



Formative Evaluation on the Implementation of School Re-Entry Policy Guidelines in the Catholic Sponsored Secondary Schools In Kajiado County, Kenya

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Abstract: *The purpose of this formative evaluation was to gather and analyze evaluative data that may be used to make some observations, comments, improvement and overall continued effective implementation of the 2020 School Reentry Policy Guidelines for Early Learning and Basic Education, as applied to the selected target population, namely, the teen mothers. The study sought to address the following evaluation question: To what extent are the school reentry policy guidelines being implemented? This evaluation study was informed by the resiliency theory. The study applied a convergence Mixed Methods Research (MMR) design in which both the quantitative and qualitative data were collected together and later the findings were corroborated. Daniel Stufflebeam's, Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model was also adapted to inform evaluation approach and study reporting. Being a formative evaluation, the study largely inclined on the process evaluation. The targeted stakeholders included the student teen mothers, their parents/guardians, teachers, Principals, Boards of Management, Education officers and the local administrators (chiefs). Questionnaires, interview guides and data analysis guides were used to collect the evaluation data from the respondents. Findings from the study revealed that: the re-entry guidelines are relevant and necessary in addressing learner dropouts; and that policy dissemination and sensitization of the stakeholders is the main challenge slowing down the effective implementation of the re-entry guidelines. Following the implementation of the guidelines, there is an improved school enrolment, retention, completion and transition of teen mothers, thereby meeting the goal of the re-entry guidelines. Moreover, the evaluation established that more academic interventions need to be put in place by the schools to uplift the academic standards and performance of the student teen mothers and all students who reenter school after dropping out. While the re-entry guidelines still face a myriad of challenges in their implementation. the evaluation study made recommendations for various approaches that the MOE, local administrators, school administrators and the teachers can adopt to accelerate the implementation of the re-entry policy guidelines.*

Key Words: Dropout, Evaluation, Formative Evaluation, Guidelines, Reentry, Resilience, teen Mother

1.1 Introduction

School dropout among learners in early learning and basic education continue to be a critical challenge in Kenya. This is brought about by various issues, teen pregnancy and motherhood being one of the major causes. This is despite Kenya's efforts and strive to realize education for all (EFA) by being a signatory to various international treaties, and by the enactment of various educational laws and policies

with the objective of access, retention, completion and transition of all learners in different levels of their education. One such policy is the 2020 National Guidelines for School Re-entry in Early learning and Basic Education.

The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Art. 28) and the Convention for the Elimination of every Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981; Art. 10) provide for the right to education for everyone, teen mothers included. Adolescent pregnancy, particularly among females of school age, is a matter of worldwide concern. The yearly reported pregnancies for women aged fifteen to nineteen years in Europe are decreasing, while the rates vary across different countries. Based on the findings of Kai, Moreau, Donati, Gissler, Fronteira, and Karro (2013), the rate of teenage pregnancy was greatest in Eastern Europe, with 41 pregnancies per 1000 teenagers. In comparison, Northern Europe had a lower rate of 30 pregnancies per 1000 teenagers, while the Southern area had the lowest prevalence at 17 pregnancies per 1000 teenagers. According to Kai et al. (2013), nations that provide subsidized contraception for all minors, provide sexual reproductive health care, and do not need parental approval for abortion had lower rates. On a global scale, the rate of birth has declined from 64.5 births per one thousand women in two thousand to 42.5 births per one thousand women in 2021. Nevertheless, the current prevalence of teenage childbearing remains elevated (United Nations, 2021).

Annually, almost 23 million adolescent girls (aged 14 to 19) in poor nations get pregnant, and 15 million girls are married off before they turn 18 (WHO, 2017). The overall teenage pregnancy rate in Africa is 18.8%, with the highest prevalence in the Sub-Saharan area at 21.6% and the lowest incidence in the northern region at 9.2%. Moreover, the situation in East Africa is quite serious, as shown by a pregnancy prevalence rate of 21.5% (Kassa, Arowojolu & Odukogbe, 2018). Kenya performs inadequately in combating adolescent pregnancy, as reported by the Global Childhood/ Save the Children (2020). Kenya ranks third in terms of adolescent pregnancy rates, with a rate of 82 births per 1,000 births. According to the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) in Kenya, health institutions in all 47 counties recorded that more than 378,000 females between the ages of 10 and 19 sought medical assistance for matters connected to pregnancy and parenting from July 2016 to July 2017. More precisely, a total of 28,932 girls between the ages of 10 and 14 and 349,465 females between the ages of 15 and 19 had pregnancies. Annually, almost 13,000 adolescent females discontinue their education due to pregnancy.

Post-independence Kenya has faced a significant obstacle in education, namely in improving both access and quality. The various national education commissions appointed over the last six decades, such as the 1964 Ominde Commission, 1976 Gachathi Commission, 1981 Mackay Commission, 1988 Kamunge Commission, and 1999 Koech Commission, as mentioned by Macrina, C.L. and Weidman, J.C. (2012), demonstrate the government's and other stakeholders' commitment to developing policy frameworks and strategies that align education with the nation's needs and contribute to its development. Despite the diligent efforts made by the many commissions to address Kenya's educational issues, the nation still grapples with significant concerns pertaining to the quality, fairness, and availability of education, leaving numerous questions unsolved. Although the establishment of these commissions was done with good intentions, a significant number of the suggestions they provided were either not put into action or were only partially successful. Kenya has implemented many educational initiatives in its aim of achieving Education for all (EFA), a significant international decision. Despite its ineffective execution, the 1994 Kenya school re-entry policy was implemented to ensure that pregnant students stay in school

and support teenage mothers in returning to school and continuing their education after giving birth (Republic of Kenya, 1994). The Government aimed to enhance the post-delivery educational continuation of young mothers via the implementation of this strategy (Appendix IV). In order to enhance the educational opportunities for girls, the Government of Kenya created a policy framework in 2007 (Second Edition, 2015) to enforce the right to education and eventually attain gender equality in education (MOE, 2007, 2015). The 2009 National School Health strategy also supported the safe return of teenage mothers to school, while ensuring they had access to adequate and suitable healthcare.

According to Wekesa (2014), despite the earlier implementation of a readmission policy in Kenya, the educational requirements of pregnant schoolgirls and mother-students have received a limited amount of attention. In the survey, just eight percent of respondents said that they had completely cooperated with the ministerial policy that was implemented in 1994 to ensure that adolescent mothers be readmitted. Specifically, there were a number of problems that interfered with the successful implementation of the reentry policy that was introduced in 1994. The absence of policy guidelines (Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011; Muthikwa, 2020), the absence of official communication and legal backing (Achoka & Njeru, 2012), a disconnect between policy goals and the socio-cultural realities for teenage mothers who were returning to school (Onyango, 2015), and conflicting views on the value, nature, and implementation of the policy (Omwancha, 2012) were some of the factors that contributed to the situation. In addition, there was a very general lack of awareness of the policy (Wekesa, 2014; Muthikwa, 2020). As a consequence of the national school reentry standards that were put into effect in the year 2020, there was a need for a monitoring and evaluation structure that was more comprehensive. This framework would defend against the shortcomings that had happened throughout the process of implementing the reentry policy that was created in 1994 so that it could be executed successfully.

