

**AN EXPLORATION OF SCHOOL STRUCTURES IN THE
PROVISION OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO THE
READMITTED TEEN MOTHERS IN SELECTED SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN MZUZU.**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work contained herein is my original work and that it has not been Submitted elsewhere for publication. Where other peoples' work has been used credit is duly given.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work foremost to God the Almighty for his divine guidance, wisdom and protection throughout my study. I also dedicate it to my late dear mother, Mrs. Lucia Kumwenda for grooming me into the man that I'm.

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ACRONYM/ ABBREVIATIONS

MOE - Ministry of Education

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHO - World Health Organization

SMC- School Management Committee

PTA – Parent Teacher Association

MG – Mother Group

CC – Counselling Committee

NED-Northern Education Division

ABSTRACT

The government of Malawi through the Ministry of Education developed the Re-admission policy on teen mothers in 1994. The policy allowed adolescent mothers to go back to school after delivery. It was intended to reduce pregnancy-related school dropout rates amongst girls. This study seeks to explore the school supporting mechanisms structures for the readmitted teen mothers in selected secondary school in northern Malawi Mzuzu city. The specific objectives of the study are: to investigate the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmission of teen mothers; to evaluate mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mothers; to examine the challenges faced by school structures in

the provision of support mechanisms to readmitted teen mothers. The proposed theoretical framework for the study is path-goal leadership theory which was developed by Robert House an Ohio state university graduate in the year 1971 and was revised in 1996. This theory proposes that leaders must clarify the paths to the goals and remove or help followers around the obstacles to the goals. In its simplest form, the theory reminds leaders that the overarching purpose of leadership is to guide and coach followers as they move along the path to achieve a goal (House and Mitchell 1974). The target population of this research is 6 public secondary schools. The 6 secondary schools will be purposefully selected depending on the number of readmitted teen mother enrolled i.e. the selected secondary school will be required to have not less than 5 readmitted teen mother at the time of the study. Mixed day Purposive sampling technique will also be used to sample school committee leaders, mother group leaders, parent teacher association leaders, a school counsellor and a teacher. The sample size for this study is 60 respondents. Data collection instruments will include structured questionnaires and interview guides. Qualitative data will be organized in thematic categories according to the study objectives and then analyzed thematically. Teen mothers will be the main beneficiaries of this study since they are the main targets of the Re-admission policy. Besides the adolescent mothers, the findings from this study are expected to be useful to education policy makers, secondary school head teachers, teachers and parents.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Adolescent : A girl between 15 and 17 years old in the process of transition from childhood to adulthood and is still in secondary school.

Adolescent mothers: Refers to 15-19 years old girls who become pregnant or has a child while they are still in secondary schools.

School Drop- outs : Are adolescent mothers who leave school prior to completion of secondary school course due to pregnancy or motherhood.

Gender equality : Ensuring educational equality between girls and boys, women and men.

Guidance and Counseling: Is the process of assisting an adolescent mother to understand herself and her environment and adjust to various situations such as adolescent pregnancy and motherhood while in school.

Implementation: The process of putting the Re-entry Policy guidelines on adolescent mothers in to action in a secondary school

Re-Admission: The process whereby an adolescent mother is allowed to go back to secondary school after delivery and is ready to continue with her studies.

Re-Admission policy: The regulation prepared by the Ministry of Education to ensure that girls who get pregnant in secondary schools continue with studies so as to prevent complete school dropout.

Roles : Responsibilities or functions that different stakeholders are expected to carry out in order to implement the Re-Admission Policy Guidelines on Adolescent Mothers.

Stakeholders : Refers to persons that have interest, concerns, who have a shared responsibility, contribution or obligation towards implementation of the re-entry policy guidelines on adolescent mother

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The world recognizes education as a key to individual success and national development. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights by the United Nations Organization in 1948 emphasized a need for countries to view education as a human right. It is observed that the concept of education as a human right is always being challenged by the unbalanced numbers of girls and boys who enroll and complete their education in different schools. Statistics has shown that there is always high number of boys who complete secondary school education as compared to girls, a challenge that has led to a concept of gender equality in education. Despite the fact that girls' education has been on the global and national agendas of many countries including Malawi for some time, the dream to achieve it remains farfetched. For instance the boy to girl enrollment ratio In Malawian primary schools reveals equal enrollment ratio only in lower primary section classes from standard 1 to 4. It is however observed that the number of girls who drop out of school increase steadily as they progress to upper primary section from Standard 5 to 8. Statistics show that more girls drop out of school before they acquire the essential knowledge, attitudes and skills that would positively change their lives and those of societies in which they live (EMIS-2016). It has been discovered that the increase in the number of boys enrolling and completing either primary or secondary school is attributed to the more favorable conditions for boys than girls in the education system. It has been observed that a lot of barriers have prevented girls from participating effectively in education as compared to boys in a situation where equal education opportunities are provided for both. The increase in number of barriers affecting a girl child education results in poor performance, increase in number of repetition and dropping out of girls from school.

Research has proved that girls face challenges in accessing their education, staying in school and completing their education. The 2015 EMIS report reveals that early and unintended Pregnancies was one of the major reasons for causing an increase in girl's dropout rates. Teenage pregnancy as a barrier to the success of a girl child is common in many developing countries including countries in sub-Saharan Africa. For instance research carried out in South Africa revealed that 30% of girls

who had reached the age of eighteen were already mothers with at least a single kid (Mahy & Gupta 2002; NRC-IOM 2005). The above research serves as a piece of evidence in explaining the issue of pregnancy being the major and serious cause of girl's school disruption, particularly at secondary school level. The 30% of the teen mothers represents the number of girls who face disruption in their education which leads to failure, poor performance or withdrawal from school thereafter. It needs to be pointed out that the future of teen mother's education will always depend on the support that they get from different stakeholders in terms of psychological support, financial support, moral support as well as providing them with guidance and counselling on issues relating to mothering and schooling simultaneously. It is of great importance that different stakeholders willing to assist teen mothers understand that the birth of the baby leads to the end or death of schooling for many teen mothers if they don't receive the required financial, psychological and physical support from them in time (Grant & Hallman 2006). To add on early pregnancy other researchers have added that early marriages and lack of school fees are among other major causes for girls dropping out of school. Most of the Parents with limited financial resources in Malawi will prefer sponsoring a boy child than a girl child in a situation of having limited financial resources. It is a common traditional belief by many parents that their boy child is more entitled to look after them in their old age than a girl child hence investing in his education is their major priority. Contrary to the parent's expectations from a boy child, parents groom a girl child to be a marriage material. A girl child is viewed as someone who needs to be trained in doing house chores and issues pertaining to caring for her future husband.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also led to an increase in teenage pregnancies in many African countries, according to United Nations, media, and civil society reports. This increase could be linked to prolonged school closures since all African countries closed their schools in 2020 and lack of remote learning opportunities during the pandemic, the lack of protective environments, and the loss of access to sexual and reproductive health services. In Zimbabwe, a parliamentary report to the Senate on August 19 observed that prolonged school closures due to Covid-19 contributed to a "sharp increase" in teenage pregnancies. The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development reported that during January and February 2021, close to 5,000 students were pregnant, and over 1,770 were forced into marriages

The July 1990 *“African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child”* proposed that “State parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that girls who become pregnant before completing education are able to continue with their education”. In compliance with the African charter many sub-Saharan countries, like Cameroon, Madagascar, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Kenya, introduced the re-admission policy allowing teenage mothers to go back to school (Chilisa 2002). Malawi also signed agreements with the *United Nations Charter* on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the global Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The goals presented in EFA and MDGs emphasized a need to promote quality and equal education with no gender disparities at both primary and secondary levels. In 1993 Malawi through The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) introduced its Readmission Policy which provided that a pregnant female learner, and the male learner responsible for the pregnancy, would be withdrawn from school for one academic year and be readmitted upon application. The Malawi readmission policy was introduced in line with the vision drawn in Malawi’s National Girls’ Education Strategy (NGES) which proposes that “All girls in Malawi access, participate in, complete and excel at all levels of Education that empowers them to effectively contribute to the country’s sustainable social, Economic development by 2018” (MoEST). The Readmission Policy provided that the learner would be given only one opportunity for readmission. Thus, the policy towards learner pregnancy remained punitive and reactionary. Evidently, the significant problem of learner pregnancies remained largely unaddressed. Additionally, there was a lack of clarity about the readmission procedures and processes, and where utilized, the process often proved to be lengthy and cumbersome for the learner seeking readmission. Following the implementation challenges of the 1993 Policy, the ministry developed a circular on Readmission Procedures in 2006. The procedures provided that a pregnant female learner, and the male learner responsible for the pregnancy, needed to submit three copies of a letter to the head teacher regarding the pregnancy. Both learners are to be counseled by the school counseling committee. The counseling should include being informed about the possibility of readmission. Both learners must also be withdrawn from school for a year and the opportunity for readmission will only be given once in their education cycle.

The 1993 Malawi readmission policy was poorly implemented by different stakeholders and did not yield expected results. The failure in the implementation of the 1993 readmission policy led to a revised readmission policy which was introduced in April 2018. One of the priority areas in the revised readmission policy released in April 2018 was to strengthen support mechanisms to Retain Readmitted Learners in Schools. The failure of the initial readmission policy revealed the importance of the school supporting mechanism in the implementation of the readmission policy.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A study on assessing progress made in increasing girls' education access which was commissioned by Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) in May 2014 established that in an attempt of keeping girls in school, the readmission policy is not effectively implemented. The study revealed that only 49% of the girls who left school had been re-admitted in all the six districts and most girls still dropped out of school even after their readmission. The study further established that the failure in the implementation of this policy was largely attributed to lack of documented guidelines and procedures for readmission to all stakeholders, negative attitudes towards teenage mothers, socioeconomic constraints, unprofessional teacher conduct and teenage mother fear to return to the same schools. It is discovered that these barriers increase girls drop out and present barriers to effective implementation of the readmission policy. Studies have also shown that some of the major reasons for failure in the implementation of readmission policy in schools is lack of awareness by most of the stakeholders. The findings from different studies show that there is lack of awareness of the Readmission Policy among Ministry of Education (MOE) officials, head teachers, teachers, students as well as parents. Oywecha (2008) recorded that in most cases, implementers do not even know that there is a policy in question thus leading to failure on the implementation part. Scholars have pointed out the need for more research to find out the status of stakeholders preparedness through capacity building which might add to their body of knowledge.

One of the priority area in the revised readmission policy released in April 2018 was to strengthen support mechanism to Retain Readmitted Learners in School. It needs to be pointed out that readmission support mechanisms form a very important system or a guideline which is supposed to be used by policy implementers or stakeholders. It is observed that many teen mother either find it challenging to go back to school or drop out after being readmitted to schools due to lack of professional support from either school or community. Lack of proper use of supporting mechanism by key member in schools leads to unfriendly environment which fails to support teen mothers emotionally and psychologically which in turn results to failure in the implementation of the policy. It is therefore important that stakeholders or implementers at a school be knowledgeable of the supporting mechanisms that are put in place to assist them to achieve the objectives of the policy in question. It is observed that despite the government attempt to put necessary supporting

mechanism for readmission policy, the functionality of such mechanisms remain questionable and doubtful.

This study is therefore necessary to establish the functionality of school supporting mechanisms in implementing the Re-admission Policy Guidelines. The study seeks to ensure that the readmitted teen mother receives the necessary support as per stipulated in the policy document so as to improve teen mother retention and readmission.

1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the school structures that provide support mechanism for readmitted teen mothers in selected secondary schools in Mzuzu city as a way of increasing teen mother readmission and retention.

1.4. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmission of teen mothers.
2. To evaluate effectiveness of mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mothers.
3. To examine the challenges faced by school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to readmitted teen mothers.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The 1993 Readmission Policy provided that a pregnant female learner, and the male learner responsible for the pregnancy, would be withdrawn from school for one academic year and be readmitted upon application. Despite the fact that one of the major aims of the policy was to increase girls education access, retention and completion, studies showed that teen mothers were still either afraid of going back to school or dropping out of school again after being readmitted due to unfriendly environment in school. It was revealed that the 1993 readmission policy was poorly implemented because many complained that it proposed cumbersome and tedious procedures for readmitting learners and failed to give details on how stakeholders in schools were supposed to deal with challenges adolescent mothers encountered, a situation which led to majority of the readmitted girls falling out of school again due to lack of care. In 2018 MOEST reviewed the 1993 readmission policy with the aim of simplifying its implementation especially at the school level. Despite the fact that the reviewed policy presents detailed supporting mechanisms to guide

and assist all implementers at a school level to implement the policy, many studies still proves that implementation of the policy by utilizing such supporting mechanisms remain a challenge. It is therefore the purpose of this study to assess the effectiveness of the supporting mechanism of readmission policy in secondary schools in Mzuzu city.

The findings of this study may be useful to the ministry of education in promoting one of its general objectives of promoting equal education opportunities for both boys and girls in Malawi. The policy makers especially those promoting access, retention and completion of girl child education may also benefit from this study by looking at different roles of stakeholders in assisting a teen mother at a school. With this study the key members of supporting mechanisms at school would be able to implement the policy by using the supporting mechanisms presented in the document. Key members in supporting mechanisms at school may benefit from this study by learning the importance of their role as stakeholders in the implementation of the policy by using the supporting mechanisms presented to them in the policy document. Finally, findings from this study may contribute in enhancing the use of supporting mechanisms presented in the policy document by different stakeholders especially those at school.

