Inclusive Education for Teenage Mothers in Mpwapwa District, Tanzania: A Critical Analysis of The School Re-entry Guideline (2022)

A Research Paper

by:

SOPHIA AUGUST TEMBA - 685908
(Tanzania)

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
Major:

SJP
Members of the Examining Committee:
Supervisor: Professor Dr. Karin Arts
Second Reader: Dr. Jeff Handmaker

The Hague, The Netherlands
December 2024

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the International Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Contents

Abstract v

List of Maps vi

Map 1.1 A map showing the Teenage Prevalence Rate 5 vi

Map 1.2 A map showing the study area 10 vi

List of Figure vi

Figure 1.1 A Researcher Interview Teenage Mothers in Dar es Salaam 6 vi

Figure 1.2 Teenage mothers in Tanzania struggle with stigmatization 16 vi

List of Acronyms vi

Acknowledgement vii

Chapter One: Setting the Scene 1

1.0 Introduction 1

1.1 Historical Overview of the Evolution of the Education System in Tanzania 3

1.2 Problem Statement 4

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions 7

1.4 Justification of the Study 8

1.5 Research Process and Methodology 8

1.5.1 Research Design and Approach 8

1.5.2 Research Sites 9

1.5.3 Key Informants 10

1.5.4 Methods of Data Collection 11

1.6 Analysing Data 11

1.7 Ethical considerations 11

1.8 Researcher Positionality 12

1.9 Summary of the Chapter 12

Chapter Two: Understanding Access to Education by Teenage Mothers in Tanzania 13

2.0 Understanding Inclusive Education as Human Rights Issue 13

2.1 Challenges Faced by Teenage Mothers 15

2.2 Women's Empowerment Overview 17

2.3 Child Rights-Based Approach 18

2.4 Integration of Theoretical Frameworks 20

2.5 Summary of the Chapter 20

Chapter Three: Bridging the Gaps: Exploring Teenage Mothers' Experiences with Inclusive Education in Mpwapwa District and the Challenges Faced 21

3.1 Tanzania Legal Framework Context 21

3.2 Challenges for Girls in Accessing Inclusive Education 23

3.3.1 Social Stigma and Discrimination 24
3.3. 2 Social Isolation 24
3.2.3 Pregnancy Testing 25
3.2.4 Restriction of Teenage Mothers to Continue with Studies after Birth 26
3.3 Support for Education Achievements to Teenage Mothers 26
3.4 Experiences of Teachers and School Management with Re-entry Programme 28
3.5 The Roles and Perceptions of Parents and Community Members towards Teenage Mothers 29
3.6 Summary of the Chapter 31
Chapter Four: Concluding Remarks 32
Chapter Five: Conclusion 35
References 36
Appendices 42

Abstract

The study explores the implementation of The School Re-entry Guideline (2022) in Mpwapwa District in Tanzania. It specifically aims at understanding the experiences of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District in the formal education system, and the challenges they face. The study analyses the experiences of pregnancy, and of motherhood of teenage mothers after returning to public school in Mpwapwa District. The researcher identified the challenges faced by teenage mothers in accessing formal education and explored strategies to promote their inclusion in the educational system. By using a child rights-based approach and women's empowerment framework, Tanzania's School Re-entry Guideline (2022) and its implementation was assessed based on two mentioned frameworks. Through interviews with teachers, government officials, and representatives of Civil Society Organizations as key informants, their insights and views on the subject could be gathered.

The study underlines the critical role of education in empowering teenage mothers by equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills that challenge gender inequality. The study highlights the need for a comprehensive policy review and improved community support to create a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment for teenage mothers. This study adds to the ongoing conversation in Tanzania on inclusive education by supporting the advocacy programs targeted to address the specific challenges experienced by teenage mothers by enabling them to balance their role as students and mothers while pursuing their academic goals.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study is relevant to development studies as it critically analyses how education and gender equality intersect, particularly in relation to teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District, Tanzania. Supporting inclusive education practices needs an understanding of the challenges that teenage mothers experience in accessing the formal education system as education is a fundamental human right and essential component. The issues involved contribute to broader conversations on gender equality and social justice that align with global initiatives such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study highlights the specific challenges teenage mothers in Tanzania face such as societal stigma and lack of support systems. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of new policy, specifically designed to meet the comprehensive needs of teenage mothers.

Key words: Teenage mothers, Child Rights-Based Approach, Women's Empowerment Framework, inclusive education, Tanzania.

List of Maps

Map 1.1 A map showing the Teenage Prevalence Rate 5

Map 1.2 A map showing the study area 10

List of Figure

Figure 1.1 A Researcher Interview Teenage Mothers in Dar es Salaam 6

Figure 1.2 Teenage mothers in Tanzania struggle with stigmatization 16

List of Acronyms

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

COBET Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania

CRBA Child Rights-Based Approach

CSOs Civil Society Organizations

ECD Early Childhood Development

ESDP Education Sector Development Plan

FBEP Fee-Free Basic Education Policy

GBV Gender Based Violence

ICBAE Integrated Community Basic and Adult Education

ISS International Institute of Social Studies

LCA Law of the Child Act

MCDGEC Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (Tanzania)

MOEST Ministry of Education Science and Technology (Tanzania)

PO-RALG President 's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (Tanzania)

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations)

SRHR Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

TDHS Tanzania's Demographic and Health Survey

UDHR Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations)

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

URT United Republic of Tanzania

Acknowledgement

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to Almighty God, whose guidance and strength have served as my unfailing inspirations along this journey. I am sincerely thankful for the wisdom and resilience that have been given to me, enabling me to overcome the difficulties along the way. I deeply acknowledge the financial support from the Dutch Government through the Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) throughout my MA studies. The financial support motivated me to work hard and pursue my academic goals with passion.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Professor Dr. Karin Arts, whose expert guidance and unwavering support have contributed significantly to this study. Your insightful feedback has not only improved my study but has also motivated me to strive for excellence. I am equally grateful to my second reader and mentor Dr. Jeff Handmaker for his constructive and helpful critiques which have greatly enhanced the quality of this study and my master's at large.

The love and constant encouragement by my husband Oscar Mselle have been my guide throughout the study journey. I deeply appreciate that. Thanks for taking good care of our children while I was away, this allowed me to focus on my studies knowing my children were in good hands. Your sacrifice and support have been priceless to me. This also applies to my family members and friends who were always praying for my success. Thanks especially for those who took time to look after my children: be blessed. I also acknowledge my good friend Cynthia Mushi for all the kindness and support you gave me before and after joining ISS. Your friendship has been a source of strength, and your encouragement has motivated me to stay focused. When things became more difficult you were always there to give me courage and strength, I really appreciate that.

Dear Naana Otoo-Oyortey, your belief in my abilities has inspired me to push beyond my limits. No matter how many times I reached out for help, you never hesitated to lend a hand. I am truly grateful for your continued support and that of FORWARD. My sincere appreciation goes to my colleague Asha Ramadhani for her excellent help in organizing the field data gathering. Your loyalty and efforts were fundamental to the success of this study. I really value all your contributions, and I understand that without your help, this assignment would not have been possible.

Lastly, I pay tribute to my beloved daughter Gabriella and my son Gian for being my little cheerleaders throughout my studies. Your lovely voices asking "*Mumy, where are you? Please come back*" have always reminded me of the love and happiness that await me at home. Your patience and kindness during my absence have been a source of motivation throughout my studies. I love you.

"***I appreciate everyone for having been part of this journey with me, may God bless you all***".

Chapter One: Setting the Scene

1.0 Introduction

School re-entry programmes for teenage mothers who dropped out of school due to pregnancy, especially at the secondary education level, have been priorities in many African countries. Countries such as Malawi, Zambia, Senegal and Kenya have different initiatives to support teenage mothers to integrate back into formal school (Haki Elimu, 2021). The focus of these programmes mentioned to be helping and empowering teenage mothers to go back to the formal education system (World Bank, 2022). Despite policies allowing their return to formal schooling, teenage mothers across Sub Saharan Africa experience challenges that limit their study prospects. The obstacles include inadequate childcare services and facilities, negative attitudes from fellow students and teachers, and difficulties in meeting school requirements such as payment of school fees. These challenges make it difficult for the school re-entry programmes to be successfully implemented and for the teenage mothers to return to school (FAWE, 2023).

A similar initiative was carried out in Ghana and somehow it was successful even though the programme was not fully implemented due to lack of childcare facilities. However, it was reported that in 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 a total number of 10,869 out of 22,147 teenage mothers were reintegrated back into public schools. This was possible due to readmission campaigns, awareness creation and psychosocial support strategies for teenage mothers in both primary and secondary schools (Africa Education Watch, 2022: 6).

In Tanzania, when a girl become pregnant, she is forced to leave school, and it is questionable that she will return to school after delivery. According to UNFPA factsheet, (2018) between 20003 to 2011, total number of 55,000 girls dropped out of school in Tanzania due to pregnancy and the evidence shows that most of these girls were primary and secondary age ranging from 13-15 years (Primary school) and from 16-18 years (from secondary school) (UNFPA,2018, p.3). Similar to this between 2017 to 2020, statistics shows that 25,971 pregnant girls were expelled from school due to pregnancy (Haki Elimu, 2024, p.10). Stopping teenage mothers from continuing with their education has a great impact on their personal lives and their families (UNFPA ,2018, p.3). This highlighting the significant effects on girls' education. It is obvious that, Tanzania's economy and development possibilities harmed when such a significant number of girls kept out of th formal education system due to pregnancy

Tanzania is among the African countries that implements a school re-entry programme to create inclusive and equitable learning environments for teenage mothers. Tanzania introduced School Re-entry Guideline (2022) that allows teenage mothers who dropped out of school for reasons such as pregnancy to get back into the formal education system after having given birth although it remains unclear how many girls have been returned to formal education system after delivery (Haki Elimu, 2024, p.10). The School Re-entry Guideline aimed at improving the quality of education through several measures seeking to provide equal education access to everyone with an emphasis on inclusivity and appropriate curricula (Haki Elimu, 2024). The government issued this Guideline in response to the growing number of teenage mothers banned from school. The overall aim of the Guideline was to provide assurance that teenage mothers who drop out of school can go back to continue with their studies (World Bank, 2022).

The Guideline permits teenage mothers to go back to their previous schools if they wish. Their parents can also decide to transfer them to a new school, or the teenage mother can decide to undertake alternative education URT, 2022). Flexibility in the enrolment time frame after birth, allowing the teenage mothers to decide when they are prepared to go back to school, is important. Thus, the Guideline gives them an interval of two years after having given birth if they are medically fit. The Guideline stated that, "***A student who interrupted studies due to pregnancy must return to school within two years after leaving***" (URT, 2022, p.3). The Guideline added that "***The student should return to school at the beginning of the new academic year in the class she interrupted***" (Ibid). The interval of two years was purposely for teenage mothers to prepare themselves and arrange childcare support before going back to school. When pregnancy is discovered around the time of the national exams, a pregnant teenager should be encouraged to sit for exams if the medical reports show she is capable. A pregnant schoolgirl is required to inform the school management formally and in writing about her intention to resume school after delivery (URT, 2022).

Adding to this, the Guideline suggested that the school environment should be friendly to teenage mothers, the schools are encouraged to maintain and keep the welcoming environment to ensure teenage mothers do not face stigma or any kind of discrimination when they return to school (URT, 2022). The Guideline particularly highlights the issue of stigma and discrimination that teenage mothers experience, because before the execution of the Re-entry Guideline teenage mothers frequently faced rejection and expulsion from their fellow students and school officials. The Guideline advocates for the elimination of discriminatory practices that restrict teenage mothers from accessing education opportunities (Haki Elimu, 2024). Teenage mothers are supposed to be treated with dignity and respect by their fellow students and school officials, and they must not be intimidated, punished or excluded. The Guideline emphasizes the importance of awareness creation among students and school staff and the community at large to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for teenage mothers (URT, 2022).

By recognizing that returning to school after childbirth might be difficult for teenage mothers, the Re-entry Guideline suggests several support mechanisms to help them reintegrate. These include counselling services to support teenage mothers emotionally and psychologically as they are transitioning back to school. The school committee should convene a meeting with the parents or guardians to discuss ways of supporting the teenage mother's upbringing, especially in facilitating their continued learning upon returning home from school (URT, 2022). "***"The school management should call a joint meeting between the Parents/Guardians and the School Committee /Board to discuss how to support the student to continue with her studies after delivery***" (URT,2022, p.3). Academic support is also mentioned by the Guideline as remedial programmes can help girls to fill the gaps resulting from their absence from school during and after childbirth. Lastly, support with the parenting skills required to manage the responsibilities of both studies and childcare (Ibid). For the preventive measures, the schools are encouraged to provide age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education to the students and to encourage them to concentrate on studies and other school activities (FAWE, 2023).

1.1 Historical Overview of the Evolution of the Education System in Tanzania

Tanzania's education system has changed over the years because of multiple historical and cultural factors. Before colonization (under Germany and the British), Tanzania's education system was primarily informal. Tribal elders played a big role as teachers and in passing on traditions and essential life skills to the next generations (Yahl, 2015).

During the colonial period, Tanzania's formal education system was introduced and adopted from Germany. Later, the British established government schools and motivated the indigenous communities to attend and adopt the new lifestyle of Christianity. The specific purpose was to transmit their values to Tanzania's citizens and the curriculum was not to transform the Tanzanian societies but rather to maintain their colonial control (Samoff, 1981).

Like was the case in many other colonial systems, Tanzania's education system at the time was not designed to favour girl's education. Instead, the focus was on serving the interests and needs of the colonial administration including developing skilled labour for their economy. Girls and marginalized groups were left behind because the colonial education was primarily oriented and design with a small number of group of people especially in urban areas who were eligible to higher learning. The colonial education often served to maintain the existing cultural norms that prioritized boy's education over that of girls. The traditional beliefs on gender roles prescribed that girls should prioritise and focus on domestic duties more than on education (Samoff, 1981).