In addition, the Health and Education Advice and Resource Team (HEART, 2015) took notice of the fact that feedback from the ground indicated that the policy that was implemented in Kenya in 1994 has not been formally implemented, and that the execution of the policy to allow girls to continue their education until they are ready to give birth has been inconsistent. Teachers, parents, classmates, and members of the local society continue to stigmatize and discriminate against adolescent moms, according to Achoka and Njeru (2012). This is one of the most significant challenges that teen mothers continue to confront. According to Wanyama and Simatwa (2011), the absence of policy instructions created a situation in which the head teachers had difficulties in putting the policy into effect. In a similar vein, the instructors of guidance and counseling were criticized for not having proper training, missing out on information on re-entry, and being afraid of the negative impact these girls would have on other people. After the adoption of the 2020 guidelines on reentry policy, this study set out to determine the current state of the execution of school reintegration programs for teenage moms.

The 2020 National Guidelines for School Re-entry were recently put into effect at Early Learning and Basic Education institutions by the Kenyan Government. This is in line with the tenets and objectives of the following documents: The Basic Education Act of 2013, the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Kenya Vision 2030, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which seeks to promote inclusive education. The government was worried that the problem of students not staying in school or not finishing their education remained a big hurdle, despite its best efforts to offer affordable, high-quality education to all children of school age. The four main goals of the guidelines are as follows: first, to help students navigate the re-entry process so they don't end up dropping out; second, to make sure everyone has a

clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; third, to make sure the school re-entry system is well-monitored; and finally, to make sure that all students have access to a high-quality primary education (MoE, 2020; Imbosa et al., 2022).

1.2 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to collect and analyze evaluative data that could be used to make some observations, comments, improvements, and overall continued effective implementation of the school reentry policy guidelines for early learning and basic education. These guidelines were applied to the selected objective/thematic area, which was the teen mothers. HEART (2015) reports that in Kenya, pregnancies, adolescent marriages, and parenthood are the primary reasons for the failure of forty-eight percent of females to finish their secondary education. As stated in the Ministry of Health Adolescent and Reproductive Health Report in Kajiado County for the year 2017 (MoH-ARH, 2017), twenty percent of the females in the county who are between the ages of fifteen and nineteen have begun the process of having children. This indicates that they have either given birth already or are expecting their first kid. This is almost the same as the national rate at the federal level. The county's age-specific fertility rate (adolescent birth rate) for females aged 15 to 19 is 118 births per 1000 girls, which is higher than the national average of 96 births per 1000 girls, according to the Centre for the Study of Adolescence (CSA, 2021). Zulaika, Bulbarelli, and Nyothach (2022) compared the COVID-19 cohort to the pre-COVID-19 cohort in a study that was carried out in Kenya. The results showed that more youths had their first sexual encounter (47.4% against 25.5%), dropped out of school (9.7% versus 3.0%), and reported becoming pregnant (10.9% versus 5.2%). If nothing is done to address the high rate of adolescent pregnancy, it has the potential to undo the progress that has been accomplished up to this point in terms of not just improving the rate of retention and completion among students who are expecting children and young moms (Human Rights Watch, 2018), but also (and probably more crucially) the quality of learning and academic results (Imbosa, Majanga, & Ouda, 2022). This trend of adolescent pregnancy is rather frightening, which is why it is necessary to analyze the quality of their learning and academic results when these students are permitted to return to school after giving birth to a child and are retained to finish their secondary school education (Imbosa et al., 2022). Both the negative consequences of socio-cultural reality (Onyango et al., 2015) and the stigma that is attached to adolescent moms (UNICEF, 2015; Achoka, & Njeru, 2012) continue to be a concern. It is important to note that both of these issues continue to be. Despite the fact that a number of studies have been conducted on Kenya's school re-entry policy (Achoka & Njeru, 2012; Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011; Omwancha K.M., 2012; Wekesa, 2014; Mwenje, 2015; Onyango et al, 2015; Kurgat, 2016, Imbosa et al., 2022, among others), none of these studies is an evaluation study on the level of the implementation of the policy. This is necessary in order to inform any necessary adjustments and decisions that may be made in the future and to ensure that the policy is effectively implemented. This was the primary focus of this evaluation study.

1.3 Evaluation Questions

To what extent are the school reentry policy guidelines being implemented on the teen mothers in Kajiado County?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This evaluation study was guided by the Resiliency theory. Resilience is the capacity to adjust and recover from challenges, setbacks, disagreements, disappointment, and disaster. Notable scholars in the

field of resilience and Resilience theory include Michael Rutter, Norman Garnezy, Emmy Werner, Suniya Luthar, Ann Masten, and Michael Ungar. Michael Rutter suggests that some people achieve a reasonably positive end despite facing significant pressures or adversities. These individuals do better than others who have had similar situations (Rutter, 2013). According to Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1994), resilience refers to the increased probability of achieving success in academics and other areas of life, even in the face of challenging circumstances. According to Kanga (2011), Wang's definition focuses on the real-life experiences of Kenyan girls, including those in schools in Kajiado County.

According to a study conducted by VicHealth in 2015, researchers in the 1970s observed that some children who were exposed to risk factors for psychopathology nonetheless had positive results. This finding prompted an investigation into distinct variations among children who excel under challenging circumstances. This led to the emergence of a study area centered on resilience, which played a crucial role in shifting the emphasis from mental disease to mental well-being. The new emphasis yielded abundant data on the effective strategies for young people, as opposed to the old focus on identifying problems. The focus is on strategies for managing challenges rather than the characteristics of the obstacles themselves. In view of this evaluation, the focus was how the teen mothers are assisted through the school reentry policy guidelines so as to overcome the challenges facing their continued education.

In the beginning of his research, Dr. Norman Garnezy (1918-2009), who is frequently referred to as the pioneer of resilience research, concentrated on schizophrenia and other mental illnesses. After that, he moved his attention to stress resilience, competence, and resistance in his longitudinal study of at-risk children's good outcomes called Project Competence (VicHealth, 2015). The term "resilience" is defined by Garnezy as something that is "not necessarily impervious to stress." Conversely, resilience is meant to represent the ability to bounce back and keep adapting after initially withdrawing or being unable to handle a stressful circumstance (Garnezy, 1991a, as quoted by VicHealth, 2015).

