



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL™
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

**THE EFFECTS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY ON THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH SCHOOL**

By

SHIVANI RUTHAN

216049639

**Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree in Master of
Education in the Department of Educational Psychology**

School of Education

at

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus

Pinetown

Supervisor: MRS S NDINISA

NOVEMBER 2023

DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in the Graduate Programme in Educational Psychology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus.

I, SHIVANI RUTHAN, declare that;

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written, but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet unless specifically acknowledged, and the source is detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signature:

MISS S RUTHAN

MRS S NDINISA

13/11/2023

DATE

30/11/2023

DATE

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to the most important people in my life: My family. Without your encouragement, patience, guidance, and motivation, I would not be accomplishing such greatness and achieving my goals today. Each one of you hold a dear place in my heart.

“Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice, and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do” – Pele.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Undertaking this research project was a huge endeavour, and I am grateful for the assistance and support I received throughout this journey. There are many people I wish to thank for their collaboration, co-operation, advice, insights, critiques, and support. Completing my Master's degree in Educational Psychology has demanded time, perseverance, and hard work; however, it has been achieved.

The following is an expression of my gratitude and sincere appreciation.

1. First and foremost, I would like to praise and thank God, who has granted me countless blessings, endless knowledge, courage and determination, allowing me the ability to accomplish and complete my independent research project.
2. I want to thank my supervisor, Mrs S Ndinisa, for her dedicated support, guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback during this study. Mrs Ndinisa continuously encouraged me, and she was always willing and enthusiastic to assist me in any way that she could throughout the research project. Thank you so much!
3. I want to thank my significant half, Parish Singh, for his patience, unconditional love and support throughout the long days and tough nights. Thank you for your continuous words of encouragement and motivation. I could not have come this far without you cheering me on. You are loved and appreciated!
4. To my nephew Sharav Dehaloo, you have been my greatest motivation throughout this research. You are the light in my life and the apple of my eye.
5. I want to thank my dad, mum, sister and brother in law for their wise counsel, sympathetic ear, and continuous wise words of wisdom. You have always been there for me, you have motivated me and you have always given me words of encouragement on my hardest days, which I will forever hold close to my heart.
6. My friends and colleagues who have held my hand and supported me through my journey and who have encouraged me to reach for my dreams.

ABSTRACT

Teenage pregnancy remains a social phenomenon globally and, to date, is on a constant rise. Approximately five per cent of females aged 14 to 19 years old in South Africa stated that they were going through different stages of pregnancy within the last 12 months. Based on this information, it is evident that teenage pregnancy is a largely increasing phenomenon. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to establish the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.

The study was conducted in a High School in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal. The chosen research design uses a case study methodology which was used to understand complex situations while evaluating how people respond. This researched used the interpretivist paradigm where meaning was created rather than found. The chosen research approach was the used of qualitative data whereby a more realistic view of the world was obtained. The researcher purposefully selected four participants to conduct research who were high school teachers at the chosen school. The researcher used interviews and questionnaires as the chosen data generation methods to collect information. The researcher gained insight into how teenage pregnancy affects academic performance through these two data collection methods mentioned above. The chosen data analysis was the use of thematic data analysis. Themes and sub-themes were constructed giving the reader a comprehensive view of the data that was derived. The study's results showed the emergence of various themes that posed as common occurrences of teenage pregnancy. The researcher then further elaborated on the maintenance of trustworthiness and the ethical considerations that were adhered to.

The chosen framework to analysis this research was Urie Bronfrenbrenner's ecological theory which was used in order to explore the various systems of influence that surround teenage mothers and the effect that they have on their academic performance. The results showed that teenage pregnancy affects teenagers academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally. Teenage pregnancy impacts learners' capabilities in the classroom and, therefore, limits their potential as individuals, with emphasis put on their academic performance. Teachers feel unequipped to handle a teenage pregnancy within their classroom and they often feel like a teenage learner causes disturbances and distractions in the classroom. The researcher provided various recommendations for schools, for healthcare, for policy makers and for the community.

Keywords: Academic performance, Preventative methods, Teenage pregnancy

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 – Theme and subthemes45

Table 4.2 – Participants’ Biographical Information.....46

ACRONYMS

CAPS – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

COVID-19 – Coronavirus disease of 2019

DBE – Department of Basic Education

EFA – Education for all

GBV – Gender Based Violence

HIV / AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

STD – Sexually transmitted disease

STI – Sexually transmitted infection

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

WHO – World Health Organization

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRELIMINARY PAGES

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
ACROYNMS	vi

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1	Introduction.....	1
1.2	Background to the study.....	1-2
1.3	Purpose and rationale of the study.....	2
1.3.1	Purpose of the study.....	2-3
1.3.2	Rationale of the study.....	3-4
1.4	Problem statement.....	4
1.5	Research objectives.....	4
1.6	Key research questions.....	5
1.7	Location of the study.....	5
1.8	Significance of the study.....	5-6
1.9	Key terminology used within this study.....	6
1.10	Synopsis of theoretical framework.....	Error!
Bookmark not defined.		
1.11	Synopsis of research design and methodology.....	7

1.11.1	Research design.....	7
1.11.2	Research Paradigm.....	7
1.11.3	Research approach.....	7
1.11.4	Sampling and selection of participants.....	8
1.11.5	Data generation methods.....	8
1.11.6	Data analysis.....	8
1.12	Trustworthiness.....	8
1.13	Ethical issues.....	9
1.14	Overview of the study.....	9-10
1.15	Summary.....	10

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction.....	11
2.2	Literature review and its use in this study.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.-12
2.3	Teenage pregnancy – a global threat.....	12-13
2.4	Prevalence of teenage pregnancy and academic performance.....	13-15
2.5	Social and economic factors contributing to teenage pregnancy.....	15-17
2.6	Impacts of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a high school.....	17-19
2.7	Teachers’ views of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.....	19-21

2.8	Importance of sex education in preventing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school.....	21-23
2.9	Policies and documents on teenage pregnancy.....	23-25
2.10	Theoretical framework.....	25
2.10.1	Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory.....	26-27
2.10.1.1.	Microsystem.....	28
2.10.1.2.	Mesosystem.....	28-29
2.10.1.3.	Exosystem.....	29
2.10.1.4.	Macrosystem.....	29-30
2.10.1.5.	Chronosystem.....	30
2.10.2	The suitability of Bronfenbrenner’s theory to this study.....	30-31
2.10.3	Limitations of the theory.....	31-32
2.11	Summary.....	32-33

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction.....	334
3.2	Research paradigm.....	34-36
3.3	Research methodological design.....	36-37
3.3.1.	Case study design	37
3.4	Research approach	37-39
3.5	Data generation methods.....	39
3.7.1	Questionnaires.....	39

3.7.2	Interviews.....	40
3.8	Data analysis.....	40-42
3.9	Research sampling.....	42
3.10	Maintenance of trustworthiness.....	Error!
	Bookmark not defined.	43
3.10.1	Credibility.....	43
3.10.2	Dependability.....	43
3.10.3	Confirmability.....	43-44
3.10.4	Transferability.....	44
3.11	Ethical considerations.....	44-45
3.12	Summary.....	45

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1	Introduction.....	46
4.2	Themes and sub-themes.....	47
	Table 4.1.....	47-48
4.2.1	Biographical information of participants	Error!
	Bookmark not defined.	
	Table 4.2.....	49
4.3	Data analysis by themes.....	49
4.3.1	Theme 1: Decline of academic performance.....	49-52
4.3.2	Theme 2: Lack of information on sexual health.....	52-54

4.3.3	Theme 3: Gender-based violence.....	54-56
4.3.4	Theme 4: Participating in sexual activities while intoxicated.....	56-59
4.3.5	Theme 5: Psychosocial challenges such as poverty.....	59-61
4.3.6	Theme 6: School-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy	61-63
4.3.7.	Theme 7: Teachers' views on teenage pregnancy.....	63-66
4.3.8.	Theme 8: Impacts of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic performance	66-68
4.3.9.	Theme 9: Struggles a teenage mother faces	68-69
4.3.10.	Theme 10: Physical or emotional changes witnessed in a learners' pregnancy	69-70
4.4	Summary.....	70

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1	Introduction.....	71
5.2	Summary of findings.....	71-73
5.3	Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory with research findings....	73
5.3	Recommendations for schools.....	73-75
5.4	Recommendations for healthcare.....	76
5.5	Recommendations for policy makers.....	76
5.6	Recommendations for the community.....	76-77
5.7	Suggestions for further research.....	77

5.8	Limitations.....	77-78
5.9	Conclusion.....	78-79

REFERENCES.....	80-99
-----------------	-------

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Protocol - Ethical Clearance from UKZN	100
Appendix 2: Protocol - Permission to conduct research from DOE	101
Appendix 3: Information and consent letter - Principal	102-103
Appendix 4: Information and consent letter - Participants	104-105
Appendix 5: Instrument - Questionnaire	106-108
Appendix 6: Instrument - Interview questions	109
Appendix 7: Protocol - Turn it in report	110
Appendix 8: Protocol - Letter from the editor	111

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This report presents a study on the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school. The chapter introduces a brief background to this study, giving the reader insight into the chosen psychosocial phenomenon and how this factor affects South African learners' academic performance and capabilities in the classroom. In this chapter, a description of the location, purpose and rationale are presented, followed by the research objectives linking to the fundamental key questions that guide the research. This chapter includes limitations and concludes with an overview of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Teenage pregnancies refer to children aged 10-19 years of age who are unmarried and are still attending school. Teenage pregnancy is a major challenge that South Africa is faced with and poses a major health and academic problem. According to Kanku and Mash (2010), several detrimental effects occur to both the mother and father. For example, increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs), decreased self-esteem, economic and financial burden, and an increased chance of dropping out of school, resulting in a high unemployment rate in the country but, most importantly, the decline in a learner's academic performance before, during and after their pregnancy. According to Maemeko, Nkengbeza and Chokomosi (2018), teenage moms are unlikely to finish their high school education syllabus, resulting in dropouts or decreased academic performance. When learners drop out of school, it limits their earning potential, which, as a result, creates a circle of impoverishment. It is said that many mothers' educational careers come to an end with the birth of a child.

According to Jonas et al. (2016), teenage pregnancy has social consequences, such as perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Teenage pregnancy in South Africa contributes to many factors, such as poverty, gender inequality, substance abuse and a decline in academic performance. According to eNCA (2023), there are concerns regarding the high number of teenage pregnancies in South Africa. In 2023, approximately two thousand babies were born on New Year's Day, and out of those 2000 babies, over 100 of them were born by teenage mothers, which poses as a major concern to the increasing rates of teenage pregnancy in the

country. Early pregnancy has an impact on a learner's scholastic, health, social, and economic prospects, claims Pillay (2023). It may prevent them from finishing their schooling and going on to pursue further training and education. This proves that teenage pregnancy is on a constant rise with numerous social, physical and emotional effects on the individual's wellbeing.

According to Matlala, Nolte and Temane (2014), the research found that teachers prohibited pregnant learners from attending school as they believed that school was not the place for pregnant learners. Teachers stated that they were not equipped with the necessary equipment to meet learners' health and medical needs. Manyathi (2014) agrees with Matlala et al. (2014) in stating that teachers have no guidelines on how to handle a pregnant teenager in the classroom.

Teachers are faced with a diverse group of learners who come from various backgrounds, each with their own social or economic problems. According to Ramalepa, Ramukumba and Masala-Chokwe (2021) teachers must know how to handle the problems that may arise in classrooms, as well as effective methods and ways to respond to them. In South Africa, several learners in schools are inundated by numerous psychosocial challenges that adversely affect their well-being and their teaching and learning environment (Dlamini, 2014). "The contextual challenges that learners undergo include poor living settings without basic utilities, poverty, school violence, domestic violence, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy" (Muribwathoho, 2015, p.9). The focus of this research is on the effects of teenage pregnancy on a learner's life, academics as well and social well-being.

1.3 Purpose and rationale of the study

1.3.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of teenage pregnancy on a learner's academic performance within a South African high school whilst gaining an understanding of how a teen mother's emotional and physical well-being is being impacted. According to Gwala (2022), teenage pregnancy remains a fundamental crisis within South African youth, and it is evident that over the years, there has been a significant increase. This, therefore, calls for greater measures to be implemented in an effort to prevent this psychosocial phenomenon from affecting future generations. According to Rumulumo and Pitsoe (2013), the school's management team must develop strategies and skills to eliminate this ongoing problem within schools. In addition, the purpose of this study was to provide insight into the limitations that

teenage mothers and teachers face. Therefore, this study aimed to provide proposed ways to gain an understanding of how this psychosocial factor halts learners' academic performance in the classroom and their personal growth and development within a South African classroom.

1.3.2 Rationale of the study

From my experience in the education profession, teachers, parents, families, and society have a lack of understanding of teenage pregnancies since many have misconceptions about females behaving promiscuously and being open to sexual intercourse willingly when this is not necessarily the case. After speaking to various colleagues in and out of schools, they had very similar experiences as many of their learners suffered academically and had a decrease in self-esteem after various psychosocial factors that they were faced with. Many fail to realize that learners who have been raped and those with unplanned pregnancies due to a lack of information and parental support also need to be considered. Studies demonstrated that other teachers can relate to this by affirming that "South African teachers are not sufficiently equipped to address psychosocial challenges that they encounter in under-resourced contexts among learners, which impact negatively on learning and teaching" (Lesley and Lukas, 2016. p. 18).

From a professional stance as an educator, this prompted me to delve deeper into the experiences of learners nowadays in relation to teenage pregnancy and how this affects the academic performance of learners.

In 2021, a well-mannered and academically inclined learner whom I taught fell pregnant. She was a bold and confident learner however, after falling pregnant this had changed. Hereafter I immediately sensed a lower self-esteem, self-confidence. isolation from other learners and a significant decrease in her academic performance. I noticed this learner chose to always sit at the back of the class and dreaded going out to break. During her break, she spent most of her time in the toilet alone. Her circle of friends decreased, and she chose to "hide" herself behind other learners in the classroom or hide herself during break. She struggled with the syllabus as she was absent frequently and constantly fell behind with her work.

She was unable to complete homework or tasks timeously as she was constantly fatigued and suffered the side effects of a teenage pregnancy. Upon a consultation with this learner, she stated that she felt embarrassed and often suicide crossed her mind. She felt disgusted with herself for what she had done, and she worried about being able to take care of the baby as she

was still a teenager and still in school. She stated that her family, peers, and society judged her for falling pregnant as they passed comments about her practicing unsafe sex and that she deserved what happened to her.

Despite the challenges that this learner faced she completed her Matric in 2021. She used her negative encounters to better herself as an individual and upon giving birth to a healthy baby girl, she returned to school to complete her studies. Here, I was driven and motivated to pursue my study on teenage pregnancy as a psychosocial factor and how teenage pregnancy impacts academic performance and how this contributes to ineffective teaching and learning in the South African classroom. In my opinion, your self-worth is not what someone believes you to be, you are stronger than you believe without any limitations but your own mind. Free yourself from a cruel society and rise above teenage pregnancies.

1.4 Problem statement

According to Gwala (2022), teenage pregnancy remains a fundamental crisis within South African youth. Over the years, there has been a significant increase in teenage pregnancies. This, therefore, calls for greater measures to be implemented in an effort to prevent this psychosocial phenomenon from affecting future generations. According to Rumulumo and Pitsoe (2013), the school's management team must develop strategies and skills to eliminate this ongoing problem within schools. In addition, the purpose of this study was to provide insight into the limitations that teenage mothers and teachers face. Therefore, this study aimed to provide proposed ways to gain an understanding of how this psychosocial factor halts learners' academic performance in the classroom and their personal growth and development within a South African context.

1.5 Research objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Understand teachers' views on the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.
2. Explore the impact of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.
3. Explore the use of preventative methods in reducing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school.

1.6 Key research questions

The key questions that guided the achievement of the research objectives were:

1. What are teachers' perspectives of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school?
2. How does teenage pregnancy affect the academic performance of learners in a South African high school?
3. Why is it important to educate learners about using preventative methods that are available when addressing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school?

1.7 Location of the study

This study was conducted at New Drive High School in Durban, South Africa. A pseudonym was used to protect the identity and information of the school. This school is richly diverse as students come from different ethnic groups and many African countries with different backgrounds. It consists of approximately 1200 learners ranging from Grade 8 up to Grade 12 and approximately 40 staff members, which include teachers, admin, and general assistants. New Drive High School is a quintile three school. The environment and surrounding of the school consist of a vibrant and dynamic community with many resources available. However, many learners travel from impoverishment areas.

This is a school that historically has a high number of teenage pregnancies therefore, this was an ideal place to conduct a study of this nature. The school consisted of predominately African learners followed by Indian learners, then Coloured learners and lastly White learners. This school has minimal facilities, with a small computer room, a hall, and a large sports field. During the time of conducting this study, the researcher chose participants who previously had pregnant learners in their classrooms, or who currently have pregnant learners in their classrooms to participate in this study.

1.8 Significance of the study

The significance of conducting this research is to investigate the effects that teenage pregnancy has on the academic performance of learners in a South African High School. It is also aimed at understanding the consequences that teenage pregnancy has on the academic, social, mental and emotional well-being of teenagers. This research was aimed at finding, understanding and

addressing the underlying problems behind teenage pregnancy while underlying the multiple causes of this phenomenon. Educators at secondary schools will acquire knowledge on how to handle the behavioural problems related to teenage pregnancy. The authorities and policy-makers in the Department of Education may use information derived from this study to come up with policies to address the phenomenon called teenage pregnancy. The results of this study may also be used by the researchers as a baseline study for future studies in the area.

1.9. Key terminology used within this study

Academic performance	According to Tadese (2022), a learner’s performance can be assessed after the completion of various academic subjects within a schooling year.
Teenager	According to WHO (2011), a teenager can be defined as the transition between childhood and adulthood occurring from the ages of 10 to 19 who can be described using the term “adolescent.”
Teenage pregnancy	Kanku et al. (2010) state that teenage pregnancy occurs when underage girls, usually between the ages of 13-19, become pregnant while still attending school.
South African High School	A school in South Africa that consists of students in Grade 8 to Grade 12.

1.10. Synopsis of Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study was Urie Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory. The researcher used Urie Bronfenbrenner’s theory to underpin the research study on the exploration of the psychosocial factors that affect learners’ academic performance in a South African High School. According to Smith (2013), using Bronfenbrenner's theory, five systems affect an adolescent mother's academic achievement. These are the microsystem, the

mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. These systems pay attention to how a child develops in response to the interactions that make up their surroundings, and they pay attention to a learner's development within the context of relationships that form their environment. This is the reason why this specific theory was chosen for this study. A further elaboration of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and its relation to teenage pregnancy will be further explained in Chapter 3.

1.11 Synopsis of research design and methodology

1.11.1 Research design

The chosen research design uses case study methodology. Using case study methodology in research allows an in-depth exploration of complex problems that arise in real-life settings. This type of research is used to obtain in-depth information about a phenomenon in a real-life context (Crowe et al., 2011).

1.11.2 Research Paradigm

The interpretivist paradigm was used in this study. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.22), "a research paradigm is key in research as it provides a particular worldview that defines the research carried out". A paradigm consists of philosophical components such as ontology, epistemology, and methodology, which will be further explained in Chapter 4 of this study. The research paradigm chosen for this study is the interpretive paradigm. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that the interpretivist paradigm is conducted in a naturalistic setting, where meaning is created rather than found. As a result, the interpretivist paradigm's main goal is to improve our comprehension of the subjective realm of human experience (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

1.11.3 Research approach

According to Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger (2020), to generate data that is rich, in-depth and comprehensive, a specific approach must be used in research. The primary research approach for this study which examines the impact of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic achievement in a South African high school uses the qualitative approach. Since the qualitative approach highlights how reality is socially constructed, it has been chosen as the preferred

approach. Using this approach, a more realistic view of the world can be obtained, which can be further understood and discussed in Chapter 4.

1.11.4 Sampling and selection of participants

Purposive sampling for this research was used, where participants were chosen on the basis of their judgement as to their possession of the particular characteristics being sought (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The sample consisted of four participants who had experienced an adolescent pregnancy in their classroom. The four chosen participants were teachers at the school where research was conducted. The four chosen participants were high school teachers and taught Grade 8 – Grade 12. These participants were purposefully selected on the basis of their experiences of having or had pregnant learners in their classrooms. I included participants who had experience with teenage pregnancy in their teaching career and I excluded teachers who did not have information or experiences of dealing with a teenage pregnant learner in their classrooms.

1.11.5 Data generation methods

I used interviews and questionnaires as the chosen data generation methods to collect information. I used structured, open-ended questions to conduct the interview which allowed for a direct response. Participants were interviewed individually and questionnaires were also administered individually. This was done to ensure confidentiality.

1.11.6 Data analysis

Thematic data analysis was chosen for this study. According to Kiger & Varpio (2020), themes were constructed patterns or meanings that are derived from data that answers the research question. Themes may comprise subthemes, which, therefore, gives the reader a comprehensive view of data that is derived from patterns. They are vital in analysing data as I was able to identify patterns and causes of the phenomenon at hand.

1.12 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is supported by comprehensive depictions of authentic data, which would reflect the participants' involvement in the study. "Qualitative data requires trustworthiness of the data, which suggests using concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability" (Bertram et al., 2014, p. 190-192). This is discussed in Chapter 3.

1.13 Ethical issues

According to Resnik (2020), ethics focuses on disciplines that define the study, which provides standards of conduct in research. Ethics must be considered before completing research. First and foremost, permission was sought from the Department of Education. After that, permission was sought from the school's gatekeeper/principal. This was then followed by an application for ethical clearance through the Research Information Management system (RIG) at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

According to Gordon & Prohaska (2006), it is of utmost importance that participants have the choice to remain or withdraw from a study willingly. The participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences on their part. The identity of the participants was kept anonymous by using pseudonyms. No participants were harmed or deceived.

1.14 Overview of the study

This research consists of 5 chapters. The chapters are presented as follows:

Chapter 1:

This chapter is an introduction to the study. It provides us insight into what the study entails. The background of the study has already been discussed. It further discusses the location of the study, the purpose and rationale of the study, the key research objectives and questions emphasizing the chosen psychosocial factor – teenage pregnancy and how this factor affects academic performance within a South African classroom. The theoretical framework, methodology, trustworthiness and ethical issues will briefly be explained in this chapter; however, this will be extended in the following chapters.

Chapter 2:

This chapter consists of the literature regarding and relating to teenage pregnancy while focusing on the academic performance of learners in a South African school. It will give us a thorough understanding of the key issues regarding academic performance and teenage pregnancy. This chapter will also focus on the theoretical framework, mainly with the use of Urie Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory of development. This theory contains core elements and an understanding of concepts relevant to this research paper.