After Independence in 1961, the government of Tanzania took over, and started implementing various programs to increase access to education, and abolished school fees in public schools (Yahl, 2015). There were challenges in communicating the new educational policies and goals to many Tanzanian indigenous community members, especially to adults and youth who had never gone to school- themselves. As a result, the government decided to introduce an adult education program and to eliminate the primary school fees for public schools to increase enrolment (Samoff, 1981).

A primary initiative was to push for universal primary education by removing barriers to enrolment, including the specific challenges faced by girls. These initiatives were successfully implemented and increased the number of enrolments in primary education in government schools. Adding to that, the education reforms also included revising the curriculum to be more inclusive and in favour of girl's needs by introducing gender strategies within the education system (Author & Court, 1976). Tanzania has made significant progress towards the access of basic education through the Education Sector Development plan. Since the commencement of the Fee-Free Basic Education Policy (FBEP), the enrolment rate for pre-primary, primary and ordinary secondary education (O level) increased from 25.5% to 34.9% (pre-primary), 73.4% to 81.8% (primary) and from 24.3% to 38.3% (ordinary secondary school) (World Bank, 2023a: 8-9)

Gender inequality in enrolment has gradually decreased due to the introduction of the FBEP. However, girl's empowerment and gender equality still need thoughtful consideration as there has been a noted gap in implementing the strategy due to various reasons including lack of resources (Woods & Eric, 2008).Enrolment and retention in Tanzania continue to be a concern particularly after primary school for children from poor families especially in rural areas. The gaps can be identified between the children from rural areas and those from urban areas. Since 2016 primary and lower secondary education completion rates have remained extremely constant (World Bank,

2023a). Overall, roughly 30% of students drop out of school at the end of the primary phase due to various reasons including poverty, pregnancy and long distance for children residing in marginalized geographies (Ibid). Tanzania's secondary school completion rate is significantly lower than that of other Sub-Saharan African countries (World Bank, 2023a). Programs like COBET (Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania) and ICBAE (Integrated Community Basic and Adult Education) were designed to provide alternative education pathways for out-of-school children including teenage mothers. These programs consider the situation of school dropouts including teenage mothers, offer them a second option to pursue their studies (Woods & Eric, 2008) .However there remain many children who have not completed their basic education but are in the job market and significant efforts will be needed to educate and retrain them (World Bank, 2023a: 10)

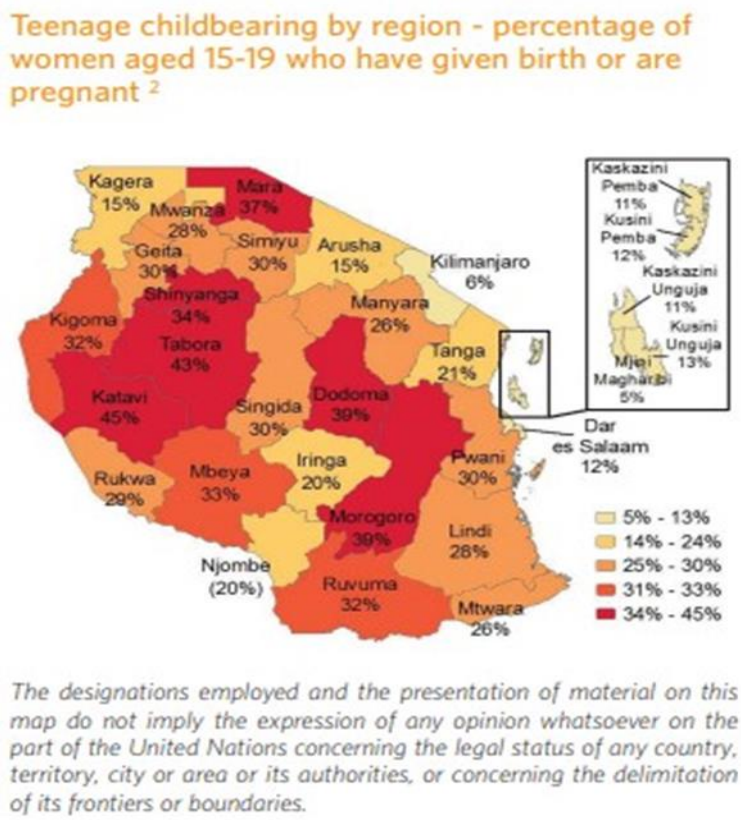
Despite all the efforts and initiatives, there are still challenges in providing girls with equal access to education. Cultural attitudes, economic challenges and the prioritization of boys over girls in some marginalized communities continued to limit opportunities for girls to access education equal to boys (Samoff, 1981).

1.2 Problem Statement

In the Tanzanian context, like in others, social-cultural norms are often dictating the needs and expectations of girls and women within the community. Traditional beliefs may favour boys' education over that of girls, generating an assumption that girls' education is less important. As a result, some families may decide to support boys' education while restricting the educational opportunities available to girls (Unterhalter et al., 2013).

Despite a few recent developments in the education system, Tanzania still faces significant challenges in relation to girls' enrolment, retention and academic performance. In 2017 the number of girls enrolled in ordinary level secondary schools were more than boys: 904,172, while boys were 863,718. However, this positive trend does not extend to A level secondary schools where there are substantial gaps between boys' and girls' enrolment. According to the findings, 83,689 boys were enrolled in high secondary school while for the girls only 57, 278 were successful enrolled (Iddy, 2021: 2). Research studies indicate that a significant number of girls are not enrolled in secondary school, and among those who are enrolled many failed to complete the secondary education cycle due to factors such as teenage pregnancy or being compelled into early marriage. For instance, the statistics show that in 2017, 4,442 girls dropped their secondary studies due to pregnancy (Iddy, 2021: 2).

Teenage pregnancy and child marriage comprise serious social and economic challenges facing Mpwapwa District. Consequently, girls are forced to marry a against their will, which leads to a poverty cycle among girls in Mpwapwa District. In Tanzania teenage mothers experienced several challenges in accessing education, these challenges influenced by several socio economic and cultural aspects. Statistically, teenage pregnancy rates in Tanzania are high. According to the Tanzania's Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS), approximately 27% of girls aged 15-19 have begun childbearing, and the rates increased by 4% from 23% in 2010 to 27% in 2015-2016 (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023: 7). The TDHS lists Dodoma Region as having one of the top five highest rates of teenage pregnancy (39%) (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023: 7).



Map1.1: (UNFPA Tanzania, 2018) Fact Sheet: Teenage Pregnancy (*The map above shows the top Regions in Tanzania with a high prevalence rate of teenage pregnancy and Dodoma Region among the top five with a high prevalence rate*).

Poverty often makes this situation worse as families with low incomes may prioritize immediate financial contributions over girls' educational success. The data from the World bank (World Bank, 2023a) indicates that girls from poor background are high likely to drop out of school due family hard ship which forced them to early pregnancy as the consequences they dropout the school so that they can take care of their children and other domestic responsibilities. Pregnancy stops girls from pursuing their dream and forces them to take other responsibilities for taking care of their children instead of continuing with their studies (FORWARD UK, 2018).

A study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2020) highlights that poverty is a major obstacle to teenage mothers to pursue their educational dreams. Economic hardship limits teenage mothers to access education resources such as school materials and childcare supports as a result they are discouraged to go back to school to continue with their studies after giving birth. The same study revealed that many teenage mothers reported feeling economic pressure to prioritize work over education so that they can afford the living cost for themselves and their children. As a result, they found themselves in an increased poverty cycle which in turn limits their future opportunities (Ibid)

Figure 1.1. The picture above from the Citizen newspaper, shows a researcher interviewing some teenage mothers in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, about why they refused to go back to school after giving birth. One of the reasons mentioned was financial constraints as they lacked financial support to take care of their children while they continued with their studies (The Citizen, 2023).

In addition, cultural norms and practices contribute to the challenges faced by teenage mothers. According to a study by Raymond (2021), traditional beliefs on gender roles tend to place a greater emphasis on marriage and motherhood for girls that can create an impression that education is less crucial for girls than for boys. This cultural bias not only affected their self-confidence but also how the community perceives their educational ambition.

Various international and regional declarations and conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognise education as a fundamental human right that everyone is entitled to and should be universally accessible without discrimination based on e.g. gender, race, or ethnicity. The right to education is one of the initial stages in securing the right to development. However, many continue to be denied the opportunity to access the right to education due to causes like poverty, early marriage, or traditional gender roles (World Bank, 2021).

Being a mother at a young age could make girls vulnerable and make it difficult for them to obtain further education either due to community stigma or economic constraints. The term "Vulnerability" can be defined in different ways. In this study girl's vulnerability is defined as lack of agency. UNFPA(UNFPA, 2020": 6) define girls' vulnerability as the situation where girls lack agency and experience harmful practices including forced marriage or female genital mutilation. Vulnerability denies girl's ability to make informed decisions about their lives such as on their health, education and work (Ibid). According to UNICEF, vulnerability is defined in terms of gender disparities in education. The report involved highlights those girls from marginalized

backgrounds, and particularly in low-income countries, face the most difficulties due to social norms that prioritise boys' education over girls which continue keeping them in a cycle of inequality and poverty (UNICEF, 2020: 8)

Most of the girls in Tanzania are vulnerable due to social norms and practices which undermine their rights and place them at a disadvantage compared to boys (Raymond, 2021). Limited opportunities for education hinder girls' ability to reach their full potential and contribute to meaningful social change. This is why the World Education Declaration for All declared that both girls and boys should get equal opportunities in accessing formal education without any kind of discrimination based on features such as gender, age, or social status (UNESCO, 1990). The declaration calls for the elimination of all forms of gender stereotyping in education systems and advocates for girls' empowerment by promoting equal quality education for girls. The Declaration highlights the need for strong commitments to eradicating educational inequalities that affect marginalised groups, including teenage mothers, and to ensure they will not face any kind of discrimination in accessing education. It recognizes the need for education programs that remove all social and cultural norms that prevent girls from accessing education as boys (Ibid).

Despite the significant efforts being made globally to make sure that all children are in schools, thousands of children are still not enrolled in school or have no opportunity to access the quality learning that would enable them to fully take part in and achieve education (World Bank, 2021). Ensuring that every student feel respected and valued is the ultimate objective of inclusion in education, despite there being many barriers on the path of that goal. Marginalized groups of students face discrimination, exclusion and stereotyping due to their gender, status, identity, disability, and beliefs and attitudes (UNESCO, 2020a). Different literature shows different challenges for the education system though. One challenge mentioned are the consequences of stigma and discrimination which lead to poor performance for most of the marginalised students. Children from marginalized backgrounds often encounter challenges in school that limit them from fully taking part in the education process. This includes unsafe circumstances, inadequate support, and environments that are not conducive to diverse learning needs (World Bank, 2023b).

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

This study aims at understanding whether the existing School Re-entry Guideline in Tanzania was designed to meet the specific needs and challenges faced by teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. This involves analysing the provisions and strategies within this Guideline that could support and empower teenage mothers in their educational pursuits. The study pinpoints the gaps in the existing Guideline that may hinder the creation of inclusive and supportive learning environments for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. By identifying gaps and achievements, if any, this study will provide critical arguments and debate on the educational needs of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. This will create a basis to understand whether and how the existing Re-entry Guideline in Tanzania address the needs and challenges of teenage mothers. The main research question is:

How do the existing School Re-entry Guideline address the needs and challenges of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

The above question is supported by the following sub-questions:

a) What are the challenges that the teenage mothers face, and what are their key needs that require attention?

b) What alternative support systems and initiatives could be developed or enhanced to better assist teenage mothers in balancing their educational pursuits and motherhood responsibilities in Mpwapwa District?

1.4 Justification of the Study

Having worked for 10 years with teenage mothers in Tanzania has pushed me to conduct this research. Education opportunities for teenage mothers are useful as those help them to acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities to pursue a better life, become economically independent, and able to avoid the risk of being exploited due to economic dependency (Iddy, 2021b). More specifically, addressing inclusive education of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District is an opportunity to address gender equality as per Goal five of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNFPA, 2022). Education is one of the most important items for the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda and has significant value for the successful implementation of all SDGs. Knowing the value and role of education, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights education as a stand-alone goal (SDG4), including for growth and development, health, environmentally friendly production, and climate change. Ensuring teenage mothers' access to education can, moreover, promote gender equality by empowering teenage mothers to fight against discriminatory harmful traditional practices in Mpwapwa District, promote equal opportunity for all, confidence to make informed choices and decisions for their future and to be part of decision-making processes at their household and the community at large (UNESCO, 2015).

1.5 Research Process and Methodology

This section outlines the research steps, study areas, techniques for data collection, sampling methods, secondary data, data analysis, scope and limitations of the study. It also considers the researcher's positionality and ethical considerations.

1.5.1 Research Design and Approach

A quantitative method was used to discover how the existing School Re-entry Guideline in Mpwapwa District promotes and addresses the needs and challenges of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. The research employed in-depth interviews, conducted by telephone. Data were collected from the interviewers using audio recording and notes and transcribed from the local language (Swahili) into English to facilitate analysis. A research assistant was employed to facilitate the process by preparing and coordinating research respondents before initiating phone calls, particularly in rural areas. The research assistant was selected due to her working experiences as she worked with Children's Dignity Forum (CDF) for approximately four years. Her background

and field experiences in community mobilization and the good relationships she has with community leaders and schoolteachers was crucial for this study. This experiences not only create legitimacy but also ensures the participants feel comfortable and be supportive during interviews.