1.7. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is designed to solely focus on the secondary school structures that provide support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mother. The study will only focus on the secondary schools because according to the Ministry of Education (2007), it is at the secondary school level where gender disparities are the greatest in terms of student enrolment, retention and performance. The study will therefore not make any comparison between secondary school structures and primary school structures in terms of the provision of support to the readmitted teen mothers. There is also a possibility that some respondents like head teachers, counselors and chairs of different committees might not be willing to share information that might expose their lack of knowledge or poor administration in relation to re-admission policy. The researcher will address this by assuring them that the study is purely for academic purposes and will neither expose their names nor the name of the school in any way. Since the study will be focusing on the support mechanisms

for teen mother, no data will be collected at a boy's only secondary school. The study will only target mixed and girl's secondary schools in Mzuzu city.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on research work related to the support mechanisms that are provided by the school structures to assist readmitted teen mothers in secondary schools. It specifically reviewed literature related to the objectives of this study which included the following: investigating the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmission of teen mothers, evaluating mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mothers and examining the challenges faced by school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to readmitted teen mothers in Mzuzu city. The literature was discussed as follows:

2.2. THE CHANCES OF A GIRL CHILD IN COMPLETING HER EDUCATION

The United Nations Population reported that over 140 million girls will quit school and enter child marriages over the period of 2011-2020 (UNFPA 2013c). The report also indicated that 30 million girls who represents half of the projected 60 million girls around the world left school while adolescent. South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa happen to be among the developing regions with the highest number of teen girl's dropping out of school due to pregnancy. For instance in 2012, South Asia recorded that 12.6 million teen girls dropped out of junior high school while in Sub Saharan Africa the number of the teen girls who dropped out in junior high school was 11.8 million. A study that was carried out by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, led by MIET Africa, a regional organization, shows that between October 2020 and February 2021, six SADC countries Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have all recorded high rates of child, early and forced marriages, early pregnancies, and school dropouts. In the same line a research study done in the United States of America by Shuger (2012) uncovered that 30% of school dropouts among adolescent girls mentioned pregnancy and parenthood as the reason. The same study also indicated that pregnancy was the leading reason for school dropouts among adolescents prior to graduation in Canada. Another study in USA reported the highest drop out of 660,000 girls due to pregnancy (Marcotte, 2011). It has been universally agreed that despite the fact that attempts are being made globally to have educated girls in many

countries there are still challenges that have to be dealt with. The reports reveal that the probability that a girl child will drop out of school is high as compared to a boy child.

UNESCO report indicates that teen girls drop out is largely caused by early and unintended pregnancy. The report maintains that the early and unintended teen pregnancies are caused by unprotected sex and inaccessibility of services like current contraception and family planning methods. It is also observed that the transition period from childhood to adulthood (puberty) which is associated with new and complex emotional sexual desires is also one of the major genesis of such unplanned pregnancies. (UNESCO, 2014a)

2.3. REVISED READMISSION POLICIES IN AFRICAN UNION (AU) COUNTRIES

SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in Africa, with profound consequences for girls' education: in 2017, 30 percent of women ages 20 to 24 had a live birth before they turned 18. An estimated 20 percent of girls drop out of school due to pregnancy and child marriage, according to government data Sierra Leone reversed its policy in 2020, lifting a discriminatory ban against pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers and adopting a more robust inclusive education policy. In March 2021 Sierra Leone adopted a policy of "Radical Inclusion" that reaffirms pregnant girls and adolescent mothers' right to education. It also provides that girls can stay in school during their pregnancy and return to school when they are ready, without imposing burdensome conditions, mandatory maternity leave, or restrictions for their return.

SÃO TOMÉ

In March 2020 São Tomé e Príncipe revoked a ministerial decree that required pregnant students to study in night-shift schools after the third month of pregnancy and for its duration. This action was tied to a World Bank majority-funded US\$15 million grant for the country's strategy to improve quality education and accelerate girls' education.

UGANDA

Uganda and constitute a significant barrier for girls' education. According to national and UN data, 25 percent of girls and women ages 15 to 19 have begun childbearing, 34 percent of girls are married before age 18, and over 7 percent before age 15. According to UNICEF, 25 percent of the 1.2 million pregnancies recorded in Uganda annually are in adolescent girls, with more than 300,000 pregnancies ending in unsafe abortions. In December 2020 Uganda introduced revised guidelines on pregnancy prevention and management in schools. The policy affirms the right to education of students who are pregnant or are parents, though it places numerous conditions on enrollment. It mandates schools to prioritize readmitting mothers and girls after pregnancy and provides redress for children and parents when public schools refuse to enroll them. It also gives schools guidance to tackle stigma, discrimination, and violence against students who are pregnant or are parents. However, it also sets out a series of strict "reentry" conditions, including requiring girls to drop out when they are three-months pregnant, and to take a mandatory six-month maternity leave. Human Rights Watch previously found that some of these conditions constitute an effective barrier, particularly as girls will be required to stay out of school for up to a year. The policy relies on effectively compulsory periodic pregnancy testing to detect and prevent pregnancies, violating girls' rights to privacy, equality, and bodily autonomy.

ZIMBABWE

In 2019 Zimbabwe reformed its Education Act to include a provision that prohibits excluding pregnant students from school. The act also protects students from discrimination on the grounds of marital status, among nearly 20 protected grounds.

MOZAMBIQUE

In December 2018 Mozambique revoked a national decree that required pregnant students to study in night-shift schools. The government has not yet adopted a policy that ensures girls' right to remain in school, though, or prescribes how schools should now manage pregnant students and adolescent mothers.

KENYA

Kenya has two older policies that set out conditions for an adolescent mother's "unconditional" readmission to school, in 2020 the government adopted national reentry guidelines for students who face educational barriers and drop out of school, including due to pregnancy. The policy clarifies that pregnant

TANZANIA

The World Bank estimates that 5,500 pregnant students stop going to school every year in Tanzania, although previous estimates indicated that close to 8,000 students have been forced to drop out of school each year. In 2019 and 2020 the World Bank approved a \$500 million loan for Tanzania's Secondary Education. Quality Improvement Program, despite the government's policy of expelling pregnant students and adolescent mothers from school. By approving the loan to Tanzania, the World Bank effectively endorsed a discriminatory ban, which further cements exclusion and loss of education for thousands of girls in the country. After initial pressure from the World Bank, the government agreed to allow adolescent mothers to enroll in. Alternative Education Pathways, a parallel system of education taught in folk development centers, community-based education centers that are set up to teach technical and vocational education and accelerated adult basic education. This type of education is not tuition free, and it is currently the only way pregnant girls, adolescent mothers, and married students can study, unless they pay to enroll in private schools. In March Leonard Akwilapo, the permanent secretary at the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, announced that 54 folk development centers would begin to enroll pregnant girls and adolescent mothers as of January 2022.

FIGURE 1: AFRICAN UNION POLICIES AND LAWS ON PREGNANT STUDENTS AND ADOLESCENT MOTHERS

Countries with "re-entry policies" and policies that prescribe conditions for pregnant students and adolescent mothers, including mandatory maternity leave	Countries with policies or strategies that provide for "continuation	Countries with national laws related to pregnant students' and mothers' right to education	Countries that have recently removed restrictive policies, but have a policy gap
Botswana Burundi Cameroon Gambia Ghana Liberia Madagascan Malawi Mali Namibia Senegal South Africa Swaziland Zimbabwe Zambia	Cabo Verde Côte d'Ivoire Gabon Liberia Kenya Rwanda Sierra Leone	Benin Democratic Republic of Congo Lesotho Mauritania Nigeria South Sudan Zimbabwe	Mozambique São Tomé e Príncipe

2.4. THE INTRODUCTION OF RE-ADMISSION POLICY IN MALAWI IN 1993

Malawi adopted the readmission policy in 1993 following the “African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child” which was conducted in 1990. The charter proposed that “State parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that girls who become pregnant before completing education are able to continue with their education”. In compliance with the African charter many sub-Saharan countries, like Cameroon, Madagascar, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Kenya, introduced the re-admission policy allowing teenage mothers to go back to school (Chilisa 2002). It needs to be pointed out that Malawi have had signed a number of agreements that were meant to promote girl child education before introducing the re-admission policy. Some of the agreements that Malawi signed includes the United Nations Charter on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the global Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The goals presented in EFA and MDGs emphasized a need to promote quality and equal education with no gender disparities at both primary and secondary levels. The Malawi readmission policy was also introduced in line with the vision drawn in Malawi’s National Girls’ Education Strategy (NGES) which proposes that “All girls in Malawi access, participate in, complete and excel at all levels of Education that empowers them to effectively contribute to the country’s sustainable social, Economic development by 2018” (MoEST). The Readmission Policy provided that the learner would be given only one opportunity for readmission. Thus many education critics claimed that the 1993 readmission policy towards learner pregnancy remained punitive and unfriendly since it could not accommodate students who could get pregnant more than once. However there was evidence that the significant problem of learner pregnancies in Malawi remained largely unaddressed. Additionally, some scholars pointed out that the policy lacked clarity about the readmission procedures, processes, and how it could be implemented by different stakeholders. There was a general complaint from Malawian masses that the readmission process proved to be lengthy and cumbersome for the learner seeking readmission. It was discovered that many stakeholders failed to understand the 1993 readmission policy hence it was poorly implemented. Following the implementation challenges of the 1993 Policy, the ministry developed a circular on Readmission Procedures in 2006. Among others the 2006 circular made some clarifications on the readmission procedure. The procedure provided that a pregnant

female learner, and the male learner responsible for the pregnancy, needed to submit three copies of a letter to the head teacher regarding the pregnancy. Both learners were supposed to be counseled by the school counseling committee before being suspended and readmitted after the child delivery (Samati, 2016). The 1993 Malawi readmission policy was poorly implemented by different stakeholders and did not yield the expected results

2.4.1. THE REVISED READMISSION POLICY 2018

The failure in the implementation of the 1993 readmission policy resulted into a revised readmission policy which was introduced in April 2018. One of the priority area in the revised readmission policy released in April 2018 was to strengthen support mechanism to retain readmitted learners in Schools. The failure of the initial readmission policy revealed lack of special backing mechanisms at school, family and community level. The reviewed policy noted the importance of the school supporting mechanism in the implementation of the readmission policy. The purpose of the revised readmission policy was to increase enrolment, retention and completion of education phase. The policy also ensured that special backing mechanism at family and community levels are put in place to assist the teen-age parents. Similar to Malawi Kenya introduced its first re-entry policy in 1999 and revised it in 2011 because many stakeholders complained that it had a lot of ambiguities as pertains to the roles of stakeholders (Hubbard, 2008; Shevajali; 2009). It can therefore be pointed out that the initial re-admission policy had failed in many countries and required revision

To improve the implementation efficiency of the 1993 readmission policy the revised re admission policy of Malawi adopted new ways of supporting the readmitted teen mothers. The new re-admission policy promised to switch from the old cumbersome and tedious readmitting procedures, where the affected students were required to write three letters addressed to the head of the school, EDM and the ministry asking them to spare their place, and on resuming back to school, the same process was to be followed to a decentralized and bureaucratic procedures for readmitting the affected students. Unlike the initial policy which did not specify withdraw period of the affected students the revised policy clearly stated one year withdrawal period for the affected

students. The revised policy also recommended that School Management Committee (SMC) and other committees working with the school create a conducive environment for readmitted learners. Counselling and psycho social support were also supposed to be institutionalized in all schools for readmitted learners. Extra-curricular activities that deter learners from risky behaviors are available in all schools. Remedial academic support to readmitted learners was also to be provided in all schools. Reporting procedures for GBVs in schools are established and institutionalized. School leadership adheres and reinforces readmission policy. Punitive measures of teenage pregnancy perpetrators are enforced according to the laws of Malawi.” (MoEST, 2018)

2.4.2. EFFECTIVENESS OF RE-ENTRY POLICY

Just like in Malawi, many African countries have failed to achieve the intended goals of the re-admission policy. As Mwansa (2011) argues that, while there is much benefit towards the implementation of the REP, a clear recognition about implementation of the policy is far from being perfect and that there is much skepticism about the claims made for the exemplary success of the policy. In trying to assess the effectiveness of re-entry policy in Africa studies that were carried out in Zambia and South Africa established that the policy was successful in some areas while failed completely in other areas. The studies carried out assessed the re-admission policy based on different expectations of both the ministry of education and other stakeholders. The studies focused much on retention of girls who fall pregnant, progression of teen mothers in school, completion of school, students goal attainment and moral uprightness (Akensina 2008). From the studies it was discovered that in most countries the readmission policy has been successful in areas of student’s retention and progression. The study carried out in South Africa revealed that the retention process in the country was successful since most of the teen mothers accepted to go back to school with the hope of getting a chance of supporting their children upon successful completion of school (Rajendra 2008). Concurring with the study in SA another study in Zambia discovered that most of teen mothers did not manage to complete their studies because their babies made them fail to cope up in school (Nowanga 2017). In 2004, FAWWEZA demonstrated that there are institutional factors hindering the implementation of the Re-Entry Policy in Zambia. The report indicated that some of the factors that were hindering the implementation included the fact that the policy was not being fully understood by service providers, especially at school level and

communities due to lack of orientation and the policy guidelines were not being readily available in schools. There was evidence of lack of institutionalized mechanisms for detecting pregnancies early, lack of counselling, lack of mechanisms to facilitate re-entry of girls after failing pregnant and the stigma within the schooling system deterring teen mothers from re-enrolling back in school. It can therefore be pointed out that the readmission policy practiced in many central Africa countries has failed to deliver in terms of performance.

