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Erasmus

**Re-entry of Adolescent Mothers into Secondary
Education in a context of Social Exclusion: The Case of
Igunga, Tanzania**

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Mwashamba Kapipi Amiri
(Tanzania)

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Members of the Examining Committee:

Dr. Helen Hintjens
Dr. Arpita Bisht

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Disclaimer:

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Inquiries:

International Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

t: +31 70 426 0460
e: info@iss.nl
w: www.iss.nl
fb: <http://www.facebook.com/iss.nl>
twitter: [@issnl](https://twitter.com/issnl)

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

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List of Acronyms

ACRWC	African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities
COVID19	Coronavirus Disease
DED	District Executive Director
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
JIDA	Jikomboe Integral Development Association
JMT	Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania
LCA	Law of the Child Act
MP	Member of Parliament
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
MDH	Management and Development for Health
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SWO	Social Welfare Office
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on the Right of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nation Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VAC	Violence Against Children
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Abstract

This study is about analysing the potentials and pitfalls of the education policy in ensuring re-entry to secondary education for adolescent mothers in Tanzania. The main question concerns itself with understanding the role that policy plays in securing access, uptake, and retention of adolescent mothers in secondary education. Sub-questions focus on breaking down this main concern by looking at past and recent changes in the official policy position on providing access to education for adolescent mothers in Tanzania. Second, the role of socio-economic and cultural attitudes in the uptake of secondary school education. Third, analysing the extent to which policy provisions can ensure a high retention rate of adolescent mothers in secondary education. To answer these questions the qualitative methodology is applied, and the interviewing used as the means for data collection. Moreover, the use of secondary data, especially reports from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and other reports from Non-Government Organisation will be drawn on. The study aims to contribute to the existing literature of education policy on re-entry programs in a context of high exclusion levels of adolescent mothers. I will investigate different experiences of adolescent mothers in seeking reintegration into secondary education in Igunga District. Conclusively, society needs to realise that if there is to be equity in service provision for both boys and girls, and if girls are to achieve their educational potential, then a supportive and enabling environment is needed. Help and practical assistance need to be provided for lone adolescent mothers in areas like Igunga before significant progress is possible in terms of reintegrating young mothers back into the schooling system.

Relevance to Development Studies

Regardless of different international legal agreements which governments signed to ensure education for all children, leaders continue to violate the right of education especially for adolescent mothers. In Tanzania, the focus of this study, this is an important development issue, not only because it prevents SDGs related to girls' education from being achieved. It is also important because restricting young mothers, denied the right to schooling, is not something that can easily be remedied through new policies. There is a great deal of past prejudice against young mothers, who also have little help with childcare. Traditions and customs, as well as past government policies, do not make it easy to implement the policy change which now dictates that all adolescent mothers should remain in schooling, and should not quit education, after all. Past policies, poverty and social exclusion all mitigate against this new order of the day being turned into daily practice, especially in a region as poor as Igunga in Tanzania, with a very high pre-existing rate of teenage pregnancies.

Keywords

Education, re-entry, gender, Adolescent mothers, Igunga, Tanzania, inclusion, exclusion

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Topic

On 19th March 2021, Samia Suluhu Hassan became the first female president of Tanzania, following the death of former President Magufuli. After less than a year in office, President Hassan decided to remove the previous ban that had prevented adolescent mothers from attending school. They would be ‘unbanned’ and reintegrated, and it was intended that young adolescent mothers would be able to proceed with their education in state schools. A set of re-entry guidelines were created for this purpose, and started to be implemented by February 2022 (Tayla, 2022). Yet such exclusionary policies had been in place since colonial times, and Tanzania had continued after independence to exclude adolescent mothers from the education system, especially state schools (Kisanga, 1997:7). In the past, a surprise pregnancy test could be conducted to identify pregnant students, who were then expelled from school. This issue sparked fierce debate in the international arena, as well as inside Tanzania, especially around the issue of violations of the human rights of teenage girls. This practice damaged the image of the country internationally, and destroyed the lives of many young mothers, excluded simultaneously from school and through inter-generational poverty. For example, in Igunga region, the focus of this study, almost 40 per cent of girls under 18 experienced at least one pregnancy.

This new policy is a good initiative aimed to protect the educational opportunities for adolescent mothers. However, unless serious steps are taken to balance gender imbalanced power relations, the next president might reimpose the ban on teenage mothers again. On 24th Nov 2021, on the 60 anniversary of independence was celebrated, the education minister, Professor Joyce Ndalichako, announced that the president would end the ban on adolescent mothers and reintegrate them into the state education system after giving birth. The Minister said:

“The government will continue to remove barriers to access educational opportunities. Students who dropped out for various reasons will be given the opportunity to return to school. This opportunity is for girls who got pregnant in primary and secondary schools and will continue with their studies in the formal system after giving birth” (Mnete, 2021)

The society received this news differently. Whilst some appreciated the effort, others perceive it as stimulating the increase the numbers of adolescent mothers in the society. Due to this, President Hassan decided to provide clarification. On 29th November 2021, she said:

“Regarding the issue of an adolescent mother returning to school, some people are happy about it and others are not. I want to say that it is normal for those children to go back to school because it is their right to get an education. Many countries do that and even Zanzibar allows it too. If adolescent mothers are given a chance, they study and reach university. I have decided to keep it right after hearing whispers from the community and social media after this opportunity was announced by the Minister of Education” (Mwaipungu, 2021).

In January 2022 new education re–entry guidelines were issued, and it was now official policy that adolescent mothers were allowed to proceed with their studies in school after giving birth. These events were a strong motivating factor that pushed me to conduct this

study. As a researcher, my questions centre on the redistribution of educational opportunities to adolescent mothers, and whether this is working in practice. As part of my work as a welfare officer, working for the government, I have in the past, recognized the oppressive traditions and policies that have prevented young mothers from accessing education.

1.2 Two Illustrative Stories

The first story is of a young girl, just 13. I work in a hospital and one day I noticed a young girl crying in the waiting room. I asked her why she was crying, and someone told me that she was a prospective bride, and she was just 13 but was going to marry a 19-year-old boy. It had been arranged that they would test her in the hospital for HIV/AIDS, before the marriage. She had come with her auntie and future husband. When I heard she was just 13, and was clearly unhappy, I also learned she was waiting for the results of her primary end-exam. She was not yet pregnant, but the bride price had been paid and the marriage could only be annulled through returning the bride price. What I did was to call the Gender-Desk officer at the district police station. She came and took the auntie and the girl, and the future husband. The police locked up the aunt and future husband and we called the girl's father. We then sent her to school. We held a case conference with the police, social welfare officer and the bride and family of the future husband, and the family of the girl. We explained that getting a girl married at this age was illegal. Then we told the family that the bride price would have to be returned. We collaborated with the local leader, the village executive officer, and told him of the situation, so that he could check on the issue and monitor the outcome.

Three weeks later we heard that the girl had passed her exam. She is still in school. My colleagues are still checking on her. She is legally protected from early marriage till 18. But she cannot be similarly monitored and protected from pregnancy. This story coming from my work illustrates how poverty can encourage families in the Igunga region to go for early marriages, even risking arrest, to secure the bride price. Usually this is paid in cattle. Without police and social work intervention, and the local village executive officer's attention, this girl would have been married at 13, and probably a mother by 14 or 15.

The second story is Esther's. It was September 2019 when a 15 years old girl came to my office, accompanied by her father. The father told me that he had noticed his daughter showing all the symptoms of pregnancy. He had come to my office to request an exemption slip for a free pregnancy test. I gave them the service they needed and asked them to come back after the test results. After half an hour the father and his daughter came back and their faces showing the sadness that filled the heart without needing to ask. I realised the result was not good, and the father explained that tests showed his daughter was four months pregnant. With sadness he explained how he tried to raise his daughter alone after her mother died. He worked hard to meet his daughter's needs, he said, and hoped she would continue her education so this could be her saviour in future. Due to her father's explanation, the daughter started crying in pain, asking her father for forgiveness. I asked the father if he doesn't mind waiting outside the office while I talked to the girl.

Once we were alone, she told me was in standard seven and had been impregnated by a neighbour. Moreover, she wanted to take her final exam and finish primary education in November. She said that her biggest fear was being kicked out from school as soon as the teachers found out she was pregnant. At that time a government-imposed ban towards

adolescent mothers. For her, not taking the final exams of primary school was like a person who is not studying at all. In Tanzania to proceed with secondary education the primary education examination number is required. As a government social welfare worker, I was responsible for following government guidelines, but the most important duty I had was to protect the best interests of the child. To help this child finish the studies I had to do something that was against the rules. First, I went myself to the school where she was enrolled, and talked to the head teacher, asking her kindly not to expel the girl because there were just two months left before the final exam. The head teacher was worried in case other teachers noticed the child's condition, which would put her in a difficult position for not adhering to guidelines and expelled the student. I told her that if the student's condition changed, and she was not able to hide her pregnancy, then we would reconsider talking to the doctor to get the girl sick leave while she was waiting and studying for her final primary school exam. Finally, the teacher agreed on this condition, and together we prioritised protecting the rights of this girl child.

Eventually the daughter successfully completed her primary education exams, and we advised her father to transfer to another province closer to her grandmother so that if she were to pass the exam, she could find someone to care for the baby, and she would find it easier to avoid the restriction of being a young mother on her own. Luckily, she managed to pass, and she continued with her secondary studies. What hurt me most was that the child had to stay in the province without the mother, so that the mother could go back to school, because if anyone knew she had a child it would be seen as a mistake to have admitted her and she would be expelled from secondary school.

These stories serve to illustrate the complex problems that face any government and the community when attempting to ensure the re-entry of child mothers, previously excluded from school, and now supposed to be able to continue, both pregnant and after the birth of their child, with their education.

1.3 Background Information

An adolescent is any person at the age of 10 – 19 years (WHO, 2012), and adolescent mothers are girls between 10 and 19 who become pregnant and parent a child. Every year in developing countries, an estimated 21 million girls aged 15 – 19 become pregnant and approximately 12 million give birth. A further estimated 777,000 births took place in developing countries in 2019 to adolescent girls who were under 15 years of age (WHO, 2020). Furthermore, there are factors that accelerate the tendency for adolescent girls to become mothers at an early age. Initially is lack of knowledge on sexual and reproductive health. In addition, unfriendly adolescent health service. Moreover, poverty which led parents to choose early marriage for bride price hence early pregnancy.

Apart from health complications facing adolescent mothers, they are facing exclusion from the education system due to the unfriendly education policies (Okwany, 2017:58).

Education is one of the fundamental development rights, as through education adolescents can acquire knowledge and skills which can help to fight against generational poverty. Also, education is a cultural and social right, and a source of knowledge, which can be a form of empowerment. Denial of adolescent mothers' access to education can perpetuate unequal power relations between men and women hence lead to gender inequality (UNICEF, 2001).