On the selection of the research respondents, I relied on research assistance to select the key informants for the interview primarily because the data collection process was conducted via phone calls, rather than through in person visits to the field and that's why the selection of the research assistant was based on having a knowledgeable and experienced assistant who can add value in the context. The research assistant had extensive knowledge of the cultural norms and social networks and key stakeholders within Mpwapwa District, due to her extended period of working experiences. The research respondents were not only relevant to the study but also willing to participate in the interviews. The existing relationship with key informants made communication easier and smooth during interview process with the key informants.

There were specific challenges when conducting interviews over the phone, like network problems and poor communication but due to the presence of research assistant, the challenges were successful handled as she is familiar with the field work and the environment. She was able to prepare respondents for the interviews process and ensure the respondents understood the purpose of the study and willing to conduct the interviews via phone. All process and preparation were very necessary and important as it opened the dialogue and fostering a conducive environment both for researcher and key informants.

Additionally, the research assistant played a crucial role in organizing and scheduling interviews and making sure respondents were available during data collection process. This was very important given the limited time frame for the research and the need to collect comprehensive data from a wide range of key informants. As a result, this process took less time because information was usually collected from a small number of people to obtain a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the topic. Data were also collected to gain insight into the implementation of the Guideline on inclusive education for teenage mothers. Questionnaires were mostly used to collect data from selected respondents though in-depth interviews and some other data were obtained from secondary data sources.

1.5.2 Research Sites

The study was carried out in two wards in Mpwapwa District, Dodoma Region in Tanzania. Mpwapwa is one of the seven Districts in the Dodoma Region. It is bordered to the north by Kongwa District. It was selected because is among the five regions with most teenage pregnancies and child marriage. Tanzania's 2015–2016 Demographic Health Survey lists the Dodoma Region as having over one third (39%) of teenage mothers affected by pregnancy and over half (51%) of young women affected by child marriage (FORWARD UK, 2018).

Map 1.2: Adopted from Dodoma region investment guide (PO-RALG, 2019) *showing the districts where the study was conducted.*

1.5.3 Key Informants

In this study, key informants were selected from wards from the district, namely Mazae and Mpwapwa wards, aimed at getting both views from urban and rural settings as Mpwapwa ward is located at urban area of Mpwapwa District while Mazae is located at rural area of Mpwapwa District. The interviews were conducted with 5 teachers (3 from Mazae girls high secondary school and 2 from Chazugwa primary school), 3 community leaders (District Education Officer, District Community Development Officer and Ward Education Officer), and 4 Civil Society Organization (CSOs) representatives who are working in Mpwapwa District (Action Girls Foundation, Haki Elimu, SMAUJATA and Children's Dignity Forum). On the other hand, teachers with experience of teaching teenage mothers from the selected schools were interviewed for this study. It was assumed that these teachers had probably taken part or been involved anyhow with teenage mothers and therefore they knew a lot about the challenges these teenage mothers face. District and Ward Education Officers, particularly from the secondary education department, were strategically chosen to take part in this research because of their positions in policy making and implementation related to teenage mother's re-entry to secondary schools and implementation of education policy in general.

1.5.4 Methods of Data Collection

Key Informant Interviews were employed to collect data aimed at generating information that could be analysed for a better understanding of the implementation of inclusive education for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa. The interviews with these selected respondents have been conducted for several purposes. For the education administrators and Community Development Officer, the discussion generated data on operational experiences with the inclusive education policy including the re-entry program. For the teachers, the interviews were also used to collect data based on their experiences.

On the other hand, several documents were analysed. The following documents were reviewed as secondary data: government reports on inclusive education and policies from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MCDGEC-Tanzania) such as the Education and Training Policy 2014, Education Act 1978, School Re-entry Guidelines of 2022, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, published books, journals, reports from international and national organisations, summary reports offered by the Human Rights Council to the United Republic of Tanzania and stake-holders summary reports that highlighted the recommendations to the United Republic of Tanzania during Universal Periodic Review sessions. The literature review helped to understand the content of the relevant education policies and guidelines and to determine whether the policies were in accordance with the set plans and objectives.

1.6 Analysing Data

The interview data were transcribed after each interview conducted and then analysed. I continuously listened to the recorded audios to understand what the respondents had to say prior to transcribing each conversation. This process made the transcribed interviews suited for in-depth analysis. To avoid possible bias in interpretation, words were transcribed directly. This approach helped to keep track of the data while continuing with the research. Themes were analysed after the transcribing since qualitative data analysis is a continuous task that requires a thorough understanding of the information collected. Data were manually reviewed and transcribed while developing codes and grouping them in accordance with the developed themes and the data were interpreted after the development of themes. The process went beyond simply analysing data but derived insights and meaning from the data. During the process, individual feelings and emotions were avoided, so that the interpretation was supported by facts and evidence. The quantitative data were generated and analysed from reports, evaluations documents and other sources.

1.7 Ethical considerations

The researcher adhered to the ethical standards along the research processes, by starting with approval of the ISS ethics clearance form by the Supervisor. Before the interview I contacted the district and wards leaders to inform them about my research topic and seek their permission for the telephone interviews through phone call with assurance of confidentiality of participants information. The consent for recording the conversations was asked before the interviews. Only

I have access to my password-protected computer with all the electronic data collected from the respondents.

1.8 Researcher Positionality

Understanding and accepting one's positionality is crucial in qualitative research, especially when the researcher is playing the primary role in data collection and interpretation. Gall & Holmes (2020, p.1) defined research positionality as the individual perspectives/standpoints, social identity, and moral standard that researcher bring to their re-search. Here are some key aspects of the researcher's positionality in this study. As a researcher, considering the cultural and social factors concerning teenage mothers is important. Moreover, being sensitive to the norms, values, and beliefs surrounding teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District, enabled me to build trust and rapport with the interview participants (Government Officials, teachers and CSO representatives). This enabled me to interpret their experiences and practices accurately. Adding to this, I took time to reflect and identify misconceptions and expectations around the study topic by evaluating my background, cultural identity, and personal experiences in working with teenage mothers. This will help to mitigate potential biases and ensure the objectives of the study are met.

1.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter sets the stage by presents an overview of the challenges faced by teenage mothers in accessing formal education. This chapter outlined the research objectives and question focusing on understanding the situations of teenage mothers and the implementation of The School Re-entry Guideline in Mpwapwa District. The rationale for this study lies on the researcher's experiences working with teenage mothers and highlighted values of education in promoting gender equality and economic independence to teenage mothers. This chapter establishes a strong foundation of this study by highlight the significance of inclusive education as a basic human right and its important in empowering teenage mothers. It sets the framework for the following chapters which go into more details on the experiences and challenges that teenage mothers facing in accessing inclusive education in formal education system in Mpwapwa District.

Chapter Two: Understanding Access to Education by Teenage Mothers in Tanzania

Introduction

This chapter explores access to education of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District and the importance of inclusive education as a fundamental human right. More specifically, it zooms into Tanzania's School Re-entry Guideline (2022) and provides a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and challenges that teenage mothers faced. This chapter analysed the theoretical intersection between education, gender equality, and social justice by using Women's empowerment and Child Rights-Based Frameworks.

2.0 Understanding Inclusive Education as Human Rights Issue

This study is based on two frameworks that is Child Right Based Approach and Women Empowerment framework, this is because inclusive education is one of the fundamental right issues as it upholds the principles of equality, equity and non-discrimination and everyone is entitled to it regardless of abilities or disabilities (World Bank, 2021). This study adopted these frameworks to assess the implementation of the School Re-entry Guideline, especially with regards to inclusive education for teenage mothers. The frameworks offer a critical perspective for evaluating how effectively these initiatives align with international human rights standards and principles. Both emphasizes on the importance of considering the rights and experiences of marginalised groups. This is relevant to this study's objectives as it helps to understands the specific needs and challenges faced by teenage mothers in accessing education in Mpwapwa District. These indicators are grounded in international human rights principles which offer a strong framework for assessing the School Re-entry Guideline. Therefore, the analysis is not only relevant to local context but also in line with international standards.

According to UNICEF (2017: 1), an inclusive education system is a system that welcomes and supports everyone in school irrespective of their specific needs and abilities (UNICEF, 2017: 1). Inclusiveness should ensure that school infrastructures, curricula, teaching techniques, and resources are appropriate and adequate for all children at all ages and genders. The fundamental principle of inclusive education is that all children get opportunities to gain experience together in the same schools and no child should be excluded or left behind (Ibid.). However, special education schools or programs may sometimes be opted for to provide the appropriate learning environments for children with disabilities. These programs have staff with specialized training in addressing the unique needs posed by certain disabilities whether they might be emotional or physical.

On the other hand, Armstrong and others (Armstrong et al., 2011: 7) stated that, inclusive education is effectively implemented when an education system has the means to fight against discrimination, create a friendly environment for all children, and achieve education for all. They added that, inclusive education is useful when the education system is affordable to everyone and not only for children/students with special needs. They also argued that, even though inclusion is presented as a universal goal, the local circumstances and resources should determine its actual implementation and effects (Ibid.).

The overall objective of inclusive education is to eliminate challenges that restrict the participation or presence of marginalized (groups of) students in achieving their full potential (UNESCO, 2017). This emphasizes how crucial it is to recognize and value diversity within the school environments so that every student, regardless of their socio-economic status or background, will have access to obtain high quality education (Ibid).

In September 2015, the members states of the United Nations adopted the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and committed to achieving them. Agenda 2030 recognises the efforts individuals, communities and the government need to make to safeguard the wellbeing of people and the world as the agenda advocates equitable and social development, economic stability, preserving the environment, equity and justice (UNESCO, 2017).

SDG 4 states that everyone has the right to access quality education and advocates the building and upgrading of education facilities to accommodate all kinds of children with disabilities and provide gender-sensitive and inclusive learning environments (UNESCO, 2017). When all students including those from marginalised groups get involved in and considered in mainstream education initiatives, both the quality and equity of the education system, reflected in student learning and social achievements will increase (World Bank, 2021). In turn, this will enhance development. To achieve this, countries should ensure inclusion and equity in their education systems and initiatives by taking action to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination and address all kind of exclusions and marginalization in education. Individual diversity should be respected and recognized to ensure safety and to secure a conducive learning environment for all (UNESCO, 2017).

According to Save the Children (Save the Children, 2022), inclusive education is a form of education that allows and enables all children to learn together along with support for their needs. Inclusive education seeks to recognise and eliminate all barriers and any form of discrimination that prevent some (groups of) children from getting the support they need to allow them to learn with their fellow students/peers (Ibid.).

The World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain, in 1994, organized by the UNESCO arrived at the conclusion that, standard schools with inclusive approaches are the most successful ways of preventing and addressing discriminatory attitudes, generating welcoming communities, creating an inclusive society, and attaining education for all. Additionally, they improve the efficiency as well as the cost effectiveness of the entire education system and secure quality education to most of the children (UNESCO, 2020b).

Inclusive education is based on the principles that education is a fundamental human right and that all students should be treated with respect and dignity. The state of Tanzania signed and ratified international human rights treaties and instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which recognizes the right to education for all. It highlights how education needs to foster tolerance and promote understanding and friendship among all nations and groups (World Bank, 2023b). According to Article 26: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all based on merit"(UDHR, 1948).

Adding to this, articles 28 and 29 of Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognise that every child has the right to education, that this right should be accessible equally, and that everyone should be treated fairly and should be able to access it without any barriers. In Article 28 States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity they add in Article 29(1) that States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) "The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential"(UNCRC, 1989) .

Tanzania as a state has the obligation to uphold, defend and fulfil human rights by respecting the rights of individuals and taking proactive steps to ensure the rights are fulfilled by allocating the resources, establishing legal system and monitoring the operation of these institutions to assure legal systems are working and operating in standard procedures to provide justice for all. Adding to this, Tanzania is guided by its national law, including its Constitution which upholds gender equality and prohibits discrimination. In article 12 the Constitution states that: "All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law". Article 13 states that: "The Government shall take appropriate measures to ensure that women are provided with equal opportunities with men in political, economic and social activities" (URT, 1977). For teenage mothers, inclusive education is crucial because it offers them both academic growth and empowers them to overcome societal barriers.

2.1 Challenges Faced by Teenage Mothers

Teenage mothers in Tanzania experience significant challenges that hinder their access to inclusive education. A study by the World Bank (2023) reported that social stigma and discrimination often end up in isolation and lack of support from fellow students and the community (World Bank, 2023b). Save the Children (Save the Children, 2022: 138) defined discrimination as "an act based on a difference between people, making an unjust distinction based on gender, disability, ethnic background etc". Discrimination and social stigma in school settings create and foster an unfriendly learning environment that can make it difficult for students to concentrate, participate, and perform academically. Students who experienced harassment, exclusion and bullying because of their gender, colour or other identities may struggle to participate fully in their education, leading to low academic performance and reduced opportunities to acquire quality education (Cohen and Malin, 2010).The picture presented below is from a documentary provided by Voice of America English news, explaining how most of the teenage mothers face social stigma both at home and in school settings and how this affects their school performance and wellbeing.

Figure 2.2 Voice of America (2024) https://www.voanews.com/a/teenage-mothers-in-tanzania-struggle-with-stigmatization-/7789014.html

In Tanzania teenage mothers often encounter negative reactions and judgement from both school and home settings which can prevent them from going back to school. A study by (Africa Education Watch, 2022) revealed that teenage mothers are constantly stigmatized as a "bad influence". this situation affecting their school performance and self-confidence as they are always isolated by their peers and teachers. Most peers and teachers in Tanzania hold discriminatory attitudes towards teenage mothers as they view them as poor role models or not qualifying to continue with studies (Africa Education Watch, 2022). According to (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023) teenage mothers report feeling unwelcome and unsupported by teachers due to their status as mothers.