2.4.3. CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

2.4.3.1. LACK OF POLICY CLARITY

Literature has shown that most of the re-entry policies that are being implemented in Africa are ambiguous, difficult to understand and make implementation difficult and impossible. Literature has also shown that some officials and head teachers expressed the view that the re-entry policy was not clear and they were unsure on how to implement it (Omwancha 2012). There were particularly conflicting views about how to interpret the guidelines and different practices with regard to when pregnancy was discovered, when pregnant girls should leave school for delivery, how long should pregnant girls be absent from school and re-entry to school after delivery among others. Lack of policy clarity poses a challenge on implementation which could prejudice the intended beneficiaries (Mashishi and Makoelle 2014). Study carried out in Kenya reported that there was inadequate knowledge of national policies by educators, parents and members of the communities. It was discovered that many stakeholders did not know or had very little knowledge about the guideline on learner pregnancy management policy (Runhare & Hwami 2014). Similarly Runhare (2010) and Omwancha (2012) indicate that educators, head teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders revealed that they have heard about the policy but not seen the pregnant learner management policy. There was a notable lack of awareness of the policy at various levels among the key stakeholders. This means that the intended beneficiaries and implementers are not conversant with the policy thus casting doubt on its proper implementation let alone success in achieving the intended policy objectives.

2.4.3.2. UNSUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Literature has revealed that pregnant learners need support and encouragement from their educators, it is however unfortunate that some educators consider pregnant and mothering teenagers' problems as personal matters and none of their problems (Chigona et al. 2008). It has been discovered that the training that most of the educators receive in their respective colleges and universities did not adequately prepare them to deal with social problems like handling teen mothers (Mutshaeni et al 2015). Akhire and Madanda (2014). Some teachers have strongly talked against retention of girls citing that teen mothers will have a bad influence on the rest of the girls.

2.4.3.4. MISCONCEPTIONS SURROUNDING READMISSION POLICY

The literature has revealed some gaps that needs to be filled if the re-entry policy is to be efficiently implemented. Many studies have pointed out that there is resistance among some stakeholders due to misconceptions surrounding the policy of re-admission policy (Olivier MA 1996). The most discussed misconception is that the Re-entry policy promotes promiscuity among young girls. A study that was carried out at Gwanda community in Zambia revealed that some respondents pointed out that embracing re-entry policy is like accepting that having sex at an early age is acknowledged and acceptable. It has been reported in the studies that some school committees in South Africa were often unwilling to allow the pregnant girls to continue attending classes for fear that they may influence other girls and encourage them to get pregnant. One of the objectives in the proposed study is to investigate factors that are hindering the provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers at school. The two reviewed studies from Zambia and South Africa will assist the researcher in comparing factors like different misconceptions presented by different stakeholders in the read studies with what might be discovered in the current research. The two studies read also proved that there is lack of coordination between different stakeholders who are supposed to be providing supporting mechanisms for the readmitted students in the respective countries (FAWEZA 2010). The studies showed that there was lack of coordination between different main stakeholders like counsellors, teachers, school management committee, mothers group and parents which lead to failure in the proper implementation of the policy. The contribution of different stakeholders in the success and failure of the re-entry policy discussed in

the two studies will assist the current proposed study to investigate the power of stakeholder's coordination in improving the efficiency of the re-entry policy in Malawi.

2.4.3.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DIFFERENT STUDIES

The discussions from the studies have provided a foresight on the possible factors that might enhance or hinder the provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers in Malawi. For instance the discussions from the two studies from Zambia and South Africa have revealed that there is a possibility that readmission policy might lead to moral decay if no properly checked. As Mutesi (2012) argues that a rotten apple spoils the barrel. He maintains that learning institutions are sacred places for morally upright students who are good examples to other learners and not otherwise. According to him teen mothers are not supposed to be allowed in convention schools because they can influence the other normal students. The literature also revealed that there is a possibility of having learners abusing the policy if stakeholders will not be active in executing their duties as stipulated in the policy document. There is a need to put society norms into consideration upon implementing the policy to address the fears of some stakeholders who appeared to be reluctant in taking their roles because they do not agree with some of the proposed concepts in the policy (Kelly 1999). It was discovered that the policy only focus on the welfare of teen mothers and ignores the normal students who might also be affected by the teen mother re-entry policy. The study in SA also pointed out lack of counselling to combat stigma attached to teenage pregnancy. The survey showed that teen mothers came back to school without going through any counselling to prepare them to deal with their stigma, parenthood, and schooling simultaneously. As such most of the teen mothers got overwhelmed by their situation in school and some failed to cope resulting in school dropout. The study carried out in SA recommended that the students be considered as special need students.

2.5. INDISCIPLINE AMONG TEEN MOTHER

The study that was carried out in Zambia revealed that there is an increase in number of indiscipline among readmitted teen mothers. It has been recorded that 45% of the readmitted teen mother are involved in indiscipline cases (Pillow 2004). Some studies revealed that some teen mothers got

fed up and resisted the teachers' use of judgmental language in the presence of the fellow learners and spoke back to the negative remarks or attitudes they encountered and this led to misunderstanding between teachers and teen mothers in school. Judging from such studies it would be concluded that there is still a need to train teachers on ways of handling teen mothers and their situations to make the re-entry policy effective. There is overwhelming evidence from the two studies from Zambia and South Africa that the policy expectations from the teachers and other stakeholders is contrary to their actual perception of the teen mother situation. Despite introducing the readmission policy in Kenya in 1994, many teen mothers were not willing to go back to school (Kurgat, 2016). It was observed that only few girls saw the re-admission policy as an opportunity for them to complete their education. It was discovered that many school heads were unwilling to accept the teenage mothers into their school system, but could assist them to transfer to other schools Omulako et al (2011). The conflicts that exist between different stakeholders at school and other committees from the community will have to be analyzed in the current study. One of the objectives in the proposed study is investigating the support mechanisms that are provided by the school in supporting the readmitted teen mothers. The proposed study wants to assess the effectiveness of the support that is provided by teachers and other committees that work hand in hand with the school like school management committee, parent teacher association and mother group among others. From the studies analyzed it has been observed that the poor results in implementing the re-entry policy in Zambia and South Africa were greatly affected by both teachers and committees that were supposed to provide support to the teen mother. Most teachers and community members including parents did not see a need to provide special support or help to teen mothers as a way of trying to help them succeed in school.

2.6. THE QUESTION OF READMITTING TEEN MOTHER INTO A CONVENTIONAL SCHOOL OR NOT

Another discussion that dominates different reviewed studies remains the question of whether it is safe and necessary to readmit a teen mother to a regular school or they must enroll into an adult school. A general consensus has been reached in many studies that a teen mother needs to be given a chance to continue with her studies. However, the study that was carried out in Zambia by Nowanga has contradicted with the idea of allowing teen mothers learn together with other students

in a conventional school citing that it would bring confusion to both other learners and the teen mother. The study has suggested that teen mother's must join the adult education structures. The study in SA concur with the study in Zambia by suggesting that the Education department may introduce separate classes or schools for teen mothers where they could complete their education without being bullied or mocked by their peers. However both studies have emphasized on the need to maintain the quality of education in such special schools for teen mothers. The idea of allowing the teen mother to enroll either in their special school or adult school sounds plausible because it would give them a chance to meet fellow students with whom they would understand and support each other. The idea would also help to eliminate the community's idea of contamination. That is, there would be no fear from other parents and teachers that the teen mother would introduce immoral acts in school leading to rise in number of pregnancies in school. Despite the fact that the two schools of thoughts from the studies sounds plausible, it would be fair to make available to teen mothers both types of schools so that they decide whether they want to enroll in a conventional or adult school. However the teen mothers who would choose to go to a conventional schools would be provided with professional counselling to assist them withstand the ridicule and prejudice from other learners and teachers.

Kabwe Deputy Mayor, McDonald Mwamba, maintained that the re-entry policy failed completely to promote girl's education but is instead promoting immorality among children and causes more harm than good in society hence need to be abolished. Members of Kaoma township including teachers and parents concurred with Mwamba by pointing out that the policy was not promoting education but encouraging girls to fall pregnant knowing very well that they will still go back to school upon delivery. Mwamba and Kaoma citizenly fear that the policy would make learning impossible since teachers will not be able to instil discipline and morals in other learners. In contrasts with the view that re-entry policy encourage unprotected sex, the proponents of such school of thoughts need to take into account the fact that most of the teen pregnancies occur either by accident to girls who are forced to have unprotected sex or occur due to immature decisions made by youths due to peer pleasure. However it cannot be generalized that all teen mothers got pregnant by accident or by being forced because the study that was carried out in South Africa had two teen mothers who confessed that they fell pregnant because they wanted.

2.7. SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH GAPS

The studies read have recommended a need to sensitize some stakeholders not to view re-admission policy as a way of condoning learner pregnancy but addressing the problem of learner unplanned pregnancy. There is a need to civic educate stakeholders to understand that the policy acknowledge the rise in the number of female students getting pregnant and dropping out of school (Bhana & Nkani, 2010). It needs to be universally agreed that the policy is a tool which is trying to deal with the problem facing teenage girls and not a tool for encouraging teenage girls to get involved in unprotected sex. The studies that were carried out in Kenya revealed that focused much on whether the girls who became pregnant were able to continue with education or not after delivery. (Oywecha, 2008; Omwancha

2.8. THEORETICAL FLAMEWORK

2.8.1. PATH-GOAL THEORY

This study was guided by path-goal leadership theory which was developed by Robert house an Ohio state university graduate in the year 1971 and was revised in 1996. This theory proposes that leaders must clarify the paths to the goals and remove or help followers around the obstacles to the goals. In its simplest form, the theory reminds leaders that the overarching purpose of leadership is to guide and coach followers as they move along the path to achieve a goal (House and Mitchell 1974). Studies have revealed that the poor implementation of the Readmission Policy is largely caused by lack or poor services rendered by the school structures. The re-entry policy guidelines requires that the school structures provide the support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mother at a school level. The school supporting structures that are stipulated in the revised readmission policy includes School Management Committee (SMC), Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Mother Group, and School Counselors among others. At a school level the head teacher or the school principal has been given mandate by the ministry of education through the education division to ensure that the school structures proposed in the re-admission policy document are available and functioning at a school. The fact that different leaders from different school committees and associations report to the head teacher reveals that the success of different policies depend on his or her decision. The head teacher or the school principal is supposed to clearly explain the aim of the goals of the readmission policy to other stakeholders like the School Management Committee, Parent Teacher Association, Mother Group and Counsellors where ever necessary. It is also the duty of head teacher to ensure that other school stakeholders play their roles as per stipulated in the re-admitted policy. The head teacher must also be able to assist other key players in the provision of support to the readmitted teen mother interpret the policy document correctly. The effectiveness of the re-admission policy at a school also depends on the roles of different leaders in the stipulated school support structure e.g. Parent Teacher Association chair, School Management Committee chair, Mother Group chair

The theory also focuses on how leaders motivate followers to accomplish designated goals in an institution or organization. The goal of this leadership theory is to enhance follower performance and follower satisfaction by focusing on follower motivation. The basic principles of path-goal

theory are derived from expectancy theory, which suggests that followers will be motivated if they feel competent, if they think their efforts will be rewarded, and if they find the payoff for their work valuable (Vroom, 1964). The school structure has different leaders working with other members to give support to the re-admitted teen mothers. It is the duties of such leaders to motivate such members to fulfil the designated goals of the readmission policy. Member belonging to different committees will only be willing to take part in providing support to the readmitted teen mothers if they feel motivated by their leaders.

The path-goal theory assisted the researcher to explore and assess how leaders in the mentioned committees strive to assist their members in the provision of support to the readmitted teen mothers. The duties and goals of the head teachers, leaders of the SMC, PTA and the school counsellors are well stipulated in the readmitted policy and the path goal theory will assist the researcher in investigating whether these leaders and their members are working towards their designated goals of supporting the readmitted teen mother. Re-admission policy guidelines require that these stakeholders give support to the readmitted teen mothers so that they continue with schooling.

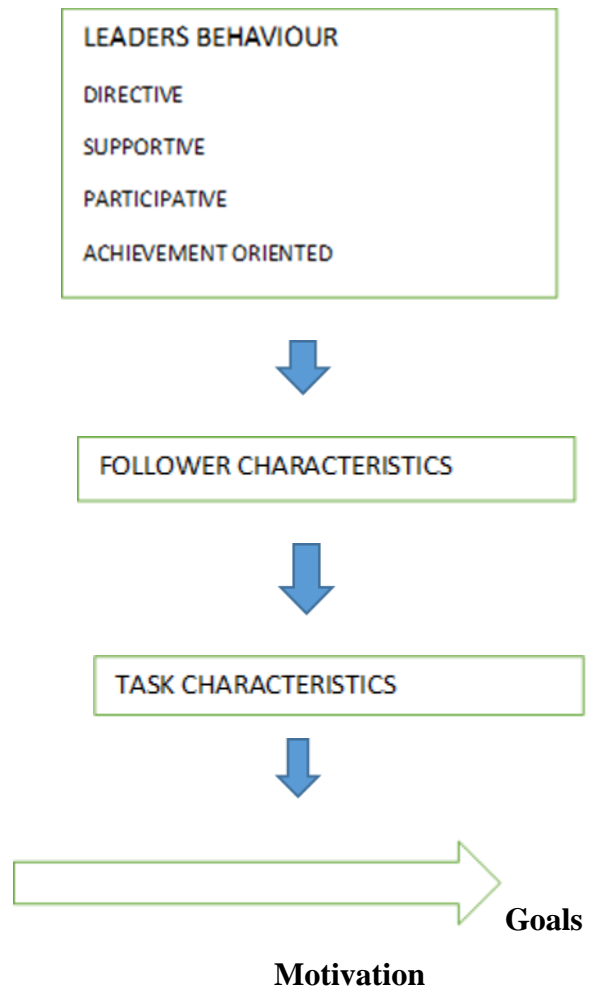
2.8.2. THE BASIC IDEA BEHIND PATH–GOAL THEORY

Path–Goal Leadership: Defines goals, Clarifies path, Removes obstacles

2.8.2.1. COMPONENTS OF PATH-GOAL THEORY

The path-goal is divided into four components namely; leader behaviors, follower characteristics, task characteristics, and motivation. Path–goal theory suggests that each type of leader behavior has an impact on followers’ motivation.

