method of data collection for this study. In qualitative research, the focus group interview is considered the most suitable instrument of data collection (Cant, Gerber-Nel, Nel & Kotze, 2006:118). In focus group interviews, the observer (researcher)'s main function is to direct the interaction and inquiry either in a structured or unstructured manner; but this will solely depend on the aim of the investigation. Furthermore, the aim of using the focus group interviews is not to replace the individual interview, but to gather more information that could actually not

be collected easily by means of individual interviews. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2011:141), it is emphasised that focus group interviews could also primarily serve to elicit responses between members of the groups. Murray and Beglar (2009:106) notes that a small number of individuals brought together for a discussion or as a resource group is more valuable than any representative group.

Several scholars have recommended focus group interviews in studies similar to the present, but they emphasises that the group must be carefully selected. This is done in order to safeguard the quality of data obtained. For example, in a focus group interview; hostile respondents should at all costs be controlled or not selected because they can spoil the whole interviewing process. This can only be achieved if the researcher introduces the topic to the focus groups before the interview starts. For example, interviewing the warring principals together with their teachers at the same venue would amount to spoiling the interview process. The other issue of paramount importance with regard to the use of focus group interviews is that each participant must be given time to make a final statement before the session comes to an end. Burns and Grove (2011:67) argue that focus group interviews are suitable to be used in a study of this nature because they can be rapidly obtained at a lower cost.

Sterward and Shamdashani (1997) cited in De Vos, Strydom, Founche' and Delport, (2009:286) point out that that focus group interviews can be conducted within a wide range of settings and also that a vast range of respondents might be selected from them. The researcher communicates directly with the respondents thereby enabling him/her to easily clarify some aspects of the questions posed on the respondents. For example, if there is a typing error the researcher may rectify it before the interview starts. On the same note, focus group interviews can also be used in a tele-conferencing way. This means that even the respondents from different places might be drawn together for an interview without being physically together at a specific place. This means that, in this study the researcher could also use focus group interviews even though the two purposively-sampled secondary schools were far away from each other by means of the tele-conferencing process. In addition, focus group interviews can be conducted with the respondents who are not able to complete the self-reporting questionnaires. This means that this type of interviews

can be conducted with children or individuals who have low education. Lengane (2014:4) reports of cases especially in Kwazulu-Natal Province where young girls between twelve and fourteen years of age are forced by marry by their parents because of poverty. It therefore, goes without saying that focus group interviews would be the most appropriate method of data collection from such teen mothers in Kwazulu-Natal schools.

Boehike (2014:5) notes that nowadays there is a large number of young girls in schools who giving birth to babies before the appropriate age. The researcher in this study has opted to use the focus group interviews because they allow the respondents to discuss different opinions and experiences freely while ensuring that consensus regarding the opinions can be reached before they could even answer the posed questions. Van Rensburg (2009:106) maintains that focus group interviews are very useful, especially in participatory action research where members of a community are equal participants in the planning and implementation of a research study. Suppose, one village is hard-hit by teen pregnancies, different stakeholders composed of local citizens can be called in order to use them as respondents on the issue of teenage pregnancies, through focus group interviews. By so doing, the problem at stake could be easily solved because participants would be offered an opportunity to share their ideas, which ultimately results in new solutions for an existing problem.

3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the research design and research methods employed in this study. The rationale for the selected sample, data collection methods, research instruments as well as data analysis methods was also given. The chapter also discussed the strengths and the limitations of the data collection instrument used in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, which is chapter three, I have focused on research designs, methods, the population, sampling, instruments and data collecting strategies. Data collecting strategies and methods were selected with regard to the main themes of the topic under study, and thus, the topic reads: *A Longitudinal Study of the Academic Performance of Teen Mothers Enrolled at Schools in Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province*. Still concentrating on the importance of Chapter 3, I learnt that there should always be a collaboration amongst the chosen method, instruments for data collection and those for data analysis. For example, if a researcher has chosen the quantitative research method, he or she should definitely make use of questionnaires and interview schedules and ultimately utilise a computer fitted with the SPSS, Version 32 package for data analysis (Kumar, 2014:38). For the sake of this study, I opted for the qualitative approach because it offers an opportunity to use focus group interviews with mostly open-ended questions, document analysis and observations. Moreover, qualitative studies also give the participants the opportunity to make use of whatever answers they might think of freely. In addition to this, it also enables the respondents to assist each other during the interviews, which, of course, results in yielding valid and reliable findings. Most importantly, in this study, the following main questions were formulated in order to guide the study against losing its focus during the investigation, as follows:

- How do teen mothers attending school perform, before, during and after pregnancy?
- What are the factors that negatively affect teen mothers' performance, before, during and after pregnancy?
- What are the necessary mechanisms of support that the school should give to teen mothers?

The main objective of this study was to investigate factors that could influence academic performance of teen mothers enrolled at schools in Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District in the Limpopo Province over a period of time. To answer these questions and accomplish the objectives of the study, the qualitative research method in which data were collected through document analysis and focus group interviews with open-ended questions from the two sampled schools' class registers and mark schedules was applied. In reporting the data, participants were identified against the actual quoted statements that they made during interviews, so that the emerging themes and sub-themes might be well-illustrated.

For the sake of this chapter, I made use of the advice by Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:63), that in a qualitative study like this one data analysis constitutes the final stage of hearing what the participants have said pertaining the topic under study. Moreover, data analysis is the most important crucial step in the research of this nature because the researcher is expected to interpret and make sense of the collected data in order to come up with meaningful findings from the data. Du Plooy (2009:101) points out that the collected data such as responses recorded during the focus group interviews need to be carefully interpreted in line with the aim of the study in order to formulate findings which can be related to the context of the specific study.

The development of the study findings is an important step in arriving at the conclusions and recommendations. The quality of study findings influences whether or not recommendations can be implemented by the targeted beneficiaries or population of the study. In this study, it is important to come up with meaningful interventions on how factors that militate against the academic performance and school participation or attendance of teen mother learners can be applied by school stakeholders who were interviewed in this study such their teachers, school principals, other learners and the teen mother learners themselves. Zikmund (2006:115) supports this when he states that data analysis is the application of reasoning with the aim of understanding and interpreting the information and later the drawing of conclusions relevant for the managerial decisions by those who use the study results. Besides this, I made recommendations so that the relationship between the final results and recommendations could be established. Data from

interviews were interpreted using thematic analysis (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2010:147). The analysis was based on themes formulated from the quotations which illustrate the responses made by the study participants. I also made it a point that the report drawn from the data must indeed communicate with the research findings so that results also meet the parameters of validity, reliability and trustworthy of this study. Moreover, Bobbie (2007:73) concurs that: “in order to enable the gathered findings to be within the jurisdiction of the better results, they should never be misinterpreted for the sake of reaching a certain goal or impressing the sponsors in the wrong way”.

In this chapter, I report on data gathered from the interviews conducted with two categories of the participants namely; teen mother learners and their teachers from the two sampled schools situated in Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District. The participants, namely, the 10 teachers, 10 teen mother learners and 20 other learners who were going to school with teen mother learners were interviewed through the use of a voice-recorder. The collected data was transcribed in order to facilitate the analysis process which would, if conducted, in the correct manner yield valid and reliable results (Royse, 2008:76). Further, data from the interviews was analysed and interpreted using thematic analysis, mainly based on the developed themes, sub-themes and comments from the participants which are outlined in the next section of this chapter. In this regard, this also resulted in the inclusion of both the coding and editing processes in order to enable on the data to be interpreted and analysed accordingly from the themes. In addition, I also corroborated data collected with the focus group interviews and information gathered from document analysis so that the valid and reliable results should emerge.

In the following sections therefore, I present and discuss the identified themes, sub-themes and interpreted comments on each of the developed themes.

4.2 SUMMARY OF THE EMERGING THEMES

Data are presented, analysed and interpreted using the qualitative research approaches as already outlined in chapter three and the previous section of this chapter. From the gathered data, four major themes from the focus group interview

data emerged. The themes were used to explain and complement factors that influenced the academic performance and school attendance of teen mother learners over a period of two years, since this was a longitudinal study. The documented data on academic performance and school attendance were summarised in tables to show the average marks obtained and on school attendance by teen mother learners.

- Teen mothers' relationships within the school
- Factors in the school affecting teen mother learners
- Factors in the home affecting teen mother learners
- Support mechanisms available for teen mothers

The four major themes were further divided into sub-themes, with the aim of presenting and analysing the views of the participants in line with the identified themes and sub-themes.

4.3 EMERGING THEMES FROM THE GATHERED DATA

Table 4.1: Summary of Four Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Teen mother learners' relationships within the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationships between teen mother learners and teachers. • The relationship between teen mother learners and other learners.
Factors in the school affecting teen mother learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School factors that affect teen mother learners' performance. • School factors that affect teen mother learners' attendance.
Factors in the home affecting teen mother learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home factors that affect teen mother learners' performance. • Home factors that affect teen mother learners' attendance.
Support mechanisms available for teen mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support that schools should provide to teen mother learners. • Support that the home should provide to teen mother learners.

4.4 DOCUMENTARY RECORD ANALYSIS ON PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE OF SAMPLED TEEN MOTHER LEARNERS (TMLS)

In order to establish the school attendance and performance of teen mothers who were enrolled at the two schools that were found suitable for this study, I studied school records such as academic progress schedules and attendance registers for the sampled 10 teen mother learners (TMLS) over a period of two years totalling 6 terms (Tables 4.4 to 4.13). However, before presentation and analysis of the sampled 10 teen mother learners (7 from school A and 3 from School B), the total population of the enrolled TML is presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 according to

school and four subjects that were also selected for the study. The four subjects, Tshivenda, English, Mathematics/Mathematics Literacy and Science were used for the study because all of them are compulsory and therefore studied by all learners. Added to that the two years that were chosen for the longitudinal study of the TMLs performance and attendance were 2014 and 2015 because only TMLs who got pregnant during the course of 2014 were targeted and sampled for the study. The first year, 2014, included the pre-pregnancy and pregnancy period while 2015 was largely regarded as the post-pregnancy period for the 10 sampled TMLs. These 10 TMLs were therefore, selected because they had some meaningful records that were of interest for the research (see extracts from School Academic Records, Appendix 4).

Table 4.2: 2014 Enrolled Teen Mother Learners School by School and Subject

Subjects	TMLs per Subject	School A	School B
Tshivenda	48	23	25
English	49	23	26
Maths/Lit.	35	13	22
Science	40	17	23

Source: School A and B Registration Records 2014

As indicated in Table 4.2 above, in 2014 School B had more enrolled teen mother learners studying the four major school subjects in 2014. The average TMLs for both schools was around 40 but Mathematics and Science had lower TMLs than the languages. Since these four subjects are supposed to be studied by all school learners, the tabled figures provided a rough idea of the population of TMLs in the two schools, which is shockingly very high and this agrees with literature which indicates high rate of teenage pregnancy in South Africa.

Table 4.3: 2015 Enrolled Teen Mother Learners School by School and Subject

Subjects	TMLs per Subject	School A	School B
Tshivenda	45	23	22
English	43	23	20
Maths/Lit.	36	22	14
Science	41	18	23

Source: School A and B Registration Records 2015

Table 4.3 above indicates that in 2015, the population or total number of TMLs at both schools decreased from what it was in 2014. The most likely reason for this is that some teen mothers may choose to drop out of school during the time of pregnancy or after giving birth in order to take care of the baby. School dropout due to school girl pregnancy is well recorded in literature and the above data agrees with reviewed literature whereby unplanned learner pregnancy is identified as one major cause of school dropout (Runhare, Mudau & Mutshaeni, 2016). It can also be seen that in 2015, the number of TMLs in school B was generally lower than School A in all subjects except in Science.