Inadequate access to sexual and reproductive health services and information has been presented in the literature as among the challenges teenage mothers experienced, for various reasons. A lack of youth-friendly service centres, and age limitations due to social norms do not favour children to access SRH services and leave them unaware of the availability and use of SRH services (Dunor & Urassa, 2017). Furthermore, the literature shows a disparity in terms of access and availability of SRH services between urban and rural settings. In urban areas teenage mothers have more access to SRH services compared to teenage mothers in rural areas in Tanzania (Ibid). Access to SRH services is a right for everyone regardless of genders, ethnicity, or age. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the country to make a certain adjustment for the availability and accessibility of SRH services to all individuals including teenage mothers (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023).

Cultural attitudes towards teenage mothers in Tanzania often stigmatize them. The widespread perception among some communities in Tanzania is that teenage mothers are irresponsible and a failure and thus they have no share in decision-making processes. Evidence from the study conducted by Iddy (2021a) highlights that, societal stigma connected with teenage motherhood

make it difficult for teenage mothers to engage and participate in school activities or community discussions. This attitude can lead to teenage mothers feeling unwanted, ashamed of themselves and having low self-esteem with no confidence. This limits their ability to participate in any decision-making process. The findings from (Nkata et al., 2021) show that some teachers have negative perceptions and stereotypes towards teenage mothers as they believe that due to their presence at school, the teenage mothers can be a bad influence on other students in school. As a result, teenage mothers feel excluded and discouraged to participate in school-related decisions.

Another major challenge for teenage mothers in Tanzania in accessing education is economic hardship. Most teenage mothers come from low-income families, and they lack financial resources to cover their education-related expenses such as uniforms, books and transport cost. According to UNICEF (2024), many teenage mothers in Tanzania failed to continue with their studies due to economic hardship. Most likely, in Mpwapwa District the situation is worse as the National Bureau of Statistics (2020) has shown that 30% of the population of Mpwapwa District living below the national poverty line. The financial constraints limit teenage mothers to pursue their education and improve their wellbeing.

2.2 Women's Empowerment Overview

Empowerment, according to Kabeer (1999: 3) refers to "the process by which women who have been deprived of the ability to make strategic life choices gain the capacity to do so". Kabeer defined empowerment in three dimensions: resources, agency and achievement. Kabeer believed that these three dimensions are interconnected. The dimension of resources, according to Kabeer, focuses on the material, social and human resources that individuals need to exercise agency and make informed choices (Kabeer, 1999b: 4). Agency refers to the ability to act independently, make decisions and influence outcomes in their lives (Kabeer, 1999b: 3). Empowerment to her is when an individual's agency enables them to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives and future at the household level and community at large. Lastly, Kabeer highlighted achievement as the outcomes of the empowerment where individuals use their agency and resources to improve their future life and realize positive outcomes, in an economic, social or political sense (Kabeer, 1999a).

According to Kabeer's idea, it is important to empower marginalized people by offering them access to the resources, agency and achievements they need to transform their life. This framework is relevant for this study as teenage mothers often experience challenges in accessing and achieving education due to social economic and institutional constraints (OECD, 2012). The research objective and methodology of this study have been shaped by the theoretical framework of empowerment aiming to empower teenage mothers to make informed decision, access resources and achieve outcomes in their pursuit of education. For teenage mothers, empowerment includes addressing the limitations placed on them by their situations such as social stigma, economic hardship, and taking control over their educational and life paths (McDermott & Graham, 2005). Teenage mothers need to have access to resources including childcare and counselling services for them to finish their education. Without these resources, they may face challenges and be forced out of school which would limit their future opportunities (Haki Elimu, 2024).

As Kabeer defined agency, to obtain the ability to set and execute one's goals (Kabeer, 1999b: 3) teenage mothers need to be empowered to make informed choices about their education and their future life in general instead of being forced by external pressure such as societal norms and institutional policies (Haki Elimu, 2021). Merry highlighted that, the decision-making process is always dominated by the people who have power in the society. They dominate all processes, and the affected population are often left aside. A question to be asked is whose experiences are considered valid? And who gets to define the indicators? This dynamic affects the governance and policy decisions that impact the marginalized groups (Merry, 2016).

Kabeer (1999b) defined achievement as having the ability to perform or act differently. In this study, I analysed whether teenage mothers have been considered to make their own strategic life choices. The highest level of empowerment is one of the successful indicators, as per international human rights aspects, for teenage mothers to be successful in completing school and being able to apply their education to better their future.

2.3 Child Rights-Based Approach

A Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA) as employed in this study implies an implementation framework that prioritises the rights and wellbeing of children particularly teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. According to Save the Children (2005), CRBA is a framework that places the rights and well-being of children at the centre of development initiatives, policies, and programs, and "is about having real impact on development ambitions, rights which are universal and unchallengeable, they cannot be diluted or taken away" (Save the Children, 2005: 24). The CRBA in this study places a strong emphasises on recognising and addressing the unique needs and rights of the teenage mothers as individuals with rights to education and to participate in decision making processes that affect their lives. This approach ensures the unique needs of teenage mothers are acknowledged and addressed.

This study incorporates the principles of children's participation that allowing teenage mothers to share their views and concern regarding their education needs. This aligns with the views that children have important opinions on how their right to education should be interpreted. Tomasevski (2001) argued that children should get the opportunity to advocate for their rights and should be given the chance to participate in decision-making processes regarding their education journey. This aligns with Kabeer's (1999) theory on women's empowerment that, empowerment allows individuals to express their views and opinions regarding their future and life in general. Students have a role to play in shaping their educations goals, and these will be realized if students are given the opportunity, and are empowered, to speak for themselves (Komasevski, 2001). Children's participation is viewed as a way to broaden the standards of acceptability in education.

Education systems can be adjusted to more effectively meet the needs and interests of children. Taking an example of Save the Children, all its child rights programs are committed to making sure children have the right to express their views in all matters affecting their life and their views should be interpreted as per their age and maturity (International Save the Children Alliance, 2007). Also, the programs ensure all children have equal access to rights and services, no child is denied their rights due to their race, colour, gender or any kind of disabilities. Moreover, Save the Children established mechanisms to ensure the government, and the duty bearers are held accountable to

fulfil their obligations to protect, respect and fulfil the rights of children (International Save the Children Alliance, 2007). This change recognises that children have unique insights into how their rights should be interpreted and implemented which can result in more relevant and productive educational experiences (Tomasevski, 2001). Student's voices are often ignored, particularly those from marginalized populations. By enabling students to be part of discussion and decision regarding their education, the education system can challenge historical norms that have led to discrimination and exclusion. The participatory approach is very important for creating an inclusive educational setting that respects and upholds the rights of all students (Tomasevski, 2001). Likewise, UNICEF operates under a CRBA framework by acknowledge that children are entitled to specific rights as stated in the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and among these rights is the right to education (UNICEF, 2001, p.2). UNICEF programs cut across the four main principles of universality, indivisibility, accountability and participation as well as the four foundation principles of the CRC including non-discrimination and the respect of the view of the children (Ibid).

Tomasevski (2001) focused on how education can be accessed and available for everyone regardless of their social economic background. Moreover, she established that it is the obligation of the state to provide for the establishment of educational institutions and for sufficient funding to run their operation. In addition, the education must be available in adequate to high quality. This will go together with having qualified teachers and infrastructure. To avoid human rights violations, Tomasevski suggested that the government should set aside budget to support students with special needs (Tomasevski, 2001). She described accessibility as the need for education to be both financially and physically accessible to all children (Tomasevski, 2001: 13). This entails to ensure the schools are affordable and allocated at the nearest locations for all students to access and there not being unfair practices that will stop or hinder any children to access the quality education. Quality education, as per Save the Children's definition (Save the Children, 2022: 142) is based on five main aspects: being learner centred, safe and inclusive, well-resourced, having a relevant curriculum, and child protection. Adding to this, the education should be delivered by qualified and trained teachers who use child-centred teaching approaches and are able to manage and control the classroom. This helps to reduce disparities and facilitate fair learning for all which in turn leads to high outcomes that encompass attitudes, skills, and knowledge that pertain to the national goals for education and active participation in society (Save the Children, 2022).

It is evident that, quality education goes hand in hand with equity, that reducing the school dropout rate improves individual and community capacity to respond to economic hardships and foster social advancement. This indicates that the most efficient approach for education systems is to invest in high quality education and equal opportunities for all from an early stage to at least the end of higher education. It was evident that, students who have engaging educational experiences are more likely to keep up their study and transition easily into the labour market. Those who struggle at the start and receive adequate, timely support and guidance have a greater probability of finishing despite any challenges in their family or social life (OECD, 2012). Equity in education according to OECD (2012) can be defined as "fairness and inclusion". As inclusion means ensuring that all students obtain at least a basic level of skills, education institutions should support their students to realize their full potential without lowering their expectations (OECD, 2012: 15). Equity as fairness means that socio-economic background and personal identity such as gender or ethnicity should not hinder or prevent individuals/students from education achievement (OECD,

2012: 15). Discriminatory education policies and practices have negative impact on individuals and socio-economic development. For students from a lower social economic background, this kind of discrimination may well worsen their situation (OECD, 2012). Furthermore, investing in equity in education systems has yielded benefits associated with, and mostly if, the investment began at the earlier stage of child growth. It was added that equity reduces school dropout and improves secondary education quality and completion (OECD, 2012).

2.4 Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

Integrating Kabeer's framework on empowerment framework and a Child Rights-Based Approach into this research helped to analyse the unique needs, challenges and rights of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa. Combining the two approaches creates a comprehensive framework that seeks to guarantee both access to education for teenage mothers and empowerment of teenage mothers to overcome the challenges they experience including exercising their rights and realizing their full potentials. These frameworks are very important in understanding how women's empowerment is preserved following the intertwined concepts of agency, resources and achievement. The three components reflect a distinct perspective for understanding and promoting inclusive education for teenage mothers. CRBA will serve as foundation to analyse the experiences and challenges teenage mothers faced in Mpwapwa District, also will guide the analysis of the collected data an interpretation of the findings by ensuring the voice and rights of teenage mothers are given priority in accessing inclusive education. The women empowerment framework will be used to analyse the empowerment challenges especially in discussion chapter by looking on how teenage mothers lack support and financial assistance to support their educational materials and needs. Both CRBA and Women empowerment framework will be used in providing critical arguments on conclusion chapter on strategies to enhance agency such as involving teenage mothers in decision making processes related to their education and creating friendly school environment that foster their empowerment.

2.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has explained how Tanzania's School Re-entry Guideline should be seen with the framework of promoting inclusive education for teenage mothers as a basic human right. It has highlighted how education policies comply with international human rights standards and principles and how important it is to provide equal education opportunities for all, particularly for marginalized populations. This chapter addressed several concrete dimensions of this, as per Kabeer's (1999) women's empowerment framework and Child Rights-Based Approach. This chapter also addressed various challenges that teenage mothers experience in accessing inclusive education which are very important to know in relation to supporting teenage mothers to continue with their education journey. Furthermore, it emphasized the significance of women's empowerment, non-discrimination and active participation to ensure that teenage mothers have a voice in their academic pursuits. Overall, this chapter shows how important inclusive education is to develop a society in which everyone receives quality education and realize their full potential regardless to their circumstances.

Chapter Three: Bridging the Gaps: Exploring Teenage Mothers' Experiences with Inclusive Education in Mpwapwa District and the Challenges Faced

Introduction

This chapter provides analysis of the findings of the data collected in the field by begins examining the gaps in the implementation of The School Re-entry Guideline in accessing inclusive education for teenage mothers. Through qualitative interviews, several key challenges emerged with social stigma and discrimination being the most prominent. This chapter explore the mentioned challenges in detailed by drawing the connections to the theoretical frameworks introduced in chapter two. The chapter started by highlights the discrepancies between Tanzania legal instrument's intentions and actual practices.

3.1 Tanzania Legal Framework Context

In Tanzania, the right to education is ensured by the top-level legislation in the country that is the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT, 1977). In Article 11 (2) state that, …" *Every person has the right to access education, and every citizen shall be free to pursue education in a field of his choice up to the highest level according to his merits and ability" (URT, 1977)*. Adding to this, in Article 11 (3) …. *"The Government shall make efforts to ensure that all persons are afforded equal and sufficient opportunity to pursue education and vocational training in all levels of schools and other institutions of learning"* (Ibid). Both articles guarantee the right to education for all, a vision of equitable educational access to all including teenage mothers presented. Yet, in Mpwapwa District teenage mothers experiences several challenges in accessing education which often place them at contrast with the goal of the article 11 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania. Child Right Based Approach recognise that education is the fundamental human right and every child is intitled to it regardless of the circumstances, which align with article 11 of the Constitution. Also, it promotes non-discrimination and emphasises that all children regardless of their situation deserve equal treatment. Despite Constitutional guarantees, societal attitudes, institutional and economic barriers make it difficult for teenage mothers to return to school after delivery to further their educational dream. (Tomasevski (2001) defined this situation, in general terms, as a lack of a remedy meaning that the denial and violations of the right to education remain unaddressed. Surprisingly, there is no specific provision in the Constitution that highlights any forms of vulnerability and discrimination that women and girls may face while accessing education.