Adolescent mothers' right to education was denied in the past, due to social and cultural attitudes which dictated that a teenage girl who engaged in sexual practices would bring shame to her family and even her school. Moreover, contamination discourse is one of the barriers toward adolescent mothers accessing education (Chigona, 2008:274). Although in Igunga the 'shaming' of teenage mothers is relatively less, this is not the case for urban society in Tanzania, where blaming and shaming would be usual, through labelling young mothers as 'bad women'. This can bring stress to young mothers who in the past found themselves unable to proceed with their studies and stuck alone with their child, having been forced to drop out. In Igunga the rate of early pregnancy (as will be explained later) is so high that young mothers are not blamed or stigmatised as teenage pregnancy and motherhood has become the norm. However, all these negative attitudes were fuelled by oppressive policies and laws that deprived the young mother the opportunity for education. The Tanzania Marriage Law Act of 1971 which allows the girl to get married at the age of 15 brings a challenge for the parents to choose between education for an adolescent mother or marriage since the economic status of most families are low (URT, 1971).

Negative government views on adolescent mothers proceeding with the studies are a major issue in many African countries. In Tanzania, President Magufuli imposed this ban on adolescent mothers who he ordered should not be allowed to study in state schools. In June 2018, Burundi announced a similar official ban on pregnant girls studying in school. The Minister of Education said, "Any school girl who has been a victim of pregnancy or was forced to get married while she was still studying at the basic or post basic school is not allowed to return to the formal public or private system" (Tull, 2020, citing Manisha Tse 2018). Even though this decision was changed after a month, when the Minister apologised for making a wrong decision, even so this statement speaks of attitudes teenage pregnancies and motherhood (Tull, 2020:6).

1.4 Statement of the Research Problem

Education is a basic human right, regardless of gender and race. The fourth SDG states that Quality Education for all should aim to "ensure inclusive and equitable education to help boys and girls to complete primary and secondary education" SDG (UN, 2018). In Tanzania after independence Mwalimu Nyerere declared war with the three enemies of development within the state which are poverty, ignorance, and disease. The nation fought against all three enemies by implementing the Universal Education for All policy (Kuhanga, 2010:50). However, other factors like gender power relations and attitudes to adolescent mothers made it difficult for them to proceed with the studies.

Statistics for the 2015–2016 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey were being collected, 27% of women in Tanzania's 15–19 age group had either already given birth or were pregnant (TDHS, 2016). This implies that 27% of women aged 15 to 19 were not in school as well, unless they went back to a private institution. Moreover, Tabora region, where Igunga district is located, has become second in ranking with a huge 43 percent adolescent pregnancy rate (TDHS, 2016). This is influenced by values around payment of bride price which contributes to early marriages and early pregnancies in this area (Roy, 1996:128).

Regardless of challenges we are facing to reach SDG number four for ensuring inclusive and equitable education to all children, it leads to obstacles to reach SDG number five

which promote gender equality. This is because all these depend on each other. We can reduce gender gap through the equal access of education and other opportunities.

1.5 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The study aims to contribute to the existing literature on gender and education policy by looking at the example of a re-entry program intended to reintroduce adolescent mothers back into schools. It does this by investigating the experiences of adolescent mothers in the process of ensuring their access to secondary education in Igunga District.

Overall Research Question

What are the potentials and pitfalls of an education policy that seeks to ensure re-entry of adolescent mothers into (primary and) secondary education in Igunga, Tanzania?

Sub-questions

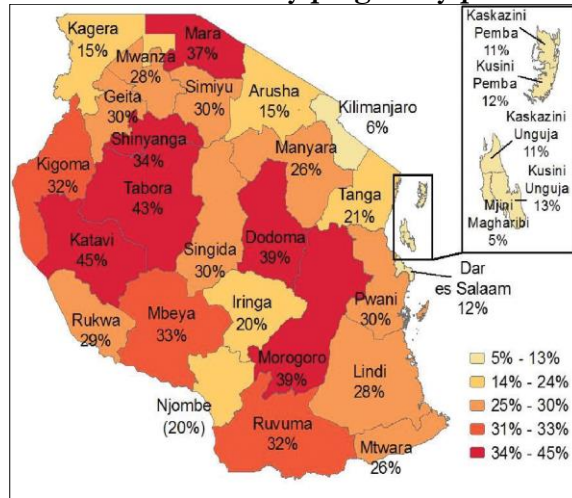
1. How has official policy on access to education for adolescent mothers in Tanzania changed over time?
2. What other factors lead to high exclusion rates of girls in Igunga in the past?
3. What role has led to the exclusion of teenage mothers in education in Igunga?
4. To what extent can policy reforms ensure higher retention rates for adolescent mothers reintegrated into education?

1.6 Research Context

The study is conducted in Igunga as one of eight districts comprising the Tabora region of Tanzania, which has the second highest prevalence of early pregnancies (of under 18s), currently estimated at 43% (UNFPA,2019). The district is dominated by two tribes which are Sukuma and Nyamwezi. There are 4 administrative divisions, 35 wards and 119 villages. Moreover, the district has 399,727 people, of which 195,607 are males and 204,120 are female (NBS, 2012). Nevertheless, the economic status of the people depends mainly on agriculture activities and livestock keeping. Sometimes local people engage in various small businesses as well, to earn extra income.

A patriarchal system is dominant, especially in rural areas. The father is head of the family, and if the father passes away then the eldest brother becomes the head of the family, not the widow (Madulu, 1998:8). Moreover, the girl child is considered a form of wealth for the family, due to bride price. Through marrying their daughters, the family can earn twelve to fifty cattle, and the younger the girl, the larger the number of cattle that must be paid in bride price (Roy, 1996:128). Traditionally the girl's family receives a bride price from the bridegroom's family in the form of cattle. Sukuma people generally consider cattle as their most important economic investment, the symbol of wealth, status, and social respect (Madulu, 1998:32). This led to social acceptance of early marriages, and early pregnancies, hence might lead to them not being too concerned when girls drop out of school.

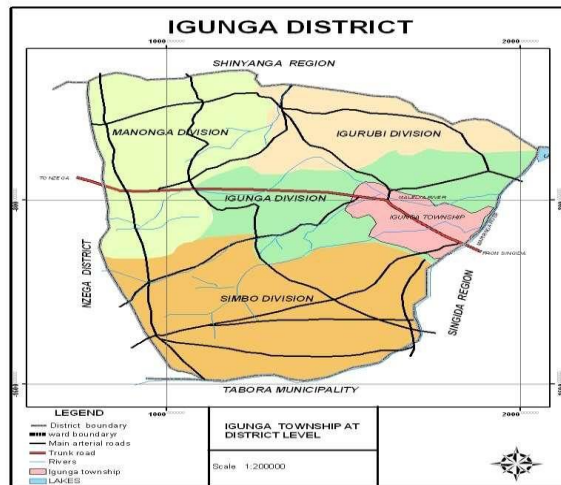
Map 1: Map of Tanzania with early pregnancy prevalence per region.



Source: UNFPA Early Pregnancy Spreadsheet.

Above is the map of Tanzania, which indicates that among all the regions of Tanzania, in terms of the prevalence of early pregnancy, Tabora is the region with the second-highest level, after Katavi.

Map 2: location of the study area



Source: NBS 2012.

1.7 Motivation and Justification of the study

As a social welfare officer one of my key responsibilities is to protect the rights of children. Due to this, I received a lot of referrals from different community leaders, teachers and other stakeholders pertaining to child protection concerns as the law of the child act state in section 95 (2) “The social welfare officer may upon receiving the report, summon the person against whom the report was made to discuss the matter and a decision shall be made by that officer for the best interest of the child” (URT, 2019: 26). Moreover, in section 95(3) law of the child act state “where the person against whom the report was

made refuses to comply with the decision made under section (2), the social welfare officer shall refer the matter to the court which shall hear and adjudicate the matter” (URT, 2019: 26).

Due to this, one of the issues I faced quite often was how to respond to the significant numbers of adolescent girls who came to my office, often accompanied by their teachers or parents, for a pregnancy test. In this I was responsible for providing exemption, and if the adolescent is confirmed as pregnant, I am responsible for reporting this to the Police Gender Desk and the perpetrator should be immediately arrested and taken to court and be prosecuted. In Tanzania, students are protected by two instruments. The first is the Law of the Child Act and the Education Act. These prohibit adults from having sexual contact with children and students. Due to this it was mandatory for school head teachers to carry out the surprise pregnancy tests on adolescent schoolgirls. However, the results of the tests were really shocking. Many adolescent girls at the ages of between 15 and 18 were confirmed to be pregnant. This influenced the high number of girls who dropped out from schools compared to adolescent boys. This situation made me think of Tanzania’s education system and how adolescent mothers went through challenges in accessing education.

Many studies have been carried out to explore the challenges young mothers face in accessing education, health, and employment in Tanzania (Hagues, 2021; Philip, 2015; Sink, 2015). But all these studies were carried out at the time the Tanzanian government did not allow young mothers to proceed with their education in the state schooling system. The return of adolescent mothers to school in Tanzania is a very recent move, articulated by H. E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan. While many development practitioners, INGOs, human rights promoters have praised this endeavour, it still draws many questions about whether it does open long-term opportunities for adolescent girls to school. What girls will encounter, as the strategy is put in place, is of interest, as is the best means to support this policy reform. My keen interest to investigate such puzzles and establish empirical information that can contribute to development of more realistic policies in future that can sustain adolescent girls’ access to education in Tanzania more sustainably, was the basis for undertaking this study.

1.8 Research Methodology and Research Ethics

The section described various steps taken by the researcher during fieldwork, including data collection techniques, sample and sampling techniques, positionality, and limitation of the study. Qualitative interviews were mainly relied on. Following the rules and regulation of research in the study area; the researcher sought permission from the District Executive Director of Igunga DC. The selection of the study area was due to the high prevalence of teenage pregnancies which had led to high school drop-out rates for adolescent girls in the past. Moreover, the DHS data shows that Tabora is the second highest region in terms of national prevalence of poverty. For this reason, the link between poverty and teenage pregnancies in Igunga is of special interest to the researcher, given the wider Tanzanian context of policy reform (DHS, 2010).

1.8.1 Selection of respondents and Data collection

The total number of 11 respondents are interviewed whereby 5 are non-students’ adolescent mothers, 5 are students’ adolescent mothers and 1 District Social Welfare

Officer. I used purposive and snowball sampling to get the right respondents for interviews. The purposive sampling was used to get the right respondents for the interview. For non-student adolescent mothers, using a Community Case Worker (CCW) as a gatekeeper. I chose CCW because he is responsible for dealing with all children's issues at village level. He is also responsible for providing referrals to Social Welfare Officers at District level. Through him it became easier to reach the right respondents in time. Nevertheless, purposive sampling was also used to find adolescent mothers able to attend school and, in this case, the headteacher was the gatekeeper who helped me reach the right respondents. Gatekeepers are those who have the authority and information needed to either provide or deny permission to researchers seeking to interview certain categories of respondents (King, 2019:59).

Moreover, I also ran one FGD (focus group discussion) with six community members, 3 men and 3 women. I chose a medium sized group to have good interactions because in a small group it can be difficult for participants to engage with one another. The larger group is however not always easy to manage (King, 2019:100). The FGD technique involves collecting data through group conversation on a topic that is presented by the researcher. FGD are semi-formal, and moderators are responsible for structuring discussion. Researchers can also observe respondents' attitudes, their norms and what people believe about the topic (King, 2019:103). The study also relied on secondary data from different sources, such as a report from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the new policy guidelines were also of interest. Furthermore, the use of World Bank report and National bureau of Statistics, journal, and previous studies.