Resilience, contrary to popular belief, is not a static quality but rather an ongoing process in which people draw on a variety of strengths and resources to overcome adversity. Second, resilience is dependent on common resources in the sense that nearly anybody can become resilient provided the fundamental adaptation mechanisms were safeguarded and in excellent functioning order over the course of a child's growth. Other examples of such common resources are the support of parents, the guidance of adults, and the presence of a secure community. Consequently, a learner is seen to be a product of their family, their school, and the society at large, all of which ought to be able to assist in the development of resilience from the very beginning of the child's existence (Kanga, 2011; Janas & Lock, 2002). Considering unfavorable occurrences are a normal part of life, one may either be severely impacted by them (possibly lowering one's quality of life) or find answers and confront them with all one has (perhaps leading to greater chances and self-development).

According to Happinesscoach.com, there are many reasons why resilience is vital, including: Resilience assists one in adapting to adversity, providing one with the courage to be brave in the face of difficult conditions as well as the capacity to comprehend what is going on and emerge stronger. Resilience preserves one's mental health by preventing anxiety, sadness, and other mental illnesses, allowing one to overcome terrible situations and set the course of one's life. Resilience contributes to self-discovery since overcoming a difficulty raises knowledge of one's own capabilities. It so helps to strengthen one's problem-solving abilities. (<https://thehappinesscoach.com/the-resilience-theory/>)

Richardson (2002) defines the resilience process as a life-enriching paradigm in which shocks and change promote development and improved resilient traits or protective elements. He holds the belief that building resilience and self-efficacy through practice may provide hope and enable people to reclaim control and order in their lives, all while reducing their need on drugs and external assistance. Likewise, according to Lock and Janas (2002), people may overcome dysfunctional relationships or buffer difficult surroundings via resilience.

It is, however, recognized that the voices of young people are relatively lacking in the resilience study, with an over-reliance on parent and teacher comments. Since the young people have better insight into their own lives, such exclusion lead to non-discovery of the most important risk and protective factors, hence ineffective interventions (VicHealth, 2015). Furthermore, despite these limits in resilience research, the concept continues to be a worthy study since it refocuses the researcher to uncover what is functioning in the middle of hardship among the young moms. On the other hand, in order to make progress in the area of resilience, there has to be a stronger acknowledgment of the context, as well as more clarity in terms of vocabulary and definitions. As Kanga (2011) notes, the current literature on resiliency is highly representative of the Western model, and that it would be intriguing to explore some possible ways of addressing resiliency in the Third World contexts.

Within the context of secondary schools in Kajiado County, this assessment focused on the huge issues that surround the re-entry of expecting students and adolescent moms, as well as the ways in which the girls are coping with them in order to achieve excellent learning and academic success. Despite the myriad of challenges facing the teen mothers in attempt at school reentry (Wekesa, 2014; Achoka & Njeru, 2012; Mirago, 2014, Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011, Onyango, Kioli & nyambedha 2015), several scholars (Kanga A., 2011; Janas & lock, 2002; Garmezzy N., 1991a; Michael Rutter, 2013) believe that building and nurturing resilience among the learners, teen mothers included, is a great strategy in enabling them face these issues related to their education and learning. In their article, "I built Resiliency", Lock and Janas (2002), discussed resiliency behaviors and characteristics that can be nurtured within family, school and even such organizations as churches or even clubs. According to Janas and Lock (2002), practicing unconditional positive love to children, establishing close supportive relationships, communicating high and realistic standards with a clear method of reaching desired goals and establishing clear and compatible boundaries to guide desired rules to be followed to achieve desired behaviors, are useful means to building resiliency in children right from their young age. Using a lifetime perspective, Michael Rutter (2007) argues that resilience is not a static trait but rather a product of one's environment, with various stages of life exhibiting it to varying degrees. Resilience, in his view, is not a result of innate abilities or exceptional performance but rather a common response to adversity. He said that each child is unique because of their upbringing and vehemently opposed the concept of "superkids" or "invulnerables." Garmezzy (1991), Pardon, Waxman, and Huang (1999), and Masten (2001) are among the many scholars who see resilience as a process rather than a static quality. Critical to building resilience are the interplaying processes between people and their environments, as well as between risk and protective variables.

This evaluation study found resilience theory to be relevant since adolescent pregnancy and motherhood still impair females' ability to stay in school and get good grades. As a result, the idea sheds light on innovative ways that pregnant students and adolescent moms in Kajiado County might be empowered to overcome obstacles and achieve high-quality learning and academic success in secondary school. The

2020 School Reentry Guidelines give special attention to the sensitization of the teen mothers, and other school dropout, on the importance of reentry, through the collaboration of different stakeholders, namely: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Interior, County Governments, School Boards, Parents/Guardians, local community and the various organizations of public benefit, the Church included (Chapter 4: Implementation Framework). Together, these critical stakeholders shall promote conducive, supportive and a resilient-building environment at home/ family, school and society at large for school dropouts (teen mothers included) to reenter back to school.

According to Richardson (2002), by learning about resilience, students are able to reflect on their own identities and the ways in which their physical, mental, and spiritual selves are strengthened by transpersonal factors. Upon re-entry, the impacted girls can draw on internal strengths like self-efficacy and self-esteem as well as external resources like parental support, adult mentors, youth programs, warmth, and supportive instructors and classmates. To help build resiliency in these girls, Kanga (2011) recommends that it is important that parents and teachers understand the value of nurturing resiliency in children under their care so as to promote future success. She challenges and calls upon parents to love their girls and be passionately interested in their education. Moreover, schools and homes are to instill in the children and learners such values as a sense of social responsibility, tolerance, justice, self-discipline and respect for others. The creation of a conducive and hospitable learning environment is key through enhancement of career guidance and counseling and well organized sports, clubs and school outings.

1.5 Review of Related Literature

Across Europe, the majority of nations have granted pregnant females the opportunity to pursue their education for as long as it is feasible, and have even let teenage moms to return to school after giving birth (HEART, 2015). In UK, the Equality Act (2010) is designed to safeguard enrolled students who get pregnant while pursuing their studies. Women are protected by the law from being mistreated or discriminated against due to their pregnant status. A pregnant teenager is granted a maternity leave of 18 weeks. Nevertheless, the adolescent is given the opportunity to attend school for an extended period of time prior to delivering a baby, thanks to the provision of transportation assistance (HEART, 2015). In addition, schools facilitate the decision of teenage mothers to breastfeed by offering a designated space for milk expression and a facility for milk storage during the day. If the childcare facility is located near the school, the adolescent mother is permitted to temporarily leave school at certain periods in order to attend to her baby's feeding needs. Municipal authorities have the responsibility of giving assistance. Teen mothers in Brighton and Hove are provided with 5 hours of individualized instruction from a certified instructor throughout the course of their 18-week maternity leave (Brighton & Hove City Council, n.d). Individuals who are less than twenty years old are eligible to receive financial support for childcare and transportation expenses under the 'Care to Learn' program (Dowden, Gray, White, Ethridge, Spenser & Boston, 2018).