Additional to this, the right to education is also protected under the National Education Act of 1978 which was revised in 1995, 2002 and 2016. Article 35(3) of the Education Act stated that, … *"Every child should be enrolled and attend school until the complete prescribed period of instruction"* (The National Education Act, 1978). Adding to this, the same Act in article 56(2) addressed non-discrimination in education by stating that, *"…...No one would be refused the chance to achieve any category or stage of national education due to his race, religion or any other ideological or political beliefs*" (The National Education Act, 1978). Unexpectedly, gender is (still) not listed as a discriminatory factor. Yet, the Education Act of 1978 outlines the requirements for exclusion from school for students based on their age, health conditions, behavioural misconduct, engagement in prostitution or illegal activities. But in practice, some of the head of schools may turn a blind eye and deny a teenage mother the opportunity to finish their education due to their interpretation of the section as they define teenage pregnancy as an offence against morality. Consequently, they are excluded from school and permanently removed from the formal education system without being given the chance to express their opinion on the choices made as regards continuing their formal education prior or

after having given birth (FAWE, 2023). In addition, the Act may be interpreted incorrectly by heads of school and school administrations as implying that pregnancy is an offense and the result of engagement in immoral behaviour or proof of illegal activities, and because of this the girls may be expelled from school. During the interview with Zacharia Kiondo, Education Officer in Mpwapwa, he explained that:

> **"*Due to a lack of clarity and inconsistencies, the Guidelines cause misunderstanding among the education stakeholders as the Guidelines has been introduced as an announcement and lacks accompanying legislation*".**

In the absence of a specific policy mandating their return, the Guidelines create confusion and conflict of interest among education practitioners as they allow teenage mothers to have alternative pass ways after birth. This may cause the head of schools to reject the girls' returns to school due to their personal interpretation. CRBA principles emphasise on the views that education is a fundamental to a child's overall development, this includes social, emotional and intellectual development. This entails, school, community and state are duty bearers responsible for creating an environment that enables teenage mothers to access education however, teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District still face an educational environment that fails to cater to their unique developmental needs, this undermining the CRBA's emphasis on enabling every child to realize their full capabilities. During the interviews conducted with teachers, one of the teachers (Interview 5) shared her experience on how students have been expelled from school by the head of school due to teenage pregnancy and found themselves ending up in the informal education system unwillingly. Others decided to get married as it was a shame for them to be a mother out of marriage. The Guideline fails to clearly outline the re-admission process of teenage mothers after delivery. This gap may lead to social stigma and discrimination against teenage mothers and their teachers or school management when teenage mothers need to be re-admitted. This could result in unequal treatment because the decision on re-admission may be made at the convenience of individual.

On the other hand, the Guidelines pay little attention to the rights of the children born and instead focused mainly on the rights of teenage mothers. According to the Guidelines, the parents of the girl are responsible for taking care of the newborn child while the girl goes back to school. The Guideline state that, "*The Guideline stated that, Parents/Guardians should agree in writing that they will take care of their child as well as the newborn by giving them appropriate support and services while the student continues with studies*" (URT,2022, p.3) But, due to cultural and community perceptions towards teenage pregnancy, some parents refuse to take up that responsibility and as a result the newborn child may lacks nutrients and proper health care and safety (Haki Elimu, 2024).

In addition, since teenage mothers are treated the same as other students, the Guidelines lack the flexibility needed to provide support tailored to the specific needs of the young mothers. The Guidelines state that a teenage mother will not be allowed to return to the formal education system if she becomes pregnant a second time. It states that, "*The student should be allowed to choose to return to the original school or more to another school based on existing laws, regulations and procedures, and if she became pregnant again, she will not be able to continue her studies in the formal education system*". (URT, 2022, p.3). This undermines the rights of teenage mothers to education. The reason for this shortcoming in the Guidelines, that is for their lack of focus on teenage mothers, might be that they are supposed to give attention to all children who drop out of school and not to teenage mothers only or specifically.

The Law of the Child Act (LCA) 2009 is a comprehensive piece of legislation that guarantees the right to education for children in Tanzania. Article 9(1) of the LCA guarantees education to all children, ensures that all children have equal access to quality education, and emphasises inclusivity. Adding to this, Article 5 of the LCA seeks to prevent and kind of discrimination against children (The Law of the Child Act, 2009). Tanzania's legal framework thus recognises, at least implicitly, the girl's right to education. However, there continue to be discriminatory laws as well that create inequality. An example of such a discriminatory law is Tanzania's Law of Marriage Act (1977) that allows girls to marry at the age of 15 years while boys at the age of 18 years. In essence, this Act contradicts the Law of the Child Act (2009) which considers everyone below the age of 18 years a child. This legal contradiction influences child marriage and will often limit girl's access to education and reinforce their exclusion. There is evidence that, in most cases, the return to school for teenage mothers is often more challenging than anticipated. Many teenage mothers struggle to progress to upper secondary or higher education due to a variety of sociocultural and institutional barriers. In addition, it has been observed that teenage mothers who receive strong support from their family or within the school environment are more likely to return to school after having given birth. They perform better academically as well (FAWE, 2023, p.5). This align with Naila Kabeer; s framework for Women empowerment that defines empowerment as a process by which women gain the ability to make strategic life choices where this ability was previously denied. By applying this framework in this context enables to identify how access to education or lack of access affects the empowerment teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. Teenage mothers in Mpwapwa often lacking the resources to afford school fees, uniform and childcare which are very important for them to re-integrate and continue with their studies. According to Kabeer's framework, access to resources is foundation to empowerment, without them, teenage mothers have limited opportunities to continue with their studies, this entails social resources including supportive school, community and home environment should be supportive to teenage mothers for empowerment.

3.2 Challenges for Girls in Accessing Inclusive Education

Introduction

Gender inequality and cultural limitations have been primary obstacles in hindering girl's access to education (Leve, 2008). Girls in Tanzania are subjected to challenges such as child marriage, teenage pregnancy, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and economic hardship. These may hinder their full participation and enjoyment of their right to education, and much more so than is the case for boys (Raymond, 2021). Furthermore, Tanzania has been implementing its Education Policy 2014 for years now and that restricts pregnant girls from attending formal schooling (Hagues & McCarty, 2022). Despite the high prevalence rate of teenage pregnancy across the country, the policy was being implemented. Keeping teenage mothers out of school was to deny a significant number of girls their constitutional right to education and denied various international agreements (Nyamu, 2023).Tanzania achieved a major milestone in 2022, when the Government introduced The School Re-entry Guideline which supports the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal education system. However, several challenges continued to hinder teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District from accessing inclusive education as follows.

3.3.1 Social Stigma and Discrimination

Many teenage mothers face mistreatment, some teenage mothers experienced social stigma and discrimination either from peers, teachers and broader community and this is the among the factors that hinder the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal education system. These situations make them feel humiliated when reintegrating into school. Teenage mothers are often subjected to abuse by their fellow students, neighbours and family members. This situation often makes teenage mothers not comfortable in school environments as their fellow students make fun of them, and their teachers speak negatively about them. Steven Ahmed, District Coordinator, Haki Elimu (Interview 3) shared:

> "***The harsh reality for pregnant teens is that instead of receiving love and guidance, they are often met with rejection, abuse, and harassment—adding layers of pain to an already difficult experience they have"***.

It makes sense to note that some school administrators objected to admitting teenage mothers who were willing to return to school after delivery. This kind of stigmatization can undermine the government efforts to promote equal education opportunities for all. A reasonable interpretation might be that some school administrators are not properly informed about the School Re-entry programs. Another possibility might be fear of jeopardizing the school's reputation. This derives from the notion that being a teenage mother goes against societal norms. This stigmatization might lead to mental illness, low self-esteem, a loose sense of purpose, and loss of confidence on the part of teenage mothers. Devota Malema, Teacher at the Mazae Girls Secondary School in Mpwapwa (Interview 8) recommended that:

> ***Discrimination of teenage mothers can be controlled by educating and creating awareness to teachers and their fellow students in the importance of supporting teenage mothers and supporting them to pursue their education goals rather than isolating them.***

The challenge of social stigma and discrimination is strongly connected to the theoretical frameworks discussed in chapter two as CRBA emphasises the importance of recognizing and addressing the rights of all children, including teenage mothers. This approach advocate for an inclusive educational environment where all students are recognized, respected and valued regardless of any circumstances. The experiences of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District strictly contradict this idea as their right to education is violated and undermined by societal attitudes. Additionally, the women empowerment framework highlighting the need for agency, resources and achievement in promoting gender equality. The social stigma and discrimination that teenage mothers experience in Mpwapwa District directly affects their agency, as it limits their ability to participate fully in educational opportunities and make informed choices about their future as empowering teenage mother through education is important in challenging the negative societal attitudes.

3.3. 2 Social Isolation

It was shared that, after being readmitted, teenage mothers experienced a range of challenges including social isolation that made it hard for them to rebuild their connections with their classmates. It shows that, because it is harder for them to interact with their classmates, teenage mothers seem reluctant to cope with their peers. Teenage mothers claimed their teachers not giving them the necessary support right after their re-admission, while the latter would help them cope

with their fellow students. As a result, school dropout once more may occur (Haki Elimu, 2024). It was reported that family members often mocked and made jokes about teenage mothers too. These negative feelings might have negative impacts on the readmission process of teenage mothers. Some of the teenage mothers fail to balance the two responsibilities at once as they get little assistance from family members in taking care of their children. In the end, this may make them decide to opt for one responsibility: raising their children, and not prioritise re-admission to school. Happiness Mafie, Academic Teacher at Mtejeta Primary School (Interview 7), shared that:

> ***It's sad to experience isolation, with my working experience in Mpwapwa District, I saw a lot of girls quit the studies to the high rate of isolation from their peers, even us as teachers we are not doing enough to support these students, we need to do more for them.***

This feeling of isolation contradicts with the principles of Child Right Based Approach, as every child has a sense of belonging, the principles emphasise on the importance of community and social inclusion by creating safe environment for all, but this in Mpwapwa District was noted as among the challenges teenage mothers experienced, as per the principles suggested, for the teenage to feel comfortable and reintegrate back to school both community and school administration should create welcoming and supportive environment for teenage mothers so that they can not feel isolated for the better future.

3.2.3 Pregnancy Testing

It is also important to note that, multiple additional other human rights of girls have been violated in 2017 when the late President John Magufuli, during his presidency took a strict against allowing teenage mothers to return to formal education system. This ban on re-enrolling for the teenage mothers affected number of teenage mothers across Tanzania, many of them experienced social stigma and discrimination (FAWE, 2023, p.3). Adding to this, ban of pregnant girls to continue with their studies particularly lead to the demand for a pregnancy test. The traditional methods of pregnancy testing such as poking are inappropriate and violate the girls' bodily autonomy when being performed without the girl's consent or knowledge. Bad enough is that the results of the test are not necessarily directly revealed or disclosed to the girls, but only to their parents or teachers. Hence their rights to privacy and dignity are violated in these cases (FAWE, 2023: 3).[i] This lack of confidentiality may lead to further humiliation and social stigma as teenage pregnancy has been linked to shame in most African communities. As a result, girls could suffer severe pain and psychosocial trauma which may have detrimental impacts on their mental health and performance in school (Lövgren, 2024). Girls may decide not to go to school at all due to the fear of being subjected to pregnancy testing. This may result in an increase of the dropout rate among girls and prolong cycles of poverty and inequality. Further complicating matters, it is unclear what national laws, policies and regulations supports this process of pregnancy test. According to Asha Ramadhan, Program Officer from the Children's Dignity Forum (Interview 1) shared that:

> ***Through my working experiences working with teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District, we often come across different cases of girls complaining that they receive inappropriate and forceful pregnant test in school. Many girls find it uncomfortable when health workers or sometimes teachers employ abdominal pressing or even manual internal examination and sometimes these activities carried out without girl's consent.***

Taking Kabeer's principle of women's empowerment it can be used in Mpwapwa District as the findings shows the gap in empowering teenage mothers and give them opportunities to decide for their own welfare. Looking at this gaps, teenage mothers in Mpwapwa lack community supports in enhance their agency, adding to this with CRBA lens reveals how teenage mother's right to privacy has been violated, advocacy for the policy reform is necessary to create more inclusive environment for teenage mothers and empower their agency so that they can be able to make informed decisions regarding their welfare.

3.2.4 Restriction of Teenage Mothers to Continue with Studies after Birth

The government of Tanzania has taken several initiatives to mitigate the challenges and improve the access of girls to education. Among these initiatives was the decision to abolish the restriction of teenage mothers to continue with their studies after having given birth in November 2021. This stands out as important steps to improve inclusive education in Tanzania (Hagues & McCarty, 2022). The government has shown its commitment towards making sure that teenage mothers have equal opportunity to pursue education by removing the restrictions and providing clear Guidelines for re-entry. During the interviews with education actors ,more has being recommended for the implementation of the School Re -entry Guideline, one being the capacity strengthening on the existence of the Guideline as it was shared that, there are still some of the teachers and local government officials who have no idea if the guideline exist, so one of the recommendations was to disseminate the Guideline to the education actors especially at the grassroots level. Adding to this, it was recommended by the Education Officer (Interview 10) that teachers should be at from to make sure teenage mothers are supported enough during integration by creating welcoming environment for them as per the Guideline suggest, also teachers should work closely with parents/guardian to make sure teenage mothers are getting all the necessary supports to progress well in their studies as per the working experiences most of the parents tends to neglect their daughters after find out they are pregnant. This was shared by Joseph Masalagana, Adult Education Officer at Mpwapwa District (Interview 10):

> "***We have a lot of cases in our office reported number of the parents who neglect their daughter after found out they are pregnant, but we are working on the strategies to make sure this has reach to an end in our District"***

3.3 Support for Education Achievements to Teenage Mothers

Both teachers I interviewed pointed out that, they are mostly providing psychosocial counselling and guidance to re-admitted teenage mothers. Teenage mothers are provided with enough sessions for psychosocial counselling so that they cannot feel ignored or isolated. The teachers claimed that they always remind them not to do things that would make it harder for them to perform well in class and succeed academically. Teenage mothers who are provided with guidance and counselling in schools were found to build more positive attitudes towards learning and felt more secure than those who were not given such support. According to the teachers interviewed, guidance and counselling mainly help to raise awareness and build self-confidence among teenage mothers. Therefore, Sophia Marko, Teacher from Mtejeta Primary School in Mpwapwa (Interview 6) advised this:

"***Create awareness by providing education to the community with a positive outlook on young mothers so they can continue with their studies and assist with school expenses like supplies***".