1.8.2 Ethics, Positionality and Limitation of the study.

During data collection at Igunga all ethics were the foremost concern, and the researcher submitted study approval letters from ISS to the DED of Igunga. After waiting, I received approval to proceed with my study in the local area. During interviews and the FGD, I used a device to record conversations and always asked permission to record and take photos. My respondents all agreed to this. Moreover, adolescent mothers under the age of 18 were asked their parents to sign consent forms, which allowed their daughters to proceed with the interview. During the study all COVID 19 measures like 1 metre distance, no shaking hands, the use of sanitizer during the FGD and during one-to-one interviews, were respected. The study was conducted in Igunga rural area, where public transport is a challenge, so I decided to hire the motorcycle for movement.

The fieldwork was carried out during the National Census of people and housing, and one of the requirements is that all members of households should stay at home, waiting for the census clerk to visit them. This made it difficult to gather people for the FGD exercise. However, I assured them that it would not take more than three hours, and that our conversation would still give them a chance to participate in the national census exercise. We therefore started our discussion early in the morning, before the census activities began, to avoid clashes. Those invited to the FGD agreed, and we managed to hold a discussion which was felt to be a great success. Tanzania shilingi 5000/= was provided for refreshment to all respondents except SWO.

1.8.3 Data Analysis

At the conclusion of each day during the data collection phase, data transcription was completed; this practice enabled me to maintain track of the data as the research developed. The transcription was followed by a thematic analysis. I continually examined the transcribed data as I created codes and grouped them in accordance with the recurring themes from the respondents since qualitative data analysis is a continuous process that requires a full comprehension of the data. The recurring themes made it easier to see how the themes related to one another. The choice of poignant quotations appropriate for responding to the research and sub questions was informed by the relationships that were identified.

1.9 Chapter Contents

The study consists of five-chapters. Chapter one consists of an overview of the study topic, background information. Not only that but also research methodology and ethics. Also, chapter two based on understanding education access for girls. The chapter three explains about gender relation and its impact on adolescent mothers' education. The chapter is based on analysis and discussion of the findings. Not only that but also chapter 4 describes Improving retention rate. The chapter is based on analysis and discussion of findings in relation to new educational re-entry guidelines. The chapter five based on conclusion and policy recommendation.

Chapter 2: Understanding Educational Access for Girls

2.1 Introduction

The study is based on the Fraser (1998) framework of distribution and recognition. Fraser framework aims to provide insight into how justice for both genders can be ensured in designing and implementing policy initiatives. In her theory of recognition and distribution Fraser says:

“To understand and challenge gender injustice requires both an economic dimension (redistribution) and cultural dimension (recognition); neither one alone is sufficient” (Fraser, 1998:1).

This means redistribution is resources in which the government places to address certain issues in a society; it can be schools, policies, and government guidelines. Moreover, recognition is socially constructed norms and the cultural pattern which can hinder the fulfilment of certain programs. To bring gender justice, the government should avoid institutionalising socially constructed norms which favour masculinity. Most of the time the state failed to reach the goal of gender equality because it redistributes resources which favour men over women (Fraser, 1998:2).

The theory is very important to my study since Tanzania Laws, policies and guidelines are grounded on social norms and traditional values of the society (Blomqvist, 2014:5). The Tanzania Law of the Marriage Act of 1971 which allows the girl child to get married at the age of 15 under permission of her parents the law is influenced by tradition and norms of early marriage in most Tanzania tribes. Due to this it brings lack of participation of women in the development sphere since most of them are marriage underage and not complete their studies. Fraser argued that parity in participation requires economic redistribution and cultural recognition (Mladenov, 2016:1228).

The chapter will discuss the following concept beginning with the past and present educational system. Addition to power and gender relations, moreover the Patriarchal, government policy and gendered education uptake. Furthermore, the provision of international laws, contradictions of laws and practices hence the conclusion. I consider how recent reforms and social relations of power pose a challenge for ‘getting girls back into school’ in Igunga District.

2.2 The Past and Present of the Education System

Tanzania's education system towards adolescent mothers passes into three basic periods of legislation which are the colonial regime, post-colonial regime and current regime (2015 – to date). In the colonial regime of Tanzania (by that time it was called Tanganyika) history of education shows that the colonial government began by establishing a boy's school in 1892 and it took thirty years to build a girl's school in 1922. Moreover, a secondary school for girls was built in 1947 in Tabora region while the first secondary school for boys was built in 1925 in the same place. This shows the inequality to education started since the colonial era (Kisanga, 1997:7). Moreover, girls' schools were taught subjects like cookery,

sewing, housekeeping and other domestic science in general while in boys' schools taught subjects like technical and scientific subjects (Kisanga, 1997:7). The nimble finger theory was used in categories of subjects and courses to study between boys and girls. They decided to use the same skills which society creates to differentiate social relations between men and women (Elson 1981:21). Furthermore, the colonial education system does not allow the adolescent mother to proceed with the studies they used to expel them out of the education system (Kisanga, 1997:7).

Moreover, post-colonial regime, this is after gaining independent from British, in 1963 government creates the "Education Ordinance Act" for the aim of removing racial discrimination and increasing access to education to all children. However, the education act no. 25 of 1978 makes the education compulsory to all and creates law to prevent school dropout and universal primary education (UPE) which started in November 1977 for the interest of increasing school enrolment especially in rural areas. Apart from all those efforts considered to ensure the access of education to all, the government adopted the colonial law of expelling the adolescent mother from the education system (Kisanga,1997:7).

The current regime (2015 to date) education system passes through different issues regarding adolescent mothers, in 2015 the late president Magufuli came with free education to all from primary to secondary school. This helps to increase the enrolment of children and reduce drop out especially for children from poor families. Even though some of the schools secretly demand some contribution from the parents, the president said, "It makes no sense for the government to remove the school fees and yet teachers decided to introduce a contribution that poor parents cannot afford to pay for their children" (Theirworld, 2016). However, in June 2017 the government under late President Magufuli imposed a ban on adolescent girls' students who are pregnant from proceeding with their studies. The President was in the meeting with people at Chalinze in Pwani region and said:

"In my administration, if I am president, no pregnant student will be allowed to return to school. We cannot allow these immoral behaviours to permeate our primary and secondary school never after getting pregnant you're done" (Human Right Watch, 2020).

President Mugufuli also ordered police to arrest individuals involved in impregnating teenage students and said, "convicted offenders could get up to thirty years in jail under the country's sexual offence legislation" (Reuters, 2017). Nevertheless, the order imposed by late President Magufuli led to heated debate in parliament between the MPs from the ruling party and MPs from opposition parties. Mostly the ruling party MPs supported the statement of the President for example former first lady Salma Kikwete who is MP supported the statement of President and said, "it is against Tanzania values (*maadili*) for girls to engage in sexual affairs in early age, so it is appropriate for the student to be prevented from going to school" (All Africa, 2017).

Zitto Kabwe, the MP from opposition leader, decided to write a letter to the World Bank to stop giving Tanzanian government loans of 500\$ million and he is highlighting the bad situation of human and gender rights due to the banning of teenage pregnant students (CNN, 2020). It should be noted that during all this period Tanzania was implementing a free education policy for all and the main donor of the program is the World Bank who provide the loan of 500\$ million to support the education system that is why Zito Kabwe decided to alert them to withdraw the loan for Tanzania because the education system create biases by imposing the order which is bad to teenage mothers.

2.3 Power and Gender Relations

Power “is a social relation between two agents who may usefully be called the principal and subaltern. A principal is the paramount agent in power relationship while a subaltern is the subordinate agent” (Scott, 2001:1 Gender inequality resulted from a power gap that was socially built, which led to male supremacy (Seema, 2018:2). According to theory, these gendered disparities are a result of a larger structural system, such as the absence of gender-responsive policy decisions. Inadequate delivery of legal and social services is another issue, followed by unequal access to resources, work opportunities, and education. That emphasises how underprivileged women are on a communal and personal basis (Seema, 2018:2).

In Tanzania context policy and laws lack gender responsiveness which led to gender gaps. The Education Act of 1971 and the regulation which is expulsion regulation found in the 2002 amendment to the Education Act. Government Notice No. 295 states in Section 4b:

“The expulsion of a pupil from a school may be ordered where...The pupil has committed a criminal offence such as theft, malicious injury to property, prostitution, drug abuse or an offence against morality whether the pupil is being or has been prosecuted for that offence” (URT, 2002).

The act did not mention anything about early pregnancy in relation to school expulsion. However, they consider having pregnancy at a young age to be immoral behaviour and therefore can be viewed as ‘an offence against morality’ (Mwakabungu, 2018:8). This shows how the Education Act reinforces gender inequality because adolescent girls biologically are the ones who carry the pregnancy, not adolescent boys. Moreover, everyone witnesses the result of sexual practices through the girl’s body changes, and she is the only one expelled from school. Even boys who are married, who formally should not be allowed to attend school, are not excluded, and more significantly for the dynamics of gender power relations in school, ‘nobody cares’ whether boys are excluded or not; the issue is not debated locally or in parliament (Akella, 2014).

Furthermore, the adolescent girls facing discrimination on the issue of inheritance since the Tanzania inheritance law respect the customary law toward inheritance. Due to these most cultural practices, especially patriarchy, provide land access to the adolescent boys. This is due to the notion of protecting the clan property. Since adolescent girls can get married and be recognised in another clan (Aelst, 2014:27). This legal discrimination led inadequate access of adolescent girls to education, employment and resources which led high participation in homemaking activities which is socially constructed as unpaid work hence high dependency ratio (Wakota, 2014:1).

2.4 Patriarchy and Gendered Educational Uptake

Patriarchy can be defined as the political, social, and economic system that supports gender inequality between men and women, characterised by a system of relationships, assumptions, and ideals (Hodgson, 1999:43). Furthermore, in Tanzania patriarchy is dominant in the private sphere as well as in the public sphere. Private patriarchy refers to the concentration of female oppression at the household level. A woman may experience personal abuse or exploitation at the hand of men while also being unable to fully participate in society. In the Tanzanian context, Lund demonstrates that in rural areas some

parents forced their girl child to fail the National standard seven exams because it would be easier for them to get married at a young age while the boys are encouraged to study hard so they can lead a family (Lund, 2014:21). Not only that but also in development and upbringing a female child is raised to be a good wife, take care of children, and do housework and a male child will be raised to become a leader, a decision maker, and a breadwinner. Moreover, the family will prevent him from participating in household chores because society perceives these tasks as women's responsibilities.