Dowden and Gray (2018) state in their study, "A Phenomenological Analysis of the Impact of Teen Pregnancy on Education Attainment: Implication for School Counselors," that in the United States, schools are not allowed to exclude pregnant students from attending school, unless there is a medical reason to do so. Schools are required to permit absences resulting from teenage pregnancy and associated circumstances, including attending prenatal clinics, labor, childbirth, and postpartum recuperation. Upon their return, the teenage moms must be restored to the same academic and extracurricular level they were

at before they began their leave, and they should be given the chance to make up for any missed assignments or coursework. Additional assistance includes providing larger workstations and secluded areas for breastfeeding, along with the establishment of childcare facilities in close proximity to schools (Dowden et al., 2018). The research conducted by Dowden and Gray aimed to comprehensively investigate the influence of teenage pregnancy on educational achievement among females aged 13-19, taking into account their racial/ethnic background and socioeconomic position. The research included eight female participants of African American/Black and Hispanic/Latino ethnicities. The research used a critical race theoretical framework. The findings revealed six main themes: sex education, societal stigma and psychological distress experienced by teenage girls who are pregnant or parenting, the challenges of adolescent motherhood, the effects of male relationships, support networks, and the need of accountability and responsibility. This resource offers strategies for school counselors who are dealing with adolescent females who are pregnant or parenting. This research is a phenomenological study that focuses on race, using a critical race theoretical framework to suggest that adolescent pregnancy is influenced by race. The report fails to acknowledge the worldwide scope of teenage parenthood. The present evaluation research employs both the phenomenological tradition and the cross-sectional methodology to assess the execution of the re-entry policy guidelines.

The Guyana re-entry policy implemented in 2018 is considered one of the most intricate and detailed policies currently in existence worldwide. As a result of the combined efforts of several stakeholders, this initiative promotes the inclusion of teenage moms back into the traditional education system (Guyana, 2018). The policy objective is to effectively manage the reintegration of pregnant teenagers and teenage moms into the regular education system, while also aiming to avoid teenage pregnancy. The policy addresses important aspects such the policy framework, fundamental principles, monitoring of teenage pregnancy, reintegrating teenage mothers into mainstream education, monitoring and support post-reintegration, and the process of implementation. Additionally, it deals with the distribution and promotion of policies, while also including the oversight and assessment of the whole process.

"Leave No Girl Behind in Africa: Discrimination in Education Against Pregnant Girls and Adolescent Mothers" is a 2018 HRW report that focuses on the ways in which several African nations have instituted "continuation" or re-entry policies and programs to help pregnant teenagers go back to school after giving birth. These nations include Malawi, Gabon, and Kenya. Inadequate supervision of adolescent mothers' return to school and legislation and regulatory enforcement often fall short of expectations. As part of its pledges to the Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Kenyan government has strengthened its re-entry strategy with new laws and extra regulations. Making it easier for pregnant girls and adolescent moms to keep going to school is the main goal here. In 2013, the Basic Education Act provided assistance for this endeavor. Important Kenyan statutes, such as the Children's Act of 2013 and the Constitution of 2010, strongly support the re-entry policy for pregnant students and teen mothers in schools. To ensure that all children of school age, including girls, have equal opportunity to get a quality education and vocational training, the Kenyan Constitution of 2010 calls for affirmative action to be implemented. The constitutional provisions outlining this need are Article 55 (a) and Article 53 (1) (b). The responsibility of ensuring that all students enroll in and complete their basic education is entrusted to the National Education Board, County Education Boards, and School Management under the Basic Act, 2013.

In 1994, Kenya established the re-entry policy for expectant learners and teenage mothers to encourage

women to finish their degrees even after having a child. To help mitigate the effects of psychological and emotional trauma, a policy from the Ministry of Education in 1994 (which can be found in Appendix IV) stated that pregnant teenagers should be allowed to stay in school up until their due date, and then either be re-admitted to their original school or another school without any conditions. In order to help the reintegrated teenagers who were also students, it also worked to raise awareness among teachers, students, and the whole school community. However, a reaction against this circular happened when it was delivered to the District and Provincial offices, and it was eventually placed on hold. Delays in re-entry policy implementation occurred because individual head teachers were given wide latitude to interpret and make decisions (CSA, 2008; Forum for African Women Educationists [FAWE], 2004).

Following the rejection of the re-entry guidelines, the only document that dealt with readmission of adolescent mothers was Article 4.19 xxi of Session Paper No. 1 of 2005. Girls who are coerced or compelled to drop out of school because they are pregnant or because they are young will be re-enrolled, according to this document (MOE, 2005). There was no other document that dealt with the issue of adolescent moms being readmitted. Despite the policy measures, some school administrators were reluctant to re-admit young mothers or keep pregnant teenagers enrolled for fear of damaging the school's reputation and encouraging promiscuity among other girls. Studies conducted in many counties in Kenya have shown that principals and other education stakeholders are unaware of the policy and its provisions, in addition to the irregularities that have been discovered in its application. For instance, in the Homa Bay region, Undie et al. (2015) found that parental learners are still not included in the educational system. As evidence, consider the fact that among the local female population, 66% were not enrolled in or regularly attended school.

As part of the Care and Protection of Child Parents Bill (2016), county governments were particularly mandated to provide further help to the national government by constructing and maintaining childcare centers for the purpose of assisting teenage parents. Insufficient resources and a lack of legitimacy are two of the problems that are preventing the implementation of the re-entry program at the county level. Despite the fact that the re-entry policy in Nakuru County has goals, it does not have the implementation, monitoring, financial, or human resources necessary to be successful. Without any defined guidelines, the policy aims are difficult to understand. As a consequence of this, the processes for re-entry were subject to the discretion of the head teacher, and the results varied depending on the teachers' perception of the situation on an individual basis (Mwenje, 2015). Similar studies done on the Kenya's school reentry policy confirm similar state of affairs: ignorance and lack of adequate awareness on existence of the reentry policy by teachers and parents, low implementation of the policy, stigmatization and discrimination of teen mothers, and even unwillingness by the teen mothers themselves to go back to school (Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011; Omwancha, 2012; Achoka & Njeru, 2012; Wekesa, 2014; Mirago, 2014; Onyango, Kioli & Nyambedha, 2015; Kurgat, 2016).

The failure of the 1994 reentry policy together with the negative perceptions in these studies has implications on the low effectiveness of the policy implementation and enforcement. It should also be mentioned that the Ministry of Education did not have a monitoring and assessment system in place, which resulted in the complete and utter abandonment of the whole strategy. A historical context of this kind provides a good basis for the procedures of implementation and monitoring that are applied to the recommendations for the current re-entry policy.

1.6 Evaluation Design and Methodology

The study used the convergence model of mixed methods research (MMR), as outlined by Creswell and Plano (2018), which involves the simultaneous application of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to investigate a phenomenon. At the conclusion of the research, the qualitative and quantitative data are combined and synthesized by examining and contrasting the findings during the interpretation process. Utilizing a Mixed methodologies approach enhances the validity of the results by combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies, which mutually reinforce each other and cater to distinct audiences (Creswell, 2003). This assessment used a cross-sectional survey research approach under the quantitative paradigm and the phenomenological tradition within the qualitative paradigm. The target population consisted of all of the Catholic-sponsored public secondary schools in Kajiado County as well as the indirect beneficiaries of the reentry policy guidelines. These indirect beneficiaries included the principals (14), class teachers (42), Guidance and Counseling teachers (28), members of Boards of Management County (210), the County Director of Education (1), Sub-County Directors of Education (5), local administrators/chiefs (25) and approximately one hundred parents and guardians of teen mothers.