During the interview, the teacher respondents (Interview 6) listed several support systems that are in place to assist teenage mothers with their reintegration back into school. However, some CSO respondents (Interview 2) indicated that they provide life skills and entrepreneurship programs that could enable teenage mothers to develop a sense of self and courage to pursue their goals. This helps them after completing their studies and in becoming economically independent to take care of themselves and their children. This was supported by Joseph Masalagana , Adult Education Officer in Mpwapwa (Interview 10) who recommended the following:

> ***As most of the teenage mothers refuse to go back to school after delivery I am suggesting, if possible, that government in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations establish special centres for training young mothers and providing them with life skills education so that they can be economically independent to take care of themselves and their children.***

I found out that, several of the respondents wish teenage mothers to have their own special school out of the formal education system. According to these respondents, providing the mothers with a special school will avoid them being discriminated by their fellow students and teachers. This sentiment for instance was shared by Joseph Msalagana, the Adult Education Officer in Mpwapwa District (Interview 10):

> ***For me support systems include the establishment of adult education centres, such as Mpwapwa Secondary and a teacher's college, that provide short-term education for teenage mothers. The presence of adult education empowerment groups and adult education centres is part of the implementation of The School Re-entry Guidelinein the District***.

He further elaborated that:

> ***We thank the government for providing these opportunities, and the implementation is good, especially considering the improvements in education for teenage mothers. It is a very positive step for our government, including schools like Galigali, Iyondo, and Kimagai, all these are prepared for teenage mothers.***

Teenage mothers require assistance from family members with childcare so that they can concentrate on their studies. However, this seemed not to be realized in most cases as teenage mothers often lack caregivers with whom they could leave their children. According to Asha Ramadhani, Program Officer at the Children's Dignity Forum in Mpwapwa (Interview 1) shared that:

> ***We have an experience of seeing teenage mothers fail to go back to school due to the lack of support from family members to help them with their children while they wanted to go back to school. In Mpwapwa this is among the challenge teenage mothers are facing, even though the Guideline directs the parents of the teenage mothers to take care of their grandchildren but that is not the practice.***

However, apart from the challenges shared, there are also successful stories about teenage mothers who decided to go back to school and did well in their studies. This was shared by Asha Ramadhani, Program Officer from the Children's Dignity Forum (Interview 1):

Although teenage mothers lack support to go back to school, we have a few teenage mothers who did wonders after going back to school. But the challenge lies with individuals who still have negative attitudes towards teenage mothers. However, those who decided to return to school are doing well and are continuing their studies without looking at how the community marked them.

The women empowerment framework is mostly relevant here as it highlights the need for support networks in helping women to achieve their potentials. The absence of mentorship programs and counselling services for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District reflects a systematic failure to provide necessary resources for empowerment. The Child Right Based Approach further highlights that all children regardless of their economic status should have access to education as it is a fundamental human right. The lack of financial support and educational, materials to teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District undermines the ability to pursue their educational opportunities like other children. Lack of specific counsellors who are supposed to manage The School Re-entry Guideline gave the impression that they lacked the necessary skills and expertise to provide the emotional support needed by the teenage mothers. This situation has been noticed to hinder the integration of teenage mothers into the formal education system. On top of this I found out that, there was no budget set aside for the implementation of the Guideline. Once the teenage mothers return to school, the government treats them like any other students and keeps giving them subsidies without offering extra help for their basic needs. This was also evident for the Msichana initiative in their evaluation report on the implementation of the Re-entry Guideline in Tanzania (Haki Elimu, 2024, p.40). It was noted that, the education officials found it difficult to monitor the implementation of the lack of funding. It would make logic to provide additional funding to school that teenage mothers can take advantages from the formal education system.

3.4 Experiences of Teachers and School Management with Re-entry Programme

Regarding the school system's preparedness for the school re-entry program for teenage mothers, some teachers declared that some of them are not aware and have limited knowledge of The School Re-entry Guideline for teenage mothers. Some respondents associated re-entry initiatives with adult education as alternative pathways. Alternative pathways offer flexible education possibilities that allow teenage mothers to balance their studies with taking care of their children. The challenge here was that some schoolteachers and heads of school are not aware of the Re-entry Guideline for teenage mothers. It was evident that some school managements were not entirely familiar with the implementation of the Guideline either (Haki Elimu, 2024: 38-39).

Even though the education officers are responsible for monitoring and providing the implementation status of the re-entry programs, I found out that they scarcely report on how they monitor and give feedback on the implementation. Obtaining data to identify these patterns was challenging because there were no records about teenage mothers being reintegrated into the education system. Both district and ward educational officers did not keep detailed records of dropouts and re-admission of teenage mothers. This was also due to a lack of proper coordination and follow up of the implementation. According to Steven Ahmed, District Coordinator, Haki Elimu in Mpwapwa (Interview 3) suggested that:

There should be regular follow-up and evaluation to identify both challenges and successes overall and keep the records of the implementation as these will be used

for evaluating the success of the implementation as without records/data we cannot know how far we have been succeeded in implementing this guideline.

There is a need to raise awareness about the benefits and value of re-entry as well as the importance of preventing pregnancy at a young age. One factor limiting the implementation of The School Re-entry Guideline was identified as inadequate training among teachers and school managers lacking the required knowledge to successfully carry out the Guideline. It was also noted that no extra steps were taken to make sure that school management and administration are in place and knowledgeable about the School Re-entry Guideline. This was shared by Zacharia Kiondo, Education Officer in Mpwapwa (Interview 11), as follows:

Implementation of the Re-entry Guideline is still limited in the Mpwapwa District due to scarcity of funds. Our plan was established to provide training to teachers on how they can implement the Guideline within their schools, but we failed due to lack of resources. However, we always do awareness campaigns in the village to encourage young mothers to continue with their education after delivery though the response is not as we expected.

Lack of specific counsellors who are supposed to manage The School Re-entry Guideline gave the impression that they lacked the necessary skills and expertise to provide the emotional support needed by the teenage mothers. This situation has been hindering the integration of teenage mothers into the formal education system. On top of this I found out that no budget was set aside for the implementation of the Guideline at the District level. Once the teenage mothers return to school, the government treats them like any other students and keeps giving them small financial assistance for upkeeps without offering extra help for their basic needs. This was also evident for the Msichana initiative referred to in the evaluation report on the implementation of the Re-entry Guideline in Tanzania (Haki Elimu, 2024: 40). It was noted that, the education officials found it difficult to monitor the implementation of The School Re-entry Guideline at the District level due to lack of funding. It would be logical to provide additional funding to carry out the implementation of the Guideline so that teenage mothers really could take advantage from the formal education system.

3.5 The Roles and Perceptions of Parents and Community Members towards Teenage Mothers.

Through my experience of working with teenage mothers, in some cases, parents and community members maintain traditional or conservative notions that condemn teenage pregnancy and perceive it as an immoral act or social humiliation. The study's findings highlighted a range of attitudes and perceptions from the community on the education of teenage mothers. This education was perceived as less important and parental responsibilities should be prioritized over education. Some of the parents emphasized that teenage mothers should opt for marriage while other parents felt that teenage mothers should be supported in obtaining education. Hongerata Masonga, Education Coordinator, Mazae Ward shared the testimony that:

With my working experience in this ward, we have a lot of cases reported that most of the parents opt for marriage for their daughter after being pregnated, they see no reasons for them to continue with the studies while they have already had the responsibilities of taking care of their born children, this is normal situation, and the community members are in support of this.

Further findings indicated that teenage mothers experience resistance from their community and this has a big impact on their lives. It turned out that there is an apparent lack of community support for teenage mothers to return to school to complete their education. The community often discourages teenage mothers from going back to school based on the idea that they are immoral and might have negative influence on their fellow peers (Haki Elimu, 2024).

Most of the parents are affected psychologically when they received the news about their daughter being pregnant. As a parent, their expectation towards their daughter was to achieve education and not to become a parent at a low age. Considering their faith in their daughters, the parents were disappointed and shocked by the news that their daughters were pregnant. Some individuals or community members advised parents to kick their pregnant daughter out of their home. Other community members advised the parents to stay calm and support their daughters. Also, some parents felt it was not important for their daughter to go back to school again after delivery and discourage them from doing so. Zacharia Kiondo, Education Officer in Mpwapwa provided the following perspective:

> ***Parents should not remain silent and ignore their daughters when they get pregnant. Rather, they should continue providing proper parenting and to teach them how they should avoid negative peer influences, to reduce the number of pregnancies among schoolgirls. He stressed the need for accountability and disciplinary measures for boys to eliminate pregnancy among schoolgirls. Additionally, proper follow-up should be done for students both at school and at home for the parents to be aware of the changes and challenges their daughters face.***

By aligning the above findings with the Kabeer's framework on women's empowerment, the gaps can be drawn from Mpwapwa District as social resources including community support and school welcoming environment are important for the empowerment process. Due to social and negative community perceptions teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District lack community support. In Kabeer's framework, access to resources is foundation to education success without enough resources and support teenage mothers have limited opportunities to pursue their education goals. Community support increase teenage mothers confidence and self-esteem, in align with Kabeer's framework , teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District reduces their self-esteem and agency to assert their educational rights as agency according to Kabeer's framework includes confidence and empowerment to pursue one's goals but due to the negative attitudes towards teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District undermines this agency and discouraging them to go back to school after delivery.

There is also an inspiring successful case example of parental support for teenage mothers who dedicated to pursuing her studies after delivery. It situated in Mbuga Village in Mpwapwa District showing a parent who decided to support her daughter in her studies journey despite the challenges faced.

A parent from Mbuga Village in Mpwapwa District, recently paid a visit to District Education Officer to discuss the procedures for her daughter to return to school after delivery. The parent's daughter become pregnant before she finishes her secondary education, but she was determined to continue her education and accomplish her dreams while raising her child. The Education Officer was encouraged by the parent as it demonstrates the parent's commitment to supporting

her daughter's education despite the circumstances. The officer assured the parents to be involved in all process and assisting the parents with all the necessary steps on re integration of her daughter after delivery, adding to this he promised the parents to encourage all cost for her daughter's school materials including books, uniform and transport cost.

He also emphasised that, every child has right to education regardless of any challenges might face, he highlights the importance of supporting teenage mothers to continue with their studies. To reassure the parent, the Education Officer shared an inspiring example of teenage mothers who were successful return to school after delivery and excel academically and even pass with higher marks. He encourages the parent to continue supporting her daughter and be a good ambassador to the community by educating other parents and community members on importance of education the teenage mothers.

These examples served to encourage parents and community members that, it is possible for teenage mothers to balance both responsibilities as parent while pursuing their educational goal if the parents and community members support and encourage them. This narrative of success aimed to inspire and reinforce the belief education remains accessible and achievable regardless the circumstances.

3.6 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provide a thorough analysis of the findings from the field related to experiences and challenges faced by teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District in accessing inclusive education. The qualitative data from the field shows there is existing gaps in implementation of the School Re-entry Guideline in supporting teenage mothers to access inclusive education especially after giving birth. Among the challenges mentioned includes social stigma and discrimination, inadequate support systems and lack of resources within educational institutions. The mentioned challenges not only affect their academic performance and progress but also contribute to emotional torture and isolation. The findings highlight the need to create an inclusive educational setting that actively address these challenges as will help to overcome the existing gaps between policy and practice and further create friendly environment for teenage mothers to pursue their education aspiration and parent responsibilities which will enhance their long-term socio-economic wellbeing. In addition, this chapter not only underlying the challenges teenage mothers experience in accessing inclusive education in Mpwapwa District but also acknowledges the positive effects of the implementation of the School Re-entry Guideline. The findings indicate that, teenage mothers are more likely to receive supportive and welcoming environment which encourage their integration into formal education system and other opt for other education alternative into informal education system. Some schools have put in place supportive mechanisms that provide teenage mothers with resources they need to pursue their studies. These positive developments indicate that, teenage mothers can overcome the challenges they face on their studies. This holistic approach benefits teenage mothers and contribute at larger societal goals on gender equity and quality in education system.

Chapter Four: Concluding Remarks

This chapter aimed to summarize the findings from the previous chapter and provide concluding remarks by focusing on the challenges raised during interviews and shared experienced of teenage mothers in accessing inclusive education in Mpwapwa District. Significant challenges were mentioned including social stigma, discrimination, isolation, inadequate support mechanisms and negative attitudes from the community towards teenage mothers. To give a thorough grasp of the current situation, this discussion will also elaborate and expand the relevant literatures.

There is significant evidence to support the notion that, well-educated young women experience better economic outcomes and improved wellbeing. Seeberg (2014) supported these arguments by underlining how important education is to empower young women and advance human freedom. Similarly, Saito (2003) demonstrated the need of education in building human capabilities. He suggested that the right to education for girls goes beyond just getting enrolled and completing the education cycles. In real life, education should be enough to enable individuals to accomplish their goals and obtain the high degree of freedom (Saito, 2003).