As evidence that both schools had high school girl pregnancy, two teachers from the schools confirmed that teen mothers attending specific subjects taught by different teachers were indeed high. The one teacher from School A indicated that *“As far as my mind recalls events, the number of teen mothers can be 20 and above in one class or the subject I teach* [Teacher 1, School A].

On the other hand, the teacher from school B also had this to say on the number of teen mothers in her subject:

In the class that I teach right now, I have got six (6) teen mothers; that is the number I still recall, but may be others do not study my subject. You may find that in mathematics, which is done by all learners, they can even be 20 teen mothers in the class. There are so many, I know.

[Teacher 2, School B]

Therefore, regarding the sampled teachers sharing of the same sentiments concerning the number of teen mothers attending school, it leaves any person with no alternative but to agree that the number of teen mothers attending school was indeed higher than expected at both schools where this study was conducted.

Table 4.4: Biographical Data of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School A

TML	Current Age	Pregnancy Age	Current Grade	Pregnancy Grade	Pregnancy Year	Guardian
TML 1	19	17	11	10	2014	mother
TML 2	21	19	11	10	2014	Both parents
TML 3	18	15	11	11	2014	Grandparents
TML 4	20	18	11	10	2014	mother
TML 5	17	16	11	11	2014	Grandparents
TML 6	19	17	11	11	2014	Both parents
TML 7	19	17	11	10	2014	Grandparents

Source: School A Registration Records

For this study, only school girls who had fallen pregnant in 2014 were selected in order to investigate and analyse their school attendance and performance over 2 years, namely 2014 and 2015. Table 4.4 above shows that 4 of the learners became pregnant while in Grade 10 and 3 were in Grade 11. The data also shows that 3 of the teen mothers were repeating Grade 11 after pregnancy at the time the data were collected. The results revealed that grade repetition or delayed school completion was caused by unplanned pregnancy and this concurs with earlier research by Grant and Hallman (2006) who found that teenagers who fell pregnant while at school repeated grades and did not do well in school. In terms of age, the Table 4.4 shows that almost all the 7 girls at School A were now over-aged in terms of the grades they were doing. This is shown by the fact that 6 of them were above 18 years while they were still in Grade 11. What is of concern from the data is that one learner, that is TML3 was below 16 years when she fell pregnant, which, according to the constitution is below the age of consent for a child to engage in sexual activity. Only TML5 who was 17 years was not over-aged as she could complete Grade 12 at 18 years. From Table 4.4 above it could be concluded that learners who stayed with

grandparents became pregnant at an early age compared to those who stayed with both parents and mothers. This shows that parents are important in delaying or preventing teen pregnancy. Only 2 out of the 7 TMLs who stayed with both parents got pregnant and this could be a sign that single motherhood could be one cause or related to teen pregnancy. Since none of the teenage mothers indicated that they stayed with a boyfriend or spouse, it can be concluded from the study that teen pregnancy affects both schooling and marital life in a negative manner.

Table 4.5: Biographical Data of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School B

TML	Current Age	Pregnancy Age	Current Grade	Pregnancy Grade	Pregnancy Year	Guardian
TML 8	20	17	10	9	2014	mother
TML 9	19	16	10	9	2014	Grandparents
TML 10	21	18	11	11	2014	Both parents

Source: School B Registration Records

From School B only 3 learners accepted to take part in the study. Of these, Table 4.5 above shows that 2 were below 18 when they got pregnant and only one was 18 years at the time of being pregnant. As two of the TML were in Grade 9 in 2014 and went to Grade 10 in 2015, they did not repeat. However, the TML 3 was repeating Grade 11 she was in 2014 when she got pregnant. Like in School A it is also indicated that the youngest TML was staying with grandparents when she got pregnant. Parental guidance is therefore important for learners to be protected from teenage pregnancy. According to literature presented in Chapter 2, some parents left their children with grandparents while they go to live in big cities like Johannesburg and grandparents usually fail to take firm control. In South Africa, it is said that there are some grandparents who encourage teen pregnancy in order to earn a living from child grants from the government.

To find out whether what records indicated was true, I asked some of the teen mother learners when they got pregnant and in which grade they were. TML1 from School A commented that: *"I think I was only 18 years old and I was in Grade 10. In*

the first instant, I could indeed not real know I was pregnant but I later convinced myself that things do sometimes happen in our daily life”.

Pertaining to the same interview TML9 from School B answered the question on the grade she was when she got pregnant thus:

I was in actual fact in Grade 10 when I fell pregnant, as my memory still serves me well because I cannot forget such a thing in my life. When I fell pregnant I did not know it well due to the age issue and did not understand that this will make my life so difficult like now.

Generally, from the statements or comments made by the two sampled teen mother learners, it appears that the two learners fell pregnant when they were still younger in Grade 10. As shown in Table 4.6 below teen mother learners were mostly in Grade 10 when most of them became pregnant. Another point that emerged from the two statements is that the girls were surprised to realise that they were pregnant because they were young and had no knowledge on pregnancy.

Based on the fact that the sampled 10 TMLs got pregnant in 2014 and were teen mothers in 2015, I decided to compare their performance between the two school years by analysing their scores in Tshivenda, English, Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy and Science. Tables 4.6 and 4.7 below has this information for School A. In order to quickly identify their passes and failing marks, I used red colour to indicate the marks below 50%.

Table 4.6: 2014 School Performance of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School

A

TML 1	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Average
	Tshivenda	73	61	14	49.3
	English	64	44	58	55.3
	Maths	33	11	-	22
	Science	19	16	-	17.5
TML 2	Tshivenda	86	64	84	78
	English	65	56	63	61.3
	Maths	36	37	26	33
	Science	32	24	44	33.3
TML 3	Tshivenda	82	68	78	76
	English	83	75	64	74
	Maths	15	13	22	13.3
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 4	Tshivenda	68	54	70	64
	English	38	36	49	33.3
	Maths	47	35	26	36
	Science	16	24	19	19.7
TML 5	Tshivenda	82	78	85	81.7
	English	46	50	59	51.7
	Maths	41	50	26	39
	Science	18	30	33	27
TML 6	Tshivenda	74	74	64	69
	English	49	70	64	61
	Maths	16	51	42	36.3
	Science	26	39	42	35.7
TML 7	Tshivenda	71	74	64	69.7
	English	39	70	61	56.7
	Maths	-	-	-	-
	Science	-	-	-	-

Source: School A Progress Records 2014

Table 4.7: 2015 School Performance of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School

A

TML 1	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Average
	Tshivenda	47	65	55	55.7
	English	30	48	43	40.3
	Maths	7	39	12	19.3
	Science	23	29	5	19
TML 2	Tshivenda	39	50	42	43.7
	English	35	56	40	43.7
	Maths	-	29	9	12.7
	Science	19	37	25	27
TML 3	Tshivenda	64	50	62	58.7
	English	38	51	54	47.7
	Maths	15	35	15	21.7
	Science	18	29	27	24.7
TML 4	Tshivenda	71	64	62	65.7
	English	39	61	49	49.7
	Maths	9	-	2	5.5
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 5	Tshivenda	79	79	82	80.5
	English	73	70	65	69.3
	Maths	40	48	20	36
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 6	Tshivenda	74	74	-	74
	English	49	70	-	59.5
	Maths	16	51	-	38.5
	Science	26	39	-	37.5
TML 7	Tshivenda	71	62	-	66.5
	English	39	49	-	44
	Maths	4	2	-	3
	Science	-	-	-	-

Source: School A Progress Records 2015

From Table 4.6 and 4.7 above it is clear that:

- All the teen mother learners passed the home language, Tshivenda throughout the two years.
- All the teen mother learners either failed or were absent in Mathematics and Science subjects.
- TML1 passed 2 subjects in 2014 and 1 subject in 2015.
- TML2 passed 2 subjects in 2014 and none in 2015
- TML3 passed 2 subjects in 2014 and one subject in 2015
- TML4 passed Tshivenda only in both 2014 and 2015
- TML5 and TML6 passed both English and Tshivenda in both 2014 and 2015
- TML7 passed 2 subjects in 2014 and one subject in 2015

From the above information, it can be concluded that only two of the teen mothers were consistent in their performance in Tshivenda and English, while the majority or 5 TMLs declined in their performance due to getting pregnant. There was high absenteeism in Mathematics and Science subjects by TML4, TML5 and TML5. A study conducted by Grant and Hallman (2006), indicated that school girls who fell pregnant were usually those who are poor in school work and the data in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 of this study also indicated the same.

For School B of the study, Tables 4.8 and 4.9 below have information on the 3 TML who participated in the study.

Table 4.8: 2014 School Performance of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School

B

TML 8	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Average
	Tshivenda	74	71	76	73.7
	English	53	41	40	44.7
	Maths	-	-	-	-
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 9	Tshivenda	76	73	62	70.3
	English	48	39	44	4.7
	Maths	45	29	21	31.7
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 10	Tshivenda	61	63	76	66.7
	English	50	36	29	38.3
	Maths	48	26	34	36
	Science	-	-	-	-

Source: School B Progress Records 2014

Table 4.9: 2015 School Performance of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School

B

TML 8	Subject	Term 1	Term 2	Term 2	Average
	Tshivenda	65	58	68	63.7
	English	44	38	45	42.3
	Maths	23	-	-	23
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 9	Tshivenda	66	72	69	69
	English	47	39	46	44
	Maths	33	35	26	31.3
	Science	-	-	-	-
TML 10	Tshivenda	56	62	55	57.7
	English	41	48	39	42.7
	Maths	-	-	-	-
	Science	-	-	-	-

Source: School B Progress Records 2015

From the two tables above, it is noted that:

- All the three TMLs only passed home language Tshivenda for the two years.
- TML 8 and TML10 passed English in the first term of 2014.
- TMLs 8 TML9 and TML10 were absent in Science in both 2014 and 2015
- The general performance of the three TMLs in School B was very poor in 2014 when they got pregnant and remained poor 2015 when they were now teen mothers.

When compared, the information in the 4 tables above shows that the TMLs in School A generally performed better than those in School B over the two years. However, it remains clear from this study for both schools that TMLs were not achieving well academically and that their performance was from bad to worse from 2014 to 2015. This result is in agreement with studies by Runhare and Vandeyar (2012), Grant and Hallman (2006) and Chigona and Chetty (2008) who all found out that South African teen learners who chose to continue with their schooling after getting pregnant did not benefit from the democratisation of schooling for pregnant and parenting teenagers. Judging from the data from this study, most teen mother learners in this were therefore most likely to fail high school certificate or Grade 12.

One of the objectives and research questions that this study sought to address was how teen mother learners at the two selected schools attended school over the two years when they were affected by pregnancy while at school. This information is summarised in Tables 4.10 to 4.13 below (see extracts of School Registers, Appendices 5). In order to determine the school attendance by the 10 TMLs, the days in which they were absent from school were counted from the official class registers and summarised into the 4 tables below for both School A and B in 2014 and 2015.

On the general performance of teen mother learners, their teachers explained what I gathered through academic documents in the tables above. For example, teacher 2

from School A shared his version concerning how teen mothers in his subject performed compared to the other subjects and to other learners by saying:

Compared to the other students, some of these teen mothers can be found to do better in my subjects than in some other teachers' subjects because learners like their mother tongue. You can find that they can even do better in writing life stories but when it comes to mathematics or science, it's something else. Other teachers say they don't even attend. For one, I do not know whether it is caused by being teen mothers or not. [Teacher 2 School A].

However, different sentiments were expressed by the English teacher 5 from School B who commented thus:

In my subject, English most of them are not performing well but we sometimes have instances in which one might find one and two of them doing well. To my surprise, I can say almost 80% of these teen mothers are not performing well in my subject completely. I can say, this may not be caused by pregnancy as such because you find that even before they get pregnant, they were still not doing well and it becomes worse after they are pregnant, so how can you blame the pregnancy. It's just that it's by coincidence that children who become teen mothers usually paly with school instead of being serious. How can a child who is serious with learning become pregnant? [Teacher 2, School B].