Chapter 3:

This chapter highlights the research method that will be used, followed by the research paradigm, the research approach as well as the methodology of the research and the method that analyses data generation. The research samples of the proposal will be discussed further.

Chapter 4:

This chapter represents the data which was collected using questionnaires and interviews. Participants will answer the questionnaires on the page. I asked participants interview questions and transcribed them verbatim.

Chapter 5:

This chapter serves as a concluding chapter of the study, where a summary of the findings was acknowledged. Recommendations of the study were highlighted, and an overall conclusion for this research was embarked on.

1.15 Summary

This chapter has provided the reader with an introduction to the study, a basic background of the study, the purpose and rationale for this study, as well as the research questions and research objectives. This chapter has also provided the reader with an overview of the study. The following chapter will present the literature review in the form of field research that was used to conduct this study, as well as the theoretical framework that was used to frame this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, an introduction and background on the study were presented whereby the reader gained insight about the chosen psychosocial phenomenon while understanding how this chosen phenomenon affects learners' academic performance in the classroom. I included a synopsis of the chosen theoretical framework as well as a synopsis of the chosen research design and methodology. In this chapter, the focal point is on the literature review which aims to give the reader a greater understanding of the research topic. The chosen theoretical framework uses Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which underpin the research study on the exploration of the psychosocial factors that affect learners' academic performance in a South African High School.

2.2. Literature review and its use in this study

According to Cantero (2019) a literature review is imperative in research as it demonstrates the researcher's ability to conduct research while showing expertise on a chosen topic. A literature review assists the reader in understanding the thesis better and makes the author more credible and reliable. Using literature in research reviews published material that is available on a particular topic. It uses the research questions to synthesize and evaluate information and evaluates the ideas of others on the given topic. This in turn allows the reader to know what is being said about the topic and what gaps have been identified.

This research was driven through the use of journal articles, books, dissertations, thesis and online websites. Through the use of literature used to drive the study, there have been themes and subthemes that have been developed as a result of literature that was navigated. The themes will be listed below and the subthemes will be further discussed in Chapter 4 of this study. The themes are:

- Decline of academic performance
- Lack of information on teenage pregnancy
- Gender-based violence
- Participating in sexual activities while intoxicated

- Psychosocial challenges
- School-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy
- Teachers' views on teenage pregnancy
- Impacts of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic performance
- Struggles a teenage mother face

2.3 Teenage pregnancy – a global threat

Ramulumo et al. (2013) have revealed that, following a period of gradual reduction, the birth rate among teenagers has increased. They estimated that teenage pregnancies in first-world countries are significantly higher compared to third-world countries, falling into millions. According to BMJ (2002) countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have an increasing rate of teenage pregnancy because they are poorly prepared for a modern and sexualised society. These results are overwhelming with the intention that a first world country may provide more education and contraceptive methods in comparison to a third world country. Countries like Brazil, Turkey, and the United States have seen a significant increase in teenage pregnancy proving that this phenomenon is a global and social problem that affects both developing and developed countries. WHO (2008) argues that teenage pregnancies predominantly occur in less developed countries because of impoverished social backgrounds. However, Ramulumo et al. (2013) showed that even in developed countries, birth rates are almost the same as in developing countries. Most recent studies have shown that the lack of information on sex and teenage pregnancy is at its lowest, as Life Orientation in schools is not taken seriously both nationally and internationally (Ntsoane et al., 2015).

Ramulumo (2014) states that years of study on the factors of teenage pregnancy rendered poverty, peer pressure and exposure to abuse and traditional beliefs the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy. This influences the social well-being, personal development and academic performance of teenage mothers.

With continuous research underway, teenage pregnancy is posing to be a challenge globally. Teenage pregnancy may occur in developing countries for different reasons than that of developed countries. Some of the reasons for an increased rate of teenage pregnancy in first world countries included: lack of liberal attitudes towards sex, female nudity, extent of nudity on public beaches, sales of sexually explicit literature, and media advertising of condoms

(Jones, Forrest, Goldman, Henshaw, Lincoln, Rosoff & Wuff, 2018). Jones et al (2018) believes that there are various methods of contraception available however, learners are unaware of how to use them or because they are not easily accessible. Contraceptives are also very expensive and, in many households, parents are less open to talk about sexual matters therefore the topic of contraceptives never occurs in conversations. Some of the reasons for an increased rate of teenage pregnancy in third world countries included: poverty, substance abuse, gender-based violence, lack of information, HIV, sexual abuse and rape. It can be seen that teenage pregnancy is a global phenomenon, and evidently the individual is at risk.

2.4 Prevalence of teenage pregnancy and academic performance

According to Mchunu (2012), research conducted in South Africa shows that in 2020, 19.2% of girls encountered a teenage pregnancy, and 5.8% of men had impregnated a girl when they were between the ages of 12-19 years old. 16.2% of women were said to have “unwanted” pregnancies and 6.7% of girls had terminated their pregnancies. 74.1% of participants stated that their pregnancies were unwanted, yet only 6.8% of them terminated their pregnancies. 58.5% of young women claimed that they never attended a clinic and that they were not informed of the various contraceptive methods available. They also claimed that they had a lack of knowledge as parents and teachers, in many cases, did not educate them about teenage pregnancy. Studies show that 74.1% of teenagers fell pregnant due to a lack of knowledge, whereas 55% fell pregnant as they were unaware of the risks involved (Mchunu, 2012). According to Newman (2018), 82% of teen pregnancies are unplanned. These statistics are a major concern in South Africa as teenagers are practising unsafe sex due to a lack of guidance and knowledge and being unaware of the risks involved, along with the consequences that each parent will have to face locally within South Africa.

The global average of 44 births per 1,000 women in the same age range is far lower than the rate of teenage pregnancy (Mashele, 2023). It has been stated that, across all provinces in South Africa, 90,037 females aged between 10 and 19 gave birth between March 2021 and April 2022. According to Nkosi (2019), across South Africa, teenage pregnancy results in teenage mothers ending their schooling careers. Approximately only 1 in 3 teenage mothers return to school after their pregnancies. This plays a massive role in the individual’s life as they limit their employment opportunities, contribute to the unemployment rate in the country and restrict personal growth and development. Nkosi (2019) states that the longer a teenage mother takes to return to school, the less likely she will ever pursue her education. According to Gongala et

al (2023), it is evident that teenage pregnancy has an unfavourable and harmful effect on pregnant mothers' academic performance as they miss out on schoolwork and, as a result, they do not perform well, and they struggle to keep up with the school syllabus, they are constantly fatigued and are unable to concentrate in class.

South Africa is known to have one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy globally, with one out of four girls falling pregnant before the age of 20 (WHO, 2023). In February 2023, which was pregnancy awareness week, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South Africa was in the spotlight. According to the World Health Organisation (2023), the high prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South Africa could be attributed to a lack of sexual education and contraception, poverty and a lack of access to healthcare, and cultural or societal attitudes towards sex. To eliminate these alarming rates, Murray (2015) believes that a multifaceted approach must be implemented along with the provision of comprehensive sex education within schooling environments.

According to Kamer (2021), as of 2019, approximately 5% of females aged 14 to 19 years in South Africa stated that they were going through different stages of pregnancy within the last 12 months. The prevalence of pregnancy increased with age; according to News and Press Release (2021), Gauteng, which is South Africa's most popular province, claims that the number of learners born to teenage mothers has increased by 60% since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Bhengu (2021), more than 23,000 girls under 18 years of age gave birth between April 2020 and March 2021, of which 934 girls were aged between 10 and 14 years of age while over 19,000 were delivered by those between the ages of 15 and 19, compared to 14,577 girls aged 19 and under having babies in the same period a year earlier. Statistics show that 2,976 girls between the ages of 10 and 19 decided to terminate their pregnancies, which is an indication that the global COVID-19 pandemic has caused multiple irreversible setbacks for girls in the schooling environment worldwide.

According to Magubane (2021), Basic Minister of Education Angie Motshekga stated that the increase in the number of teenage pregnancies is not confined to Gauteng alone but instead is a national crisis. Teenage pregnancy remains a serious social and health problem in South Africa. It poses a health risk to both mother and the learner, and it also has social consequences such as continuing the cycle of poverty, life-threatening health complications for both the mother and the baby, an academic decline and early school dropout, which South Africa is

fighting hard to reduce. Angie Motshekga believes that South Africans must act together as this phenomenon threatens the country.

According to KDHS (2014), a lack of knowledge about sexual health and family planning has led to one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in Kenya, which sits at 22% in comparison to the average, which sits at 18%. 2020 proved to be a difficult year due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, an astonishing 1380 babies were delivered from teenage mothers during this year. According to Worku et al. (2021), teenage pregnancy is a major health and social problem locally and internationally in both developed and developing countries. Approximately 25% of teenage girls have fallen pregnant globally, and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Africa is 18.8%. Globally, an estimated 3.9 million teenage mothers experience unsafe abortions, which contribute to the highest maternal mortality and morbidity.

2.5 Social and economic factors contributing to teenage pregnancy

Socio-economic status is a combination of different aspects derived from people's daily activities, social economic status, education, and occupation are the backbone of community development. It works parallel to upbringing; socially constructed behaviours affect the development of a healthy, well-being and mentally fit teenager (Francois, 2015). According to Francois (2015) the income status of a teenager's family plays a massive role in adolescent pregnancy, as most teenagers are unemployed and depend on their parent's financial incomes as they are unable to raise a child on their own.

One's understanding of psychosocial factors may differ from individual to individual. However, the word "psychosocial" was appropriately described by UNICEF as a close connection between the psychological components of an individual's experiences, such as their ideas, emotions and behaviour, with broader social experiences, such as relationships, traditions, and culture. Hence, in the context of this study, psychosocial factors refer to the problems or barriers that describe learners' development in relation to their interaction with the social environment. This study will use the terms teenager and adolescent interchangeably.

According to Makua (2022), several socio-economic factors contribute to high teenage pregnancy, such as poverty, early marriage, gender-based violence (GBV), lack of agency or autonomy over their bodies, substance abuse and, inadequate sexual and reproductive information coupled with misconceptions around contraceptives. Makua (2022) states that risks associated with teenage pregnancy can affect both the mother and the new-born child.

There is an increased risk of pre-term birth, low birth weight, and neonatal death in children. Mothers also suffer postpartum depression and are less likely to initiate breastfeeding.

Due to maternal complications, the survival rates of babies are significantly lower than an adult pregnancy. Hence, the teenage mother is forced to take on an adult role that they are often not emotionally or physically prepared for. According to Mchunu, Peltzar, Tushana and Seultwadi (2012), 55% of respondents in their study became pregnant because they were unaware of the risks associated with teenage pregnancy, and more than half of the female respondents (74.1%) fell pregnant due to a lack of knowledge. 71.2% of female respondents were either unaware of risks associated with unprotected sexual activity or did not comprehend how pregnancy occurs, which may account for the high rate of unintended pregnancies.

Mashele (2023) believes that pregnancy among teenagers in South Africa is a phenomenon that is rapidly increasing at an alarming rate. There are various contributing factors, such as sexual assault, that teenagers are exposed to. Mashele (2023) suggested that experts implement measures by the department of education whereby sex education programmes become available for boys and girls. According to Mashele (2023), gender inequality poses a significant cause of teenage pregnancy both domestically and internationally. Gender inequality imbalance is derived from societal institutions of socialisation, for example, cultures and traditions whereby the male becomes empowered, and the female is not empowered. Often, girls are pressured into sexual activity while expected to be conservative, whereby boys are indoctrinated from an early age to explore their sexuality.

According to Mashele (2023), another contributing factor is the absence of knowledge about crucial sex education. Sex education must be taught to learners from an early age since laws state that the use of contraceptives can be used at an early age, starting from 12. Sexual abuse has a major contribution to unintended and unplanned teenage pregnancies. According to Ajayi (2020) unintended pregnancies has detrimental consequences on the health and social wellbeing of teenage girls. Teenagers are often persuaded into sex and hence are forced to have sex without a condom to prevent being abused which then results in pregnancy.

Social media, modern lifestyles, and peer pressure often pressure girls into trying new substances such as alcohol and drugs. Substance abuse weakens the mind, making teenagers more intrepid and curious. Teenagers are easily persuaded into making hasty decisions when

they are intoxicated. Peer pressure in schools play a fundamental role in schools today as teenagers want to fit in hence experimental with substances.

2.6 Impacts of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in high schools

There are numerous psychosocial challenges that learners experience. However, this study focuses on how teenage pregnancy affects learners' academic performance in a South African High school. Teenage pregnancy, child-headed households, child sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS are what were identified by Swahn et al. (2022) as the most common psychosocial factors in a South African context. These were derived from the study, personal experiences and observation from an educator, which can be concluded that the academic performance of learners is directly affected. According to Gustafsson et al. (2007), in South Africa, teenage pregnancies are prevalent. In South Africa, a few of the elements that contribute to teenage pregnancy include:

- Poverty,
- lack of information on sexual health and responsibility in preventing pregnancy (lack of parental support),
- gender-based violence and gender inequalities
- HIV/AIDS
- peer pressure to engage in sexual activity to “fit in”,
- sexual abuse and rape,
- teenagers being married to blood relatives and
- adolescent sexual behaviour that may be influenced by substance abuse.

Pregnancy and parenting are not uncommon among school-going individuals in South Africa, and therefore, it is of paramount importance to explore the psychosocial experiences of teenage mothers. “Teenage pregnancy is a major concern that impacts the psychosocial development of learners during schooling years” (Dlamini, 2014, p.10). A study conducted by Molapo (2011) indicated that learners are scared and embarrassed to face or approach their teachers because of their big stomachs, often resulting in them dropping out of school, leading to a higher dropout rate within the country. Teenage mothers experience great difficulty in meeting their educational, physical, emotional, and financial needs before, during and after their pregnancy. Despite girls legally being allowed to attend school during and after pregnancy in

South Africa, they are often confronted by the humiliation of teachers and peers in a schooling environment. This leads to absenteeism, loss of content knowledge and an overall lower academic performance (Pogoy et al., 2014).

According to Salehi et al. (2017), the World Health Organisation (WHO) view “social well-being as an important dimension of health along with physical and mental aspects.” Social well-being plays a pivotal role in social performance and overall well-being while enhancing a higher quality of life. The academic achievement of a student is negatively impacted by teenage pregnancy as they miss vital work in the classroom and, as a result, fall back on the syllabus, which they are often unable to catch up on.

Maemeko et al. (2018) state that teenage pregnancy is a serious issue that negatively impacts the future of learners. According to Maemeko et al. (2018), one of the major issues that teenage pregnancy has on learners is school drop-out or interrupted schooling and school adjustment difficulties. Teenage mothers battle with the completion of schoolwork and syllabi as they are mothers first and scholars second. Other challenges associated with teenage pregnancy are “dual responsibilities, poor physical and mental health, reduction in educational attainment, self-hate and neglect, social isolation, reduced self-esteem and low-class performance.” When learners fall pregnant, they miss vital work in the classroom, adding to truancy due to the side effects of their pregnancy, such as exhaustion. Learners who are academically inclined start failing after falling pregnant as the focus shifts from academics onto the new-born baby.

According to Du Preez et al. (2019), teenage pregnancy has an overall negative effect on the learners as they lack the skills needed to care for a new-born. Teenage pregnancy is a cause for great health concern as it can lead to serious, even life-threatening, conditions in these young mothers (Ben-Joseph, 2017). Pregnancy-induced hypertension, diabetes, placenta abruption and premature births are more common among teenagers than among adult women.

The bodies of these teens who fall pregnant are not fully developed to carry a child and, as a result, are faced with sombre health complications. Maemeko et al. (2018) state that teachers reported that a learner's academic performance can be compared before and after pregnancy. There is often a massive difference before and during their pregnancy as they tend to miss out on much schoolwork such as lesson development and crucial information for examinations, unable to complete homework and unable to study for standardised tests due to the side effects of their pregnancies. Closer to the pregnant mother's labour date, she tends to be exhausted in

discomfort, and as a result, truancy occurs. It is important to remember that not every pregnant teenager drops out of school; it purely depends on a learner's intellectual ability.

According to Kate et al. (2012, p. 11-15), the following spoken quotations bolster the concerns raised above derived from different teachers:

“Learners perform very poorly because pregnancy is a hell lot of job on itself. I had an experience whereby a learner was brilliant in class before she fell pregnant; immediately, when she was in that situation, everything changed completely.”

“Teenage mothers start developing negative attitudes toward their schoolwork whereby they will start thinking about the responsibility of their kids and start forgetting about their future. Expecting teenage mothers will be left behind with their schoolwork by the time they are on maternity leave. To add on the impacts of teenage pregnancy, expecting mothers end with school dropout because of the fear of embarrassment from their classmates.”

Teenage pregnancy influences students' academic achievement as they perform badly during and after the pregnancy in comparison to before the pregnancy. Kate et al. (2012) state that there is a vast difference between the results of teenagers who are mothers and between teenagers who are not.

2.7 Teachers' views of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in high schools

In a study by Matlala et al. (2014), teachers prohibited pregnant learners from attending school as they believed that school was not the place for pregnant learners. The teachers stated that they were not equipped with the necessary equipment to meet learner's health and medical needs. Some schools ignored a pregnant learner and therefore disregarded the situation. According to Mason (2022), teachers had a negative attitude towards pregnant learners and even neglected these learners until they dropped out of school. Manyathi (2014) agrees with Matlala et al. (2014) in stating that teachers have no guidelines on how to handle a pregnant teenager in the classroom. Manyathi (2014) also states that schools are not providing youth empowerment, which develops self-confidence and promotes acceptable behaviour in society. Numerous teachers believe that parents criticise teachers when they teach their learners about the importance of practising safe sex and sexuality in the classroom during Life Orientation lessons.

Ramalepa et al. (2021) conducted a study in Pretoria, Gauteng which aimed at exploring and describing the perceptions of teachers regarding pregnancy of school learners. The findings of his studies suggested that despite being against teenage pregnancy, teachers become more concerned with the educational success of pregnant learners. Ramalepa et al. (2021) states that teenage pregnancy is viewed as a threat to teachers, other scholars and the school environment collectively as they feel inadequately equipped to deal with pregnant learners.

According to Ramalepa et al. (2021), teachers believe that teenage pregnancy disrupts learning, resulting in a higher dropout rate and absenteeism. Some teenage mothers did not come back to school after giving birth, which therefore contributes to the higher unemployment rate and poverty rate within South Africa. Teachers felt that they were forced to leave their classes due to “emergencies” that took place relating to the teenage mother, resulting in disruption and poor educational attainment among learners.

According to Ramalepa et al. (2021, p. 3-7), these were some of the responses from teachers interviewed:

“In one of my classes, Grade 12 B, I had a learner who was pregnant and last week, the whole of last week when we re-opened, she was not here; the problem is that most of the time, they are absent from school.”

“All the learners that I said were pregnant at my former school just dropped out of school.”

“Teenage pregnancy influences teaching negatively because we are not empowered as teachers, we are not work-shopped, and we have never been trained to deal with this situation.”

Based on these naturalistic experiences, it is evident that teachers who have pregnant teenagers in their classes are faced with numerous challenges as they feel that teenage pregnancy is a threat to teaching and learning. Learners return to school depending on their socioeconomic status, such as family support or the ability to afford childcare services. Teachers believed that prior to the 1994 democracy, rules and regulations regarding teenage pregnancy were strict in comparison to the current laws. In the early 1900’s teenage pregnancy was seen as taboo and a disagreement to the family hence the cases of teenage pregnancy were not as high as compared to the 2000’s. According to Barnes (2013), alcohol and drugs was not as accessible as they are today and peer pressure was the rare case. School principals were very strict and there were sever consequences for wrong acts being committed. According to Favier and Greenberg (2018), abortion was legalised in South Africa in 1996. Since the implementation

of this law, there has been a significant increase in teenage pregnancy in the country as there are often untrained nurses that conduct the procedure which leads to deaths of the mother as well. Favier and Greenberg (2018) believe that despite abortion being legalised, legal abortions face a lack of accessible information on where and how to obtain information on abortion along with illegal procedures. They believe that prior to 1994, the cases of teenage pregnancy were significantly lower in comparison to the increasing rates today.

2.8 Importance of sex education in preventing teenage pregnancy in high schools

Teenage pregnancy affects learners world-wide. A prevention method would be for sex education to be taught during their Life Orientation lessons to ensure that learners are aware of what teenage pregnancy is, how it affects their academic performance, their self-esteem, and its consequences, along with numerous contraceptives and information that can be used to prevent teenage pregnancy from occurring. According to Hendricks & Tanga (2016), Life Orientation is a compulsory learning area in South Africa which is prescribed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), aimed as a substitute for guidance and counselling. According to Munyai, Makhando, Ramathuba & Lebese (2023) despite the educational systems promoting responsible sexual behaviour in the classroom, this is often not reiterated at home as many parents consider sex a sensitive topic to speak about. Teachers play an imperative role in curbing the increasing rate of teenage pregnancy as they can educate learners about this global phenomenon by using the curriculum and by ensuring that learners are aware of the various factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy, such as health factors (Du Preez, Botha, Rabie & Manyathi, 2019). Teachers need to take a greater responsibility towards the seriousness of Life Skills education in South Africa.

Teachers can assist the problem by teaching sex education in the classroom, and when it is spoken of, learners can contribute to the lesson by asking questions and gaining knowledge on situations that they were previously unaware of. During Life Orientation lessons, teachers must discuss various contraceptive methods and how they can be used to prevent pregnancies from happening (Hendricks & Tanga, 2016). Life Orientation is a compulsory learning area in South Africa which is prescribed by the DBE. This course is aimed as a substitute for guidance and counselling learners who are facing psychosocial challenges, as well as equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to confront challenges that they may encounter as adults.

In a schooling environment, Life Orientation teachers must ensure that they transmit knowledge about sex education to these learners, as learners have inquisitive minds that want to know about many social issues but are unable to approach these topics in their homes. Inexperienced teachers on the subject of sex sometimes feel uncomfortable sharing such knowledge, and hence, learners are disadvantaged and, therefore, develop their misconceptions (Morrell, 2013). Research by (Morell, 2013) states that teachers feel uneasy discussing this topic as it is often viewed as taboo and they feel that if it is commonly discussed in a schooling environment, teachers “encourage” the topic and students tend to use this to their advantage. Lower academic performance is immediately identified when a teenager falls pregnant as the focus of academics is shifted to the pregnancy and, after that, the new-born child. In this stage, the learner’s academic performance is affected and, as a result, has a long-term effect on the development of the teenage mother and her academic performance in the classroom, which in most cases results in a dropout or the inability to complete her schooling career.