As a result of this, it is evident that abolishing the restriction for teenage mothers to go back to school after birth and providing the School Re-entry Guidelines are steps in the right direction in mitigating the barriers that teenage mothers faced who had previously dropped out of school due to pregnancy. The government of Tanzania is committed to support inclusive and equitable education through this initiative which allows teenage mothers to go back to the formal education system after birth, but this alone is not enough to ensure that teenage mothers' right to inclusive education is adequately achieved. The evidence from 2024 Haki Elimu study indicated that, only 16 out of 513 teenage mothers were able to return to school after birth in 24 formal schools visited in 12 Districts. Due to lack of proper tracking system in place it was assumed that either the remaining numbers of teenage mothers were integrated into other alternative pass ways or they got married (Haki Elimu, 2024: 44). Several teenage mothers have been readmitted and achieved notable success, particularly those who performed well on their form four national examination and advanced to higher secondary education. Despite these positive outcomes of the implementation of this School Re-entry Guideline, the study findings indicated that the initiatives have not yet fully achieved its goals (Haki Elimu, 2024).

A study by Iddy (2021) shows that teenage mothers in rural areas in Tanzania continue having difficult in accessing inclusive education. Despite the policy allows teenage mothers to re integrate to school and continue with their studies still teenage mothers face difficulties in effectively accomplishing their responsibilities of parenting and schooling. (Sefoka and Odeku, 2021) shared that, most of their time are consumed by parenthood as a result they find themselves with limited time for their academic pursuit. As a result, many teenage mothers find it difficult to complete school assignments, resulting in poor performance which hinders their progress in secondary education and higher learning education (Iddy, 2021a).

According to Nkata and others, (Nkata et al., 2021) many teachers feel it is a good idea to expel pregnant girls from school. The reasoning behind this is that such practice will teach other girls to avoid engaging in inappropriate conduct and prioritize their studies first. This is alarming for ensuring student's educational success (Matteucci et al., 2017). In line with re-entry initiatives, there is no doubt that teachers need to be actively engaged as active agents not only in teaching in the classroom but also in providing support and creating a positive and encouraging environment for the teenage mothers to continue with their studies as the best performing teenage mothers in school are the one with better and supportive environments (UNESCO, 2020a).

In Tanzania, girl's access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) education is still significantly inadequate. According to Coultas et al. (2020), comprehensive sexuality education has yet to be integrated into Tanzania's education system. Likewise, Lövgren (2024) brings attention to the contradiction between the SDGs and national education and SRHR rights commitments. In reality, policies often support adolescents' SRHRs inadequately, even though they tend to appear good on paper. As a result, the efforts to prevent teenage pregnancy becomes difficult and exposes girls to vulnerability and risk of unsafe abortion practices. Therefore, if Tanzania is serious about addressing the issue of teenage pregnancy, one of the first actions should be investing in the availability and accessibility of SRHR services and information specifically designed for adolescents. By prioritizing comprehensive SRHR education by providing its young population with the right information and ensuring easy access to related services, Tanzania can equip its young population with the knowledge and resources to make informed and right decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, resulting in healthier and more resilient generations (Ngilangwa et al., 2016).

The negative attitudes and perceptions associated with teenage pregnancy and motherhood may restrict or affect the educational opportunities to teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District. As mentioned in previous chapters, teenage mothers still experience criticism and discrimination from their fellow students, teachers, parents and community members, despite the efforts to advocate and promote inclusivity and equal education opportunities for all. Such societal attitudes can harm the student's self-confidence, self-esteem and sense of belonging within their school environment and community. Taking an example, in South Africa, despite having good and comprehensive policies in place, there are no adequate counselling programs available to address the stigma teenage mothers experience (Sefoka and Odeku, 2021). The lack of psychosocial support in their new situations caused teenage mothers feeling helpless and incapable of meeting their academic obligations. In most cases, teenage mothers who don't have a good support system both at school and community, end up dropping out for the second time.

Nkata and others (Nkata et al., 2021) pointed out the fear of contamination as another common justification for pushing teenage mothers out of schools. The primary concern centres on the notion that allowing pregnant girls to continue with their studies in formal education system could potentially encourage and motivate more pregnancies among their fellow students. In response to this, various government efforts including alternative pathways have been implemented to respond to this (World Bank,2022) however these actions lead to discrimination against teenage mothers instead of effectively address the need of teenage mothers. Instead of forcing teenage mothers into alternative educational pathways, a more sensible approach could be used to empower them as Kabeer suggested that, for women to be empowered availability of resources is crucial aspect for empowerment. Therefore, the government of Tanzania should provide appropriate resources to teenage mothers so that they can make informed choices towards their education pathways. Taking Kenya as an example where their reintegration policy is more progressive, Tanzania Government can opt for the strategies worked in Kenya to successful implementation of this Guideline. In Kenya various National Organizations and International organizations play a crucial role in supporting government efforts to support teenage mothers, various programs carried out to complements government initiatives through creating community awareness on the important of educating teenage mothers, addressing negative attitudes toward teenage mothers and provide financial supports to cater for their needs both for their studies and for taking care of their children (Imbosa et al,2022).These creating friendly and supportive environments for teenage mothers to return to school and continue with their studies. Adding to this, the School Re-entry programme

have been integrated with Sexual Reproductive Health Rights education, often SRH services are provided by local clinic centres and local organizations at the grassroots level to enable easy accessibility of the services to girls, which resulted to reduce the prevalence rate of early pregnancy among girls (Imbosa et al,2022).

Moreover, those implementing the Re-entry Guidelines must also consider the fact that one cannot safeguard their own rights by undermining the rights of others. While allowing teenage mothers to go back to school after birth grants them their education rights, it poses questions regarding the rights and wellbeing of the babies born to these mothers (Anakpo and Kollamparambil, 2021). It is very important to recognise and respect that both teenage mothers and their children have rights that must be acknowledged and upheld. The government of Tanzania must provide enough resources and invest in Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs and care facilities. By improving availability and accessibility of ECD programme, teenage mothers can receive the assistance and care they need and focus on their academic performance without compromising the wellbeing of their children.

Lastly, as Unterhalter (2012) emphasized, in complying with International and global commitments to equal treatment between boys and girls and the right to education, many countries prioritise on achieving gender equality in school enrolment and actual growth is beyond just enrolment statistics. Tanzania as a country must shifts its priority and focus more on important issues rather than enrolment statistics.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

In conclusion, education is a basic human right and must be granted to attain other human rights. Therefore, all nations must make sure every child has access to education. Many African countries have taken steps to provide free primary education to achieve socio economic rights. In Tanzania the ban on pregnant girls from attending school is not just the result of a lack of understanding but also a violation of fundamental human rights. Generally addressing the challenges that keep girls from accessing education in Tanzania, typically calls for a multi-sectoral strategy that involves reviewing discriminatory laws, providing comprehensive support for the needs of teenage mothers and addressing societal problems like gender inequality and poverty. Tanzania can only achieve its goal to ensuring equal access to education for all its people, regardless of their gender or circumstances. Tanzania needs to integrate its Re-entry Guidelines into a comprehensive legislation. This should be aligned with the process of changing the Education Act of 2002 to address the reason for excluding pregnant girls from schools. Doing this will help to establish inclusive policies and Tanzanian girls would be better protected and attain support for their comprehensive needs and educational goals.

The negative attitudes and perception from the community towards teenage pregnancy and motherhood can restrict teenage mothers to access the education, despite the efforts to promote inclusive and equal educational opportunity for all, teenage mothers also continue facing societal stigma and discrimination as pe the research findings. Such societal attitudes can harm the student's self-confidence, self-esteem and sense of belonging within their school environment and community. These types of maltreatment cause serious long-lasting effects to teenage mothers, including psychological, physical and emotional pains which may lead to dropout from school after re-admission. The issue of mistreatment is extremely challenging and can only be tackled through coordinated action by individuals, groups, organizations, and decision-makers.

The implementation of the School Re-entry Guideline for teenage mothers encounters underlying resistance rooted from negative cultural norms and moral attitudes. Both community members and educational actors challenged this guideline, arguing that it went against accepted moral and cultural traditions. These perceptions marginalize and condemns teenage mothers. To overcome this situation, its crucial to raise community awareness and open dialogues also addressing the gaps between cultural and moral perception and the guideline.

To achieve meaningful gender empowerment in education, the government should prioritise multiple aspects of empowerment within the education system. This will be achieved through improving the learning environment, revising the school curriculum to reflects gender equality, implementing inclusive teaching strategies, providing fair access to education learning materials and addressing the root causes of poverty that hinder the educational attainment. Tanzania can create an inclusive education system that help teenage mothers succeed academically and pursue their future by investing in these areas.

References

Africa Education Watch. (2022). Re-entry of Pregnant Girls and Teenage Mothers to School: A critical policy and strategy brief. *Reproductive Health*, *17*(1).

Anakpo, G., & Kollamparambil, U. (2021). Teenage Motherhood and Child Outcomes: Evidence from South Africa. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, *11*(1).

Armstrong, D., Armstrong, A. C., & Spandagou, I. (2011). Inclusion: By choice or by chance? *International Journal of Inclusive Education* (Vol. 15, Issue 1, pp. 29–39).

Author, K., & Court, D. (1976). The Education System as a Response to Inequality in Tanzania. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (Vol. 14, Issue 4).

Coultas, C., Campbell, C., Mohamedi, R. and Sanga, U., 2020. Comprehensive Sexuality Education is 'not for us': Rethinking 'cultural relevance 'through Young Tanzanians' identifications with/against intervention knowledge. *Social Science & Medicine*, *265*, p.113239.

Dunor, H., & Urassa, J. K. (2017). Access to Reproductive Health Services and Factors Contributing to Teenage Pregnancy in Mtwara Region, Tanzania. *7*(5).

FAWE (Forum for Women Educationalists). (2023). Policy Brief*: An overview of existing Policies and Practice on Re-entry Policies for Teenage Mothers in Tanzania*, Nairobi.

FOWARD UK. (2018). I Have No Idea How I Got Pregnant: *Participatory Study on Teenage Pregnancy and Child Motherhood in Mpwapwa District, Tanzania*, London UK.

Hagues, R., & McCarty, S. H. (2022). The Consequences of Forcing Pregnant Girls Out of School: A study focused on Tanzania. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, *7*(1), 23–35.

Haki Elimu. (2021). The Education We Want*: A critical analysis of the education and training policy*. (ETP) 2014, Issues, and Recommendations, Dar es Salaam Tanzania.

Haki Elimu. (2024). Experience of Implementation of Reintegrating Teenage Mothers into Formal Secondary School in Tanzania*: Reintegration Experience and Practices Teenage Mothers into Formal Secondary Schools in Tanzania.*

Imbosa, L.L., Majanga, E. and Ouda, J.B., 2022. Re-entry Policy and Retention of Expectant Students and Teen Mothers in Public Secondary Schools in Vihiga Sub-County, Kenya. *International Journal of Education and Research*, *10*(2), pp.1-16.

Iddy, H. (2021). Girls' Right to Education in Tanzania: Incongruities between legislation and practice. *Gender Issues*, *38*(3), 324–343.

International Save the Children Alliance. (2007). Getting it Right for Children*: A practitioners' Guide to Child Rights Programming*. Save the Children UK.

Tomasevski, K. (2001). Human Rights Obligations*: Making Education Available, Accessible, Acceptable and Adaptable.* Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida

Kabeer, N. (1999a). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*, *30*(3), 435–464.

Leve, A. (2008). Gender, Schooling and Global Social Justice, *Gender and Education*, *20*(5), 545–546.

Lövgren, L. (2024). Which Rights Matters: Girls' education at the expense of their sexual and reproductive rights? *World Development Perspectives*, *33*.

M. Sefoka, I., & O. Odeku, K. (2021). Critical Analysis of the Right to Education for Pregnant School-going Teenage Girls in South Africa. *African Journal of Gender, Society and Development (Formerly Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa)*, *10*(3), 73–85.

Matteucci, M. C., Guglielmi, D., & Lauermann, F. (2017). Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Educational Outcomes and its Associations with Teachers' Instructional Approaches and Professional Wellbeing. *Social Psychology of Education*, *20*(2), 275–298.

McDermott, E., & Graham, H. (2005). Resilient Young Mothering: Social inequalities, late modernity and the "problem" of "teenage" motherhood. In *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8(1), 59–79.

United Republic of Tanzania Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2022). *Re-entry Guideline. Education Circular No.2 of the Year 2021 on School Re-Entry for Primary and Secondary School Student's Drop out for Various Reasons*, Tanzania.

Moshi, F. V., & Tilisho, O. (2023). The Magnitude of Teenage Pregnancy and its Associated Factors Among Teenagers in Dodoma Tanzania: A community-based analytical cross-sectional study. *Reproductive Health*, *20*(1).

National Bureau of Statistics. (2020). *The United Republic of Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics Ministry of Finance and Planning Dodoma*., Tanzania.

Ngilangwa, D. P., Rajesh, S., Kawala, M., Mbeba, R., Sambili, B., Mkuwa, S., Noronha, R., Meremo, A. J., & Nyagero, J. (2016). Accessibility to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Education Among Marginalized Youth in Selected Districts of Tanzania. *Pan African Medical Journal*, *25*.

Nkata, H., Marques, S. C. S., Nyamhanga, T., & Barros, H. (2021). Perceptions of Secondary School Teachers Towards School Expulsion of Pregnant Adolescents at Igunga District, Tanzania: A qualitative study. *Porto Biomedical Journal*, *6*(5), e141.

Nyamu, N. (2023). Safeguarding girls' rights to education in the enforcement of the African Children's Charter: The African Children's Committee decision in Legal and Human Rights Centre and Centre for Reproductive Rights (on behalf of Tanzanian Girls) v Tanzania. *African Human Rights Yearbook*, *7*, 453–465.

OECD. (2012). Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting disadvantaged students and schools, OECD Publishing. In *Equity and quality in education: Supporting disadvantaged students and schools* Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

PO-RALG (The United Republic of Tanzania President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government). (2019). *Region investment guide*. Dodoma, Tanzania

Raymond, A. (2021). Girls' Participation in Formal Education: A case of Maasai pastoralists in Tanzania. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, *20*(2), 165–185.