Judging from the statements above, it emerges that teen mothers do perform well in one teacher's subject than in another one's. Consequently, the statements made by the two sampled teachers might compel one to agree with the opinion that teen mothers are not doing well in almost all subjects done in schools as indicated by Grant and Hallman (2006) who said that teen mothers repeat grades because they are generally poor in school. Moreover, it also further leads us to an agreement that teen mothers do perform as others in some subjects but not in all. In this study, it was observed that teen mothers were very poor in Mathematics and Science throughout, and the Mathematics and Science teachers said this is common, mostly

for teen mothers because they don't attend classes most of the time. The Mathematics teacher added that:

If you have say 10 teen mothers in your class, you can get assured that you already have 10 learners who will fail the subject in your class. Mathematics or be it maths literacy, these are subjects normal learners fail because they don't enjoy it; this is worse with teen mothers, especially when they are in period of full pregnancy or the baby is young. They simply do not come to school at such time, in my subject it's just blank and blank if you check their mark schedules. What can I do if someone does not attend? [Teacher 6, School B].

I wanted to find out why teen mother learners also failed in science and teachers from both schools who teach sciences expressed the same views or concerns of maths teachers above. The Science teacher in School A said almost the same view as the one above:

We can't blame it all on pregnancy. That will be like hiding the whole issue. Yes, you may find one or two learners who are teen mothers who can go down because of this issue, but you find that even before being a teen mother the same learner was too playful; that's why she gets pregnant. In science we do projects, they have to submit but you find if one is a teen mother, they give reasons for not doing the projects because of illness or looking after the baby and so forth. But the truth is that they don't attend and so fail or don't have marks [Teacher 4, School A].

Looking at the tables on performance and attendance, one can conclude that teen mothers will in most cases be absent in maths and science lessons because that is where there are blank spaces and marks were mostly below the pass grade and even as low as below 20%.

Table 4.10: 2014 School Absenteeism of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School A

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Total
TML 1	11	3	2	16
TML 2	7	3	1	11
TML 3	8	-	8	16
TML 4	7	3	8	18
TML 5	14	4	4	22
TML 6	7	10	2	19
TML 7	14	4	2	20

Source: Class A Registers

As school term in South Africa has an average of about 3 months. Table 4.10 shows that most of the TMLs in School A were absent from school in the first term of 2014. After noticing that most other learners had zero days of school attendance, it was concluded that the school absenteeism of sampled teen mothers was actually very high in the year they got pregnant.

Table 4.11: 2015 School Absenteeism of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School A

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Total
TML 1	10	-	1	11
TML 2	8	-	6	14
TML 3	7	3	1	11
TML 4	9	4	2	15
TML 5	8	3	5	16
TML 6	5	3	6	14
TML 7	10	-	2	12

Source: Class A Registers

As indicated in Table 4.10 it can be seen that in the period after delivery, teen mothers had less absent days from school. This could be because they got help from their mothers or grandmothers to look after the babies. In fact interviews with the TMLs indicated that in deed there are some whose mothers and grandmothers looked after their babies while they attended school. This is in agreement with Gant and Hallman (2006) and Chigona and Chetty (2007) who found that teen mothers could attend school where parents gave them support by looking after the babies. The Department of Education (2007) also has regulations that parents should help to look after their children's babies while they are at school. In some schools, principals demand that parents accompany their pregnant children to school.

Table 4.12: 2014 School Absenteeism of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School B

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 2	Total
TML8	9	4	6	19
TML9	9	6	1	16
TML10	14	2	1	17

Source: Class B Registers

Table 4.13: 2015 School Absenteeism of Sampled Teen Mother Learners School B

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 2	Total
TML 8	7	6	6	19
TML 9	9	8	4	21
TML 10	13	5	6	24

Source: Class B Registers

If TMLs absenteeism is compared for the two schools, it can be noticed from Tables 4.10 to 4.13 that TMLs in School B had a higher rate of absenteeism than those in School A. So in both performance and attendance, TMLs in School A were better than those in School B.

In South Africa, mothers and grandparents who look after babies born out of marriage are given child grants once every month. At the end of the month it is common for banks to have long queues of teenage girls and grandparents who want to withdraw their child grants. For teen mothers still in school, this could be the reason for school absenteeism and this was mentioned by some of the interviewees.

To elaborate on the school attendance of teen mothers as shown in the daily registers, their teachers narrated that pregnancy affected not only their performance, but their attendance too. One of the teachers from School B responded by illustrating how pregnancy affected teen mothers' school attendance by saying:

Firstly, before teen mothers got babies, they will be attending the school well and even doing better in the subjects they have enrolled in. During the pregnancy stage, the pace of performance drastically changes and becomes lower than before. The major reason might be that teen mothers would then often absent themselves from school for a number defensive excuses. For example, other would say, we had been accompanying our babies to the health centres for quarterly vaccinations. On the one hand, others would cite that they were not 'feeling well', and thus they had failed coming to school. As far as I am concerned, I regard the pregnancy stage, as the most disturbing period with reference to teen mothers' school attendance. It is during the pregnant stage where the graph of teen mothers' absenteeism from schools increase. The last stage called the afterbirth period. During this important period, teen mothers attend schools well, and start doing well in their subjects as before. May be, the reason behind this might be that they have reached a stage where they have accepted themselves as 'mothers' of their babies. In other words, they would have reached a stage where they have concluded that bearing a 'child' does not really mean the end of the world but an incident that sometimes occurs in life. I have experienced in my teaching career, a period where one would see teen mothers performing well and even very co-operative in classes [Teacher 3, School A].

Teacher 8 from School B also gave a long explanation which indicated that during and after pregnancy, teen mothers usually give various reasons as an excuse to be absent from school. The teacher was of the view that:

What I know about the before pregnancy is that 'the mother-to-be' would be attending the school regularly. In addition to this, they would be working very hard with the aim of progressing to the next grades. Immediately, during pregnancy, changes will happen and teen mothers would in reality be absenting themselves from school citing many defensive excuses. For example, it is during this period where teen mothers would say they were absent because they had experienced headaches. At the last stage, the period when teen mothers would have given birth to babies, things also change from bad to worse. For instance, during the afterbirth period, teen mothers would absent themselves from schools; saying that they had gone to collect the social grants and sending their babies to the health centres for vaccinations. Also as time goes on, teen mothers would cite their absence on lack of baby-sitters in order to look after babies while at schools. Teachers for the teen mothers are, in reality, experiencing troubles because some would in the form of lying say telephone messages have alerted about their baby is ill [Teacher 8, School B].

There indeed exists a similarity in the responses of the two sampled teachers from the different schools. An analysis of the statements by the two participants shows that teen mothers behave in the same way during the three stages of pregnancy in schools and this is largely negatively affecting their school attendance. However, the teacher from School A indicated that some teen mothers start to accept and work even harder, which is also indicated by Runhare (2010) who found out that some pregnant learners worked hard in school so that they progress and look after their babies.

What the teachers said was also similar to what one of the ordinary learners who was also a girl who studied with teen mothers in the same class had to say on her observations on their school attendance during pregnancy and after giving birth.

Yes, every teen mother demonstrates a good attendance of schools before pregnancy. From the little experience I had gathered while still a learner, I always observed that most of teen mothers had performed excellently before becoming pregnant. However, as stages of pregnancy progresses, a drastic change emerges. During pregnancy period, excuses like: "I was sick with my headache painful. I had also vomited continuously the previous night and later also felt dizzy." These and other obstacles are today used by teen mothers in defence of their absenteeism. The last stage called 'the giving of births to the babies', could be properly called 'the period of horrible', if not, 'troubles' in teen mothers' attendance of schools. This is qualified to be named after such terms because it is during this period where the rate of absenteeism is absolutely higher. In this instances, teen mothers are often absent from school on the days of collecting social grants or when they would have gone to the health centres in order to let their babies vaccinated [Other Learner 7, School A].

The statements from the two teachers and from one of the ordinary learners had common sentiments that teen mother learners faced changes in the manner they attended school. One participant spoke of good attendance made by teen mothers before falling pregnant, whereas another respondent cited the issue of the change of attitudes during the pregnancy which the former also mentioned. It would appear that there was a vast difference especially between the pre-pregnancy, pregnancy periods and the period they would have given birth in that the pre-pregnancy period had good attendance compared to during period after child birth when absenteeism would increase due to various reasons.

In order to explain the documentary figures on the school attendance and performance of the 10 TMLs who participated in the study, I conducted focus group discussions and face to face interviews with school principals, teachers, TMLs and other learners. This was aimed at establishing finding out the factors that affected the teen mothers' schooling within the school and from their homes. In the following section, I present the qualitative data on the views that were expressed.

4.5.1 TEEN MOTHER LEARNERS' RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

According to literature, in the home and the school, as well as the community there are other people who interact or live with the teen mother learners such as their parents, other children in the family, teachers, school principals, other learners and so forth. All these people have a strong effect on whether the teen mother learners can continue with school or not, and if they continue with school the manner in which they learn is also affected (Grant & Hallman, 2006; Runhare, 2010; Chigona & Chetty, 2007). In this study, I interviewed the 10 teachers, 10 teen mother learners and 10 other learners who were learning together with the teen mother learners. The reason was to find out what they said about factors in the school and in the home that affected the school performance and attendance of TMLs before they were pregnant, during time of pregnancy and after they gave birth to the baby, according to the themes in Table 4.1.

As already alluded to in the previous sections, relationships in the school with teachers and other learners can influence how teen mother learners like to come to school and their performance to a very large extent. The next section presents data from interviews with teachers and other learners.

4.5.1 The Relationships between Teen Mother Learners and Teachers

To find out how teen mother learners and teachers viewed each other, I first asked the teen mothers themselves and then their teachers. Learner number 10 from School B had own views that all was well with teachers, when she stated that:

As far as I am concerned, the relationship towards me was alright. Teachers don't care about us when we become pregnant. They do not say much like the other learners who can easily show you that they either like you or not. With teachers, you cannot see it, especially with the men teachers. With lady teachers some can help but others can show the blame attitude. You know women can attach other women, I don't know why. it seems like teachers don't want to associate with us who are pregnant, they just don't say anything [Learner 10, School B]

It was evident that the type of relationship especially before, during and after pregnancy for teen mothers might differ from one person to another. This suggests that not every teacher was friendly towards teen learner mothers. They say being silent can mean something. The teachers who did not comment were therefore sending a message to the teen mothers. It means some teachers don't even ask what happened to show concern or so that they can help. Instead they keep a distance from the teen mother learners and one wonders how they can help them with school work. This view was also found out in research that teen mothers or pregnant learners do not get any support from teachers and that male teachers feared that people might think that it's them who impregnate school girls if they help them (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012). However, the policy by the Department of Education (2007) indicates that teachers are supposed to give extra support to pregnant learners when they cannot attend to school when they are fully pregnant and when the baby is too young for them to come to school or due to delivery pains.

In expressing her views concerning the question on her relationship with teachers, Learner 4 from School A had this to say:

I can from the bottom of my heart that the relationship between myself and some of the teachers had become sourer, especially after I had given birth to a baby. During the pregnancy stage, it was a little bit better but tremendously changed after I had given birth to the baby boy. Some teachers started calling me with silly nicknames and even laughed at me when we met. I remembered being called 'Mrs and Miss' especially by the lady-teachers where we met. In case of an example with reference to bad things in the class, my name was called. I had for several times reported the matter to the principal but he also kept on laughing at me. I remembered an incident where a lady teacher one day called my name and I went to immediately when I was about reaching her, she called me by nicknames and sent me away. That was, in reality, an embarrassment I ended up in a long cry. I as usual reported the case to the principal who this time reacted by reprimanding the culprit during my presence. Yes, in honest speaking my relationship

with teachers was quite sour and it is still maintaining the same pace [TML4, School A].

