# EXPLORING TEENAGE MOTHERS' EXPERIENCES OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN KWAZULU-NATAL

**School of education**
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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a

Master degree of Education in Educational Psychology

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, the work on ‘‘*Exploring teenage mothers` experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal’’* is my own work-both in conception and execution-and it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been adequately indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

_____ _____

**N.V. Jwili** **Date**

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the one and only King of my heart, **Jesus Christ** who is my wisdom and who guided me every step of the way and empowered me to write it till the end. His indescribable and ever increasing love for me is the reason I am alive today.

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It is often said that no great men or woman succeeds alone.

For this reason, I would like to express/convey my sincere appreciation to the following people:

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All the young mothers who participated in this study thank you for letting me into your world.

# ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of teenage mothers` experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. This study was anchored on two major research questions; what are experiences do teenage mothers have of school-based-psycho social support services provided in a secondary school, and how can these school-based psycho-social can be improved to ensure excellent performance by the teenage mother? To answer these research questions, the qualitative approach to research was used to generate deep insight around the research phenomenon. To fine-tune the research, the case study style to research was employed to give focus to the study as well as to dig deeper into the phenomenon. Exploring teenage mother's experiences require depth and continuous digging which can only be done under the canopy of case study research. For this digging to be effective, semi-structured interviews were used to generate data for the study. This was complemented using observation to make sure that what the researchers say happened, actually happened.

The participants of the study were sampled purposively and the data generated was analyzed using grounded analyses. The interpretive paradigm and the social constructionist's theory was used to make sense of the data generated. The data was categorized into three main themes; educational support, financial support and emotional support. These themes were further divided into six subthemes; extra classes, mentoring, financial exclusion, financial upliftment, counseling and personal care. These themes were analyzed alongside literature and direct quotations from the participants.

Secondly, the researcher also recommends that the Department of Education or the Department of Social Welfare should take full responsibility for the provision of these services to ensure that some teenage mothers don't benefit from the services more than others. Since teachers were the ones sourcing and providing these services, those under them can only benefit from what they were able to raise or offer.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that the challenges teenage mothers facing should be the bases of the provision of psycho- social support and not the resource available to the school or that which the mentor or teachers can raise on behalf of teenage mothers.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

## 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Teenage pregnancy has and seems to continuously be an issue in South African schools. The number of teenagers dropping out of school and those who remain in school while pregnant has dramatically been on the increases since the introduction of the choice on Termination of Pregnancy act, 1996 (Myers 2014). The constant increase in the number of teenage mothers in schools means the implementation of support services to help these teenage mothers cope with academic work while in school. Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod and Letsoalo (2009) pointed out that in South Africa, before the age of 20 about half of the young people already have children. This disturbing figure means the level of support provided in schools to these teenagers has to constantly be on the increase.

But the constant increase in student dropout rates especially teenage mothers according to Panday et al. (2009) has become a concern and have left many scholars wondering if the support provided to these teenagers is enough to keep them in school or the challenges they face gradually lead them to drop out of school. As such the level of care and support a teenager receives in school will determine her attitude towards school and ultimately her performance in the classroom. Panday et al. (2009:18) continued that ‘‘there is an inextricable link between adolescent motherhood, poverty and socio-economic disadvantage and efforts to empower young women through skills development and opportunities for developing sustainable livelihoods may assist in minimising trade-offs between health and economic security and go a long way to ensure that these teenagers are well catered for’’. Since pregnant learners don’t only have to consider their wellbeing but also that of the child support

which is vital for the continuous stay in school and if such support is not received the teenager is bound to seek it elsewhere.

Myers (2014) points out that South Africa has a relatively admirable and progressive legislative response to teenage pregnancy and motherhood and this legislation offers opportunities for teenage mothers to access and actualise these rights wherever they may be. But policies do not directly translate into practice (Morrell, Bhana and Shefer, 2012). Most of these policies are not implemented and some principals and teachers select which ones to implement in some cases and which ones not to. Concurring with this, Shefer and Bhana Morrell, Manzini and Masuku (2012, p. 139) noted that ‘‘when teenage mothers did return to school their performance was often affected, and many moved from doing well academically to becoming average or ‘underachievers’ once they were balancing motherhood and schooling’’. To succeed effectively in schools, teenage mothers need a lot of psycho-social support within the school environment. The school dropout rate and poor academic performance of teenage mothers has increased according to Morrell et al., (2012). Panday et al. (2009) Grant and Hallman (2008) have been on the increase. Owing to the fact that South Africa spends about eighteen per cent of its budget on education (Panday et al., 2009) academic performance is expected to be on the increase. Fomunyam (2014a) and Fomunyam (2014b) pointed out that the academic standards and performance of learners, especially teenage mothers in South Africa has been generally poor. It a bid to address such circumstances which have been neglected in education research for some time, teenage mother’s experiences of psycho-social support provided in schools should be explored and how this support or lack therefore affects or impact their academic performance should be known in the bid to improve performance and the quality of education in general.

## 1.2 RATIONALE

This study aims to explore teenage mothers' experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The rationale for this study is in two dimensions. The one is derived from literature and the other is derived from my personal experience as a teacher for the past twenty-one years. The teaching and learning process is a very multifaceted one to both teachers and learners at large and with every child having the right to basic education, the teachers must do all they can to pull through this complex process and endeavour that his or her learners get what they need as required by the curriculum and other government policies (Pridmore, 2007). As Morrell et al. (2012) put it, the number of teenage mothers have been alarming and despite the diverse polices the government have developed and implemented to ensure that teenage mothers are well supported in schools, most of them still under perform or in some cases barely make a pass. Also whilst researchers such as Chilman (1978), Card and Wise (1978), Vukelich and Kliman (1985), Ramey et al (2000) have engaged in research on teenage mothers in various international contexts, locally scholars like Chigona and Chetty (2008), Panday et al. (2009), Swartz and Bhana. (2009), Bhana et al. (2010), among others have also written extensively on teenage mothers and education in South Africa. But a closer look at the literature reveal that though a lot of research has been done in this area, nothing has been done on teenage mothers' experiences of school-based support services provided in a secondary school. It is this existing gap that prompted and motivated me to embark on this study. In the light of the above, therefore, this study will contribute to the on-going debate on academic school-based support programmes. Furthermore, this study will bring to the forefront the experiences of teenage mothers on the school-based support services provided to them.

Secondly, I started teaching about 21 years ago. During this period, I have taught and interacted with many pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers and some of them have dropped out and some persevered until they completed their studies. As a result of the increasing number of drop outs the

number of ‘unwanted babies’ and unskilled future adults who are unable to provide adequate parental and social support has been on the increase. Some of the teenagers who leave school because of their pregnancy often return to school after delivery to complete their studies. When these learners are readmitted, numerous psycho-social school-based support is supposed to be put in place to enhance their academic progress. This support services vary from who designs them and who executes and the effects of this program have been different from time to time with some learners successfully completing their studies, while others drop out of school. As a result of this, I want to explore the experiences of teenage mothers who enjoy such psycho-social support and to see how it impacts their academic performance. From the results therefore the school as well as the education community at large will be able to know what works and what doesn’t and be able to adjust their support services to better support teenage mothers.

## 1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

For any research to be useful and successful it must have an aim and objectives. Khoza (2013) considers aim to be the general mission statement or general focus of the research while research objectives are specific things stemming from the aim which the research wants to achieve.

In this study, the aim of the research is to explore teenage mother’s experiences of psycho-social support services provided in secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. From this aim, two major objectives were developed for the study.

1. To explore teenage mothers’ experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal.
2. To explain how the school-based psycho-social support services be improved to ensure acceptable performance by teenage mothers.

## 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study intends to explore teenage mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. It will accomplish this by scrutinising the following critical questions:

1. What experiences do teenage mothers have of school-based psycho-social support Services provided in a secondary school?
2. How can these school-based psycho-social support services can be improved to ensure excellent performance by the teenage mother?

## 1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

This discussion or review of literature will be done using the lens of the following themes; defining teenage motherhood, causes of teenage pregnancy, challenges experienced by teenage mothers, policies that support pregnant teenagers and mothers, and school-based support services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully.

### 1.5.1 Defining teenage motherhood

There has been a growing debate about teenage mothers and why they are called teenage mothers. While some scholars refer to them as teenage mothers (Moore, 2013; Morrell, Bhana, & Shefer 2012) some others (Lice, 2011; Ventura, Joyce, William, & Stanley, 2007; Elizabeth, & Hilary, 2005) believe that they should not be called teenagers anymore because they are mothers and no longer associate with teenage life. Adams (2012) defines teenage motherhood or a teenage mother as a girl between the ages of thirteen to nineteen who has successfully given birth to a baby. Scott, Nicole, Jennifer and Kristin (2012) and Resnick, Blum, Bose, Smith, and Toogood (2010), point out that about eighty per cent of teenage mothers fall between the ages of fifteen and nineteen and most

of these teenage mothers are still living with their parents, but for a few who are married as teenagers or some who live with the father of their babies.

Adams (2012) continues that motherhood goes beyond age to effectively taking care of the baby as such the age of the girl is inconsequential. What is of relevance is that the girl is a mother because she has a child. Motherhood therefore is not a function of age but of childbearing and responsibly caring for the child. What therefore makes teenage mothers different from other mothers is the fact that most teenage mothers are never fully prepared for their babies and according to Myers (2014) are babies birthing babies. The social, economic, and psychological stamina needed for motherhood is often lacking in teenage mothers. Teenage motherhood according to Treffers (2004, p. 5) refers to pregnancy carried and delivered by a girl aged 10 to 19 years. To him, teenage motherhood doesn't only refer to girls from thirteen to nineteen who are put to birth, but mothers as a whole who are nineteen and below.

### 1.5.2 Causes of teenage pregnancy

The causes of teenage pregnancy are as varied and disturbing as the phenomenon itself. There is no one specific cause identified in the body of knowledge as the primary cause of teenage pregnancy but different scholars have propounded different ideas based on their context and the participants they are researching. Ajeya, Shitu and Yunusa (2013) in a study conducted in the Kontagora Local Government Area in Niger State, northern part of Nigeria, argue that one of the causes of teenage pregnancy is low self-esteem. They continue that children who are not shown love, care and affection at home are bound to seek it elsewhere among their peers or among the older generation whom they believe or think will fill the void in them.

Domenico and Karen (2007) concurring with Ajeya, et al. (2013) argue that family structure is considered a major factor causing teenage pregnancy in the United States of America. They continue

that most American teenagers live in relatively unstable homes and most of them became sexually intimate for short term sense of love and comfort. Parental rejection, lack of affection and love in these homes also push teenagers to seek relationships outside the family which will provide them with what they lack at home.

Davies, DiClemente, Wingwood, Person, Crosby and Harrington (2004) and Saewyc, Magee, and Pettingell (2004) argue that in the United States of America another major cause of teenage pregnancy is sexual abuse. They reported that between seven to fifty per cent of pregnant teenagers reported that the sexual act or acts that led to the pregnancy were involuntary. They also point out that those females who were abused as children are three times more likely to fall pregnant during their teenage years as opposed to those who were not abused. Also about two-thirds of teenage mothers have previously been sexually abused or raped by a father, stepfather and or other relatives and often suffer from depression. In such cases, the first opportunity of care and comfort that come their way, they often fall into it regardless of what the consequences will be.

### 1.5.3 Challenges experienced by teenage mothers

Chigona and Chetty (2008) outline several major challenges that teenage mothers face both in school and out of school which affect their schooling. These challenges are as follows; lack of counselling to combat stigma attached to teenage motherhood, misunderstanding and pressure from teachers and fellow learners, parents' attitude due to stigma attached to teenage pregnancy and motherhood, socio-economic status of the family, lack of support from the community and resistance to otherness. The first and most significant amongst them is the lack of professional counselling to empower teenage mothers for success. Most teen mothers, who leave school in order to deliver their children, often return without any counselling on how to deal with parenthood, their stigma in schools as parents, and schooling simultaneously. As such most teen mothers become overwhelmed by the pressure and

challenges causing many to drop out of school and others to perform very poorly. Chigona and Chetty (2008) in the findings of their study report that teenagers do not get the professional help they need to face their new roles as students and mothers. All the participants in their study were of the opinion that they needed professional counselling in order to cope with certain issues, but nobody has offered to help, not even their own teachers. Most of these teenagers who know next to nothing about counselling or where to get it needed advice and direction from the older generation and community to be able to get the kind of help they need. Although according to the Department of Education in some provinces like the Western Cape, teenage mothers returning to school are supposed to be treated like learners with special needs who require incessant counselling to be able to successfully go through school. Furthermore, in public schools where professional counselling is provided, accessibility by these teen mothers constitutes another problem. This is so because very few counsellors cater for a large number making the time each learner gets to spend with these counsellors very small while others don't even get the chance at all.

Another problem or challenge which teenage mothers face according to Chigona and Chetty (2008) is misunderstanding and pressure from teachers and fellow learners. Participants in their study were of the opinion that most teachers refuse to recognise their condition and chose to treat them the same as the other learners. As a result of these, a lot of pressure is exerted upon them by both the teachers and other learners without considering the stress they go through. Some teachers or learners go to the extent of ridiculing teen mothers in class for not doing their homework, group task or meeting some other class requirements. This coupled with the stress of caring for the baby according the participants of the study, made them felt like they were carrying the entire world on their shoulders. Chigona and Chetty (2008) add that even the Life Orientation teacher corroborated the experiences of teenage mother in relation to being ridiculed by teachers or other learners in school. These

attitudes have been a source of hell for most teenage mothers making most of them to perform poorly in school and a few to even drop out completely.

Another major challenge faced by teenage mothers as indicated by Chigona and Chetty (2008) is parents' attitude due to stigma attached to teenage pregnancy. They postulate that most parents are reluctant to support their teenagers through motherhood forgetting that it is a hideous task for which they themselves needed support when they were raising the said child. Some parents refused to understand the plight of these teenage mothers or provide support to them because they felt ashamed of their daughter's actions or because they felt that it would affect their social standing within the community. Pillow (2004, p. 11) points out that all teen mothers need a great deal of support to be able to navigate parenthood. The kind of support needed by any mother whether young or old, parenting as a single mother is the kind of help that should be provided to teenagers especially by their parents, but most parents are always unwilling to do this. In some cases, parents favoured the siblings of the teen mother as a way for punishing her for her action making motherhood in such cases very difficult and challenging. Chigona and Chetty (2008) report that some parents go as far as cutting down the basic supplies of teen mothers as a way of punishing and cause them to suffer the consequences of their actions. In such a situation, sibling rivalries begin to add to the teen mother's challenges leaving her with almost no one to share her experiences with or talk to.

### 1.5.4 Policies that support pregnant teenagers and mothers

Willan (2013) points out that there are several initiatives in South Africa that support pregnant teens and or mothers. These policies were initiated by the government as a way of curbing the diverse challenges pregnant teens and mothers are facing so they can continue with their academics smoothly. The first of such policy initiative is the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996.

This act gives a teenager the right to have her pregnancy terminated on request up until the pregnancy reaches twelve weeks of gestation, provided it is done by a certified midwife or doctor.

The second policy that supports teenage mothers and pregnant teens is the South African Child's Act of 2005 which was amended by the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007. This act which came into effect in 2010 allows children from twelve years old to access health care services including HIV testing, termination of pregnancy and contraceptives without the consent of their parents or care giver.

The third policies that support teenage mothers in South Africa are the Child Support Grant. This grant has been of vital importance to many teenage mothers especially those who became pregnant as a result of poverty and who are still living below the poverty line. This grant which is paid monthly to mothers or care givers of young children from the ages of 0 to eighteen was 280 rand and in October 2013 it was increased to 300 rand (Panday et al., 2009).

The fourth policy put in place to assist pregnant learners and teenage mothers is the Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy (MPMLP) of 2007. It was implemented as a move to provide assistance in both preventing teenage pregnancy and assisting those affected in cases where pregnancy already exists.

Furthermore, Panday et al. (2009) pointed out that flexible school policy or policies is another intervention introduced in schools to ensure that teenage mothers are able to return to school after giving birth. The South African Schools Act formalised this process par 2.6 School-based support services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully.

### 1.5.5 School-based support services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully

As earlier postulated, many teenage mothers quit school because of the diverse challenges already enumerated which they go through while in school. As demanded by the Department of Education, schools are supposed to provide support to these special needs learners so they can complete school successfully. Depending on the kind of challenges the learners are facing and why they got pregnant in the first place, each school is supposed to develop intervention programmes or support services to help these learners. As a result of the nature of these services, very little have been written about it in South Africa; as such Zondo (2006) in her study about teen mothers, their responsibilities and challenges in Inanda showed that out of most teen mothers were more keen on talking about what they should do for them rather than what they school have done when asked about the support services provided by the school. She continued that moral support was one of the areas where teen mothers were supported to continue schooling. Most of these teen mothers within the schools in the study were assigned to specific teachers who guided them in their academics and other challenges which they were facing while in school. These teachers amongst who were the Life Orientation teachers and counsellors had an understanding of what teen mothers could be going through as such were in a good place to provide them with good moral support. Also teachers who were mothers and fathers were included amongst those who were to provide moral support to teen mothers.

## 1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research design for the study was framed to elicit answers to the research questions posed earlier in this chapter. As such it will discuss in brief the approach to the study which is qualitative, the style which is case study, the paradigm which is the interpretive paradigm, the method of data generation, the analyses of the data generated, trustworthiness and ethical issues.

### 1.6.1 The qualitative approach

The qualitative approach to research is geared towards exploring every detail about an issue or a case. It unearths the quality of whatever is being researched (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this study the qualitative approach is used to generate rich and in-depth data about the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. Maxwell (2005) postulates that qualitative research should contain both practical goals, which can be realised, produce specific outcomes, meet a need and whose intellectual goal is to understand or explain certain concepts or issues. He further breaks them down as follows: practical goals aim at generating results and theories which are valid and can be understood by the participants as well as the readers. Secondly, it aims at conducting formative evaluation so as to improve practice.

Thirdly, it aims at engaging in collaborative action research with diverse parties. The intellectual goal aims at understanding the meaning given to situations or problems by participants. It also aims at understanding the specific context in which participants find themselves. Furthermore, the intellectual goals also aim at identifying unexpected events, phenomena and situations and produce theories that cover these areas. Intellectual goals also aim at understanding the processes that contribute to actions, situations and events. Lastly it aims at developing simple explanations for situations.

Neill (2007) opines that the qualitative approach of research provides a platform to gain insights through the unearthing of meaning by increasing comprehension. Cohen et al., (2011) argue that the qualitative approach mostly favours interviews, document analyses and case study research where there is a lot of text and the data generated is in the form of words. Henning (2004, p. 3) concurring with this, points out that in the qualitative approach, the researcher aims at understanding and explaining, using arguments, the evidence constructed from data and literature. This study is therefore justifiably qualitative as it gears towards unearthing detail information about the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school.

### 1.6.2 Case study

Neumann (2006, p. 40), defines case study as ‘‘an in-depth study of one particular case in which the case may be a person, a school, a group of people, an organization, a community, an event, a movement, or geographical unit’’. Cohen et al., (2011) argue that a case study is often used within qualitative research and Rule and John (2011), agreeing with these, also define case study as an

orderly and comprehensive investigation of a particular example in its context in order to generate data. The psycho-social support services provided in secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal can likewise be studied as a case study. Cohen et al. (2011) maintained that case study explores an incident or example in detail and analyses intensively the diverse examples or phases that make up the life cycle of the unit being explored. I consider case study most appropriate for this study because it tries to explore mother's experiences on teenage pregnancy in the school context.

In this study, the case is in one secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal and the unit of exploration is psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school. Cohen et al. (2011) outlined several hallmarks for case study, arguing that firstly it deals with a rich and detailed description of issues important to the example. Secondly, it provides a sequential narrative of issues important to the example. Thirdly, it combines the account of issues with the analysis thereof. Fourthly, it focuses on individual participants or group of participants and seeks to understand their perceptions of the example. Fifthly, it highlights specific issues that are important to the example and lastly the researcher is completely involved in the case or example and the case study might be linked to the person of the researcher.

Likewise, Simons (1996) postulates that case studies should address six paradoxes which often make it problematic. To begin with, it should dismiss the subject-object dichotomy by seeing all participants as equals. Secondly, case studies should acknowledge the input that an authentic creative encounter can and will make to new ways of understanding education. Thirdly, case studies must consider diverse ways of seeing as new forms of knowing. Fourthly, case studies should follow the ways of the artist. Fifthly, case studies should liberate the mind from traditional analysis and lastly it should cling to these paradoxes with an overshadowing interest in people. Studying the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal as a case study therefore provides

the researcher with detail information about the help provided to teen mothers. The case study approach was chosen because it offers the researcher the opportunity of digging deep into the lives of the participants to know about their experiences.

### 1.6.3 The interpretivist Paradigm

Opie (2004, p. 18) postulates that paradigm is "a basic set of beliefs that guides action", and add that two main paradigms have influenced or guided educational research as far as its history is concerned: interpretivist and critical research paradigms. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define a paradigm as an essential set of philosophy or viewpoint that guides the action or points the direction of the research. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) also defined paradigms as ways of looking at reality and frames of reference used to organize observations and reasoning. Paradigms therefore provide researchers with contextual ground on which to place their views.

A research paradigm according to Christiansen et al. (2010) represents a particular worldview that defines for the researcher who carries that view, what is acceptable to research and how. Each research paradigm is defined by the way it collects data and interprets the findings. A research paradigm can therefore be a reflection of certain set of belief about the nature of the world, what can be known about it and how we can know and understand it better. Christiansen et al. (2010) believes that the way we see the world influences the way we research the world. This is why it is important for each study to define which paradigm it uses for its research. Christiansen et al., (2010) states that there are three key paradigms: the post-positivist, the interpretivist and the critical paradigm and each of these have their way of viewing and interpreting the world. Post positivist strives for objectivity, predictability, patterning and the construction of laws and rules of behaviour; interpretivist on the other hand strives to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors and critical paradigm considers the political and ideological context in order to transform (Cohen et al., 2011).

This study falls under the interpretivist paradigm because it seeks to understand human actions, individual perspectives and personal constructs. In Christiansen, Bertram and Land (2010) interpretivism is described as a paradigm in which researchers do not aim to predict what the people will do, but rather to describe how people make sense of their worlds, and how they make meaning of their particular actions. The experiences teen mothers of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal will therefore be explored to see these support services can be improved to ensure that teen mothers go through school successfully. Teen mothers will also provide the context in which to understand issues surrounding the provision of psycho-social support services. This paradigm believes that the social world is created by interactions of individuals therefore there is no fixed structure of society.

### 1.6.4 Data generation

In order to answer the two research questions, semi-structured interviews and observation will be used to generate data. Cohen et al. (2011) define an interview as a flexible tool of collecting data which enables multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken or heard. The semi-structured interview on its part asks questions which require closed responses or open-ended responses (Cohen et al., 2011). The interviewer does not follow a rigid list of questions and there is a great deal of flexibility in the responses.