Learners’ lack of knowledge about contraceptives and pregnancy contributes to the increasing rates of teenage pregnancy in South Africa (Jonas et al., 2016). With this being said, teachers must emphasize that using contraceptives does not mean that a girl will not fall pregnant, as a contraceptive is considered a safer option than merely practising unsafe sex. According to Draga and Gcilitshana (2019), the availability of condoms and other contraceptives in schools has seen sexually active teenagers practice safe sexual intercourse, eliminating the splurge of teenage pregnancies, HIV and STIs. Having these contraceptives available to learners encourages learners to practice safe sex.

According to Connery, Albright and Rodolico (2018), substance abuse among teenagers is one of the major concerns that promote and increase teenage pregnancies. Binge drinking, smoking marijuana and taking drugs such as heroin and cocaine make teenagers delusional, hence the inability of not being in the right state of mind. Teachers, parents, and the community play a vital role in reducing substance abuse as teachers can assist the problem by educating learners and guiding them about the effects and lifelong dangers of substance abuse. Parents can monitor their children and ensure that they instil morals and values, and lastly, the community can provide support by creating neighbourhood support groups whereby elders, victims and religious organizations can create awareness. Early prevention eliminates substance abuse, which will, therefore, prevent consequences such as teenage pregnancies from occurring.

According to Okeke, Idriss-Wheeler and Yaya (2022), since the splurge of the COVID-19 pandemic, gender-based violence and gender inequalities have increased drastically, which in turn has increased teenage pregnancy and unemployment rates in South Africa. A prevention method would be creating awareness so that both men and women know their rights and they can stand up for themselves.

Poverty contributes to teenage pregnancy as in many areas, having children at an early age is not recommended as it perpetuates the cycle of poverty as the teenager is often unemployed the inability to return to school due to mother responsibilities (Garwood et al., 2016). A prevention method would be educating learners while conducting seminars in those areas to change their mindset and allow them to speak up and not necessarily follow old traditions for both learners and the older generation. Since times have changed, it is vital to ensure that decisions that are made today, which are often influenced by external factors, are not the same as compared to 30 years ago. Teachers can assist by speaking to parents and family members and explaining the dangers of early teenage pregnancy.

2.9 Policies and documents on teenage pregnancy

According to the South African School's Act 84 of 1996 (DoE, 1996), schools must adopt a code of conduct for learners. Life Orientation is a compulsory learning area in South Africa, prescribed by the DBE: Department of Basic Education which is aimed as a substitute for guidance and counselling. According to Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements DBE (2011), schools are aimed at facilitating a holistic environment for all learners despite their psychosocial challenges. The purpose of Life Orientation in schools is to ensure that learners are exposed to vital information regarding their health and well-being to make informed decisions about their lives. This consists of a set of guidelines that establish the expected behaviour of students and respect for one another. This is one way of tackling the issue of teenage pregnancy and academics in a schooling environment.

According to the South African School Act (DoE, 1996), education is compulsory, and learners should be enrolled in school from the beginning of the year to the last day of the year or until the learner turns fifteen or enters the ninth grade, whichever comes first. Therefore, if a scholar falls pregnant while being in school, the school must cater for their needs until they are ready for labour. This act aims to protect learners by ensuring that no educator discriminates against any learner who falls pregnant or fails to respect their confidentiality. The Education white

paper 6 (2001) states that differences among teenage learners will not be tolerated as every learner is equal despite being pregnant. Unfairness towards these learners will not be tolerated.

According to the National policy on the prevention and management of learner pregnancy in schools (2018), learners have a right to basic education despite being pregnant or their post-pregnancy status. Learners have the right to non-discrimination, meaning that no person, school, policy or practice may unfairly discriminate against learners based on their pregnancy or post-pregnancy status. Learners have the right to healthcare services during and after pregnancy. Additionally, learners have the right to confidentiality regarding their health status. They have the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes the right to make decisions concerning pregnancy prevention or termination measures and healthcare services during or after pregnancy. They have the right to dignity, meaning that learners have the right to have their inherent dignity protected regardless of pregnancy status. This policy seeks to uphold the rights of learners as protected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).

According to UNESCO (1990), the Education for All (EFA) movement is a universal commitment to provide quality basic education for all learners, youth and adults. At the World Education Forum UNESCO (2000), 164 governments agreed to achieve EFA and identified six goals to be met. The following are the six EFA objectives:

- Goal 1:** Extending and enhancing all-inclusive early childhood education and care, particularly for the most marginalized and at-risk students.
- Goal 2:** Making sure that all learners, especially those who are female, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and are members of racial or ethnic minorities, have access to high-quality primary education that is both free and required.
- Goal 3:** Ensuring that equitable access to suitable learning and life skills programs satisfies the educational requirements of all adults and young people.
- Goal 4:** Achieving a 50% increase in adult literacy, particularly among women, and ensuring that all adults have equitable access to basic and continued education.

Goal 5: Attaining gender equality in education and eliminating gender differences in primary and secondary education, with a particular emphasis on guaranteeing females' complete and equal access to and success in high-quality basic education.

Goal 6: Enhancing all facets of educational quality and guaranteeing excellence for everyone, with the goal of achieving quantifiable learning results for all students, particularly in reading, math, and, most importantly, life skills (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

While EFA goal number 2 ensures that learners, particularly females, should have access to free compulsory education, the Department of Basic Education (2010) reports that teenage pregnancy constitutes a major reason for high school dropouts for girls. A study carried out by Gyan (2013) revealed that most teenage mothers had dropped out of school as pregnancy acts as a catalyst, especially for poor families. The policy mentioned above documents and accompanying initiatives have been developed to address some of the psychosocial challenges that learners are faced with.

2.10 Theoretical framework

According to George (2023), a theoretical framework can be used to review existing theories that serves as a roadmap for the development of the researcher's ideas. The researcher can use existing theories to support research, explain phenomena and draw connections. Sreekumar (2023) further goes on to say that theoretical framework supports and describes a theory. It is an important part of a dissertation as it defines a set of concepts, theories, ideas and assumptions that assist in understanding the specific phenomenon. A theoretical framework is considered a "borrowed" blueprint that researchers use to develop their own research thus proved to be significant in research.

Eco-systemic theory encompasses ideas from the ecological systems theory. The ecological framework is based on interdependence between different organisms and their environment (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002). The ecological theory by Bronfenbrenner was used in order to explore the various systems of influence that surround teenage mothers and the effect that they have on their academic performance. The ecological environment in which an individual lives consists of five environmental systems, namely the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chronosystem (Hook, 2002).

Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, the reader gained a better understanding of the theoretical framework, which focused on a theorist's understanding of specialised concepts that are relevant to this research. In Bronfenbrenner’s theory of human development, he illustrated that every individual belongs to an ecological environment. This environment is comprised of a set of systems which make up a concentric structure where each system surrounds the other. Bronfenbrenner was particularly interested in how an individual perceives their environment and not in the environment as it exists in objective reality (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory therefore assisted the reader in understanding the phenomenon using his five environmental systems and helped the reader analyse the research information.

Figure 2.1: Describes the interactions between individuals and their environments

Source: (Ma, 2023)

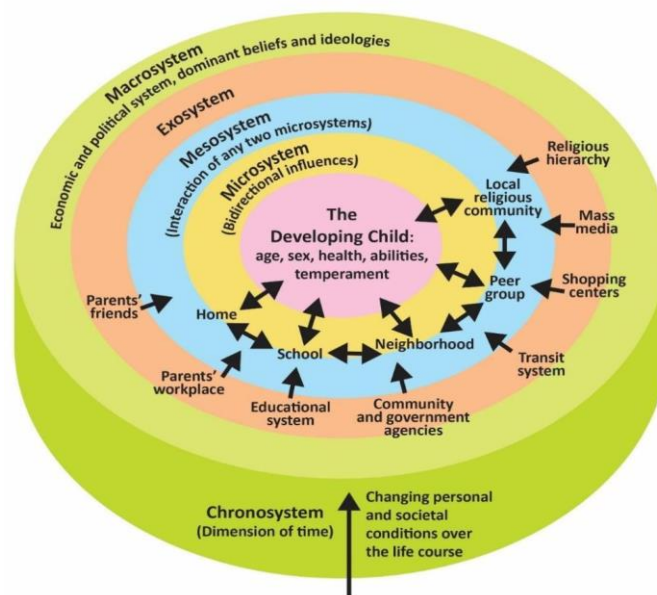


Figure 2.1 describes the interactions between individuals and their environments and how these complex relationships affect development over time. According to this model, many interconnected systems make up a person's environment that all interact to influence and shape how people grow and respond (Cherry, 2023).

2.10.1. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory

According to Zierten (2023), Urie Bronfenbrenner, born on the 29th of April 1917, is a Russian-born American psychologist best known for having developed the human ecology theory (the

ecological systems theory). According to Evans (2023), Bronfenbrenner received his bachelor's degree in 1938 and two years later received his master's degree in education. He graduated with a PhD in 1942 in developmental psychology. During World War 2, he served as a military psychologist, and later he became an assistant professor at the University of Michigan. He then moved to Cornell in 1948, where he became a professor of human development. According to Zierten (2023), Bronfenbrenner received national and international honours awards for his work and, hence, highly acknowledged in society.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 27), "human development is the process through which the growing person acquires a more extended, differentiated and valid conception of the ecological environment and becomes motivated and able to engage in activities that reveal the properties of, sustain, or restructure that environment at levels of similar or greater complexity in form and content." This means that while developing, learners will gain a better understanding of the choices they make and the consequences they must face after that, indicating how learners' immediate and surrounding environment affects the way in which they grow and develop.

According to Smith (2013), Bronfenbrenner's theory was used to establish the various systems that influence the academic performance of an adolescent mother. The five systems that makeup Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory are microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The ecological systems theory considers how a learner develops in response to the interactions that make up their surroundings. The theory adopted for this study is Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes how a learner develops in the context of the interactions that make up their environment. The interaction of the learner, their immediate family or school environment and society steers the learner's development. If changes or conflicts occur in a particular area of the learner's life, it creates a chain reaction whereby all other areas are affected.

There are various sub-systems which form the larger part of a system, hence creating interactions (Smith 2013). When studying a learner's development, not only does one look at their immediate environment but also their interaction with the larger environment (Berk 2013). According to Evans (2023), to understand and study a learner's development, the learner and their immediate environment must be investigated. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory follows a structure of the environment, each connected with the next. It was organised and connected in order to understand of the impact they have on a learner's life and development.

2.10.2. Microsystem

The first level of Bronfenbrenner's systems theory is called the microsystem, which can be linked to the immediate environment that surrounds the individual. This environment, their family, school, the community and any other face-to-face interaction, for example, affects the individual directly. Relationships at this level are bi-directional, whereby others can influence the learner in their environment. Relationships within this level are personal and, therefore, crucial for fostering and promoting healthy environments for the learner. The microsystem, according to Evans (2023), is the most influential level of the ecological systems theory, as this level relates to the learners immediate environmental setting.

The primary means of support include family as part of the microsystems. Since this system comprises a learners' immediate environmental setting, for example, activities the learner experiences and people whom the learner interacts with daily, microsystems have the greatest influence on a learners' development (Hartin & Williams, 2023). This system provides role expectations, values and morals. Parents play a role in their children's lives and become significant motivators. When learners have strong connections with parents at this level, it has a positive effect on the learner, and unaffectionate parents may have harmful effects on the learner in their system.

2.10.3. Mesosystem

The second layer is the mesosystem, which provides the interaction between the other systems of the learners' microsystem. For example, the communication between the learner, the teacher and parents or occurrences in a household may influence the learner's academics as often the learner is unable to concentrate or pay attention due to problems that may have occurred at home or outside the classroom (Berk, 2013). According to Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 25), "the transition from an immediate environment to a new setting means moving into the next system, which in this case is the mesosystem."

The mesosystem can be described as "interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates." Evans (2023) asserts that a learners' growth is positively impacted by a healthy relationship between parents and instructors as opposed to negatively impacted by a dysfunctional relationship, which would have the opposite effect. The concept of the mesosystem provides ways of expanding thoughts about social networks. According to Newman and Newman (2020), it is through related settings that people gain a

greater understanding of the norms and expectations for behaviours across settings. Within the system, social and instrumental support can be acquired by activating contacts across the system.

2.10.4. Exosystem

The third layer is the exosystem, which includes health systems and decisions made by school boards. It also includes parent workplace, government policies, media, the neighbourhood, school policies and social support systems. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 25), “this system does not directly affect the developing individual. However, each setting can contribute to decisions made by the parent”. This system does not directly involve the learner, but they can be influenced by it. This system may influence the microsystem indirectly. According to Evans (2023), this system incorporates formal and informal social structures which do not directly affect the learner but influence the learners directly. For example, parents' work-related stress can influence a learner when the parent misdirects this anger or frustration onto the learner. According to Drew (2022), despite this ecosystem being external to a child's immediate environment, it should not be removed with the perception of being distant.

2.10.5. Macrosystem

The fourth layer is the macrosystem, which comprises beliefs, culture, society, values, ideologies and norms, which are reflected within one's culture, religion, or socio-economic background. These play an essential part in learner's life and development in which the learner is raised. In society, teenage pregnancy is frowned upon, which, in most cases, creates a negative view. The macrosystem contributes to teenage pregnancy in schools due to cultural taboos placed on the conveying of sex education (Morrell, 2013). According to Newman et al. (2020), the macro system encompasses experiences by individuals or groups being a part of an environment and other components beyond physical surroundings.

According to Evans (2023), this system focuses on the cultural elements and how these elements affect a learner's development. Such elements include ethnicity, poverty and wealth, which can then be immersed within ideas and perspectives about life's happenings. For example, a learner living in a third-world country will experience a different development in comparison to a learner living in a first-world country. The macrosystem differs from other systems as it does not refer to or specify the specific environment of a developing learner, although the society and culture in which the learner is developing have already been

established. Drew (2022) agrees with Evans (2023) and states that the macrosystem can be related to a larger socio-cultural environment in which the learner grows up.

2.10.6. Chronosystem

The fifth and outermost layer is the chronosystem, which is the environmental events, transitions and cultural changes that occur throughout a learner's life. According to Main (2023), this system recognises that cultural and societal change over time can influence one's development. This depicts the element of time as it relates to the learner's environment, which is constantly changing, for example, the death of a parent or the physiological changes they may undergo as they mature and develop over time (Berk, 2013). According to Main (2023), the chronosystem focuses on shaping an individual's development. This system acknowledges influences such as historical events, personal experiences and life transitions that affect or contribute to one's development.

Main (2023) believes that while individuals progress through various stages of their lives, they encounter numerous challenges, ordeals and opportunities that shape their development. According to Vuuren and Silliams (2022), the chronosystem considers and accommodates major life events or transitions. It consists of environmental changes that occur throughout a learner's life, which can affect their decision-making processes and behaviour, which can either be negative or positive.

2.10.7. The suitability of Bronfenbrenner's theory to this study

The reason behind choosing Bronfenbrenner's theory to explain teenage pregnancy is the evidence that all systems affect the pregnant adolescent. The microsystem incorporates the learners and their most immediate interactions. Within this system, people who are frequently involved with the learner need to ensure that they are moulding the learner accordingly. For example, when learners reach a certain age, it is then those closest to the child, such as parents or teachers, who need to ensure that knowledge is passed on regarding sex education. Sex education begins at home, with parents educating their children on any form of sexual activity.

Within the mesosystem, interaction between the parents and the teacher is mandatory as the learner spends most of their time with these two systems. They must work together to devise a learning plan for the child who is pregnant. The school management teams cannot discourage learners from coming to school because of their pregnancy, as every child has the right to a basic

education. Parents also encourage this because many are embarrassed by their pregnant children and would rather have them locked away indoors than be seen. The South African Schools Act of 1996 protects those learners who are forced to stay at home because of their pregnancy.

Research by Waxman (2006) indicates that learners who become pregnant are misled and misinformed. Within the exosystem, parents who are absent from their children's lives and are constantly trying to make ends meet tend to forget that their children still need them. As a result, a lack of parental involvement is evident due to various reasons, such as parents working long hours and night shifts. Therefore, these learners sought information about sex from those who are more experienced, like friends or others in the community.

The macrosystem, which encompasses culture and educating learners on sexual practices, is seen as taboo. According to Francis (2012), in many schools, there is a culture of silence as it is taboo for discussions to occur as teachers may feel that talking about it will encourage the activity; hence, the topic is not spoken of. Teachers, after that, insist on abstinence rather than having to go into detail about sex and its consequences, as this is an unspoken topic.

With relation to the principles of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the ideal circumstances for optimum development and healthy adjustment occur when all systems are supportive of the individual. Adolescents need to be wary of the circumstances that are leading to teenage pregnancy and understand that, in many cases, it disadvantages the learner. The interaction of the learner, their immediate family or school environment and society fuels and steers the learner's development.

2.10.8. Limitations of the theory

According to Drew (2022), the ecological systems theory can be difficult to test empirically. Over the years, there have been multiple positive outcomes regarding the theory. However, often, it is not very clear that the application of the theory can solely cause outcomes. There are also systems within the theory, such as the chronosystem and the mesosystem, that remain vaguely explained, understood and defined. According to Guy-Evans (2023), there is insufficient evidence that learners are disadvantaged based on their environmental influences.

According to Taylor (2016), Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory does not cater for the complexity of the development of individuals and is universally applicable, which may be

difficult to apply in reality. Taylor (2016) also believes that the theory does not provide detailed mechanisms for development as one needs extensive knowledge and detail to build up developmental accounts of individuals. According to Elliot and Davis (2018), the model is critiqued as it disregards and ignores consideration of human nature connections.

According to Sallis et al. (2008), the model lacks specifics, and it does not include behaviour-specific factors; therefore, the theory is unable to provide clear hypotheses or intervention strategies. According to OpenLearn (2020) the ecological systems theory does not define the good or bad for learners. It can often be considered a snapshot model which does not readily convey changes over time. The theory also does not greatly show the weightlifting between several factors, such as when kids are raised in a poor setting (poverty-stricken background), and then, despite their environment, they still can achieve positive outcomes.

Despite these limitations, the theory was still applicable in this study because the ecological perspective assists in engaging with learners and their parents as it reflects realities, world-views and explanations of difficulties experienced. This theory looks at problems from various perspectives while considering the impact of family, community, and culture and finding solutions. This theory reminds the reader of a diverse and unique learner as well as the importance of keeping them at the heart of their work (OpenLearn, 2020). According to EssayBasics (2017) the ecological theory deals with living things derived from a natural environment in comparison to artificial isolation. The theory also highlights significant individual differences that are present during each learners' development which plays a fundamental role in understanding individual experiences.

2.11. Summary

This chapter presented various forms of literature relating to the chosen topic for this research. This chapter also emphasised the use of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which gave insight into teenage pregnancy and how this phenomenon affects learners' development in every stage of their lives. In tune with the principles of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the ideal circumstances for optimal development and healthy adjustment prevail when all systems are supportive of the individual.

It is of utmost importance to include prevalence as it highlights the severity of this psychosocial factor and its effects on South African learners' academic performance. Statistics indicate that teenage pregnancy is a growing phenomenon, and people are unaware of how serious teenage

pregnancy is on lives and educational capabilities. While the percentage of teenage pregnancy is rising, more female learners are dropping out of school and the greater the strain on all school management teams. Literature has proven that teenage pregnancy affects various other factors, such as academic performance and the emotional well-being of learners. It is vital to ensure that teenage men and women in South Africa are educated as they are the bearers of our future leaders.

Parents, teachers and the community must play an active role in the prevention of teenage pregnancy and ensure that there are intervention programs established to ensure this phenomenon does not occur. The ecological systems theory considers how a learner develops in response to the interactions that make up their surroundings. The interaction of the learner, their immediate family or school environment and society as a whole fuel and steers the learner's development. The next chapter will represent the research design and methodology as well as the research approach that was used to gather relevant data with the analysis of the academic performance of teenage mothers.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature derived from fieldwork research, which drew on extensive knowledge and statistics on teenage pregnancy and how this psychosocial factor affects learners' academic performance in a chosen South African high school. It also explored the theoretical framework that was used to guide this study. This chapter aims to discuss the research design, research paradigm, research approach and data generation methods. It further investigates the research style, relevant methodology used for the research, data analysis, the research sample, ethical considerations and lastly, trustworthiness.

3.2. Research paradigm

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.22), “a research paradigm is key in research as it provides a particular worldview that defines the research carried out.” Ulz (2023) agrees with Bertram (2014) and states that research paradigms refer to beliefs that underpin research. It provides guiding principles about what is most suitable for research and in which way research should be carried out. According to Keong, Husin and Kamarudin (2023) there are four main different types of paradigms that can be utilised according to the type of research being conducted. These paradigms are: positivism, realism, critical theory, and interpretivism. The chosen paradigm to conduct this research uses the interpretivism paradigm.

According to Keong et al (2023), a research paradigm guides research while giving insight into what is going to be researched within the study. Every paradigm has its own ontological, axiological, methodological, and epistemological assumptions that underpin it (Proofed, 2022).

According to Simons (2015), ontology is the study of existence. Ontology is the study of how we determine existence, along with the classification of existence. Ontology takes aspects that are abstract and determines whether they are real. It focuses on the nature of things, their cause and identity. According to Moon and Blackman (2017), ontology in research can assist researchers in recognizing the certainty of the nature and existence of the research topic, which can be related to the existence of reality. Using ontology in research allows for the study of “being” and the study of “what is” (Meem, 2020). Snape and Spencer (2003) define ontology

as the nature of the world and what there is to know about it. I was able to identify the fundamentals of each paradigm, as this ensures successful research (Snape et al., 2003). The chosen interpretivist approach is based on the relativist ontology, which can be defined as an approach that perceives reality derived from meanings and understandings on various levels (Scotland, 2012).

According to Blakeley (2023), epistemology is the study of knowledge acquisition while creating awareness of aspects of reality. It aims to determine the known and how it is, therefore, known. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), epistemology is how the world comes to know about something, which is based on knowledge, nature and how people become aware of certain things. It allowed me to broaden and extend knowledge within the respective field (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Epistemology aims to discover why minds relate to reality while determining the validation of how these relationships are known to be valid or invalid. Epistemology is required to determine the difference between the truth and false knowledge. Ahmed (2008) believes that epistemology provides a philosophical grounding on possible knowledge while ensuring accuracy. The chosen interpretivist approach is based on transactional or subjectivist epistemology, which indicates that people cannot be disconnected from their knowledge, which therefore indicates a link between myself and the research topic (Vanson, 2014).