Sour relationships like the one indicated by the above learner make teen mother learners not to enjoy schooling and this can be the reason why they are absent from some of the subjects because of being ridiculed from all sides. In fact, while the policy by the Department of Education (2007) warns others in the school to avoid hate language or hurtful speeches, it is very common that teen mother learners suffer in this instance. When teachers and other learners call them by names or adult titles such “Miss, Mrs or Mother”, this is indeed hurting to say the least. This makes the teen mother learners to feel unwelcome at school and this explains the absenteeism or withdrawal from school altogether when one becomes pregnant or gives birth. Being a teen mother is therefore a stigma that was found to negatively affect the teen mothers throughout from after they are seen to be pregnant and after they give birth. This research showed that before one becomes a teen mother or pregnant, life can be normal at school than after becoming a teen mother.

In order to expose the state of relationship between the teen mothers and teachers, the teachers were found to be on the defensive side and put the blame on the teen mother learners. This was indicated by two similar statements by teachers from both schools. One teacher said that *“these girls make life difficult for themselves and it is wrong to blame us teachers or the other learners when they know very well that they have messed their future. Are we supposed as adult people to show that we support them for falling pregnant”?* The same was also echoed by the teacher from School B who was to the point that *“we must call a spade a spade, these are girls who follow joy when they are too young. They lose direction and go into adult life and expect us to keep silent, yet most school failure rate is caused by them”.*

With all the above statements from teachers and teen mother learners, one can conclude from this study that the future education for teen mothers can never be compared to that of other learners. On the part of the teen mother learners, they expressed loss of hope and teachers expressed blame attitude. The result was poor results and poor attendance after a teen mother becomes pregnant and the situation remains the same after giving birth to the baby.

4.5.2 The Relationships between Teen Mother Learners and other Learners

In order to find out factors in the school that influenced the schooling of teen mother learners, I had to investigate how the 10 teen mother learners associated with the other ordinary learners within the school. To achieve this, I asked the other learners and the teen mothers themselves through interviews to say their views on the interaction patterns over the period before one was pregnant and then after pregnancy up to child birth since this was a longitudinal study. On this one ordinary learner from School B made the following comments, which indicate that there was no good harmony between the TMLs and other learners:

One finds teen mothers always isolating themselves from the 'non-mother learners' because they suspect that they would either laugh or ridicule as they see them for no apparent reason. The other cause of such a reaction is forced by the fact that 'other learners' know their boyfriends and would keep on calling by their boyfriends' surnames unnecessarily. [Learner 9, school B].

The other learner in the same school indicated that some of the teen mothers were quite strong to the extent that they could ignore the bad comments passed on them by the other ordinary learners. She went on to say that such strong TMLs who fought back the hurtful language in the school could even be good in class.

Apart from this, there are amongst these teen mothers who ignore 'other learners' silly attacks and concentrated on studying as if not hearing their insults. Such teen mothers end-up doing well in schools. [Learner 4, school B].

Asked why there was this bad blood between teen mothers and other students, the teen mothers themselves blamed other student's while other students also blamed the other side. One teen mother had this to say:

Before I got pregnant and had no baby, I had many friends and we used to play well. After my friends saw that I was now pregnant, they no more wanted to play with me saying I am not trustworthy child. So I had to accept it and they even joined those who called me names to show me that we are no longer together. Even now that I am no more pregnant, just because they know I have a baby, my friends left me [TML7, school B].

The core part of the statements made by two of the sampled ordinary learners from the two schools seems to indicate the idea that teen mothers often harbour bad ideas about non-mother learners towards them. However, it is clear from the two statements by the other learners and the teen mother above, it can easily be concluded that teen mother learners do not trust other learners and other learners also isolate teen mothers at school. In this context, teen mothers themselves seem to hold suspicious ideas or attitudes against whatever other learners do and at the same time other learners seem to isolate their friends once they become pregnant.

4.6 FACTORS IN THE SCHOOL AFFECTING TEEN MOTHER LEARNERS

4.6.1 School Factors that Affect Teen Mother Learners' Performance

In order to ascertain the factors in the school that affected the performance of teen mothers, I asked their teachers to explain these factors. To further ascertain what the previously-interviewed respondents said concerning the posed questions on the problems that teen mother learners faced, teacher 3 from School A came with the following views which indicated fluctuation in their performance from good to bad:

Before pregnancy, some teen mothers had been working very hard which left their performance being higher; but to my surprise, their performance later dwindled to lower ebb after pregnancy. During pregnancy, the situation became worse because teen mothers made several excuses of why they were absent from for some few days. After, teen mothers had given birth to their babies, the stage of performance changes from bad to worse. As far as I know, it i.e. during the after births

stage teen mothers could absent themselves from schools, citing the accompanying of their babies to the health centres as their defence point
[Teacher 3, School A].

From the above, it becomes very clear that the performance of teen mother learners was seen as not stable by the teacher, the reason being that the entering of a new difficult phase of being a mother. Truly, some teen mothers are forced by circumstances to take full care of their babies for immunisation at clinics. Some parents or grandparents do see it as an unnecessary burden to look after the baby for such things. When the baby is not well, it is common sense that the real or biological mother must be present.

On the same issue of teen mother learners' school performance, Teacher number 8 from School B had this to say:

Actually before pregnancy the performance of the most teen mothers I have taught started doing very good but changed after they have fallen pregnant with their performance changing drastically down. I, for one, always think that the deterioration in performance is due to the reason that they are then faced with many challenges than before. In most instances, teachers might find that teen mothers are falling asleep during lessons. Some even go to extent of requesting permission to go out in order to answer to the call of nature in disguise because they will be dodging the so-called 'hated' subjects. In case some teachers refuse them such permissions, they would start slumbering during lessons. This, in one way or another, contributes to their regular repetition of the same grades. Furthermore, sometimes after being refused permission to vacate the classes, they displayed losing concentration during lessons **[Teacher 8, School B].**

The statement by the above interviewed teacher is putting all the blame on the teen mothers that they are not honest but play tricks and truancy in class and that this cause them to deteriorate in their class work. What is noted is that the teacher from school B was indicating that the performance of teen mothers only became bad or

worse from the time they became pregnant throughout their time as teen mothers. Even after delivery, the teen mothers would not improve. The issue of slumbering has been mentioned in literature that traditionally, Africans believe that pregnancy causes a person to sleep and even those around her can be caused to sleep also. Indeed, there are people who do not want to be near a pregnant person while working.

An examination of the statements made by teachers from different schools reveals that there actually exists a recognisable difference in terms of teen mothers' performance, before, during and after they had given births to their babies.

Another point of blaming teen mothers was raised by the teacher from School A who claimed that teen mothers have no respect for teachers as they regard themselves as adults. The teacher said that:

There also exist instances where teen mothers intentionally disrespect their teachers because they then regard themselves as their 'equals'. The main reason being that they have also given births to babies like the lady teachers. In some instance, teen mothers may even ignore lady teachers when they call them due to the equality claim in terms of having babies. To add on this, teen mothers even go to the extent of not listen to lessons offered by female-teachers. In one way or another, it is teen mothers who would repeat grades for several times after such unbecoming actions [Teacher 7, School A]

If such completion exists between teen mothers and teachers, then no proper teaching and learning can take place in the school. This point is in agreement with teen mothers who said female teachers gave them nicknames and shouted at them while male teachers are said to show an attitude of being unconcerned.

In contrast to the above teacher, another teacher from School B seemed to side with the teen mother learners when he accused other teachers of creating conflict with the teen mothers which made them to dislike their subjects. He expressed his views thus:

We teachers, especially from a school sphere, should be held responsible for teen mothers' performance in schools. The reason is that we are interested in ridiculing or even refer them to embarrassing circumstances in classes during lessons. For example, one might find a teacher calling a teen mother 'Mrs or Miss' in front other lessons which indeed leaves very embarrassed. These are some of the incidents which leave teen mothers with no other alternative but quit schooling. Apart from this, teen mothers are compelled into earlier marriages or even looking for jobs at the early ages to look for their babies. Still in the school scenario, fellow learners or 'non-mother learners' form groups which keep on ether laughing or teasing teen mothers for no apparent reasons. To these learners' opinions, they are no longer fit to be called 'learners' but 'mothers' found in schools.

[Teacher 7, School B].

If one could make an analysis of the statements above as mentioned during the interviews, one would agree with the notion that both teachers and other learners do also contribute to these embarrassing situations that teen mothers find themselves in while at school. During interviews with teachers from the two sampled schools, examples were cited referring to teachers and non-mother learners as the real perpetrators towards teen mothers not to feeling comfortable while in school. With regard to the responses received so far from the participants interviewed, it obviously emerges that the school should also play a vital role in assisting teen mothers towards doing well in school.

4.6.2 School Factors that Affect Teen Mother Learners' Attendance

Teachers were also asked to explain what they thought about teen mothers not attending school or their absenteeism as shown in registers and in Tables 4.10 to 4.13. Responding to the posed question during the interviews on this issue, teacher 4 from School A said:

Normally the school's major concern should be to see to it that all learners, with teen mothers also included are attending school on

regular basis. But the opposite seems to be the case due to the point that teen mothers usually absent themselves from schools and cited the fact of accompanying the babies for vaccination at the health centres, clinics and hospitals [Teacher4, School A].

The teacher laid the blame on the teen mother learners who take days from school due to issues around the health of the babies while the school was doing its best. As observed by some of the teachers, it be concluded that looking after babies is one reason why teen mother learners absent themselves from school, especially if their parents or grandparents do not give them enough support (Grant & Hallman, 2006).

One of the teachers from School B seemed to blame on the learners when he said that:

Yes, of course, teen mothers are often absent from schools due to the fact that they fear that they will be ridiculed or even called by nicknames by teachers. Still on the same note, they always harbour an opinion that other learners would for no apparent reason make them laughing-stocks. They suspect that the same other learners might also isolate them while at schools by forming their own groups in whatever it is done [Teacher 2, School B].

Looking at the statements from the two sampled participants, that is teachers from School A and B respectively, it would seem that school attendance could also be affected or made worse by other learners' behaviour. This includes, amongst others, the non-mother learners' attitudes towards the teen mothers in in school. This is when non-mother learners to call teen mothers by titles like 'Miss' or 'Mrs' in the classes. This is compounded by the fact that female teachers for that matter were also big culprits in embarrassing teen mother learners in public.

In addition, the same trend was revealed when teachers responded to the question what discouraged teen mother learners from attending school. A learner from School B had this to say:

Yes, I regard the world of falling pregnant or becoming a teen mother as a clear calling of problems of whatever forms. For example, from the school situation, becoming pregnant is an invitation of being a laughing-stock for the 'other learners.' It is also a way through some parents saying that parents should regard them as 'spoiled children or outcasts. In many instances, they group themselves together while walking around in school owing to the fear of fearing that they would be ridiculed if no being laughed at by the 'non-mother- learners'. [Learner 7, School B].

Another teen mother learner from School A added that it was true that there were many negative factors in the school that hindered her from studying or attending school with comfort. She said that:

It is without any reasonable doubt that I always become annoyed when other learners laugh at owing to the fact that I had a baby. This, in actual fact, leads me to become discouraged and sometimes think of quitting schooling or go to look for jobs else-where far away from these nuisance 'non-mother-learners.' Alright, that is that from me [TML 5, School A].

In answering the question asked, Learner No.5, from School B expressed her views pertaining her sentiments thus:

Yes, it is without any doubt it is the responsibility of teachers to motivate every learner towards learning in a comfortable in order to achieve the good results or proceed well to the next grades. But sometimes the opposite seems to the answer because it is those teachers who are accused of ridiculing or shelving unnecessary insults to teen mothers even in classes. This seems to happen on the days when teachers come to schools unprepared and they use those tricks in order to waste time. [Other Learner 8, School B].