The open-ended nature of the question gives the researcher the opportunity to ask further questions which are related to the answers given. Cohen et al. (2011) opine that the semi-structured interview is a very important tool for data generation since it gives the researcher the added advantage of probing deeper, asking clarifying questions and discussing with participants their understanding of the phenomenon. Teen mothers from one school in KwaZulu-Natal would be interviewed.

Maree (2007) asserts that observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them. He further argued that observation as a qualitative data gathering technique is used to enable the researcher to gain a deeper insight, and understanding of the phenomenon being observed. Cohen et al. (2011) stated that the distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations. The selection of the research approach is, according to Creswell (2009) a critically important decision. The research approach does not simply inform the research design –important as that is - but gives the researcher the opportunity to critically consider how each of the various approaches may contribute to, or limit the study. The research approach allows the researcher a chance to satisfy the articulated objectives and design an approach which best satisfies the research requirements (Creswell, 2009).

## 1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Khanare (2012) has postulated that a theoretical framework is needed in research because it explains why the research is done in a particular way. She adds that the theoretical framework provides the basis for the researcher to theorize his work. The theoretical framework can be defined as a well-developed and structured explanation of circumstances or events in a logical and coherent form (Vithal & Jansen, 1997). Yilmaz (2011) argues that the choice of theoretical framework guides or dictates the direction of the research process by identifying key issues like phenomenon to be investigated, data generation strategies, data analysis techniques and data interpretation. This study uses the theory of social constructivism as it attempts at explaining the psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal.

The social constructivist philosophy of education articulates that the society needs a reconstructing and schools are the ultimate utensil to foster such changes (Harguindéguy & Gouin, 2012). They add that social constructionists advocate that world crises need education to facilitate the creation of a new social order or status, one that is strictly democratic in nature. Social constructivist theory deals primarily with the society's construction of the environment they live in (Burr, 2003). The basic tenet of social constructivism according to Young and Collin (2004) comprises of the focus on the collective rather than the individual construction of knowledge or the collective meaning-making process. Nawaz and Kundi (2010) argue that social constructivism focuses on learning as a process of understanding and the creation of meaning where learning is considered to be the construction of meaning rather than the memorization of facts. Khanare (2012) opines that social constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs within the school environment and knowledge is constructed based on this understanding. She further argues that social constructivism deals with anything that exists by virtue of social interactions.

Khalid and Azeem (2012), postulate that social constructivists see the teaching and learning process as an active, contextualized procedure of creating knowledge rather than acquiring it. Such knowledge is created based on experiences in and around the school environment. Learners continuously test these experiences through social negotiation and renegotiation. The learner is not blank but rather brings a wealth of experiences and cultural factors to the teaching and learning process. Nawaz (2012b) postulates that social constructivism lays emphasis on collective-learning, where the parents, teachers, peers, community members and stakeholders help the student become prominent. He continues that social constructivists emphasize that the teaching and learning process is active and social requiring the learners to construct knowledge from their experiences under the guidance of the teacher. This theory therefore works well for the study since the experiences of teen mothers is studied collectively in the bid to generate meaning and theory.

## 1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

In an attempt to answer the research questions, the study will use grounded analysis where data generated will be coded and categorised into major themes. Maree, (2007) states that data analysis involves working with data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesising them, searching them for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to tell others. Literature will be used to support the findings. Lichtman, (2006) concludes that it is the role of the researcher to bring understanding, interpretation and meaning to the data; therefore, the data will be analysed in an explicit and descriptive manner.

## 1.9 SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS

Purposive sampling will be used to select participants for the study. According to Cohen et al. (2011) it is a situation whereby the researcher picks out individuals who he or she thinks possesses the particular characteristic he or she is looking for based on his or her personal judgment. This way the researcher builds up a sample satisfactory to his specific needs. Teddlie and Yu (2007) opine that purposive sampling in research is used to produce representativeness, to make comparisons, to focus on unique and or specific cases or issues and to generate theory through the continuous accumulation of data from diverse sources.

The study which is built up around psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers in a secondary school has teen mothers as participants. These teen mothers who experience the psycho-social support services were selected to provide data about the psycho-social services. These teen mothers were hand-picked by the researcher based on her personal judgment of them and with the understanding that they possess in-depth knowledge or experiences about the phenomenon being investigated. According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 101) ‘‘there is no clear-cut answer, for the correct

sample size''. Each researcher therefore chooses the sample size based on the aims of the research and the nature of the study.

## 1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Wellington (2004) articulates that every research project must take ethical issues into consideration. Cohen et al. (2011) added that ethical issues have a very significant role to play in research, especially when it concerns humans and animals. As such the researcher obtained the permission of the Department of Education and the Principal of the schools to use their schools. The researcher also kept the identity of the school and the participants of the study anonymous. The data generated from participants will be treated with outmost confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2011). The names of the participants were replaced with the codes names. A consent form was also given to all the participants to read and signed it before the interview was conducted. Cohen et al. (2011) postulates that the consent letter should contain details of how the research will be conducted and used, and any implications for participants should be made known. The participants of the study were informed both by word of mouth and through the consent form that their participation is voluntary and that they were free to withdraw their participation at any time during the research if they change their mind or feel uncomfortable. Ethical clearance was also obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

## 1.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Yin (2011) argues that concepts of validity and reliability are not valid or vital in case study research because they better suit surveys and experiments. This research being a case study therefore considers trustworthiness. Trustworthiness deals with the credibility and dependability of the study. Therefore, to attain trustworthiness in the study the researcher uses different sources of data generation which provides her the opportunity of checking one source against the other and ensuring

its trustworthiness (Creswell, 2008). Creswell adds that using diverse sources of data enhances credibility, transferability, and dependability in the study. Cohen et al. (2011) call this triangulation and define it as the utilisation of two or more ways of generating data in research and it is a powerful method of ensuring trustworthiness especially in qualitative research. The complete dependence upon one method may bias or distort the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The use of two or more methods in generating data and producing the same results ensures trustworthiness in the study. This study uses semi-structured interviews and observations to ensure trustworthiness.

## 1.12 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This study which aims at exploring teenage mothers' experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal is divided into six chapters. The first chapter which is the current chapter is the introduction to the study. It discusses the background to the study by looking at the prevailing circumstances in South Africa and what led to problems under exploration in the study.

Chapter two reviews literature both from the international and national research landscape about teenage motherhood.

Chapter three deals with the paradigm and the theoretical framework employed in the study. The paradigm employed in this study is the interpretive paradigm and the theoretical framework of the study is Social Constructionist Theory.

Chapter four discusses the research design and methodology of the study. It discusses qualitative research, case study, methods of data generation, data analyses, sampling of the participants, ethical issues, trustworthiness and limitations.

Chapter five deals with the analysis of the data generated. The data generated is categorised into themes and sub-themes.

Chapter six which is the last chapter deals with conclusions and recommendations and ends up with a brief summary of the entire study.

## 1.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter is an introduction to the study and it discussed the background to the research, the rationale behind the research, the critical questions and an outline of the entire study. The next chapter, chapter two deals with the literature review.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Boote and Beile (2005) define literature review as an evaluative report of studies found in the body of knowledge related to your selected area. They continue that the review should describe, recapitulate, appraise, and elucidate this literature. It should also provide a theoretical basis for the research and help the researcher to determine the nature of his or her research. This part of the study therefore offers a discussion of what researchers and other scholars have written about teenage mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school. This review provides the findings of such studies and also seek out the lapses or gabs in the body of knowledge that led to the undertaking of this research. This discussion or review of literature will be done using the lens of the following themes; defining teenage motherhood, causes of teenage pregnancy, challenges experienced by teenage mothers, policies that support pregnant teenagers and mothers, and school-based support services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully.

## 2.2 DEFINING TEENAGE MOTHERHOOD

There has been a growing debate about teenage mothers and why they are called teenage mothers. While some scholars refer to them as teenage mothers (Moore, 2013; Morrell, Bhana, & Shefer 2012) some others (Lince, 2011; Ventura, Joyce, William, & Stanley, 2007; Elizabeth, & Hilary, 2005) believe that they should not be called teenagers anymore because they are mothers and no longer associate with teenage life. Adams (2012) defines teenage motherhood or a teenage mother as a girl between the ages of thirteen to nineteen who has successfully given birth to a baby. Scott et al. (2012) and Resnick, Blum, Bose, Smith, and Toogood (2010), point out that about eighty percent of teenage mothers fall between the ages of fifteen and nineteen and most of these teenage mother are still living with their parents but for a few who are married as teenagers or some who live with the fathers of their babies.

Lince (2011) continues that motherhood goes beyond age to effectively taking care of the baby as such the age the girl is inconsequential, what is of relevance is that the girl is a mother because she has a child. Motherhood therefore is not a function of age but of childbearing and responsibly caring for the child. What therefore makes teenage mothers different from other mothers is the fact that most teenage mothers are never fully prepared for their babies and according to Myers (2014) are babies birthing babies. The social, economic, and psychological stamina needed for motherhood is often lacking for teenage mothers.

### 2.2.1 Teenage pregnancy

Teenage motherhood according to Treffers (2004, p. 5) refers to pregnancy carried and delivered by a girl aged 10 to 19 years. To him, teenage motherhood doesn't only refer to girls from thirteen to nineteen who are put to birth but mothers as a whole who are nineteen and below. Spencer (2011) on the other hand, provides a conventional definition of teenage motherhood by defining it as pregnancy carried and delivered by a young girl who is between the ages of 13 and 19. Macleod (2011, p. 45) offers a more bugging definition of teenage motherhood by seeing it as ''a social problem in which adult behaviors and functions like reproduction, sexual intercourse, mothering are displayed or replicated by a young girl who due to her age and developmental status, is not-yet-adult, that is, adult, but not adult, child, but not child''. This makes teenage pregnancy and motherhood a difficult issue to fine-tune and whether to refer to teenage mothers or pregnant teens as children or adults. Collins (2003) points out that generally adolescents refer to teenagers. A careful look at the definition of adolescence reveals that it is that period in human development that indicates the beginning of puberty and ends in adulthood. As such it is of vital importance to understand adolescents in conjunction with their development stage.

One of the characteristics of this stage of development is the experimentation of different kinds of life such as sexual activities. It is also a period of ambiguity for teenagers where they have to decide where they want to go or are going and what they want to become thereby shaping their lives and future. Also Collins (2003) adds that within this period of adolescence teenagers often go out of control in terms of behavior and more often than not get involved in the illegal use of drugs, suicide, violence, risk taking, and lack of moral standards. To an individual therefore this is one of the most challenging periods of life where certain life's choices are made which that individual will subsequently regret for the rest of his or her life or celebrate it till eternity (Marcia, 2001).

### 2.2.2 Problems with teenage pregnancy

Shearfor and Horesji (2008) add that children today are facing diverse kinds of challenges that might be devastating and their scarce or limited coping skills may prevent them from dealing with such problematic situations effectively. Within the confines of this study, teenage motherhood goes beyond falling pregnant as a teenager but also parenting or motherhood by young girls in secondary school. As such pregnant teens who aborted the baby have no part in the study but those who actually gave birth to the child and have become mothers while they are still in the secondary school. This brings the study to more conventional definitions of teenage motherhood like that of Macleod (1999) who sees teenage pregnancy as an under aged girl becoming pregnant and giving birth or that advanced by Kail and Cavanaugh (1996) who theorize teenage motherhood is a situation whereby a girl is considered to be a mother if she becomes pregnant and delivers before her 19th birthday. With a clear understanding of who are teenage mother are or what teenage motherhood means, it is of vital importance to understand what causes teenage pregnancy or what force these teenagers to become teenage mothers.

## 2.3 CAUSES OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The causes of teenage pregnancy are as varied and disturbing as the phenomenon itself. There is no one specific cause identified in the body of knowledge as the primary cause of teenage pregnancy but different scholars have been propounding different ideas based on their context and the participants they are researching.

### 2.3.1 Low self esteem

Ajeya et al. (2013) in a study conducted in the Kontagora Local Government Area in Niger State, northern part of Nigeria, argue that one of the causes of teenage pregnancy is low self-esteem. They continue that children who are not shown love, care and affection at home are bound to seek it elsewhere among their peers or among the older generation whom they believe or think will fill the void in them. Ajeya, et al. (2013) also pointed out that the movement from childhood to the teenage stages often causes unstable emotions in some teenagers since this is the stage where most girls become confused about who they are and how they are supposed to behave in the society. These unstable emotions often cause psychological breaks in teenagers resulting in irresponsible behavior and consequently teenage pregnancy. In families where the bond is weak, the psychological load and excitement of teenage life is worse for young girls who often lack the support they need at this stage of their lives. This lack of support some respondents in the study caused them to look for love and attention elsewhere especially with the opposite sex who often shower them with love and gifts and consequently get them pregnant.

### 2.3.2 Family structure

Domenico and Karen (2007) concur with Ajeya, et al. (2013) argued that family structure is considered a major factor causing teenage pregnancy in the United States of America. They continue that most American teenagers live in relatively unstable homes and most of them became sexually intimate for short term sense of love and comfort. Parental rejection, lack of affection and love in

these homes also push teenagers to seek relationships outside the family which will provide them with what they lack at home. Domenico and Karen (2007) also postulate that in home where the father is absent, teenagers are more likely to get pregnant since they are always looking for a male figure to fill the void created by their fathers. These male figures that in some cases are teenagers themselves and in others are men far older than themselves often take advantage of the void in these young girls and exploit them in sexual relationships. Xie, Cairns and Cairns (2001) also point out that puberty is occurring faster in teenagers than before, making first time sexual encounters to come relatively quicker and more sexual experiences subsequently. As such the more sexual encounters a teenager have the more then chances of falling pregnant increases. They conclude that teenagers whose mothers gave birth to them as teenagers and those who have pregnant teenage friends are more likely to fall pregnant as teenagers.

### 2.3.3 Sexual abuse

Davies, DiClemente, Wingwood, Person, Crosby and Harrington (2004) and Saewyc, Magee, and Pettingell (2004) argue that in the United States of America another major cause of teenage pregnancy is sexual abuse. They reported that between seven to fifty percent of pregnant teenagers reported that the sexual act or acts that lead to the pregnancy were involuntary. They also point out that those females who were abused as children are three times more likely to fall pregnant during their teenage years as opposed to those who were not abused. Also about two-thirds of teenage mothers have previously been sexually abused or raped by a father, stepfather and or other relatives and often suffer from depression. In such cases, the first opportunity of care and comfort that come their way, they often fall into it regardless of what the consequences will be.

Sarri and Phillips (2004) also reveal that over sixty-five percent of teenage mothers had babies by men who were age twenty and older implying that a higher number of teenage pregnancies may be

resulting from sexual abuse. Panday et al. (2009) reported that in South Africa, child or teenage sexual abuse was another major cause of teenage pregnancy. They continue that in past, about forty-eight percent of abuse cases reported were children and teenagers not counting the ones not reported and about forty-two percent of rape cases reported were children and teenagers. Some of these teenagers become pregnant as a result of these while others become vulnerable with weaker abilities to negotiate the use of condoms and contraceptives.

### 2.3.4 Social background

Ajeya et al. (2013) in the findings of their study report that teenage pregnancy was caused primarily by social background. Forty-seven percent of their participants who were teenage mothers were of the opinion that teenage pregnancy is caused by social background of the teenager. Most teenagers who come from poor homes often seek boy friends who would provide them with basic needs and pocket allowances and as long as this happen the participants said they were at the beck and call of these boy friends who most often want them to have unprotected sex which often results in unwanted pregnancies.

Furthermore, according to forty-five percent of the participants in the study by Ajeya et al. (2013) early marriage and traditional gender roles in the societies they live in were also responsible for teenage pregnancy. According to Ajeya, et al. (2013) early marriage and traditional gender roles are important causes in the rate of teenage pregnancy is often seen as a blessing in some societies because it is proof of the young woman's fertility. In the northern part of Nigeria where teenage marriages are common; one can expect to see higher levels of teenage pregnancies. Early marriage and pregnancy is more common in traditional rural communities and teenage pregnancy is often prevalent in cities and towns.

### 2.3.5 Sexual promiscuity

Panday et al. (2009) argued that sexual behavior is a primary cause of teenage pregnancy. When teenagers expose themselves or initiate their sexual life early in life they increase their risk of early or teenage pregnancy. Kaiser/SABC (2006) survey report revealed that that sixty-seven percent of young South Africans have previously engaged in sexual intercourse. Fifty-seven percent of the youth population had sex continually throughout the year and the rates were higher amongst females than males with females having staggering percentage of sixty-two and males fifty-three percent. This continuous engagement in sexual activities by teenage girls also increases the number of teenage pregnancies subsequently recorded (Kirby, 2007). Kirby (2007) continued that when a teenage girl has sex once a week or more, she increases her risk of falling pregnant significantly and this has been the cause of the large number of teenage pregnancy recorded. Also some teenage girls often engage in sexual activities with men significantly older than them. Also this difference in age often leads to power struggles and failure to use contraceptives. Harrison (2008a) and Harrison (2008b) indicated that the use of condoms and other contraceptives was more prevalent amongst males than females with the percentage of male teenagers who use condoms higher by twenty percent than female teenagers.

This explains the large number of teenage pregnancy. As such a teenager's knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about contraceptives determines whether or not the teenager becomes pregnant (Jewkes & Christofides, 2008). Kaiser/SABC (2006) survey report outlined that sixty-six percent of pregnant teenagers indicated that they were not using any contraceptive when they became pregnant. Jewkes, Vundule, Maforah and Jordaan (2001, p. 255) stated that ''sex education that reaches beyond awareness, gearing towards improving accuracy and completeness of knowledge about contraception

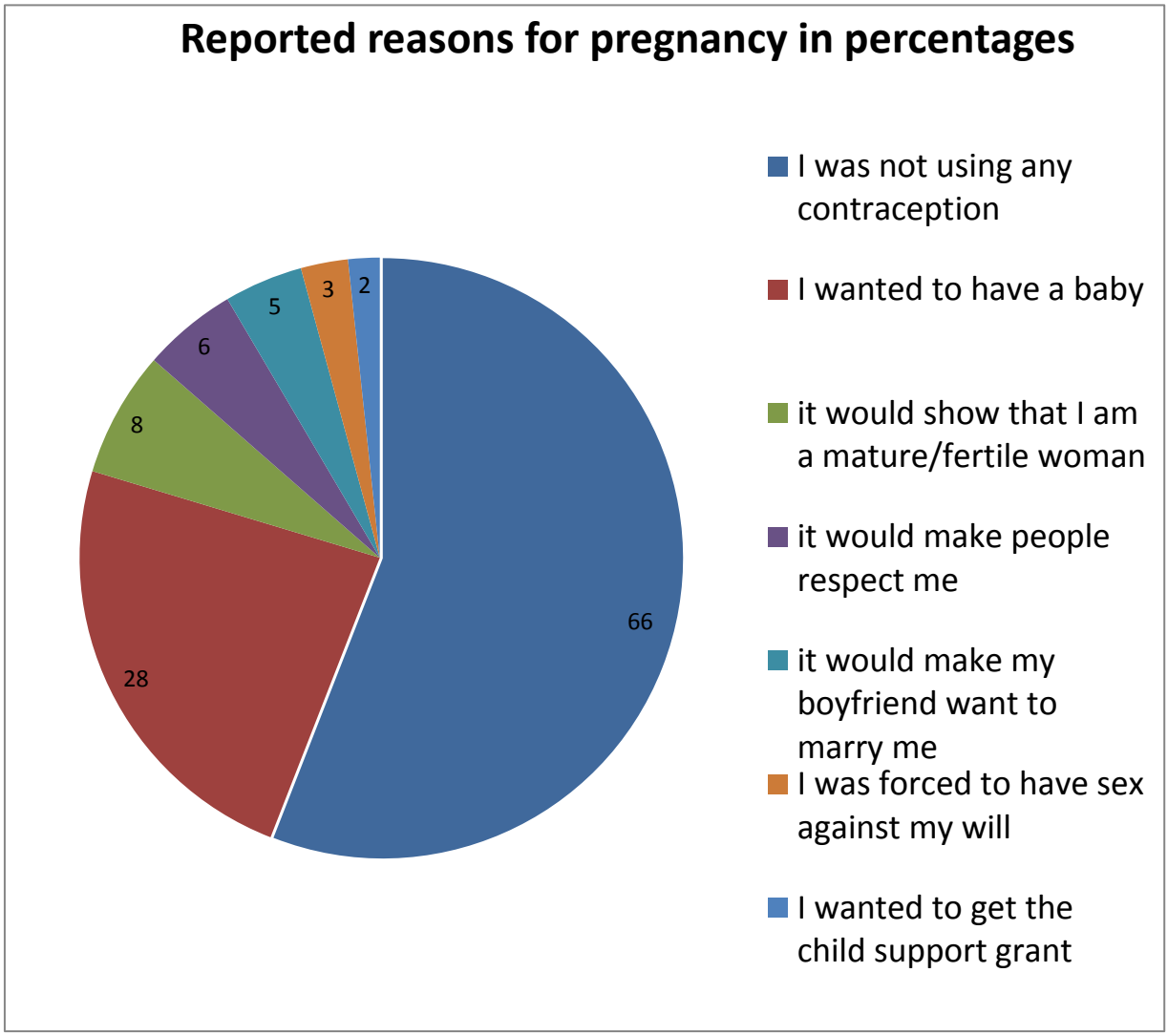
as well as condom use self-efficacy, will definitely play a critical role in encouraging safe sexual behavior. While ‘‘negative sensitivities about contraceptives play a significant role in whether adolescents will use them, such sensitivities which often arise from false beliefs about contraception such as: a condom could slip off during intercourse and be left inside a woman’s vagina, condoms reduce sexual enjoyment and condoms are of poor quality, fear of the perceived physical effects and fertility-related side effects of contraceptive use’’ (Jewkes et al. 2006, p. 954). Hendriksen, Pettifor, Lee, Coates, and Rees (2007) reported in most relationships the demand for the use of condoms was often associated will lack of trust, respect, and fidelity. As such when a partner demands that condoms be used most often, the other partner takes offence or takes that as an indication that he or she doesn’t trust the partner and this often ends with the condom abandoned. As such a teenager’s sexual behavior by and large determines whether she becomes pregnant as a teenager or not.