Sujan (2023) defines a research paradigm as a pattern of belief relating to the research topic. Paradigms within research projects are imperative as they form the philosophical framework of the research. According to Nickerson (2023), the interpretivist approach emphasizes understanding a phenomenon from an individual's perspective. The central purpose of the interpretivist paradigm is to get an understanding of the subjective world of human experience (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The interpretivist paradigm allows participants to capture real-life experiences. According to Pervin and Mokhtar (2022), the term "interpretivism" refers to scenarios that highlight the importance of people's personalities in a social context. It also provides guiding principles about what is most suitable for research and in which way research should be carried out. "Within the interpretive paradigm, researchers do not aim to foresee what people will do but rather to describe and understand how people make sense of their worlds as well as make meaning of certain actions." (Bertram & Christiansen 2014, p.26).

According to Birt (2023), the naturalistic paradigm encourages observing participants in a more natural and comfortable environment in comparison to a clinical setting, which allows the

delivery of reliable research. Bhandari (2023) agrees with Birt (2023) in stating that using the naturalistic approach allows for research to be conducted in “real-world settings.” This paradigm encourages naturalistic research, where research is conducted naturally, and no researcher is intrusive or insensitive. Whether it is given or socially created, the interpretation of this leads to the development of authentic data (Bergold et al., 2012). I was able to gain opinions of various literature used in field research, hence getting a better understanding of how people make sense of their world and unboxing the impact of teenage pregnancy on females’ social well-being in a schooling environment. According to Nickerson (2023) the use of the interpretivist paradigm is to sift out injustices and to gain a better understanding of real-life events that occur.

3.3. Research Methodological design

A research design is a systemic plan of how the researcher will generate data that is needed to answer the research questions (Bertram & Christiansen 2014). McCombes (2023) believes that a research design uses a strategy to answer research questions while considering the chosen approach, the research objective, sampling methods, data analysis and the appropriate data collection methods. The research design is aimed to provide an appropriate framework which determines how information for the research will be obtained—involving many interrelated factors (Sileyew, 2019). The research design entails the use of systematically generating and analysing data that is needed to answer the research questions. The chosen research design uses naturalistic research. Naturalistic research involves natural, real-world contexts where I am non-intrusive, as they outlay the information as it appears. According to Bhandari (2023), this type of research uses the behaviours of subjects in a real-world setting. “A context-specific setting, such as a real-world setting, was conducted whereby I did not manipulate the interest of the study” (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p.40). The research paradigm uses the interpretivist paradigm followed by a justified qualitative research approach.

According to Jansen et al. (2020), research methodology refers to how a researcher systematically designs a study to ensure valid and reliable results that address the research aims and objectives within their specific chosen phenomena. The goal of research goes beyond gathering information but aims at contributing new knowledge to a specific discipline (Bouchrika, 2023). Sreekumar (2023) agrees with Bouchrika (2023) and states that gathering information is a tiny percentage of achieving the outcomes. It requires achieving the objectives

using fundamentals in research such as data collection methods, research design and data analysis methods (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023).

3.3.1 Case study design

A case study was used to conduct this research. According to McCombes (2023), a case study is a systematic and in-depth study of one case where a phenomenon is explored in a real-life context. It is used to describe what it feels like to be in a specific scenario, and they are therefore known to be descriptive. Priya (2020) defines case study design as an empirical inquiry that looks deeper at the research topic in a real-life context. There are two styles of case studies, namely naturalistic and ethnographic studies. This research focused mainly on the naturalistic study as this type of study observes and records certain behaviours or phenomena in a natural setting that has little interference with the phenomenon at hand (Crow et al., 2011).

Using a case study within the interpretive paradigm is a popular research method as the research topic can be studied to improve practice. According to Ponelis (2015), the use of case studies within the interpretivist approach establishes rapport with the research subject at hand. A case study was chosen for this study as a case study assists in understanding complex situations while evaluating how people respond to situations (Priya, 2020). This research design fits in with the research topic as the behaviours and actions of participants in a real-world setting and environment were ably recorded.

3.4. Research approach

According to Taherdoost (2022) different research can be classified based on the objective and the relevant topic. Research approaches are plans for research stemmed from data generation, analysis and interpretation. There are three common approaches to conducting research which are namely: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. The chosen one for this study is qualitative research.

According to Aspers and Corte (2019, p.142), “Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” Qualitative data focuses on written rather than numerical context, and it is research which is naturalistic as it attempts to study the daily life of diverse groups of people in their natural situations (Dive, 2023).

According to Manyathi (2014, p.20), “Qualitative research is an interpretive inquiry that entails interpreting the participant’s personal experiences and the meaning they assign to the phenomenon.” This was the most appropriate approach to conduct this study as the research topic required personal experiences from participants to ensure accurate data. Using qualitative data in research allows for a humanistic, real-life perspective on the research topic. One can gain a better understanding of the behaviours, opinions, and values of specific situations (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey, 2015).

A qualitative was chosen to conduct this research on the impacts of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school. Qualitative research was chosen because it emphasizes the socially constructed nature of reality. According to Tenny, Brannan and Brannan (2022), using qualitative research provides deeper insight into real-world and real-life problems. Using this approach, a more realistic view of the world can be obtained as I had real-life experiences with chosen participants. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) mentions that a qualitative approach aims to make sense of or, interpret or describe a phenomenon in terms of various meanings that people bring to them. Thus, this approach was particularly selected to explore the effects of teenage pregnancy on learners’ academic performance in a South African High School.

According to Cleland (2017), it is also useful in the educational setting as it addresses the “who” and “why” research questions, hence allowing a deeper understanding of experiences. It allows for a better understanding of social phenomena, which, therefore, extends understanding and knowledge. Through a qualitative approach, we can retrieve findings beyond the immediate boundaries of the study (Chauke, 2013). One of the strengths of qualitative research is that it allows for the use of a variety of research methods to generate data, such as the use of interviews, case studies, focus groups and secondary research (Gill et al., 2008).

According to Caulfield (2023), textual data is an imperative aspect of research. Using a field study, the use of textual data was present within this study. This research used audio-recorded interviews, which were noted, then transcribed. Data reduction transpired throughout this research, and before the data was recorded, I determined data which was collected from the conceptual framework and research questions (Lindsey & Rathbone, 2022). It is vital to ensure that data is reduced to make it easier to understand and interpret. Data reduction can be done by summarizing, choosing and focusing on important information and by identifying themes

and patterns (Sugiyono, 2014). It also refers to simplifying and abstracting the most important data from the participants.

Extended text is the most frequent method used for qualitative data, and this included translating verbatim from interviews conducted in this research. When drawing conclusions, I was able to determine trends and explanations. These three streams of activity are interlinked, where the I was involved in each step.

3.5.Data generation methods

According to Ghorbel (2023) data generation can be referred to as creating or producing new data. This can be done through various means such as: data from sources, conducting surveys, visual aids, interviews, questionnaires, performing experiments or through algorithms. The chosen data generation methods for this study included the use of interviews and questionnaires.

According to Hassan (2023), data is data that is generated directly from researchers through sources such as interviews and questionnaires for a specific purpose. This information is original information that has not been published before. Primary data was used to conduct this research to give the reader a comprehensive view of this phenomenon from both real-life situations and existing information. Participants were required to answer questionnaires and interview questions individually to ensure confidentiality.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

According to Mcleod (2023), a questionnaire is a primary research instrument that consists of questions used to gather information from participants. There are many different kinds of questionnaires such as: open-ended questions, dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions, scaling questions and pictorial questions. This research used open-ended questions, dichotomous questions, and multiple-choice questions to conduct research. I used open-ended questions so that the participants were able to answer freely with no restrictions. The researcher used dichotomous questions to implement validity and multiple-choice questions with both single-select multiple-choice questions and multi-select multiple-choice questions which were given from a list of options which was used to analyse data better.

Using questionnaires in research is cost-effective, easy to complete and convenient to conduct (Rahman, 2019). Questionnaires were chosen to conduct this research as questionnaires are easy to analyse and visualize and they are practical (Debois, 2023). Questionnaires are one of the most effective data collection methods in research as they are cost-effective, flexible, and easily accessible (Lindmann, 2023). Each participant was asked to answer 15 questions in the form of a questionnaire (Appendix 5) that comprised both open and closed-ended questions. Here, participants can vocalize their feelings and experiences about the academic effects of teenage pregnancy in a south African school. The questionnaire took 15-25 minutes to complete. This time was fair as participants were able to reminisce on their experiences and provide true and accurate feedback. The questionnaires were completed in person hence they did not need to submit their answers at a later stage.

3.5.2. Interviews

According to George (2023), an interview is a qualitative research method that relies on the researcher to obtain information to generate data by asking necessary questions, allowing the researcher to gain insight into the thoughts and experiences of the participant. There are many types of interviews namely: structured interviews, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews.

Using structured, open-ended questions to conduct the interview allows a direct response. It also assists me in understanding the body language and expressions of participants, and it assists in gathering rich information, allowing more detailed conclusions (George, 2023). According to Clements (2023), interviews are used in research to understand personal experiences and behaviours relating to the research topic. Using interviews to conduct the study ensured a unique and personal response was given from participants (Mcleod & Guy-Evans, 2023). The interview had 8 questions (Appendix 6) and lasted approximately 20-30 minutes per person. Imperative points were noted on paper during the interview. I recorded the interview and thereafter it was transcribed whereby consent was given by the participants to the researcher.

3.6. Data analysis

According to Staff (2023) data analysis can be described as the practise of working with data to collect useful information which can then be used to make informed decisions. Crabtree & Nehme (2023) believe that data analysis is a comprehensive method of cleaning and modelling

data to discover useful information whilst drawing conclusions. There are various kinds of data analysis such as: qualitative data, diagnostic analysis, descriptive, prescriptive and predictive data analysis. The chosen data analysis for this research is thematic data analysis which is a method for analysing qualitative data.

According to Kiger (2020), thematic data analysis is a method that can be used to analyse qualitative data and gives the reader a better understanding of experiences, thoughts, and behaviours across the analysed data. Crosley (2021) agrees with Kiger (2020) and states that thematic data analysis uses patterns to unfold meaning, and this process works together with the research questions within the study. It provides a systematic element of analysis while allowing the researcher to align the frequency of a theme with the whole content. According to Nowell, Norris, Moules and White (2017), the use of thematic data analysis can be conducted in a systematic approach which can be communicated transparently to others. The chosen data approach to analyse the data would be thematic data analysis.

Thematic data analysis was appropriate for this study because of its usefulness in examining the perspectives of various participants (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I was required to analyse the data and detect the common patterns among the themes that emerge repeatedly (Dawadi, 2020).

Thematic data analysis consists of concepts that underpin the method. These include becoming familiar with the data, generating codes, generating themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming themes and lastly, locating exemplars (Mihas, 2023). After gathering data using interviews and questionnaires, data was analysed. I became familiar with the information obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. After that, codes and themes were generated. Once the themes emerged as a result of analysed data, the themes were reviewed to ensure that the most important themes relevant to the research topic were chosen. The themes were then defined and named, locating the exemplars which were relevant to the research topic being discussed.

According to Kiger (2020), themes are constructed patterns or meanings that are derived from data that answers the research question. It is also known as “patterned responses or meanings.” When using thematic analysis, I could identify both subjective and objective aspects of the research (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). Themes may comprise subthemes, which, therefore, gives the reader a comprehensive view of data that is derived from patterns (Caulfiend, 2023).

Themes are vital in analysing data as I was able to identify patterns and causes of the phenomenon at hand (Dawadi, 2020).

The researcher used data to organise, classify, sort and to identify themes that occur repeatedly while identifying patterns which add to the increasing teenage pregnancy rate in a South African school. After analysing the repeated themes derived from literature, it was clear which themes had a higher contribution towards teenage pregnancy, which therefore guided this study. Upon identification of patterns, I gained a better understanding of the phenomenon while suggesting solutions on how the phenomenon can be alleviated (Castleberry et al., 2018).

3.7. Research sampling

According to McCombes (2023) there are many different kinds of sampling methods used in research such as: simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, convenience sampling, voluntary response sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling.

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), a sample can be defined as the number of participants that are used in the research to analyse the outcome of a specific phenomenon. Purposive sampling was used whereby I chose specific participants on the basis of their judgement as to their possession of the particular characteristics being sought (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). According to Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood (2016), purposefully selecting participants provides rich and valuable information as the chosen participants are knowledgeable about the research topic or can share their first-hand personal experiences. The sample for this study consisted of four participants who were teachers at the chosen school that I chose to conduct data. These participants were purposefully selected as they were chosen on the basis of their experiences of having a pregnant teenage learner in their classes. Participants who did not have experiences of teenage pregnant learners in their classes were excluded from the study.

3.10 Maintenance of trustworthiness

Trustworthiness can be defined as methods used within a study to ensure quality research (Connelly, 2016). Trustworthiness is supported by comprehensive depictions of authentic data, which would reflect the participants' involvement in the study. Qualitative data requires trustworthiness of the data, which suggests using concepts of credibility, transferability,

dependability, and confirmability (Bertram & Christiansen 2014, p. 190-192). Trustworthiness is imperative in research as it shows a degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods to ensure the quality of the study. Within each study, I ensured procedures and methods are followed and undertaken to ensure a worthy research (Connelly, 2016).

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility is the first criterion that must be established in research (Sago, 2023). It is considered the most important aspect of establishing trustworthiness. Credibility is said to measure the true value of comprehensive qualitative research that can be used to determine whether the study's findings are accurate (Stahl & King, 2020). The use of credibility within this study ensured the accuracy of the participants' reality by linking the research to reality. This was demonstrating credible data with the use true experiences and real-life events. Within this research, credibility was achieved by utilizing different data generation methods: interviews and questionnaires. Credibility was also achieved by making sure that there was transparency and clarity during the data collection and processing method while demonstrating honesty and integrity throughout the study.

3.10.2 Dependability

“Dependability ensures that discrepancies are accounted for by including comparisons made to other studies on the same topic” (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 193). It is important in research as it aims to verify that findings are consistent with the raw data collected. According to Blog (2023), dependability can be linked to reliability and reproducibility, which is the repetition of the study by a second researcher and obtaining the same results. This begins with providing a detailed description of the research methods (Nowell, 2017). The research was audited and critiqued ensure dependability was obtained. The more consistent I was while conducting the research, the more dependable the results are.

3.10.3 Confirmability

According to Nyirenda (2020), confirmability can be defined as data that is checked and rechecked throughout the data generation process. It also means ensuring that results are repeatable. According to Nowell et al. (2017), confirmability is derived from data that come from conclusions. It can be achieved when the three components, namely credibility, transferability, and dependability, have been achieved. Confirmability was ensured by

providing data that is detailed and understandable. I ensured confirmability within the study by checking and rechecking the data throughout the study.

3.10.4 Transferability

According to Korstjens and Moser (2017), transferability can be defined as qualitative research that can be generalized or transferred to another setting and context. “Transferability was achieved by ensuring that research can be transferred to other contexts whereby data may be applied to other research with similar characteristics. “Thick” detailed and comprehensive descriptions in the research were used, ensuring transferability was obtained” (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 193). According to Tenny (2022), using thick descriptions ensures a thorough description of details, which includes detailed explanations of how the study was carried out.

3.11. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations in research can be defined as principles that guide your research (Bhandari, 2023). All research must follow a specific norm for conduct according to the specific discipline requirements (Resnik, 2020). These principles include confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent. It is imperative that participants sign consent forms before participating, and it is also important to ensure that I explained that participation is entirely voluntary.

First and foremost, I had to process an application for the permission to conduct research in one of the KwaZulu-Natal province Department of Basic Education's schools. Secondly, I was required to send an application letter to the school's principal. Thirdly, the researcher then sent out a consent letter to the four sampled teachers. Fourthly, I was required to send an application to the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal's Research Degrees office for an ethical clearance certificate and lastly, I had to conduct data generation after the Ethical Clearance certificate had been issued with the HSSREC certificate number: HSSREC/00005762/2023.

In the consent forms, information was clearly stated whereby participants voluntarily participated in the study and had they wished to exit the study at any given time, they were able to. These consent forms had a brief background of the study with the personal information of myself being the researcher. Despite issuing the same interview questions to all participants,

interviews were conducted individually as the research topic was a very sensitive one. This was done to maintain confidentiality throughout the study.

3.12. Summary

This chapter discussed and outlined the chosen research paradigm and further went on to explain the paradigms ontological, axiological, methodological and epistemological assumptions that underpin it. The chosen research paradigm was the interpretive paradigm and the researcher thereafter explained this in detail. The research approach that used to conduct this study was the use of qualitative data. Case study design was used as the chosen research design to conduct this study. There were two data generation methods that were further elaborated in this chapter namely: interviews and questionnaires. Thematic data analysis was used to give the reader a better understanding on the chosen data analysis method. The researcher purposefully selected four participants to participate in the study. These participants were selected based on their experiences of having a pregnant teenager in their classroom. The researcher then went on to discuss the maintenance of trustworthiness which included: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. Lastly, ethical considerations were discussed whereby the researcher provided the reader with the necessary ethics that needed to be adhered to before the study could commence.

These topics were extensively discussed in this chapter providing the reader with imperative information relating to the research. I was able to gain various views and ideologies underpinning this phenomenon with the use of research. The next chapter presents the data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

Chapter 3 outlined the chosen research paradigm which was the use of interpretive paradigm along with the chosen research approach that used qualitative data. The research design used in this study was the use of case study design. The researcher used two data collection methods which were the use of interviews and questionnaires to conduct the research. Four participants were purposefully selected to participate in the study and this was elaborated further within the chapter. Maintenance of trustworthiness which included: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability were discussed in detail and lastly the researcher provided ethical considerations that had to be adhered to before the research could commence.

This research study speaks about the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school. The purpose of a thorough study is to explore the effects of teenage pregnancy on a learner's academic performance within a South African high school whilst gaining an understanding of how a teen mother's emotional and physical well-being is impacted. This psychosocial phenomenon establishes multiple disadvantages and drawbacks in preventing teenage mothers from reaching their full potential, reaching their capability within themselves, and mainly limiting their academic capabilities and performance.

The research questions that drove the study are: (1) What are teachers' perspectives of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? (2) How does teenage pregnancy affect the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? (3) Why is it important to educate learners about using preventative methods that are available when addressing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school?

This chapter aims to represent data that was generated through the use of questionnaires and interviews. The themes, sub-themes and findings for the study were discussed, and lastly, the use of thematic data analysis in the form of themes will be further elaborated. Based on the data that was collected using interviews and questionnaires, there were various findings and themes which were recognised and further discussed in this chapter.

4.2. Themes and sub-themes

According to Dawadi (2020) themes capture important information about the data in relation to the research question. Themes assist in identifying patterns that are important in understanding the research topic. The research questions that formed the emergence of themes and sub-themes are: (1) What are teachers’ perspectives of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? (2) How does teenage pregnancy effect the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? (3) Why is it important to educate learners about using preventative methods that are available when addressing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school? This research consisted of six major themes and various sub-themes that were further discussed in this research.

Table 4.1 – Themes and subthemes

<u>THEME</u>	<u>SUBTHEME</u>
Theme 1: Decline of academic performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequent absenteeism 2. A lack of interest in schoolwork, 3. A decline in self-esteem 4. No interest in self-appearance 5. A “don’t care attitude.”
Theme 2: Lack of information on teenage pregnancy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of training 2. Lack of infrastructure and facilities (nursing office) 3. Lack of resources 4. Lack of information in school curriculum
Theme 3: Gender-based violence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rape 2. Molestation 3. Coerced into having sex to prevent being abused. 4. Controlling and possessive partners
Theme 4: Participating in sexual activities while intoxicated.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Substance abuse
Theme 5: Psychosocial challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lower-income 2. Family pressure

Theme 6: School-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshops, seminars and community involvement 2. Availability of contraceptives 3. Parental involvement 4. Life Orientation curriculum
Theme 7: Teachers' views on teenage pregnancy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A baby having a baby 2. A girl between the ages of 13-19 years old
Theme 8: Impacts of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Significant academic decline – lose interest in schoolwork 2. Mood swings – changed behaviours (lack of interest towards academics) 3. Frequent absenteeism 4. Fatigue and lack of concentration 5. Inability to complete or return to school
Theme 9: Struggles a teenage mother faces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tired and lethargic 2. Teased and bullied 3. Emotionally, physically and economically 4. Health problems 5. Social and family drama 6. Depression 7. Drug and alcohol abuse due to depression
Theme 10: Physical or emotional changes witnessed in a learners' pregnancy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introverted 2. Deterioration in appearance 3. Behaviour change

Theme 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 addresses research question (1): What are teachers' perspectives of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? And research question (2) How does teenage pregnancy effect the academic performance of learners in a South African high school? Theme 6 addresses research question (3) Why is it important to educate learners about using preventative methods that are available when addressing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school?

4.2.1. Biographical information of participants

Below is a profile of each of the research participants at the time the study was conducted. Pseudonyms are used to ensure their confidentiality and anonymity.

Table 4.2 – Participant profile

Source: Author

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Grades teaching</u>	<u>Teaching experience</u>	<u>Number of teenage pregnancies experienced</u>
Sarah	30-34	Female	African	8,9,10	8 years	1-3
Brenda	26-29	Female	White	9,10,11	3 years	1-3
Chante	40-45	Female	African	8,11,12	16 years	1-3
Danielle	50 >	Female	Indian	10,11,12	25 years	4-6

4.3. Data analysis by themes

The themes and sub-themes used in this research had emerged as a result of the use of interviews. Theme 1 addressed question number 4 from the interview questions that asked participants - What are some of the struggles a teenage mother face? Based on the data that was generated from participants answering questions from the interviews conducted, the following themes were the most common occurrences of teenage pregnancy.

4.3.1. Theme 1: Decline of academic performance

It is evident that most of the time, when teenage pregnancy occurs, learners' academics will decline. Often, they are unable to return to school after their pregnancy and, hence, never get the opportunity to complete their studies. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Sarah: There is frequent absenteeism with the learner who is pregnant. She always stays at home because maybe she doesn't feel well, other side effects of pregnancy, maybe she has to attend a doctor's appointment or even morning sickness doesn't permit school. They also stay at home frequently because they often don't want to be seen (this is usually later on in their pregnancy).

Brenda: Pregnant learners have a lack of interest in schoolwork as their focus is now the pregnancy and not their academics. They are often fatigued or become fatigued resulting in a low concentration level and low performance in the classroom. The learners focus becomes on the new-born baby and not the mothers schooling career which she is often unable to complete.