If one could possibly make a thorough analysis of what these learners from the different schools said, the truth might come out that the real perpetrators in discouraging the progress for teen mothers in schools, both teachers and other learners should be equally charged. On the other hand, teachers kept on ridiculing or laughing at learners during lessons instead of teaching. Consequently, this made the school environment uncomfortable for teen mothers, who end up not coming for lessons or dropping out of school altogether.

4.7 FACTORS IN THE HOME AFFECTING TEEN MOTHER LEARNERS

The home is an important environment for affecting the teen mother learners to attend school or not. In this section, I present the views of study participants on how the family or home influenced teen mother learners' schooling, in terms of attending or academic performance.

4.7.1 Home Factors that Affect Teen Mother Learners' Performance

To further attest to the question as directed to the participant during the interviews on how the home or family could affect teen mothers at school, teacher 6 from School A had this to say:

From the home's perspective, teen mothers experience some difficulties in respect to studying at their homes. For example, sometimes when he or she is busy studying at home, his or her brothers and sisters might at the same moment be making noises or even singing at the top of their voices outside. Children, in one way or another, cannot be blamed for such actions because they can only stop making doing this after they have been warned. Apart from this, as mentioned earlier, babies do also keep on crying in case they are not feeling well. This, therefore makes the chances of studying by teen mothers very slim. There also occurs an incident where the illiterate parents do not hire private tutors with the aim of improving the teen mothers' learning. In this regard, in such instances, the possibility of teen mothers performing well are also scarce [Teacher 6, School A]

To my surprise during the interviews, a similar statement to the previous respondent's, was also revealed by teacher 6 from School B who stated that:

Their own brothers and sisters do also contribute on hampering teen mothers' progress in learning when they make unnecessary noises while their 'brothers' are studying. Besides this, one might find babies busy crying for almost the whole night while their 'mothers' are studying owing to the ill-feelings they might be expressing. Kids or babies prefer making their 'feelings' heard through crying hence they could hardly express it verbally. Looking at such situations, one might simply deduce that chances for studying on the side of teen mothers are small
[Teacher 6, School B].

An analysis of the statements made by teachers from the two different sampled schools reveals that the families of teen mothers should also be held responsible for the failure of teen mother learners. It seems that the majority of obstacles that hinder teen mothers from doing well in school might in reality be originating from both their homes and at schools.

With reference to other factors in the home affecting teen mothers' attendance, teacher 5 from School A answered the posed question by saying that:

Sometimes when they intend to study or write their homework, babies could start to cry. For example, there also exists some incident where a baby could cry in pain for the whole night, forcing the mother not to sleep without studying at home. Such teen mothers would obviously slumber or even loosing concentration during lessons the following day. In one way or another, it would lead such teen mothers to perform badly in other tests or any written exercises. Such situations are the ones that influence teen mothers to repeating grades
[Teacher 5, School A]

Therefore, considering what the two teachers said, it appears that the majority of obstacles originate from home would seem to be the correct. For example, parents

overburden teen mothers with household chores thereby setting up the teen mothers for failure. It all needs supportive parents of teen mothers as suggested by Grant and Hallman (2006) that teen mothers who were supported by their parents continued with schooling.

In addition to what the teachers said on the home, learners also added their views such as learner 6 from School A, who stated that:

With reference to the home situation, I think many obstacles that hinder teen mothers from performing well originate from there. Yes, one finds at times that teen mothers are over-burdened at homes with duties, such as sweeping the floors, washing clothes for the whole family, baby-sitting their kids, fetching woods from the forests, cooking food and also fetching water from nearby boreholes. This thus, hinder teen mothers from studying properly while at their homes because they would become exhausted after doing such works. For example, imagine a teen mother whose baby cried without a stop for the whole night, while going to write a test the following day. For example, if parents decide not to get someone to baby-sit a teen mother's baby, it would in one or another hinder the teen mother from making a thorough progress in learning [Learner 6, School A].

In response to the same question asked to the participant during the interviews on how the home affected teen mother learners, an ordinary learner from School B answered it expressing her views like:

From a home perspective, according to my opinion some obstacles that happen at home, are a means of hindering a teen mother from progressing in her studies. For example, it sometimes also happen that a grown kid might snatch books and throw them away while a teen mother has just given herself, some break time. We have for several times heard teen mothers telling lies in an attempt to defend their failures to do their homework [Learner No.6, from School B].

A closer analysis of what the two sampled participants expressed in answering the posed questions shows that there are obstacles that stop them from studying well while at their homes. For example, the issue of being over-burdened with household duties was the commonly mentioned as one such hindrance. During the interviews, one teen mother learner summed it all when she said “*our parents in some family even refuse to get a baby-sitter for us. This makes it difficult for us to study well while looking after our own babies.*”

4.7.2 Home Factors that Affect Teen Mother Learners’ Attendance

In terms of attendance, the home was equally found responsible for the absenteeism among teen mother learners. In the next section, this sub-theme is discussed in greater detail.

4.7.3 Factors in the Home that Affect Teen Mothers’ Attendance

To indicate the importance of family support for a teen mother to be able to come to school, one of the learners said that some teen mothers are ill-treated at home by their parents because of misbehaving. This is what the learner 7 from School B had to say:

Moreover, the same treatment is also implemented from the home’s sphere because teen mothers are even ill-treated because some parents do not accept them as such. I think that not providing adequate support to teen mothers in terms of baby-sitting for them while at schools also brings real to their learning processes [Learner 7, School B].

If parents refuse to help the teen mother with looking after the baby, there is no doubt that the teen mother will not come to school early or not even come at all. This view is supported by Grant and Hallman (2006) who said that only teen mothers who were supported by their parents continued with schooling. Chigona and Chetty (2007) also found that many families do not give enough time for teen mothers who attend school to do school work while at home due to household duties and being scolded by their own mothers.

Similarly, another teacher from school B also acknowledged that the home is important in a negative as well as a positive way. He said that:

According to my understanding, it seems that many factors that retard teen mothers from attending school well originate from home. The very reason behind being that some parents stop supporting their children immediately after they had given births to babies. They then no longer regard them as their children but 'spoilers' or 'outcasts' who have degraded their good families by having babies. According to some clans' cultures, having a baby prior to the actual time, brings either a curse or disgrace to their families [Teacher, 9 School B].

The issue of being held like a family outcast was also found out by Runhare and Vandeyar (2011:4118) who said that a pregnant learner in the family said that "Even if you get a chance to go to school, you cannot ask for any favours from parents. You are like an adopted child". This is a clear sign that teen mothers may fail to come to school if parents treat them in such a way as this.

Another teacher from the same school thought in exactly the same way as the previously quoted statement when he said that:

Yes, some situations normally arise, where we find most teen mothers being over-burdened with the home-based duties, like cooking food, fetching wood from the forest, washing clothes for the baby and the whole family, fetching water from the boreholes and finally, also being forced to baby-sit their own children including their brothers and sisters all the time [Teacher 5, School B].

The above statement shows that teen mothers may not have time not only to study while at home but even to attend school. If the teen mother is given extra household duties as if she is being punished, this will make them feel comfortable and burdened.

Also added to what the above teacher said about home problems that can cause teen mother learners not to attend school or abscond lessons, another statement from a learner at School A also added her voice. In her view health issues add more problems and the danger of leaving school by teen mothers. She said that:

There are many obstacles that teen mothers encounter. Some of them baby-sit the babies, their ever-uncertain health status and also lack of support from the parents in some families. These are, in reality, acute problems because they lead to quitting schooling if not committing suicides while still in school [Other Learner 2, School A].

From the statements by teachers and learners who went to the same school with teen mother, it is abundantly clear that the home is not a safe place for many teen mother learners. The problems from the home include little or no support to look after the baby by their parents; a lot of household duties, having to baby sit their own baby and their siblings and losing their rights as children. These views are supported by findings from other studies about problems faced by pregnant school girls and teen mothers on their education (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2011; Chigona & Chetty, 2007; Grant & Hallman, 2006).

To find out the type of support, if any, which school and home gave to teen mother learners, this study sought to find out what the participants said as this was one of the study objectives and research question which said: "What support mechanisms are available for teen mothers who attend school?" The following section discusses what the study participants expected the school and the home or family to do for teen mother learners to be able to attend school and perform well in their school work. This is important because this longitudinal study found out that the 7 teen mothers at School A and the other at School B were in deed failing most of the subjects and not coming to school as required.

4.8 SUPPORT MECHANISMS AVAILABLE FOR TEEN MOTHERS

In order to understand how teen mother learners were being supported to learn, the support given to them by the school is discussed first and this is followed by how the

home supported them too. Where such support was not available, the study participants explained what they expected to be done by both the home and the school to help teen mother learners attend and perform well at school.

4.8.1 Support Mechanisms Available for Teen Mothers from School

With regard to the question of the support that the school gave to teen mothers, it was generally agreed by all the teachers that nothing serious was being done at all. Instead suggestions made on how the schools could help the teen mother learners to attend school and improve their performance. One teacher from School A acknowledged that nothing was done at his school, stating that:

I personally think that schools should provide support to teen mothers by requesting social workers from the Department to work in schools. By so doing, teen mothers would then get a chance of being guided to accept themselves as being like other learners found in schools. Apart from this, I am also again of the opinion that local religious leaders have to be invited to work in terms of their own schedules in order to teach teen mothers on how to live in a spiritual way. Having a child is not a sin but a blessing from God. This would furthermore teach teen mothers not to resort to committing abortions or throwing them into toilets after births [Teacher 6, School A].

School teacher number 9 from School B supported this view thus:

In terms of tackling the issue of providing support to the teen mothers in schools, I think, should without any doubt invite social workers to work in schools. This should be done for whatever time they would have agreed with each other so that teen mothers might feel being accepted in schools. The main reason is that after being addressed by social workers on the issue of living as 'mothers,' they would feel at home and start working harder than before. In so doing, teen mothers might start performing or attending schools like other learners in school [Teacher, 9 School B].

This view shows that at both School A and B, there was no counselling for girls who became pregnant or had babies. Social workers were not found in any of the schools in the whole district of Vhembe. Apart from the need for counselling, the teachers also felt that there was need for moral teaching by religious leaders directed at teen mothers and to prevent baby dumping and abortions which are common in South Africa. If one looks around, especially in towns, the advertisements for abortions are found everywhere and this encourages immorality and loss of life.

In order to help teen mother learners do well in class, it was suggested that schools are doing a lot by having weekend lessons and winter schools which teen mother learners can also attend. But still one teacher suggested that more should be done in this regard. This is how she put it: *“Although we have all these weekend and winter schools, according to my way of thinking, principals should be urged to arrange extra-lessons for the teen mothers”*.

Turning to the issue of baby-sitting, it was suggested by teacher 5 from School B that there should be play centres and crèches where babies should be left for care.

*In one way or another, educational leaders from whatever sector, should devise ways and means of making teen mothers leave their kids at the crèches next to the schools where they are. This would assist teen mothers not to walk for long distances in order to collect their kids after schools. Consequently, the long journeys that teen mothers undertake after schools to go and collect their babies, contribute to their low studying periods while at home [**Teacher 5, School B**].*

However, at School B the teachers claimed that there were pastors or religious leaders who came to the school to preach and also give moral guidance and support to teen mother learners and all learners in general.

I have personally witnessed some religious leaders assisting teen mothers during morning prayers and it seems it has paid dividends. The results emerging from these attempts is that the teen mothers can improve tremendously for those who listen to the advice. On the other

hand, I also know of some other schools that are not implementing these attempts, and to tell the honest truth, their yearly results especially in Grade 12 can be poor [Teacher 9, School B].

One very important contribution or suggestion made by one teacher in response to the same question was the need for strict school rules to protect teen mothers while at school. This was found important because the teen mothers said that they felt isolated and ridiculed by some teachers and other learners. The teacher suggested that:

From my point of view, I personally think the schools should make rules which seriously restrict 'non-mother learners' to refrain from making teen mothers their laughing-stocks in schools. These rules should further ban the 'other learners' from isolating them during breaks or even after schools. The reason behind this is that this result in making teen mothers feels not accepted. Furthermore, I am also of the opinion that laws might be enacted in order to restrict from either insulting or ridiculing teen mothers in classes [Teacher 9, School A].