Twenty percent of the schools were sampled using stratified simple random sampling in order to guarantee that the various strata of the schools, such as mixed schools, girls schools, and rural/urban schools, were represented to the greatest extent feasible. All the targeted respondents, teen mothers included, were selected using purposive sampling). The various instruments employed included questionnaires, focus group discussion guides, interview guides and document analysis guide. The different instrument helped to mitigate against the weaknesses of any of them through triangulation.

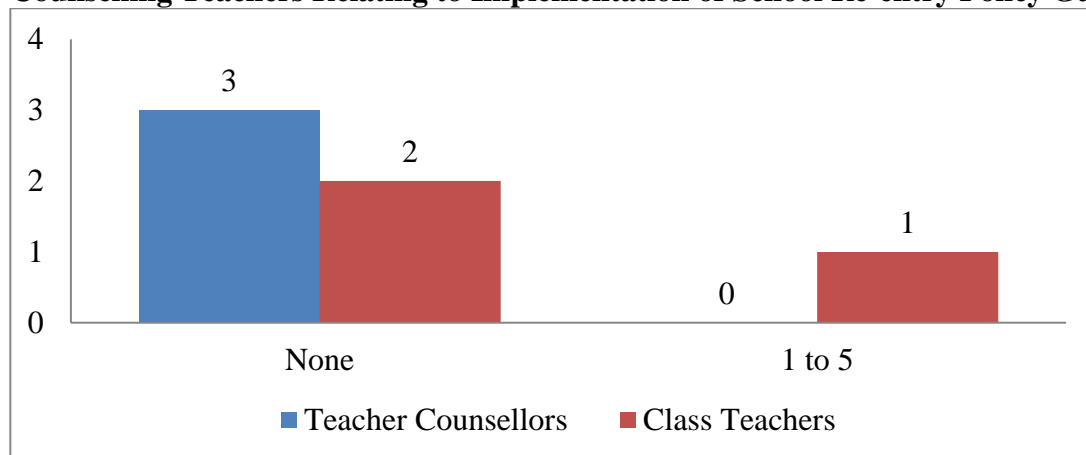
1.7 Findings and Discussions

One of the study inquiries for this assessment project is to determine the level of effectiveness in implementing the school re-entry policy guidelines for adolescent moms in Kajiado County. To address this inquiry, the research participants were presented with a range of questions and requested to express their perspectives.

The Teachers' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

A question was posed to the teachers of the classes and the teacher counselors, asking them to identify whether or not they were familiar with the requirements for the National MOE School Re-entry policy. Upon receiving the answer, each and every one of them confirmed that they were aware of the policy. The teachers were asked to specify the number of introduction and sensitization workshops that they had attended in relation to the implementation of the school re-entry policy guidelines. This was done after it was confirmed that the instructors were aware of the policy. Figure 1 depicts the replies that were supplied to the survey.

Figure 1: No. of Induction/Sensitization Workshops Attended by the Class Teachers and Counselling Teachers Relating to Implementation of School Re-entry Policy Guidelines

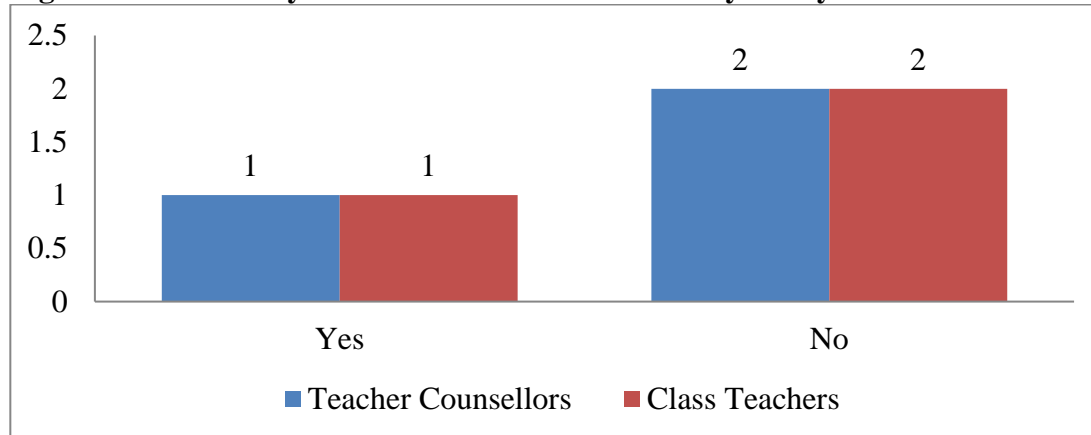


Source: Field data, 2024

As shown in Figure 1 all the teacher counselors and two class teachers indicated that they had never attended the induction/sensitization workshops concerning the implementation of the school re-entry policy guidelines. Only one class teacher had attended at least 1-5 induction/sensitization workshops. The class teacher who had attended the induction and sensitization program was further asked to indicate the organizers of those workshops. From the responses, it was noted that the workshops had been organized by the Ministry of Education headquarters and non-governmental organizations. This could imply that within the county, there are little efforts that have been made by the respective stakeholders such as the Kajjado County Education office and Teachers Service Commission to facilitate workshops for teachers and counsellors on the implementation of school re-entry policy guidelines.

For those who had not attended the induction/sensitization workshop further gave their responses on the people that had made them aware of the school re-entry policy guidelines. From the responses, one of the teacher counselors indicated the principal whereas two others indicated through fellow teachers in the school. One of the teacher counselors also indicated that they became aware of the policy guidelines through social media. On the other hand, one of the class teachers indicated the principal whereas another one indicated that they had gone through the document online. This study was also interested in identifying whether the copies of the National school re-entry policy guidelines are readily available in the school. Figure 2 shows the responses obtained from the class and counselling teachers on the same.

Figure 2: Availability of the National School Re-entry Policy Guidelines in Schools



Source: Field data, 2024

As shown in figure 2, majority of the class teachers and teacher counselors indicated that the National School re-entry policy guidelines were not readily available in their respective schools. Only one in each category of teachers indicated that they were available. This means that in most of the secondary schools, National School Re-entry policy guidelines are missing and therefore teachers and counsellors may have a challenge in implementing them.