Chante: These pregnant learners often do not bother about what they look like and there is a significant decline in self-appearance. They also become less confident and often the learners that are once confident become conservative and quiet. They seldom enjoy interacting with others and prefer to stay alone or even hide in the bathroom.

Danielle: These learners often have a don't care attitude and are unbothered about their work or their academics. They have an attitude of, if it is done its done, if not it is one of those things. They don't bother to complete their classwork or even their homework. Projects are a nightmare. Just an absolute doesn't care, couldn't be bothered attitude.

According to Maemeko et al. (2018), teenage pregnancy plays a major role in a learner's academic performance as academics usually decline pre-, during and post-pregnancy. Based on the data collected from participants, it is evident that all four participants had negative experiences relating to their pregnancy and academic performance. Participants highlighted imperative aspects that contributed to the academic decline, such as frequent absenteeism, do not care attitude, a lack of self-esteem, and fatigue or extreme exhaustion. The participants' experiences highlight the reasoning behind the significant decline in academics, self-appearance and overall attitudes, which can often be linked to the side effects of teenage pregnancy. The non-completion of a schooling career perpetuates the cycle of impoverishment (Kate, 2012).

According to Clementina (2015), when a teenager becomes pregnant, their schooling career becomes a struggle. Their bodies change, and hence, studying becomes more challenging with physical discomfort. Along with the physical discomfort comes negative academic performances. Learners are often unable to pay attention in class and, therefore, unable to cope. Clementina (2015) confirms that stress alone has a detrimental effect on a learner's academic performance.

Similarly, emotions and the trauma of enduring a teenage pregnancy also hinder one's academic performance. Maslowsky, Hendrick and Stritzel (2021) stated that women who fall pregnant at an early age sustain low educational qualifications with a questionable chance of returning to school. The completion of one's schooling career will strongly depend on her health and well-being. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Sarah: The frequent absenteeism is super frustrating for teachers as we do not have the time to go back and reteach content. Along with frequent absenteeism, comes the lack of interest in academics. When students are absent they do not make the effort to get the missing work, instead teachers have to bend over backwards to ensure these learners have the work but they just don't care.

Brenda: There's so many emotions that a teenager goes through, imagine how many more there are when they are pregnant. Shewww. They become withdrawn and lose themselves in the process. They show disinterest towards academics with a simple "I don't care" attitude. It is worrying but sometimes even sickening.

Chante: Attending doctors' appointments, leaving school early due to health reasons, preparing for the unborn baby, rituals and the list could go on that results in frequent absenteeism. When learners do come back to school, their appearance and their self-esteem declines significantly which is evident to everyone around. Often their appearance is untidy and shabby and their self-esteem is just low. They no longer confident teenagers. They are changed people.

Danielle: There's so many reasons to speak about. Being a teenage mother, itself is enough of a reason! Students just don't value their education anymore – they don't care

and make that evident to teachers. They are always absent and take no interest in finishing homework tasks. Sometimes I wonder if they feel as sad as they look – their uniform is worn so untidily. It's just a sad reality of life and we see this more and more every day.

4.3.2. Theme 2: Lack of information on sexual health

Participants strongly believed that learners lack imperative information to decrease the rate of teenage pregnancy potentially. Theme 2 addressed question number 2 from the interview questions that asked participants - What do you feel were the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy?

Participants believe that learners are often not provided with sufficient knowledge and hence try to experiment and explore on their own, resulting in teenage pregnancies and the contraction of STDs. Teachers also feel that schools are not equipped with the necessary resources and materials to cater for teenage pregnancy within a classroom environment. Schools do not have the necessary infrastructure and facilities; hence, dealing with a pregnant teenager becomes challenging for teachers. Some teachers also feel that the school curriculum does not speak much about teenage pregnancy, and as a country with an alarming rate of teenage pregnancy, this needs to be addressed. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Sarah: Learners have a lack of knowledge, and I strongly believe that this significant reason is why teenagers are so experimental because they do not know the consequences of their actions. As much as they advanced and they know things, it is important for learners to be reminded and told right from wrong. There are no necessary preventative methods given to schools anymore. Condom boxes in bathrooms are always empty. In many previous schools that I taught at teacher's dislike speaking about the topic of sex as they feel children must be children and not have adult topic conversations. But I feel teachers, parents and the community be open about this topic to prevent higher rates.

Brenda: There are no resources for teachers to even assist a teenage pregnant learner. You cannot use any unsterilized items and secondly the school doesn't even have a bed. It is crazy what schools expect of teachers. Teachers are also not equipped with the sufficient training on how to deal with a pregnant learner within the classroom environment. I did not study nursing, I studied teaching. My job is to teach, not nurse

children. The school and government must provide this facility for pregnant learners. If our school with resources does not have equipment, imagine the how bad things must be in rural schools, and honestly most teenage pregnancies occur within these areas. There is often a lack of information about availability of condoms and other contraceptives hence even our curriculum does not incorporate safe sex.

Chante: Parents can reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy by simply communicating and speaking to their children about this. I understand that often it can be seen as a taboo topic however important information can be passed from the parent onto the child. When parents do not communicate with their children the result is often detrimental as they lack direction in decision making. They also lack the necessary support and guidance from people dear to them. It cannot be embarrassing to have an open relation with your children, I cannot understand it really. You don't blame the children; you blame the parents. Prior to this, the school curriculum does not allow teachers to spend time speaking about this topic. Children are therefore given little or no information.

Danielle: In my experience of teaching, the government have not made anything easier for teachers. We have been promised equipment however we have received nothing. One of my pregnant learners many years ago started cramping badly during her pregnancy, she was in excruciating pain. I had no idea what to do. We had no equipment; no resources and I had no information about how to handle this learner's situation. Yes, the school had called the ambulance and luckily it was nothing major however had there been a nurse on the property they could assist the learner. This time the learner was lucky, next time they may not be.

According to Govender (2019), sufficient knowledge of teenage pregnancy and sexual health is inadequate and, as a result, can adversely affect the lives of teenagers and their unborn babies. Govender (2019) states that it is vital to ensure that teenagers are adequately equipped with information regarding pregnancy and sexual health, which will result in the teenager making responsible and informed decisions. According to Govender (2019), "Adolescent pregnancy is considered a high health risk as poor nutrition, limited knowledge, and ignorance of danger signs during pregnancy can be devastating." In many South African schools, "sex" is viewed as a sensitive topic and as a result, it is unspoken. Parents do not agree with sex education being

taught in school and feel that this topic is taboo. Research indicates that parents find it difficult to engage in this kind of interaction with their children. This results in learners growing up with misconceptions and being naïve and vulnerable to trying out new things, resulting in negative consequences.

Life Orientation in schools aims at educating learners about making informed and responsible decisions regarding health, environment, and careers. It educates learners about topics such as pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse, as well as the consequences of practising such behaviour. Unfortunately, many schools choose not to cover content that is supposed to be taught in the Life Orientation curriculum, and as a result, learners lack the vital knowledge needed. A lack of knowledge on illnesses such as anaemia before, during and after teenage pregnancy can have detrimental implications on the mother and the learner. According to Govender (2019), a lack of information results in learners not being exposed to contraceptives or alternate safety measures and, as a result, being uninformed about the consequences of practising unsafe sex. There is a knowledge gap that is contributing to the high pregnancy rate in schools in South Africa. Based on the literature that has been reviewed on a lack of information on sexual health, it can be concluded that learners lack the necessary information needed to make responsible decisions and are often misguided, which results in repercussions to their actions.

4.3.3. Theme 3: Gender-based violence.

Theme 3 addressed question number 2 from the interview questions that asked participants - What do you feel were the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy? Gender-based violence is a silent killer and a silent reason for many situations happening today. It is often not the easiest topic to speak about, and hence, the truth is often hidden. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Brenda: Shew, this theme hits home for me. Between you and I, I can relate to many learners as I have experienced a similar situation growing up. I am very sentimental about this theme (crying) as I had lived and experienced something very similar. Upon speaking to a learner in my class who was pregnant, I felt as if women more so children are extremely vulnerable in comparison to the opposition who is often very submissive, controlling and possessive. I believe that children often hide the reason behind their pregnancy and often there are more gender-based violence cases that are hidden or unspoken about, but it is a very sensitive topic to ask or speak about. The child has to

often speak about this on their own. Gender based violence is also so serious and scary however children often enough rather stay quiet than mention it to anyone as they are often very scared.

Chante: Teenage pregnancy does not always occur when children want to have fun and explore. There are many reasons that causes teenage pregnancy which can sometimes be overlooked. When people see a teenage pregnant learner they immediately assume the child is irresponsible and promiscuous however this is not always the case. Many times, children are raped, or molested which is not their fault. They are often too young or even traumatised in the moment to know what needs to be done and eventually when they do seek help it may be too late. There are so many factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy and nobody has a right to judge the situation without knowing the truth and reasoning behind it.

Danielle: I feel GBV is a massive contribution towards teenage pregnancy and I strongly believe that in many areas women are trapped with the inability to speak up for their rights. I also feel that girls are pushed into having sexual relationships with older men and if they object to it, they will get abused. In order to prevent the abuse from their partners who can also be family members, children force themselves to have sex which just saddens me.

According to Chacham et al. (2016), research shows that teenage pregnancy was higher among adolescents who were in a relationship with a violent, overpowering and controlling partner. Often, this behaviour is intentional as the male refuses to wear a condom and hence impregnates the woman. The girl is often too scared of being abused by her partner; hence, she agrees and is forced to carry and give birth to the child due to her subordinate status. Chacham et al. (2016) maintain that teenagers and women who are at a reproductive age are most vulnerable to gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual relationships. Statistics from Chacham et al. (2016) show that those who became pregnant as teenagers reported higher rates of sexual or physical abuse from partners.

Many men prohibited their pregnant partners from wearing certain clothing, having friends or a social life whilst instilling rules and regulations in place regarding time of departure and arrival at home. These men had total control over their partners, and hence, their partners

became scared of them, forcing them to obey their partner's instructions. When women asked their partners to use a condom, the men would abuse them into having sex without a condom, hence the women falling pregnant and carrying a baby without their consent. This is a result of the power imbalance in the relationship. As a result, the teenager must drop out of school to cater for her babies needs and to become a mother first and student second. In many societies, women were forced to stay at home and look after their children while the men went out to work. Based on the literature that has been reviewed on gender-based violence, it is evident that both these factors contribute to teenage pregnancy as the male is often controlling and dominating, which leads to the girl being forced into falling at the man's feet to avoid being abused or ill-treated.

4.3.4. Theme 4: Participating in sexual activities while intoxicated

Theme 4 addressed question number 2 from the interview questions that asked participants - What do you feel were the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy? Substance abuse was a theme that all four participants spoke about and felt was a cause for teenage pregnancy. Each participant felt that toxic substances are so easily available for learners, and as teenagers, they are often experimental and vulnerable. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Sarah: Substance abuse plays a fundamental role in teenage pregnancy. Often teenagers are experimental and at an age to explore. They explore with the wrong people and often become vulnerable and naive. In these situations, often children are so intoxicated they unaware of their surrounds and then mistakes happen. In comparison to primary school, there are more toxic substance available in high school and to fit in, learners want to try these substances. It is so dangerous and these children don't understand this. They become addicted, they start stealing to buy drugs, they ruin their lives and their future. It is just horrible.

Brenda: Here in school there are even drug dealers of which teachers know about. I am scared, so I do not say anything to these learners but we know what happens. It is so sad that teachers are so helpless in this profession. We rather be quiet than say anything because we fear our lives and our families lives as we live in a community where kids know where we live. Management need to intervene as soon as possible or this generation of children are done. Substance abuse is daunting to speak about. These are so many

youngers smoking, drinking and doing drugs. Worse part is that these illegal substances at that age is so easily available to them!

Chante: Drugs and alcohol is so easily available to learners. They bunk school with the opposite gender and when intoxicated they end up having sex and falling pregnant. They so unconscious of their surroundings and environment that they do not realise what they doing or they know what they doing but to fit in they continue the activities. They make irrational and irresponsible decisions which affect them lifelong. Teenage pregnancy within lower income households is very common as families encourage teenagers to have babies so that they able to collect child grant and thereafter support their families. In many cases, these teenagers are too young to understand or they do it simply to help their family. In many households, child grant is the only source of money received so within these households they don't see anything wrong with a teenager having a baby. Schools, communities and the government need to work together to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies within the country as these kids are the future generation. Information about falling pregnant needs to be given as well as previous experiences from teen mothers so that girls do not follow in that direction. Schools also need to conduct more searches to reduce the number of drugs and alcohol within schools. Learners are often intoxicated 99% of the time. We as teachers know this but cannot do anything.

Danielle: There needs to be stricter rules and regulations for the availability of drugs and alcohol especially with teenagers as it is so readily available. People want to make money and they are not interested about the future. When children in school try drugs, they often become addicted to it. Often girls take drugs during their pregnancy not realising the dangers for their own health and the baby's health. These children then continue taking drugs even after school which means that they do not return to school. They now on drugs, unable to support their children which creates a bad life for their children and then their children thereafter.

According to Connery et al. (2014), the rates of unplanned teenage pregnancy are higher among women who use various kinds of substances. Teenagers who are sexually active whilst using substances have higher rates of unplanned pregnancies. When teenagers engage in substances such as alcohol, cocaine, marijuana, and other drugs, it may lead to them being sexually active,

and as a result, they experience consequences such as teenage pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and STDs in comparison to teenagers who do not use substances.

According to Connery et al. (2014), when teenagers use substances, they are less likely to use contraceptives as they are often intoxicated and are unaware of their actions or their environment. The larger the number of substances a teenager uses, the less likely a teenager will use contraceptives such as a condom during sexual intercourse. Connery et al. (2014) state that in 2011-2012, pregnancy rates among teenagers who were between the ages of 15-17 years of age and who used substances increased to 18.3% in comparison to 15.7% the previous year. This is a clear indication that teenage pregnancy rates are increased once these teenagers are intoxicated and under the influence of alcohol or other substances.

According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration & Centre for Behavioural Health Statistics and Quality (2013), the mother and child are bound to have pre- and post-natal health-related problems when the mother uses drugs or alcohol during her pregnancy. This becomes a problem for the teenager as they are often unable to identify their pregnancies and, therefore, continue to binge drink during the early months of their pregnancy. When mothers take drugs during their pregnancy, babies born can experience addiction and long-term effects of prenatal drug use. Teenagers often become addicted to these drugs, making it difficult to stop while pregnant. At this stage, the harmful substances have caused damage to the teenager's body, which often affects the baby's development.

According to Bana et al. (2010), sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS are one of the major problems that South Africa is faced with. This, together with an increased rate of teenage pregnancy and alcohol and drug abuse, is of serious concern among teenagers in the country. According to Dryden (2011), several high school learners are engaging in risky behaviour, and hence, they are at risk of falling pregnant or contracting an infection. According to Dryden (2011), teenage males who were under the influence of alcohol or who used substances such as cocaine were less likely to use any contraceptive method. This poses a risk to the woman as she could fall pregnant or contract STDs. The male often leaves the mother to raise her child on her own, which therefore contributes to the poverty and unemployment rate in the country as the mother is unable to work.

When teenagers are under the influence of any substance, it alters their mind-set, which results in obscure decisions. Although one cannot blame this for contributing to teenage pregnancy, it sure plays a huge role as adolescents are at the age of experimenting. If learners are well

informed about the repercussions of substance abuse, it could result in dampening the number of teenage pregnancies in modern-day society. Based on the literature that has been reviewed on substance abuse, when learners are under the influence of substances and are therefore intoxicated, they are not able to make functional decisions, and as a result, they can make decisions which negatively impact their lives.

4.3.5. Theme 5: Psychosocial challenges such as poverty

Theme 5 addressed question number 2 from the interview questions that asked participants - What do you feel were the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy? Poverty is another major factor that contributes to teenage pregnancy. Often, lower-income households have more teenage pregnancies. This then continues the cycle of impoverishment. When interviewing participants, these were some of their responses:

Sarah: Children who come from houses with less money are often the ones to get themselves involved in teenage pregnancy. I don't understand the reasoning behind it, but it is the truth. The teenager who was pregnant in my class, came from a very poor and unfortunate background yet the pregnancy was so okay and so acceptable maybe because the parents did not attend school themselves, so they are not very knowledgeable about the dangers. Poverty is also a factor in teenage pregnancy and in many households the pressure to marry and have babies is fairly large. Children can be helpless and often have to abide by their parents which is honestly so sad.

Brenda: Living in a developing country, there are many psychosocial challenges that contribute significantly to teenage pregnancy. If learners come from a poverty-stricken background, most often they will raise their child in that environment which will aid the cycle of poverty within the country. Raising a child in a poverty environment also poses health challenges on the mother and unborn child as often the mother is unable to afford food items and vitamins essential for the baby's development.

Chante: Teenage pregnancy within lower income households is very common as families encourage teenagers to have babies so that they able to collect child grant and thereafter support their families. In many cases, these teenagers are too young to understand, or they do it simply to help their family. In many households, child grant is the only source

of money received so within these households they don't see anything wrong with a teenager having a baby. Schools, communities and the government need to work together to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies within the country as these kids are the future generation. Information about falling pregnant needs to be given as well as previous experiences from teen mothers so that girls do not follow in that direction.

Danielle: The one learner and I were very close. She told me the reason behind falling pregnant is so that she was able to qualify for the child grant monthly. She also said it would help their families buy groceries monthly. Now this for me was such a narrow-minded way of thinking. Again, this proves that there is a knowledge gap because parents may also have not attended school hence they unable to provide valuable and important information to their children. This will mean that these teenage mothers might not be able to finish school and not be able to provide important information to their children. The poverty will just continue.

Poverty, according to Stats SA (2017), indicates that the main victims are girls aged 0-17, black Africans living in rural conditions, mainly in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. Nzama (2004) demonstrates that teenagers who come from disadvantaged communities with high poverty rates are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse, become pregnant and deliver babies without having the necessary skills for motherhood. Voydanoff et al. (1990) have made observations about teenagers in The United States of America, stating that sexual activity, which often leads to teenage pregnancy among teenagers, is more evident among learners from poor and underprivileged backgrounds.

In many of these areas, education is seen as extraneous; hence, they promote having babies at a young age, which leads to unemployment and poverty, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty. According to Lambani (2017), research shows that poverty is the major reason that the majority of teenagers fall pregnant. Lambani (2017) states that the teenage pregnancy rate is five times higher when in poverty. They specify that "it is well documented that teenagers from lower-class families are likely to become sexually active at younger ages than those from families in higher income brackets. Early sexual experience is more likely among teenagers from poorer than wealthier families." Voydanoff et al. (1990). Based on the literature that has been reviewed on psychosocial challenges, we can easily identify poverty as being one of the main factors that drive the cycle of teenage pregnancy. Poverty leads to a lack of education due to financial

difficulties, which then leads to an uneducated teenager who makes a foul decision and, as a result, faces lifelong consequences.

4.3.6. Theme 6: School-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy

Theme 6 addressed question number 6 from the interview questions that asked participants - What are some school-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy? According to Worldwide Paediatrics (2020) schools should enforce programs that support, tutor and educate learners which will assist in reducing the high-risk behaviours amount teenagers and hence prevent pregnancies within schools. Schools should attempt to implement programs whereby positive youth development is promoted. These programs should contain information about the following: connectedness, confidence and character.

Sarah: Workshops, seminars, and even the community involvement. The community can have workshops on teenage pregnancy since children spend most of their time in the community. Parents need to come on board and help prevent teenage pregnancies from happening. Often parents do not know how to speak to their children about this topic, but things are changing. We live in a modern generation now; parents must have the talk with their children.

Brenda: Depending on the individual, I believe that a previous teenage mother should come to the school and speak to the school about their experience being in school and being pregnant. I pray that first-hand experience maybe assists the children in making the right decisions.

Chante: Parental involvement is very important in reducing teenage pregnancy. Parents need to know where their children are, and what their children are doing at all times. Parents need to check their children's phones and social media to ensure that their children are not doing what they not supposed too. This can be challenging as social media is so vast and peer pressure is a real concern in schools today.

Danielle: I have offered in the second break to have a confidential conversation with girls who want any information regarding sex. I have also offered condoms to girls, not because I encourage sex but because I'd rather them be safe than falling pregnant. I also feel the Life Orientation teachers need to be more involved with this topic as this is their field and they might know how to assist learners better than I do.

According to Ngobeni, Segalo, and Mashuhlane (2023), teachers emphasize that advocacy be held to make learners aware of the dangers of teenage pregnancy and their lifelong effects. Teachers feel that teenage pregnancy is a natural problem and that the learner should never be frowned upon due to their pregnancy. They also feel that pregnant learners should never be excluded and that teachers should attend workshops or seminars on ways to handle a pregnant teenager.

According to Hlongwa, Mutambo & Hlongwana (2023), contraceptives are one of the most important public health care interventions. The correct use of contraception eliminates teenage pregnancy and many sexually transmitted diseases. Using contraceptives eliminates teenage pregnancy, which improves educational opportunities and the empowerment of women. The use of contraceptives positively affects the overall health of women of reproductive age.

FAAP et al. (2023) believe that parents are the most influential sex educators for teenagers; hence, it is imperative that parents sit their children down and discuss sex education and guide them towards safe and healthy decisions. Chorzempa-Schainis (2019) agrees with the above statement and states that teenagers report that parents have the greatest influence over their decisions about sex or even partners, which most likely delays having sex until they are older. As a result, teenage pregnancy is reduced, as well as the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Chorzempa-Schainis (2019) stated that one in four teenagers become pregnant by the age of 20, which can be prevented by using contraceptives. Despite parents wanting their children to abstain from sexual intercourse altogether completely, this is often seldom the case. Therefore, parents are responsible for ensuring their children make responsible and informed decisions.

According to Jackson (2020), the only way to avoid unwanted pregnancies is to abstain from sexual intercourse. It is imperative to ensure that learners learn the use of contraceptives and its importance. In addition to using contraceptives that prevent pregnancy, using contraceptives reduces the risk of HIV and other STDs. There are various risk factors associated with STDs

in teenagers, such as unsafe sex, concurrent partners, multiple partners, substance misuse and mental health problems (Viner, 2005). According to Viner (2005), engaging in sexual intercourse at a young age can be associated with a lack of knowledge, a lack of access to contraceptives, peer pressure or intoxication.

Life Orientation in school is an excellent subject whereby learners can learn about various contraceptive methods. However, while learners are being taught about having safe sex, they should also be informed that contraceptives do not always prevent pregnancy. Here, teachers can explain the benefits of using a contraceptive for various health reasons, as well as preventing teenage pregnancy. Often, learners fall pregnant as they are unaware of the various contraceptive methods available or due to a lack of information. If these topics are spoken about during classroom time, learners become more knowledgeable about what is right and what is wrong.