This statement shows that such support of putting school policy or guidelines on teen mothers was not at the schools.

In order to fully understand what is happening in the two sampled schools with reference to the question of support given to teen mother learners, I realised that there seemed to be similarity in terms of little or no support at all, except the preachers who seemed to visit one of the schools. There was no teacher who stated that they gave extra lessons to teen mother learners or sent school work to them when they fail to come to school. This is what should be done by teachers according to the school guidelines and policy from the Department of Education (2007). All the participating teachers mentioned that there is need to have social workers, nurses, religious leaders and extra learning support such as weekend and winter schools. Apart from these issues, it was realised that schools do not have rules to provide guidance on how teen mothers should be treated so that they feel accepted. Giving such support to teen mothers in schools could assist them in performing better both in attending and performing better at school and also to feel at home or being

accepted while at school. These recommendations are important in helping teen mother learners improve their learning.

4.8.2 Support Mechanisms Available for Teen Mothers from the Home

To find out if there was support given to teen mother learners in the home or their families, I asked the ten teen mother learners themselves what assistance they got. According to the Department of Education (2007) regulations and guidelines on how to prevent and manage school girl pregnancy in schools, parents and guardians like mothers and grandmothers.

In responding to the question asked, teen mother learner No.8, from School B expressed her views thus:

Although my mother is not happy that I have a baby but she is looking after my baby while I will at school. She has agreed to do this type of work because she likes grandsons and daughters, even those of my other brothers and sisters always come to her [TMLL 8, School B].

In a different way, teen mother learner 9 from School B answered this question in short by acknowledging that “*For me, while schooling, my baby is sent to the crèche by my mother because she also works. Many times I have to go with the baby to the crèche and then come to school late*”. It is therefore clear from this statement that while sending the baby to crèche is very helpful, one reason for coming to school late was that for her, she had to pass through the crèche as the mother was going to work while she goes to school.

From the few comments that the two sampled teen mother participants made, it shows that their babies are usually either at crèches or being baby-sat by the teen mothers’ parents while they are at schools. So, teen mothers remained with the challenge because it’s only while at school that they could leave their babies. But most of the teen mothers said that at home they would not get time to do school work because of looking after the baby and other household duties. All this can be summed up by indicating that teen motherhood is not good for a learner although all

hope is not lost as they at least will be at school. However, from records and interview information presented from this study, it is clear that teen mother learners had many challenges from both within the school and at home or in the family with regard to both attending and performing in school. In the following section therefore, I will summarise the main findings from the data presented as a way of closing the chapter.

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented data collected from forty (40) participants sampled for the study. The participants were composed of ten (10) teen mother learners who volunteered, twenty (20) other learners and ten (10) subject teachers sampled from the two secondary schools situated in Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

For the sake of this study, the collected data were interpreted and analysed in accordance with the four interrelated themes. The following were the major findings that emerged from the analysis.

- School records on teen mothers who attended school indicated that, there were up to 23 teen mothers at School A and also 23 at School B. The high rate of teen mother learners is therefore disturbing at schools and this is the same situation nationally where a lot is said about the problem of pregnant school girls, which is about over 15% nationally.
- Since this was a longitudinal study, results of school attendance and performance were looked into from school registers and academic progress reports obtained for 6 terms over a period of two years when the study was being conducted, that is from 2014 to 2015 (Tables 4.6 to 4.9 and Appendix 4). In summary, the statistical data indicated that there was good school performance by teen mother learners in their mother language, Tshivenda and from fair to poor performance in English additional language. However, with regards Mathematics and Science, there was very high failure rate and this was made worse by the fact that most teen mother learners had no marks

in these two subjects. The main reason being that they either did not attend or did not write tests and examinations in Maths/Literacy and Science.

- On attendance, it was noted from the data (Tables 4.10 to 4.13 and Appendix 5) that attendance was poor such that every month, teen mothers did not come to school for some days due to home problems such as the baby being ill, taking the baby to clinic for immunisation, collecting grant money and household duties. These problems and disturbances for learners who are at school as teen mothers or being pregnant are found in other research (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2011; Runhare, 2010; Grant & Hallman, 2006; Chigona & Chetty, 2007).
- The general picture that emerged relationship-wise, within the school between teachers and non-mother or ordinary learners could generally be referred to as differing depending mostly on the pregnancy stages. Before pregnancy there was a good relationship with other learners but as soon as the pregnancy was noticed, the relationship became poor and even after delivery when one became a teen mother. Teen mothers said they lost friends, were isolated and hurtful language was used on them.
- Likewise, the relationship between teen mother learners and teachers was described by participants as poor. Teen mother learners narrated how they were also ridiculed by teachers, especially lady teachers. They said school principals and male teachers seemed not to be concerned about them. Teachers did not give teen mothers.
- This study revealed that teen mothers had good reasons for being absent from school and for not being able to perform well at school. The factors were found both in the home and the school, such as illness during pregnancy, baby sitting and taking the baby to clinic for immunisation, home duties, having to collect monthly government child grants, being ridiculed by other learners at school.

- With respect to support given to teen mothers by the school and the family or in the home, most teen mothers and teachers indicated in the interviews that not much was given to them. There were no social workers or nurses to support them on health and counselling needs in the schools. Teachers were not giving extra help to teen mother learners as required by the Department of Education policy of 2007. However, it was also revealed by the study that there were some weekend and winter schools for all learners that could also accommodate teen mother learners. It seemed that teen mother learners looked forward to get their own help from teachers as 'special learners'. At one of the two schools where the study was conducted, it was revealed that religious leaders' services were conducted but it seemed they were general and not specifically meant for teen mothers. Schools did not have rules to protect teen mother learners from hurtful language and comments that they suffered from some teachers and learners. In the home, the only help or support that teen mother learners said they received was by looking after the babies by their own mothers or grant mothers or sending the babies to crèches. Otherwise, once they are back from school, the teen mothers were burdened to the extent that they had no time to study or do school work.
- Finally, in view of the lack of help from the school and the home, teen mothers requested for nurses and counsellors or social workers at schools, extra lessons to be organised by principals, religious leaders to be invited to pray for them and rules to be formulated by the school so that they are not ridiculed by other learners and teachers. There was also a request that there be crèches at schools for their babies while they attend school.

In the next and last chapter, I identify and discuss the findings that emerged from data presented in this chapter. Apart from this, the collected data were further linked to the findings from other related studies as well as the theoretical framework that underpinned my study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings based on school documents such as registers and mark schedules on 10 teen mother learners who participated in this study and focus group interviews. The idea was to obtain valid and reliable findings or results from the data analysis process. Further to this, the findings will also be discussed by referring to literature and results from other earlier studies.

The previous chapter presented data gathered from the key stakeholders, namely: class or subject teachers, teen mother learners (TMLs) only and ordinary or other learners who were at school together with the teen mothers. The data was collected using the study of school documents and focus group interviews with the 40 sampled participants from two schools as explained in the previous chapter.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this longitudinal study was to examine the school attendance and academic performance of teen mothers enrolled at schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District, of the Limpopo Province for two years, namely 2014 and 2015. Only two secondary schools found in Luvuvhu Circuit were purposively-sampled with the aim of obtaining relevant participants from them such as teen mother learners, their teachers and their schoolmates, whose experiences would assist in acquiring the valuable findings. This in reality helped the researcher to collect data in accordance with the intended purpose or aim of the study as well as answering the stated research questions to achieve the study objectives.

Furthermore, this study sought to examine or explore the extent to which factors in the school and in their homes affected the teen mothers' school attendance and performance before they got pregnant and during the pregnancy stages, like during and after they had given birth to their babies. Besides this, this study also sought to

explore teen mothers' relationship within the school and home and finally the available support from the sampled schools and homes in an effort to enhance the pace at which attendance and performance of teen mothers might be improved or declined. This would, in one way or another, enable the study findings to assist other schools besides the sampled ones, in terms of the attendance and performance of teen mothers.

As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, focus group interviews and school documents provided data from the two sampled schools. In addition, purposive sampling was utilised with the aim of selecting the participants in a qualitative manner. A focus group interview was preferred because it offers the participants an opportunity to answer the posed questions in whatever way they might think of and to also respond to other views in the discussion. The purposive sampling was chosen because it gives the researcher an opportunity to rely on experiences or only those participants who are relevant for the study objectives (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2005: 113). In this case, since the study was on teen mothers who were at school and who were pregnant and gave birth in two years, only those who had become teen mothers between 2014 and 2015 were chosen. It was also easier to obtain documents or records for these two years. Apart from teen mother learners, their teachers and schoolmates or other learners were purposively included because they were with the TMLs on a daily basis. Because of the time factor, as the study had to be conducted within a short period as a study requirement, I had to reduce the number of schools to two and select a sample size that I could manage to interview within the time available. The results of this study therefore may not be generally applied to other schools without limit as this was a case study.

This chapter therefore presents a summary of findings from the data collected from a total of forty (40) participants comprising ten (10) teen mother learners who volunteered, twenty (20) other learners and also ten (10) subject teachers sampled from the two secondary schools situated under Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

5.3 MAIN STUDY FINDINGS

This study examined the academic performance of teen mothers enrolled at schools under the Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District, of the Limpopo Province. A number of important issues pertaining to how, the academic performance of teen mothers enrolled at the sampled schools might be affected by the school and the home are mentioned. Below, are the major findings that emerged, first from the documents that were studied on performance and attendance of TMLs, followed by results from the interviews with the participants selected from the sampled schools, according to the themes that were stated in the previous chapter.

5.3.1 High Population of Enrolled TMLs at Both Schools

Using class registers and four subjects (Tshivenda Home Language, English Additional Language, Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy and Science) that are studied by all learners for 2014 and 2015, this study established that the average TMLs for both schools was around 40 but their attendance and pass rate in Mathematics and Science had lower TMLs than the two languages.

It was noted that in 2015, the total number of TMLs at both schools decreased from what it was in 2014. The most likely reason for this is that some teen mothers might have dropped out of school during the time of pregnancy or after giving birth to give care of the baby. This is in line with research by Runhare, Mudau & Mutshaeni (2016) which indicated that one cause of school dropout in South Africa is unplanned learner pregnancy.

This study also showed that some of the TMLs repeated school grades after becoming pregnant and this concurs with earlier research by Grant and Hallman (2006) who also found that teenagers who fell pregnant while at school repeated grades and did not do well in school.

From the data gathered it was also shown that learners who stayed with grandparents and single mothers became pregnant at an early age compared to those who stayed with both parents. This can be an indication that the presences of

both parents are important in delaying or preventing teen pregnancy. Parental guidance is therefore of importance for learners to be protected from teenage pregnancy. As indicated in the literature presented in Chapter 2, some parents left their children with grandparents while they go to live in big cities like Johannesburg thus leaving their children in the care of grandparents who may not be able to exercise firm control over the grandchildren.

5.3.2 Longitudinal Performance of TMLs

As this was a longitudinal study, I compared the performance of 10 TMLs over 6 terms for 2014 when they became pregnant and in 2015 after they were teen mothers, in four subjects, Tshivenda, English, Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy and Science. It was clear from the academic records that for both schools the TMLs were not achieving well academically in Mathematics and Sciences and that their performance was from bad to worse from 2014 to 2015. This result is in agreement with studies by Runhare and Vandeyar (2012), Grant and Hallman (2006) and Chigona and Chetty (2007) who found out that South African teen learners who chose to continue with their schooling after getting pregnant did not benefit from continued schooling due to several factors in the school and the home. However, it can be seen from the study that the scores of TMLs in Tshivenda was satisfactory or good but fair to poor in English.