The respondents were given several statements and asked to indicate the extent to which the different aspects of school re-entry policy guidelines were implemented in the school. For the purposes of interpreting the mean, the following key was adopted; 1- Not at all, 2- To some extent, 3-To a very large extent, 4-completely. The responses are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Extent to which School Re-Entry Policy Guidelines are implemented in the school

Statements	Class Teachers		Teacher Counselors	
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.
Sensitization of learners, and teen mothers in particular, on children’s rights and protection.	2.66	0.57	2.33	1.527
Re-admission of Teen Mothers after delivery.	3.00	1.00	3.33	0.577
Sensitization of the teachers on teen mothers’ responsive curriculum and pedagogy.	2.33	1.15	2.33	1.527
Transforming the school to be a teen mothers responsive teaching and learning environment	2.66	1.52	2.33	1.527
Recovery of missed lessons to facilitate progression of teen mothers	2.33	1.52	1.66	1.154
Pregnant students and teen mothers are put on Guidance and Counseling and referral for appropriate services	3.00	1.00	2.66	1.154

Pregnant girls and teen mothers have access to age-appropriate reproductive health services such as antenatal care.	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00
Pregnant girls are allowed to remain in school as long as possible.	3.33	0.57	3.66	0.577
Sensitization of the parents on importance of Girl child education and reentry policy guidelines.	3.33	1.15	2.33	1.527
Average Score	2.84	1.053	2.62	1.174

Source: Field data, 2024

As shown in Table 1, majority of the school re-entry policy guidelines had an average mean score of 2.84 for the class teachers and 2.62 for the teacher counsellors. This implied that the sensitization of learners, and teen mothers in particular, on children's rights and protection, sensitization of the teachers on teen mothers' responsive curriculum and pedagogy, Transforming the school to be a teen mothers responsive teaching and learning environment, Recovery of missed lessons to facilitate progression of teen mothers, Pregnant students and teen mothers are put on Guidance and Counselling and referral for appropriate services, and Sensitization of the parents on importance of Girl child education and re-entry policy guidelines had been implemented in the secondary schools to some extent. On the other hand, school re-entry policies such as Re-admission of Teen Mothers after delivery (Class Teachers' mean=3.00, Teacher Counsellors Mean=3.33), pregnant girls and teen mothers having access to age-appropriate reproductive health services such as antenatal care (mean for both class teachers and teacher counsellors=3.00), and pregnant girls being allowed to remain in school as long as possible had a mean score of 3.33 and above. This implies that such policies had been implemented in the respective secondary schools to a very large extent.

As a means of the evaluator's triangulation, the document analysis guide used indicated that no records existed in the schools to support the teachers' nor the teen mothers' participation in any sensitization on the re-entry guidelines. Moreover, the evaluator could not verify the availability of a copy of the re-entry guidelines in any of the schools. As observed by Imbosa, Majanga and Ouda (2022), this finding has implications on the effectiveness of the implementation of the school re-entry guidelines. In the absence of the policy document with clear guidelines would lead teachers to ad-hoc measures in their response to learner dropouts. Similarly, the finding that the expectant students are retained in school as long as possible (class teachers' mean= 3.33, Teacher Counsellors Mean=3.66) confirm earlier findings by HEART (2015) in Homabay County and by Imbosa et al. (2022) in Vihiga County. This is in total contrast to the studies done in other African Countries (including Morocco, Tanzania and Sudan among others) in which expectant students and teen Mothers are excluded completely from their studies (Akwilapo, 2016 as cited by Imbosa et al., 2022). However, as Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2021) notes, both Tanzania and Sierra Leone are now reversing their discriminatory policies to reaffirm pregnant girls and adolescent mothers' right to education.

According to Muthikwa's (2017) research on the topic of adolescent mothers in secondary schools and the implementation of re-entry policy guidelines, the guidelines at the time were vague about how to identify pregnant girls enrolled in school and how long they should be absent from class before and after giving birth. Section 3.2(5) of the revised national school re-entry rules makes it more apparent what to do in the event that a student learner learns she is pregnant while enrolled in school. This is why the

educators have officially authorized the students to stay in school for as long as they can.

The Principals' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

The view of the principals in regards to the effective implementation of the school re-entry policy guidelines in school was examined. First, they were asked to explain how the policy guidelines assisted the school in addressing gender issues in education. In response, all the principals (P1, P2, P3) indicated that the policy had enabled them as a school to give opportunity to more girls to pursue their education. This increased literacy among female. In addition, another principal stated that the policy guided its implementation, outlined the roles for each stakeholder, and spelt out the steps to be followed in readmitting students/learners. On the contrary, one of the principals reported that:

It is not very effective. Since the policy does not address the challenges the students have on the ground for example in terms of lack of fees; the student cannot be received back if he/she has not paid (P1 31/01, 2024).

The principals were further asked to explain the extent to which they thought the re-entry policy guidelines were effectively addressing issues affecting student teen mothers in their education. They all responded that the policy guidelines were effective to some extent because it gave the students a second chance. In fact, one of them reported that:

At least for the teen mothers, the policy gives them another opportunity to get back to school which was never the case before. In fact, before the policy, the students would go for early marriage but today they can deliver and come back to school. (P1, 2024)

The principals further gave their thoughts on what should be done to make the re-entry policy guidelines implemented in the school more beneficial to girls. Some of their thoughts included developing and strengthening support group for such learners in schools, offering free medical support for teen mothers and their children, developing a databank for teenage mothers, providing scholarships to those students from humble backgrounds, and creating awareness on policy to parents, BOM, ministry of interior employees, and churches. One principal stated that since some of the students stay off from going back to the same school, assisting them to go to a different school of same level would be beneficial.

Lastly, the principals also highlighted the role of the members of the BOM in the implementation of the re-entry policy guidelines. The roles as highlighted by the principals included ensuring that there is a hundred percent transition, providing guidance and counselling to such students so that they fit well, ensuring that there are good standards in the school so as to facilitate high retention value, sponsoring needy students where possible, and sensitizing learners on good morals and discipline so that they can complete without dropping out. It was also said by one of the principals that the BOM helps with student admissions, creates re-entry policies and guidelines, tracks re-entry policy participants' progress, and makes sure that students have access to referral, health, legal, and psychological services.

It is to be noted that the Principal is the institutional manager and the Secretary to the School's Board of Management. As such, the Principal is the implementer of all Government policies on behalf of the BOM. The measure of the effectiveness of the implementation of the guidelines has implication on the principal's effectiveness. Their function is important. School officials, especially head teachers, have shown skepticism over readmitting young moms or allowing pregnant females to remain on campus, as

indicated by many research (Birungi et al., 2015; Mutua et al., 2019). These individuals hold the belief that such actions reflect poorly on the school. This attitude should change among principals if they have to effectively implement the 2020 school reentry policy guidelines.

The Parents/Guardians' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

The parents/guardians from various schools were also queried on the successful execution of the school re-entry policy guidelines during the focus group talks. Initially, all individuals (P/G 1-7) unanimously agreed that the adoption of the re-entry policy guidelines effectively addressed the educational challenges faced by adolescent mothers in the county. However, in FGD3, one of the parents explained that despite the policy being effective in addressing education issues such as supporting the rights of teen pregnancy and childbirth, there was need for more steps to be taken to actively ensure they can continue their education. In response to the education issues affecting teen mothers that have not been captured or adequately addressed by the policy, the parents in the various FGD's highlighted the following: Unavailability of child care which makes returning to and focusing on education to be a challenge, unavailability of facilities such as the breastfeeding areas that can ensure teen mothers can handle their re-entry and unavailability of family members to provide child care.