According to Pazol et al. (2015), educational interventions can assist teenagers in increasing their knowledge of available contraceptive methods, enabling individuals to make informed and responsible decisions. Communities must implement seminars and workshops whereby “taboo” topics that parents often refer to them as are spoken about. Teachers within a schooling environment must determine educational interventions that are most effective with the assistance of educational psychologists and healthcare providers.

4.3.7. Theme 7: Teachers’ views on teenage pregnancy

Theme 7 addressed question number 1 from the interview questions that asked participants - What are your views of teenage pregnancy? Teenage pregnancy occurs when a teenager under the age of 20 years of age falls pregnant. Teenage pregnancy is a global phenomenon that affects girl’s social status and health, which can be life-threatening and detrimental to their well-being. When asked what teachers’ views on teenage pregnancy are, teachers said that:

Sarah: It is when young girls have a baby. I feel that teenage pregnancy is a curse and is ruining the young generation and our future country.

Brenda: They are like toddlers; it is like miniatures having a baby! Why??? Teenage pregnancy is a bad thing, and its seen as taboo in my eyes.

Chante: Teenage pregnancy is girls who fall pregnant while still being in school. This is usually between the ages of 13-19 however based on readings, girls as young as 10 years old are falling pregnant today.

Danielle: Teenager means ages 13-19 therefore teenage pregnancy would mean a girl between these ages falling pregnant. I cannot understand how, and I surely cannot understand why. Their bodies are barely developed, they are kids themselves, how are they supposed to nurture another child themselves?

According to Ndlovu (2019), teachers believe that it is depressing to have pregnant learners in a classroom as they are unable to perform well. Teachers feel that they have less time to devote themselves to education even after delivery. Research by Chigona & Chetty (2017) revealed that teachers perceive teenage pregnancy negatively as it contributes to their poor attendance, poor performance and the lack of knowledge by teachers on how to handle a teenage pregnancy within their classroom environment. According to Mpanza & Nzima (2010), teachers view teenage pregnancy as a domain of sexual shame with various negative effects which disrupt learners' academic performance, resulting in less time to devote themselves to completing their education.

According to Ndlovu (2019), teachers perceive pregnancy very negatively. Pregnancy within a classroom environment leads to poor attendance and poor academic performance. There is also a lack of knowledge and guidance given to teachers on ways to deal with teenage pregnancy in a classroom. Ndlovu (2019) states that "many teachers view teenage pregnancy as a domain of sexual shame with negative effects and disruptive to the academic life of the school." Teachers tend to relate to pregnancy in a moralistic, sarcastic, judgemental way.

Teachers perceive that teenage pregnancy has an emotional impact on a learner's well-being. They also feel that their academic performance declines significantly before, during and after pregnancy and states that teachers are against the idea and do not approve of allowing pregnant learners to attend school (Malahlela, 2012 & Ndlovu, 2019). Teachers believe that school is for learners and not pregnant teenagers. Many teachers have different perceptions of teenage pregnancy. Ndlovu (2019) is of the impression that pregnant teenagers are teased and often bullied by teachers in school, which indicates their attitude towards the learners' condition. Some teachers, on the other hand, show sympathy and compassion towards their situation as

they feel education is a right and no learner, despite their situation, should be deprived of that right.

A study done by Ndlovu (2019), revealed the following results:

Teachers felt that no learner should be denied an education because of a ‘mistake’. It might not necessarily be a mistake; outsiders will never really know the reason. The constitution clearly states that all students have a right to an education, and hence, this rule should apply to all.

Despite being pregnant, everyone has basic rights, and one of them is the right to education. Being pregnant should not disadvantage a learner and remove them a school. Along with motherhood, mothers must acquire a level of education so that they are able to find a job and provide for their children.

Teachers should not allow pregnant learners into the classroom, not being we are mean but because it hinders teaching and learning. Much time is wasted as these learners are often absent, running out of the class or easily distracted. Teachers become stressed as they have to reteach the syllabus. Teachers are also not adequately trained to handle teenage pregnancy, so it should not be allowed.

According to du Preez et al. (2019), teachers stated that teenage pregnancy affects the overall teaching-learning situation within a classroom environment. Teachers stated their experiences were often negative as learners often fell asleep, dealing with increased bullying incidences, unwell learners, mood swings and attitudes that affected their attitude towards teachers and colleagues.

A study conducted by Du Preez et al. (2019) revealed responses from teachers which were discussed below:

Teenage pregnancy interferes with performance at school as there is always an academic decline, and learners are always absent, making it difficult for teachers to reteach syllabi. They are often absent as they need to go for check-ups and to the clinic, but this means that vital work in the classroom is being missed out on.

Again, teachers felt inadequately able to handle a pregnant teenage learner within their classroom environment. Teachers often felt overburdened with a change of job occupation,

which was a midwife instead of a teacher. Teachers viewed their opinions on the situation as seen below:

Teachers feel that they are not trained and that they are teachers, not doctors. They also feel like they are unable to deliver the baby because they do not have gloves, there are no clinic rooms or no provision for such situations that may arise, no equipment, no facilities and most importantly, no knowledge on how to deliver a baby or handle a teenage pregnancy.

4.3.8. Theme 8: The impact of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic performance

Theme 8 addressed question number 3 from the interview questions that asked participants - How do you think teenage pregnancy impacts learners' academic performance? When teenagers fall pregnant, they become mothers first and students second. Their schoolwork and studies immediately get neglected. Teenage pregnancy has detrimental effects on the mother's schooling, career and life. When asked how teenage pregnancy impacts learners' academic performance, teachers said that:

Sarah: First and foremost, the academic decline is so significant and evident. I once had an extremely intelligent girl in my class and after finding out she was pregnant, her grades had significantly dropped. It was so sad and heart-breaking because this student was brilliant! When learners find out that they are pregnant, their interest in schoolwork and academic declines as they tend to focus merely on their pregnancy. The sad part is that the poor remain poor, and the rich become richer.

Brenda: I feel that when a teenager falls pregnant, their focus was not only the pregnancy but also on her relationship with the teenager who impregnated her. It may be wrong to say, but my instinct sensed excitement from this learner regarding her pregnancy especially because she was very boastful about it, which I really could not understand. With this, came the academic decline whereby this learner failed the term and eventually resulting in failing the year. As teachers, we want to help but often our hands are tied.

Chante: I remember having a teenage pregnant learner in my class who initially showed no signs of academic decline, however as they progressed through their pregnancy, their academics began to decline. When I had approached the student, she responded saying:

Ma'am I am having a baby." I was shocked. I also noticed changed behaviour (mood swings and extreme attitude), frequent absenteeism and a lack of interest in academics. During the pregnancy the learner is frequently absent due to pregnancy side effects or to attend doctor's appointments. When the learner is in class, they become fatigued resulting in a low concentration level and low performance in the classroom. After the pregnancy the new mother is often unable to enrol at school due to dual responsibilities and having to take care of their child resulting in a school dropout. Teenage pregnancy contributes to a lower academic performance as the focus becomes on the new-born baby and not the mothers schooling career which she is often unable to complete.

Danielle: I recall having more than one teenage pregnancy in my classroom whereby there was a decline in academics with most pregnant teenagers. There was one learner that I taught a few years ago who continued to excel in her studies like she did before her pregnancy. This specific learner returned to school and completed her Matric post pregnancy. This however was an exception, all other cases of pregnancy in my classroom had shown significant decline in academics which did not seem to bother them – the sad reality.

Danielle: When I was 14 years old, I was drinking juice, now these children are drinking beer and Vodka. Where is our government in this? Why are they not helping the youth? Substance abuse is increasing especially in high schools and children almost know that nothing is being done about it. As teachers we try, but we also often scared to reprimand the children as we are afraid, they may hurt us especially while being intoxicated. Another major factor is poverty. Learners grow in impoverishment and raise their families in the same environment hence the cycle continues. Learners who come from a lower earning income home are more likely to fall pregnant at an early age in comparison to a learner from a higher earning income home.

According to King et al. (2006), substance abuse impairs cognitive development, which disrupts academic performance in the classroom. A good academic performance demands a learner to have a healthy mind-set, which is not present when learners are intoxicated. Once a learner is intoxicated, it affects their ability to concentrate, memorise or pay attention to the educator, hence falling behind with the syllabus as they are unable to recall what has been

taught to them. According to Mwangi (2018), substance abuse shrinks the brain, which may lead to permanent loss of information. Hence, the learner is unable to comprehend simple instructions given by the educator. The intake of drugs inhibits learners from reaching their full potential, and often, they become addicted and unable to leave the drug. The use of drugs causes failure of tests, absenteeism, poor grades, and a higher dropout rate. These factors contribute to lower academic performance and overall lower grades.

4.3.9. Theme 9: What are some of the struggles a teenage mother face?

Theme 9 addressed question number 4 from the interview questions that asked participants - What are some of the struggles a teenage mother face? According to Olivapulit (2022) teenage mothers have huge amount of stress and anxiety which often leads to mental health problems. Postpartum depression is another major concern as often teenagers take a very long time to overcome this.

According to TACAAdmin (2020) a teenager is faced with numerous challenges such as creating a balance between raising a baby and academics, the cost involved in raising a baby, a change in social environment and stats during and after pregnancy, in many cases family conflict as parents disregard the pregnant teenager and changes to mental and physical health. Teenagers' bodies are often not equipped to handle a pregnancy which results in health problems that can be detrimental for the baby and the mother.

Sarah: They are lethargic. They cannot concentrate and hence distract others in the classroom. They show a lack of interest in academics. They also face shame as they are teased and often belittled by others. They struggle to carry the weight of the baby as they are kids themselves.

Brenda: Not just mentally, a teenage mother suffers emotionally, physically and even economically. They really battle towards the end of their pregnancies as their bodies are not strong enough to handle a baby. They struggle to carry the unborn baby. They struggle to concentrate. They struggle to function as a teenager should be. They are often absent and hence struggle with the syllabus.

Chante: It was very sad to witness a diligent and bright girl becoming so depressed and turning to drugs during her pregnancy. She became depressed and turned to alcohol and drugs to ease the pain. Social workers got involved and luckily the baby was okay, but

where is the logic in this?? Due to the drug intake, she had many complications during and after her pregnancy and hence was in and out of hospital. It is really sad to see these girls ruin their lives.

Danielle: They face a lot. From losing friends, losing the boy who impregnated them, family drama, social drama its often endless. It's not limited to just physical or emotional stress and anxiety but societal as well.

4.3.10. Theme 10: What physical or emotional changes have you witnessed in learner's pregnancies?

Theme 10 addressed question number 5 from the interview questions that asked participants - What physical or emotional changes have you witnessed in learner's pregnancies?

According to Vishal (2016) emotions once you miss your period may spark anxiety, stress and often confusion. Upon finding out that you are pregnant, sharing that information with family becomes daunting including how you plan on sharing the news with the father of the baby. There are many emotions that teenagers encounter and it's important that they are understood.

Sarah: They no longer care about how they look. They lose their self-esteem and motivation and its evident. They drag their feet through the corridors. They become very withdrawn and to themselves. They don't interact with others and often choose to sit in the back of the classroom. During breaks they choose to sit in the classroom away from others. It is not a pleasant sight.

Brenda: Mostly emotional I feel. The pregnant child becomes very reserved and to themselves. They barely speak about their problems even when asked and this becomes a problem because they lack important information about pregnancy. Physically they break out with acne, hair loss and weight gain which makes them feel worse about themselves and their situation.

Chante: An absolute deterioration in appearance for sure! It was shocking to know I taught the same girl before she became pregnant. Her moods, her attitudes, her abruptness and arrogance infuriated me. It was almost as if she was "proud" of her

behaviour and her actions and nothing else mattered. Perhaps this behaviour was an act to cover up her emotions and her pain, but nevertheless the behaviour was shocking!

Danielle: It depends on the child and the child's situations. I have experienced a few pregnant learners during my teaching experience and each has been a unique one. Some appear to be normal, some depressed and some do not show their emotions. Physically they often break out and start feeling more insecure about themselves. They put on weight and start feeling unattractive which makes things worse.

4.4. Summary

This chapter presented the findings which were derived from the use of interviews and questionnaires. Themes were used to gain a better understanding of teenage pregnancy in a South African high school. The themes were derived from 6 interview questions asked to participants and thereafter analysed. Each theme consisted of sub-themes which were further discussed through this chapter. The next chapter is the final chapter, which will include the summary of findings, recommendations for schools, recommendations for healthcare, recommendations for policy makers and recommendations for the community. This chapter will also include suggestions for further research, limitations of the study and lastly a summary which concluded the chapter and the research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 presented the findings of this study through the use of interviews and questionnaires. The information acquired from the interviews and questionnaires was used to explicitly understand and discuss the research topic. Themes and sub-themes were established and analysed which were derived through the use of interview questions.

This chapter is the final chapter of this research study, which includes a summary of the findings from the research, concluding comments, limitations, recommendations and lastly, an overall conclusion for the research task. This chapter presents a reflective review of this thesis from Chapters 1 to Chapter 5.

5.2. Summary of findings

After conducting extensive research on the topic at hand, it is evident that teenage pregnancy affects teenagers academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally. Teenage pregnancy impacts learners' capabilities in the classroom and, therefore, limits their potential as individuals, with emphasis put on their academic performance. The new mother becomes a mother first and student second, resulting in the teenager often dropping out of school as they are unable to cope with the responsibilities of being a new mother. Teenage pregnancy adds to the stagnation of the new mother, where her life takes a drastic turn once the baby is born. Based on the participants experiences, it is evident that teenage pregnancy within classrooms have a negative impact on both teaching and learning. The findings that were achieved based on the research questions were as follows:

1. What are teachers' views of the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school?

After interviewing four participants, all participants leaned on the fact that teenage pregnancy has a negative effect on academic performance and the social well-being of learners during and after their pregnancy. None of the participants viewed teenage pregnancy as anything positive, as they also witnessed learners not returning to school after their pregnancy.

Teachers were adamant that the Department of Education implement intervention strategies to assist in reducing the alarming rate of teenage pregnancies. Teachers also believed that teenage pregnancy not only affected the learners' academic performance and often their inability to return to school, but it also affected their overall health social, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing.

2. How does teenage pregnancy impact the academic performance of learners in a South African high school?

There is a significant impact of falling pregnant at a young age on one's schooling development. In many cases, the teenager's body is not developed to handle a baby, hence resulting in a significant decline in their health. They may also develop illnesses such as diabetes or high blood pressure due to their pregnancy, which may stay lifelong. Within a classroom environment, learners become lethargic, lazy, unfocused or unbothered about school. They often create a disturbance in the classroom as they become bored or less interested in the lessons being taught. Learners are often absent due to ill health or to attend doctor appointments and, as a result, miss out on valuable content taught. There is an increased chance of learners dropping out and often never returning to school again. They attend school when they feel fit and, in the process, miss vital teaching time. They often must leave the classroom multiple times in a lesson to use the bathroom or to throw up, which creates a constant disturbance.

3. Why is it important to educate learners about various preventative methods available when addressing teenage pregnancy in a South African high school?

It is important to educate learners about preventative methods, as often many learners are unaware of their availability. Teenagers are experimental; hence, contraceptives should be readily available to prevent teenage pregnancies or other conditions such as HIV and STDs. In many households, the topic of sex is unspoken about and is seen as taboo. Learners then are not taught about the importance of abstinence or the use of condoms and other contraceptives. There is a major concern regarding a lack of knowledge about this topic, and often, these topics are never discussed in households, making it very difficult for learners to make the right decision. Learners then experiment and explore without the correct preventative methods and end up falling pregnant.

Teenage pregnancy has a negative effect on a learner's academic performance. The learner loses interest in their academics, and hence, they are unable to perform in the classroom as the side effects of their pregnancy overpower them. The findings indicate that once a teenager falls pregnant, the learner's social, mental, academic, and physical health deteriorates, which could cause harm to both the mother and the new-born baby. Nkosi et al. (2019) agree with the above finding, with the belief that teenage pregnancy has detrimental consequences, which therefore affects emotional behaviour.

Overall, research according to Mwangi (2018) shows that teenage pregnancy negatively contributes to a learner's academic performance, and often, learners are unable to return to school to complete their studies as they become mothers first and students second. In many cases, they become full-time mothers; hence, returning to school to complete their schooling is of no interest to them. This contributes to the cycle of impoverishment in the country. When a teenager falls pregnant, the pregnant mothers' child will likely follow the same path (World Bank, 2022). According to Mathewod and Mekuria (2018), learners' who have babies at a younger age tend to have more health problems and often face unemployment at a very young age. Teenage pregnancy contributes negatively to the learner's academic performance in the classroom and their development, which hinders the learner from reaching their full potential.

5.3. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory with research findings

In this study, the effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners was discussed with feedback given from participants through the use of interviews and questionnaires. According to Twintoh, Anku, Amu, Darteh & Korsah (2021) Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory identifies the importance of the immediate environment (microsystem) through the various systems such as mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronsystem. Based on research conducted, it is evident that teenage pregnancy can be linked to every system in different forms. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides a framework to explore levels and the interactions between teenage pregnancy and the ecological system.

5.4. Recommendations for schools

Teenage pregnancy affects learners worldwide. It is recommended that sex education be taught during their Life Orientation periods to ensure that learners are aware of what teenage pregnancy is, how it affects their academic performance, their self-esteem, and its

consequences, along with various methods that can be used to prevent teenage pregnancy from occurring. Saito (1998) supports this recommendation as it is believed that there is a need for sexual education at an early age to prevent unwanted pregnancies during the adolescent years. Teachers must promote teaching sex education in the classroom, and when it is spoken of, learners can contribute to the lesson by asking questions and gaining knowledge on situations that they were previously unaware of. During Life Orientation lessons, teachers must discuss various contraceptive methods and how they can be used to prevent pregnancies from happening. A learner's lack of knowledge about contraceptives and pregnancy contributes to the increasing rates of teenage pregnancy in South Africa. With this being said, teachers must emphasize that using contraceptives does not mean that a girl will not fall pregnant, as a contraceptive is considered a safer option than merely practising unsafe sex.

An intervention strategy would be having workshops and programs in schools so learners can understand the consequences of substance abuse more so on their health, decisions, and social well-being. Having real substance abuse victims speak about their experiences and trauma may encourage learners not to partake in substance abuse as they can identify the consequences of those actions (Hacker et al., 2021).

Substance abuse among teenagers is one of the major concerns that promote and increase teenage pregnancies. Binge drinking, smoking marijuana and taking drugs such as heroin and cocaine make teenagers delusional, hence the inability of not being in the right state of mind. It is therefore recommended that workshops and programs be conducted in schools so learners can understand the consequences of substance abuse. Having real substance abuse victims speak about their experiences and trauma may encourage learners not to partake in substance abuse as they can identify the consequences of actions. Teachers, parents, and the community play a vital role in pivoting substance abuse. Teachers can educate learners and guide them, parents can monitor their children and ensure that they instil morals and values, and the community can provide support by creating neighbourhood support groups whereby elders, victims and religious organisations can create awareness. Johnson et al. (2008) support this recommendation with the belief that the community, parents, and teachers can create various intervention programmes to combat substance abuse. Early interventions prevent substance abuse, which will, therefore, prevent consequences such as teenage pregnancies from occurring.

Over the years, gender-based violence and gender inequalities have increased drastically. This, in turn, increases the chances of teenage pregnancy and unemployment rates in South Africa. It is recommended that awareness be raised so that both men and women know their rights. This can be achieved by having programs available in communities and schools to encourage men and women to speak up. Teachers can assist in reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy by organizing workshops that show victims how to defend themselves and what to do had they been in specific situations, ensuring that victims are not helpless and vulnerable. It is imperative that victims, who can be men or women, know their rights and responsibilities and what actions to take to prevent them from being victims (Okeke et al., 2022). Having intervention programmes available in communities and schools encourages men and women to speak up. Having workshops showing victims how to defend themselves and what to do had they been in specific situations ensures that victims are not helpless and vulnerable. It is imperative that victims, who can either be men or women, know their rights and responsibilities and what actions can be taken to prevent them from being victims. USAid (n. d) supports this recommendation as it is believed that when victims are educated and told what can be done in situations, they can become powerful.

Poverty contributes to teenage pregnancy. In many areas, having children at an early age is recommended, which perpetuates the cycle of poverty as the teenager is often unemployed. I recommend educating learners by conducting seminars in these areas to change their mind set and allow them to speak up and not necessarily follow old traditions. Since times have changed, it is vital to ensure that decisions that are made today, which are often influenced by external factors, are not the same as compared to 30 years ago. Nacosa (2018) supports this recommendation with the belief that childbearing is more common in rural areas in comparison to urban areas. Nacosa (2018) also believes that teenage pregnant mothers raise children who will often follow in their mother's direction.

Nabugoomu, Seruwagi and Hanning (2020) believe that teenage pregnancies at an economic level are an increasing phenomenon. Skills like woodwork and handcrafting can be facilitated by governments in schools to keep learners interested in schooling and promote self-employment for girls as well. This can be used to earn an income instead of turning to sexual activities to earn a living. Another recommendation is that training institutes should implement vocational skills within the curriculum to train students who can then use these skills to earn a living. These skills can include artwork, needlework, making jewellery and plaiting hair.

5.5. Recommendations for healthcare

According to Fleming, O’Driscoll, Becker and Spitzer (2015), healthcare should adjust prenatal care while offering multidisciplinary care and attention, which should be easily accessible to teenagers in the early stages of their pregnancy. It is also imperative that healthcare workers and facilities are more sympathetic, sensitive and considerate towards teenage pregnant learners despite their situation. Dietary requirements must be given to teenage mothers early in their pregnancies to promote the delivery of a healthy baby without any developmental problems. In many cases, families become so infuriated with the teenager that they forget to provide support, which can be detrimental to the teenager and the unborn baby (Guitierrez and King, 1993).

5.6. Recommendations for policy makers

Policymakers and the Department of Education should implement programmes to engage in girl’s education (Shrestha, 2012). Social media can also be used to generate awareness of teenage pregnancy. According to Jessasalards (2020), recommendations such as information sharing, sexual education, contraceptive guidance and a supportive environment must be implemented by schools which must be encouraged by the Department of Education and policy makers to ensure support and important information is given to teenage pregnant girls. These can be implemented within schools that encounter teenage pregnancies. Ideally, since the Department of Education promotes equality for all learners, they need to ensure that schools provide the necessary resources, workshops and seminars to provide imperative information for teenagers.