5.3.3 School Absenteeism of Sampled Teen Mother Learners

In most cases, learners may spend the whole term without being absent from school because schools are close by in South Africa. From the study, it was noted that teen mothers were absent from school for almost four times every month, which was very high compared to others. Those who were less absent said that some mothers and grandmothers looked after their babies while they attended school. This is in agreement with Gant and Hallman (2006) and Chigona and Chetty (2007) who found that teen mothers could attend school where parents gave them support by looking after the babies. This is in support of the Department of Education (2007) regulations that parents should help look after their children's babies while they are at school. In some schools, principals demand that parents accompany their

pregnant children to school. The reasons for being absent from school by TMLs was that they or the baby could be ill, or they were having too many household duties or were going to receive their child grants or allowances from the government.

5.3.4 Poor Teen Mother Learners' Relationships within the School

This study found out that the relationship between TMLs and their teachers and other learners was generally not good enough for their schooling during the period of pregnancy and after giving birth. It was found that some teachers, especially ladies used hurtful language and could embarrass the teen mothers during in class and principals did not strongly reprimand such teachers. On the other hand, the TMLs said that male teachers did not ask them anything or distanced themselves from them. This shows that some teachers did not care about the life of TMLs. This result was also found out in another research that found that pregnant learners did not get much support from teachers and that male teachers feared that people might think that it's them who impregnate school girls if they help them (Runhare & Vandeyar, 2012) although there is a policy by the Department of Education (2007) which says teachers are supposed to give extra support to pregnant learners when they cannot attend to school when they are fully pregnant and when the baby is too young for them to come to school or due to delivery pains.

With regards to other learners, TMLs indicated that they isolated them and also used hurtful language like "Mrs, mother". It was also found out that teen mothers were not trusted by other learners such that they lost friendship as soon as they were discovered to be pregnant. It is clear from what teen mother learners and other learners said that there was no trust between other learners and TMLs.

5.3.5 School Factors on Teen Mother Learners' Performance and Attendance

By a mere study of the scores of the TMLs in the four subjects and what the sampled teachers from different schools uttered, one might well realise that there actually exists a recognisable difference in terms of teen mothers' performance, before, during and after they had given birth to their babies. Teachers blamed the TMLs for being learners who had lost direction while teen mothers also blamed the teachers

and other learners of hurting them such that they could not concentrate in school. With such bad blood between teen mothers and teachers, no proper teaching and learning can take place in the school. This is evidenced by the fact that teen mothers reported that female teachers gave them nicknames and shouted at them while male teachers were said to show an attitude of being unconcerned. One of the teachers agreed that some teachers created conflict with the teen mothers which made them to dislike their subjects. Grant and Hallman (2006) in their research said that teen mother learners are usually learners who were not doing well at school even before pregnancy.

5.3.7 Home Factors on Teen Mother Learners' Performance and Attendance

Judging from the comments by TMLs themselves and teachers from the two different sampled schools, it appears that homes from where teen mothers come should also be held responsible for the failures displayed by teen mothers in schools. TMLS said that most times when they intend to study or write their homework, babies could start to cry. Such teen mothers would then slumber or lose concentration during lessons the following day. One teen mother learner summed it all when she said that:

“our parents in some family even refuse to get a baby-sitter for us. This makes it difficult for us to study well while looking after our own babies”.

If parents refuse to help the teen mother with looking after the baby, there is no doubt that the teen mother learner will not come to school early or not even come at all. This view was echoed by Grant and Hallman (2006) who said that only teen mothers who were supported by their parents continued with schooling. Chigona and Chetty (2007) also found that many families do not give enough time for teen mothers who attend school to do school work while at home due to household duties and being scolded by their own mothers. One of the TMLs in this study said that some teen mothers are ill-treated at home by their parents because of misbehaving. In one study Runhare and Vandeyar (2011:4118) said that one pregnant learner in the family said that “Even if you get a chance to go to school, you cannot ask for any favours from parents. You are like an adopted child”. This is clear indication that teen mothers may fail to come to school if parents treat them badly.

5.3.8 Support Mechanisms Available for Teen Mothers from School

With regard to the question of the support that the school gave to teen mothers, it was generally observed that nothing serious was being done at all as schools had no policies to protect TMLs from hurtful language from teachers and other learners. In addition, teachers did not give any extra assistance to TMLs when they failed to come to school due to health problems and there was no counselling at school for TMLs. This is what should be done by teachers according to the school guidelines and policy from the Department of Education (2007). Apart from these issues, it was realised that schools do not have rules to guide on how teen mothers should be treated so that they feel accepted since they complained about being ill-treated. Giving such support to teen mothers in schools could assist them in performing better, both in attending and performing better at school and also to feel at home or being accepted while at school.

5.3.9 Support Mechanisms Available for Teen Mothers from the Home

According to the Department of Education (2007) regulations and guidelines on how to prevent and manage school girl pregnancy in schools, parents and guardians like mothers and grandmothers. But from the statements that the sampled teen mother participants made, it shows that their babies are usually at either at crèches or being baby-sat by the teen mothers' parents while they are at schools. However, most of the teen mothers said they would not get time to do school work at home because they would be looking after their babies and doing other household duties. Therefore, records and interview information presented from this study, made it clear that teen mother learners faced many challenges at school and at home which adversely affected school attendance and academic performance.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested for schools to assist TMLs to improve their school attendance and performance.

In order to improve the academic performance, the following interventions are recommended:

- There should be a policy at each school aimed at minimising the ridiculing of pregnant and teen mother learners. Such a policy should indicate the type of language which is not allowed and the punishment which the school can give to those found guilty of hurtful language. This is a way of making sure that the Department of Education policy of 2007 can be observed by teachers and other learners whom the TMLs accused or blamed for calling them all types of names that embarrassed them.
- Schools should have a record for all pregnant and teen mother learners so that their progress is monitored as soon as they are reported to be pregnant. This is because on becoming pregnant, learners did not come to school and as a result performed poorly in their academic work. A record of reasons why the TMLs are absent should be recorded in order to make a follow up. Class or subject teachers can even visit their homes to find out.
- It was noted from this study that schools do not keep records of TMLs and it is recommended that each school has a teacher assigned to keep records required and even send them to higher offices like the circuit and district managers.
- It is suggested that each school should have extra staff for counselling all learners about the dangers of falling pregnant while at school. The Department of Basic Education should employ school counsellors, psychologists and social workers.
- Each school must also have a nearby clinic where there are nurses to help with the health issues of pregnant and teen mother learners.
- Child care or crèches should be built at each school where TMLs can drop their babies while at school and have time for breastfeeding during school break times.
- Finally, in order to have a close working relationship with the home, it is recommended that the school governing bodies (SGBs) should call parents or guardians of pregnant and teen mother learners for meetings from time to time to discuss the progress of their children during this trying time.

5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study was conducted over a very short period of time as required by the University for the Master's degree. It is therefore recommended that a larger study be conducted including more schools which are affected by schoolgirl pregnancy. Such a study could include a longer period encompassing questions such as what happens to TMLs after leaving school.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Zikmund (2006:54) explains that limitation is “the term that mainly refers to the art of preventing something from taking place or even happening, whereas the doer was expecting it to occur”. In relation to this study, as it also occurs in other studies, the first limitation was that the study had a smaller number of selected schools from which the participants could be selected. However, the existence of a small number of schools enabled me to visit the two sampled schools in a shorter time.

The second limitation that I experienced was that as a researcher include an incident where some of the teachers were reluctant to be voice-recorded. This happened after they had even appended their signatures to the informed consent forms. In this instance, I was forced to again explain and assure them that the information gathered was strictly for academic purposes only, and, would, under no circumstances be published by any media.

No researcher can be completely certain of his or her participants prior the start of the investigation, because they have the sole right of withdrawing at any time. For example, some sampled participants were absent when I went to their school with the intention of interviewing them as previously arranged. This made the study more expensive time consuming as I had to return on another day.

Finally, since this was a study of only two schools, the results are however very valuable although they cannot be generalised to all schools. Some schools with TMLs might be doing things differently to the two schools sampled for this study.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented a summary of the findings for this study based on the data gathered through the use of the focus group interviews and document analysis in relation to the two sampled secondary schools found in Luvuvhu Circuit, in Vhembe District, of the Limpopo Province. The findings of the study showed that TMLs were faced many problems both at home and school which negatively affected their school attendance and performance. These include failing to attend school every school day, not having marks in Mathematics and Science and poor marks in these two subjects throughout their period of pregnancy up to delivery of baby and even after that, being ridiculed at school by other learners and teachers and failing to study at home because of household duties. The study also made recommendations to minimise these problems of TMLs.

5.8 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study recommends the following interventions to alleviate the challenges faced by teen mother learners as well as ensure that a higher number of teen mother learners remain in school: the invitation of social workers, nurses and the religious leaders to schools, the provision of available support to teen mothers by both teachers and parents, the enacting of laws that forbid 'non-mother learners' from teasing teen mothers and arrangement of extra-lessons for teen mothers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RECORD OF TEEN MOTHER LEARNERS' SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

SCHOOL A 2014

2015

SCHOOL B 2014

2015

T1 T2 T3 Total T1 T2 T3 Total T1 T2 T3 Total T1 T2 T3 Total

Learner 1																			
Learner 2																			
Learner 3																			
Learner 4																			
Learner 5																			
Learner 6																			
Learner 7																			
Learner 8																			
Learner 9																			
Learner 10																			

Key: T = Term

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEEN MOTHERS

1. How old are you?
2. Do you have a baby?
3. What are the problems that you face as teen mother-learners at your school?
4. Do you often attend classes?
5. How good is the friendship between you and the 'other learners' at your school?
6. If not good, what do you think is influencing all these reactions?
7. Do you perform well at school?
8. If not, what do you thinking is causing this?
9. Who looks after your baby while you are at school?
10. Is there any day-care centre next to your school?
11. Are special extra-lessons given to teen mothers at your school?

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SUBJECT TEACHERS

My name is Maswuba, M.E. My study focuses on how teen motherhood affects teen mothers' academic performance at your school.

Firstly, I would honestly wish to thank you for accepting my invitation to participate in this discussion. Please, feel free to give your views in the way you feel like. However, if there appears to be some matters that you feel you cannot say it in the presence of others; you are free to forward them to me immediately after this discussion. Be fully informed that the views provided here, are only for this study and that no answers are regarded as incorrect. Your personal particulars including your name or surname are not needed but only your ideas are important.

Thank you for your time.

1. Have you ever heard of the term 'teen mothers' before?
2. If yes, are there teen mothers at your school?
3. How did they perform before, during and after pregnancy?
4. Do other learners accept or reject them?
5. How do teen mothers react in the assessment tests before, during and after pregnancy?
6. If good, do they participate well in your lessons?
7. Give few examples of how one can motivate teen mothers to do well in school activities?
8. Have you noticed any difference in teen mothers' performance before, during and after pregnancy?
9. Do you often in collaboration with the School Management Team (SMT), invite social workers or motivational speakers to address teen mothers about good performances in your school?

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR REGISTER TEACHERS

My name is Maswuba, M.E. This study focuses on how teen motherhood affects teen mothers' academic performance at your school.

Firstly, I would honestly wish to thank you for the acceptance of my invitation to participate in this discussion. Please, feel free to give your views in the way you feel like. However, if there are certain matters you feel you cannot say in the presence of others; you can send them to me after this discussion. Be fully informed that the views you have provided, are to be used for this study only and nothing-else. Furthermore, no answers are declared incorrect in this study. Names or surnames including personal particulars are not needed in this study but only one's ideas.

Thank you for your time.

1. Do you have a group called 'teen mothers' at your school?
2. If yes, is it a large or small group?
3. Have ever noticed a difference in terms of performance between teen mothers and the other learners?
4. If yes, shortly explain this difference?
5. Do teen mothers attend school regularly?
6. If not, what do you think is influencing their absence?
7. Have you ever realised that teen mothers at your school do class bunking?
8. If yes, which strategies did you apply in order to control this?
9. Have you ever invited social workers or religious leaders with the aim of helping teen mothers towards performing well in doing well in your school?
10. If yes, shortly explain their reactions after such an address?