Public patriarchy is when women are no longer confined to the private realm but experience prejudice and sexual harassment in society due to their gender. Tanzania society largely practises patriarchy however this system is dominated in the agricultural and pastoral societies like Maasai, Sukuma, Kurya, chaga compared to coastal regions like Lindi and Mtwara which are less practising. The traditional practices like "*Chagulaga mayo*" which means "choose among us" are highly violation of women rights. Around harvest time, the largest ethnic group in Tanzania, the "Sukuma" from the Mwanza region, Tabora region and Shinyanga region practice *chagulaga mayu*, and celebrations with traditional dances mark the event. Men pursue unmarried ladies at the dances until they select the man with whom they will have sex at the end of the dance (Abeid, 2014:2). Because it is culturally recognized that women must bow to men's wants, this patriarchal practice of *chagulaga mayu* leaves the women with no alternative but to accept the sexual act. Women are generally viewed as having a low status and little impact on decision-making, especially when it comes to their own health, which makes patriarchal frameworks more advantageous to men than to women (Abeid, 2014:2)

In the context of public patriarchy, Tanzania tribes still practise a traditional training system called "*Jando and Unyago*" for young people. *Jando* is practised for male especially at the time of circumcision they prepare them to be the leader of the household and society at large, are trained to be the leaders, the issue of sexuality and decision making. Furthermore, *Unyago* is for young women trained to be obedience to their husband, how to satisfy husband during sexual intercourse and tolerance in marriage and life in general (Abeid, 2014:3). Moreover, the public patriarchy is legalised in Law of the marriage act of 1971 when it allows the girl child at the age of 15 to get marriage under the permission of her parents and boy child to get marriage at the age of 18 (URT, 1971). This helps to increase gender inequality between male and female and influence school dropout hence it contributes to push back government efforts in achieving SDG of gender equality at the country level.

Apart from implementing different programmes like SEQIP and other still the education for girl's child is pyramid in shape are many in primary school but less in secondary and high-level education. Moreover, a high number of schools drop out which is influenced by early marriage, early pregnancies, and family gender relation, which is influenced by culture, value of our societies are the main factors which hinder equal access of education in Tanzania (Miyakado, 2012:248). In this section we are looking at how the government failed to address socially constructed norms and values which contribute to low enrolment and school drop out of girls on the lens of social justice.

Whilst guidelines recognise and address cultural patterns which hinder gender equality in the country, in the educational sector, so far, the Tanzanian government has mostly failed to address cultural aspects that bring about gender inequality in education. This includes failing to remove obstacles such as the Law of Marriage Act of 1971 which brings about

gender inequalities, by allowing the girl child to get married at the age of 15 with permission of her parents, whereas boys can be married till they are 18 under the same law (URT, 1971). The Law of Marriage Act influences early marriage and hence high school dropout rates by girls, adding to the problem that Sukuma society highly values bride price over educational attainment of girls. Local cultural practices also see in this act a way to justify earlier marriages of girl children than for boys.

The Constitution of Tanzania gives the president ability to control. Under Article 35 of the Constitution the president has extensive authority to make policy and propose legislation and regulation changes. He/she has the authority to elect the ministers, executive directors, judges including the head of judiciary and the top position from the party. This leads to conflicts of interest in decision-making, resulting in parliament not being an independent entity but relying on the President's opinions and executive decision-making (Halim, 2021). Tanzania is the country ruling under constitution moreover any law endorsed in the parliament and implemented in the country must follow the constitution as a guideline (URT, 1977). The constitution shows how authority is distributed through three pillars of the state which are Executive, Judiciary and Parliament however the Executive pillar has much power which may affect the performance of the other pillars (Halim, 2021). Under Article 35, "All the Executive functions of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania discharged by officers of the Government shall be done on behalf of the President." Section 35 (2) also states,

"Orders and other directives issued for the purposes of this Article shall be signified in such manner as may be specified in regulation issued by the President in conformity with the provision of this Constitution" (URT, 1977).

President's Orders are directives given by the President and are empowered by the Constitution (World Rank, 2022). This kind of directive may affect the existing policy and laws, and along with the order that comes from the president, guidelines for implementation should also be considered and the responsible ministry/ies should prepare for implementation. In Tanzania the president's order may affect the existing policy in one way or another. For example, the education policy of Tanzania of 2014 is silent about the issue of adolescent mothers either to retain or to expel from the study. However, the policy and guidelines are changed due to the Executive order of the President from Magufuli who imposed the ban on adolescent mothers and the Executive order of President Saima Suluhu who withdrew the ban regarding the adolescent mother.

2.5 Provisions of International law, Contradiction of Law, and Practices

Regardless of various efforts implemented by the Tanzania government to achieve SDG number 4 of "ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education to all", gender inequality still exists in accessing education. The Tanzanian government ratified different regional and international laws for the best protection of the child and to ensure children received equal rights regardless of gender and social status. All the convention demands the child to access education as the basic right and the key for helping children to end the generation of poverty. The article 6 of the ACRWC explained education as the right of the child and encouraged the state who ratified the convention to invest in education which helps in personality, talents, mental and physical wellbeing of the child. Moreover, if education

considers all aspects of the child, it will help the child to reach his or her full potential (ACRWC).

Nevertheless, the Tanzania government ratified the UNCRC to ensure the protection of our children. However, article 28 of the convention explained the right to education and how the government should discipline students who made mistakes while they considered the children's rights to education and dignity of the child (UNCRC, 11). Regardless, Tanzania rectified the convention, but the Education Act of Tanzania allows the student to be expelled if he/she made certain mistakes including theft, robbery, and practises immoral behaviours. Moreover, the government considered early pregnancy to be against the morality of the society. That is why they were used to expel adolescent mothers from school (Mwakabungu, 2018).

Moreover, Tanzania signed CEDAW (1985), the article 10 of the convention gives women equal rights with men in all aspects, especially right to education. All children are equal, and they deserve equal opportunity and access to education. Moreover, CRDP in 2009 Tanzania ratified the convention to provide equal opportunity to people with disability and to make sure there is provision of supportive gears to children with disability which makes it easier for them to access education (Mwakabungu, 2018).

All these UN treaties under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights promote gender equality and easy accessibility of education regardless of the culture, value, and economic situation of the parent. Therefore, conventions like UNCRC and ICESCR promote free education especially in basic education.

Regardless of Tanzania ratifying the international treaties for the wellbeing of children, the Marriage Act of 1971 is one of the factors which hinder the adolescent mother's access to education. The section 13 of the act allows the girl child to get married at the age of 15 under the permission of her parents and the age of 14 under the permission of the court. However, the same section allows the boys to get married at the age of 18 (Equality Now, 2021). Regardless, in 2016 activist Rebeca Gyumi sent an appeal to the High Court of Tanzania to put the ban on the use of section 13 and won. The appeal was based on the grounds that this is against the constitution of Tanzania which defines a person under 18 years of age as a child. Second the law it brings gender discrimination among the children. Third, the marriage act is against different international treaties which Tanzania ratified to protect the right of the child including the right to education. Due to this, the court gave the government one year's order to raise the legal marriage age for both children to 18. However, in 2019 attorney general launched an appeal basis on the ground that child marriage protects children who get early pregnancies (Human Right Watch, 2019). Even though the court refused to accept the appeal, until this time the government did not amend section 13 of the marriage act.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how education uptake was gendered and used to discriminate against adolescent mothers in formal education since colonial times. Furthermore, the education structure of adolescent girls is pyramidal in shape. Girls have almost equal numbers with boys in primary schools, and most manage to start secondary education. The situation is influenced by both government policies and cultural practices that favour men over women and produce gender inequalities. The contradiction between

laws and practices such as the Tanzanian constitution, which recognizes children as person under the age of eighteen at the same time, the Marriage Law Act of 1971 allows a fifteen-year-old girl child to get married, conditional on getting permission from her parents and boys should get marriage at the age of 18. All scenarios may lead the challenges to the inclusion of adolescent mothers in school, through implementing the new re-entry guidelines. Like Fraser suggested, we need to consider both redistribution and recognition issues, and to counteract the institutionalisation of social norms which means gender injustices are perpetuated.

Chapter 3: Understanding Gender relations

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion and analysis of findings regarding information obtained from the field in August 2022 at Mwisi village and Igunga urban in Igunga District council. Interviews were with adolescent mothers, both those who attend school and those who are not able to attend. Also, a focus group discussion was held at community level. The profile of respondents was based on sex and age group, is presented in this chapter. The chapter brings together a discussion around gender relation with its impact on adolescent mothers' education and ability to remain in school. The discussion centres on the following subtopics (1) Adolescent mother and the burden of responsibilities (2) Attitudes toward adolescent mothers (3) the household economy and its impact on adolescent mothers' education.

3.2 Profile of respondents

This subsection discussed the respondent's personal particulars as follows: first (1) the number and age of respondent; (2) marital status of adolescent mothers; (3) respondents' education level. Respondents come from different backgrounds with different ages, education levels from non-educated to bachelor holders. This helped to get different kinds of views and opinions concerning the topic of re-entry to education for adolescent mothers.

3.2.2 Number and age of the respondents

The respondents for this study are 5 adolescent mothers who were still attending school and another 5 who did not attend school anymore. They were divided into the following age categories: 3 were 17 years old, 4 were 18 years old, and 3 were 19 years old. Not only that, but I also held a focus group discussion with 6 people, 3 females and 3 males, who were invited from within the community and were parents or siblings of adolescent mothers. Moreover, in the focus group discussion there were some younger informants which were helpful in the discussion to bring up contemporary issues based on their own experience. The ages of participants in the FGD ranged from 22-24 years old, 48 to 50 years old, and up to 68 years old. Moreover, 1 Social Welfare Officer interviewed (age not known).

Table number 1: Summary of the interview.

Student adolescent mothers	Non-Student adolescent mothers	Focus Group Discussion	Government Official (Social Welfare Officer).
5	5	6	1

Total 17 respondents.

3.2.3 Adolescent Mothers Marital Status

Marriage is a very precious thing in the Sukuma community because it involves bride price paid in heads of cattle. However, among the ten adolescent mothers interviewed for this study only two were married. This is because five were proceeding with their studies and Tanzanian law prohibits continuing students, both boys and girls from getting married. Moreover, among the five non-student adolescent mothers, three were also not married and only two were married. This was one of the surprising things I discovered during fieldwork. Based on my own experience of working in Igunga for eight years, I expected all the non-student mothers to be forced into marriage by their families, either for economic reasons or to prevent shame. Yet this was not the case for three of the five. As one explained:

“My child’s father’s relatives came to the house to ask my parents for a bride price for me to marry their son. I refused because they are family used to mistreat their daughter in-laws by giving them a lot of work like slaves. The order of their family is that if you get married you must stay at their house and do housework and farm work” (KM, 19 years student adolescent mother, 20th August 2022, Igunga).

The region of Tabora in which Igunga is one of its districts is the second nationally for having a high prevalence of early marriage with 58% (UNFPA, 2014). Many adolescent mothers are forced to get married in Igunga when they get pregnant, to avoid bringing shame to the family. Meeting a young mother who refused to marry, and the family understood and supported her, was something that quite surprised me. These decisions were based on the family understanding her situation and planning to help their daughter reach her dream of completing education. In one case it helped that the respondent’s father was a primary school teacher himself, who had made a promise that his daughter would complete her studies at any cost unless she refused to do so herself. Due to this it was possible for him as a parent to refuse dowry as soon as his daughter refused to marry the father of her child.