5.7. Recommendations for the community

There are numerous non-profit organizations (NPO), such as Keep the Dream196, Girl Pride Africa, Teen Moms Youth Development, Healthy teen network, Planned parenthood, Breath of life centre and Rays of Hope Foundation, to name a few, that can empower teen mother’s skills development and mentorship ensuring that these teens become good mothers (Mary, 2020). These organizations throughout South Africa provide support and guidance to teenage mothers and their families. Teachers can assist by making learners aware of the various NPOs that are available (Chalumbira, 2021). Communities can also become aware of them by handing out flyers and encouraging these NPOs to visit schools and educate learners about teenage pregnancy. Schools, teachers, and the community must ensure that learners are aware of these

organizations so whereby they can seek guidance and prevent the increasing number of teenage pregnancies

5.8. Suggestions for further research

This research study focused on the impacts of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school. This research was limited to four participants who respectively taught at the one school chosen to conduct research. It would have been intriguing to expand the scope of this study by hearing other teacher's perspectives of teenage pregnancy and academic performance from other schools. This research included teachers only, hearing a learner's stance and views on the topic would have been interesting to develop the study while getting first-hand information from pregnant learners themselves.

The research could have made use of a visual participatory research whereby learners themselves could have been imaginative and embrace their own involvements and emotions in the study. According to De Lange (2012) the visual-participatory approach works well when people cannot find words to articulate their ideas. This approach allows for creativity, communication and many minds coming together to strategize and come forth with the best results.

5.9. Limitations

Below is a list of limitations that were established during this study. The limitations were as follows:

1. Limited knowledge about the impacts and how to deal with teenage pregnancy in a schooling environment as this is seen as a sensitive topic, and teachers feel unequipped to deal with the trauma of pregnancies in the classroom.
2. Another limitation was a limited amount of knowledge regarding the experiences of teachers; therefore, teachers are unable to determine how teenage pregnancy affects academic performance within a South African classroom.
3. A limited amount of knowledge regarding the experiences of teachers; therefore, teachers are unable to determine how teenage pregnancy affects academic performance within a South African classroom.

4. Another limitation was time constraints, as participants were not always available to answer interview questions or complete questionnaires due to extra murals after school or extra remedial lessons. Another limitation was the availability of teachers.
5. Availability of teachers, and often, many teachers do not want to share their experience; hence, getting enough teachers to complete the study becomes challenging. There are often multiple disturbances during and after school that may prevent interview questions from being answered or questionnaires completed, which, therefore, hinders me from obtaining information timeously. There are often multiple disturbances during and after school that may prevent interview questions from being answered or questionnaires completed, which, therefore, hinders the researcher from obtaining information timeously.
6. Participants may not reveal their true experiences and the impacts of their experience of having a teenage pregnancy within their classroom.
7. Many cultures promote pregnancy at an early age as they are able to groom their child from a young age and promote employment within their household.

Time constraints were a limitation as, in many cases, teachers were unable to avail themselves to answer the interview questions or questionnaires due to unforeseen circumstances such as workshops, extracurricular or duties, which therefore delayed the research. I had to wait for a candidate as she missed her interview timeslot due to extra-curricular activities.

A limitation was the choice of case study design within context of this research. The use of case studies limited the generalisation of results to South African schools. Another limitation is the drawbacks mentioned in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. The choice of interviews and questionnaires were time consuming for participants which posed as another limitation. According to Charlesworth Author Services (2022) having a larger sample size provides stronger and more reliable results because they contain smaller margins of error hence another limitation in this study was the number of chosen participants.

5.10. Conclusion

The findings in this research were vital in understanding how teenage pregnancy affects a learner's academic performance in a South African school. Teachers, schools, parents, the community, and the Department of Education must come together to create awareness and

eliminate teenage pregnancy in schools today as it impedes the learner's professional development. Various factors contribute to teenage pregnancy. Teachers need to ensure that they are doing their part to decrease the rates of this global phenomenon, more so within a South African classroom.

Various sources of literature, interviews and questionnaires were used to gain information and analyse teenage pregnancy along with its effects on learners' academic performance in schools. Teenage pregnancy limits the potential of hundreds of women in the professional world, and hence, they have little or no drive to grow in a dream career. This is because once they give birth, they become mothers first and students later or sometimes never.

REFERENCES

- Africa Renewal. (2021, February 5). Breaking the silence that led to surge in teenage pregnancies | *Africa Renewal*. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/february-2021/breaking-silence-led-surge-teenage-pregnancies>
- Ahmed, A. (2008). Ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions : Qualitative versus quantitative. Assistant Lecturer at The Curriculum & Instruction Dept., Faculty of education, Helwan University, Egypt.
- Akba Yrak, B. (2000). A comparison of two data collecting methods: Interviews and questionnaires. *Journal of Education*, 18(1), 1–10. <http://www.efdergi.hacettepe.edu.tr/yonetim/icerik/makaleler/1051-published.pdf>
- Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2021). What is qualitative in research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 44(4), 599–608. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-021-09497-w>
- Bana, A., Bhat, V. G., Godlwana, X., Libazi, S., Maholwana, Y., Marafungana, N., Mona, K., Mbonisweni, A. M., Mbulawa, N., Mofuka, J., Mohlajoa, N. A., Nondula, N. N., Qubekile, Y., & Ramnaran, B. (2010). Knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of adolescents in relation to STIs, pregnancy, contraceptive utilization and substance abuse in the Mhlakulo region, Eastern cape. *South African Family Practice*, 52(2), 154–158. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/20786204.2010.10873959>
- Barnes, T. (2013). *Pregnancy and Bodies of Knowledge in a South African University*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43905117>
- Ben-Joseph, E. P. (2017, February). Having a healthy pregnancy (for teens). Nemours Teen health. <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/pregnancy.html>
- Berk, L. E. (2013). *Child development* (9th Ed.). Pearson Boston.
- Bertram, C., & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research*. Van Schaik.
- Bhengu, L. (2021, August 17). Gauteng records more than 23 000 teen pregnancies in one year, some moms as young as 10 / *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/gauteng-records-more-than-23-000->

teen-pregnancies-in-one-year-some-moms-as-young-as-10-20210817

- Birt, J. (2023, February 4). Naturalistic observation: Definition, benefits and examples / *Indeed.com*. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/naturalistic-observation>
- Blakeley, S. (2023, November 21). Epistemology | Definition, types & examples - Video & lesson transcript / *Study.com*. <https://study.com/learn/lesson/epistemology-examples-types.html>
- Bouchrika, I. (2023, December 2). *How to write research methodology: Overview, tips, and techniques*. Research.Com. <https://research.com/research/how-to-write-research-methodology>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Quantity and quality in social research*. Taylor ,& Francis London.
- Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, C. (2020). How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice*, 2(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s42466-020-00059-z>
- Cantero, C. (2019). *How to Write a Literature Review*. San José State University Writing Center.
- Castleberry, A., & Nolen, A. (2018). Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: Is it as easy as it sounds? *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 10(6), 807–815. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2018.03.019>
- Caulfield, J. (2019). *Textual analysis | Guide, 3 approaches & examples*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/textual-analysis/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Adolescents and STDs | Sexually Transmitted Diseases | CDC*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/life-stages-populations/stdfact-teens.htm>

Chacham, A. S., Simão, A. B., & Caetano, A. J. (2016). Gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health among low-income youth in three Brazilian cities. *Reproductive Health Matters*, 24(47), 141–152. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rhm.2016.06.009>

Charlesworth Author Services. (2022). *The importance of having Large Sample Sizes for your research*. Charlesworth Author Services. <https://www.cwauthors.com/article/importance-of-having-large-sample-sizes-for-research#:~:text=Statistical%20importance%20of%20having%20a,value%20are%20from%20the%20mean.>

Chauke, H. (2013). *The challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary schools : the case of Hlanganani South Circuit*. [Masters dissertation, University of Limpopo Turfloop Campus]. <http://ulspace.ul.ac.za/handle/10386/962>

Chorzempa-Schainis, L. (2019). *Teaching your teen about birth control*. Healthychildren.Org. <https://www.eehealth.org/blog/2019/07/birth-control-options/>

Cleland, J. A. (2017). The qualitative orientation in medical education research. *Korean Journal of Medical Education*, 29(2), 61–71. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3946/kjme.2017.53>

Clements, J. (2023). *Benefits of using interviews in research*. Mos Company. <https://www.legaltranscriptionservice.com/blog/what-the-benefits-of-using-interviews-in-research/>

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (Seventh ed). Routledge London. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720967>

Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *MEDSURG Nursing*, 25(6), 435–436. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30304614/>

Connery, H. S., Albright, B. B., & Rodolico, J. M. (2014). Adolescent substance use and unplanned pregnancy: Strategies for risk reduction. *Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinics of North America*, 41(2), 191–203. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ogc.2014.02.011>

- Costa, M. (2023). *What is primary data? And how do you collect it?* SurveyCTO. <https://www.surveyccto.com/best-practices/primary-data-collection/>
- Cowling, N. (2023). *South Africa: Teenage pregnancies, by age 2018-2022.* <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1115755/share-of-teenage-pregnancies-in-south-africa-by-age/>
- Crabtree, M., & Nehme, A. (2023). *What is Data Analysis? An Expert Guide With Examples.* Datacamp. <https://www.datacamp.com/blog/what-is-data-analysis-expert-guide>
- Crosley, J. (2023, August 9). *What is thematic analysis? Explainer + examples.* Grad Coach. <https://gradcoach.com/what-is-thematic-analysis/>
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, *11*(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100>
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2023, March 19). *Adolescence | Definition, Characteristics, & Stages | Britannica.* Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/science/adolescence>
- Dawadi, S. (2020). Thematic analysis approach: A step by step guide for ELT research practitioners. *Journal of NELTA*, *25*(1–2), 62–71. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v25i1-2.49731>
- Debois, S. (2023). *5 different AI tools for various types of consulting.* <https://pointerpro.com/blog/5-ai-tools-for-different-types-of-consulting/>
- De Lange, N. (2012). *Participatory visual methodologies.* Sage Publishers.
- Delve Ho L, & Limpaecher A. (2020). *How to do thematic analysis.* <https://delvetool.com/blog/thematicanalysis>
- Department of Basic Education. (2011). *Curriculum assessment policy statement grades 10-12: Life Orientation.* <http://www.education.gov.za>
- Department of Education. (2001). *Education white paper 6 (Special Needs Education): Building an inclusive education and training system* (No. 6). <https://www.gov.za/documents/special-needs-education-education-white-paper-6>

- Department of Education. (1996). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, 182 (1996)*. <https://www.gov.za/documents/south-african-schools-act>
- National policy on the prevention and management of learner pregnancy in schools*, 17 (2018) (testimony of Department of Basic Education). www.gpwonline.co.za
- Dlamini, N. A. (2014). *The psychosocial experiences of teenage learners in two selected secondary schools in the Ubumbano circuit at Impendle*. [Masters dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal]. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/12676>
- Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Lolwana, P. (2002). *Educational Psychology in Social Context*. Second Edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press
- Draga, L., & Gcilitshana, S. (2019, July 25). Why learners need easy access to condoms in schools / *City Press*. <https://www.news24.com/citypress/voices/why-learners-need-easy-access-to-condoms-in-schools-20190725>
- Drew, C. (2023, October 1). *7 microsystem examples & simple definition (Bronfenbrenner)*. HelpfulProfessor.com. <https://helpfulprofessor.com/microsystem-examples/>
- Dryden, J. (2011, February 3). Pregnancies more likely in teens who smoke, drink and use drugs. *NewsRoom*. <https://source.wustl.edu/2011/02/pregnancies-more-likely-in-teens-who-smoke-drink-and-use-drugs/>
- Du Preez, A., Johan Botha, A., Rabie, T., & Manyathi, D. G. (2019). Secondary school teachers' experiences related to learner teenage pregnancies and unexpected deliveries at school. *Health SA Gesondheid*, 24. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/hsag.v24i0.1079>
- Easwaramoorthy, M., & Zarinpoush, F. (2022). Interviewing for research. In *Canada Volunteerism Initiative* (pp. 1–3). Canada Volunteerism Initiative.
- EasyBasics. (2017, July 13). *Strengths and weaknesses of ecological theory (Essay sample)*. Easy Basics. <https://essaybasics.com/blog/strengths-and-weaknesses-of-ecological-theory-essay-sample/>
- Elliott, S., & Davis, J. M. (2018). Challenging taken-for-granted ideas in early childhood education: A critique of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in the age of post-

- humanism. In A. Cutter-Mackenzie, K. Malone, & E. Barratt Hacking (Eds.), *Research Handbook on Childhoodnature* (pp. 1–36). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51949-4_60-1
- Enago Academy. (2022, November 18). *How to conduct field research study? - A complete guide*. Enago academy. <https://www.enago.com/academy/how-conduct-field-research-study-complete-guide/>
- eNCA. (2023, January 15). Teen pregnancy | More than 100,000 girls give birth in SA every year. ENCA. <https://www.enca.com/analysis/teen-pregnancy-more-100000-girls-give-birth-sa-every-year>
- Fleming, N., O’Driscoll, T., Becker, G., Spitzer, R. F., Allen, L., Millar, D., Brain, P., Dalziel, N., Dubuc, E., Hakim, J., Murphy, D., Spitzer, R. F., O’Driscoll, T., Becker, G., & Spitzer, R. F. (2015). Adolescent pregnancy guidelines. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada*, 37(8), 740–756. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S1701-2163\(15\)30180-8](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S1701-2163(15)30180-8)
- Francis, D. (2012). Teacher narratives on the teaching of sexuality and HIV/AIDS education. *Communitas*, 17, 45–59.
- Francois, K. (2015). Socio-economic factors associated with teenage pregnancy in Rwanda: A secondary analysis of Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey data from 2014-2015. [Masters degree. Uppsala Universitet]
- FullStory. (2023, February 24). *What is qualitative data? How to understand, collect, and analyze it*. Fullstory. <https://www.fullstory.com/qualitative-data/>
- Garcia, K., & Alston, C. (2023, November 21). *Field Study Definition, Methods & Examples*. Study.com. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/field-study-definition-research-quiz.html>
- Garwood, S. K., Gerassi, L., Jonson-Reid, M., Plax, K., & Drake, B. (2015). More than poverty: The effect of child abuse and neglect on teen pregnancy risk. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 57(2), 164–168. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.05.004>
- George, T. (2023, February 6). *What is a focus group | Step-by-step guide & examples*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.co.uk/research-methods/focus-groups/>
- George, T. (2023, November 20). *What Is a Theoretical Framework? | Guide to Organizing*.

Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/theoretical-framework/>

Ghorbel, M. (2023, February 27). The concept of data generation. *Marktechpost*. <https://www.marktechpost.com/2023/02/27/the-concept-of-data-generation/>

Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291–295. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1038/bdj.2008.192>

Gongala, S., Schiff, H., & Patwal, S. (2023, November 16). *11 negative side effects of teenage pregnancy on society*. Mom Junction. https://www.momjunction.com/articles/effects-of-teen-pregnancy-on-society_00384725/

Gordon, E. J., & Prohaska, T. R. (2006). The ethics of withdrawal from study participation. *Accountability in Research*, 13(4), 285–309. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/08989620600848645>

Govender, D., Naidoo, S., & Taylor, M. (2019). Knowledge, attitudes and peer influences related to pregnancy, sexual and reproductive health among adolescents using maternal health services in Ugu, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *BMC Public Health*, 19(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7242-y>

Gustafsson, S., & Worku, S. (2007). Teenage motherhood and long-run outcomes in South Africa. In *South Africa in Focus: Economic, Political and Social Issues* (Paper No. 07-024/3; Tinbergen Institute Discussion). Amsterdam and Rotterdam: Tinbergen Institute. <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/86593>

Gutierrez, Y., & King, J. C. (1993). Nutrition during teenage pregnancy. *Pediatric Annals*, 22(2), 99–108. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3928/0090-4481-19930201-07>

Guy-Evans, O. (2023, January 17). *Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory*. SimplyPsychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bronfenbrenner.html>

Gwala, L. (2022, March 22). *Recent policy around teenage pregnancy within the South African basic education sector*. Go Legal. <https://www.golegal.co.za/policy-teenage-pregnancy/>

Gyan, C. (2013). The effects of teenage pregnancy on the educational attainment of girls at Chorkor, a Suburb of Accra. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2013.v4n3p53>

Hacker, M., Firk, C., Konrad, K., Paschke, K., Neulen, J., Herpertz-Dahlmann, B., & Dahmen, B. (2021). Pregnancy complications, substance abuse, and prenatal care predict birthweight in adolescent mothers. *Archives of Public Health*, 79(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s13690-021-00642-z>

Hartin, T. (2023, November 21). *Bronfenbrenner's microsystem theory | Definition & Examples*. Study.com. <https://study.com/learn/lesson/brofenbrenner-microsystem-theory-examples.html>

Hassan, M. (2023). *Primary Data - Types, Methods and Examples - Research Method*. Researchmethod.Net. <https://researchmethod.net/primary-data/>

Hendricks, E., & Tanga, P. T. (2016). Life orientation and adolescent pregnancy in selected secondary schools in Blue Crane Route Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 7(4), 212–220. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2016.11885719>

Hlongwa, M., Mutambo, C., & Hlongwana, K. (2023). “In fact, that’s when i stopped using contraception”: A qualitative study exploring women’s experiences of using contraceptive methods in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *BMJ Open*, 13(4). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-063034>

Indeed Editorial Team. (2023, August 1). *What is research methodology? (Why it’s important and types)*. Indeed. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/research-methodology>

Jackson, A. D., & Sherpa, M. L. (2020). The evolving relationship between conservative states and access to contraception. *Seminars in Perinatology*, 44(5). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.semperi.2020.151272>

Jansen, D., & Warren K. (2023, April). *What is research methodology? Definition + examples*. *What Is Research Methodology?* Gradcoach. <https://gradcoach.com/what-is-research-methodology/>

Jilcha Sileyew, K. (2020). Research Design and Methodology. In *Cyberspace*. IntechOpen.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.85731>

- Johnson, K., Courser, M., Holder, H., Miller, B., Ogilvie, K., Moore, R., Collins, D., Saltz, B., Ogilvie, D., & Saylor, B. (2007). A community prevention intervention to reduce youth from inhaling and ingesting harmful legal products. *Journal of Drug Education*, 37(3), 227–247. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2190/DE.37.3.b>
- Jonas, K., Crutzen, R., Van Den Borne, B., Sewpaul, R., & Reddy, P. (2016). Teenage pregnancy rates and associations with other health risk behaviours: A three-wave cross-sectional study among South African school-going adolescents. *Reproductive Health*, 13(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-016-0170-8>
- Jones, E. F., Forrest, J. D., Goldman, N., Henshaw, S. K., Lincoln, R., Rosoff, J. I., Westoff, C. F. & Wulf, D. (2018). Teenage pregnancy in developed countries: determinants and policy implications. *Fam Plann Perspect*, 17(2), 53-63.
- Kanku, T. (2010). Attitudes, perceptions and understanding amongst teenagers regarding teenage pregnancy, sexuality and contraception in Taung. *South African Family Practice*, 52(6), 563–572. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/20786204.2010.10874048>
- Kassa, G. M., Arowojolu, A. O., Odukogbe, A. A., & Yalew, A. W. (2018). Prevalence and determinants of adolescent pregnancy in Africa: A systematic review and Meta-analysis. *Reproductive Health*, 15(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-018-0640-2>
- Kate, M. M. (2012). *The effects of teenage pregnancy on the behaviour of learners at secondary schools in the Mankweng area, Limpopo* [Masters dissertation, University of South Africa]. <https://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/9353>
- Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical Teacher*, 42(8), 846–854. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2020.1755030>
- King, K. M., Meehan, B. T., Trim, R. S., & Chassin, L. (2006). Substance use and academic outcomes: Synthesizing findings and future directions. *Addiction*, 101(12), 1688–1689. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2006.01695.x>

- Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5), 26. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26>
- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 120–124. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092>
- Kmietowicz, Z. (2002). US and UK are top in teenage pregnancy rates. *National Library of Medicine*, 324(7350), 1354. doi: 10.1136/bmj.324.7350.1354
- Lambani, M. N. (2015). Poverty the cause of teenage pregnancy in Thulamela Municipality. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 6(2), 171–176. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2015.11885656>
- Lindemann, N. (2023, June 7). *12 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires*. pointerpro. <https://pointerpro.com/blog/questionnaire-pros-and-cons/>
- Longe, B. (2022, July 27). *What is secondary data? + [Examples, sources, & analysis]*. Formplus. <https://www.formpl.us/blog/secondary-data>
- Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K. M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2015). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide*. Family Health International.
- Maemeko, E. L., Nkengbeza, D., & Chokomosi, T. M. (2018). The impact of teenage pregnancy on academic performance of grade 7 learners at a school in the Zambezi region. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 06(09), 88–100. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2018.69006>
- Main, P. (2023, May 5). *Bronfenbrenner's ecological model*. Structural learning. <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/bronfenbrenners-ecological-model>
- Majola, D. (2021, July). *Teen pregnancies not just a Gauteng problem, it's a national crisis*. Newschannel. <https://ewn.co.za/2021/08/30/motshekga-teen-pregnancies-not-just-a-gauteng-problem-it-s-a-national-crisis>
- Makua, M. (2022, January 15). OPINION | Manala Makua: Teen pregnancies - society needs to assist govt in battling this scourge. *News24*.