GRADE: 11

YEAR: 2015

School: A.

Schedule For Quarter No. 2

Surname & First Names (in alphabetical order)	Gender (M/F)	Age	Date of Birth	No. of Years in Grade														Average	Pa	Ba	Position					
				Venda	English	Maths	Mathematical Literacy	Physical Sciences	Life Sciences	Geography	History	Economics	Accounting	Business Studies	Agricultural Sciences	Life Orientation	Aggregate					Average	Pa	Ba		
M4	F	17	1997/12/04	1	71	55	16														55	274	39.1	Ba	48	
M3	F	0		1	66	51		26			29	24	31								48	275	39.3	Ba	47	
M6	M	21	1996/03/10	1	57	45		34			27	10	33								36	221	31.6	Ba	134	
M7	M	19	1996/05/12	1	60	46		22			16	9	26								41	220	31.4	Ba	136	
M8	F	0		1	41	31		12			25	14	29								31	183	26.1	Ba	175	
M9	M	0		1	62	53		20			10	17	23								41	226	32.3	Ba	125	
M10	F	0		1	69	65		23						22	T	23				51	260	37.1	Ba	71		
M11	F	0		1	66	58		20			6	15	22							55	252	36.0	Ba	87		
M12	M	0		1	56	47		10			26	10	25							41	215	30.7	Ba	144		
M13	M	21	1993/12/27	1	60	57		35			29	17	34							48	280	40.0	Ba	40		
M14	F	19	1996/09/08	1	62	54		15			27	23	40							49	261	37.3	Ba	70		
M15	F	0		1	74	70		51			39	17	34							90	335	47.9	H.C.	16		
M16	F	18	1996/03/14	1	58	41		27			22	16	33							37	219	31.3	Ba	105		
M17	M	0		1	55	48		27			22	12	17							37	219	31.3	Ba	138		
M18	M	0		1	62	49		2												42	212	30.3	Ba	131		
Total				12045	9097	1274	2510	1070	4468	2458	3377	704	442	652	650	473										
Average				41	49	15	23	19	27	18	31	13	15	15	14											


SCHOOL'S DATE STAMP

Examiners: MUYIMBEZHLO H
Principal: Mvana B.M.
Circuit Manager: RAMUANI AM

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Page 8 of 8
V2020/2021 Exam Results

Learner Number	Surname and first names	Year	Month	Day	Gender (M/F)	No. of Years in Grade	No. of Years in Phase	No. of days Absent	Home Language	Subjects														Learner Total	Average %	Promotion Code (P/F/ND)	Final Mark		
										Level	First Additional Language	Level	Life Sciences (Gr 10)	Level	Geography	Level	History	Level	Life Orientation (Gr 10)	Level	Life Sciences (Gr 10)	Level	Mathematical Literacy (Gr 10)					Level	Mathematics (Gr 10)
1	100																												
2	75																												
3	203																												
4	206																												
5	47																												
6	406																												
7	116																												
8	78																												
9	72																												
10	114																												
11	148																												
12	218																												
13	215																												
14	70																												
15	51																												
16	84																												
17	100																												
18	105																												
19	89																												
20	310																												
21	89																												
22	83																												
23	112																												
24	220																												
25	86																												
26	80																												
27	216																												
28	81																												
29	72																												
30	225																												
31	120																												
32	127																												
33	127																												


UNIPRO
 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 School: **SUN MATHS SECONDARY SCHOOL**
 District: **VENETA**
 Circuit: **LUMHALL**
 ERN: **00030104**
 Date: **2016/08/08**

School: **B**
 Term: **1**

No. Absentee/Total	Surname (Name of learner)	Year	Month	Day	Gender (F/M)	No. of Years in Grade	No. of Years in Phase	No. of days Absent	Home Language	Subjects														Learner Total	Average %	Promotion Code (P / NP)	Remarks (if applicable)			
										Level	First Additional Language	Level	Accounting (Gr 11)	Level	Agricultural Sciences (Gr 11)	Level	Business Studies (Gr 11)	Level	Economics (Gr 11)	Level	Geography (Gr 11)	Level	History (Gr 11)					Level	Life Orientation (Gr 11)	Level
1	ZM	1991	08	22	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2	60	1991	11	04	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
3	54	1991	15	28	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
4	38	1991	03	21	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
5	40	1991	05	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
6	44	2001	07	23	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
7	31	1991	08	08	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
8	42	1991	03	26	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
9	42	1991	03	26	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
10	52	1991	03	21	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
11	27	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
12	20	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
13	36	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
14	207	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
15	203	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
16	4	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
17	214	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
18	45	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
19	188	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
20	88	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
21	57	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
22	202	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
23	208	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
24	42	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
25	33	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
26	35	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
27	33	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
28	33	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
29	33	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
30	33	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
31	312	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
32	41	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
33	5	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
34	35	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
35	4	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
36	4	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
37	36	1991	03	20	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

APPENDIX F: EXAMPLES OF CLASS REGISTERS

11/11/2014
 School: A REGISTER - 2014
 1

Page No	Teacher	Grade/Class	Date	WEEK ENDING														
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7								
98	SIRIS	11	11/11/2014	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
No	Admission No	Surname	First Name															
1																		
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38																		
39																		
40																		

Class Teachers: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____
 Number of learners absent: _____
 Number of learners enrolled: _____

No	WEEK ENDING							No. of days absent per learner
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	
1								1
2								2
3								3
4								4
5								5
6								6
7								7
8								8
9								9
10								10
11								11
12								12
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14								14
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30								30
31								31
32								32
33								33
34								34
35								35
36								36
37								37
38								38
39								39
40								40

Total number of learner absentee days

Page 88	WEEK ENDING							No. of days absent per learner
	No	M	T	W	T	F	F	
1	14-01-14	0.0						1
2	21-01-14	0.0						1
3	28-01-14	0.0						1
4	04-02-14	0.0						1
5	11-02-14	0.0						1
6	18-02-14	0.0						1
7	25-02-14	0.0						1
8	03-03-14	0.0						1
9	10-03-14	0.0						1
10	17-03-14	0.0						1
11	24-03-14	0.0						1
12	31-03-14	0.0						1
13	07-04-14	0.0						1
14	14-04-14	0.0						1
15	21-04-14	0.0						1
16	28-04-14	0.0						1
17	05-05-14	0.0						1
18	12-05-14	0.0						1
19	19-05-14	0.0						1
20	26-05-14	0.0						1
21	02-06-14	0.0						1
22	09-06-14	0.0						1
23	16-06-14	0.0						1
24	23-06-14	0.0						1
25	30-06-14	0.0						1
26	07-07-14	0.0						1
27	14-07-14	0.0						1
28	21-07-14	0.0						1
29	28-07-14	0.0						1
30	04-08-14	0.0						1
31	11-08-14	0.0						1
32	18-08-14	0.0						1
33	25-08-14	0.0						1
34	01-09-14	0.0						1
35	08-09-14	0.0						1
36	15-09-14	0.0						1
37	22-09-14	0.0						1
38	29-09-14	0.0						1
39	06-10-14	0.0						1
40	13-10-14	0.0						1
Total number of learner absence days								40

APPENDIX G: UNIVERSITY APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

TO : MR/MS ME MASWUBA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

FROM: PROF J.E. CRAFFORD
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

DATE : 05 DECEMBER 2016

DECISIONS TAKEN BY UHDC OF 29 NOVEMBER 2016

Application for approval of Master's research proposal in School of Education:
M.E Maswuba (11524484)

Topic: "A longitudinal study of the academic Performance of teen mothers enrolled at Schools in the Luvuvhu Circuit, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province."

Supervisor	UNIVEN	Prof. T. Runhare
Co-supervisors	NWU	Dr. T.J Mudau

UHDC approved Master's proposal



Prof J.E. CRAFFORD
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

APPENDIX H: DISTRICT MANAGEMENT APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
VHEMBE DISTRICT



REF: 14/7/R
ENQ: RAVELE N.P
TEL: 015 960 1029

MASWUBA M.E
PO BOX 36
PHIPHIDI
0994

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS UNDER LUVUVHU CIRCUIT.

1. The matter above refers.
2. We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 26/11/2014 on the subject above.
3. You are hereby granted permission to pursue your research activities in the specified schools subject to the following conditions:
 - 3.1 Contact Circuit Manager (s) and the Principals (s) of schools involved in advance before visiting them for prior arrangements.
 - 3.2 Avoid disruption of normal teaching and learning in schools involved.
 - 3.3 Comply with research ethics, especially those affecting the confidentiality of the identities of your research subjects or participants.
4. We wish you success in abundance in your research endeavours.


DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGER

09/12/2014
DATE

Thohoyandou Government Building, Old Parliament, Block D, Private Bag X2250, SIBASA, 0970
Tel: (015) 962 1313 or (015) 962 1331, Fax: (015) 962 6039 or (015) 962 2288

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!

APPENDIX I: SCHOOL A: MANAGEMENT APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

THIVHILAEI SECONDARY SCHOOL

Tel. 015 969 1221
ENQ: MANAGEMENT



Private Bag X2600
S I B A S A
0 9 7 0
Email: thivhilaelisecondary@gmail.com

21 October 20154

Maswuba M.E
P.O.BOX 36
Phiphidi
0994

Dear Sir

PERMISSION GRANTED TO STUDY LEARNER'S OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AT THIVHILAEI SECONDARY SCHOOL: MASWUBA M.E

1. The matter as in the above subject refers.
2. Kindly be informed that permission has been granted to Mr Maswuba ME of Identity Document Number 560405 5947 083 and University of Venda Student Number 11524484.
3. Mr Maswuba ME is authorized to study learners' official documents and advised to be ethic.
4. Hoping that this is in order.

Yours in service.



APPENDIX J: SCHOOL B: MANAGEMENT APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

SAM MAVHINA SECONDARY SCHOOL

ENQ : THE SCHOOL MANAGER
CELL : 083 762 4041

P.O.BOX 1019
THOHOYANDOU
0950
02 NOVEMBER

2015

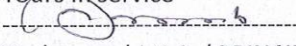
MR MASUBA M.E.
P.O.BOX 36
PHIPHIDI
0994

Dear Sir

PERMISSION GRANTED TO MR MASUBA M.E. OF ID NUMBER 560405 5947 083 TO STUDY LEARNER 'S OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AT SAM MAVHINA SECONDARY SCHOOL .

1. The above matter refers :
2. Kindly be informed that permission has been granted to the above named student who is currently studying at the University of Venda and his student number is 11524484 .
- 3 .Mr Masuba M.E. is authorized to study learner's official documents and advised to be ethic.
4. Hoping that you will find this in order

Yours in service


Ndwambi N.A. (PRINCIPAL)



APPENDIX K: EDITORS REPORT

29 May 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: EDITING OF MR MASWUBA MUKOSI ENOCH (STUDENT NUMBER 11524484)

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited Mr. MASWUBA MUKOSI ENOCH'S Masters Dissertation Titled "***A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TEEN MOTHERS ENROLLED AT SCHOOLS IN THE LUVUVHU CIRCUIT, VHEMBEDISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE***".

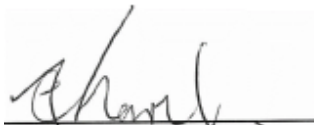
My work entailed identifying and correcting grammatical, typographical, formatting and related editorial errors in the document.

I have recommended a number of corrections related to grammar, typographical errors, sentence construction and formatting.

Should there be any queries regarding the editorial aspects of the document please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Dr T.Chari,



Lecturer, Department of Communication and Applied Language Studies, University of Venda, BA, DMCS, MA (UNZIM), PhD (WITS)