Saito, M. (2003). Amartya Sen's Capability Approach to Education: A critical exploration. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *37*(1), 17–33.

Samoff, J. (1981). Education and Transformation in Tanzania, The recreation of Zimbabwe: Prospects for education and rural reconstruction. In *Journal of Opinion*, 11(4).

Save the Children. (2022). Inclusive Education*: Resources-and-tookit-final*. Save the Children, Sweden.

Seeberg, V. (2014). Girls' Schooling Empowerment in Rural China: Identifying capabilities and social change in the village. *Comparative Education Review*, *58*(4), 678–707.

The Citizen. (2023). *Teen mothers face school re-entry struggle*. The Citizen, 19 August. Available at: https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/teen-mothers-face-school-re-entry-struggle-4340292 [Accessed 8 November 2024].

United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). The Law of the Child Act [principal legislation] revised edition of 2019.Dar es Salaam: Government Printer.

United Republic of Tanzania (1979). Educational Act of 1978. Dar es Salaam: Government Printer

United Nations. (1948). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universaldeclaration- of-human-rights.

United Nations. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. Treaty Series, 1577, 3. Chicago.

UNESCO. (1990). World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting basic learning needs. *World Conference For All*, Thailand.

UNESCO. (2015). Incheon Declaration*: Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

UNESCO. (2017). *A Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education*.

UNESCO. (2020a). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2020:* Inclusion and Education*: All means all.* UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2020b). Towards Inclusion in Education*: Status, trends and challenges The UNESCO Salamanca Statement 25 years on United Nations Cultural Organization*.

UNFPA. (2020). *Defying the Practices that Harm Women and Girls and Undermine Equality - State of the World's Population 2020*

United Nations Population Fund, 2022. *Motherhood in Childhood*: *The Untold Story*. UNFPA.

UNFPA Tanzania. (2018) (n.d.). Fact Sheet on Teenage Pregnancy, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

UNICEF. (2001). *Applying a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming: Experiences of UNICEF Presentation Paper prepared for the Workshop on Human Rights,* Assets and Livelihood Security, and Sustainable Development Background Information.

UNICEF. (2017). Inclusive Education: Including children with disabilities in quality learning: What needs to be done. *Inclusive Education*.

UNICEF. (2020). A new era for girls: Taking Stock of 25 Years of Progress. UNICEF, New York.

UNICEF. (2024). Data Must Speak*: Unpacking factors influencing school performance in Mainland Tanzania,* UNICEF, Italy.

Unterhalter, E., Heslop, J., & Mamedu, A. (2013). Girls Claiming Education Rights: Reflections on distribution, empowerment and gender justice in Northern Tanzania and Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *33*(6), 566–575.

Unterhalter, E. (2012). *Mutable Meanings: Gender Equality in Education and International Rights Frameworks: The Equality Rights Review ,Vol. Eight.*

URT. (1977). The United Republic of Tanzania: *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 chapter 2 of the laws.*

Woods, E., 2008. Tanzania Country Case Study. *Country Profile Prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008. Education for All by 2015: will we make it*.

World Bank. (2021). Inclusive Education Resource Guide*: Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education*.

World Bank. (2022). Tanzania Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project (SEQUIP): In Tanzania Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project (SEQUIP) (Vol. 102, Issue SUPPL. 1).

World Bank. (2023a). *Strengthening Basic Education System and Improving Learning Outcomes in Tanzania*.

World Bank. (2023b). World Bank Gender Thematic Policy Notes Series: Evidence and practice note overview achieving gender equality in education: *Examining Progress and Constraints*.

Voice of America (2024) *Teenage mothers in Tanzania struggle with stigmatization.* Available at: https://www.voanews.com/a/teenage-mothers-in-tanzania-struggle-with-stigmatization-/7789014.html (Accessed: 8 November 2024).

Yahl, M. (2015). Education in Tanzania*, Harvard Education Review,55 (1) .45-52*.

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Participants

S/N	Interviewee's Name	Gender	Age	Location	Date of Interview	Role	Years of Service
1	Asha Ramadhani	F	30	Mpwapwa Ward	05/08/2024	Program officer - CDF Mpwapwa	4 Years
2	Theresia Atanasi	F	31	Mpwapwa Ward	05/08/2024	Assistant program officer-Action Girl's Foundation	3 years
3	Steven Ahmed	M	40	Mpwapwa Ward	06/08/2024	District Coordinator-Haki Elimu Mpwapwa	7 years.
4	Janeth Mtweve	F	42	Mpwapwa Ward	10/8/2024	District Coordinator -SMAUJATA.	2 years
5	Khadija Ramadhani	F	36	Mazae Ward	06/08/2024	Discipline Teacher Mazae Secondary School	8 years
6	Sophia Marko	F	38	Mpwapwa Ward	06/08/2024	Counselling Teacher Mtejeta Primary School	9 years
7	Happiness Mafie	F	31	Mpwapwa Ward	06/08/2024	Academic Teacher Mtejeta Primary School	5 years
8	Devotha Malema	F	40	Mazae Ward	07/08/2024	Counselling Teacher Mazae Secondary	10 years
9	Herbeth Mahimbo	M	50	Mazae Ward	7/08/2024	Teacher Mazae Secondary School	20 years
10	Joseph Masalagana	M	42	Mpwapwa Ward	09/08/2024	Adult Education Officer-Mpwapwa District	16 years
11	Zacharia Kiondo	M	47	Mpwapwa Ward	09/08/2024	Education Officer Mpwapwa District	10 years
12	Hongerata Masonga	M	38	Mazae Ward	10/8/2024	Education coordinator	7 years

Appendix B: Indicative Questions

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

My name is Sophia August Temba, I am a master's student at the International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University-Rotterdam in the Netherlands. I am carrying out the study on Understanding Education Policies and Practices for Inclusive Education for Teenage Mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania in the fulfillment of the requirement for the award of my master's degree. I hereby request you to cooperate with me by responding to these questions in this interview schedule. Your views will be treated with maximum confidentiality. I thank you in advance.

REGION:

DISTRICT:

WARD: ……..

DATE: ……..

Name of Interviewee	
Age	
Sex	
Education Level	
Position Held	
Years of Professional Experience	

As I explained earlier, am here to get your insights and experience as a CSO representative on issues related to Understanding education policies and practices for inclusive education for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania. Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your role in your organization?

A). General questions

Qn.1 I really appreciate for your time, we can start our questions first by hearing from you, what do you know about education policy in general?

Qn.2 How do you perceive the effectiveness of existing education policies and guidelines in promoting the inclusion of teenage mothers in the education system?

Qn.3 Do you think education is important to a teenage mother? Why? What support systems or initiatives do you believe are necessary to better assist teenage mothers in balancing their educational pursuits and motherhood responsibilities?

Qn.5 What role do Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play in supporting teenage mothers in accessing education in the district? What resources or programs does your organization provide to support teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District in continuing their education after giving birth?

Qn.6 What are the key priorities for policy development or revision to improve educational opportunities for teenage mothers, and how can CSOs contribute to these efforts?

B). Implementation questions

Qn.1 Can you share any successful initiatives or best practices that your organization has implemented to support teenage mothers in their educational journey?

Qn.2 How do you assess the impact of your organization's programs on the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in the district?

Qn.3 In your opinion, how well are the current education policies implemented in Mpwapwa District to support teenage mothers returning to school after childbirth?

Qn.4 What challenges do you encounter in supporting teenage mothers in accessing education, and how do you address these challenges?

Qn.5 How do you think government officials and CSOs can work together to enhance educational opportunities for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.6 What measures do you think should be in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education policies for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

C). Child and Women's rights questions

Qn.1 How do you address any stigma or discrimination that teenage mothers may face within the education system and the community?

Qn.2 How could one ensure that the voices and experiences of teenage mothers are heard and considered in the development of education policies and programs?

Qn.3 How do you work with other stakeholders (Schools, health facilities and government agencies) in ensuring the fundamental rights of teenage mothers are protected and respected?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

My name is Sophia August Temba, I am a master's student at the International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University-Rotterdam in the Netherlands. I am carrying out the study on Understanding Education Policies and Practices for Inclusive Education for Teenage Mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania in the fulfillment of the requirement for the award of my master's degree. I hereby request you to cooperate with me by responding to these questions in this interview schedule. Your views will be treated with maximum confidentiality. I thank you in advance.

REGION: DODOMA

DISTRICT: MPWAPWA

WARD: ……..

DATE: ……..

Name of Interviewee	
Age	
Sex	
Education Level	
Position Held	
Years of Professional Experience	

Good morning, thank you for agreeing to speak with us. As the letter explained, am here to get your insights and experience as a government official on issues related to Understanding education policies and practices for inclusive education for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania. Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your role as a government official?

A). General questions

Qn.1 I really appreciate for your time, we can start our questions first by hearing from you, what do you know about education policy in general?

Qn.2 Can you provide insights into the current education policies in Mpwapwa District regarding the inclusion of teenage mothers in formal education?

Qn.3 What are the key priorities for policy development or revision to enhance the educational opportunities for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.4 Do you think education is important to a teenage mother? Why? What support systems or initiatives do you believe are necessary to better assist teenage mothers in balancing their educational pursuits and motherhood responsibilities?

Qn.5 What are the key priorities for policy development or revision to improve educational opportunities for teenage mothers, and how can government contribute to these efforts?

B). Implementation questions

Qn.1 How are these policies implemented at the district and ward levels to support teenage mothers in accessing quality education?

Qn.2 How do you perceive the role of government agencies in ensuring the successful implementation of inclusive education policies for teenage mothers?

Qn.3 What resources or programs are currently available to support teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District in continuing their education after childbirth?

Qn.4 How do you assess the effectiveness of existing education policies in addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by teenage mothers in the district?

QN.5 What measures are in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of inclusive education policies on teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.6 What strategies or initiatives have been successful in promoting the retention and academic success of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.7 In your view, what are the key priorities for improving educational opportunities for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District, and how can government officials contribute to these efforts?

Qn.8 Can you share any success stories or best practices related to inclusive education for teenage mothers that have been implemented in Mpwapwa District?

C). Government roles and collaboration questions

Qn.1 How do you perceive the role of community engagement in supporting teenage mothers' access to education in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.2 How can government officials collaborate with community members and other stakeholders to create a more supportive and inclusive educational environment for teenage mothers?

D). Child and Women's rights questions

Qn.1 How do you address the stigma or discrimination that teenage mothers may face within the education system and the community?

Qn.2 How do you ensure that teenage mothers receive the necessary emotional and social support to thrive academically in the education system?

Qn.3 How does the government ensuring gender equality is fostered and there is no discrimination against teenage mothers in home and school environment?

Qn.4 How does the government make sure teenage mothers are involved in decision making process regarding their rights and wellbeing?

Qn.5 What measures are taken by the government to enable teenage mothers to advocate for their rights within education system and in the community?

QUESTIONEIRER FOR TEACHERS

My name is Sophia August Temba, I am a master's student at the International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University-Rotterdam in the Netherlands. I am carrying out the study on Understanding Education Policies and Practices for Inclusive Education for Teenage Mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania in the fulfillment of the requirement for the award of my master's degree. I hereby request you to cooperate with me by responding to these questions in this interview schedule. Your views will be treated with maximum confidentiality. I thank you in advance.

REGION: DODOMA

DISTRICT: MPWAPWA

WARD: ……

DATE……..

Name of Interviewee	
Age	
Sex	
Education level	
Position Held	
Years of Professional Experiences	

Good morning, thank you for agreeing to speak with me. As I explained earlier, am here to get your insights and experience as a teacher on issues related to Understanding education policies and practices for inclusive education for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District Tanzania. Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your role as a teacher?

A). Genera questions

Qn.1 I really appreciate for your time, we can start our questions first by hearing from you, what do you know about education policy in general?

Qn.2 How do you perceive the current education policies and guidelines in Mpwapwa District in supporting teenage mothers in accessing formal education?

Qn.3 Can you share your experiences and observations regarding teenage mothers returning to school in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.4 Do you think education is important to a teenage mother? Why? What support systems or initiatives do you believe are necessary to better assist teenage mothers in balancing their educational pursuits and motherhood responsibilities?

B). Implementation questions

Qn.1 How do you think the existing education policies are implemented at the school level to support teenage mothers effectively?

Qn.2 How do you assess the effectiveness of the existing education policies in addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by teenage mothers in the district?

Qn.3 What strategies or initiatives have you found successful in promoting the retention and academic success of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.4 What do you see as the key priorities for improving educational opportunities for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District, and how can teachers contribute to these efforts?

Qn.5 Can you share any success stories or best practices related to inclusive education for teenage mothers that have been implemented in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.6 What role do you think teachers play in ensuring the successful implementation of inclusive education policies for teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.7 In your opinion, what additional support systems or initiatives could be developed or enhanced to better assist teenage mothers in balancing their educational pursuits and motherhood responsibilities?

C). Community engagement and collaboration questions

QN.1 In what ways do you think community members can be engaged in supporting teenage mother's access to education in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.2 How can teachers collaborate with CSOs and other stakeholders to further support teenage mothers in their education journey in Mpwapwa District?

D). Child and Women's rights questions

Qn.1 How can education policies empower teenage mothers to advocate for their own rights and educational opportunities?

Qn.2 How do you think the stigma or discrimination that teenage mothers may face within the education system and the community can be addressed?

Qn.3 In what ways do you think education policies promote inclusivity and gender equality for teenage mothers in accessing education opportunities in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.4 What is your take on the legal protections and support systems that have been included in education policies to protect the rights of teenage mothers in Mpwapwa District?

Qn.5 How do you ensure that teenage mothers receive the necessary emotional and social support to thrive academically in the education system?