Figure 2: ILLUSTRATES THE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF PATH-GOAL THEORY



2.8.2.2. DESCRIPTIONS OF THE COMPONENTS OF PATH-GOAL

(A) LEADER BEHAVIORS

Path goal theory recommends the application of the following leadership styles or behavior; directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented (House & Mitchell, 1974, p. 83). However the theory is open to the inclusion of other variables

(I) DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Directive leadership is where a leader gives followers instructions about their task, including what is expected of them, how it is to be done, and the timeline for when it should be completed. A directive leader sets clear standards of performance and makes the rules and regulations clear to followers (Halpin & Winer, 1957). Using this path goal leadership style the researcher was able to explore, examine and assess whether leaders of different school structures were giving clear instructions to other stakeholders helping in providing support to the readmitted teen mothers. In this case the head teacher has a duty of giving instructions and guidance to different leaders who are in charge of different departments, committees and associations providing support to the readmitted ten mothers. The delegated leaders are also supposed to pass the instructions and guidelines to their departmental, committee or members of the school association who are supposed to assist in providing the support to the readmitted teen mother.

(II) SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP

Supportive leadership consists of being friendly and approachable as a leader and includes attending to the well-being and human needs of followers. Leaders using supportive behaviors go out of their way to make work pleasant for followers. In addition, supportive leaders treat followers as equals and give them respect for their status. Using this path goal leadership style the researcher was able to explore, examine and assess how the head teacher or school principal support other committee or departmental leaders in different school structures that provide support to the readmitted teen mothers. Using this element of path-goal theory the researcher was also able to establish the coordination between leaders and other members assisting in providing support to the

readmitted teen mothers. This leadership style also assisted the researcher discover how different school supporting mechanism support teen mother in coping with different challenges at school.

(III) PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP

Participative leadership consists of inviting followers to share in the decision making. A participative leader consults with followers, obtains their ideas and opinions, and integrates their suggestions into the decisions about how the group or organization will proceed. This path-goal theory leadership style assisted to reveal the relationship between different stakeholders at school level. The leadership style also assisted in examining the coordination between leaders of different school structures providing support to teen mothers with their members.

(IV) ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP

Achievement-oriented leadership is characterized by a leader who challenges followers to perform work at the highest level possible. This type of leader establishes a high standard of excellence for followers and seeks continuous improvement (House and Mitchell (1974). In addition to expecting a lot from followers, achievement oriented leaders show a high degree of confidence that followers are capable of establishing and accomplishing challenging goals. This leadership style assisted in checking the standards set by different leaders in charge of different school structures providing support to teen mothers

NOTE: House and Mitchell (1974) suggested that leaders might exhibit any or all of these four styles with various followers and in different situations.

(B) FOLLOWER CHARACTERISTICS

Follower characteristics determine how a leader's behavior is interpreted by followers in a given work context. Researchers have focused on followers 'needs for affiliation, preferences for structure, desires for control, and self-perceived level of task ability. These characteristics and many others determine the degree to which followers find the behavior of a leader an immediate source of satisfaction or instrumental to some future satisfaction. Path-goal theory predicts that followers who have strong needs for affiliation prefer supportive leadership because friendly and

concerned leadership is a source of satisfaction. For followers who are dogmatic and authoritarian and have to work in uncertain situations, path–goal theory suggests directive leadership because that provides psychological structure and task clarity. Directive leadership helps these followers by clarifying the path to the goal, making it less ambiguous. The authoritarian type of follower feels more comfortable when the leader provides a greater sense of certainty in the work setting.

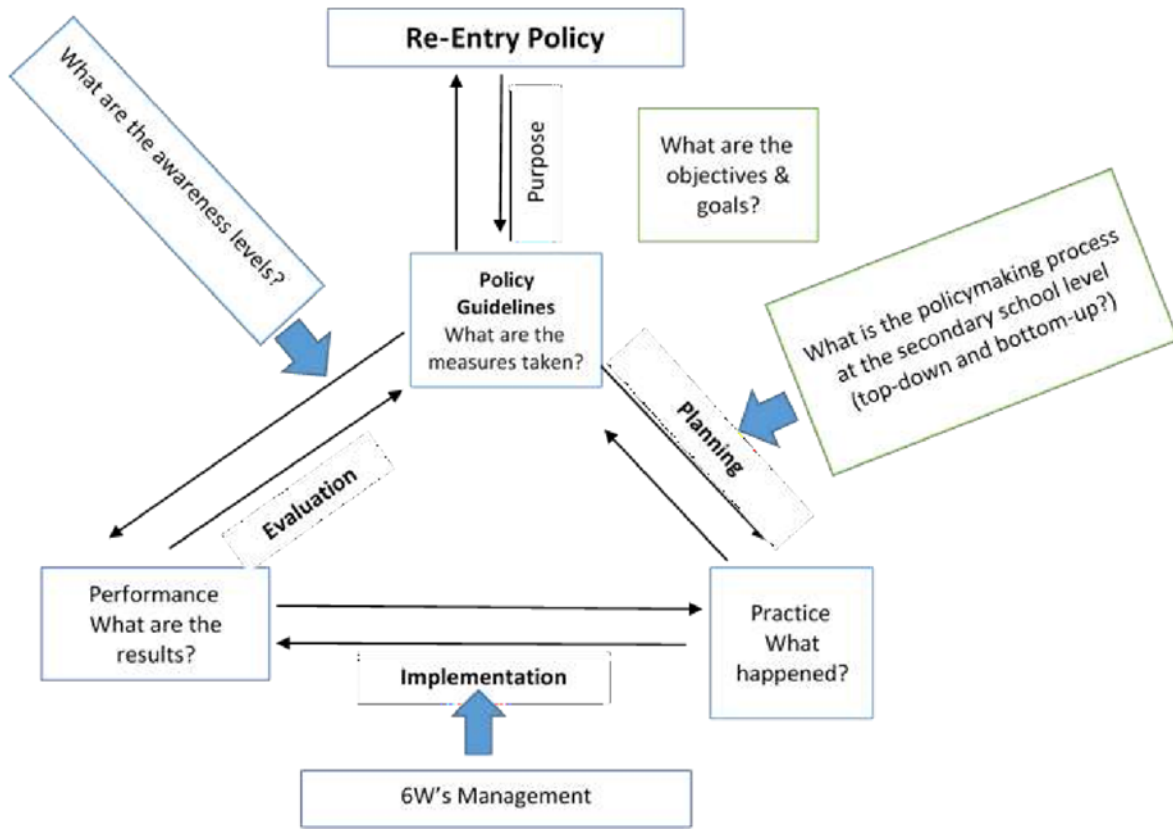
(C) TASK CHARACTERISTICS

Task characteristics include the design of the follower’s task, the formal authority system of the organization, and the primary work group of followers. Collectively, these characteristics in themselves can provide motivation for followers. When a situation provides a clearly structured task, strong group norms, and an established authority system, followers will find the paths to desired goals apparent and will not need a leader to clarify goals or coach them in how to reach these goals. Followers will feel as if they can accomplish their work and that their work is of value. Leadership in these types of contexts could be seen as unnecessary, empathic, and excessively controlling. The leader’s interpretation and presentation of the re-admission policy to other members at school might determine its implementation efficiency. The way leaders structure the tasks relating to the provision of support to the teen mother might encourage or discourage other members to implement or not. The proper policy break down will motivate members to be willing to provide support to the re-admitted teen mothers without being directed by the leaders. Tasks that are unclear and ambiguous call for leadership input that provides structure. In addition, highly repetitive tasks call for leadership that gives support in order to maintain followers’ motivation. In work settings where the formal authority system is weak, leadership becomes a tool that helps followers by making the rules and work requirements clear. In contexts where the group norms are weak or no supportive, leadership assists in building cohesiveness and role responsibility.

The path goal Theory was relevant and useful to this study because stakeholders’ participation in implementing the Re-admission Policy contributes in meeting the adolescent mother’s need of continuation with education after delivery. This theory will help to check the effort of different leaders at school level in trying to achieve the goal of giving support to the readmitted teen mother.

The ineffective implementation of the readmission policy proves that the policy is facing some barriers that need to be removed by different stakeholders and leaders in different sections at school. It is assumed that if all stakeholders willingly participate in playing their roles in the implementation of the Re-admission Policy, adolescent Mothers will not be afraid of going back to school after delivery, will not drop out of school again because of the challenges faced at school and will not perform poorly after being readmitted. The task of implementing the Re-admission Policy has been given to various stakeholders who should work together to ensure that no gaps are left in the implementation process. The stakeholders need to work in collaboration if the purpose of the policy is to be realized. This theory was found to be relevant because it clearly explains how leaders can best achieve challenging goals with their followers.

FIGURE 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND THE STUDY

O'Toole (2000) suggested that the re-entry policy implementation can be measured effectively using Yang and Holzer, (2006) effectiveness triangle conceptual framework. The formulation will determine whether the policy implementation is effective or not. Therefore, this conceptual framework was modified for this study with the presumption that some reasons for the success or failure of the readmission policy implementation are well understood. This study identified why the implementation of the re-entry policy is not successful from an education management perspective.

Policy: In this conceptual framework, the term policy is defined as the guidelines, rules, and laws that advocate against gender disparities in the Malawi education system, as suggested by Chen et al. (2014). The concept of policy, therefore, can be described as the ability to exercise control over the issue addressed in a given geographical area concerning specific group's i.e. adolescent mothers and mechanisms (awareness of the re-entry policy) for effective implementation of the policy. In this study, re-admission policy of teen mothers, is describes as a condition where young girls who get pregnant while in secondary school should be allowed to take a break from learning and allowed to go to deliver, then after delivery can return to school as per the directive from the Malawi Ministry of Education.

Practice: in this study practice refers to examining the methods that school administrators responsible for implementing the policy adopted in the policy planning process of policy formulation as indicated by (Baker and McLelland 2003). Further, according to Pradhan et al. (2014), the planning process must involve multiple approaches such as the top-down or bottom-up formulation process, meaning the adaptation planning should take place in an interface of the top-down and bottom-up approach. Hence, these sovereign adaptations require an enabling policy environment for implementing the re-entry policy as in this context. The study seeks to investigate how school managers utilize school structures in providing support to the readmitted teen mothers. The study will go further to study how school managers work with other stakeholders at the school in supporting readmitted teen mothers.

Performance: The performance indicators in this conceptual framework measure whether the re-admission goals and aims are being achieved at school level or not.

Evaluation: the evaluation refers to the assessment of the effectiveness of the re-admission policy.in this case the evaluation process examines school stakeholders implementing the readmission policy (head teachers, teachers, SMC, PTA, MG, School counsellor). The study will also examine their knowledge, and understanding.

Feedback: the study will also examine how school managers use the feedback from their subordinates as they provide support to the teen mothers. The study presumes that there is a communication gap between leaders and their subordinates at a school setting in issues concerning readmission policy. The feedback in this case exists between performance and practice and practice and policy. Finally, the re-entry policy implementation performance feedback contributes to changes to enhance objective policy achievement by future or delegated policy implementations (Baker and McLelland 2003).

Effectiveness: The effectiveness of the re-admission policy implementation in this conceptual framework is measured by understanding the purpose for which the policy implementation takes place. It is believed that proper preparation leads to ethical practices and results in better performance that provides feedback for policy-makers and decision-makers and leads to implementation success. Therefore, the implementation of the re-admission policy depends on the administrators from the district and school level responsible for the implementation. Similarly, the policy implementation effectiveness is typically influenced by the values, opinions, ideas, and priorities of policy implementing stakeholders. Therefore, the effectiveness of the implementation of the re-admission policy relies on the views and perceptions of the head school stakeholders (head teachers, teachers, SMC, PTS, MG etc.) and district education officers in the implementation process and dictates whether or not the policy will be successful in schools. Because administrators responsible for implementing the policy can disagree with the policy personally and contextual or even disregard and never enforce the policy. Therefore, when implementers are qualified and committed to using their discretion, as indicated by O'Toole (2014), it becomes possible to effectively implement the policy objectives and implement the policy effectively. Further, evaluating the re-entry policy's implementation effectiveness in secondary schools helps raise essential questions like; is the re-entry policy effective? What is the level of awareness of the policy? What needs to be improved for the policy to be effective in secondary schools?

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes research methodology, research design, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, site of the study, target population, pilot study and data analysis techniques.

3.2. Research design

The study adopted qualitative and exploratory research designs. Primary data was collected and analyzed using a qualitative approach. The study opted for a qualitative approach as opposed to quantitative due to the exploratory nature of this research. Qualitative research is defined as “the use of qualitative data such as interviews, documents and participant observation data to understand and explain social phenomena” (Myers, 1997). According to Myers qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Since the study seek to explore and assess the attitudes, opinions and experiences of the stakeholders, descriptive research design will not be enough. The researcher will have to complement it with exploratory research design to get the in-depth reasons why things will happening the way they will be happening (Gay, 1982).