3.3 Adolescent mothers and burden of responsibilities

This situation leads adolescent mothers to perform more than one role to ensure that her child gets the necessary support. Apart from taking care of the baby, adolescent mothers must support their own parents, carrying different responsibilities, including income-generating activities located within the area of the household, for example selling food or small consumer items. This explains adolescent mothers’ failure to withstand pressures and to continue with their studies. Four of the five non-student adolescent mothers gave the main reasons for not proceeding with their studies as unavoidable childcare responsibilities. There was nobody at home who could take care of the child nor the money to pay for a babysitter. Moreover, for those student adolescent mothers continuing education, they faced the burden of maternal responsibilities, and just tried their level best. Even when fathers of the baby were not students, they did not look after the child when the mother was at school, to help her continue with her studies. Instead, they refused to participate in childcare because taking care of a baby was socially constructed as a woman's work, and hence not a man’s responsibility.

“I wash the child's clothing and make her breakfast before I go to school. To prevent my sister from being overburdened with obligations and failing to properly care for the child, I also help with the housework. Because I can't study at home, I try to make the

most of my time when I'm at school. Often, I'm in charge of running the fruit stand outside our house and we close at 10:00 p.m. If the kid doesn't cause any problems after those duties, I can study or finish my homework.” (VB, 18-year-old student mother, 20th August 2022, Igunga).

The findings show that the burden of responsibilities for adolescent mothers hinder their capacity to return to school and keep up with school schedules, as the new education re-entry guidelines demand. Holmes (2017:1 cited in Giddens, 1986:13) explained how the culture of a society affects the rights, responsibilities and identities of both men and women. In the Tanzania context, all domestic work is socially constructed as the women's responsibility, and that includes taking care of babies and young children. Bhana (2012:22) in the South African context shows the low involvement of young fathers in childcare, leading to the entire burden of raising and taking care of the child being carried on the shoulders of young mothers alone. Patriarchal society considers childcaring the exclusive duty of females. This resonates with the following point made by one young mother:

“My grandmother is my legal guardian because my parents passed away when I was quite little. She oversees providing for my necessities, but she is currently unable to do so due to her advanced age. Working in the rice milling machines is my responsibility to provide food for the family and the child's necessities. I can't go to class five days a week as a result. The need to find money requires skipping some days” (Interview with RR, 17-year-old student mother, 20th August 2022, Igunga urban).

This situation relates to many studies which show the heavy and multiple responsibilities on adolescent mothers. For example, Wekesa (2010) in her study shows how in the Kenya context, adolescent mothers face the challenge of taking care of babies, doing their studies, and making sure they deal with other household responsibilities, such as income-generation. Okwany (2017:5) argues that the adolescent mother tries to cover a lot of responsibilities at home to compensate for the damage the family accuses her of causing. Most of them are still under the control of their parents so they become parents to their child and remain daughters to their mothers. At the same time, they are students and are expected to perform all these roles and responsibilities at once.

“Being a caregiver while studying is a problem I'm now confronting. Since my grandmother is 68 years old and is suffering from numerous health issues because of her advanced age, is too elderly to care for a 5-month-old baby. My mother and I both live in different places, and I didn't know where she is staying for now. She advised me to call her at the ideal time, but for the time being her phone is not reachable. My relationship with my father's family is not very strong because he lives in Dar es Salaam.” (MA, 17 years-old, non-student adolescent mother, 18th August 2022, Mwisi village - Igunga).

The respondent has been raised by her grandmother since childhood due to the separation of her parents. Based on my experience of living in Igunga, most grandparents face the challenge of raising their grandchildren by themselves. Mostly facing economic hardship because the parents of their grandchildren are not responsible enough to take care of their children even if they are far from them. Regardless of challenges they encounter grandparents takes caregiving as an “obligation not a choice, caregiving as sign of love and emotional bond” (Rutagumirwa, 2020:410) This leads many of them to ask for help from various people because the government has not set up an effective system to support the elderly. The elderly policy and welfare are not provided economic help to them rather than free medical service at a time they face health challenges (Rutagumirwa, 2020:412). The

economic hardship can force adolescent girls to involve themselves into transactional sexual activities with an adult without the power of controlling sexual practices which headed to early pregnant and STIs (Abeid, 2014:3).

3.4 Societal Attitudes

In Tanzania setting portrayed sexuality as immoral to practise at an early age especially for the girls. Most of the adolescent girls they do not have clear information on sexual education. Bilinga (2014:22) argued that most Tanzanian youth learn the issue of sexuality from their peers because their parents feel ashamed to talk about it. Moreover, there is no special curriculum at school which explains the issue of sexuality. Due to this society perceive the early pregnant as the immoral behaviour and the adolescent mother are people who misbehave they practice sexual intercourse before their age (Okwany, 2017). This brings to a discourse which causes a lot of people to disagree with the fact that student mothers should study in the same school with non-mother's students. The same issue faced Tanzania after the Minister of Education announced the removal of the ban and allowed adolescent mothers to proceed with their studies and other people started to claim the safety of nonmother students to be mixed up together with adolescent mothers. This led Madam President to come up with clarification about it and she said:

“The issue of an adolescent mother returning to school, some people are happy about it and others are not. I want to say that it is normal for those children to go back to school because it is their right to get an education. Many countries do that and even Zanzibar (Tanzania Island) allows it too. If adolescent mothers are given a chance, they study and reach university. I have decided to keep it right after hearing whispers from the community and social media after this opportunity was announced by the Minister of Education” (Mwaipungu, 2021).

The president made that statement after spreading a negative view on allowing pregnant mothers to continue with their studies. Some citizens took the statement of the minister of education as the same as inciting pregnancy for other students (Mnetee, 2021). A situation that led to various discussions through social networks like Facebook and twitter. Due to this, the president decided to come and explain the right of education to children regardless of her condition. The interview with adolescent mothers shows that all of them are facing negative attitudes from different areas, 5 of them from family members (parents and other relatives). 3 of them are facing negative attitudes from teachers, and the community and 2 of them are facing negative attitudes from household members and fellow students.

I should stay at home and raise my child rather than continuing with my studies. The teachers have told me if I need to study to proceed with a different school and not the one, I started at the beginning. They claimed that I became pregnant because of my terrible behaviour. I should stop studying rather than transfer to another school that is far from home. (RM, 17 years old, non-student adolescent mother).

The respondent is among non-student mothers who confess to face negative attitudes from the teachers. Moreover, at the time we conducted the interview she was seven-months pregnant and waiting for delivery. The respondent insisted that after getting her baby she chooses to stay home because of the discouragement she faces from the teacher. This contamination discourse finds many adolescent mothers in a situation that led to rejection in returning to their previous schools. The same scenario happens in Kenyan context Wekesa (2010) shows how the teachers have a negative attitude towards pregnancy and reports how one teacher said, “I smell the pregnant woman in this class”. Writing about the

Southern African context, Chigona (2008:270) argued that teachers need education on how to handle adolescent mothers because they often received more negative attitudes from teachers than in general (e.g., at home, in the community). Furthermore, others are facing emotional abuse from their family members which led them to stop proceeding with the studies in a time being like. This resembles the point made by student adolescent mothers.

“There was a moment when I returned home and found my child filthy and in poor condition. My mother said, if you wish, leave the school and raise the daughter yourself. You were busy with finding a child rather than learning, and now you want to bother us. This remark pierced my heart like a sharp object. I made the decision to quit school to take care of my daughter. My father learned that I wasn't attending school after two weeks. I explained why he had advised my mother that I needed to finish my education and that my child should be raised properly. Since my father has given the order now, they treat her well”. (VJ, 19 years. Student adolescent mother).

It is not easy for adolescent mothers to endure bad words coming from community members, but it is even harder if those words come from her own parents. This discourages them from moving forward and if they don't get immediate support it can contribute to school dropping out. Parents and young mothers all need psychological therapy to help them cope and adjust to the new situation. Mwanza argued that in the Zambian context the adolescent mothers started to question their parents' love, and most adolescent mothers said life changed completely before and after having a baby. Mostly they were facing challenges and negative attitudes and comments from family, and this led some adolescent mothers to think that maybe the parents did not want them to proceed with the studies (Mwanza, 2018:27). Others faced not only negative attitudes from their relatives but also refusal to pay school fees, like this scenario below.

“I want to study but my brother spoke very bad words when he found out that I was pregnant. He told me he knew I wouldn't get far and that he had wasted his money to educate me. Thinking about that statement, I am afraid to go back to school. I am afraid if I don't manage to pass well, they can say I just wasted their money” (RR, 18 years old, non-student mother).

When it happens that a parent has tried to send a girl child to school and failed to accomplish the studies it breaks the heart especially for the family member who is responsible for the provision of the students' needs. For non-student mothers, the negative attitudes of their family members were among the main reasons why they did not return to school. They feared repeating the same or making another mistake in future.

In the Kenyan context, studies have shown that adolescent mothers face similar kinds of issues. Their brothers may have the power to decide whether the girl can continue with her studies. Wekesa study shows that one adolescent mother was stopped from proceeding with her studies after her brother made the decision that she should get married with an adolescent father who was himself proceeding with his studies (Wekesa, 2011:29). Moreover, in the FGD, all six participants had a positive view for the government's effort to encourage re-entry of adolescent mothers into school. However, they were not happy with the idea of mixing non-mother girl students and adolescent mothers in the same class.

“Personally, I don't have any problem with the new initiative of allowing adolescent mothers to proceed with their studies. But my suggestion is that the government should build special schools for them and not mix them together with non-mothers' students” (FGD, 18th August 2022, Mwisi – Igunga).

Not only community members but also senior government officials have this attitude of contamination. In July 2017 at Chalinze President Magufuli argued that to allow adolescent mothers to proceed with the study will lead to destruction to the girls on their studies due to the caregiving responsibilities. Moreover, their presence at school would be a bad influence on other girls (Ratcliffe, 2017). Furthermore, one of the senior officials of Tanzania Ministry of Education Science and Technology has the same view and said allowing the adolescent mothers to proceed with the studies is like normalising pregnancy out of wedlock. Removing punishment for girls will cause many girls to get pregnant (HRW, 2020).

3.5 Protection of the child's father

The Sexual Offence Provision Act of Tanzania state “A man who has sexual intercourse with a female below the 18 years of age, with or without her consent has commit rape unless she is his wife and above 15 years of age and not separated from him” (URT, 2002). The sentence is to be prisoned for not less than thirty years. To avoid the child's father from being prisoned, different approaches are used. First, is negotiation between two families and second is the adolescent mother to deny the father at the court and the last adolescent mother runs away from home at a time she discovered her pregnancy. Among ten adolescent mothers, eight of their family negotiated with the child's father's family. One adolescent mother refuse to know her child's father during the case hearing at the court. One adolescent mother ran away from home at the time she discovered her pregnancy.

“When my father found out I was pregnant, he asked me who was responsible for the pregnancy. I mentioned the child's father. He went to the family and asked them to choose either their son to marry me or to report him to the court. Their family decided to pay the bride price and arrange the marriage. However, at the beginning we didn't plan to get married; it was just a childhood relationship, nothing serious” (SS, 18-year-old non-student adolescent mother).