### 2.3.6 Teenagers attitude towards teenage pregnancy

The second cause of teenage pregnancy propounded by Panday et al. (2009) is the teenager’s attitudes towards teenage pregnancy. They argue that very little research has been done to understand teenager’s attitudes about pregnancy and parenthood. Ambivalent attitudes are common among teenagers especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds and or those low aspirations for their future. To these teenagers therefore, the benefits of motherhood which they perceive to be maturity, love, responsibility, and the perception that it will lead to a better and long lasting relationship with the baby’s father, far outweighs any negative consequence or possible risk. Such a teenager perceives motherhood as the best thing that can happen to her. These reasons explain why forty-seven percent of the teenage mothers in the Kaiser/SABC (2006) survey report wanted a baby. Cater and Coleman (2006) concurring with this added that most research on teenage pregnancy and motherhood focused on the negative connotations of teenage motherhood and what hinders the use of contraceptives forgetting that some teenagers actually see teenage pregnancy and motherhood as a positive thing.

These teenagers choose to fall pregnant and see it as a way of giving purpose, meaning and future direction to their lives. Such a decision Cater and Coleman (2006) say is often taken to correct certain negative childhood experiences which in most cases is characterized by poor scholastic experiences, dysfunctional family relationships, and growing up in homes and neighborhoods where teenage pregnancy is normative. Figure 2.1 below better explains teenager's attitudes towards teenage pregnancy.

**Figure 2.1 Attitude related reasons for teenage pregnancy**



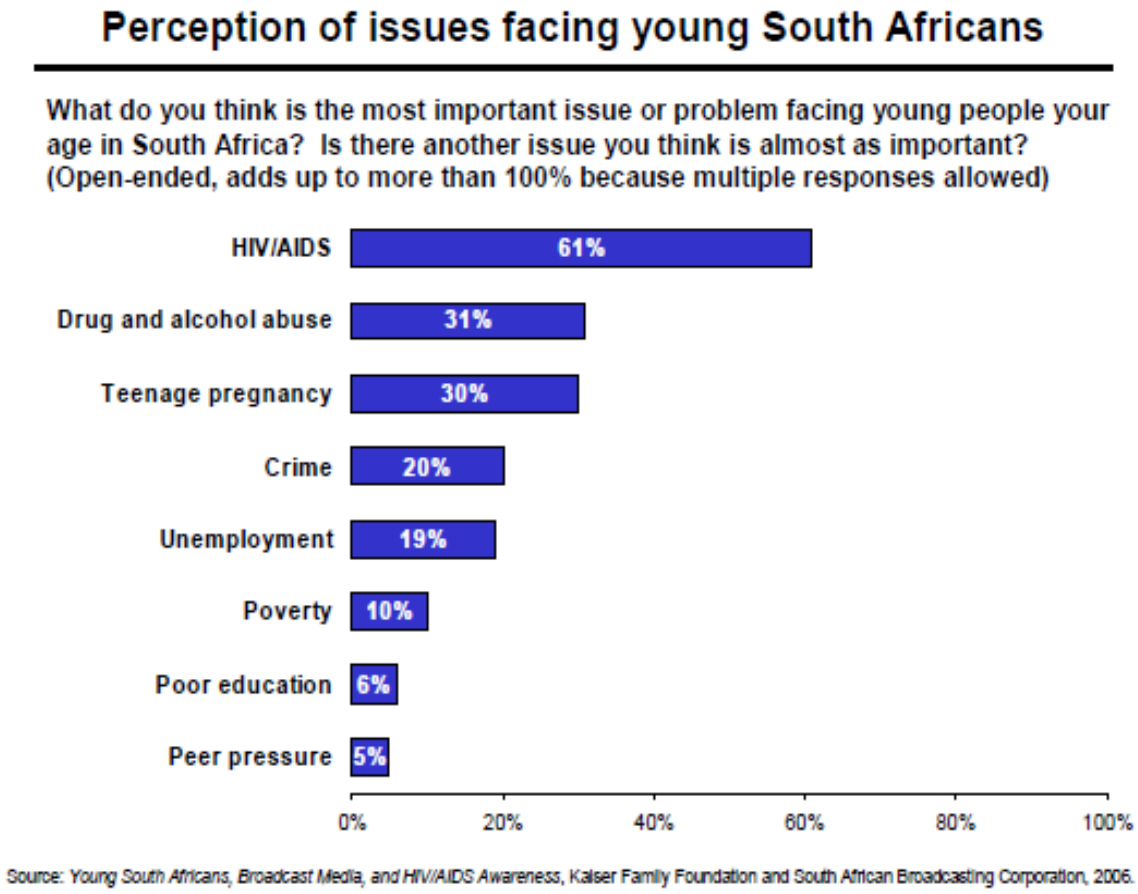

**Adapted from Kaiser/SABC (2006)**

Panday et al. (2009) added that in the nineties and the early years of the twenty first century teenage pregnancy and motherhood was welcomed especially amongst teenage women and the families as an indication of fertility and potential bride wealth. Also the lack of knowledge of some teenagers of how exactly conception occurs, and the belief that the use of certain traditional medicine can prevent conception and the belief in myths like conception only occurs during menstruation (Wood & Jewkes, 2006) have led to large number of unwanted pregnancies.

### 2.3.7 Risk perception

Panday et al. (2009) added that risk perception is another major cause of teenage pregnancy. Kirby (2007) argues that when a teenager perceives that she is at risk of getting pregnant, she is likely to take measures to avoid it. But although most teenage girls have the ability to identify the presence of risks, they often lack the skills and competences to effectively evaluate the risk and the consequences of any action taken before taking it. Pedlow and Carey (2004) concur that the immature cognitive levels possessed by teenagers may inhibit their ability to clearly define the risk they are involved in and take necessary steps to ensure that such risk is curtailed. Kaiser/SABC (2006) survey report indicated that teenagers in South Africa considered HIV/AIDS and drug and alcohol abuse as the major issues plaguing South African. Figure 2.1 below illustrates this.

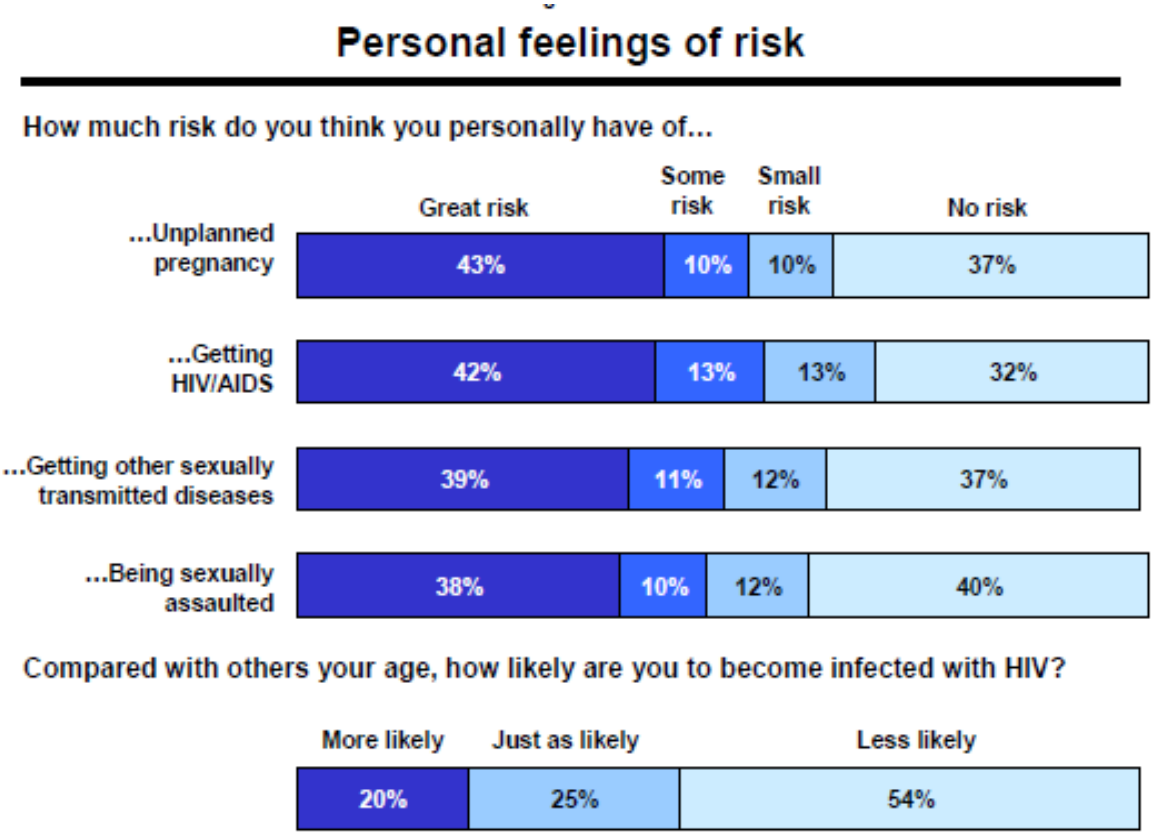
**Figure 2.2 Perception of issues facing South African youths**




**Source Kaiser/SABC (2006)**

Adding to this, Kaiser/SABC (2006) also indicated that a good number of teenagers in South Africa believe that they have very little or no risk at all in getting pregnant or contacting other STD's or STI's as illustrated in figure 2.3 below.

**Figure 2.3 Personal feelings of risk amongst South African youths**




Source Kaiser/SABC (2006)

The over fifty-seven per cent of teenagers who believe that they have very little or no risk of getting pregnancy are amongst those who end up being pregnant, making teenage pregnancy a function of the consequences of the level of risk a teenager is able to see in her sexual behaviour. As such the level of awareness the teenager has of the risk each sexual action holds, and the teenager's ability to analyse and deal with this risk determines how quickly she falls pregnant.

### 2.3.8 Substance abuse

Another cause of teenage pregnancy discussed by Panday et al. (2009) is substance abuse. The abuse of substances like drugs and alcohol is likely to increase a teenager's chances of unprotected sex and subsequently pregnancy. Limmer (2008) argues that reports from studies in the United States of America, South Africa, United Kingdom and other places have indicated that between one third and

half of teenage pregnancies are as a result of substance abuse. Reddy, Panday, Swart, Jinabhai, Amosun, and James (2003) postulated that in South Africa about two thirds of the teenage population reported drinking whether regularly or once in a while, while Brook, Morojele, Zhang and Brook, (2006) and Brook et al. (2006) added that about six to twelve per cent of South African teenagers have used drugs in their life time. Reddy, et al. (2003) also added that about thirteen per cent of sexually active teenagers in South Africa reported using alcohol or drugs before sex. As such once these teenagers engaged in alcohol or drugs, they lose the ability to control their feeble brains or to be rational as such, forget all precautions that are supposed to keep them safe and engage in unprotected sex. Pluddemann, Flisher, Mathews, Carney, and Lombard (2008) concur to this added that data from Cape Town has demonstrated that most South African learners or teenagers use drugs (methamphetamine) and when they do, they are more likely to have anal, vaginal and or oral sex as well as to become pregnant or responsible for a pregnancy. Substance abuse therefore increases a teenager's chances of getting pregnancy not only in the manner in which the sexual act is carried out by the frequency in which it is done. According to Palen, Smith, Flisher, Caldwell, and Mpofu (2006) teenagers who use marijuana and other kinds of drugs and those who use alcohol have the biggest risk of engaging continuously in casual sex and maintain such behaviours for a long time which would subsequently lead to pregnancy. While teenage girls who initiate sex with a single boyfriend or somebody they have known for a long time are less like to encounter an early pregnancy (Jewkes et al., 2001; Jewkes, Nduna, Levin, Jama, Dunkle, Puren, 2008). The continuous abuse or intake or drugs and alcohol increases sexual desire and arouses in the teenager tension, decreases inhibition and tenseness, reduces decision-making ability, judgement and sense of responsibility, and generally disempower women to resist sex (Morejele, Brook & Kachieng'a, 2006). Substance abuse doesn't only disempower the woman from resisting sex but also makes both partners eager to have it increasing the risk of unprotected sex and pregnancy. Morojele, Kachieng'a, Mokoko, Matsobane,

Parry, and Nkowane (2006) add that when under the influence of alcohol or drugs, teenagers increase their risk of forced sex and decreased the propensity of using condoms. This is worse in teenagers who engage in these practices daily or who find themselves in environments drenched by high unemployment, and places where alcohol is easily accessible and casual sex readily available.

### 2.3.9 Dysfunctional families

Teenage pregnancy in South Africa according to Panday et al. (2009) is also caused by dysfunctional families. Family life and values have a profound impact on the behaviour of teenagers. Most teenagers often mirror their parents whom in most cases are their first role models and in cases where parents lack basic morals and behave in a conspicuous manner, the teenager is likely to follow in such footsteps. According to Miranda and Szwarcwald (2007) and Zeck, Bjelic-Radisic, Haas and Greimel (2007) the characteristics of every family play an important role in the understanding and determining teenage sexual behaviour alongside pregnancy and teenage pregnancy has a direct correlation with family structures. In families where only one parent is present or in child headed families where both parent are absent, the teenager's propensity to become pregnant drastically increases.

Teenagers who belong to or who are raised in bigger or extended families are also at an increased risk of early engagement in sex than those who are raised in relatively smaller families and this happens as a result of loose parental control since concentration is spread across the large number in the family limiting the attention each child gets. Furthermore, research by Antecol and Bedard (2007) have indicated that in families where the parents are divorced or where the teenager has only a single parent, more permissive sexual behaviours, lesser parental supervision and monitoring and the parent's sexual or dating activities are other factors that enhance promiscuous sexual behaviour in teenagers and cause them to encounter early pregnancy. Also teenagers spend about half or three

quarter of their time at home. As such the belief systems and moral values inculcated in them at home go a long way to determine their sexual debut and the prevention of unwanted pregnancies. As such a parent's permissive attitude towards early or premarital sex or a parent's strong stance against teenage sexual behaviours and or unprotected sex will go a long to determine the sexual debut of the teenage and when she eventually gets pregnant. East, Khoo and Reyes (2006) concluded that teenagers whose mother or sister was a teenager mother, is like to follow in the same line and become a teenage parent. Also in families where parent take time to school their children on sex, the dangers of unprotected sex and other negative consequences associated with early sexual behaviour, such teenagers more often than not never engage in teenage sex.

### 2.3.10 Parental attitudes on sexual involvement

Also in families where parents are open to give advice and answer questions concerning relationships and other matters related to sex, teenagers in such families often exhibited greater level of control and restriction and when they do engage in sex, it is never unprotected in most cases. Richter, Norris, and Ginsburg (2006) reported most South Africa parents refused to have educated conversations with their children about sex and relationships leaving these teenagers to learn from unreliable sources like peers and boyfriends and girlfriends who want to have their way with them. Therefore, a family's moral values and engagements with its teen population go a long way to determine their sexual debut and behaviour and how they view the use of contraceptives and teenage pregnancy. Cox (2007) points out that most South African families are characterised by the absence of either the father or the mother and in such cases the level of conversation and engagement the teenager has with the parent reduces making families a cause of teenage pregnancies.

### 2.3.11 Unequal relationships

Another cause of teenage pregnancy in South Africa propounded by Panday et al. (2009) is the partners of teenagers. They argue that gender power inequalities play a major role in women's

defencelessness to early debut in unprotected sex as well as pregnancy. Jewkes et al. (2001) concurred with this, argued that only twenty-five per cent of pregnant teens reported willingly engaging in sex the first time, while forty-two per cent were persuaded to engage in sex and about thirty-two per cent were raped. This shows that about seventy-four per cent of teenagers in the study were either coerced or forced into sex for the first time. Others also reported being beaten by their boyfriends if they refuse to have sex with them while even a greater number consented to sex because they were afraid of being beaten by their boyfriends if they refused. Morojele, Brook and Kachieng (2006) and Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, and Rose-Junius (2005) also supported this fact by pointed out that in South Africa women are tricked or forced in to sex for the first time and this is tricks or force is most often accompanied by violence both physical and emotional. Furthermore, Panday et al. (2009) affirmed that in some communities in South Africa the beating of women in relationships have come to mean or represent a show of love. As such most of these women don't consider forced sex as rape when a boyfriend is involved and boys take advantage of this to ensure the continuous availability of women for their sexual pleasure. Threats of rejection, violence and multiple partners are also used to ensure that teenagers offer continuous and unprotected sex to their boyfriends leading to teenage pregnancies (Jewkes et al., 2001). Therefore, partners with which teenagers enter into relationships with are key determiners of whether they get early pregnant early or not.

### 2.3.12 Peer pressure

Another cause of teenage pregnancy propounded by Panday et al. (2009) is the peers or friends of teenagers. They continue that as teenager grow and begin to construct personal identities, their complete dependence on parents and siblings for advice and information about certain things or subjects begin to reduce. Their continuous and ever increasing interaction with friends, other role models, teachers, the educational community expand their horizon and sphere of influence and

interest. Sieving, Eisenberg, Pettingel, and Skay (2006) argued that peer attitudes, beliefs and norms are bound to influence one another as they share ideas about their daily experiences. They add that when a teenager hears or believes that their friends are having sex, they are more likely to engage in it if a positive or negative attitude about the use of contraceptive is carried by a majority of peers; most of them are bound to follow in the same vein. Jewkes et al. (2001) reported that most teenagers engaged in sexual activities because they believed that people of their age were sexually active. Young girls are often pressured by their peers to maintain sexual relationships with more than one partner as a means of gaining respect from peers and avoiding rejection while girls who were sexually inexperienced were excluded from certain groups or certain group discussions because they are regarded as children (Varga, 2003; Jewkes, Gumede, Westaway, Dickson, Brown, & Rees, 2005; Jewkes, Rees, Dickson, Brown, & Levin, 2005). Varga (2003) continues that sexual activity amongst young boys has come to be a defining factor in his successful passage into manhood. As such, young boys encounter significant social pressure from peers who readily mock and them or support them to become sexually active and maintain multiple sexual partnerships. This engagement of multiple partners and unprotected sex by both boys and girls is what ultimately leads to teenage pregnancy.

Some participants in Ajeya et al. (2013) believed that the rise in the number of teenage pregnancies was as a result of peer pressure. Thirty-five per cent (35%) of their participants pointed out that they became pregnant primarily as a result of peer pressure. Most of the teenage mothers who participated in the study had teenage friends who were either pregnant or were teenage mothers who told them dangerous lies about the advantages of having a child as a teenager and the financial and otherwise support they got from the fathers of the babies and other family members.

### 2.3.13 Communities

Communities are another cause of teenage pregnancy advanced by Panday et al. (2009). They point out that the nature of the society where a teenager grows up goes a long way to influence his or her behaviour in the future. In communities characterised by poverty, disorganisation, violence, lack of role models and general gloom, teenagers are more likely to engage in sexual activities and have early pregnancies. Also low levels of education and high crimes, waves are also risk factors for teenage pregnancies. But in communities where members are high achievers in terms of education, employment, income levels and where greater emphasis is placed on pursuing education and career goals and avoiding teenage pregnancy, the rate of teenage pregnancy is such societies are bound to be low. Dinkelman, Lam and Leibbrandt (2008) concur that in poverty-stricken communities, both males and females often engage in early sex and randomly engage in unprotected sex for petty favours and the provision of basic necessities by boyfriend. Communities therefore play a vital social role in the number of teenage pregnancies that emerge in such communities. For instance, in societies where teenage pregnancy is not frowned at, but seen as a norm, more teenagers are bound to become pregnant as opposed to societies where elders or the older generation or the entire community at large frown at teenage pregnancy causing both boys and girls in such communities to practice abstinence or at the very least engage in protected sex and the continuous use of contraceptives (Paruk, Petersen & Bhana, 2009; Bell, Bhana, Petersen, Mckay, Gibbons & Bannon, 2008).

### 2.3.14 Institutional factors

Institutional factor according to Panday et al. (2009) are another major cause of teenage pregnancy in South Africa. Health care institutions as well as workers in such institutions play a vital role in the understanding of risky behaviours associated will health and the utilisation of these services to improve one's condition. According to WHO (2002) most public health clinics and hospitals lack the ethics of confidentiality which is a major determinant in how the local population utilise such

facilities. In most institutions a culture of shame has been developed around certain diseases or infections making people who need help in such areas reluctant to ask for it. Also poverty and the scarcity of resources in most health care institutions have ensured the continuous rise of teenage pregnancies. The improper behaviour of health care staff who possess the appropriate knowledge to help young girls avoid unwanted pregnancies, have led to scepticism amongst young girls who turn to seek information from peers and boyfriends for fear of being stigmatised in hospitals or communities because of a lack of confidentiality (Jewkes, et al., 2005; Jewkes, et al., 2005). Mathews, Guttmacher, Flisher, Mtshizana, Nelson, and McCarthy (2009) reported that most South African young girls who went to clinics to get condoms chose never to return because of the judgemental attitude and scolding nature of clinic staff. This staffs often liken the use of contraceptive to poor morality, shame and promiscuity rather than responsibility and healthy sexuality. Furthermore, clinic staffs often scold teenagers and call them names for coming late for appointments or for missing an appointment rather than encourage these teenagers to ensure that they get the support they need to avoid teenage pregnancy. Woods and Jewkes (2006) support that health care workers also fail to advise school teenagers on the proper use of contraceptive. According to the Kaiser/SABC (2006) doctors or health care practitioners and scientist are the most trusted source eighty-seven per cent (87%) of information in South Africa on teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS but only a tiny twelve per cent of the people actually learn about teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS from these reliable sources because of the attitudes of these practitioners. The unwillingness of these professionals to do their job appropriately have forced teenagers to neglect the use of such vital services and resort to diverse unconventional and unreliable sources in dealing with teenage pregnancy prevention and other sexually related issues (Mathews, et al., 2009; Tylee, Haller, Graham, Churchill & Sanci, 2007).

### 2.3.15 Cultural factors

Cultural factor or context is another major cause of teenage pregnancy articulated by Panday et al., (2009). They argue that culture plays a vital role in the behaviour patterns of a teenager and in South Africa where teenage pregnancy is welcomed and accepted in some cultures impact the number of teenage pregnancies that subsequently emerge from such societies. Jewkes and Christofides (2008) argued that cultures in South Africa, especially black culture, have toned down on teenage pregnancy and welcomed it in the society reducing the stigma attached to it thereby causing more and more teenagers to engage in sex and produce unwanted pregnancies. Also traditional stereotypical roles assigned to men and women in many traditional societies with men having sexual decision-making power leaving women with little or no room to negotiate contraceptive use with partners have gone a long way to increase or cause teenage pregnancies. Furthermore, according to Jewkes, Penn-Kekana and Junius (2005) the fact that respectability amongst men in traditional societies is still tied to their rights and ability to make decisions about how when and where they have sex with their partners and to be highly sexual active with multiple partners (the younger the better) makes it a driving force and major cause of teenage pregnancy and a man's economic standing in such a society doesn't only increase his bargaining power for many sexual partners, but also increases his sexual desirability amongst women or teenagers in such a society (Richter & Dawes, 2008; Richter, & Morrell, 2006). In this case according to Jewkes, Morrell and Christofides (2009, p. 675) ''girl's or women's subordinate position in the gender and social hierarchy contains their ability to make real choices around pregnancy''. Richter, et al. (2005) and Kaufman, de Wet, and Stadler (2001) conclude that in societies when patriarchy is the order of the day and men have their way with women including teenagers, teenage pregnancy is bound to rise because young boys and men who go for young and vulnerable and teenage girls who are vulnerable who they can easily control as opposed to the older

ones who might prove difficult to contain or control due to their numerous sexual partners. Cultural context is therefore a strong determiner and provoker of teenage pregnancy.