3.3. SITE OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in northern city of Malawi, Mzuzu. Mzuzu city is one of the three major cities in Malawi. The study that was carried out by Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) in May 2014 on girl’s access to education with focus on readmission policy indicated that northern region had a highest number of girls dropping out due to early marriages or pregnancy. Out of the selected 6 districts across the three regions Mzimba north education district topped the list with the highest net girl’s dropout of 61% and Nkhata bay was the third district with 1,132 girls representing 55% of the total dropout. Mzuzu city has both community day secondary schools and boarding secondary schools with students from different regions and districts across the country. The district was chosen as the site for the study because a good number of adolescent

pregnancy have been reported in this district. The district also has schools accommodating students from different districts hence the researcher had a chance to get the participants views from a wide range of districts across the country. The district also has schools that are located in areas having adolescents from the poorest households. It has been discovered that most teen mothers come from poor households as compared to the wealth households. Studies have shown that 20% of students from poor families gets pregnant while only 10% of teen mothers are from wealth households (KDHS, 2014). The Re-entry policy on adolescent mothers was therefore thought to be very relevant in this area.

3.4. TARGET POPULATION

The study population comprised of four public secondary schools from four clusters in Mzuzu city. Participants were principals or head teachers, teachers, counselors, school management committee, parent teacher association and mother group leaders from the selected schools. The study involved both mixed day schools, boarding mixed schools as well as girl's secondary schools girls. The study did not include a boy's only secondary schools since focusing on supporting mechanism of teen mothers. It also targeted all the school principals in these schools for they are responsible for putting measures into place to ensure that the Re-entry policy is implemented in secondary schools. Teacher counselors have been charged with the responsibility of giving counseling services to pregnant and adolescent mothers and the rest of the student population (MOE, 2011). Mother group was targeted because they deal with issues concerning girl child at a school therefore, their views and perceptions about how the stakeholders were implementing the policy were vital to this study. In addition, the views of the parents Teacher Association was important to this study to understand how they were helping their daughters to cope and go back to school after delivery. The study used purposeful sampling to select schools with not less than 10 readmitted teen mothers. This study targeted 60 participants from the selected schools.

3.5. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZE

Tshuma (2010) posit that the population in a research context is any target group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher for purposes of

gaining information and drawing conclusions. The target population in this study comprised of head teachers, School Management Committee chair, Parent Teacher Association chair, Mother Group chair, Teachers and Counsellors in selected secondary school in Mzuzu city. It was from this target population that a sample was chosen through relevant sampling strategies to participate in this study. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample out of the four mixed public secondary schools from four clusters out of eight clusters which represents 50% of the clusters. Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) explain that if the researcher cannot study all individuals, he will consider which of them have experiences or perceptions that give them special value as data sources. Creswell and Clark, (2007) recommend that participants who have experience with the phenomenon under study could be deliberately selected to give the needed information. This is supported by Wiersma and Jurs (2005) who point out that the idea behind purposeful sampling is different from random sampling on the basis of choice of a sample of information rich cases that are studied in detail

3.6. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

This study used two types of research instruments that includes structured checklist and interview guides. Data from head teachers or principles, counsellor, parent teacher committee, school management committee and adolescent teen mothers was collected using interview guides and the checklists. The instruments gathered information that could not be observed such as opinions, attitudes and experiences. They were also convenient in collecting data from respondents who are busy. An interview guide was also used because there was need to obtain in-depth information from the participants. Face to face interviews provided an excellent way to explore complex feelings (Sommer & Sommer, 1995). Through interaction, listening, and observation, the researcher was able to get into the world of the participants and therefore understand their feelings, opinions and attitudes about the implementation of the Re- entry Policy.

The checklist was also used to the mother group chairs with the aim of seeking information on the mother group knowledge on of the government readmission policy on girls who get pregnant while in school. The interview guide was also used to seek information on the mother group roles in

assisting readmitted teen mother as well as challenges faced by the mother group in rendering services to the readmitted teen mother.

The interview guides were also given to school managers like the head teacher, the deputy and heads of departments to seek information how they coordinate with different committees at their respective schools in their attempt of assisting the readmitted teen mother in relation to the government readmission policy. The interview guide also sought the information on knowledge of school management on the school mechanisms that are put in place by the government readmission policy and the shortfalls facing the school mechanisms in place as well as ways of dealing with such challenges. The researcher also analyzed the content of the revised readmission policy document to verify and clarify information from different respondents.

The interview guide were used during a focus group discussion between the parent teacher association (PTA) and the researcher. The interview guide assisted in examining the effectiveness of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in providing support to the readmitted teen mother. The discussion between the parent teacher association and the researcher assisted the researcher to gain insight on some of the services that the Parent Teacher Association is giving to support readmitted teen mothers, challenges that the Parent Teacher Association are facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother as well as what strategies could be used to overcome the shortfalls in supporting readmitted teen mothers at their school.

3.7. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.7.1 VALIDITY

According to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), the meaning of validity of research instruments is best understood by the question, “are we measuring what we think we are measuring?” In simpler terms, validity refers to the degree to which the items in the research instruments represent what it is designed for (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To support the study trustworthiness the researcher will use the following methods:

TRIANGULATION.

Triangulation enhances the trustworthiness and confidence in the findings of the study and can be achieved by using multiple data methods, different data sources, member check and time spent in the field. Triangulation also brings about comprehensiveness and the fullest picture of a phenomenon including inconsistencies. Similarly Shenton (2004) notes that there are many strategies that qualitative researchers could use to uphold confidence in their research results. One of the strategies is triangulating their results which may involve use of different methods of data collection and a wide range of data sources among others. Stake (2010) explains that many qualitative investigators are careful in proving that the meanings and evidence of their findings are conventional. He points out that qualitative researchers could attain credibility of their findings by considering and paying attention to more than one standpoint. Similarly He adds that triangulation could enrich the overall representation and diversify viewpoints of the phenomenon under study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) believe that triangulation is a powerful way of showing concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research. Richards (2005) remarks that using multiple approaches promises very interesting results. It is always interesting to look at the same topic from different perspectives. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explain that triangulation is a significant way of extending and adding richness and depth to any research.

This study used two methods of data collection namely interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher used an interview schedule and narrative focus groups using minimal prompts. The different insights from the two methods were used to strengthen the evidence. Data was also solicited from multiple sources (SMC, PTA, Mother Group, Head Teacher, Counsellors). The evidence from these different sources was used to illuminate the themes.

THICK DESCRIPTION.

The researcher used rich thick description to convey the findings. Detailed descriptions of the findings including their contexts was given in this study. Creswell (2009) suggests that results become more realistic and richer through dense description. This description may transport readers to the setting and give the discussion that element of shared experience adding validity to the findings. It also enables readers to make a judgment about how relevant the findings are to their setting

SPENDING PROLONGED TIME.

The researcher spend prolonged time to gain experience with the participants during data collection. Creswell (2009) emphasizes that prolonged time in the field enables one to develop an in depth understanding of the phenomenon understudy and convey detail about the site and the people that lends credibility to the narrative account. It is believed that the more experience that a researcher has with participants in their actual setting, the more accurate or valid will be the findings.

3.7.2 RELIABILITY

Reliability of research instruments in this study was checked by subjecting the research instruments to the respondents during piloting and their responses recorded down. The same instruments was re-administered to the same respondents after some time and their responses recorded again. Test-retest helped to improve reliability by ensuring that the items were clear and understood by the participants. It also aided in identifying and dealing with errors that could arise due to ambiguous instructions in the instruments.

3.8. PILOT STUDY

The main aim of piloting was to help identify misunderstandings, ambiguities, vague and inadequate items in the research instruments. Piloting was carried out in two secondary schools

with similar characteristics but outside Mzuzu city. This was done in Nkhata-bay. These two schools were a co-education school and a girls boarding secondary school. Necessary adjustments were done in the research instruments accordingly. This exercise helped the researcher to predetermine validity and reliability of the instruments.

3.9. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The process of data collection began after obtaining a letter from the MZUNREC at MZUZU University. Primary data was collected using checklists and interview guides. The researcher used the interview guides to seek information from the teen mother, principals, the school counsellor class teachers, SMC, PTA and mother group. Where the respondents were busy, the researcher left the interview guide for filling and then collected after three days. The researcher interviewed the principal or head teacher SMC, PTA, the school counsellor and mother group members. The interview guide were mainly used to collect qualitative data. Through interaction, listening and observation, the researcher was able to get the in-depth feelings, opinions and attitudes of the respondents which were recorded down. Secondary data was sought from relevant sources like books, past studies, journals, policy documents, and internet sources.

3.10. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES AND PRESENTATION

This study yielded qualitative data. Errors from raw data were identified and corrected by the researcher. The raw data was coded and stored in appropriate form ready for analysis. Qualitative data was organized in to themes according to the study objectives and then analyzed thematically. The findings were presented in narrative and verbatim quotation form.

All the interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. After completion of each interview, the information was transcribed using the tape recordings. The transcription of the recordings helped the researcher to compare his opinions on the government readmission policy with what the interviewee was saying and how it will be said. The typed transcript were read several times while listening to the corresponding audio tape to ensure accuracy of the transcription and to come

to a better overall understanding of each participant's experience on the government readmission policy. This process of transcribing and listening also prompted additional questions for subsequent sets of interviews. The researcher also used "highlighting" approach which was proposed by Van Manen (1990). According to Van Manen highlighting assists in uncovering the thematic aspects of different interviewee in a research. In this approach, the researcher was reading the text several times and statements that appeared to be revealing about the phenomenon were highlighted. Themes were identified by highlighting material in the interview transcripts taken from different participants. The highlighted phrases or sentences were selected and then the researcher ascertained what meaning was put forward in the highlighted material. After identifying the themes the researcher embarked on the process of recording the themes and describing how they would be interrelated. Rewriting continued until the themes and the relationship between the themes were identified as accurately as possible

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher obtained the relevant letters/ permits which authorized him to collect data from the field. The researcher obtained consent from participants who were assured that their responses were only to be used for the purposes of this study. Privacy and confidentiality of participants and their responses was guaranteed and maintained throughout the research process. Anonymity was also ensured by assigning pseudo names to adolescent mothers at home when recording verbatim quotes when reporting the study findings. School names were assigned letters to ensure anonymity. Participants were treated with the respect and the dignity that they deserve. They were informed that their decision to withdraw from the study would be respected by the researcher however, they were encouraged to stay on till the end of the interview session. The researcher avoided being personal and judgmental so as to encourage participants to share their views freely. Data was stored appropriately in readiness for analysis. Finally, the researcher maintained integrity and truthfulness in presentation of research findings. The discussion on research methodology paved the way for chapter four which discussed the research findings in details.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATIONS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the comprehensive findings of the study with the aim of exploring school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers in selected secondary schools in Malawi, Mzuzu city. As discussed earlier, the study is guided by the path-goal leadership theory. The findings will be presented thematically according to the specific objectives of the study that sought information on: investigating the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmission of the teen mother; evaluating effectiveness of the mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mother and furthermore examine the challenges faced by the school structures in the provision of support mechanism to the readmitted teen mothers. In general, the findings reveal that, the government of Malawi through the Ministry of Education developed the Re-admission policy on teen mothers in 1994 in line with the vision drawn in Malawi's National Girls' Education Strategy (NGES). However it has been discovered that the policy has been poorly implemented by its stake holders despite the fact that it has been revised three time since it was introduced. It has been discovered that failure to use school supporting structures stipulated in the policy document by the school management has contributed to the failure in the implementation of the readmission policy. The study has unveiled a need for different school leaders to adopt path goal theory of leadership which focuses on how leaders motivate followers to accomplish designated goals in an institution or organization. The goal of this leadership theory is to enhance follower performance and follower satisfaction by focusing on follower motivation.

4.2. Investigating the school structures that provide mechanisms to support readmission of teen mothers

The first objective was aimed at investigating the school structures that provide mechanisms to support readmission of teen mothers in four selected secondary schools in Mzuzu. The study noted that the presence or absence of these school structures at a secondary school determine the effectiveness or ineffective implementation of the readmission policy at school level hence a need to investigate them. The readmission policy document presents the four school structures that a school must have in the implementation of readmission policy. The four school structures presented by the policy document includes: guidance and counselling committee, School Management Committee (SMC), Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Mother Group (MG). The inclusion of these structures in the readmission policy document proves their importance in the process of implementing this policy. It was also observed that these structures form a pillar or the epicenter of the readmission policy in as far as the implementation process is concerned. Task characteristics, a component of path goal theory emphasize a need for leaders to create a design of the follower's task, create the formal authority system of the organization, and the primary work group of followers. The theory points out that when a situation provides a clearly structured task, strong group norms, and an established authority system, followers will find the paths to desired goals and will not need a leader to clarify goals or coach them in how to reach these goals. The school structures investigation which was carried out in four schools coded X, Y, Z and W yielded the following findings:

4.2.1. An Investigation on School Guidance and Counselling Committees

An investigation on 'schools guidance and counselling committees' was carried out in all four schools under study to find out whether the schools had this supporting structures as required by the policy. The study established that guidance and counselling committees are the most important support structures from which the re-admitted teen mother can get immediate counsel when the need arise. It also needs to be pointed out that among the four supporting structures that are presented in the readmission policy document, only guidance and counselling committee is based at school and comprise of members who are either teachers or employed by the school. Unlike other structures, guidance and counselling committee is operated by members who have full

knowledge of the teen mothers hence the committee stands as the most imperative structure as compared to the remaining three.