Negotiations between families with the aim of protecting the perpetrator is a common thing especially in rural areas for the sake of protecting the honour and dignity of the family. They prefer to settle the matter themselves instead of using the court to claim justice for their daughters. Abeid argued that most cases of sexual offense that are reported at the court are those that happened between people living in two different places and do not know his origin. But sexual offence committed by a relative, family friends and same community member is not reported, and family decided to negotiate to cover the damage (Abeid, 2014:7). This situation hinders the efforts of the government to fight against GBV and VAC. It also causes more cruelty to the adolescent mother by forcing her to marry someone not of her choice. Some of those who do marry through force end up being abandoned by the man. This scenario reminded me of another story of an 18 year old who came to my office in 2019.

3.6 Another Illustrative Account: Hollo's story

This story illustrates problems that can arise with teenage mothers seeking child support, which could help them potentially to return to school. In July 2019, an 18-year-old adolescent girl came to my office accompanied by a man and a one-year-old child. After interviewing them, I found the man is her brother, and the child is her son. they have come

to complain about child support. Her brother explained that Hollo (not real name) got pregnant in the second year of her secondary education. As soon as he found out that his younger sister was pregnant, he started looking for the child's father so he could pay the family bride price and marry Hollo. According to her brother's explanation, he claims he did not want to follow legal procedures for several reasons.

First, the responsibility to provide care belongs to the father. If he was imprisoned for 30 years, who would then ensure that the child would get the necessary support to buy food, shelter, and pay school fees when it reaches school age. Second, his younger sister's life had already been ruined by the man at a very young age. Who would ever marry her if the perpetrator was in prison? Due to that the brother went and found the father of the child and told to marry his young sister otherwise he would take him to court. The father of the child paid dowry and married her when Hollo was just 16 years old. After giving birth, when the child was about six months old, her husband started to change and told her openly she was no longer needed and should leave his house. She tried to bear it, but when she saw that the harassment was increasing, she decided to leave and go to stay with her brother. For all the years after that, she stayed with her brother. Her husband never provided any further child support and often when reminding him by phone that he was responsible, he responded rudely. Due to this, Hollo's brother decided to come to the Social Welfare Office to see how we could help his young sister to get child support. He admitted that he regretted not having used the legal means in the first place. He could no longer go to the court to seek justice for his sister because so much time had already passed. Furthermore, if he went, he would become part of any court case for the crime of hiding the perpetrator for this entire period.

As a SWO, my duty is always first and foremost to protect the rights of the child, including the right to be cared for by both parents. I sent a summons to the child's father to find out what was preventing him from providing care and support for his child. After arriving, he apologised to the child's mother for being absent for such a long time. He promised to provide money monthly through a bank account. However, he was able to proceed with the marriage because he was at the early stages of marrying another woman. The amount of money that was due for the child was mentioned, and both parties agreed to sign an agreement form. The father would also get time to see the child, an issue that was raised.

This case is like many other cases involving adolescent mothers whose parents were in one way, or another protecting the perpetrator. The following is one account obtained from an interview with a student adolescent mother who was protecting her child's father, instead of demanding justice for herself and her child.

“At the court the judge asked the person responsible for getting me pregnant. I said he escaped and not the person who is In Front of me. They asked me three times and replied the same. Also, when they asked the father of my child, he denied that he was not responsible for my pregnancy. Due to the lack of cooperation the case was dismissed, and the father of my child was released. My decisions brought a misunderstanding between me and my parents however we are fine now. I did that to protect the wider interest of my child” (VB, 18-year-old student mother, 20th August 2022, Igunga).

As happens quite often, when the father of an adolescent mother decides to find justice for his daughter, she sometimes becomes a barrier to achieving justice for herself. This led the few numbers of sexual offence cases in the context of early pregnancy to reach the end of

judgement with victory. To win this case it depends on the willingness of the parent to present the case at the court and determination of the adolescent girl to give sincere evidence without feeling sorry for the child's father. Abeid (2014) argued that in Tanzania context especially in rural area the sexual offence which is happened to the girls of the age of 12 and above is not easy to be reported. Society assumes that it is the responsibility of girls to protect themselves. through good manners and stop wearing attractive clothes like miniskirts to avoid temptation to boys (ibid, 2014:6).

3.6 The Household Economy

Data collected from the field in response to the question of how the economic status of the family brought the barrier to adolescent mothers to access education. The 9-adolescent mothers out of 10 express how the economic hardship is the big problem for them to fulfil their goals as adolescent mothers. As an adolescent mother has double responsibilities of taking care of the child and taking care of themselves. Most of the family if you have a child regardless of your age, they consider them as an adult. Parents used to look after non-mothers' children instead of adolescent mothers. This led adolescent mothers to participate themselves in small income generating activities so they can earn money for their babies and themselves. Hence it leads to low performance to those who attend school and sometimes lead non-student mothers to not having a plan to go back to school at all.

“Going back to school on my side will be a challenge because I am responsible to provide for myself and the baby. The father of my child ran away after discovering that he had impregnated me. To be able to support myself my brothers gave me capital and now I am vending food while raising my child” (AS, 19 years old, non-student mother, 18th August 2022, Mwisi-Igunga).

Songa (2009: 91) shows the same situation in the Zambian context: due to the poverty in household level, most adolescent mothers cannot afford to re- entry after giving birth. This is due to the cost of childcare and other school requirements. Not only that but also Berthelon (2016) explained the same scenario in Chilean context he argued that failure of adolescent mothers to proceed with education due to household poverty led to increased generational poverty. In the South African context, Morell has argued that policy should focus on inclusion instead of exclusion which means even though the policy allows adolescent mothers to proceed with the studies, but government does not put good environment for adolescent mothers through solving gender roles which is the backlash to adolescent mothers in attain the education (Morell, 2012:4).

“I wish my daughter could go back to school but the challenge is where will I get milk for the child at a time her mother is at school. Considering the law, it does not allow children to be sent to school for breastfeeding. For now, I do not have the ability to buy alternative milk due to the economic hardship. If I am allowed, I will wait for my granddaughter to grow up a little, then her mother goes back to school. I know that if she gets older, there will be no need for milk, and he will be able to eat anything while his mother is at school” (FGD, 18th August 2022, Mwisi village – Igunga).

This is one of the biggest challenges in achieving the goals of young mothers to return to school, especially in low-income families. The ability of many families is limited to meet the need for alternative milk for children, especially when the baby is not yet two years old. However, the re – entry guideline demands the adolescent mothers to return two years after the disengagement period, in that context the child has not yet reached two years of

age. Poverty is the obstacle to adolescent mothers to obtain the right to education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Nyariro, 2018:317).

3.7 Conclusion

The chapter shows how the lives of adolescent mothers are intersecting with gender roles, societal attitudes and economic hardship that hinder them from achieving their educational goals. Gender relation led to multiple responsibilities to adolescent mothers causing many of them to fail to proceed with their studies and for those who managed to have poor attendance which will lead to poor success in their studies. Moreover, the societal negative attitude is the one of backlash. Many of them lost hope of continuing their studies due to the disappointment especially from their family members and people within the community. Due to this education is needed in society to create awareness about the importance of education for adolescent mothers. Moreover, parents must be advised to reduce the workload of adolescent mothers to help them to get extra time to review their studies.

Chapter 4 Improving Retention Rates

4.1 Introduction

The chapter is going to present the potentials and pitfalls of the new education re-entry guidelines for adolescent mothers. The discussion and analysis of findings is based on the official re- entry guideline document, interviews with government officials (SWO), the focus group discussions, interviews with adolescent mothers and the researcher's experience working within the Tanzanian welfare system. The discussion will cover the following subtopics (1) Educational opportunity for adolescent mothers (2) Teamwork for the wellbeing of adolescent mothers (3) Education as a fundamental right (4) Waiting times (5) Need for a supportive environment for both mother and the child.

4.2 The new education re-entry guidelines

As this study has shown, sixty years after independence, things are changing and the government is allowing adolescent mothers to proceed with their studies in state schools, under the new re – entry guideline, as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2. The following are the potentials of the new re-entry education guidelines for mothers. This section is going to discuss the following issues (1) Educational opportunities for adolescent mothers (2) Teamwork for the wellbeing of adolescent mothers.

4.2.1 Educational opportunities to adolescent mothers

Data obtained from SWO, FGD and the interview with adolescent mothers at Mwisi village and Igunga urban shows that adolescent mothers get the opportunity to proceed with their studies. Unlike in the past years, now any adolescent mothers who left school due to pregnancy is allowed to proceed with her studies after giving birth. This is a big step achieved after being removed from formal education for many years.

“The government will continue to remove barriers to access to educational opportunities. Students who dropped out for various reasons will be given the opportunity to return to school. This opportunity is for girls who got pregnant in primary and secondary schools and will continue with their studies in the formal system after giving birth” (Mnete, 2021).

This was the speech of Minister of Education Professor Joyce Ndalichako on 24th November 2021 the date she announced the removal of the education ban on adolescent mothers. During the speech the Minister declared to remove the barriers towards education attainments especially for adolescent mothers. After the speech new guidelines were created and from January 2022 adolescent mothers were allowed to proceed with their studies.

“Allowing a young mother to continue with their studies is a good step towards gender equality. This is a great opportunity for them, we have been waiting for many years.” (SWO, 24th August 2022 – Igunga).

The SWO mentioned the issue of gender equality since it was only adolescent mothers who had been expelled from school and not adolescent fathers. These kinds of practices bring double standards to our nation and enlarge gender gaps in education and employment. Moreover, in the focus group discussion all six respondents are happy with the opportunity given to adolescent mothers. However, 2 respondents among them said it was the first time to hear the news about the new policy. Generally, the ten adolescent mothers interviewed, both students and non-students alike, did say they appreciated the opportunity provided by the government, for allowing them to proceed with their studies after giving birth. As one 17-year-old expressed it:

“Personally, I am happy to remove the ban on adolescent mothers from studying. Although I am advising the government to advertise the opportunity in mass media, especially local radio. This is the first time I have heard this news, here. For us rural people to get information, it must be announced repeatedly” (FGD, 18th August 2022, Mwisi village – Igunga).

What the respondent said rings true; it is very rare for rural people to get timely information through national and international media. This is due to the limited access of the network in many rural areas in Tanzania. Moreover, most agricultural activities mean long hours of work, and they have little time to follow the news in the mass media unless it is on local radio. Often if you want information to reach the village in abundance, the young mothers suggest the use of village open meetings to reach people. Even if some people do not attend, they tend to ask neighbours what happened in the meeting and in this way information will spread further.

4.2.2 Teamwork for the wellbeing of adolescent mothers

Data obtained from the field shows that teamwork between SWO, teachers, student-adolescent mothers and parents is improved. Among 5 student-adolescent mothers interviewed, three had been referred to SWO offices for counselling and to solve family issues, including conflict between the young mothers and parents, lack of income or support for the young mother. The education re-entry policy guideline needs counsel to be provided to student adolescent mothers at a time joined to school again. This will help her to overcome some challenges from household members, fellow students, and the community at large. Due to this schools create positive relationships with SWO for the wellbeing of student mothers. For those who face challenges referral is provided to SWO for further help to ensure high retention rate of them. Sometimes a case conference is needed between a student- adolescent mother, parent, teacher and SWO are needed to make sure the matter is solved.