### 2.3.16 Poverty

Poverty which is another stringent cause of teenage pregnancy is propounded by Panday et al., (2009). They argue that in South Africa, the poverty stricken nature of an individual or teenage girl is more likely to improve her chances of early pregnancy. According to Panday et al., (2009) studies worldwide (Branch, 2006; Hallman, 2004; Hobcraft & Kiernan, 2001; Kirby, Coyle, & Gould, 2001; Miller, Benson & Galbraith 2001; Russell, 2002; Woodward, Horwood & Fergusson, 2001) have demonstrated that most teenage mothers were themselves raised in poverty-stricken societies or less advantageous social environment, or already existing disadvantages that came about as a result of poorer economic circumstances or status. Hallman (2004) adding to this, pointed out that poverty significantly increased the possibility of diverse unsafe sexual behaviours especially amongst females and this is often characterised by early sexual debut, low levels of condom use and multiple sexual partners. Poverty according to Dinkelman, Lam, and Leibbrandt, (2008) also increases a young girl's possibility or early sexual debut, coerced sex or transactional sex. Poverty and low socio economic status also means low access to family planning information or basic information about safe sex, the use of contraceptives, and better education. Teenage girls from such underprivileged background most often are not aware of the different choices or possibilities available to them thereby limiting their ability to make the right choices. To add to these, teenagers from homes that wallow in poverty often lack the motivation to prevent teenage pregnancy because they most often see no positive options (Kearney & Levine, 2007). Also the desire to collect the child support grant by teenagers in these societies according to Myers (2014), Kaiser/SABC (2006), Willan (2013) makes teenage pregnancy and motherhood common because most of them see this grant as a way of generating income which explains why some teenagers have two children in such societies. Bhorat &

van der Westhuizen (2008) concur with this by arguing that youths in South Africa use amongst those highly hit by poverty and unemployment with about sixty-eight per cent of them very concerned of not being able to find jobs and sixty-seven per cent worried they are not able to take care of their families. In such cases teenage girls often look for quick ways to generate income like transactional sex or maintain multiple sexual partners. This promiscuous sexual behaviour brought about by poverty and terrible socio economic conditions have drastically caused the rise in the increasing number of teenage mothers recorded and those on the line to be recorded.

### 2.3.17 The 'Sugar Daddy' Phenomenon.

Kanku and Mash (2010) observed that sugar daddies constitute a major cause of teenage pregnancy. Most teenagers engage in relationships with older people for petty favours as well as all the benefits sugar daddies can afford. The effects of relationships with older partners most often is domination because their social capital and experiences are different. The sugar daddies are older as such their ability to bargain and supersede teenagers is great. This often led to unprotected sex and consequently teenage pregnancy. Dunkle, Jewkes, Nduna, Jama, Levin, Sikweyiya and Koss (2007, p. 12) added that ''sugar daddies can easily manipulate young teenagers who are still struggling to discover their own personality''. Kansumba (2002) argued that a recent survey which measured HIV rate in pregnant girls showed that about 45% of pregnant girls between the ages of 15 and 20 were impregnated by men far older than themselves. Other participants were of the opinion that "Another thing is that you will see teenagers of 16 years or 17 going out with someone who is 26 years old, he overpowers her with his thinking, to an extent that this child cannot say no to this male, even if she says no her mind is still weak, this person overpowers her with his mind" (Kansumba, 2002, p. 5) and this has been the cause for the rise up of the number of teenage pregnancies.

### 2.3.18 Lack of use of contraceptives and knowledge

Ajeya et al. (2013) pointed out that sixty-two per cent of the participants in the study believed that one of the reasons they became pregnant was their lack of knowledge in sexual education. Pregnancy at such a delicate age is predominantly, due to lack of sex education because parents and teachers who have a responsibility to deliver an adequate sex education to teenagers often neglect the topic or abuse the children in some cases. Most families lack the platform where sensitive issues like sexual education can be tabled and discussed, as such teenagers often take whatever information their peers or boyfriends feed them with as the truth which in most cases is never the case. Reproductive health situations are also important to be imparted to the young child so that they become aware of the various aspects related to sex and pregnancy.

According to Lawin (2006) adolescence marks the beginning of sexual maturity. This is the period is when teenage girls start showing interest to/in the opposite sex and curiosity about the more topics of sex. The lack of the right sexual knowledge at this point will inevitably lead to teenage pregnancy. Furthermore, Ajeya et al. (2013) reported that some of the participants also believed that they became pregnant because they failed to use contraceptives during sexual intercourse. Thirty-two per cent (32%) of them postulated that contraceptives are of vital importance in avoiding pregnancy and the moment you have sex without using it your chances of falling pregnant are very high. While some forget to use it, others lack the bargaining powers to ensure that it is used both by them and by their boyfriends during sexual intercourse.

### 2.3.19 Government policy

The last cause of teenage pregnancy according to Panday et al. (2009) is government policy. They opine that government policies contain the power both directly and indirectly to either curb or promote teenage pregnancy. This is so because policy decisions influence the distribution of resources in public institutions like clinics and hospitals whose availability is also subject to

government policies. Brindis (2006) concurs with Panday et al. (2009) by adding that policy decisions shape the context in which young girls grow and the aid that is available for them to use as they begin to experiment with certain behavioural patterns. Adding that the decision by the Department of Education to let pregnant girls stay in school and to return to school after giving birth but has gone a long way to reduce the consequences of teenage pregnancy on young girls, on the other hand it has reduced the risk and consequences of teenage pregnancy and motherhood causing other teenagers to engage in it. Sampson, Lee, Ndlebe, Mac Quene, van Niekerk, Gandhi, Harigaya, and Abrahams (2004) concluded that the government often initiate policies forgetting to thoroughly scrutinise it for its adverse effects on the people and take measures to curb such negative consequences. Having discussed the causes of teenage pregnancy which subsequently produces teenage mothers, it is of vital importance to discuss the challenges facing teenage mothers.

## 2.4 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEENAGE MOTHERS

Chigona and Chetty (2008) outline several challenges that teenage mothers face both in school and out of school which affect their schooling. These challenges are as follows; lack of counselling to combat stigma attached to teenage motherhood, misunderstanding and pressure from teachers and fellow learners, parents' attitude due to stigma attached to teenage pregnancy and motherhood, socio-economic status of the family, lack of support from the community and resistance to otherness.

### 2.4.1 Lack of professional counselling

The first and most significant amongst them is the lack of professional counselling to empower teenage mothers for success. Most teen mothers who leave school in order to deliver their children often return without any counselling on how to deal with parenthood, their stigma in schools as parents and schooling simultaneously. As such most teen mothers become overwhelmed by the pressure and challenges causing many to drop out of school and others to perform very poorly.

Chigona and Chetty (2008) in the findings of their study reported that teenagers do not get the professional help they need to face their new roles as students and mothers. All the participants in their study were of the opinion that they needed professional counselling in order to cope with certain issues but nobody has offered to help, not even their teachers. Most of these teenagers who know next to nothing about counselling or where to get it needed advice and direction from the older generation and community to be able to get the kind of help they need. Although according to the Department of Education, in some provinces like the Western Cape teenage mothers returning to school are supposed to be treated like learners with special needs who require incessant counselling to be able to successfully go through school. Furthermore, in public schools where professional counselling is provided, accessibility by these teen mothers constitutes another problem. This is so because very few counsellors cater for a large number making the time each learner gets to spend with these counsellors very small while others don't even get the chance at all.

### 2.4.2 Misunderstanding and pressure from teachers and fellow learners

Another problem or challenge which teenage mothers face according to Chigona and Chetty (2008) is misunderstanding and pressure from teachers and fellow learners. Participants in their study were of the opinion that most teachers refuse to recognise their condition and chose to treat them the same as the other learners. As a result of these a lot of pressure is exerted upon them by both the teachers and other learners without considering the stress they go through. Some teachers or learners go to the extent of ridiculing teen mothers in class for not doing their homework, group task or meeting some other class requirements. This coupled with the stress of caring for the baby, according the participants of the study, made them felt like they were carrying the entire world on their shoulders. Chigona and Chetty (2008) added that even the Life Orientation teacher corroborated the experiences of teenage mother in relation to being ridiculed by teachers or other learners in school. These have

been a source of hell for most teenage mothers making most of them to perform poorly in school and a few to drop out completely.

### 2.4.3 Parents attitude

Another major challenge faced by teenage mothers, as indicated by Chigona and Chetty (2008), is parents' attitude due to stigma attached to teenage pregnancy. They postulate that most parents are reluctant to support their teenagers through motherhood forgetting that it is a hideous task for which they themselves needed support when they were raising the said child. Some parents refused to understand the plight of these teenage mothers or provide support to them because they felt ashamed of their daughter's actions or because they felt that it would affect their social standing within the community. Pillow (2004) pointed out that all teen mothers need a great deal of support to be able to navigate parenthood. The kind of support needed by any mother whether young or old parenting as a single mother is the kind of help that should be provided to teenagers especially by their parents but most parents are always unwilling to do this. In some cases, parents favoured the siblings of the teen mother as a way for punishing her for her action making motherhood in such cases very difficult and challenging. Chigona and Chetty (2008) reported that some parents go as far as cutting down the basic supplies of teen mothers as a way of punishing them and cause them to suffer the consequences of their actions. In such a situation sibling rivalries begin to add to the teen mother's challenges leaving her with almost no one to share her experiences with or talk to.

### 2.4.4 Socio economic status

Another challenge which teenage mothers face according to Chigona and Chetty (2008) is poverty or the socio economic status of the families of teenage mothers. As earlier postulated in the study most teen mothers stem from families characterised by economic hardship and poverty. In such situations the teen mother or her parents cannot afford babysitting services for the child and most of the lack of support from the father of the baby multiplies the bulk of challenges facing teen mothers. As such

when nobody is available to take care of the child the teenage mother has to skip school or forgo her homework or other school related work to be able to take care of the baby. The participants in the study indicated that they had little or no time at all to study because most at times their parents took care of the baby when they went to school but when they returned from school they had to take care of the baby themselves, leaving them little or no room to do assignments or read for personal development. One of the participants in the study reported that ‘‘it is not easy when you have a baby, when sometimes I want to do school work … I don’t have time … so it is hard to find time … I have to do the household chores, look after my baby … and we are a number of us in my family but we all live in just one room so it is also hard for me to do my homework at night but during the day I am also busy with the household chores and the baby … I cannot study at home because I don’t have time and space …but I also get tired by night … sometimes I do not have time to do my homework … sometimes the baby always wants to be with me so I just ignore the school work because I can’t do homework when I am with the baby’’ (Chigona & Chetty, 2008, p. 13). Pillow (2004) corroborates this teen mother’s story by arguing that teen mothers who were already living in poverty -stricken conditions or below the poverty experience more hardship than those who come from well to do families. Since in such home parents prefer to spend their meagre resources on educating the siblings of the teen mother rather than on improving living conditions for the teen mother, their hardship they go through, coupled with lack of counselling becomes a heavy load even for an adult.

### 2.4.5 Lack of support from communities

Chigona and Chetty (2008) observed that lack of support from communities is another challenge that teen mothers are facing. Most teen mothers lie in communities or neighbourhoods where teen mothers are usually treated or considered the ‘other girls’ or girls with low morals. Some parents within such communities or neighbourhoods go as far as discouraging their children from being friends with teen mothers or walking with them for fear that they would infect their daughters with

their bad manners. Such actions often leave the teenager isolated and vulnerable with no friends to talk to or no one to help them with their assignments. In some cases, some parents go ask far as going to the school to demand that pregnant learners and teenage mothers shouldn't be allowed in the school because they will be a bad influence on other learners. In some neighbourhoods or communities conflicts of dressing constantly arise between the people and teen mothers or pregnant teenagers who most often than not still want to dress like teenagers but whom the community no longer see as teenagers but as mother raising children. When such issues persist Chigona and Chetty (2008) add that some group of parents' team up and force the school (by threatening to withdraw their support and their children from the school) to expel pregnant learners and teen mothers though public policy stipulates that they should be allowed in school.

### 2.4.6 Otherness; Us versus them

Chigona and Chetty (2008) maintained that otherness or resistance to otherness is a daunting problem facing teenage mothers. They continue that the society in most cases other teen mothers by creating a new but unwanted category for them and it becomes a challenge for these teenagers to resist such otherness especially since it begins from schools to the community' right down to the home. In the bid to fight this some teen mothers end up skipping some school days or refusing to do some particular task as a way of asserting themselves. While some teen mothers resort to fights with fellow learners who ridicule them, others engage in heated debates with teachers who attempt other them. Though this process of asserting themselves often yield some fruits, in most cases it further destroys the relationship between teen mothers and the teachers as well as fellow learners making the classroom more uncomfortable for them to learn in.

### 2.4.7 Perceptions about motherhood

Raising Children Network (2015) a research organisation on teenage mothers and children also pointed out several challenges which teenage mothers face after giving birth both in school and at

home which affects their education. They argue that the perception of most teenage mothers about what parenting means and how to go about it also constitutes problem. Since most of them were not prepared for the baby when they got pregnant, the psychological stamina and presence is missing it them and instead of braving themselves up and standing up to the challenge most of them complain about what doesn't work and all the things which they need but which they don't have and forget to make the most of the vital resources available in front of them. Juxtaposing parenting and academics is not an easy task as such teen mothers need to be focused and concentrate on the huge task ahead of them making do with what they have rather than concentrate on what they don't have. Also since child care has become one of the most expensive services to get in recent times, teen mothers often face financial constraints which often lead to exhaustion and distance from other family members. Time which was previously spent with other family members and to do other things is not enough to take care of the baby as such teenage mothers most of the time becomes estranged from their family members because most of them lack the maturity to deal with the baby, school and family at the same time.

### 2.4.8 Poverty

Furthermore, depending on the reason why the teenage mother became pregnant, some of them are bound to face more challenges than others. In cases where pregnancy came about as a result of transactional or causal sex, poverty and or drug abuse such a teenager is bound to face more challenges. This is so because such a teen mother would first need to get herself free or clean from drugs as a step towards ensuring the total wellbeing of both her and the child. In the case of transactional sex, the teenage mother would therefore need to search for alternative ways of raising money to take care of the child so as to avail taking in again or contacting a terminal disease. In the cases where pregnancy came about as a result of cultural influence or sexual abuse (both present and past), dealing with the follow of consequences such incidences is another major challenge for the

teenager. Bypassing the hatred, she might have for the father of the child and effectively taking care of the child will be a huge psychological challenge. On the other hand, if the pregnancy came about as a result of cultural influence it therefore means that such a teenager would have to follow the demands of such culture continuous and combining this with taking care of the baby and academics always becomes too heavy for the teenager. While teenagers who got pregnant because they wanted their boyfriend to marry them or keep him for ever (Kaiser/SABC, 2006) become frustrated in cases where the boy's intention or plans turnout to be different from what they were expecting. All in all, it is difficult accessing the full length of challenges teenage mothers go through beginning from physical, economic, psychological and emotional. But in the midst of all this challenges the government has been taking some steps to ensure that pregnant teens and mothers would be comfortable. These policies are analysed in the next section of this literature review.

## 2.5 POLICIES THAT SUPPORT PREGNANT TEENAGERS AND MOTHERS

Willan (2013) points out that there are several initiatives in South Africa that support pregnant teens and or mothers. These policies were initiated by the government as a way of curbing the diverse challenges pregnant teens and mothers are facing so they can continue with their academics smoothly. Base on the Department of education side views which intent that though there are series of teenage pregnancies at schools but discourage learners from dropout out of school if they want to get child grants funds otherwise there will not be any substantial provision on their neglect to school as Department of Education indicate in the policies to support pregnant teenage learners and mothers to enjoy with benefits with their studies.

### 2.5.1 Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996

The first of such policy initiative is the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996. This act gives a teenager the right to get pregnancy terminated on request up until the pregnancy reaches

twelve weeks of gestation provided it is done by a certified midwife or doctor. The pregnancy can also be terminated on request by the teenager when the pregnancy is between thirteen to twenty weeks in cases where the pregnancy poses a potential risk to the girl's social, psychological or economic wellbeing after twenty weeks termination of the pregnancy can only be done if it is to save the girls life (Bhana, Clowes, Morrell, & Shefer, 2008; Hoffman-Wanderer, Carmody, Chai, & Rohrs, 2013; Cooper, Morroni, Orner, Moodley, Harries, Cullingworth, & Hoffman, 2004; Jewkes et al., 2005). This act places enough power in the hands of the teenager to decide what she wants for her future. This act was amended in 2003 to provide more access and broaden the scope due to the large number of abortions that were being committed in illegal facilities. This amendment allowed any medical facility with a twenty-four-hour maternity facility to offer abortion for the first trimester and subsequently any nurse who had completed the top training to undertake first trimester abortions (Hoffman-Wanderer et al., 2013).

### 2.5.2 Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007

The second policy that supports teenage mothers and pregnant teens is the South African Child's Act of 2005 which was amended by the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007. This act which came into effect in 2010 allows children from twelve years old to access health care services including HIV testing, termination of pregnancy and contraceptives without the consent of their parents or care giver. This act stipulates that ''contraceptives other than condoms (and also including condoms) may be provided to a child on request by the child and without parental consent of the parent or care-giver of the child if the child is at least 12 years of age'' (Hoffman-Wanderrer, et al., 2013:7). This act therefore gives the child the right to either terminate or keep her pregnancy or to determine other health care she will access as a teenage mother.

### 2.5.3 Child's Support Grant

The third policy that supports teenage mothers in South Africa is the Child Support Grant. This grant has been of vital importance to many teenage mothers especially those who became pregnant as a result of poverty and who are still living below the poverty line. This grant which is paid monthly to mothers or care givers of young children from the ages of 0 to eighteen was 280 rand and in October 2013 it was increased to 300 rand (Panday et al., 2009). Child's support grant has been noted to alleviate the struggle crisis on the majority South African teenagers who have child at their early age at high schools, it said to improve their mental health, cognitive reasoning and emotional stability towards achieving their matric certificate and further enhance to higher institution of learning (Riemenschneider, 2011). This connotes that Child's support grants are helping the education system to stabilize the dropout rate among the teenage females at school irrespective of their pregnancies, thus equip them to continue studies until a desired outcome is achieved.

### 2.5.4 Prevention and Management of Learner's Pregnancy

The fourth policy put in place to assist pregnant learners and teenage mothers is the Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy (MPMLP) of 2007. It was implemented as a move to provide assistance in both preventing teenage pregnancy and assistance to those affected in cases where pregnancy already exists. This measures which were heavily critiqued for its language and prescriptive nature gradually became dormant and the combine efforts of both the Departments of Basic Education (DoBE) and Departments of Health (DoH) produced the Integrated School Health Policy (ISHP) in October 2012. This policy widened the scope of Life Orientation to include; 'Abuse (sexual, physical and emotional abuse, including bullying and violence), sexual and reproductive health, menstruation, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS, male circumcision, teenage pregnancy, Choice of Termination of Pregnancy (CToP), HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) and stigma mitigation.

### 2.5.5 Flexible schools

Furthermore, Panday et al. (2009) pointed out that flexible school policy or policies is another intervention introduced in schools to ensure that teenage mothers are able to return to school after giving birth. The South African Education Act and Schools Act formalised this process. In 2009 the joint pronouncement of the council of Education Ministers specified that pregnant teens could not be expelled from school while teen mothers were allowed to return to school. Again in 2007 the Department of Education introduced a set of guidelines to help teachers deal with teenage mothers. It is therefore incumbent on the school to develop an intervention strategy based on the guidelines provided by the Department of Education which would best suit the needs of the teen mothers in their school.

The school management body, alongside the counsellors and Life Orientation teachers therefore have the responsibility of ensuring that teenage mothers get all the support they need when they return to school since every child has a right to basic education. The challenges facing teen mothers are enormous and are context specific according to the Department of Education (2013) each school will therefore have to come up with specific measures and support services to ensure that teen mothers successfully make it through school. Chigona and Chetty (2008) and Ardington, Branson, Lam, Leibbrandt, Marteleto, Menendez, Mutevedzi, and Ranchold (2012) argued that teen mothers are learners with special needs who deserve special care and support to be able to pull through school successfully. Arlington Public School (2004, p. 2) concur with this by pointing out that ‘‘peer pressures are far more common than support and understanding. Mature, adult decisions are required of emotionally pressured adolescents. Managing to care for an infant and devoting adequate time to school work is a great challenge for the teen parents’’. Each school therefore needs to take full responsibility for these special needs learners in their school and ensure that they are well taken care

of. The next section of this review will look at some of the strategies used by schools in South Africa to support teenage mothers.

## 2.6 SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORTS SERVICES OR PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED TO ASSIST TEENAGE MOTHERS GO THROUGH SCHOOL SUCCESSFULLY.

As earlier postulated many teenage mothers quit school because of the diverse challenges already enumerated which they go through while in school. As demanded by the Department of Education schools are supposed to provide support to these special needs learners so they can complete school successfully. Depending on the kind of challenges the learners are facing and why they got pregnant in the first place, each school is supposed to develop intervention programmes or support services to help these learners, as a result of the nature of these services, very little has been written about it in South Africa.

### 2.6.1 Academic support

Zondo (2006) in her study about teen mothers, their responsibilities and challenges in Inanda pointed out that most teen mothers were more keen on talking about what they should do for them rather than what their schools have done when asked about the support services provided by the school. She continued that moral support was one of the areas where teen mothers were supported to continue schooling. Most of these teen mothers within the schools in the study were assigned to specific teachers who guided them in their academics and other challenges which they were facing while in school. These teachers amongst who were the Life Orientation teachers and counsellors had an understanding of what teen mothers could be going through as such were in a good place to provide them with good moral support. Also teachers who were mothers and fathers were included amongst those who were to provide moral support to teen mothers. Furthermore, Marion (2008) added that in some school's academic support is provided to teen mothers to make up for the classes lost and other

difficulties they are facing in school. Most teen mothers due to the different challenges they face at home and in school find it difficult to cope with their studies, as a result most of them drop out of school. The school therefore, in the bid to ensure that these teenagers enjoy their basic rights of education and not drop out of school.

This supplementary curriculum programs come in the form of extra classes, specially designed tutorials, special assignments, and thought provokers to ensure that teenage mothers successfully complete their education.