According to a research conducted by Karimi (2015), the education of adolescent moms is mostly influenced and controlled by their parents, particularly their dads. Based on her statement, parents would use their daughter's pregnancy as a pretext to arrange her marriage. This aligns with the results of the present research, which focused on young moms from the Maasai community. The only females that are academically bright are the ones whose parents are driven to pursue their education (Karimi, 2015). In order to successfully execute the 2020 reentry policy guidelines, it is important to adequately address the attitudes of the parents.

The Board of Management responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

Within the school management, the chairpersons in the Board of Management (B.O.M) were also interviewed and views solicited on the effective implementation of the re-entry policy guidelines in the school. In response to the issues experienced by teen mothers in the school, one of the chairpersons indicated that the issues included stigmatization hence discrimination by peers, stress leading to isolation, low self-esteem and financial constraints to meet their needs and those of their kids. Another B.O.M reported that:

I envisage issues of stigma of pregnancy, maybe discrimination, challenges of coping with learning and being an expectant mother. However, this has not come to my attention implying two things i.e. either the teen mothers have blended in well and are normal or as can be they studying well or the BOM is disconnected with such realities as teen pregnancy regrettable. (BOM 2, 2024)

Regarding the adequacy of the policy in addressing the gender issues being experienced, it was reported that it was adequate. This is because there were guidance and counselling sessions offered by teachers, to both the affected students and the rest. This created understanding among the students as well as enhanced good relationship among them. On the contrary, one of the BOM reported that:

The guidelines have not consciously been brought to the attention of the BOM, neither have they

been an agenda item in meetings. However, the chief principal has brought to my attention that the girls are kept in school as long as possible and are taken for antenatal checks (BOM 2, 2024).

Regarding the role of members of BOM in addressing education issues of teen mothers in the school, it was reported that the roles included being very conversant with the re-entry guidelines and giving oversight for effective implementation of the re-entry guidelines; ensuring the school unpacks the national guidelines to fit in the school environment and unique circumstances, ensuring the learners are not discriminated against but have appropriate support to be healthy and have access to antenatal clinics, counselling services, monitoring the pregnancy in case they need more medical attention that what the school can offer or in emergencies; ensuring both the affected learners and their peers are consulted so that they support the teen mother. The BOM should therefore ensure a strong guidance and counselling department/team is in school in addition to an experienced school nurse or clinical officer. Additionally, other roles as highlighted by the BOM included ensuring involvement of parents and guardians in the welfare of the students especially in such cases where the affected students may be persons with disability (PWD), more attention should be given to the student, facilitating discussion/awareness of status of teen pregnancies as part of the agenda of BOM meetings to ensure compliance to the re-entry guidelines; ensuring that there is an inclusive environment in the school that accommodates all students, and ensuring that a strong counselling and guidance department is established to take care of the student's affairs.

While there was still lack of sensitization of the BOMs on the re-entry guidelines, the Board of Management Chairpersons seem to have understood their roles on matters touching on the teen mothers. However, from the document analysis, no specific agenda from the various BOM meetings addressed matters of teen pregnancy and motherhood. This is despite the fact of widespread phenomenon of teenage pregnancy and motherhood.

The Chiefs' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

From the interviews, the chiefs' views on issues affecting girls' access to education in the sub location were examined. They reported that the issues experienced by girls included early marriage, early pregnancy, poverty, lack of understanding the importance of education, informal settlements and day schooling, lack of mentors and mentorship, and lack of basic needs. In further examining whether the issues affecting teen mothers have been addressed by the school re-entry policy, a few said yes whereas others indicated that it had not effectively addressed. This was due to increased prevalence of poverty, lack of role models and poor management of properties.

Whereas one of the chiefs had no response on the reasons why teen motherhood issues in education are effectively addressed by the re-entry policy guidelines, the other chiefs indicated that teen mothers need to attend seminars and workshops to get new knowledge, the policy assisted the girls to continue and complete education, and they also got bursaries in the process.

Regarding the preparation of chiefs in the sub county for the implementation of school re-entry policy guidelines, majority of them indicated that they were not prepared whereas only a few were prepared. Those who were prepared indicated that it was part of their duty to implement government policy, and the chiefs were key stakeholders in the community.

The chiefs also stated that their roles in ensuring the schools are effectively implementing the school re-entry policy guidelines included enquiring who led the girl dropping out hence fining the culprit so that girl can continue with education, looking and connecting girls with role models to talk to them, forming groups of dropout for mentorship, conducting monitoring practices for those pupils/students that have not gone to school, conducting 'barazas' every month, giving bursary, and visiting both school and homes.

The Chiefs serve as representatives of the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, and their primary responsibility is to implement all laws pertaining to re-entry standards. The intricate circumstances surrounding the adoption of the re-entry standards need a consistent approach to their enforcement. The issues in these situations revolve around criminal acts such as child maltreatment, unlawful female genital mutilation (FGM), and early marriages. In order to successfully execute the recommendations for the school re-entry policy, it is necessary to demand stringent measures from the Ministry of Interior. Based on the research titled "Implementation of the 'Return to School' Policy for Teenage Mothers in Kenya: A Rights-Based Perspective," Mutua, Miriti & Mogeni (2019) discovered that young mothers discontinue their education to give birth and assume caregiving responsibilities, but teenage dads continue their education, so perpetuating social norms that unfairly burden women. The implementation of the policy must be applied to all individuals involved.

The Education Officers' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

According to the Education Officers, the issues affecting girls' access to education in the sub-county include early marriages, pregnancies, poverty/inability to fund schooling, inadequate day schools (accessibility), and FGM practices. Regarding whether these issues are effectively addressed by the school re-entry policy guidelines, one of the officers indicated that it was effectively addressed because the students are able to re-join any time and government funds them through NEMIS whereas another officer disagreed by indicating that the issues that prevailed before the event such culture and poverty may not have changed. In supporting their reasons, the officers indicated that there are no referral mechanisms, documentation and data is not prioritized, and follow up procedures are abstract. On the positive note, one of the officers indicated that there was less stigmatization for teen mothers in schools, principals/heads are supportive in all cases, and stakeholders are generally sensitized. Additionally, it was reported that learners are allowed to attend classes and receive GOK funding like the other learners do.