The data collected from the four schools under study revealed that schools X and Y had guidance and counselling Committees, school Z used the disciplinary committee to guide and counsel the teen mothers while school W used form teachers as their counsellors. The act of using disciplinary committee to deal with teen mother's cases is against the readmission policy which states that re-admitted mothers must not be treated as students who are supposed to be punished for their actions but be counselled and guided so that they realize the goals. It was discovered that schools X and Y did not have trained or professional counsellors despite having guidance and counselling committees. The officer who was acting as a counsellor at school X pointed out that he knows about the re-admission policy in general, as a policy that allow girls who get pregnant to come back to school and continue their studies, however he did not know the details contained in the policy document. The Counsellor said that:

“I have been a school counsellor for more than five years even though I have never attended any professional training in counselling and guidance. I have been using the knowledge i obtained from counselling and guidance course back at college”

Similar results were exhibited by counsellor at school Y who pointed out that he was neither trained in guidance and counselling nor did he have time to read the policy document. These findings were in line with a study carried out at Kiambu County in Kenya by Mbugua (2013) which revealed that participants were generally aware of the Re-entry Policy but had never seen the policy guidelines document. The above results proved that the head teachers, school principals and the government through the ministry of education are lacking seriousness in equipping their officers with the knowledge of guidance and counselling in re-admission policy. The school management also failed to make effort in providing the policy documents to their officers however counsellors from all school accepted that their head teachers and principals oriented them and introduced them to the re-admission policy in general. These general findings are in contrast with one of the supportive

leadership component of path goal theory which request leaders to have a supportive behaviors which requires them to go out of their way to make work pleasant for followers by providing them with their professional needs and requirements.

A head teacher from school Y reported that:

“The Ministry of Education did not distribute the re-admission policy document to schools for us to read and give it to our teachers. Schools were supposed to source these documents on their own”

The above findings proved that the government through the ministry of education was the root cause of failure to access and read the re-admission policy document by some stakeholders leading to poor implementation of the policy. These findings contrasted with the findings of a study carried out in Zambia by Sitali (2009) which established that MOE officials sensitized school administrators about the Re-entry Policy and that they visited schools to monitor the implementation of the policy. Contrary to the study carried out by Sitali, this study observed that majority of stakeholders at school level have never seen or read the policy document in question. It is from this point of view that the researcher point out that there is a need for the government to ensure that the targeted group access the policy documents once the policy has been formulated.

Counsellors from school X and Y recommended a need for in service training and provision of a counseling offices in schools to help in counselling re-admitted teen mothers. Training was important in order to equip them with relevant skills to handle the sensitive issues of pregnancy and parenthood in schools while the offices would provide privacy during counselling. It was observed that the basic guidance and counselling skills obtained from general life skills and college courses were not enough to equip counsellors in counselling re-admitted teen mothers. The above findings are in line with the findings from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) policy of 2003 on managing learner pregnancy in public schools, which stipulates that “the re-

admitted learner must be considered to be a learner with special needs with access to counselling by professionals of the Specialized Learner and Educator Support (SLES) component with the Education Management Development Centre (EMDC)”

The head teacher from school Z said:

“We do not have a counsellor at this school, however whenever we need the service of a guidance and counsellor on the re-admitted cases we use form teachers. So, if the re-admitted teen mother is from form 1, we allow form 1 form teacher to guide and counsel the student and the same apply when such cases happen in other forms”.

With the above strategy of choosing the counsellor, it is discovered that some schools do not find it important to look for special quality or gender when selecting counsellors. In this case some schools were only considering form teachers to counsel teen mothers without considering the fact that some teen mothers would not be comfortable to be counselled by their male form teachers.

The deputy head teacher from school Y reported:

“We do not have a guidance and counselling committee at this school, cases of re-admitted teen mothers are handled by school disciplinary committee. The committee discipline the teen mother and provide guidance and counselling when such cases occurs”.

The counsellors from both schools under study concurred that pregnancy and parenthood among school girls is a complex matter that counselors felt can only be tackled effectively by a trained counselor. They suggested that these training could be done through seminars and workshops organized by the Ministry of Education and other bodies interested in education of the girl-child. A counsellor from school X also suggested a need to reduce teaching workload for teachers who work as school counsellors an act that would assist them focus on counselling and guiding the re-admitted teen mothers.

4.2.1.1. Strengthening guidance and counseling departments

The findings on the investigation of school guidance and counselling committees were in agreement with past Kenyan studies which established that guidance and counseling services were inadequate in schools (Omwancha, 2012; Mbugua, 2013). All the respondents suggested that guidance and counseling departments should be strengthened in schools. This would help adolescent mothers to adjust and cope with learning and parenting. They felt that teacher counselors should encourage adolescent mothers so that they do not give up. This study had also established that guidance and counseling had played a vital role in helping the adolescent mothers to adjust and cope with their studies. Strengthening G & C department as suggested by participants would therefore be a worthy course to achieving effective implementation of re-admission policy.

The results on guidance and counseling revealed that Teaching Service Commission through the ministry of education did not recruit professional counselors in secondary schools. Majority of the school counselors had a high workload ranging between 25 and 28 lessons per week which hindered their effectiveness in offering counseling services to learners. Training on professional counseling was minimal which left counselors ill - equipped to handle the issues of learning and parenting in schools. Counselors suggested various ways of strengthening guidance and counseling in schools. These included reducing their workload and other responsibilities, in-service training especially on skills on handling adolescent mothers and provision of an office in schools for counseling purposes.

The findings about adolescent support to cope revealed that Guidance and Counseling Departments were the only mechanisms used in schools to help adolescent mothers to cope with schooling and parenthood.

Lack or inadequate training of school counselors leaves them ill equipped to handle the changing issues of adolescent pregnancy and motherhood in schools. It therefore puts them in an awkward

position because so much is demanded from them yet, too little or nothing has been invested in them as far as capacity building and skill development is concerned.

This meant that guidance and counseling played a key role in the implementation of the Re-entry policy as it offered emotional support to the adolescent mothers to adjust and cope with their double roles as students and as mothers as it was the only mechanism used in schools.

4.2.2. An investigation on PTA and SMC

The study observed that a number of schools decided to combine PTA and SMC as a single committee despite the fact that these two school structures have different roles in assisting the readmitted teen mother. The interview with some members of such committees showed that some members did not even know the committee they belonged to. A member who happened to be a chair for SMC at school X responded:

“I’m a chair of both PTA and SMC because the committees have the same goal. However we have not been oriented on our roles in the re-admission policy, we just hear about the policy on radios and television”.

The above findings showed lack of knowledge on the special roles of PTA and SMC on re-admission of teen mothers in schools. The above findings are in line with the findings from Maluli & Bali (2014). Which asserts that Policies are not continually practicalised in schools because of absence of information at local or school level. They report that Teachers and community members don’t have the required knowledge on how to use policies, or implement action plan, supportive devices or resources in the educational institutions for the success of proposed policies.

The study discovered that some schools which claimed to have all the structures that provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers had a number of inactive structures. For

instance it was discovered that school W, Y and Z had PTA, SMC and mother groups which stopped functioning five years ago. In this case school W had a nonfunctional PTA while school Y did not have an active SMC and school Z did not have a mother group. When the researcher was given contacts of some members of the structures from the above schools, it was revealed that some of respondents denied to be members of such structures. Some respondents accepted that they were once members of such structures but pointed out that it has been years since they were invited to attend meetings relating to such committees. A respondent which school W referred to as their parent teacher association (PTA) chair said;

“I was elected as a PTA chair in the year 2018 but I have never been invited for a meeting for 5 years now. I have never been oriented about re-admission policy and I don’t know my roles on that. I hear about the policy on the radio and television”.

This finding was contrary with the findings from a Namibian study by Kapenda (2012) which pointed out that parents through different school committees were involved in supporting their children to go back to school after delivery. It was observed that some schools were ignoring and undermining the role of parents in re-admitting the teen mothers. The above findings also contradicts with a collaborative effort in helping re-admitted teen mothers return to school. Chilisa (2002) points out that young mothers in school require support from fellow learners, teachers, administrators, parents and the larger community so as to cope with their double roles as students and parents.

4.2.3. An investigation on School Mother Group

The overall results on the investigation of the school structures that provide support mechanism to the re-admitted teen mothers revealed that mother group and guidance and counselling committee are the most scares structures in the schools despite the fact that they are the power house of the re-admission policy of teen mothers. The study discovered that of five schools under the study three did not have mother groups. The researcher observed that most school managements did not

really find mother group important especially in urban secondary schools. A head teacher from school Y, a school without mother group responded:

“Mother Groups are commonly used in rural community day secondary schools and not in urban secondary schools like this. You will also find it challenging to find mother groups in community secondary schools in the city because they are old fashioned”.

The above findings proved that some head teachers believe that students in schools which are located in urban areas do not require the services of mother group since the students are exposed to social media and they obtain necessary information related to sex and sexual matters through such platforms. According to the above assertion mother group services are only required to students in schools which are located in rural areas where students are not exposed to different social media platforms. However a research carried out in South Africa on Adolescent mothers indicated that in most cases, mothers just told their adolescent children to abstain without providing further SRHE (Sexual and Reproductive Health Education) hence mother groups could not be trusted as a source of information on SRHE for teen mothers both in urban or rural. This was discovered to be most common in African societies where parents do not talk to their children about SRHE leading many adolescents to find alternative avenues for information which in most cases is not accurate and leads to pregnancy and sometimes sexually transmitted diseases (Svanemyr et al. 2015: S9). Contrary to the above assertion Maluleke, (2003b), asserts that in African villages children learn about sex and sexual matters during initiation ceremonies hence they are well conversant with such issues. It is observed that both students from rural and urban equally required the services for mother groups despite the fact that students from urban areas have an upper hand of accessing information relating to sexual issues as compared to the students from rural areas.

4.3. Impact of inadequate school structures that provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mother.

From the study findings, it has been discovered that many head teachers are aware of the required school structures that provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers. These findings

affirmed past studies (Oywecha, 2008; Omwancha, 2012) which established that there was lack of awareness of the Re-entry Policy cutting across the various participants. Oywecha (2008) adds that in most cases, the implementers are not even aware that there is a policy in question. However many head teachers have failed to ensure the presence and activeness of such structures in their schools hence there is lack of school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mothers. The study also established that head teachers were not adequately creating re-admission policy awareness to the rest of the school community. The lack of adequate school structures in different schools have created a gap in the process of re-admitting teen mothers. It has been observed that there is partial success in the implementation of re-admission policy because head teachers have chosen to only use a selected number of structures that provide support mechanism to the re-admitted teen mother. However it has been noted that the partial success is the result of the fact that many head teachers have left out the most important structures that are considered to be key roles in the implementation of the re-admitted policy. There is a need of emphasizing on the use of guidance and counselling committee and mother group to achieve efficient implementation of the re-admitted policy.

4.4. Evaluating effectiveness of mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mother

The study discovered that the school structures that are supposed to provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers were not effective. The researcher evaluated the effectiveness of the school supporting structures that appear in the re-admitted policy document namely PTA, SMC, guidance and Counselling and mother group.

4.4.1. Evaluating effectiveness of Counselling and Guidance Committee

The results revealed that all the schools under the study were providing unprofessional guidance and counselling services to the re-admitted teen mothers since they did not have professional school counsellors. These findings were contrary to Bloem (2000) assertion which points out a need for professionals to come and inform teacher's counsellors about handling teens and their situations, and in-service training to keep track of changes that the society is facing.

4.4.2. Evaluating effectiveness of SMC and PTA

The study unveil different levels of effectiveness of SMC and PTA in the schools under study. Data collected from members of SMC and PTA from Schools Y and Z showed that leaders from these structures did not know their roles in re-admission of teen mothers while school X had some leaders who had some information on their roles however they had never been invited to take part in readmission cases. Different leaders of the school structure under study showed that there were not aware of their roles despite that there were told about the policy by the school management. It was also observed that some school structures failed to render their re-admission services because they were blended resulting into conflict of interest since the members were pursuing different goals and had a lot of duties to carry out as a merged committee. The interview carried out at school W under the study showed that some members were operating as both the SMC chairs and PTA chairs at the same time hence failing to focus on some goals. A chair from school W said:

“I’m the chair of SMC and PTA, these committees were blended since the management thought that they have same goals however I haven’t really been involved in discussing issues concerning re-admitted teen mothers. The school management only invites us to discuss important issues relating to school development. I learnt about the re-admission policy on the radio and television. I just know that it is a policy that allows girls to go back to school after being pregnant. I believe that it is the duty of school management to handle such issues not us”.

Another committee member pointed out that:

“We know about the re-admitted policy but the problem is that the school management does not want to involve us in assisting these re-admitted students. The school management always call us and report what they have decided to do on such issues, they don’t call us to contribute our ideas because the management thinks we are not knowledgeable on the topic and cannot contribute”

An investigation carried out on some leaders of the school structures also revealed that some school structures were inactive because the school management tend to value some school structures as compared to others hence members felt demotivated. A chair of school Y said that:

“The school management values the PTA and SMC and always invites them for workshops while we are considered as a less important group. Members always want to be part of SMC and PTA unlike mother group. The lack of attention from the management demotivates us and it’s difficult to render services to the re-admitted teen mothers. It is always like we are forcing to be part of the school”.

From the above findings it is noted that lack of different types of support from school management to different school committees and groups is one of the reasons for in effective implementation of re-admission policy to support re-admitted teen mother. The findings are in contrast with one of the Leadership behavior component of path goal theory which emphasizes on a need for participative leadership where leaders are required to invite followers to share in the decision making. This theory points out a need for leaders to adopt participative leadership where leaders need to consult with followers, obtains their ideas and opinions, and integrates their suggestions into the decisions about how the group or organization will proceed. Applying this component of path goal theory, head teacher are expected to invite different committees and groups and work with them to assist the readmitted teen mothers. This path-goal theory leadership style assisted to reveal the relationship between different stakeholders at school level.