### 2.6.2 Inclusive curriculum

Magwaza (2003) also postulates that in other school's teenage mothers are offered a more inclusive curriculum within general or mainstream education curriculum and a range of subjects pertaining to childbearing, parenthood, or child development. The key feature in the inclusive program is that teenage mothers did not attend regular classes; rather, they were physically and administratively separate from the conventional classes. In these specialised classes, more attention is paid to the individual needs of teenage mothers thereby making them more effective and successful in their academics. This type of program Magwaza (2003) continues mainly concentrates on adding more information to the teenage mother on how to deal with challenges that comes with children making them more comfortable in handling their babies and their academics. Adding to this, the school also provides contextualised supplementary curriculum programs, that provide relevant coursework as well as child care or counselling to those teenage mothers who also attended conventional lessons. The main feature in these programs was that the students remained in their regular classes for a majority of the day and awarded credit for taking part in the special parenting classes (Magwaza, 2003). In some cases, teenage mothers were made to choose subjects which would tally with their experiences making it easier for them to understand the lessons being taught and also make it through

in their exams. This made teenage mothers more comfortable because they were part of the knowledge creation process as such they could own the knowledge and reproduce it whenever it was needed.

### 2.6.3 Medical support

To add to this, Lekganyane (2014) states that some schools developed a special school clinic service for teenage mothers. These teen mothers are not only taught basics about health care and how to take care of their children, but they themselves receive basic care to ensure that they are physically sound to study and take care of their children. The challenge with this she says is that meeting the individual health needs of all teen mothers within and the school and teaching them the basics about caring for their children leaves no room for other learners within the school to use the clinics found in the school. Some schools have responded by employing more hands while others have responded by cancelling the program while others are yet struggling to adjust the program to meet the needs of all the learners in the school.

### 2.6.4 Material support

Macleod and Tracey (2009) conclude that some schools provided material support to teenage mothers like food and other basic necessities. These schools get in contact with some non-governmental organisations and the community to help some of these teenage mothers who were wallowing in poverty. Most teenage mothers who became pregnant as a result of poverty therefore find this refreshing and comforting since it reduces their worries and increases the time they have to concentrate on their education. They continued that most schools are yet to implement support services to help teenage mothers successfully complete their studies and the few who have initiated project manage the program very poorly leading to minimal benefits and waste of time and resources in some cases. Hence this study exploring teenage mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal comes in handy to explore how teenage

mothers experience this support services so as to ensure that that subsequent support services are targeted.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter which was titled literature review examined what different scholars around the world have said about teenage teen mothers and everything that has to do with them. This review was done using the following themes which emerged from the literature; defining teenage motherhood, causes of teenage pregnancy, challenges experienced by teenage mothers, policies that support pregnant teenagers and mothers, and school-based supports services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully. The next chapter examines the paradigm and the theoretical framework of the study.

# CHAPTER THREE

# PARADIGM AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter of this study examined the literature around teen mothers and what happens to them as mothers. This chapter will examine the paradigm and the theoretical framework that informed the study. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, (2011) argue that it is vital for any research project to have a paradigm to frame the study and a theoretical framework to give meaning to the findings. In this study, the interpretive paradigm was used to give direction to the study and to determine how the data will be generated and analysed. Social constructivism was used as a theoretical framework to make sense of the findings of the study. The next part of the study looks at the interpretive paradigm.

## 3.2 PARADIGM

The word ‘paradigm’ according to Thomas (2010) originated from a Greek word ‘paradeigma’ meaning pattern or worldview and it was first used in educational research by Thomas Kuhn in 1962 to designate a conceptual framework or worldview shared by a group of scientists which offered them an easy model or approach of examining education problems and finding solutions to these problems. Kuhn (1962, p. 12) cited by Thomas (2010) defines a paradigm as: “an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tool”. According to Kuhn (1962), paradigm refers to an approach guiding research in education with a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that a group of researchers have unanimously agreed to be the guiding principles of research in a particular field. Neuman (2006, p. 81) offers an alternative definition of paradigm which he sees as “a general organising framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, models of quality research, and key issues, methods for seeking answers’’. This therefore means that a paradigm offers a platform where a researcher can

study an individual's or a group of individuals experiences, beliefs, values, understanding of others and self and meaning making processes (Cohen et al., 2011). Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) argue that there are different understandings and notions of what a paradigm is or what it should be and how it should be used in research.

In this light, Bogdan and Biklen (1998, p.22) define paradigm as "a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research" while Cohen et al. (2011, p.39) consider paradigm to be ''the philosophical intent or motivation for undertaking a study''. Alternatively, Mac-Naughton, Rolfe and Siraj-Blatchford (2001) offer a definition of paradigm which includes three elements ''a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology and criteria for validity'' (p.32). It is therefore clear that different scholars have different definitions and understanding of what a paradigm is and what it means in a study.

From the above definitions it is clear that a paradigm is a way of thinking made up of particular basic principles. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) argue that there are different kinds of paradigms used in educational research amongst which are; constructivist paradigm, positivist paradigm, transformative paradigm, emancipatory paradigm, interpretive paradigm, critical paradigm and post-positivist paradigm.

### 3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm

Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) continue that the interpretive, interpretivism or interpretivist paradigm (as it is often called) originated from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutics. Interpretivism gears towards understanding "the world of human experience" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.39), and suggests that "reality is socially constructed" (Mertens, 2005, p.12). As such the interpretivist researcher seeks to know the participants vision and understandings of a particular issue (Creswell, 2003, p.8) and also recognises the subjectiveness of

their participation since it is based upon their background and experiences. Creswell (2003, p.9) argues that interpretivism don't normally begin with theories, but rather goes it to the field with the intention of "generating or inductively developing a theory or pattern of meanings" as the research process is completed. As such interpretivist research most often than not uses qualitative data generation approaches and methods of analysis in research or a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve the objectives of the study.

Göran (2012) argues that interpretivism considers reality of knowledge to be embedded in people's subjective worldview, making reality to be socially constructed. He continues that interpretivists believe that there is no one single approach or correct answer to any research problem; neither is the any 'correct' or 'incorrect' theory or idea. In interpretivist research, knowledge is judged based on how interesting they are to the researcher and those involved in the same learning area. As such this idea no matter how varied it may, be is constructed through a careful examination of its relationship to the phenomenon.

Thomas (2010) concurs by adding that knowledge and meaning only emerge as a result of interpretation, as such there is no objective truth or knowledge which is independent from thinking or human reasoning. Myers (2009) supports that the underpinning idea or framework for interpretive research that access to reality both in cases where in is given and in those where it is socially negotiated is only through social constructs like language, consciousness and shared meanings. This makes knowledge in interpretive paradigm a product of observation and interpretation, since by observing the researcher generates data about events or a phenomenon while to interpret is making sense of the data generated by making inferences or by connecting it to other abstract patterns within the same field. In this case, an understanding of a thing is gained through the meanings or attributes

people give to it. Reeves and Hedberg (2003, p. 32) also point out that the "interpretivist paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context''.

According to Reeves and Hedberg (2003, p. 32) the interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the world from a subjective perspective making individual experience of great importance in the meaning-making process. To archive this meaning oriented methodologies or instruments such as interviews, participant observation, and semi-structured questionnaires that rely on the subjective relationship between the researcher and the participants within the study is used. As such no dependent or independent variable is predefined; rather emphasis is laid on the participant's complex sense making processes. Creswell (2008) adds to this by postulating that the interpretive paradigm emphasises the creation of a comprehensive analysis of one or more situations or cases and this caters for a thorough understanding of the teenage mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. Since experience is subjective meaning can only be constructed from experience through the interpretive paradigm since it opens up the problem and creates room for diverse interpretation and meaning making. This therefore is justifiably an interpretive study.

Nieuwenhuis (2010) argues that interpretive research offers a lens through which the researcher can understand or make meaning of human life from within and this meaning enable the process to focuses on people's subjective experiences, or how these people build the social world by sharing meanings, and how they relate to or interact with others. In order to deal with the research questions in this study, the researcher will interact with teenage mothers so as to gain a detailed understanding of their subjective experience of the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. By investigating the richness, depth and complexity of teenage mother's experiences of the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school, the researcher will

construct a sense of understanding of the meaning developed by teenage mothers. Within the interpretive paradigm the underpinning assumption is that by exploring or investigating participants in their social contexts or individual space, there is a greater possibility of understanding the perceptions they have developed of their subjective reality (Creswell, 2008). Cohen et al. (2011) concur that the primary concern of interpretive research is to understand the way in which participants (teenage mothers) will create, modify, and interpret to the world or school environment where-in they find themselves.

According to Neuman (2006), researcher especially interpretive researchers need to learn more about the phenomenon under investigation, by constructing questions of various kinds which are wide-ranging and universal in the form of words or images to generate all the relevant information needed. Within this study therefore the participants (who are teenage mothers) responses are the source of data with richness, depth and complexity. The focal point in educational interpretive research according to Nieuwenhuis (2010) is to comprehend what informs human behaviour and this is anchored in the fact that knowledge and reality or truth is subjective, local, specific and non-generalizable and not objective or universal. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 31) argue that interpretive paradigm acknowledges the fact that ‘‘results are not kept somewhere out there waiting for the researcher to come and take, but it is created and recreated through the interpretation of data’’. Concurring with this, Creswell (2008) opines that the interpretive paradigm is principally orchestrated towards meaning making and knowledge construction processes of an individual from his or her perspective. This therefore means that human behaviour or experiences is mechanically affected by his or her knowledge of the social world making reality a multiple phenomenon and socially constructed across space and time (Creswell, 2008). To add to this, Nieuwenhuis (2010) postulates that within the interpretive paradigm, reality can only be socially constructed and its knowledge is personal or self-objective, generated from a life time of experiences and constructed

through careful interpretation leaving meaning to be constructed within the individual. In this context the researcher wants to explore experience of the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal.

Cohen et al. (2011) opine that critics of interpretivism argue that its principal weakness is the fact that it cannot address the features and conditions from which meanings and actions, interpretations, beliefs and rules are deduced. Furthermore, Sarantakos (2005) advocates that this paradigm comes short of ‘‘acknowledging the organizational structures, particularly divisions of interest and relations to power and as a result presents partial accounts of social behaviour by their neglect of the political and ideological contexts of much educational research’’ (p. 24). This study bypasses such criticism since it looks at the experiences of individuals within a social order and since the society shapes the individual, the individual can effectively represent the society or a social order and all that happens in it. Figure 3.1 below represents the representation of the interpretive paradigm.

**Figure 3.1Interpretive paradigm**

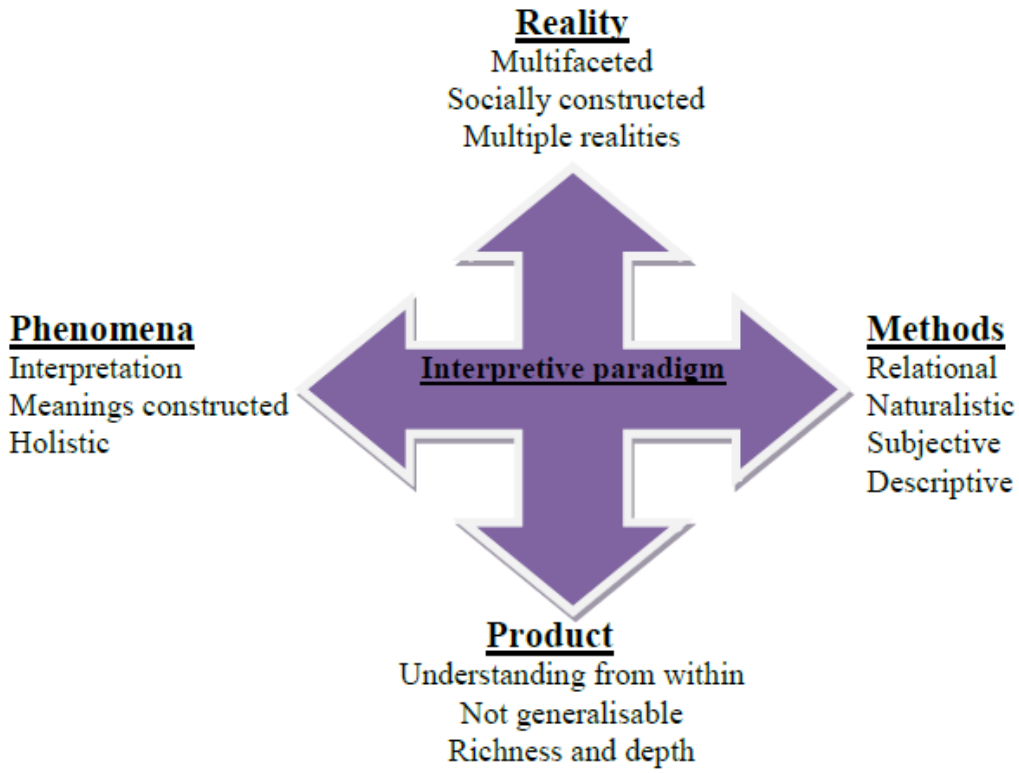



Figure 3.1: Above illustrates the interpretive paradigm adapted from Nieuwenhuis (2010, p. 55).

## 3.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Khanare (2012) every research must have a theoretical or conceptual framework because it offers explanations as to why the research is done in a particular way. She adds that the theoretical framework offers a platform where a researcher can theorise his or her work. According to Vithal and Jansen (1997, p. 11) a theoretical framework can be defined ‘‘as a well-developed and structured explanation of circumstances or events in a logical and coherent form’’. Yilmaz (2011) argues that whatever theoretical framework is chosen is guided or dictated by the kind of research the researcher is undertaking by identifying principal concepts like the situation under investigation, data generation procedure or strategies, data analysis techniques and data interpretation. This study uses social constructionism as a theoretical framework to explain the experiences of teen mothers of the

psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal as a learning experience where-in meaning is created or constructed through such experiences.

### 3.3.1 Social Constructivist Theory

Social constructivism or constructionism as it is often called emerged as a leading theory in human learning by the 1980s and1990s as more people got interested in behavioural approaches and information-processing perspectives (Mayer, 1998). Constructivism, originated from the works of Piaget (1970), Bruner (1962, 1979), Vygotsky (1962, 1978, 1986, 1989), and Papert (1970, 1980, 1991,). Constructivism is both a psychological and philosophical approach anchored on social cognitivism and which propounds that people, their behaviours and their environments interact in reciprocal fashion (Schunk, 2000). According to Thomas (2010) within social constructivism, students or learners construct knowledge based on their experiences rather than acquire it from an already existing source and this is done through their constant interaction with other students or learners, teachers and the society at large based on what they know and continue to know, lived past experiences, beliefs, and thought patterns that are used to make sense of events, or objects in relation to its context and in agreement with the environment where such learning is taking place. In this case, students or learners are considered active participants in the knowledge creation process as they process information thereby turning it into knowledge.

Fomunyam (2014) therefore points out that within the social constructivist theory, teaching or instruction is a process which supports and guides the process of knowledge construction and this knowledge is purely subjective and rarely objective or entirely generalizable. He adds that the teacher or instructor comes into the classroom as a facilitator of learning and not as a dispenser of knowledge or a demi god who knows everything and from whom students or learners are to depend on for everything. Thomas (2010) concurs with this by pointing out that constructivists lay more

emphasis on learning and experiences rather than instruction or teaching and this can only be done by creating a rich and constructive learning environment for learners or students to actively engage with both the teacher and other learners or students in the knowledge construction process. Anderson and Kanuka (1999) add that constructivism requires that the learning platform should be motivating and learner-centred or student-centred and in such an environment learning should be nurtured and guided. They continue that students or learners learn best when they can contextualize or relate with what they learn and in turn apply it in their daily lives. Within this process according to Mayer (2001), the student or learner's role changes from a recipient of ideas or knowledge to that of a constructor of knowledge, making the learner or student responsible for his or her learning by utilising his or her metacognitive skills.

Since social constructivism has its roots in cognitive learning psychology, many scholars and researchers have categorised it into two; behaviourist and cognitivist (Mayer & Gallini, 1990; Mayer & Moreno, 2003). Mayer (2002) adds that within social constructivism's cognitive processes, the teacher or educator is a facilitator who encourages learners and students to discover things like ideas, principles concepts amongst others for themselves and to construct knowledge by working to solve the diverse day –to- day problems they encounter.

### 3.3.2 Ontological assumption

McMillan & Schmacher (2010) opine that a good qualitative research is guided by the nature of the truth of the findings that study is aim to unfold to the readers with genuine input to the scientific world of views. This is of importance in the social science perspective as it grounded on the interpretive way of reasoning with the given data of the study (Maree & Jacques, 2012). However, researcher is empowering to go on to an in-depth theoretical framework to support the information that is credible understudy.

### 3.3.3 Epistemological assumption

Mayes (2004) concurs with Mayer (2002) and points out that from an epistemological position, social constructivism is a shift from objectivism and other obscure learning theories, and its concerns are about what "knowing" is and how individuals "comes to know," In this sense social constructivism does not completely deny the existence of objective reality, rather what it denies is the existence of objective knowledge. Social constructivists therefore believe that reality is one's own interpretation of what he or she sees around him or her and it is obtainable through reasoning or pondering about the individual's subjective experiences, values, belief systems and perspectives on things (Jonassen, 1994; Mayer & Wittrock, 1996; Mayer. 1999). Reality is only constructed through an embedded process or reasoning along the lines of socio-cultural practices (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996). This epistemology helps the researcher to display the understanding of how the knowledge is acquired through the instruments applicable to the study. Tobin and Tippings (1993, p. 4) state that ‘‘cognising beings can never know what that reality is actually like" as such there is no meaning lying in the world out there except the ones we create and "there is not a correct meaning that we are striving for" (Duffy and Jonassen, 1992, p. 5) but rather and there are many "meaning is imposed on the world by us, rather than existing in the world independently of us" (Duffy and Jonassen, 1991, p. 8). It is the rejection of any notion of absolute truth and knowledge that distinguishes social constructivism from absolutism.

According to Reeves and Reeves (1997) and Driscoll (2000) students and learners learn by careful observation, processing, and elucidation as they attempt to make sense of what they have seen and experienced based on what they have encountered before. But this doesn't directly translate to the fact that all the learners in the classroom would produce separate unique ideas and write in their own way thereby leading to confusion (Wilson, 1997) rather "what someone knows is grounded in perception of the physical and social experiences which are comprehended by the mind" (Jonasson,

1991, p. 8). These physical and social experiences are common to all and learning is guided by the teacher in a particular manner creating unity in diversity within the body of knowledge. Social constructivist learning is therefore a very personal undertaking, whereby internalized personal ideas and concepts will subsequently be applied in a real world practical context. This offers social constructivists learners the opportunity of dealing with life's situations and challenges through the interpretation and engagement of multiple realities and the communication of the results of such ventures through a process of social negotiation in order to make sense and create uniformity thereby cancelling out every inconsistency.

Reeves and Reeves (1997) offer four basic tenets or constructs of social constructivism which they believe embody what social constructivism is and should be. The first construct is that knowledge only exists within humans who create or construct their own reality. Secondly knowledge is constructed by learners' students or people subjectively based on their prior experiences and the way these students think and meta-cognitively organise these ideas or thoughts. The third tenet states that if the student or learner acquires the strategies which tallies with the objective then learning has taken place. The fourth construct deals with measurement and this occurs only through approximation with observation or dialogue.

Rorty (1991) and Savery and Duffy (1996) summarise the focal points of social constructivism in three main ideas. They point out that at the centre of social constructivism is understanding which comes through interactions with the people and environment. As such the results of learning cannot be differentiated or separated from how and where such learning takes place. This understanding therefore doesn't only rest on the individual but is distributed within its context. Secondly social constructivists hold that critical thinking stimulates and shapes learning, giving the opportunity for

the goals of learners to be carefully considered. The third tenet of social constructivism is that knowledge emerges through social negotiation and reflection on the practices of individuals.

Willis (2000) opines that social constructivism is quite important in teaching or use in schools because it gives learners the opportunity for tangible, contextualised meaningful experience through which learners can explore for configurations, ask their own questions, and develop their own models. Also it enables a group of learners to engage in activities, discursions and reflection and finally it affords learners the opportunity of owning their ideas, develop individual and reciprocate social relations thereby empowering them to fulfil their goals.

Harguindéguy and Gouin (2012) argue that the social constructivist ideology of education communicates that the society requires reconstructing and schools are the platforms where such changes can be initiated and sustained. They add that social constructivists articulate that world or individual crises need education to ease the creation of a new social order; one which will be strictly democratic in nature. Social constructivism focuses primarily on the society's negotiation or construction of the environment they live in (Burr, 2012). The basic characteristic of social constructivism according to Young and Collin (2004) comprises of the emphasis on the collective or general rather than the individual or particular construction of knowledge or the general meaning-making process. Nawaz and Kundi (2010) argue that social constructivism centres on learning as a process of understanding and the creation of meaning where learning is thought of or seen as the construction of meaning and not the memorization of facts. Khanare (2012) opines that social constructivism highlights the significance of culture and context in understanding what takes place within the school premises and knowledge is constructed using this understanding. She subsequently adds that social constructivism deals with whatever exists as a result of social interactions.

Khalid and Azeem (2012) articulate that social constructivists consider the teaching and learning process to be an active one, where contextualized or individualised procedures of generating or creating knowledge is used rather than acquiring it. Such knowledge is generated or created on the platform of experiences in and around the school environment. Learners or students incessantly assess these experiences through social negotiation and renegotiation. The learner is not empty but rather brings a catalogue of experiences and cultural factors to the classroom. These attest to the fact that teen mothers can and do experience psycho-social support provided within a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal as a learning experience and make meaning of it due to the large volume of experiences they come into the teaching and learning process with. Experiencing the psycho-social support by teen mothers in this case is learning by doing under the guidance of teachers or any other person assigned to provide such support and these experiences shape the way they will perform in the classroom. Nawaz (2012a) opines that social constructivism emphasises collective-learning as opposed to individual, where the peers, parents, teachers, stakeholders and community members' help the learner (teen mother in this case) become prominent. He adds that social constructivists pinpoint the fact that the teaching and learning process is an active and social one which requires the learners to construct knowledge from past experiences. Social constructivism is therefore gaining grounds in education because learning is now undertaken as a community and social experience thereby projecting both collective and individual learning (Nawaz, 2012b).

Burr (2012) opines that there are three principal characteristics of social constructivism namely: reality, knowledge or artefacts and learning. Khanare (2012) concurring with him adds that reality, artefacts or knowledge and social construction are characteristics of social constructivism but these characteristics are not universally accepted in the world but are rather reliant on human subjectivity.

As such these characteristics will work in combination for teen mothers when they experience the psycho-social support provided to them. Each of these characteristics is explained below.

#### 3.3.1.1 Reality

According to Khanare (2012) social constructivists argues that reality is constructed or negotiated through human experiences. Individuals within a society work in collaboration to create realities in their world and this reality cannot be discovered because it does not exist before its social construction. Young and Collin (2004) opine that in social constructivism reality is within the confines of socially constructed knowledge coming from experiences. They add that reality is tabernacle in the learners or individual's dreams, language, behaviours, culture and experiences.