<https://www.news24.com/news24/opinions/columnists/guestcolumn/opinion-manalamakua-teen-pregnancies-society-needs-to-assist-govt-in-battling-this-scourge-20220115>

Market Research. (2022, June 29). *What is a questionnaire | Types of questionnaires in research*. Cint. <https://www.cint.com/blog/what-is-a-questionnaire-and-how-is-it-used-in-research>

Mashele, F. (2023, May 12). Is teenage pregnancy becoming a norm in SA? *IOL*. <https://www.iol.co.za/sundayindependent/news/is-teenage-pregnancy-becoming-a-norm-in-sa-91f2571c-c659-4911-b84b-b0028bb1d7d6>

Mashuhlane, K., Segalo, L., & Ngobeni, T. (2023). Teachers' perceptions of the impact of teenage pregnancy on learners' academic performance: a case of selected schools in South Africa. *EUREKA: Social and Humanities, 1*, 54–60. <https://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2023.002572>

Maslowsky, J., Hendrick, C. E., & Stritzel, H. (2021). Mechanisms linking teenage mothers' educational attainment with self-reported health at age 50. *BMC Women's Health, 21*(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-020-01150-y>

Mathewos, S., & Mekuria, A. (2018). Teenage pregnancy and its associated factors among school adolescents of Arba Minch Town, Southern Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Journal of Health Sciences, 28*(3), 287–298. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4314/ejhs.v28i3.6>

Matlala, S. F., Nolte, A. G. W., & Temane, M. A. (2014). Secondary school teachers' experiences of teaching pregnant learners in Limpopo province, South Africa. *South African Journal of Education, 34*(4). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15700/201412052112>

McCombes, S. (2023, November 20). *What is a case study? | Definition, examples & methods*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/case-study/>

Mchunu, G., Peltzer, K., Tutshana, B., & Seutlwadi, L. (2012). Adolescent pregnancy and associated factors in South African youth. *African Health Sciences, 12*(4), 426–434. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v12i4.5>

McLean, K. C., & Mansfield, C. D. (2012). The co-construction of adolescent narrative

- identity: Narrative processing as a function of adolescent age, gender, and maternal scaffolding. *Developmental Psychology*, 48(2), 436–447. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025563>
- Mcleod, S., & Guy-Evans, O. (2023, December 13). *What is a questionnaire and how is it used in research?* SimplyPdsychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/questionnaires.html>
- Meem, M. I. (2020). *Importance of epistemology and ontology in research design and methodology*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-epistemology-ontology-research-design-mahabuba-islam-meem/>
- Mihas, P. (2022). Qualitative research methods: Approaches to qualitative data analysis. In *International Encyclopedia of Education: Fourth Edition* (pp. 302–313). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-818630-5.11029-2>
- Molapo, C. M., Adams, J. D., Zulu, S. P., & Mabusela, M. S. (2014). Schooling-going mothers' experiences in relation to teachers: A case of high schools in Leribe District, Lesotho. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20), 1269–1276. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n20p1269>
- Moon, K., & Blackman, D. (2014). A guide to understanding social science research for natural scientists. *Conservation Biology*, 28(5), 1167–1177. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.12326>
- Morrell, R. (2003). Silence, sexuality and HIV/AIDS in South African schools. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 30(1), 41–62. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03216780>
- Mpanza, N. D., & Nzima, D. R. (2010). Attitudes of educators towards teenage pregnancy. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 431–439. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.118>
- Munyai, H. S., Makhando, L., Ramathuba, D. U., & Lebese, R. T. (2023). Challenges on sexual health communication with secondary school learners, Limpopo province. *Curationis*, 46(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/curationis.v46i1.2321>

- Muribwathoho, H. N. (2015). *The state of psychological services in secondary schools : experiences of principals, school counsellors, educators and learners*. [Doctoral degree, University of KwaZulu-Natal]. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/14034>
- Mwangi, J. W. (2018). *Influence of drug use on academic performance among secondary school students: A case study of Lamudiac Secondary School, Njoro sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya* [Post graduate diploma, University of Nairobi]. <http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/105147>
- Nabugoomu, J., Seruwagi, G. K., & Hanning, R. (2020). What can be done to reduce the prevalence of teen pregnancy in rural Eastern Uganda?: Multi-stakeholder perceptions. *Reproductive Health*, 17(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-020-00984-x>
- NACOSA. (2018). *The truth about teen pregnancy*. NACOSA. <http://www.nacosa.org.za/2018/11/26/the-truth-about-teen-pregnancy/>
- Ndlovu, T. S. (2019). *Perceptions of educators towards teenage pregnancy in selected schools in uMkhanyakude District: implications for action*. [Masters dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal]. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/19045>
- Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (2020). Ecological theories. In *Theories of Adolescent Development* (pp. 313–335). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-815450-2.00011-5>
- News24. (2023, March 15). Teen pregnancy rife in SA. *News24*. <https://www.news24.com/news24/community-newspaper/express-news/teen-pregnancy-rife-in-sa-20230314>
- Nickerson, C., & Mcleod, S. (2023, December). *Interpretivism paradigm & research philosophy*. Simply Sociology. <https://simplysociology.com/interpretivism-paradigm.html>
- Nkosi, N. N., & Pretorius, E. (2019). The influence of teenage pregnancy on education: Perceptions of educators at a Secondary School in Tembisa, Gauteng. *Social Work (South Africa)*, 55(1), 108–116. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15270/55-1-698>

- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Ntsoane, R. G., Mamogobo, P. M., & Mothiba, T. M. (2015). Learners' perceptions on teenage pregnancy at Phuti-Nare High School in Sekhukhune district, Limpopo Province, South Africa. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, 1(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.10520/EJC183579>
- Nyirenda, L., Kumar, M. B., Theobald, S., Sarker, M., Simwinga, M., Kumwenda, M., Johnson, C., Hatzold, K., Corbett, E. L., Sibanda, E., & Taegtmeier, M. (2020). Using research networks to generate trustworthy qualitative public health research findings from multiple contexts. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0895-5>
- Nzama, A. P. L. (2004). *The effects of teenage pregnancy on the school life of adolescent girls* [Masters dissertation, University of Kwazulu-Natal]. <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/3203>
- OCHA. (2021, August 23). *Teen pregnancies in South Africa jump 60% during COVID-19 pandemic - South Africa | ReliefWeb*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/south-africa/teen-pregnancies-south-africa-jump-60-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- Okeke, S. R., Idriss-Wheeler, D., & Yaya, S. (2022). Adolescent pregnancy in the time of COVID-19: what are the implications for sexual and reproductive health and rights globally? *Reproductive Health*, 19(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-022-01505-8>
- Olivapulit7. (2022, May 31). *What are some of the struggles that teenage pregnancy faces?* Brainly. <https://brainly.ph/question/28672086>
- OpenLearn. (2020). 4.2 - *The social ecological perspective: Advantages and limitations*. <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=99099§ion=4.2>
- Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M., & Snape, D. (2014). The foundations of qualitative research. *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, 2(7), 52–55.

- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Pambi, H. I., Bukasa, A. K., Makola, J. K., Nsopa, E. K., Bwiyi, J. Z., Mupepe, R. Y., & Ngonga, A. A. (2023). Parents' views on adolescent sex education in the home setting. *Open Access Library Journal*, 10(09), 1–10. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110605>
- Paquette, D., & Ryan, J. (2001). *Brofenbrenner's ecological systems theory*. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/sites/default/files/paquetteryanwebquest_20091110.pdf
- Pathak, V., Jena, B., & Kalra, S. (2013). Qualitative research. *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 4(3), 192. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4103/2229-3485.115389>
- Pazol, K., Zapata, L. B., Tregear, S. J., Mautone-Smith, N., & Gavin, L. E. (2015). Impact of contraceptive education on contraceptive knowledge and decision making: A systematic review. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 49(2), S46–S56. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.03.031>
- Pervin, N., & Mokhtar, M. (2022). The interpretivist research paradigm: A subjective notion of a social context. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v11-i2/12938>
- Pillay, N. (2023, February 13). *EXPERT OPINION: Pregnant learners in South Africa need creches and compassion to keep them in school*. Centre for the advancement of scholarship. https://www.up.ac.za/centre-for-the-advancement-of-scholarship/news/post_3127452-expert-opinion-pregnant-learners-in-south-africa-need-creches-and-compassion-to-keep-them-in-school
- Pogoy, A. M., Verzosa, E. D. R., Coming, E. D. N. S., & Agustino, R. G. (2014). Lived experiences of early pregnancy among teenagers: A phenomenological study. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(2), 157–169. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324834063>

- Ponelis, S. R. (2015). Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: A case of information systems research in small and medium enterprises. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 10, 535–550. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.28945/2339>
- Pritha Bhandari. (2023, June 22). *Ethical Considerations in Research | Types & Examples*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/research-ethics/>
- Priya, A. (2021). Case study methodology of qualitative research: Key attributes and navigating the conundrums in its application. *Sociological Bulletin*, 70(1), 94–110. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920970318>
- Proofed. (2022, March 1). *Research paradigms: Explanation and examples*. Proofed. <https://proofed.com/writing-tips/research-paradigms-explanation-and-examples/>
- Quantilope. (2023, December). *Dependability and trustworthiness in qualitative research*. Quantilope. <https://www.quantilope.com/resources/glossary-trustworthiness-in-qualitative-research>
- Rahman, A. (2019, October 12). *A presentation on questionnaire*. Slideshare. <https://www.slideshare.net/ArifaRahman10/a-presentation-on-questionnaire-arifa-rahman-181400391>
- Ramalepa, T. N., Ramukumba, T. S., & Masala-Chokwe, M. E. (2021). Teenage pregnancies in bapong schools, madibeng local municipality: Teachers' views. *South African Journal of Education*, 41(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v41n2a1646>
- Ramulumo, M. R., & Pitsoe, V. J. (2013). Teenage pregnancy in South African schools: Challenges, trends and policy issues. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(13), 755–760. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5901/MJSS.2013.V4N13P755>
- Resnik, D. B. (2020, December 23). *What is ethics in research & why is it important*. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm>
- Sago. (2023). *The importance of establishing credibility in qualitative research*. <https://sago.com/en/resources/blog/the-importance-of-establishing-credibility-in->

qualitative-research/

- Saito, M. I. (1998). Sex education in school: Preventing unwanted pregnancy in adolescents. *International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics*, 63(SUPPL. 1), S157–S160. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7292\(98\)00199-4](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0020-7292(98)00199-4)
- Salehi, A., Marzban, M., Sourosh, M., Sharif, F., Nejabat, M., & Imanieh, M. H. (2017). Social well-being and related factors in students of school of nursing and midwifery. *International Journal of Community Based Nursing and Midwifery*, 5(1), 82–90. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5219568/>
- Sallis, J., Owen, N., & Fisher, E. (2008). Ecological models of health behavior. *Health Behavior and Health Education*, 4.
- Scotland, J. (2012). Exploring the philosophical underpinnings of research: Relating ontology and epistemology to the methodology and methods of the scientific, interpretive, and critical research paradigms. *English Language Teaching*, 5(9), 9–16. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n9p9>
- Setlhare, R. (2016). Collaborated understandings of context-specific psychosocial challenges facing South African school learners: A participatory approach. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 5(2), 18–34. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17159/2221-4070/2016/v5i2a2>
- Shaw, J., McLean, K. C., Taylor, B., Swartout, K., & Querna, K. (2016). Beyond resilience: Why we need to look at systems too. *Psychology of Violence*, 6(1), 34–41. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000020>
- Shrestha, A. (2012). Teenage pregnancy in Nepal: Consequences, causes and policy recommendations [Free University of Amsterdam]. In *48th International Course on Health Development*. <https://www.bibalex.org/Search4Dev/files/428878/455706.pdf>
- Simons, P. M. (2015, January 19). *Ontology | Definition, history & examples*. Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ontology-metaphysics>
- Smith, N. (2015). *Teenage pregnancy : an exploration of teenage mothers' perceptions and experiences of support from an eco-systemic framework* [Masters dissertation, University

of the Witwatersrand]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/18391>

Sreekumar, D. (2023, August 28). *What is research methodology? Definition, types, and examples*. Paperpal. <https://paperpal.com/blog/academic-writing-guides/what-is-research-methodology>

Sreekumar, D. (2023, August 21). *What is a Theoretical Framework? How to Write It (with Examples)*. Researcher.Life. <https://researcher.life/blog/article/what-is-a-theoretical-framework-how-to-write-it/>

Staff, C. (2023, November 21). *What Is Data Analysis? (With Examples)*. Coursera. <https://www.coursera.org/articles/what-is-data-analysis-with-examples>

Statistics South Africa. (2017, August 2017). *Poverty on the rise in South Africa*. Department: Statistics South Africa. <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=10334>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). *National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Mental health findings*.

Sugiyono, D. R. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.

Sujan. (2023, July). *What is research paradigm? Definition & 3 types*. Tyonote. https://tyonote.com/research_paradigm/

Swahn, M. H., Culbreth, R., Adams, S., Kasirye, R., & Shanley, J. (2022). Demographic and psychosocial risk factors for adolescent pregnancies among sexually active girls in the slums of Kampala, Uganda. *African Health Sciences*, 22(1), 152–159. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v22i1.19>

TACAdmin. (2020, October 27). *Challenges of being a teenage parent*. Texas adoption centre. <https://texasadoptioncenter.org/blog/challenges-of-being-a-teenage-parent/>

Tadese, M., Yeshaneh, A., & Mulu, G. B. (2022). Determinants of good academic performance among university students in Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Medical Education*, 22(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-022-03461-0>

Tenny, S., Brannan, J. M., & Brannan, G. D. (2022, September 18). *Qualitative study*.

- StatPearls Publishing. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470395/>
- Tripp, J., & Viner, R. (2005). Sexual health, contraception, and teenage pregnancy. *BMJ*, 330(7491), 590–593. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.330.7491.590>
- Twintoh, R. F., Anku, P. J., Amu, H., D, E. K. M., & Korsah, K. K. (2021). Childcare practices among teenage mothers in Ghana: a qualitative study using the ecological systems theory. *BMC Public Health*. <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-09889-7#ref-CR15>
- Ulz, J. (2023, March 20). *What is a research paradigm? Types and examples*. Researcher.Life. <https://researcher.life/blog/article/what-is-a-research-paradigm-types-examples/>
- Unesco. (2000, April 29). *The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our Collective commitments*. UNESCO Digital Library. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000121147>
- UNESCO. (2000). The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our collective commitments (including six regional frameworks for action). *World Education Forum, Dakar, 2000*, 1–77. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000121147>
- USAID. (2021, March 8). *Issues and recommendations on gender-based violence prevention and response in COVID-19 programming*. USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/coronavirus/gender/issues-recommendations-gbv-prevention-response-covid-19>
- Van Vuuren, L. J. (2010). Industrial psychology: Goodness of fit? Fit for goodness? *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 36(2), 1–16. http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S2071-07632010000200008&script=sci_arttext
- Vanson, S. (2014, August 22). *What on earth are ontology and epistemology? - The performance solution*. The Performance Solution. <https://theperformancesolution.com/earth-ontology-epistemology/>
- Vishal. (2016, October 13). *What are the emotional effects of teenage pregnancy?* Quora. <https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-emotional-effects-of-teenage-pregnancy>

- Voydanoff, P., & Donnelly, B. W. (1990). *Adolescent sexuality and pregnancy*. Sage Publications.
- Waxman, H. A. (2006, July). FALSE AND MISLEADING HEALTH INFORMATION PROVIDED BY FEDERALLY FUNDED PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS. [Special investigations division] <https://www.motherjones.com/files/waxman2.pdf>
- Worku, M. G., Tessema, Z. T., Teshale, A. B., Tesema, G. A., & Yeshaw, Y. (2021). Prevalence and associated factors of adolescent pregnancy (15–19 years) in East Africa: a multilevel analysis. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 21(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-021-03713-9>
- World Bank. (2022, February 2022). *The social and educational consequences of adolescent childbearing*. The World Bank. <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/data-stories/adolescent-fertility/>
- World Health Organization. (2008). Department of making pregnancy safer annual report 2008. In *World Health Organization WHO/MPS/09.09*. http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/70198/1/WHO_MPS_09.09_eng.pdf
- World Health Organization. (2023, June 2). Adolescent pregnancy. *World health organisation*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/adolescent-pregnancy>
- Worldwide Pediatrics. (2020). *Prevent Teenage Pregnancy. What Can Schools Do?* Worldwide pediatrics - TopLine MD Alliance. <https://www.toplinemd.com/worldwide-pediatrics/prevent-teenage-pregnancy-what-can-schools-do/>
- Yong, W. K., Husin, M. M., & Kamarudin, S. (2021). Understanding research Paradigms: A scientific guide. *Society of Business and Management*, 27(2), 5857–5865. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47750/cibg.2021.27.02.588>
- Ziarten, E. A., & Gilstrap, L. L. (2023). *Urie Bronfenbrenner | Russian-American psychologist & ecological systems theory | Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Urie-Bronfenbrenner>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance from UKZN



14 July 2023

Shivani Ruthan (216049639)
School Of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear S Ruthan,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00005762/2023

Project title: The effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 21 June 2023 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 14 July 2024.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 290 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 2: Permission to conduct research from DOE



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 392 1063

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Ref.:2/4/8/80

Miss S Ruthan
133 Dunkeld Road
Reservoir Hills
DURBAN
4091

Dear Miss Ruthan

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "THE EFFECTS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS IN A SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH SCHOOL", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 27 June 2023 to 31 July 2026.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMLAZI DISTRICT


Mr GN Ngcobo
Head of Department: Education
Date: 28 June 2023

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix 3: Information and consent letter to the principal

148 Old Road

Durban

4057

500 Old Road

Newlands

Durban

4057

Dear Mr XXXX

RE: PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT MASTERS STUDY

My name is Shivani Ruthan, and I am currently a master's student completing my thesis in the topic "*The effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.*" The focus is gaining a better understanding of the academic effects of teenage pregnancy on learner's lives and their social well-being. This study is part of a master's degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal - Edgewood Campus.

The purpose of this study is to explore the academic effects of teenage pregnancy and how this affects academic performance of learners in a South African high school. Teenage pregnancy remains a fundamental crisis within South African youth, and it is evident that over the years there has been a significant increase. This therefore calls for greater measures to be implemented in effort to prevent this psychosocial phenomenon from affecting future generations. Therefore, this study is aimed at providing ways to gain an understanding of how teenage pregnancy affects the academic performance of learner's academic performance in the classroom and their personal growth and development as individuals.

To obtain data for this study, I am going to conduct research using a structured open-ended questionnaire and structured interviews with open-ended responses (which will be audiotaped verbatim). Due to the chosen teachers teaching at your school, I hereby request your permission to allow your teachers to participate in this study. Collectively the questionnaire and interview will conclude after approximately one and a half hours. There will be 4 participants partaking

in the study. Your teachers will have the right to withdraw at any stage should they wish to do so, and it is imperative to know that participation is entirely voluntary. Participant's identity will be protected, pseudonyms will be used, confidentiality will be always maintained, and personal information will remain undisclosed during the presentation of the findings. For this study, there will be four participants that will be chosen. The teachers chosen will be between Grade 8 and Grade 12. Participant's participation is voluntary, and should they wish to exit the study, they will be able to do so willingly. Teaching and learning during the interview and questionnaire process will not be disturbed. Interviews will be conducted either during participant's free lessons or after school.

My details are as follows:

Name: Shivani Ruthan

Student Number: XXXXXX

Mobile Number: XXXXXXXX

Email: XXXXXX@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Institution: UKZN Edgewood Campus

Course: M.Ed Hons – Educational Psychology

In the event of any problems or concerns or questions you may contact the researcher on the number XXXXXX, or you can email XXXXXXXX@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can contact UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 4: Information and consent letter to participants

Dear Participant

My name is Shivani Ruthan, and I am currently a master's student completing my thesis on the topic "*The effects of teenage pregnancy on the academic performance of learners in a South African high school.*" The focus is gaining a better understanding of the academic effects of teenage pregnancy on learner's lives and their social well-being. This study is part of an M.Ed degree at the Edgewood Campus of UKZN.

To obtain data for this study, I am expected to conduct research using structured open-ended questionnaires and structured interviews with open-ended responses (which will be audiotaped verbatim). Therefore, I humbly request your consent to be a part of this study. You have the right to withdraw at any stage should you wish to do so. Your identity will be protected, confidentiality will be maintained, pseudonyms will be used, and personal information will remain undisclosed during the presentation of the findings. Please note that data will be destroyed after 5 years. Any information given by the participant cannot be used against him/her, and the data will be used for research purposes only.

For any enquiring regarding this study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor, Mrs Sibusisiwe Ndinisa. You may also contact the UKZN Humanities & Research Ethics committee; contact details are as follows:

Name	Contact Number	Email address
Mrs Sibusisiwe Ndinisa (Supervisor – UKZN)	██████████	██████████
Humanities & Research Ethics Administration Research office, Westville Campus Kwa-Zulu Natal, SOUTH AFRICA	Tel: ██████████	██████████
Shivani Ruthan (Researcher)	██████████	██████████

CONSENT FORM

I, _____ (full name and surname)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this study and the nature of the research
project, and I consent to participate in this research project. I understand that I am at liberty to
withdraw from the project at any time should I desire.

.....

...../...../2023

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Appendix 5: Questionnaire

1. How old are you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-25 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 26-29 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30-35 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 36-40 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40- 45 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 > years old |

2. What is your race/ethnicity?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian/Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

3. What grade/s are you currently teaching?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12 | |

4. In your teaching experience how many teenage pregnancies have, you encountered within your classroom?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7-10 |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|

5. Are you aware of any stigma or isolation that learners experienced during or after their pregnancy?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

6. Does the school you teach at have any sex educating workshops or seminars for females where efforts were made to ensure that learners received vital information about teenage pregnancy?

7. Did you advise learners about abortions?

Yes

No

8. Do you feel like pregnancy affected academic performance within your classroom? If so, how?

Yes

No

9. How would you describe your experience as an educator with a teenage pregnant learner in your class? Did you know what needs to be done, if not where and who did you get assistance from?

10. How did pregnancy affect the learner's social well-being as a teenager?

11. Do you feel like teaching and learning time was lost as teachers spent more time re-teaching syllabus because of pregnancy and absenteeism? Please elaborate.

Appendix 6: Interview questions

1. What are your views of teenage pregnancy?
2. What do you feel were the most prevalent causes of teenage pregnancy?
3. How do you think teenage pregnancy impacts learners' academic performance?
4. What are some of the struggles a teenage mother faces?
5. What physical or emotional changes have you witnessed in learner's pregnancies?
6. What are some school-based intervention strategies that schools can implement to address teenage pregnancy?

Appendix 7: Turn it in the report

MASTERS

ORIGINALITY REPORT

11 %	9 %	3 %	5 %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1 %
2	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1 %
3	www.greengazette.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
4	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	<1 %
5	www.news24.com Internet Source	<1 %
6	vital.seals.ac.za:8080 Internet Source	<1 %
7	www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov Internet Source	<1 %
8	Submitted to University of Witwatersrand Student Paper	<1 %
9	Submitted to University of Pretoria Student Paper	<1 %

Appendix 8: Letter from the editor



Website: www.chiefeditors.net

Email: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/madam

Re: Confirmation of editing and proofreading

This letter informs the responsible authorities that our team proofread and edited the work authored by **Shivani Ruthan (216049639)** to the best of its ability. Our editing involves spelling check, punctuation, grammar, sentence construction, word reduction, cross reference citations, basic formatting (general layout), presentation style, indexing, and other mechanics of the English language. No technical alterations have been made.

Corrections were made using track changes, which have been clearly outlined for the author's reference. It is the onus of the author to accept or reject the suggested changes.

Please do not hesitate to contact us on the details provided above for more information.

Disclaimer: The editor will not be held responsible for any errors introduced due to the changes made after editing.

Yours,

[REDACTED]

B. Mutsvene (Coordinator)

Affiliation: International Affiliation of Writers Guilds (IAWG)

IAWG