4.4.3. Evaluating effectiveness of Mother Groups

The study also revealed that of the four schools under study only school X had a mother group which was active and was providing services to the re-admitted teen mothers. Schools W, Y and Z had mother groups which were not active since members had not been meeting or rendering any service to their respective schools for more than a year. The study revealed lack of block leaders in different areas in the schools catchment areas which were supposed to assist in sourcing and

providing information to the leaders of the mother groups. Lack of block leaders in different areas from which leaders of mother groups would have been sourcing information about readmitted teen mothers limited the operations of mothers groups in all schools under study. The mother groups were failing to identify the teen mothers who required different support from different areas because the groups had no representatives in such areas.

4.4.3.1. Strengthening or re-introducing Mother Groups in schools

The results on the third objective which was about the gaps in the Re-entry policy, the guidelines were found to be silent on important issues like how a school should determine that a girl was pregnant. The guidelines were also said to lack clarity on the period of absence for an adolescent mother before and after delivery.

Finally, the study established that various strategies could be used to enhance the implementation of the Re-entry policy guidelines. They include: strengthening guidance and counseling departments in secondary schools; creating awareness to stakeholders on the existence of the Re-entry policy guidelines; sensitizing parents to support the Re-entry Policy;

4.4. Examining the challenges faced by the school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers

Respondents in the study were asked to explain some of the challenges that they were facing in providing support to the re-admitted teen mothers and among others respondents pointed out poor organization structures. Some respondents pointed out that the committees lacked block leaders who were supposed to connect the committee's leaders with the communities. It was discovered that there was a need of a connection or a link between the committees, communities and the school to assist the re-admitted teen mothers: a PTA chair from school Y said:

“It is challenging to follow up or discover re-admitted teen mothers in their communities since there is no direct link between the surrounding community, the committee and the schools they attend. The school has a large catchment area from which students come from and committee leaders cannot afford to follow up and gather information on the re-admitted teen mothers in all areas. There is a need to have block leaders from different areas who would be working hand in hand with the committee leaders who report to the school management”

A Head Teacher from school Z revealed that:

“The problem is that some students just drop out of school after getting pregnant without notifying the school authorities hence it becomes difficult to follow up or alert responsible committees like PTA and Mother Group. It could also be important if the re-admission process could completely be done at school level and later on be reported to the division unlike the current process where the process is done at division hence leading to some delays in re-admitting such students”

However the respondent from the Northern Education Division (NED) pointed out that the ministry of education through NED has always ensured a fast re-admission process for teen mothers. The respondent explained that their office ensures that teen mothers are re-admitted and stay in schools by providing bursaries for some of these teen mothers who have financial challenges. She continues to say that the office also allows the teen mothers to get transferred to other schools within their categories if they feel uncomfortable in their former schools. However the respondent pointed out that there is still some resistance among other parents and students.

The desk officer at NED said:

“There is still some negligence and ignorance among some parents and students on the adoption of the policy. Some parents are still forcing their children into early marriages with the claim that they are poor and cannot afford to support their child any more. There is still a need for civic educating communities on re-admission policy”

It was also observed that the committees lack motivation from the school management. On the same note the research revealed that the fact that most of the committee members and leaders operate on voluntary basis makes these committee leaders to lack morale or zeal to work towards the intended goals. Some of the roles of the committee's leaders require them to travel long distances to follow up on re-admitted cases while the school management does not provide them with transport. An SMC chair from school W remarked:

“Sometimes we wish we could do more follow ups on these students and provide counselling or even support them financially but we don't have money as a committee. We need to use our personal money to carry out some of the committee tasks which is not easy. Sometimes members contribute to carry out the task but it is always not enough”.

A PTA a chair from school X pointed out:

“Sometimes we fail to carry out our roles because of lack of funds to assist the re-admitted teen mothers. Sometimes when we go to advice parents to allow their daughters who got pregnant to return to school the parents ask us to sponsor their daughter financially. Some parents points out that they don't want their daughter to go back to school because they cannot sponsor her and the baby. The financial restraints forces some parents to force their daughters to get married so that the responsibility should be shifted to the father of the child and not them, however they are ready to send their daughter back to school if financial support is available”

It is also observed that most members of committees like PTA, SMC and Mother Group are rarely invited by the school to discuss school issues related to readmission of teen mothers. These members complain that they are not given a chance to put forward their suggestions on issues of re-admitted teen mother but most of the times the school management just report what they have already implemented. In response to the above findings Path-goal theory predicts that followers who have strong needs for affiliation prefer supportive leadership because friendly and concerned leadership is a source of satisfaction.

An SMC chair from school Y said:

“We only go to school when we are invited by the school management and it is usually once every term or after two terms. The school management always set up the meetings with their own agendas. We are not given a chance to contribute our own opinion on issues tabled during the meetings. We cannot go to school to do our own investigations on some issues on our own time. The school management do not give us full access to school to do our own investigation on issues affecting students like the re-admission of the teen mothers”

The lack of access to school by some school committees and groups proved to be one of the reasons why some school structure are failing to render their services in assisting re-admitted teen mothers in schools. There is a need for schools to open up to members of their committees and groups so that they will be able to assist students on various issues.

4.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented findings on exploring school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers in selected secondary schools in Malawi, Mzuzu city. The findings have revealed that there is lack of adequate school structures to provide support mechanism to the re-admitted teen mothers in secondary schools. It has been discovered that some schools do not have guidance and counselling committees and mother groups, the structures that are considered to be the most important in the efficient implementation of the re-admission policy. It is observed that some schools which have guidance and counselling committee lacks qualified or professional counsellors to render the required services. The findings also shows that some schools combined some important school committees that are supposed to be operating separately hence such committees are failing to render their services properly. Furthermore the findings reveal how the lack of adequate school structures is leading to ineffective implementation of the re-admission policy in secondary schools. The analysis of the progress records of the re-admitted teen mothers showed a drop in their performance since their re-admission due to lack of special assistance and support from the school structures that are supposed to provide such support. According to the findings, it was observed that the availability of enough funding and empowering

school committees comprising of community members could improve the efficiency in the implementation of the policy in secondary schools. There is also a need to seal the school and community gap that exist between the school management and community members by making sure that the school is allowing the school committees to contribute in making decisions affecting the re-admitted teen mothers. The next chapter presents the interpretation of the findings

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of the main findings of the study as captured in the different objectives, the conclusion of the study findings, recommendations for further action and suggestions for further study.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The main goal of this study was to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. The summary was done following the findings from the objectives of the study.

Concerning the first objective of investigating the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmitted teen mothers, the study established that there is lack of adequate school structures to provide support mechanism to the re-admitted teen mothers in secondary schools. It is discovered that some schools do not have guidance and counselling committees and mother groups, the structures that are considered to be the most important in the efficient implementation of the re-admission policy. It is observed that some schools which have guidance and counselling committee lacks qualified or professional counsellors to render the required services. The study revealed that there is still a need to orient head teacher on a need of making available all school structures stipulated in a policy document at school level.

The second objective was evaluating the effectiveness of mechanisms provided by the school structures in supporting readmitted teen mothers in selected secondary schools in Mzuzu. The study established that the school structures that are supposed to provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers were not effective. The results revealed that all the schools under the study are providing unprofessional guidance and counselling services to the re-admitted teen

mothers hence there is a need for ministry of education to train or employ professional counsellors in secondary schools to provide professional counselling services to the readmitted teen mothers. It has also been established that most of the leaders of SMC and PTA of the schools under study do not have knowledge of their roles in re-admission of teen mothers as stipulated by the policy document, a need which requires head teachers to orient such leaders on re-admission policy. Finally it has been revealed that most schools are not using mother groups while those that are using the group requires block leaders to help bridge the gap between the school and community.

The results on examining the challenges faced by the school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to readmitted teen mothers have unveiled a need for block leaders for mother group, PTA and SMC who are supposed to connect the committee's leaders with the communities and the school. In addition it is discovered that Northern Education Division (NED) is ensuring that teen mothers are re-admitted and staying in schools by allowing them to get transferred to other schools within their categories if they feel uncomfortable in their former schools.

5.3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of readmission policy to teen mother depends on the functionality of school structures that are supposed to provide support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers. It has been established that the school structures that are stipulated in the re-admission policy document are not being fully utilized by schools leading to ineffective implementation of the policy by different stakeholders at the school level. The ministry of education need to establish committee block leaders and train professional counsellors to improve the implementation of the re-admission policy in schools.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following recommendations were drawn so as to enhance the effective implementation of the Re-admission Policy by using school structures that provide support mechanisms to teen mothers.

- (i) Regular monitoring and evaluation. The government through the Ministry of Education should carry out a regular monitoring and evaluation of the use of different school structures that provide support mechanisms to teen mothers. This would help in addressing the problem of poor implementation of the re-admission policy.
- (ii) Strengthening weak school structures that support readmitted teen mothers: The government through the ministry of education must strengthen weak school structures that support readmitted teen mothers like Guidance and Counseling and mother group.

5.5. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- (i) Exploring school structures in the provision of support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mothers in selected primary schools in Malawi.
- (ii) Examining the roles of mother groups in effective implementation of the readmission policy in secondary schools in Malawi

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support.

AIM OF THIS INTERVIEW GUIDE

To investigate and examine the school structures that provides mechanisms to support readmitted teen mothers. The information obtained from this study will be treated with confidentiality and will be used purely for academic purposes. Please respond honestly and freely to all the items.

NB: Do not indicate your name

Thank you for accepting to take part in this program.

Instructions:

Kindly respond to the following items by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male [] female []

2. Administrative experience in secondary school

Less than 2 years [] 2 to 5 years [] over 5 years []

3. Kindly indicate the category of your school by ticking in the appropriate box

Girls" school [] Mixed school []

4.a. Do you have an active school management committee?

Yes [] No []

b. Do you have an active Parent Teacher Association?

Yes [] No []

c. Do you have an active Mother group?

Yes [] No []

d. Do you have an active counselling committee?

Yes [] No []

5. Is your school aware of the existence of the Re- admission policy?

Yes [] No []

5. Is your School Management Committee (SMC) aware of its roles in supporting readmitted teen mother?

Yes [] No []

6. Is your school Parent Teacher Association (PTA) aware of its roles in supporting readmitted teen mother?

Yes [] No []

7. Is your School Counselling Committee aware of its roles in supporting readmitted teen mother?

Yes [] No []

8. Is your School Mother Group aware of its roles in supporting readmitted teen mother?

Yes [] No []

SECTION B: GOVERNMENT RE- ENTRY POLICY GUIDELINES ON SCHOOL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

9. Have you read the Re- entry Policy Guidelines document on school supporting mechanisms?

Yes [] No []

(b) Kindly give an explanation if your answer is „NO“ above

.....
.....

c) If YES, are the school supporting mechanisms clear?

Yes [] Vaguely [] No []

8. What roles are the following stakeholders playing in supporting readmitted teen mothers at this school?

Note: answer only where applicable

(a) School Management Committee

(b) Parent Teacher Association

(c) Mother Group

(d) Counselling committee

12. In your own opinion, what strategies could be used to overcome the shortfalls in supporting readmitted teen mothers in school?

13. What support mechanisms are there in your schools to help adolescent mothers to adjust and cope with their double roles as students and as mothers?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR.

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support.

AIM OF THIS INTERVIEW GUIDE

To examine the effectiveness of School Management Committee (SMC) in providing support to the readmitted teen mother. The information obtained from this study will be treated with confidentiality and will be used purely for academic purposes. Please respond honestly and freely to all the items.

NB: Do not indicate your name

Thank you for accepting to take part in this program.

Instructions:

Kindly respond to the following items by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male female

2. Type of school

Girls mixed

3. How long have you been a School Management Committee chair Years

4. Is your committee aware of the government re- admission policy on girls who get pregnant while in schools?

Yes

No

5. If YES, how did you learn about the policy?

SECTION B: GOVERNMENT RE- ENTRY POLICY GUIDELINES ON SCHOOL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

6. Have you read OR heard about the content of the policy document on roles of School Management Committee?

Yes [] No []

7. If YES, are the roles of School Management Committee clear?

Yes [] No []

8. What are some of the services that your School Committee Management is giving to support readmitted teen mothers?

Note: answer only where applicable

9. What are some of the challenges that the School Management Committee facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother?

10. In your own opinion, what strategies could be used to overcome the shortfalls in supporting readmitted teen mothers in school?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support.

AIM OF THIS INTERVIEW GUIDE

To investigate and examine the effectiveness of counsellor committee in provision of support to the readmitted teen mothers. The information obtained from this study will be treated with confidentiality and will be used purely for academic purposes. Please respond honestly and freely to all the items.

NB: Do not indicate your name

Thank you for accepting to take part in this program.

Instructions:

Kindly respond to the following items by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male female

2. Administrative experience in secondary school

Less than 2 years 2 to 5 years over 5 years

3. Kindly indicate the category of your school by ticking in the appropriate box

Girls" school Mixed school

4. How long have you been a school counsellor Years

5. Are you aware of the government re- admission policy on girls who get pregnant while in schools?

Yes

No

6. (a) Have you attended any professional training or have any qualification to assist you render guidance and

Counseling services at this schools?

Yes

No

SECTION B: GOVERNMENT RE- ENTRY POLICY GUIDELINES ON SCHOOL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

6a. Have you read the re-entry policy document on the roles of a counsellor in supporting readmitted teen mother?

Yes []

No []

6b. If YES, are the roles of School Counsellor clear?

Yes []

No []

8. What services are you giving to support readmitted teen mothers?

Note: answer only where applicable

9. What are some of the challenges that the School Management Committee facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother?

10. In What ways could guidance and counseling department be strengthened in order to handle issues on pregnancy and parenting students more effectively?

8. Have you and the rest of the teachers in your school been prepared by the Ministry of Education on your role in implementing the re-admission policy guidelines?