#### 3.3.1.2 Knowledge/Artefacts

Young and Collin (2004) define artefacts as knowledge generated or obtained socially and culturally on the platform of social reality. Khanare (2012) and Fomunyam (2014) agree with this as they argue that knowledge as a human construct is either socially and culturally constructed or negotiated. Learners or teen mothers in this case use their experiences to generate meaning as they socialise with those supporting them and other teachers as well as learners.

#### 3.3.1.3 Learning

According to Khanare (2012) learning is a social process or experience which does not only take place within the individual, neither is it a reflexive growth of behaviours framed by external forces. She continues that meaningful learning can only occur when learners (teen mothers) are involved in social activities (like the psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers in schools). These activities generate experiences which are used in the creation of knowledge. These characteristics

propagate that social constructivism deals with both the context in which learning takes place and the learners who are in such context.

Lock and Strong (2010) and Elder-Vass (2012) argue that there is no one universally accepted school for social constructivism, but rather it is a broad stage with different constellations that hold it together as a theory. They argue that there are five major tenets which are explained below.

The first tenet sees meaning and understanding as the centre feature of human activities. Meaning places more emphasis on the quality of social experiences gotten as a result of the use of language, for meaning and understanding can only be gotten when there is a common contextual language. The second tenet focuses on meaning and understanding which evolves or begins from social interactions. Such interactions create a shared understanding as to what direction or approach the meaning construction should take. The third tenet emphasises the ways constructing meaning which are inherently imbedded in social processes and which are specific to particular place and time. As such different individuals or learners will understand such particular situations differently and this difference can either be simple or complex. For example, ‘‘people wish to present themselves as fashionably dressed yet what is regarded as fashion varies within cultures, over time (compare photographs of how people dressed in the twenties and in 2012) and across space (how the president of South Africa dresses in comparison to the king of Saudi Arabia). On the other hand, such variations can be complex or more substantive. Western ways of making sense of fasting has changed quite remarkably over the years: medieval women who take up this practice were considered saints who withdrew themselves from worldly pleasures and sustained themselves with heavenly rather than physical nourishment. These women therefore did not relate to their experience using the modern discourse of ‘anorexia’. Similarly, the Delphic Oracle was respected for hearing and understanding the voices of gods rather than positioned as schizophrenic’’ (Fomunyam, 2014, p. 46).

The different ways through which the experiences were available to be constructed demonstrate historical examples in diverse relations to different issues or problems of their modern day compatriots.

The fourth tenet propounds that social constructivists are not really interested in determining the processes of operation within the socio cultural line of action which leads to the production of discourses within which different learners or people construct themselves. This is not a refusal of the fact that people have the ability to behave in a particular way, but what is central here is the argument that this ability has no particular form or is shapeless. The fifth and last tenet focuses on unravelling the activities or operations of the social world and the political allocation of power which in most cases is done unintentionally to distort the existing status quo and replace it with something new. This takes social constructivism far beyond the notion of philosophers interpreting the world but failing to change it, as learners take action and struggle to create a better future for them.

## 3.4 CONCLUSION

This research focuses on exploring teenage mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. From what has been discoursed above it is clear that the interpretive paradigm and social constructivism theory would work hand- in -hand in this study, since both the interpretive paradigm and social constructivist to certain extend agree on the subjectivity of knowledge and how it is generated. The experiences of teen mothers are subjective in nature and make subjective contributions to knowledge thereby agreeing with the paradigm of interpretivism and the theoretical framework of social constructivism. With this having been established, the next chapter which is chapter four deals with the research design and methodology.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Kumar (2012) a research design is a well-structured strategic plan of investigating geared towards generating answers towards a particular research problem. It is a complete scheme which details what the researcher will do to generate the needed results. Through the research design, the researcher is able to communicate to the world what he or she intends to do; how the research is going to generate information from the participants of the study, how the information generated is going to be analysed and how the analysed information will subsequently be communicated to others. The research design also offers reasons for choosing a particular approach and how beneficial it is to the study. Opie (2004) supports that there are two main functions of a research design. The first function is 'the conceptualization of an operational plan to undertake the various procedures and task required to complete your study and the second one is that it ensures that the procedures chosen are enough to generate valid or trustworthy, objective and accurate answers to the research problem''. According to him a research design should contain the following information; who would be the participants in the study? How would the participants of the study be identified? Will the entire population identified be used for the study or a sample of them will be used? If a sample will be used, how will this sample be contacted? How will the consent of this sample population be obtainable? What methods will be used to generate data, from the sampled population and why? In cases where questionnaires are used to generate the data how will the questionnaires be returned to the researcher? How will this sample population contact you if they have questions that need clarification? In cases where interviews will be used, where will the interviews be done? And finally how will you ensure that no ethical rule is broken? On these questions, the researcher will carefully

structure the interview guide in line with this study objectives to support the teenage mothers psychologically at schools.

Polit and Hungler (2004, p. 233) define methodology as ‘‘ways of obtaining, organizing and analysing data’’. And these ways are chosen depending on the nature of the research question. Mamabolo (2009) adds that methodology refers to how data was generated within the research while Burns and Grove (2003, p. 488) are of the opinion that methodology includes ‘‘the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, and the data collection and analysis techniques in a study’’. Within this study methodology is seen as a well-structured group of methods that work inter-connectedly and which fit together in generating the required data and analysing the set data. Nieuwenhuis (2010) postulates that the research design lays emphasis on the findings of the study, while methodology or research methodology pays attention to how these findings will be arrived at by focusing on the different methods and instruments to be used in the study. This chapter therefore discusses the research design and methodology used in this study. This study whose purpose is to explore the experiences of teen mothers of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal is case study. The first part of the study will therefore look at case study research. The second part will look at the approach to the study which is qualitative while the third part will look at the different methods of data generation. The fourth part will look at how the data will be analysed while the firth part will discuss the sampling of the participants. The sixth part will look at ethical issues while the seventh part will look at trustworthiness in the study. The eighth and last part will deal with the limitations of the study.

## 4.2 CASE STUDY

Neumann (2006) opines that case study refers to ‘‘an in-depth study of one particular case in which the case may be a person, a school, a group of people, an organization, a community, an event, a

movement, or geographical unit'' (p. 40). Cohen et al., (2011) add that case study most often than not is often used within qualitative research and Rule and John (2011) agreeing with these, add another definition of case study as a systematic and comprehensive exploration of a specific example in its context in order to generate data. The experiences of teen mothers of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal can likewise be studied as a case study. Neumann (2006) opines that case study deals with a phenomenon or example in detail analyses scrupulously the different kinds of examples or phases that the life cycle of the phenomenon being explored. Within this study, teen mothers in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal is the case under study and the unit of exploration is their experiences of psycho-social support services provided to them in school. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 253) pointed out that ''case studies are conducted in a specific temporary, geographic and institutional context'', as such this secondary school were chosen because of the large number of teen mothers within it and the psycho-social support services being offered to help them go through school.

Neumann (2006) postulates that most often than not, case studies use a variety of data generation methods like interviews, participant observation, maps, photos, documents, newspapers, and records in a single case. This study which aims at capturing lived experiences of the participants' perceptions, thoughts, reactions and meaning making process (Cohen et al. 2007) about the psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal utilizes different data generation methods to get rich in a depth data about the phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) argue that one of the primary benefits of case study is that it gives the reader a real life experience and offers a detailed and complete account of a phenomenon or an example and tangible insight that would enable the reader understand and relate with (in some cases) the experiences of the participants.

Yin (2009) outlines four major designs of case study which he refers to as; embedded single case design, single case design, embedded multiple-case design and multiple case designs. The single case design primarily deals with a critical example, revelatory or novel example (that is; a case which has never been researched before), an exclusive example, a longitudinal example, a representative example or an extreme example. The embedded single case design focuses on more than one component of analysis and this component is amalgamated into the design. For example, a case of a whole country might also use sub-units like provinces, regions or states, ministries, arms of the government, ethnic groups, languages, cities, towns, villages, school, universities, and companies and all the sub categories may need a separate data generation tool or instrument. The multiple case design centres around more than one case study or focuses on more than one case study, for example a comparative analyses of two case studies within a study or case study where the two sub categories make up the case under study. In this case a researcher might want to repeat the results of a particular case (e.g. a private school) to that of another (a government school or university) to produce a wide-ranging and trustworthy result. The embedded multiple case design, just like the multiple case design, also centres around a variety of cases or more than one case study, but the difference between the two is that, the embedded multiple case design takes it further by bringing in multiple different sub categories or units in each of the cases (for example two schools government and private pitched together and under this two main cases sub categories like students, teachers, buildings, administrators are used simultaneously for both cases) and by using a wide variety of data generation instruments like interviews, questionnaires, participant observations, documents, photos, reflective journals and reports in the generation of data.

Cohen et al. (2011) indicate their major types of case study which are: the descriptive, the explanatory, and the exploratory. The explanatory case study primarily deals with the testing of existing theories or ideas. They seek to investigate why and how a certain occurrence did happen by

suggesting "clues to possible cause-and-effect relationships" (Yin, 2003a, p. 7). While the descriptive case study gears towards generating rich, thick and detailed narrative information about a particular case or example with the aim of developing a theory which fully informs the particulars of an experience and which provides answers to diverse questions presented by the theoretical constructs (Yin, 2003b). The exploratory case study on the other hand refers to a case study wherein "fieldwork and data generation are undertaken prior to the final definition of study questions and hypotheses" (Yin, 2003a, p. 6). The exploratory case study digs into a renowned phenomenon and offers a stage for the researcher to gain comprehensive information about the phenomenon. This research is therefore conducted as an exploratory case study using a single case design since it provides the researcher with a platform where the detailed experiences of teen mothers of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school can be explored. For Mills, Eurepos and Wiebe (2010) an exploratory case study blends perfectly with social constructivism and with social constructivism being the theoretical framework of the study, exploratory case study is the obvious choice.

There were other reasons for the choice of case study research within this study. One of them was the limited availability of cases. Though teenage pregnancy and teen motherhood is a challenge in South Africa not all schools have teen mothers and not all of the teen mothers in the school were willing to participate within the study. Also identifying teen mothers is another issue since it is not a disability which can be easily recognized. The limited number of teen mothers within secondary school informed the choice of case study research. Secondly, the nature of the research questions was another reason why case study research was chosen. Yin (2003a) points out that, case studies are preferable when what, why and how questions are being asked. As earlier discussed in chapter one of this study, this study is all about explaining what the experiences of teen mothers are and how these experience can be improved through the improvement of psycho-social support services. The nature

of the event or phenomenon under exploration was another reason for choosing case study research. Yin (200b3) opines that case studies are preferable when contemporary issues are being investigated and when behaviour cannot be changed or controlled. Since teenage motherhood and experiences are things which cannot be easily controlled, case study was chosen to investigate them. Yin (2003) and Thomas (2011b) add that case studies present the complete study of a phenomenon. Since an in-depth, rich and detailed exploration of teen mothers' experiences was what this study was after case study research was the only way of getting it.

## 4.3 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

As pointed out earlier this is a qualitative study. The qualitative research approach focuses on exploring every detail or piece of information about an issue or a case. It brings out the depth and quality of the case under investigation or exploration (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Within this study therefore the qualitative approach is vital in the generation off rich, detailed, in-depth information or data about teen mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. Cohen et al. (2011) opine that the qualitative approach to research can and is often used in different ways: to identify and polish topics, fields, foci and questions, to present information in its own right for research analyses, to pinpoint and present the consequences that are of great importance in the research, to improve and synchronize information or data from quantitative research, to fill up gaps in quantitative research and data, to offer alternative vintage point on topics, to contribute in decision making or conclusions on research and finally to suggest ways or develop ways of turning results into practice. Creswell (2009) adds to this by pointing out diverse components of the qualitative approach to research. Firstly, it utilizes laborious processes and different data generation methods. Secondly, investigation is a chief feature and it can take one or more shapes like phenomenology, case study, grounded theory, biography or ethnography. Furthermore, the research focuses primarily on an issue or problem, and not the amalgamation of

problems or a hypothesis or the back-and-forth of relationships in variables. Though relationships might finally find its way in the research later on the study, it is not a priority.

Fourthly, the determining factor verifying the results are set out at the beginning of the research and rigour is ensured or practiced when the finding of the study is being written. Fifthly authenticity or trustworthiness is needed to ensure that the readers identify with the problem situation or become part of the case. Sixthly, the data generated is analysed in diverse groupings and these groupings are multifaceted. Lastly qualitative approach to research engages the reader and is often replete of astonishing perceptions, while ensuring that validity and trustworthiness is maintained.

Neill (2007) postulates that researching within the qualitative approach offers the researcher an opportunity of gaining rich insights about the phenomenon being investigated through the unravelling of meaning by increasing comprehension. This approach to research explores the depth, richness and difficulty of issues and is often tied to the interpretivist paradigms (Lowe, 2007), in which meaning is primarily obtainable from content (Henning, 2004). Lichtman (2006) adding to this postulates that qualitative research aims principally at describing and understanding the experiences and relationships of human life accumulated through life's journey. This study is therefore justifiably qualitative in its approach since it is dealing with the experiences teen mothers of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school. The experiences of teen mothers will be explored to generate rich in-depth data as they voice out their perceptions or experiences (Henning, 2004). The experiences teen mothers have of the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school helps the researcher comprehend the kind of support offered to them and how such support can be improved to ensure that they successfully complete school (Settlage, Southerland, Smith & Ceglie, 2009).

Cohen et al. (2007) argued that since qualitative research focuses on generating detailed information about the phenomenon, the method of data generation mostly favours participant observation, interviews and document analyses because a lot of information is available and the data generated is in the form of words. Henning (2004) concurs with this by pointing out that the qualitative approach to research demands that the researcher understands and explains, using arguments or descriptions from the evidence generated from data and literature. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) also posit that participant observation and interviews are designs which aid in providing in sequential order, rich, detailed and in-depth information generated through communications and observation. Gonzales, Brown and Slate (2008) argue that the qualitative approach to research gives delicate and complicated details and unique understandings of issues and meaning in both non-observable as well as observable situations, phenomena, intentions, attitudes, and behaviours. Through the qualitative approach the participants of the study get the voice to communicate issues, behaviours, actions, beliefs and perceptions which most often than not are buried deep down within them. Therefore, teen mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school can best be studied and understood as a qualitative study using interviews and participant observation as data generation tools.

According to Maxwell (2005), the qualitative research approach should be able to intellectually explain particular concepts or situations, produced specific desired outcomes, meet a need, and contain practical realized goals which can be achieved. He further divides the goals as follows; the practical goals should gear towards generating theories and knowledge which is trustworthy and can be understood by anybody whether intellectual or not who reads it. Secondly, it should gear towards evaluating formatively so as to improve both practice and performance. Furthermore, it should engage in cooperative or collaborative action research with different parties. To add to this the intellectual goal aims at comprehending the meanings attributed to issues, situations or phenomenon

by the participants. It also gears towards comprehending the specific context wherein the participants are based. The intellectual goals also focus on recognizing unexpected events, situations or problems and generating theories which will address such issues or solve such problems. To achieve this, a thorough understanding of the processes and guiding principles that contribute to actions, situations or problems is needed. Finally, the intellectual goals aim at constructing simple explanations for complex situations which were previously not understood. The qualitative approach was therefore chosen in this study since it aims at understanding the support teen mothers receive and how such support can be improved to ensure that not one of them drop out of school but all of them successfully complete school. To achieve this data, have to be generated through a variety of ways which is discussed in the next section of this study.

## 4.4 METHODS OF DATA GENERATION

This study whose purpose is to explore teen mother's experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal uses two major ways to generate the required data to answer the research questions. Cohen et al. (2007) define methods of data generation as different ways of getting the required information or data required to answer the critical questions in a research. Within this study therefore interviews and observation were used to generate the required data. Cohen et al., (2007) add that the use of more than one method of data generation ensures trustworthiness in the study. The interviews were done in the participants' school after school hours while the researcher observed the participants during classes and during the time that other psycho-social support services offered to them.

### 4.4.1 Interviews

Nieuwenhuis (2012) postulates that an interview is a give-and-take conversation between two or more people wherein one person known as the interviewer ask questions to an individual or group of

individuals known as the interviewee to generate information about their beliefs, ideas, views, opinions and experiences. Cohen et al. (2011) add to this by defining interviews as a one-on-one circumstance or two and more which pitches an individual asking questions to which another person or a second individual or group of people (who may be teen mothers or learners or a learner, teachers or a teacher, parent or parents, student or students) respond. Cohen et al. (2011) add that interviews are used when a researcher wants to dig deeper into participant's responses to questionnaires or when the researcher what to ask questions about impressions, or perceptions and experiences which requires details which cannot easily be covered by a questionnaire.

Nieuwenhuis (2012) continues that the aim of interviews is to understand things or to see things through the eyes of the participants of the study and they often provided great depth and valuable information thereby becoming a huge asset to the researcher provided they are used correctly. Since participants provide rich details about their views, opinions and beliefs or experiences, the researcher gets to understand the participant's knowledge construction pattern and the kind of world view such a participant has. To Cohen et al. (2011) interviews offers the researcher the opportunity of generating data from direct verbal communications between the researcher and the participant which is reliable. Khanare (2012) concurs with this by pointing out that if an interview is well designed and properly conducted, it will generate in-depth data or information around the problem or phenomenon under investigation. Since interviews offer the opportunity of generated data from direct verbal communications (Cohen et al., 2011), it is easy to extract insight about what a specific individual (teen mother in this case) has experienced or knows and what she thinks about what she knows or has experienced (Sarantakos, 2005). Khanare (2012) also add that interviews work perfectly with interpretivism and qualitative research and this is because both interpretive and qualitative research seeks depth and details which the researcher can only generate using interviews.

Nieuwenhuis (2012) opines that there are three different kinds of interviews; open-ended, semi-structured and structured interviews. He continues that open ended interviews take the form of discussion or conversation with the aim that the researcher will explore the participants' ideas, beliefs or experiences about a certain event or problem. To achieve this, such interviews are often spread over a long period of time which gives both the participant and the researcher enough time to think about the interview before meeting. The participant is at liberty to direct or take the conversation anyway he or she wants and to express his or her views about a particular phenomenon or problem. The structured interview on the other hand refers to ''a natural extension of participant observation, involving the utilization of a rigid list of questions requiring specific answers to such questions''. For example, do most teen mothers drop out of school or perform poorly in school because: a) they lack support from their parents or care givers, b) there is too much content to master which they find difficult, c) the psycho-social support services provided to them are inadequate. In this interview the researcher dictates the kind of response he or she wants to hear and the participants only choose from a specific group of responses. They can't add or subtract anything from the list.

The semi-structured interview is the third kind of interview outlined by Nieuwenhuis (2012). This kind of interview asks questions which require either closed or open responses. The researcher or interviewer does not necessarily follow a rigid set of questions but the questions are guided by the participant's responses. As such, semi-structured interviews give the researcher a lot of flexibility in the kinds of questions to ask and also offer the researcher the opportunity of asking further questions based on the responses of the participants. For example, "Why do teenage girls constantly get pregnant in the province of KwaZulu-Natal? The individual or participant responding to such a question is permitted to give a variety of answers or reasons. Some of the answers or reasons may be general (like drug abuse, poverty, lack or no use of contraceptives which pertains to all of South Africa) while others might be specific or contextualized to reasons or things that happen only in

KwaZulu-Natal which push young girls to fall pregnant like culture. The open-ended nature of both the questions and the responses given offers the researcher the opportunity of probing further by asking other questions which are linked to the ones already answered. Nieuwenhuis (2012a) adds that semi-structured interviews hardly ever take too long and requires that the researcher be very attentive so as to be able to ask follow up questions and clarify any doubts. Also while probing, the researcher should take special note of the 'whom', 'where', and 'what' of the participant's responses so as to determine if the 'why' question is necessary or not. Cohen et al., (2011) argue that semi-structured interviews are of great importance in qualitative researcher and as a tool for data generation because it gives the reported an added edge of digging deeper through clarifying questions and discussions with the participants.

In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to generate data to answer the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were chosen in this study because it gives the researcher freedom to ask all kinds of questions necessary to generate the required data. Since the research deals with the participant's experiences, it was vital that a data generation technique be chosen which would be flexible enough thereby given the research the opportunity to ask all kinds of questions to clarify any doubts. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were chosen because it provided the researcher the opportunity of gathering sensitive data that would otherwise be impossible to generate using questionnaires or documents. Also since participants do not necessarily have to possess skills to handle complicated documents or questionnaires, provide a avenue where the researcher can help the participants to answer complex questions, since questions which are not clear or understood by the participants of the study can be rephrased, explained or changed and similar questions asked to ensure that the participants fully understand the questions before answering. The researcher also chooses semi-structured interviews because of the nature of the research questions which required in-depth detail about the experiences of the teen mothers and how the psycho-social support they are

receiving can be improved. Such depth could only be gotten through semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were recorded using tape recorders with the permission of the participants.

Cohen et al. (2011) argued that semi-structured interviews have a few disadvantages or challenges. Therefore, face-to-face interaction or exchange with the participants might one way or another influence the responses of participants either due to the researcher's tempo, cadence, tone and facial expressions or fear by the participant to look foolish or inexperienced (Cohen et al., 2011). Also the subjective nature of the participant's responses and the "subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 300) might also lead to results which are questionable. For instance, ''most researchers have the tendency of getting answers which support a preconceived view, or the researcher may interpret the participant's responses in a way which supports his or her preconceived ideas'' (Opie, 2004, p. 8). Despite these limitations, when a semi-structured interview is appropriately planned and conducted, it generates detailed in-depth information which cannot be generated using other methods. The researcher ensured that these barriers are bypassed by carefully planning and conducting the interviews. The researcher also ensured bias is set aside and since the experiences of several teenage mothers was obtained, subjectivity was eliminated. To corroborate the data generated from the semi-structured interviews, the researcher also used observation and this is discussed in the next section of the chapter.

### 4.4.2 Observation

Kumar (2012) defines observation as purposeful way of strategically and selectively generating data by watching or listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it happens or plays itself out. Maree (2007) concurring with this asserts that observation is a logical process of recording the behaviours of participants, or a particular phenomenon or occurrence without asking any questions. Kumar

(2012) further argues that observation can be used when the data needed cannot be generated through questioning. He adds that observation is a qualitative data gathering approach which is used to ensure that the researcher gets deep insight and understanding of a particular phenomenon. Kawulich (2005) argues that observation can be carried out on any subject or any field of study depending on the kind of research questions guiding the study. The researcher choose observation in this study because one of the research questions requires that the effectiveness of support services provided to teen mothers be ascertained and steps taken to ensure that such support is improved. Therefore, it was vital that the researcher has first-hand information about the services before corroborating it with the experiences of teen mothers. Maree (2007) points out that there are four major types of observation, complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant. The complete observer sees the researcher completely hidden from the participants of the study while observing. The participants have no knowledge of participating in a study as such they are in their natural environment. This is often the case with data gotten from shopping malls or public places like parks, cinemas, churches etc. The observer as participant on the other hand participates in the activities of those whom he or she is investigating but with the primary focus of generating data. In some cases, the group being studied is aware that they are being observed while in others they are not. This is often the case with investigative journalism. Most often the observer as participant is not a member of the group he or she is observing but simple joints them to gain access to observe carefully. The participant as observer presents the researcher who is a member of the group being observed and the group are aware of the study and that they are being observed. The researcher is a member of the group but is more interested in observing than participating. The complete participant presents the observer who is a full member of the group being observed but hides his or her observing rule so as to avoid disruption in the activities.