Regarding how the teachers in the sub-county were prepared for the implementation of the school re-entry policy guidelines, the officers indicated that the re-entry policy is well articulated in schools, all students are readmitted whenever they seek admission and counselling teachers often pick up and support them. It was also added that the teachers were prepared through policy dissemination and announcement by field officers in B.O.M and other stakeholders meetings. Regarding whether teachers are effectively implementing these guidelines, the officers indicated that teachers support the implementation of the re-entry policy. On the other hand, it was also observed from the officers that schools over-enrolled and teachers overwhelmed. The teachers have tried through there're myriad of challenges ranging from cultural and communal i.e. those who have given birth are supposed to be married off. Additionally, it was reported that teachers partially implemented the guidelines because only the affected learners and

parents are at the care of ensuring access.

The education officers further explained that the role of CDE/SCDE in ensuring that schools are effectively implementing the school re-entry policy guidelines included ensuring that teachers (head) appreciate the policy and the directives from government, teachers are flexible on the needs of such social cases, facilitating capacity building through dissemination of policy position and guidelines in stakeholders' meetings and forums, and making follow on cases in the sub county. Another role was doing spot check to ensure that no learner in this category is denied access to education. While the officers indicate preparedness of the teachers and schools to implement the guidelines, the evaluator could not access any document as a confirmation to the dissemination workshops or seminars for teachers by the education officers. By corroboration, the class and counsellor teachers were unequivocal in stating that they had not had any sensitization sessions from the education officers.

This discovery helps to reinforce the School Re-entry rules, which say that the Ministry of Education is the primary duty and obligation to execute the rules. This discovery serves to strengthen the findings of the previous discovery. All other ministries and agencies that are engaged in the implementation of the rules should do so in collaboration with the policies and guidelines established by the Ministry of Education, which includes the Basic Education Act (BEA), which entered into force in 2013. According to sections 28 and 30 of the Basic Education Act of 2013, every child in Kenya is entitled to receive elementary education that is both free and required. The adoption of the 2020 School Re-entry Guidelines is an example of a legal framework that may be used to facilitate the enforcement of the right to education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is the only organization that is capable of carrying out this responsibility with the highest care and attention.

The Teen Mothers' responses on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the School Re-entry Guidelines

The perspectives of adolescent moms about the efficacy of implementing school re-entry policies were also assessed. Regarding the question of whether students in the school have been educated about children's rights and protection, students in FGD 1 and 2 said that their respective schools have conducted sensitization programs on policy via history lectures and advice and counselling. However, in FGD 3, the teen mothers reported that there had been no sensitization on the children's rights and protection. Regarding the duration that expectant students are allowed to be in the school before being released to go home in expectation of delivery, majority of the teen mothers indicated 8 months whereas other indicated immediately or until when the student made a request. On the other hand, a few of the students were not aware.

When asked to indicate how long student teen mothers in their respective school take, after delivery, before coming back to continue their studies, majority of the teen mothers indicated that it was dependent on their family or the student herself. In the discussions, the teen mothers also gave their views on how other students in the school received back the teen mothers who have come back after delivery. From the responses, there were some varied views. This is whereby, whereas a majority indicated that the other students were positive, receptive and very happy to receive their colleagues back, others indicated the opposite. They noted that other students were a bit difficult, none-supportive and there was mixed reception. This could be a contributory factor for stigmatization among some of the teen mothers. The teen mothers also gave their experiences of how the teachers handle those who came back to school after

delivery. From the experiences, a majority of the teen mothers reported that the teachers were welcoming and encouraging. However, in one of the schools, the teen mothers indicated that the teachers behaved just like the other students by not being supportive and discouraging. Regarding whether there are extra lessons/ remedial given to teen mothers by teachers to recover the missed lessons they lost when they were out of school, all the teen mothers who participated in the focus group discussions reported that there are no extra lessons. Only one of the teen mothers indicated that this depended with the subject teacher. This could be posing a challenge to the teen mothers to catch-up with their fellow colleagues.

Regarding whether the student teen mothers in the school have specific organized Guidance and Counselling sessions after they re-enter school, majority reported that there were no specific organized groups. However, in some occasions, the students took up the initiative to create such groups by themselves. Moreover, in various occasions the guidance and counselling sessions were for all students. The teen mothers also gave their comments on how student mothers are assisted in the school to receive health related services such as ante-natal care. In response, they reported that assistance given was by being allowed to go to the nearest health care facilities. Additionally, it was also noted that the matron played a key role in supporting the teen mothers to have access to medication based on their training. Another teen mother explained that they were not aware of any healthcare services provided by the institution whereas another teen mother also highlighted that the school did not provide any specific health service.

The teen mothers also explained from their experience how parents/guardians are supporting the expectant girls and teen mothers at home and in school. From the experiences, there mixed reactions. This is whereby some of the teen mothers explained that the support they received as teen mothers included being provided with balanced diet, school fees paid, school visitation, taken to clinic, reduction of labour, and provision of child care. Additionally, some of the parents/guardians were encouraging and supportive to their children. However, other teen mothers indicated that they received little or no support. Regarding whether there are conditions (things that must be done) that expectant students must meet before being admitted back to school after delivery, the teen mothers indicated that they were either not aware or there were no conditions. Only one of the teen mothers highlighted that they were needed to pay extra fee.

This finding shows how the Kenyan reentry policy guidelines differ from other regional countries. Unlike the Namibian and other African Countries (HRW, 2018), the burden and responsibility of handling of the re-entered teen mothers is given to other stakeholders other than the teen mothers. The realization is that the circumstances of teenage moms need a proactive response that can only be executed by the adults and officials who are involved with these young mothers who have left school. According to Sulo, Nyang'au & Chang'ach (2014), the desire of young mothers to return to school plays a significant role in the successful implementation of the re-entry policy.

1.8 Summary

From the respondents in this evaluation study, several factors are noted which continue to affect the effective implementation of the school re-entry policy guidelines, namely: lack of structured dissemination of the guidelines and sensitization of the relevant stakeholders and critical policy actors which greatly affects the guidelines awareness; non-availability of the copies of policy guidelines in schools; and the persistent stigmatization of the readmitted students. Lack of specific guidance and counseling sessions for the re-entered learners was also found to hamper the effective implementation by making the learning environment less responsive to issues affecting

teen mothers and other school dropouts. High poverty levels in the families of the affected learners continue to push such learners away from school. While health related services were found to be adequately implemented, these negative factors brought to the fore the question of the re-entry guidelines to adequately address the menace of school dropouts.

1.9 Conclusions and Recommendations

From this formative evaluation, several conclusions are made. Regarding how effective the school re-entry policy guidelines for teen mothers are being implemented in Kajiado County, this study concludes that the policy has been averagely implemented within the secondary schools in Kajiado County. In addition, the effective implementation of the policy is affected by lack of sensitization, awareness and role models within the region. Moreover, majority of the schools do not have the school re-entry policy guidelines and this shows a significant gap in the actualization of the policy within the secondary schools. Issues of school drop outs and their reentry back to school demand deliberate steps and actions in law enforcement. A program that encourages parental involvement and empowerment should be implemented in any school environment. Having a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that is both robust and efficient is very necessary. To effectively address the various challenges facing the implementation of the re-entry guidelines intentional collaboration of all stakeholders is recommended.

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