Yes []

No []

13. How often are you involved in the following counselling sessions?

i. Counseling pregnant

None []

Less []

More []

ii. Parenting students?

None []

Less []

More []

iii. Counseling parents of adolescent mothers?

None []

Less []

More []

THANK YOU

APPENDIX 4: CHECK LIST FOR PARENTS TEACHER ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support.

AIM OF THIS CHECK LIST

The observation check list below aim at examining the effectiveness of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in providing support to the readmitted teen mother.

1. Availability of an active PTA

YES [] NO []

2. Knowledge of roles of PTA in readmission.

YES [] NO []

3. Current active cases of re-admission at the school

YES [] NO []

4. Read the policy document

YES [] NO []

5. Any Challenges that the Parent Teacher Association facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother?

YES [] NO []

6. Any strategies put in place to deal with challenges facing the PTA.

YES [] NO []

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MOTHER GROUP CHAIR

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support.

AIM OF THIS INTERVIEW GUIDE

To examine the effectiveness of Mother Group in providing support to the readmitted teen mother. The information obtained from this study will be treated with confidentiality and will be used purely for academic purposes. Please respond honestly and freely to all the items.

NB: Do not indicate your name

Thank you for accepting to take part in this program.

Instructions:

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male [] female []

2. Type of school

Girls [] mixed []

3. How long have you been a Mother group chair [] Years

4. Is your committee aware of the government re- admission policy on girls who get pregnant while in schools?

Yes []

No []

5. If YES, how did you learn about the policy?

SECTION B: GOVERNMENT RE- ENTRY POLICY GUIDELINES ON SCHOOL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

6. Have you read OR heard about the content of the policy document on roles of School Mother Group?

Yes []

No []

7. If YES, are the roles of School Management Committee clear?

Yes []

No []

8. What are some of the services that your School Mother Group is giving to support readmitted teen mothers?

Note: answer only if applicable

9. What are some of the challenges that the Mother Group facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother?

10. In your own opinion, what strategies could be used to overcome the shortfalls in supporting readmitted teen mothers in school?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

APPENDIX 6: CHECK LIST FOR MOTHER GROUP

CHECK LIST FOR MOTHER GROUP

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support

AIM OF THIS CHECK LIST

To examine the effectiveness of Mother Group in providing support to the readmitted teen mother.

1. Availability of an active Mother Group.
Yes [] NO []
2. Knowledge of roles of Mother Group in readmission.
YES [] NO []
3. Current active cases of re-admission at the school
YES [] NO []
4. Read the policy document.
YES [] NO []
5. Any Challenges that the Mother Group facing in its provision of support to the readmitted teen mother?
YES [] NO []
6. Any strategies put in place to deal with challenges facing the Mother Group.
YES [] NO []

THANK YOU

APPENDIX 7: READMISSION POLICY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS ON PRIORITY AREAS

From: Revised Readmission Policy Document

3.0 Policy Priority Areas

3.1 Policy Priority Area 1: Readmission Procedures and Conducive Learning Environment

The current procedures for readmission are not user friendly and follow complicated steps and bureaucratic procedures for learners to be readmitted in school. Such cumbersome procedures hindered learners from being readmitted in school after dropping out due to pregnancy and child marriages. When readmitted in school learners especially girls are bullied and experience discrimination from their fellow learners and /including teachers. Such attitudes create stigma in the readmitted learners and consequently affect learning and academic performance.

Policy Statement(s)

The policy will ensure that:

- (i) Procedures for learners to be readmitted to school are user friendly and streamlined
- (ii) Implementation of readmission procedures is streamlined
- (iii) Recommended withdrawal period for girl learners who fall pregnant is clearly defined
- (iv) School Management Committee (SMC) create a conducive environment for readmitted learners
- (v) Counselling and psycho social support are institutionalised in all schools for readmitted learners
- (vi) Regular activities and other learners from risky behaviours are available in all schools

APPENDIX 8:DOCUMENT ANALYSIS ON ROLES OF HEAD TEACHER,SMC&MG

From: Revised Readmission Policy Document
Implementation plan

Policy statement 4: SMC creating conducive environment

environment for readmitted learners at school level	readmitted learners	Head Teachers, Mother groups	
	2.Assign teachers to mentor readmitted learners in primary and secondary schools	Head Teachers, PEAs, DEMs	2018-2021
	3. Create platforms for alumni and readmitted girls to interface and provide school related support	Head Teachers, SMC	2018 – 2021
	4. Strengthen SMC and PTA meetings with parents and guardian	SMC, Head teachers, parents	On going
	5 Develop and implement disciplinary procedures for learners who bully readmitted learners	Head teacher, section heads, SMC	2018-2021
	6.Finalise and enforce code of conduct for teachers who bully readmitted learners	DEM, EDM, Head Teacher, PEA, SMC	2018-2021
	7. Create a GBV reporting structure at school level	Head Teacher, PEA, SMC, Child Protection Officers, Community Police	2018-2021
	8. Strengthen linkage with other stakeholders in responding to cases of GBV	Head-teacher, SMC Mother Group	On going
Policy statement 5: Counselling and psycho social support are institutionalised in all schools for readmitted learners			
Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
Implement special counseling and psychosocial support in all the schools	1. Develop special counseling guidelines for readmitted students in schools	MoEST, MoH, Development partners, NGOs	2018-2021
	2. Build Capacity of Discipline Committees in schools to manage various types of counseling sessions	MoEST, MoH, Development partners, NGOs	2018-2021
Policy Statement 6: School structures to manage learners counselling needs shall be established and standardised in schools.			

From: Revised Readmission
Policy document

Re : Implementation plan

Policy priority 1: Readmission
Procedures and
Conducive environment

Policy statement 3: Recommended withdrawal period for girl learners who fall pregnant shall be clearly defined

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
Determine withdrawal period for girl learners who fall pregnant	1. Sensitize learners who fall pregnant to return to school six months after giving birth and during first term	Learner, Parents, Head teachers, Mother Groups,	2018-2021
	2. Institutionalize counselling and guidance for boys' responsible pregnancy	Head teachers, parents/guardians, teachers	On going

Policy Statement 4: School Management Committee (SMC) create a conducive environment for readmitted learners

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
Enhance conducive	1. Institutionalize school level feedback sessions with teachers and	MoEST, DEMs, PEAs,	2018-2021

APPENDIX 9: FOCUS GROUP FOR MOTHER GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to explore school structures that provide support mechanisms to readmitted teen mother in secondary schools in Mzuzu city. In order to accomplish this, I need your support

AIM OF FOCUS GROUP

To examine the effectiveness of Mother Group in providing support to the readmitted teen mother.

Mother Group members

1. What factors affect your roles in the implementation of readmission policy?
2. How do you deal with challenges facing mother group in helping re-admitted teen mothers?
3. What are some of the achievement that mother group have accomplished at this school?
4. What support do you receive from the school management?
5. What are your short term goals as a group?
6. What are your long term goals?

THANK YOU

APENDIX 10:

APPLICATION LETTER TO THE ETHICAL COMMITTEE

To The Chairman, Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee
From Paul Kumwenda, Masters of Education in Leadership and
Management student

Date

Subject **APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I would like to apply for the approval to conduct a research study from your committee. The topic of my study is; exploring school structures in provision of support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mother in Mzuzu city. My scheduled time to collect the data for the study is within the month of January, 2022 to May 2022. I therefore look forward to your timely response for the application.

I will be glad if my application is considered.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Kumwenda

APENDIX 11: REQUEST LETTER TO NED

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
Mzuzu 2.

Northern Education Division

Private Bag

Mzuzu.

Dear Sir,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN MZUZU CITY (NORTHERN EDUCATION DIVISION)

I am Paul Kumwenda, I'm pursuing Masters of Education in leadership and Management at Mzuzu University. In partial fulfillment for the award of the above-mentioned qualification, I am supposed to conduct a research study. In this view I would like to seek for permission from your office to conduct a research study at your division which has been selected as my research site.

The study seeks to ' Explore school structures in provision of support mechanisms to the readmitted teen mothers'. All issues pertaining to ethical consideration have been considered and highlighted in consent forms.

I will be glad if my request meets your favorable consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Kumwenda

APENDIX 12:

CONSENT FORM

My name is Paul Kumwenda. I am pursuing a masters of education in leadership and management a master’s student at Mzuzu University. In fulfillment of my academic research requirements, I am conducting a study on exploring school structures in provision of support mechanisms to the re-admitted teen mother in Mzuzu city. The information will assist the government to develop programs that will assist the readmitted teen mothers receive the required support in school.

I would be much appreciative for your participation in this study. Interview will take approximately 15 minutes. Whatever information you provide will be strictly confidential and will not be shown to other people.

Note that the participation in this study is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any individual question or all questions. Bearing in mind that your views are important I hope that you will participate in this study.

If you agree to participate in the study please sign below:

Signature..... (Participant)

Dated.....

Researcher’s Declaration

I have given comprehensive information pertaining to the study in order to enable the participant to give informed consent. Confidentiality and privacy will be maintained to its utmost standard.

Signature..... (Researcher)

Dated.....

APENDIX:

CONSENT FORM – CHICHEWA VERSION

Kalata ya Chiloledzo

Ine ndine Paul kumwenda mmodzi wa ophunzira uphunzitsi pa Mzuzu University. Ngati mbali imodzi yomalizitsa sukulu ndikuyenera kupanga kafukufuku pa mitu yomwe itha kufikira miyoyo ya anthu. Mutu wa kafukufuku wanga ndi kufufuza magawo a sukulu ya sekondale omwe angathe kuthandiza ophunzira wa dzaka zosapyola 18 amene wabwezereseredwa pa sukulu ataimisidwa kwa chaka chimodzi kamba kakupezeka ndi pakati. Mukafukufuku ameneyu omwe atenga nawo mbali ndi omwe anakwanitsa zaka 18 kapena kupitilira.

Dziwani kuti simuli okakamizika kutenga nawo mbali mu kafukufuku ameneyu koma maganizo anu athandizira kutiunikira mmene unduna wa maphunziro ungathandizire ophunzira amene adachosdwa sukulu kamba kopezeka ndi pakati. Ngati mwavomeredza kutenga nawo mbali mu kafukufuku ameneyu mukudziwitsidwa kuti chilichonse chomwe titakambirane ndi cha chinsinsi. Simulemba mayina anu papepala mmalo mwake mulemba chabe nambala. Kafukufuku ameneyu sakuyika moyo wanu pachiopezo.

Dziwaninso kuti kafukufuku ameneyu alibe malipiro aliwonse, kotero muli ndi ufulu wosayankha kapena kusamalizitsa mafunso malingana ndi mmene mwafunira.

Chiloledzo cha otenga nawo gawo mukafukufuku

Ndapasidwa uthenga wokhudzana ndi kafukufuku uyu motere ndikuvomereza kutenga nawo gawo pa kafukufuku ameneyu.

Sayinani apa; Tsiku;

Umboni wa mwini kafukufuku

Ndine wokhutitsidwa kuti ndapereka uthenga wokwanirawakafukufuku ameneyu kwa omwe atenge nawo gawo. Ndikunenetsa kuti zomwe zikambidwe pakati pa inu ndi ine ndi zachinsisi.

Sayini; tsiku;

APENDIX:

CONSENT FORM- TUMBUKA VERSION

Kalata ya Chizomerezgo

Ine ndine paul kumwenda wakusambira wa mastazi ya ulongozi na kwendesya masambilo ku Mzuzu Univesite. Ngati luwande lumoza lwakumalizgira sukulu nkhwenera kupanga kafukufuku pa mitu iyo yingamanya kufikira miyoyo yabanthu. Mutu wa kafukufuku wane ni Kufufuza vigawo vya sukulu za sekondale ivyo vingawira musungwana wa chichepere uyo wawezyereseka pa sukulu kufuma ku holide iyo wakapika chifukwa chakusangika na nthumbo. Mukafukufuku uyu awo watolengepo gawo ni agho wali na vilimika 18 nakujumpha.

Manyani kuti muli bakuchichizgika yaye kutola luwande mu kafukufuku uyu kweni maghanoghano ghinu ghavwirenge kutivumbulira umu wabali na awo bakugwira ntchito za umoyo bangamupwelelerani makola. Pala mwazomerezga kutolapo luwande mu kafukufuku uyu, muli bakumanyiskika kuti chilichose icho tidumbiskanenge ni cha chisisi. Mulembenge mazina chala papepala mumalo mwake mulembenge waka nambala. Kafukufuku uyu wakubika moyo winu pa wofyi uliwose chala.

Manyaniso kuti kafukufuku uyu walije malipiro ghaliwose mwantheura muli banangwa kuleka kuzgola panji kumalizgisa mafumbo malinga na umu mwakhumbira.

Chizomerezgo cha bakutola nawo gawo mukafukufuku

Napasika uthenga wakukhwaskana na kafukufuku uyu nthaura nkhuzomerezga kutola nawo gawo pa kafukufuku uyu.

Sayinani apa:zuba:

Ukaboni wa mwenecho kafukufuku

Nili wakukhutiskika kuti napereka uthenga wakukwanira wa kafukufuku uyu kwa awo batolenge nawo gawo. Nkhuneneska kuti vyose ivyo vidumbikenge pakati pa imwe na ine ni vya chisisi.

Sayini:zuwa:

APENDIX 13

PROPOSED BUDGET

NUMBER	ITEM	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
1	RIMS OF PAPERS	5	50000
2	TRANSPORT		50000
3	RECORDER	1	20000
4	PEN	3	1000
5	PRINTING AND PHOTOCOPYING COST		50000
6	BINDING	3	20000
TOTAL			200000