Kumar (2012) points out that there are two major kinds of observation; participant observation and unobtrusive or non-participant observation. Non-participant observation according to Liu and Maitlis (2010) refers to a data generation technique which requires the participant to penetrate a social system with the purpose of observing the system and gaining full understanding of the happenings within such system and why the system functions in a particular way. There is no contact with the research, rather the researcher just watches from afar and records what he or she sees. Participant observation on the other hand according to Denzin (1989, pp. 157-158) refers to ‘‘a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection. In this kind of observation, the researcher is part of the research and interacts with the participants of the study thereby becoming a member of their community. This is what Maree (2007) termed participant as observer. Within this study non-participant observation was used to ensure that the crisis that comes with participant observers such as conflict of interest can be avoided. I observed the psycho-social support services provided as well as the teenage mothers who are receiving this support to generate additional data for the study. This observation was done on two separate occasions for one hour each. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 303) point out that ‘‘the distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations’’

## 4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Cohen et al., (2011 p. 537) qualitative data analysis centres on or deals with ‘‘accounting for, organizing, and explaining the data or making sense of the data in terms of the participants’ experiences of the situation noting categories, regularities, patterns, and themes’’. They continue that there is no conventional or universally accepted approach for data analyses in in qualitative research but researchers tailor their own approach based on the focus of their research and the research questions they want to answer. Nieuwenhuis (2012b) postulates that qualitative data

analyses though tailored by the researcher has some basic guiding principles which helps the researcher to tailor his or her approach to analyse the data generated. He adds that qualitative data analysis favours an interpretive approach since it aims at examining ‘‘meaningful and symbolic content’’ (p. 99). Qualitative data analyses which is what is done within this study, therefore aims at explaining or establishing how the participants of the study (in this case teen mothers) make sense of or understood a particular problem or phenomenon (psycho-social support services in this case) by analysing their attitudes, values, knowledge, perceptions feelings, understanding and experiences. Nieuwenhuis (2012b) points out that there are two primarily approaches to qualitative data analyses; deductive and inductive analyses. Within the deductive analyses framework, the researcher formulates categories of information in advance from literature around the topic under investigation or from a theoretical framework and the data generated is the coded and analysed using these categories. The inductive analyses framework on the other hand gives room for the research itself to generate the categories or themes used for analyses. In this case, after the data is generated the dominant, frequent and significant categories or themes in the raw data are allowed to express themselves without any constraint from the theory or literature. Nieuwenhuis (2012b, p. 110) maintains that data analysis centres on ‘‘decoding data, breaking it down into smaller units, synthesizing it, identifying patterns and deciding what to write as findings’’. Within this study the researcher used inductive analyses where no categories were formulated prior to the data generation. From the raw data, the researcher categorized the data into several themes and sub themes, based on the dominant ideas or experiences that emerged from the semi-structured interviews and observation of teen mothers. The different sub themes were then analysed and corroborated with literature. Lichtman (2006) concludes that it is every researcher’s duty to ensure that he or she gives appropriate interpretation and meaning to the data generated.

## 4.6 SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS

Sampling, according to Maree and Jacques (2012), refers to ways of selecting an individual or group of individuals who would act as participants within a particular study or research. Kumar (2012, p. 193) defines sampling as ‘‘the process of selecting a few from a bigger group to become the basis for predicting or estimating the existence or prevalence of something unknown be it ideas, perceptions, beliefs or experiences about the bigger group making a sample population a sub set of the target population or population of interest’’. Sampling is vital because not everybody who falls within the category of the study can take part in the study. For instance, not all teen mothers in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal will take part in this study. Though this study is a case study, not everybody within the school can participate. As such, a sample of the target population is needed to represent the entire population. Maree and Jacques (2012) continue that there are two major kinds of sampling approaches; probability approach and the non-probability approach. In the probability sampling approach each member of the target group has the opportunity of being selected. In this case there are no individual or human interferences in the selection process. The probability sampling can be sub divided into four different kinds of sampling; simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. On the other hand, non-probability sampling has no dealings with random selection of people within the target groups. The participants for each study are carefully selected for each research based on particular reasons. Fomunyam (2013, p. 49) opines that the ‘‘non-probability sampling technique is a sampling technique whereby participants or a particular group of participants are chosen by the researcher with the full knowledge that it doesn’t represent the entire population’’. In such circumstances the members of the target population have no equal chance of selection as in probability sampling; ‘‘some members will definitely be selected or included while others will definitely be excluded’’ (Fomunyam, 2014a, p. 45).

The researcher intentionally, purposefully and deliberately selects a portion or part of the population (Cohen et al., 2011). Maree and Jacques (2012) identifies four major kinds of non-probability sampling that is convenience sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling or what some researchers often call theoretical sampling. Convenience sampling is a sampling approach used by researchers to select a sample size which is easily and conveniently available. For instance, to get a sample of the entire students in a school the researcher might choose to use the first twenty learners who come to school. Quota sampling as a non-probability sampling technique on the other hand demands that the researcher first of all identifies the different categories or groups of people that need to be in the sample and the exact number.

Convenient sampling then takes place until the exact number is completed. For instance, to get a sample population of a school the researcher might choose to get twenty learners and out of this twenty-eight boys and twelve girls. He or she then starts conveniently filling the quota for both boys and girls until the sample size is completed. Snowball sampling is a sampling approach often used when members of the target population are difficult to find or where the target population are inter-connected people. The researcher then begins by identifying one member of the target group who would subsequently identify and link the researcher to other members of the target population. For example, if a researcher is conducting researcher on thieves who have never been caught, once the researcher identifies one of them such and individual would be able to identify and link the other individuals with the researcher. One purposive sampling is another non probability sampling used when the researcher or the research has a specific purpose or intentions.

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Cohen et al. (2011) postulated that in purposive sampling the researcher selects people within the target population which he or she thinks possess the specific traits and characteristic he or she is looking based on the personal judgement of the researcher. This

therefore affords the researcher the opportunity of building a sample which is satisfactory to his or her specific needs. Teddlie and Yu (2007) argue that purposive sampling is used in research when a researcher wants to establish a certain level of representativeness, compare experiences or one phenomenon against the other, focus on exceptional and or unique cases or problems and to build theory through the incessant generation of data from different cradles. Purposive sampling also ensures that the study generates greater depth than other methods since it allows the researcher to choose people whom he or she is sure possess the relevant and in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon being investigated due to their experiences or power relations. Hence Cohen et al. (2011) pointed out that purposive sampling is a key aspect of qualitative research. As such purposive sampling was chosen in this study because of the in-depth details required from teen mothers about their experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. This study therefore justified in using non probability purposive sampling to choose participants for the study from the target population. The study which centres on teen mothers and their experiences of psycho-social support services in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal has eight teen mothers from one school as participants. These eight teen mothers who have experienced the psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school were personally chosen by the researcher based on her personal evaluation of them and with the understanding that they have exhaustive knowledge and experiences about the psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers in a secondary school. The researcher chooses eight participants for the research based on Cohen et al. (2007, p. 101) assertion that ‘‘there is no clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size’’. As such every researcher therefore goes for a sample size which he or she thinks will best generate data for the study based on the research objectives and questions. The researcher in this case understands that this number doesn’t fully represent the entire population of teen mothers in a secondary school but, only one school from where the data was generated. The findings of the study

may not be generalizable but the focus in this study is on the in-depth data generated from the participants.

## 4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Every profession including education is guided by a code of ethics as such all dealings within such profession must follow the set code of ethics. Wellington (2004) postulates that for research to be universally accepted and for the findings to be valid it must take into consideration ethical issues. Kumar (2012) articulates that the term ethics originated from the Greek word ethos, meaning "character." To ensure ethics in any research Kumar (2012) says the researcher must endeavour to answer the following important questions; 1) what ethical or moral values informs the research? 2) How does ethics or ethical consideration inform your choice of a research problem? 3) How does ethics or ethical considerations influence how you carry out your research—from designing your study, to sampling of participants and generating the data? 4) What accountability or duties do you as the researcher have towards the participants of your study? 5) What ethical challenges or dilemmas might emerge during the data generation process and in deciding what to write as your findings or what to leave out? 6) Will there be any benefits for those who participated in the study whether directly or indirectly? Cohen et al. (2011) added that ethical considerations have a very important place in research, especially if such research deals with people or animals. As such the researcher ensured that she got permission from the Department of Education to carry out research in the school. Secondly the researcher also obtained permission from the principal of the school to use learners from her school as participants in the study. Further, the consent of all the participants in the study were obtained both verbally and in written form as the researcher ensured that all the participants signed a consent form. The data generated through semi-structured interviews and observation was handled with outmost confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2011). The names of all the eight participants within the study were replaced with the codes name from the NATO phonetic alphabet;

Golf, Hotel, Kilo, Lima, Mike, Quebec, Romeo, and Sierra. Cohen et al. (2011) argue that the consent letter should provide specific details about how the research will be carried out and how the data will be used and subsequently disposed of and if there are any implications for participants they should be told from the start. All the participants within this study were told both verbally and in writing that their participation was voluntary and can only continue participating in the study as long as they want; as such they are free to withdraw any time they choose to. Furthermore, participants were also told that they don't only have right to withdraw their participation but they also have right to withdraw whatever information they have already provided. Through these rigorous avenues, I made sure that ethics was ensured within the study.

## 4.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness according to Shenton (2004) refers to the level of assurance researchers in the qualitative approach can have as far as their data generation and analyses is concerned. It is assessed using credibility, dependability, transferability and authenticity as criteria. Yin (2011) postulates that within qualitative research and especially within the case study approach, validity and reliability have no value or are not valid because they work better with quantitative research. Since this study uses the case study approach, trustworthiness was therefore considered. Trustworthiness considers the credibility, dependability, transferability and authenticity of the study. Within this study credibility was not an issue since the study centres on the personal experiences of teen mothers. The data generated from the interviews with teen mothers was also cross-checked with that obtainable from observation to ensure that it is credible and dependable. Though experience is subjective in nature it is dependable and creatable since the participants are not trying to guess but simply recounting what they have experienced.

Transferability and authenticity were also ensured through the use of diverse sources of data. I used two different approaches (semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation) to generate data for the study which gave her the added advantage of checking one approach against the other thereby ensuring that the data is trustworthy (Creswell, 2012; Rolfe, 2006). Creswell (2012) continues that the use of different sources of data guarantees credibility, transferability, dependability and authenticity in any research. This according to Cohen et al. (2011) is called triangulation, and Morrow (2005) defines triangulation as the use of more than one methods of data generation in a study or research. He concludes that triangulation is one of the major ways of ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research. The absolute reliance on a single approach in generating data in a particular study may lead to bias or inaccurate understanding of the problem under investigation by me. As such when two or more methods are used in a particular research and they generate the same results or data, trustworthiness is established (Rolfe, 2006). Within this research, I used semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation to enforce the process of triangulation. To further strengthen the concept of trustworthiness in the study, the researcher gave the transcribed data to the participants for necessary corrections before the data was analysed. Through all this processes the researcher ensured that the research was trustworthy though there are few limitations which are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

## 4.9. CONCLUSION

This study which aimed at exploring the experiences teen mothers have of the psycho-social support services provided in secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal is a qualitative research using the case study approach within the interpretive paradigm. This chapter therefore discussed the research design and methodology and within this broad spectrum, case study approach was discussed followed by qualitative research. Methods of data generation were the next thing to be discussed, followed by data analyses. Sampling of participants and ethical considerations then followed after which

trustworthiness and limitations of the study were discussed. The chapter concluded with a summary of what has been discussed within the chapter. The next chapter, which is chapter five deals with data analyses and interpretation.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter examined the research design and methodology and this chapter focuses on analysing the data generated through diverse semi-structured interviews with and observation of the participants. Nieuwenhuis (2012b) argues that data analyses refer to procedures and processes whereby researchers get some form of meaning or explanation or interpretation from the data generated. To achieve this, the data is further interrogated and literature coupled with the theoretical framework applied to generate meaning. Qualitative data analyses which is what this study is utilising due to the fact that it is a qualitative study according to Sarantakos (2005) refers to as a process of giving meaning to data. It attempts to understand how participants make meaning of experiences or a particular phenomenon. The data was generated to answer two critical questions;

1. What experiences do teenage mothers have of school-based psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school?
2. How can these school-based psycho-social support services be improved to ensure acceptable performance by the teenage mother?

These two questions were derived from the two objectives of the study which are; to explore teenage mothers' experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal and to explain how the school-based psycho-social support services can be improved to ensure excellent performance by the teenage mother. The experiences of teenage mothers of the school based on psycho-social support provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal was coded and grouped into three main recurring themes. The themes are: educational support, financial support and emotional support. These three themes were further broken down into six sub themes: extra classes, mentoring, financial exclusion, financial upliftment, counselling and personal cares. To give more

credibility to the study the data will be analysed using direct quotations from participants. Slavin (2007) opines that it is of vital importance to use direct quotations from the participants in data analyses to elucidate and corroborate the arguments. In analysing the data, the findings of the study are also discussed. This way the analysis integrates the literature and theoretical framework which was discussed in chapters two and three respectively. Figure 5.1 below presents or represents the themes and sub themes which are discussed within this data analysis. All these emerged from the semi-structured interviews and observation of teen mothers.

**Data analysis framework**

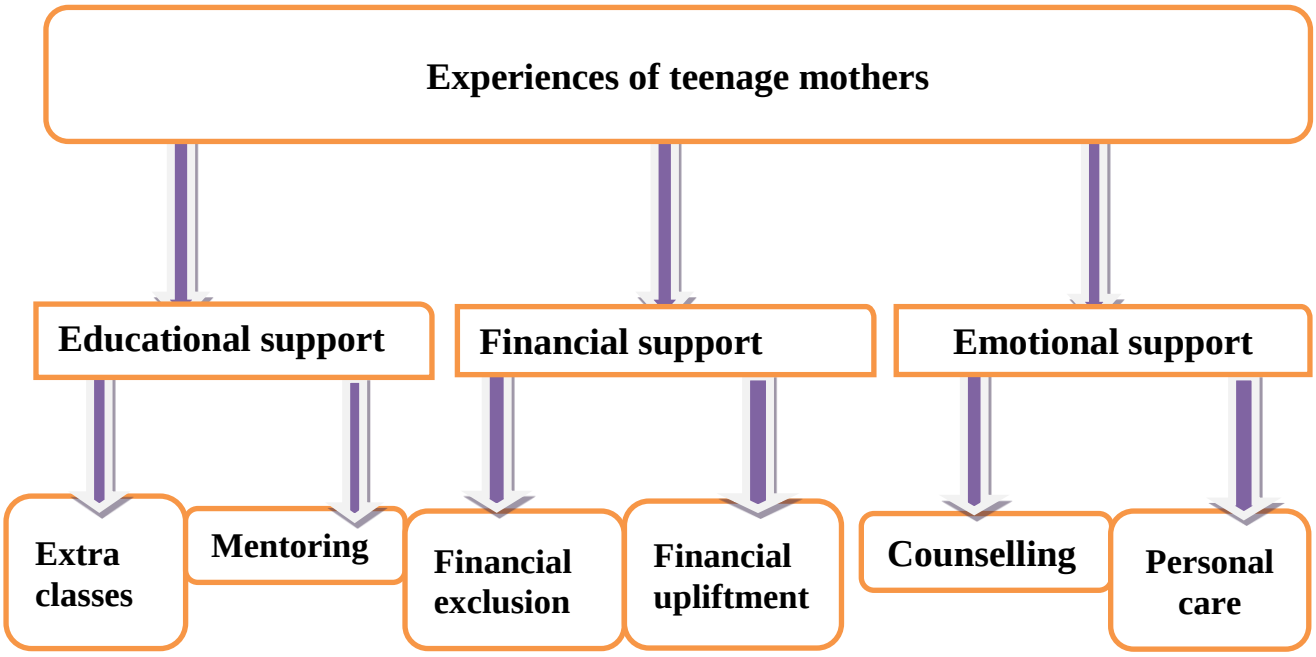



Figure 5.1 Data analysis framework

## 5.2 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

This refers to the school based educational support or assistance provided to teenage mothers to help them navigate through school (Adesoji 2014). Myers (2014) propounded that when teenage mothers return to school they need a lot of support especially educational support to be able to complete their

studies. The lack of educational support in most cases has been the reason why more than one third of teenage mothers in school end up dropping out without completing their studies. Shefer, Bhana Morrell, Manzini and Masuku (2012, p. 139) added that ‘‘when teenage mothers do return to school their performance is often affected, and many move from doing well academically to becoming average or ‘underachievers’ once they were balancing motherhood and schooling’’. For teenage mothers to be able to navigate such issues and successfully complete school, a lot of educational support is needed within the school environment. Morrell et al., (2012), Panday et al., (2009) and Grant and Hallman (2008) all observed that the lack of educational support for teenage mothers has led to a significant rise in the number of teenage mothers dropping out of school. Owing to the fact that South Africa spends about eighteen per cent of its budget on education (Panday et al., 2009) educational experts expect academic performance to constantly be on the increase. But Fomunyam (2014) pointed out the academic standards and performance of learners’ especially teenage mothers in South Africa has generally been poor. In a bid to address such circumstances which has been neglected in schools for some time, schools are now offering educational support to teenage mothers in the bid to impact their academic performance and ensure that they complete school. This educational support as demonstrated on the framework comes in two ways, extra classes and mentoring.

### 5.2.1 Extra classes

Educational support in school for teen mothers is all about ensuring that they catch up with what they missed when they left school to deliver the baby. It is also about ensuring that the stay on course or that they are at the same pace with the other learners even when they miss school for one reason or the other. Chigona and Chetty (2008) observe that teen mothers often lack concentration in class because most of them spend the night taking care of crying babies; as such they are not able to follow the lesson fully.

Others fail to do assignments or stay away from school completely because the baby is sick or some other reason and when they return to school extra classes are needed to ensure that they catch up. Extra classes therefore are a major psycho-social support service provided to teenage mothers in schools to ensure they complete school effectively. To this effect, Golf, one of the teen mothers who participated in the study, stated that;

*When I returned to school after giving birth to my baby, several teachers were appointed to give me extra classes once a week. So every day of the week when all the other learners have returned to their homes one of the teachers would give me extra classes to ensure that I catch up with the others. But these extra classes were only in key subjects like mathematics, isiZulu, English language and economics, while my other subjects were neglected. I was told to study the others on my own which I think was not fair. I am supposed to pass all my subjects and if I don't get the support I need, I can't pass.*

Fomunyam (2014b) propounded that learners or students are supposed to develop holistically and not haphazardly. If teen mothers are provided with extra class on some subjects and others are neglected, their holistic development and successfully completion of school is already hampered in a way. These learners would also turn to think that those subjects neglected by the school to provide support for are not important leading them to perform poorly in such subjects. Adesoji (2014) pointed out that when support is partial or not fully appreciated, the effects of such support will diminish and consequently fail to achieve its goal. Since success is a process and not a destination, the neglect of one subject in favour of another will have a negative influence on the learner. As such extra classes should be organised for all subjects being studied by the teenage mother to ensure maximum impact and ultimate successful completion of school.

Hotel, another teenage mother who participated in the study, corroborated Golf's story by pointing out that;

*When I returned to school, for several weeks I didn't get any assistance with my studies from the teachers or the school. It was only after about three weeks after I complained to the principal about the challenges I was facing that three of my teachers were asked to give me extra classes in three of my subjects; English language, economics and geography. Vital subjects like mathematics and accounting neglected which made me feel like dropping out of school because my intention was to study accounting in the university and if I was not given extra classes in subjects which I needed it in the most it meant that I would not pass it and not be able to do what I want to do. The only reason why I didn't drop out was my teacher.*

Ajeya et al. (2013) observed that several teenage mothers got pregnant because of lack of specialised education. Forty-seven per cent of their participants who were teenage mothers were of the opinion that teenage pregnancy is caused by socio economic background of the teenager. Most teenagers who come from poor homes often seek boy friends who would provide them with basic needs and pocket allowances and as long as this happen the participants said they were at the back and call of these boy friends who most often want them to have unprotected sex which often results in unwanted pregnancies. In this case if the support provided to the learner is not enough to ensure that they can successfully complete school and improve their socio-economic conditions, most of them would drop out of school because it would all seem like a waste of time as demonstrated by Hotel. For teen mothers therefore, to put in their best and successfully complete school, holistic education support must be provided and the importance of all subjects must be emphasised taking their dreams into cognizance. Without which most of them would see no value in school and consequently drop out as thousands have already been doing yearly (Panday et al., 2009). Since knowledge is integrated and

learning areas overlap one another, success in one and failure in the others will ultimately lead to failure. Therefore, stakeholders within the school environment must ensure that teen mothers get extra classes for all their subjects to be able to catch up with the others and successfully complete school.

Kilo, was another participant of the study who enjoyed the extra classes provided to her by her teachers as she pointed out that;

*Three days after I returned to school, the principal called me for a meeting in his office with several of my teachers. He spoke lengthily to them about supporting me in every way possible. He also emphasised that I should be given extra classes in all my subjects to enable me catch up with all the other students. I used to be the best in my class before I became pregnant so the principal said he wanted to do everything possible to ensure that my performance doesn't drop. The classes have really been useful and encouraging, though I have not emerged as the best in my class I have been amongst the top ten. I just wonder what would have happened if I wasn't taught all those extra classes by my teachers*.

Kilo's experience practically demonstrates that if teen mothers get a holistic educational support couched in extra classes in all their subjects, they a bound to complete school successfully. Adesoji (2014) pointed out that when psycho-social support services are provided to learners in ways that they enjoy and appreciate it, such learners are bound to make the most of it. But when such support is provided in ways that are not appreciated it is bound to be neglected. This explains why even in the face of several health institutions and free contraceptives many young girls are not utilising them because of the problematic behaviour of health workers (Harrison, 2008a). Most of these teen mothers became pregnant because they failed to utilise health services which were provided in ways which they did not appreciate. To avoid a repeat of such circumstances, teachers and the

management of schools should ensure that teen mothers get extra classes holistically or for all their subjects which they will appreciate and utilise. If they can appreciate and utilise such support, then the successful completion of their studies is guaranteed.