“This re-entry guide has made me work with young mothers more closely. Many times, teachers brought the referral of young mothers for counselling and other family matters. So far, I have met 23 young mothers for counselling. I have done 11 case conferences for those who had problems with their families. I also referred 15 student adolescent mothers to adolescent friendly services. This is different from previous years when most of the students, even if they faced challenges, ended up between them and their teachers” (Interview with SWO, female, 24th August 2022, Igunga).

The re-entry policy guideline enhances the usefulness of integrated case management approach whereby important stakeholders stay together to solve the problems that the adolescent mothers are facing. Social welfare office has scarce resources, but the needs of

adolescent mothers are many. Due to this SWO refers adolescent mothers to local organisations which are in Igunga like JIDA and MDH who implement different projects to help young mothers at the district level. This helps to reduce the various challenges of adolescent mothers especially for those who come to the office in need of help.

“When I explained to the teacher the challenges I faced in our home, especially being given bad names by my mother’s like “bad daughter ``"unlucky mother”. She directly gave me a referral to SWO. The officer called my parents, and we had a meeting together with the teacher. The SWO informed the mother about the consequences of what she is doing to me and the child and how it will affect the academic performance. My mother understood and promised not to call me bad names again. Until this time, we talk, she calls me by my name, and we have a good relationship” (Interview with DR, 17-year-old, student mother, Igunga urban).

The coordinated service for adolescent mothers will help to increase the retention rate and improve performance. Moreover, help them to overcome negative attitudes from households and communities at large. It seems the new guidelines also move the main responsibility for resolving conflicts and enabling young mothers to continue with their schooling, from teachers to the SWOs. Moreover, Imbosa argued that the re-entry policy should consider protection of pregnant adolescent girls, the positive environment for adolescent mothers and prevention of pregnancy to adolescent mothers (Imbosa, 2022:4).

4.3 Pitfalls of the re-entry guidelines

Regardless of the opportunity provided, the education re-entry guidelines impose some challenges which show the inclusion of adolescent mothers in problematic ways. As a country if the matters don’t be settled it can bring the failure of reaching goals towards the inclusion of adolescent mothers in the formal education system. In this subsection the discussion is based on (1) Short waiting period (2) Disengagement time (3) Negotiation with parents/ guardian (4) No second pregnancy and (5) Wellbeing of the new-borns.

4.3.1 Short waiting periods

Although the young mother has been allowed to continue with her studies, once she is found to be pregnant the school management will suspend her until she gives birth. In response to the guidelines, she must return to school within two years from the time she stopped going to school due to pregnancy (JMT, 2022:2). The information collected from the FGD all 6-respondents said that the waiting period is short. However, the interview with SWO shows the same response. Because the child is still young and needs to be breastfed by her mother. However, the child’s age for two years is determined on the months of the mother’s pregnancy to be recognized. For a poor household it is difficult to find money to buy alternative milk for the child. The situation forces adolescent mothers from those families to stay at home and continue to raise their child.

“The challenge I saw is that the waiting time is short for an adolescent mother to leave her child and proceed with her studies. Statistics show that many adolescent mothers give birth through surgery because their reproductive organs do not support normal delivery. So, within two years from the time of leaving school. An adolescent mother, especially one who gave birth by surgery, is not physically and mentally fit to face the

challenges of the studies. This situation will lead to many of them not being able to proceed with their studies. But if they get a good time to reflect, they can make the right decisions” (Interview with SWO, woman, 24th August 2022, Igunga urban).

Many parents complain that the waiting time is too short compared to the responsibilities of parenting and health conditions of the young mothers to make the right decision to return to school at that time. Two years after being stopped from school, the child has not reached two years of age and needs the close attention of the parents. Moreover, other parents claim since the guideline does not allow sending the child to school for breastfeeding it would be better to wait until the child reaches the two years of age, so he/she will be able to eat a variety of food. The two years are also helpful for those grandparents who remained at home with the child to do small income generating activities because it will be easier to go with two years plus babies than a less two-year baby.

4.3.2 Disengagement time

The data acquired from an interview with SWO shows that the education re-entry guideline is silent on the disengagement procedure to adolescent mothers. Although there is a new guideline that allows the adolescent mother to proceed with their studies after giving birth. But they are supposed to stop going to school soon after it is discovered that they are pregnant. The challenge is the guidelines do not mention anything about the preferred time for young mothers to be suspended from school due to pregnancy. Also not talked about the proper procedure to determine the pregnancy for adolescent girls. This situation leads to the continuation of surprise testing which is against human rights.

“I was diagnosed with pregnancy through a surprise test at school when I was in fourth year of secondary education, and there were two months left for the final national examination. My pregnancy was not disturbing me. I wish they could let me sit for my final exams. However, I was suspended from school and proceeded after giving birth by restarting the fourth year of secondary education again” (VB, 18-year-old student mother, 20th August 2022, Igunga).

The surprise test has been used since independence as the measure of pregnancy control among adolescent girls. However, it brings gender humiliation and violation of human rights, especially the right to privacy (Sik, 2015:55). In the Tanzania context Sik has argued that after the result of the surprise pregnancy test the adolescent girls who are found pregnant are expelled from school without any health support or psychosocial counselling (Sik, 2015:56). This act led to disturb the emotional wellbeing of adolescent girls as the person who faces humiliation from school, household, and community at large. The same scenario is happening in Kenya and Uganda. There is mandatory pregnancy test in boarding schools however it is voluntary in day school and soon you were found to be pregnant by an adolescent mother supposed to be expelled from school (Okwany, 2017:64).

Due to this act of violation of human rights through surprise pregnancy tests, which has existed in the education system since independence, the new re-entry guideline should explain the proper modality of disengaging the adolescent mothers into the education system without any kind of humiliation. Moreover, for those who are about to finish school and their pregnancy is recognized. They could check how to support them to finish the studies with their peers if the pregnancy does not cause any problem. Fraser (1998:2) said to bring gender justice we should consider both redistribution and recognition of

cultural patterns. I argue that in this context to give adolescent mothers the chance to proceed with the studies alone is not sufficient since there is a kind of human rights violation in discovering pregnancies which is institutionalising.

4.3.3 Negotiation with parents/guardian of the child

The data obtained from an interview with SWO shows that the negotiations between parents and teachers over access to education of adolescent mothers is a violation of their rights. Education is a fundamental right and there should not be compromise between two people so that the adolescent mother. The re-entry guidelines state for the adolescent mother to get the chance to proceed with the studies the parents/ guardian should sign the consent form which shows that she/he allowed her/his daughter to proceed with the studies (JMT, 2022:2). If the parent does not accept his child to continue with her studies in writing the child will not be admitted to schooling.

“The issue of having an agreement between the school and parent to return the adolescent mother to school is not acceptable. The same necessity that is used to encourage a parent to send a student to the first year of secondary education should be used to return a young mother to school. In societies that do not value the education of a girl child. This can be used as a way for parents to oppress the adolescent mother so that she cannot continue with her studies even if the young mother wishes to return to school” (Interview with SWO, woman, 24th August 2022, Igunga urban).

The SWO has given an opinion based on many Tanzanian communities who do not value education especially for female children. Giving the parent the chance to consent is the same as depriving the adolescent mother the opportunity to return to school. In Kenyan context Okwany (2017:63 as cited on Chilisa, 2002:22) argued that the number of adolescent mothers who are re-engage is small compared to those who are dis-engage; this is because the re-engagement process is surrounded in the context of exclusion. The policy makers forget to address gender ideologies which are embedded in adolescent early pregnancies and early marriages.

“The guideline to require parental consent so that an adolescent mother returns to school will make it difficult for young mothers to get the right to education. Due to the nature of many parents in the district who don't see the value of educating a female child, I am not sure if she will see the value of educating her once she has a child. It is the child's rights we cannot oppose. It must be the parent's responsibility to send their daughter back to school. I” (Parent speaking in FGD, 18th August 2022, Mwisi village, Igunga).

Igunga is one of the districts with high levels of early pregnancy and early marriage. There is a high dropout rate of adolescent girls from secondary school influenced by cultural practices that value early marriages. However, the boys are allowed to get married at the age of 18 years (URT, 1971). Due to this the parent, especially the father, has the last say to the family and whose decision is not supposed to be questioned, they prefer their daughters to get married instead of finishing their studies. Consequently, this hinders the good intentions of the government for re-entry and takes away their right to education. This situation is not only in Igunga but also is in many areas in Tanzania whereby the patriarchal practices are dominated. The area, which is dominated by Maasai, and Mara has similar characteristics with Igunga. Blomqvist argued that cultural practices affect the life of women and girls in the global south due to the socially constructed values and norms which are legally blessed (Blomqvist, 2014:4).

Policy makers should recognise the cultural patterns which hinder the access of education to adolescent mothers and avoid institutionalising it in the guideline.

4.3.4 No second pregnancies

The education re-entry guideline explains that if the re-joined adolescent mother gets second pregnant, she is not allowed re-entry again after giving birth (JMT, 2022:2). The information received from the interview with SWO shows this issue is one of the weaknesses of the re-entry guideline. Education is a basic right as stipulated in the international agreements that the country agreed to rectify.

“Efforts should be increased in preventing early pregnancy and not preventing the child from going to school. Education should continue to be distributed to reduce negative stereotypes in society toward the use of family planning for young people. Preventing a young mother from continuing her studies if she gets a second pregnancy is no different from holding back in our efforts to fight to achieve gender equality” (Interview with SWO, 24th August 2022, Igunga urban).

The challenges facing a girl child are many, in one way or another she may get another pregnancy soon after giving birth to her first child. This situation has led to challenges in preventing early pregnancy. The understanding of adolescent mothers about pregnancy prevention education is still low. Many of them are still afraid of being known to be using contraceptive methods with their families especially for non-student mothers. The following is the answer from a non-student mother concerned about friendly health service provided at the health centre.

“I don’t know anything about youth friendly service, I get birth control education when I come to bring the child to the clinic. And not in detail because it is an integrated education for all the mothers who brought their children to the clinic that day. It is difficult for me to ask questions because we are in an open class with adults, and I am afraid that I will be misunderstood” (MA, 18 years-old, non-student adolescent mother, 18th A 2022, Mwisi village - Igunga).

In a sub-Saharan Africa context Birungi argued that there is the need to integrate pregnancy prevention methods into sexuality education. The schools give only adolescent mothers the chance to receive prevention services through referral to health centres; however, even non-students’ mothers need to be prevented from being pregnant (Birungi, 2015:15). Regardless of the low understanding of contraceptives methods to non-student adolescent mothers, at school level there is no proper sexuality education. The sexuality topic is integrated in other subjects like biology, and it does not teach pregnancy prevention methods. However, the school clubs which are led by students themselves have discussions on sexuality and how to prevent pregnancy, but the advised option is to abstain. This is unlikely to solve the problem.

4.3.5 Wellbeing of the New-born Child

The information received from an interview with SWO shows that the new education guideline does not consider the wellbeing of the new-born child. The education re-entry

guideline said that the child should not appear in school in a school environment (JMT, 2022:2). This means that there is no room for breastfeeding in school hours.

“The guidelines have not set a safe environment for the child, and the basic thing to consider is that you cannot allow a young mother to go to school and not improve the environment for her child. The peace of mind of a young mother is found when she knows that her child is safe. The absence of a special area for breastfeeding and preventing children around the school area is not healthy for both adolescent mothers and children as well” (Interview with SWO, woman, 24th August 2022, Igunga urban).

This is one of the challenges which is not solved, and it is not easy to get the answer to it. The guideline shows that the child is not allowed to be seen in the school environment. At the same time the guideline does not say how the adolescent mothers can get a chance to breastfeed her child. In this context, it will lead adolescent mothers who come from poor families to fail to proceed with their studies due to lack of money to buy alternative milk during the period they are in school. Nyairo argued that re-entry policies in Sub – Saharan Africa are silent on the services needed by the mother and the babies and do not show how a young mother might care for her baby. This leads to the conflict between schooling and taking care of the baby, hence school dropout and low involvement of adolescent mothers in education re-engagement programs (Nyairo, 2018:6). The silence of policy guidelines towards new-born children led to a lot of questions from the parents of adolescent mothers as follows.

“What has the government planned for the child born especially during the period when the mother will be in school? As parents we do not have a problem, we will give the child proper care, what about mother’s milk? They will be allowed to come back to breastfeed for a certain period or if they leave at 7:00 am they return at 6 pm like another student? My fear is that we may send our children back to school and bring malnutrition to our grandchildren” (Parent speaking in FGD, 18th August 2022, Mwisi village, Igunga).

These questions asked by parents in FGD conducted at Mwisi Igunga, they seem to be happy with the opportunity for adolescent mothers to go back to school. However, at the end of the day they remain in a dilemma regarding the fate of their new – born children. Due to this, the guide has not provided an answer to it. It led to problems for adolescent mothers to fulfil their basic right to education. Moreover, Birungi argued that in the Sub-Saharan African context the school setup is not helpful to adolescent mothers; there is no existence of childcare, breastfeeding room, and financial support (Birungi, 2015:25).

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter answers question number four which asks; To what extent can policy provisions ensure a higher retention rate of adolescent mothers in education? To answer this question, the study shows the potential and pitfall of education re-entry guidelines to adolescent mothers. Some of the weaknesses like negotiations of the parent for re-entry, no chance for second pregnancy, disengagement time and short waiting period. All this led to a low retention rate of adolescent mothers in education. Due to this to provide education rights for adolescent mothers, the government should consider removing socially constructed barriers for high retention rates through creating a friendly environment which is the best for adolescent mothers to proceed with her studies. The issue of negotiation with

the parents for adolescent mother return to school led barrier to the guideline because even if parent the adolescent mother

Chapter 5 Conclusions and recommendations

The chapter reminds us about the 4 research questions which are (1) How has official policy on providing access to education for adolescent mothers in Tanzania changed over time? (2) What other factors led to high exclusion rates of girls in Igunga in the past? (3) What role has led to the exclusion of teenage mothers in education in Igunga? (4) To what extent can policy provisions ensure a higher retention rate of adolescent mothers in education? Due to this the chapter is going to discuss the summary of the key findings and conclusion and last recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the key findings and conclusion

The study demonstrates that despite the government effort in ensuring the access of education to adolescent mothers the re-entry guideline is silent on the wellbeing of the new-born child. The guideline does not allow the child to be seen in a school environment however other adolescent mothers are not financially stable enough to buy alternative milk for their babies. Due to this absence of nursing zones (breastfeeding room) will be the obstacle to retain adolescent mothers especially for those who come from low-income families and are not afforded to buy alternative milk for their babies.

The study shows that the Tanzania government to rectify the international treaties for provision of equal rights to all like CEDAW and UNCRC. The education access to adolescent mothers is still problematic because of the following fact: The new re-entry guideline demands the permission from parents for adolescent mothers to proceed with the studies. The data from the study shows this may lead to low enrolment of adolescent mothers since getting pregnant before married is an act of shame for the family. It is difficult for the parent to agree with the adolescent mother to return to school, especially in rural areas.

The study shows that regardless of re-entry guidelines to insure the access of education. But the life of an adolescent is intersection with gender roles, the negative societal attitude, and the marriage act of Tanzania which allows the girl to get married at the age of 15. All these are barriers towards education attainment to adolescent mothers.

Conclusively, the study has provided insight on how adolescent mothers experience challenges in achieving their educational goals regardless of new re-entry policy guidelines. This is influenced by government policies and guidelines to institutionalise the social norms like early marriages which are bringing gender injustice in the society. As Fraser said, “to bring gender parity we should consider the redistribution and recognition neither alone is sufficient” (Fraser, 1998:2). Which means the redistribution is resources allocated by the government like schools, policies, and financial aid and recognition is cultural practices which can hinder the achievement of a certain policy or guideline (Fraser, 1998:2). In re-entry policy guidelines, government's neglect to recognize the cultural patterns which hinder the adolescent mothers' access to education, hence they institutionalise in the guideline.

5.2 Recommendations

- Government policy makers should integrate the re-entry policy guideline with another national project like TASAF to support adolescent mother households financially. This would help to reduce the economic hardship to the family of adolescent mothers. The main purpose of TASAF is to strengthen the household's economy by investing in education and health for children under five through provision conditional and unconditional cash transfer (TASAF, 2017).

- The government should look at the importance of improving school infrastructure by setting up a special room for breastfeeding infants. Since the government allows adolescent mothers to proceed with their studies, they must recognize that they are students with unique needs different from non-student mothers. They should set a specific time for the baby to be brought and breastfed.

- Awareness raising is needed especially in rural areas where most people don't have clear information on re-entry guidelines. First should educate the local leader like elderly, village chairperson and village officer. This will help to disseminate information through the meetings. Moreover, the use of local radios, National TV and Radio is needed.

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List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Questions guided adolescent mothers who attend school.

1. What age were you at the time of your pregnancy and what age are you now?
2. How did you feel at first learning you were expecting a child?
3. What occurred at the school following the pregnancy's discovery?
4. How did the boy respond when you told him Nancy was pregnant?
5. How did the boy's parents respond?
6. What took place at home following the pregnancy's discovery?
7. Were you aware of the re-entry rule before getting pregnant?
9. How did your family decide that you should return to school?
10. How long did you spend at home before returning to school?
11. Did you retake the same grade you already completed?
12. How is being in school today compared to before you became pregnant?
13. How did the following individuals feel about your returning to school?
 - Brothers, sisters, and other relatives
 - Other students - The administration of the school - The boy who caused the pregnancy - The boy's family - Members of the community
14. What needs to change to allow more girls like you to return to school from the group's
15. With whom are you currently residing?
16. How do you manage having a baby and going to school at the same time?

17. Who is responsible for watching your kids while you are in school?
18. Do you know any other mother students?
19. What, in your opinion, prevented them from returning to school?
20. How would you advise other students to avoid getting pregnant while attending school?
What do you think of the re-entry policy, number
21. What do you think about the re-entry policy?

Appendix 2: Questions guided adolescent mothers who did not attend to school

1. What age were you at the time of your pregnancy and what age are you now?
2. How did you feel when you initially learned you were expecting a child?
3. What transpired at the school following the pregnancy's identification?
4. What transpired when the pregnancy was found at home?
5. Were you aware of the re-entry policy prior to conceiving?
6. If so, how did you learn about it?
7. What does staying at home mean to you? When you are aware that you might utilise the re-entry policy
8. Would you like to return to school?
9. Why do you believe your parents chose not to re-enrol you in school?
10. How did the following individuals respond to your decision not to go back? siblings, classmates,
11. With whom are you staying with now?
12. How has your life altered in general?
13. Do you have any knowledge of other student mothers who have applied this policy and why?
14. What factors do you believe prevent adolescent moms from returning?
15. How would you advise other students to avoid getting pregnant while attending school?
16. What do you think of the re-entry policy?

Appendix 3: Question guided Parent/guardians in FGD

1. What age are you?
2. What number of kids do you have?
3. What age are the kids?
4. How many students are there?
5. Which educational level have you attained?
6. What is your source of income and what can you afford for family expenditures it to cover with?
7. How did you find out your daughter was expecting?
8. How did your daughter's pregnancy alter your relationship with her?
9. Did you hear about adolescent new education re- entry guidelines for adolescent mothers?
10. If yes, what is your opinion?
11. Do you know the rules for a young mother to return to school after pregnancy?
12. What are the challenges a family will face when deciding to return the adolescent mother to school?
13. What is the role of family members in ensuring that an adolescent mother is retained in school?

Appendix 4: Profile of the study participants

Name	Background	Date of the Interview
AM	The District SWO, 34 years old female	28 th August 2022.
KM	19 th years old student adolescent mother	20 th August 2022
VB	18 th years old students' adolescent mother	20 th August 2022

SS	18 th year old non-student adolescent mother.	18 th August 2022
RR	17 th years old students' adolescent mother	20 th August 2022
MA	17 th years old non-student adolescent mother	18 th August 2022
RM	17 th years old non-student adolescent mother	18 th August 2022
VJ	19 th years old student adolescent mother	20 th August 2022
RR	18 th years old non-student mother	18 th August 2022
AS	19 th years old student adolescent mother	18 th August 2022
DR	17 th years old student mother	20 th August 2022
AZ	22 years old female a participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022
KK	24 years old male, a participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022
HS	48 years old male. A participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022
NK	50 years old female. A participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022

ZS	62 years old male, a participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022
MM	68 years old female, a participant in FGD at Mwisi village	18 th August 2022

Appendix 4.1 Respondents' educational level

Education determines the level of understanding of a person. The same issue can be interpreted differently from one person to another due to their level of education. The respondent of this study has a different level of education from university level to those who do not attend school at all. Starting from the group of adolescent mothers, all managed to reach secondary education. However only five of them proceeded with their studies while five were no longer at school. Two managed to reach Form 2 of secondary education, two managed to reach Form 3 of secondary education and 1 managed to reach Form 4 of secondary education. In this last case, teachers discovered her pregnancy just before her last exam. Moreover, of the six respondents of the focus group discussion two of them managed to reach an advanced level of secondary education, and two managed to finish secondary education. One finished only primary education and one did not attend school at all. Only the Government official (Social Welfare Officer) had a university degree.

Appendix 5; Parents/guardian consent form for Adolescent mother under 18 which is written in Kiswahili

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Ezafun

FOMU YA IDHINI YA MZAZI/ MLEZI KWA AJILI YA MAHOJIANO.

Mimi MILEMBE MAGANGA ambaye ni Mzazi/Mlezi wa
..... nimeridhia mtoto wangu kufanya mahojiano na
Mwashamba Kapipi Amiri. Mwanafunzi wa chuo cha International Institute of Social Studies
cha nchini Uholanzi kwa dhumuni la kitaaluma. Mahojiano yanahusu "Kurudishwa kwa
wakina mama vijana katika elimu sekondari". Mahojiano haya yamefanyika eneo la
MWISI kata ya MWISI Wilaya ya IGUNGA

Sahihi ya mzazi/ Mlezi ~~MM~~
Tarehe 18/8/2022

Sahihi ya Mtafiti UOBmir
Tarehe 18/8/2022