### 5.2.2 Mentoring

Wong and Premkumar (2007) propound that mentoring is a learning process wherein supportive, particular and mutual relationships are formed with specific focus on achievement. Within such mentoring framework or period, the individual being mentored learns and develops through conversations with the mentor who is more experienced and knowledgeable in such areas. The mentor also helps the mentee to develop certain skills which can be incorporated into their daily practice. With the diverse challenges teen mothers are facing both in inside and outside of school they need mentors who would guide them in school to ensure that they are on course with their school work. Since mentoring can be either formal or informal, according to Baugh and Fagenson-Eland (2007), it is a vital for teen mothers to be mentored on how to effectively blend motherhood with education by those who have either through teaching or learning. The participants of the study believed that mentoring was a crucial part of the psycho-social support provided to them. Lima, one of the participants of the study, stated that;

*After about a month of my going through extra classes the principal of my school called me to his office and assigned me to one of my teachers who also were a teen mother while in the secondary school. She taught me a lot of this about planning my day and making time out for everything like studying, taking care of the baby, relaxing and many other things. Once I applied what she taught me and my performance increased drastically and I was hardly stressed again unlike before when I was all over the place. It was an amazing experience working with her.*

Raising Children Network (2015) observed that teenage mothers' perception of what parenting or motherhood means constitutes problem. Since most of them were not prepared for the baby when they got pregnant, the intellectual stamina and presence was missing in them. Most of them had no idea how to balance their lives and with parents who are often ashamed of their children's behaviour (Chigona & Chetty 2008). It is more terrible because the teen mother gets little support. Juxtaposing parenting and academics is not an easy task, as such with the help of mentors; teen mothers would go a long way. Since mentors guide the teen mothers about their lives both in school and at home, they have the opportunity of living a balanced life where everything is given equal attention and their education doesn't suffer.

This fact was further buttressed by Mike another teen mother who participated in the study as she pointed out that;

*After two months of returning to school I decided to quit because I couldn't cope with taking care of the baby and going to school because my parents were not really helping and the baby's father refused to take responsibility. I had to do almost everything by myself and it was quite hectic and frustrating. After about a week of my absence from school one of my teachers visited me and spoke to me about return to school. When I told her about all the problems I am facing she decided to help me. That's how she became my mentor and since then, my life has been so much easier. Anything I don't understand in school I ask her. She started helping me, my performance has increased drastically. I wouldn't not be in school now if it wasn't for her.*

Chigona and Chetty (2008) argued that many teachers fail to realise that teen mothers are like learners with special needs. They continue that most teachers refuse to recognise the condition of teenage mothers and chose to treat them the same with the other learners. As a result of these, a lot of

pressure is exerted upon them by both the teachers and other learners without considering the stress they go through. Some teachers or learners go to the extent of ridiculing teen mothers in class for not doing their homework, group task or meeting some other class requirements. This coupled with the stress of caring for the baby makes them felt like they were carrying the entire world on their shoulders.

But when a mentor is assigned to them whether formally or informally who would encourage, teach and guide about school in particular and motherhood in general to ensure that they complete school successfully.

Quebec, was another participant in the study, whose experience emphasised the place of mentoring as a psycho-social support service provided to teen mothers so they can completely finish school. She pointed out that;

*One of the teachers in my school was appointed to be my mentor but she bailed on me. She kept on giving me one excuse after the other of how busy she was and how she would find time so that we can sit down and talk. It was very frustrating because the principal had said anything I needed to ask, I should ask her but she was never there. I saw a friend of my mine enjoying a lot of support from the mentor allocated to her. Whenever I had a question or needed help, I would tell her to ask her mentor for me who sometimes helped but sometimes was too busy to help. If my mentor was available like she was supposed to be, my life would have been much easier.*

Panday et al. (2009) opined that schools are vital to provide support which would empower teenage mothers to stay in school and successfully complete their education. Arlington Public School (2004, p. 2) concur with this by pointing out that ‘‘pressures on teen mothers are far more common than support and understanding. Mature, adult decisions are required of emotionally pressured

adolescents. Managing to care for an infant and devoting adequate time to school work is a great challenge for the teen parents''. Mentoring, therefore, is a critical approach of tackling a complicated problem which cannot be practically defined in clear terms but which has different faces with time. Allocating someone to constantly guide teen mothers is a pivotal way of ensuring that they successfully complete school since the more time they spend with such an individual the more they get to trust him or her thereby making communication easier and subsequently finding solutions to their problems.

Marion (2008) observes that academic support is a vital psycho-social support services which teen mothers need to effectively navigate through school. Most teen mothers due to the different challenges they face at home and in school find it difficult to cope with their studies, as a result most of them drop out of school. But since education is the primary reason why they are in school, educational support becomes a primary determining factor in whether they would stay in school or drop out. Teen mothers who enjoy enough support are bound to stay while those who don't would be weary and might consequently drop out. The school therefore in the bid to ensure that these teenagers enjoy their basic rights of education and not drop out of school, should provide holistic educational support continuously or supplementary curriculum programs like extra classes, specially designed tutorials, special assignments, thought provokers and mentoring, to ensure that teenage mothers successfully complete their education.

## 5.3 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

This refers to the support that teen mothers receive from school in monetary terms. Chigona and Chetty (2008) posit that poverty is a major crisis facing teenage mothers. Most teen mothers stem from families characterised by economic hardship and poverty. In such situations the teen mother or her parents cannot afford several basic necessities. Also most teenage mothers lack support from the

father of the baby. With such deplorable conditions most teenage mothers need financial assistance of some sort to be able to cope with the ever increasing demands of the baby and school. Pillow (2004) collaborates, by argues that teen mothers who were already living in poverty stricken conditions or below the poverty line, experience more hardship than those who come from well to do families. Since in such home parents prefer to spend their meagre resources on educating the siblings of the teen mother rather than on improving living conditions for the teen mother, their hardship they go through becomes a heavy load to bear even for an adult. Willan (2013) adds that with the ever increasing cost basic children necessities and health care, the social grant teenage mothers get becomes insignificant in meeting their monetary challenges. Schools, therefore should do all they can to ensure that teen mothers are more comfortable financially. This financial support often comes in the form of financial exclusion and financial upliftment.

### 5.3.1 Financial exclusion

Financial exclusion is all about ensuring that low income earners or those who are living below the poverty line don't make any monetary contribution towards their education (Magwaza 2003). She continues that since teen mothers are often affected by poverty, which is also a primary reason why several teen mothers got pregnant in the first place, financial exclusion from all monetary contributions would go a long way to ease the burden on most teen mothers and ensure that they stay in school. Since teenage mothers are already struggling with poverty and taking care of their babies, expecting any financial contribution from them as a school be it for tuition or any other thing, is just another way of pushing them away. But once every financial obligation is eliminated and teen mothers know that they won't be called upon daily to enquire why they haven't met their financial obligations, they will remain in school. Romeo one of the teen mothers who participated in this study, bore testimony thus;

*Once I came back to school and explained my condition to the teacher who was assigned to guide me, she said she would get back to me. After three days she came back to me with an exemption form for me to fill. Once I filled this form, she took it to the Department of Education and I was excluded from any form of payment for education. This really helped me because I could then channel my scarce resources to taking care of my child and myself and ensure that I am in school on time.*

Dinkelman, Lam and Leibbrandt (2008) posit that in poverty- stricken communities; both males and females often engage in early sex and randomly engage in unprotected sex for petty favours and the provision of basic necessities by boyfriend or girlfriend. Paruk, Petersen and Bhana, (2009) concur that in the phase of such crisis any financial assistance provided to teen mothers would go a long way to ensure that the teen mother is able to take care of herself and the baby. Being financially stable would therefore stabilise the life of the teen mother and help them focus in school thereby causing them to completely school effectively.

Sierra corroborated Romeo's story by pointing out that;

*Once my mentor got to know about my financial challenge, she approached the principal and spoke to him on my behalf. About a week from that, I was given a form to fill which exempted me from making monetary contributions in the school. Once we were going out on a field trip and everyone was supposed to pay. When the due date for the payment was near, I approached my teacher to ask for more time to pay the money only to discover that the school had paid for me because I was exempted from all financial contributions. I was so happy and instead of concentrating on looking for the money I spent that time studying.*

Adesoji (2014) points out that when a student or learner is at peace, the level of their concentration will drastically increase making them to consequently perform better.

With financial stress being cleared from Sierra's table, she had more time to focus on her studies thereby ensuring that she performs well and ultimately completes school successfully. Since poverty is a major issue plaguing several teen mothers, financial exclusion becomes a big relief not only giving them the satisfaction of studying without disturbance, but also gives them peace of mind and ample time to study which would have otherwise been spent either working to earn some money to meet up with school needs or demands or visiting uncles and aunties to ask for help. The teenage mother gets enough time or to concentrate on her studies thereby ensuring that she would go through school successfully.

### 5.3.2 Financial Upliftment

As earlier postulated, most teenage mothers became pregnant as a result of poverty; that is either because they were looking for petty favours and gifts from young boys and men who were financially stable or because they wanted the child support grant which they will collect for the next twenty years and more (Branch, 2006). Hallman (2004) adds that some also got pregnant because they wanted their well to do or financially stable boyfriend to marry them or take care of them. But most of these teenage mothers were disappointed by their boyfriends and in some cases abandoned. Faced with the responsibility of taking care of themselves and the baby becomes and extra burden to bear which most teen mothers find challenging. Uplifting their financial statues therefore becomes a way of addressing the poverty crisis they are facing. Some teachers in the bid to ensure that teenage mothers remain in school and successfully complete their studies go an extra mile to ensure that teenage mothers financial debacle is eased or reduced one way or another.

Golf one of the teenage mothers who participated in the study pointed out that;

*My teachers are really doing a lot to help me financially. Some of them went as far as getting help for me from the Department of Social Welfare to ensure that my financial obligations are met. I was given two pairs of uniform to use for school. This really uplifted my financial situation because the money I was supposed to use for uniforms I used it to buy other things and become more comfortable and confident about my financial situation and this also help*

*me concentrate in class because I no longer had to be ashamed of my old uniform, since I was shining like other students. I really felt like I belong.*

With such financial elevation teen mothers feel more comfortable with their financial situation and consequently more comfortable in class and in their studies. By getting basic necessities or money for such basic necessities which they were otherwise supposed to get on their own, help them to concentrate better on their studies and consequently complete school successfully. All stakeholders within the school should therefore ensure that teenage mothers who are learners with special needs according to Panday et al. (2009) got all the basic necessities they need, be it financial or material so that they can feel more comfortable in class thereby remaining in school and completing their studies successfully.

Hotel another participant supported Golf's experiences by elaborating in a similar experience as she stated that;

*I am really grateful especially to my mentor and all the teachers who are doing all they can to ensure that I am more comfortable financially. Teachers did not only get uniforms for me, they also got me food parcels from the Department of Social Welfare. To crown it all, some of them got donations from supermarkets and chain stores both in cash and in kind who decided to help us. When I got all these things, I was speechless because I never expected any of them. But I felt bad when I discover that a friend of mine who was also a teen mother didn't get all the things I was getting.*

Since this support is independently sourced and provided by the respective teachers or mentors assigned to guide teenage mothers, the results are often different from one teacher to the other. Some teenage mothers end up more financially empowered than the others making their concentration level different. If the government or the Department of Social Welfare was to take responsibility for

providing basic necessities for teenage mothers who are in need, it will go a long way to unify the process and put everyone on the same page so that at the end they all would be able to complete their studies successfully.

Financial assistance is a vital part of the psycho-social support services provided to teenage mothers in schools because financial challenges constitutes a major challenge teenage mothers are facing; be it in schools or at home. Since they cannot get the financial support they need at home, getting it in school would go a long way to ensure that they stay in school and complete their studies. Also getting things like uniforms which would otherwise have cost them money causes them to channel such money into other things thereby uplifting their financial status.

## 5.4 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

This study refers the different structures of emotional support which teenage mothers are supported to deal with the stress of motherhood and possibly rejection by the fathers of their babies. Chigona and Chetty (2008) posit that teenage mothers face emotional challenges both in school and out of school which affect their schooling. They continue that most teen mothers who leave school in order to deliver their children often return without any emotional support on how to deal with parenthood, their stigma in schools as parents, and schooling simultaneously. As such most teen mothers become overwhelmed by the pressure and challenges causing many to drop out of school and others to perform very poorly. To deal with the tremendous emotional pressure they face, teenage mothers need emotional support. Chigona and Chetty (2008) in the findings of their study reported that teenagers don't get the professional help they need to face their new roles as students and mothers. All the participants in their study were of the opinion that they needed professional counselling in order to cope with certain issues but nobody has offered to help not even the teachers. As a response

to these problems, teenage mothers are offered emotional support by the school in the form of counselling and personal care.

### 5.4.1 Personal/Individual counselling services

Grosu, Katimada-Annaiah, Mahran, Samarasinghe, Sheikh, Barnes and Oluwatosin, (2015) argued that counselling refers to a kind of talking therapy which gives an individual the opportunity of talking about their problems and feelings in a confidential and dependable environment thereby getting solutions for them or suggestions on how to deal with them. As in the case of teenage mothers who are constantly under pressure and stress either from teachers because they didn't do their homework as a result of taking care of the baby throughout the whole night, or as a result of constant absence from school for one reason or another. Counselling therefore is used to help them deal with pressure, rejection, marginalisation amongst other things. The teen mothers in the study were of the opinion that counselling was a vital service they couldn't do without. Kilo agreed with this by pointing out that;

*Once I discovered I was pregnant and told my boyfriend, he dumped me and rejected our baby. This didn't really mean a lot to me during the pregnancy but when I gave birth and had to deal with the stress of taking care of the baby by myself while he was busy enjoying himself with other girls really made me sick. When I saw other girls moving around with their boyfriends I felt like dumping the baby somewhere and walking away. All these mixed emotions coupled with the girls in my class who were always mocking me, made me feel very uncomfortable and helpless. It was only when I my life orientation teacher started counselling me that I became a little confident and which also improved my performance in class.*

Danby, Cromdal, Rendle-Short, Butler, Osvaldsson, and Emmison (2015) argued that counselling is a vital way of reducing stress, dealing with emotional challenges and feeling confident about one's

self. When teenage mothers, therefore, seek counselling, they are provided with vital emotional support which is vital for their continuous growth and development. Being able to deal with their challenges during counselling sessions, means that they can concentrate more on their academics and successfully complete school.

Mike another teenage mother had a similar experience to that of Kilo as she stated that;

*The girls in my class and around my area started mocking me when I gave birth that I will never achieve anything in life. I felt bad about myself and consequently I decided to stay away from school most of the time I was not comfortable either at home or at school so I started visiting some friends who made me start drinking. After being away from school for two weeks, one of my teachers visited me to know why I wasn't coming to school and asked me to come to school. The next day when I got to school she took me to the office of the counsellor who counselled me on several things and now I am back in school doing.*

Lima another teenage mother who really enjoyed her counselling sessions stated that;

*My parents hatred for me and my baby, coupled with my teacher's harsh comments and constant bullying made feel really terrible. I could hardly do my homework because I had to take care of the baby and when I came back to school my teachers would shout at me and even threaten to punish me for not doing my assignments. The stress was too much. I only felt better when I started visit the counsellor in our school that spoke to me and directed me on how to go about several things.*

Chigona and Chetty (2008) pointed out that counselling was very vital for teenage mothers' successful completion of their studies. The burdens of school work, motherhood and other social pressures are often too much for teenage mothers to handle on their own. Counselling services will

therefore go a long way to ensure teenage mothers are able to cope with such burdens and successfully complete school. Also since such counselling doesn't only deal with things happening in school but the teenage mothers' life in general, counselling would go a long way to keep them in school and to ensure that every emotional challenge they have is dealt with.

### 5.4.2 Personal care

Personal care refers to the continuous striving by teachers to make life easier and bearable for teen mothers. Most teachers take it upon themselves to personally care for teenage mothers, ensure that they are doing well in school, give advice about parenting amongst other things. Most feel teachers within the schools view these teenage mothers as their children who they are supposed to care for. Panday et al. (2009) pointed out; teenage mothers are learners with special needs who are supposed to be cared for in special ways and individually depending on their individual challenges. Personal care is therefore provided to teen mothers to ensure that the go through school successfully. Quebec's experience of personal care provided to her by a teacher in her school best illustrates this point as she stated that: -

*One of the teacher's cares for me personally like her daughter. Things that my mentor won't do for me she helps me with them. Every day she always wants to know if I have eaten and if not she will give me food. She buys me gifts and many other things from time to time. She advises me on how to raise my child and also helps me with my studies. She is like my guardian angel sent from heaven. I don't think I would still be in school without her because she makes sure that any girl who insults me is punished that nobody looks down on me or insult me because I am a teenage mother. It is because of her that I have really started enjoying school again and want to become a teacher someday so I can be like her and help other girls.*

All special need learners need extra care, according to Adesoji (2014), and when this care is provided, teenage mothers are empowered to not only remain in school and study, but their desire to further their education after matric, so as to make a difference in their society is kindled. Through personal care, therefore, teachers become the change they want to be in their society thereby inspiring teenage mothers to see beyond their challenges and complete their studies. Since most often the support is provided in different forms and ways, teenage mothers benefit not only from the physical help they get, but also from a wealth of experience possessed by the teacher providing the care which has been accumulated through life.

Romeo, another teenage mother who took part in the study, added that;

*Some of my teachers are doing all they can to ensure that I am comfortable in school while others are just making my life miserable. Also my community is very hostile to teenage mothers and they consider us to be bad influence on other girls. Because of the way some of my teachers personally take care of me, school is the only place where I feel comfortable. They advise me, guide me and ensure that I am on the right track. Some go as far as presenting my case to the social welfare to get me the help I need. One of them went as far as speaking to my parents when I had a problem with them about taking care of the baby and doing my assignments. They just want to see a smile on my face all the time and this ensures that I stay on track with my studies.*

Chigona and Chetty (2008) argued that lack of support from communities is one of the primary problems most teenage mothers are facing. Most teen mothers live in communities or neighbourhoods where teen mothers are usually treated or considered the ‘other girls’ or girls with low morals’. Some parents within such communities or neighbourhoods go as far as discouraging their children from being friends with teen mothers or walking with them for fear that they would

infect their daughters with their bad manners. Such actions often leave the teenager isolated and vulnerable with no friends to talk to or no one to help them with their assignments. When teachers therefore take responsibility of taking care of teenage mothers, they become more comfortable thereby being able to concentrate in class and successfully complete school.

Emotional support is vital for teenage mothers' successful completion of studies because teenage mothers have a lot of challenges and pressures whether from disgruntled parents, teachers, peers or community. Also the stress of combining motherhood with academic duties brings a lot of pressure upon the teenage mother and to be able to deal with such pressures they require a lot of emotional support in school to be able to successfully complete school. School stake holders as well as the Department of Education and Department of Social Welfare must work hand-in-hand to ensure that teenage mothers get the emotional support they require from professionals or it is provided by teachers. Pillow (2004) points out that emotional support provided to teenage mothers is the reason why suicide rate and dropout rate have constantly been decreasing. The more emotional support teenage mothers get, the more likely they are to stay in school and successfully complete school.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter was an analysis of the data generated from interviews and observation about the psycho-social support services provided to teenage mothers in a secondary school. Three major themes, educational support, financial support and emotional support were identified and these three themes were sub-divided into six sub themes; extra classes, mentoring, financial exclusion, financial upliftment, counselling and personal cares. The next chapter which is the last chapter of these study looks at the summary of the findings and recommendations.

# CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the concluding chapter of the study titled, ‘‘Exploring teenage mother’s experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal’’. The focus of the study was to explore teenage mother’s experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. This was done by asking two critical questions; what experiences do teenage mothers’ have of school-based psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school? How can these school-based psycho-social support services be improved to ensure excellent performance by the teenage mother? To answer this questions data was generated from semi-structured interviews and observations. The data generated was categorised into three themes and six sub-themes and these themes were further analysed using direct quotations from the participants. This chapter, therefore, drawing from the findings concludes the study by summarising the findings and making recommendations.

## 6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This summary of the findings is based on the analyses done in chapter five and it is based on two sub themes; the importance of providing psycho-social support services to teenage mothers and the contextualisation of psycho-social support which have been carved out of the findings.

### 6.2.1 Teenage mother’s experiences

Teenage hood is a very critical stage in the life every individual. Teenage mothers find themselves having to deal with motherhood at this tender age of their life where they are neither experienced in taking care of themselves or another human being. This often makes life difficult for them in most

instances creating a vacuum which must be filled. Teenage mothers therefore have both positive and negative experiences about parenting in particular and motherhood in general since motherhood is a defining characteristic at this stage of their lives. From the study several key issues stand out from teenage mother's experiences; financial crisis, educational void and emotional distress. Since teenage mothers are most often in school when they fall pregnant, meeting the financial obligations of taking care of themselves as well as the baby is never easy. Owing to the fact that most teenage mothers come from poverty stricken homes further plunge them into financial crisis. This crisis which most teenage mothers believe they cannot solve on their own especially if they are to continue with the school, necessitates the provision of financial support.

Further, the time teenage mothers take for maternity leave or during the later stage of the pregnancy as well as when they give birth creates an educational void in them which leaves them in a disadvantageous position. Also the time they spend taking care of their babies when they return from school while other learners are studying creates an educational void in them which can only be filled when they get enough educational support. From their experiences, it is clear that most of them have challenges coping with their studies and require some form of educational support to meet up with the numerous demands.

To add to this, the psychological impact of motherhood as well as the castigation faced by teenage mothers from parents and the community they live in creates a form of emotional distress in them which becomes difficult for such an inexperienced individual to handle. The pressure and challenges of taking care of the bay, meeting other social and family obligations, meeting educational demands and creating time for the self all become too much for the teenage mother to bear. To develop emotional stamina and psychological dexterity to handle such challenges becomes the reason why teenage mothers need psychological support in meeting the demands of their lives as mothers and learners.

### 6.2.2 The importance of providing psycho-social support services to teenage mothers

Due to the diverse challenges which teenage mothers face in life ranging from the poverty to academics, they need support to be able to successfully navigate through school and complete their studies. From the experiences of teenage mothers, it was clear that psycho-social support of different kinds is vital for teen mothers' academic progress. By receiving psycho-social support from the school, teen mothers are provided with an arsenal with which they will be able to face the challenges of navigating through parenthood and academics at the same time.

Also because teenage mothers most often than not are never fully developed psychologically and emotional to deal with parenting, adding such responsibility to the demands of school which most of them are struggling with because a huge task which requires a lot of psycho-social support to be able to navigate through. Providing support to teenage mothers therefore is quite crucial in ensuring that teenage mothers stay in school and complete successfully. Teenage mothers within the study were of the opinion that without this support most of them would not be in school because it has come to constitute the basis of their school. The educational support, financial and emotional support provided to them becomes a bridge through which they can cross over the river of challenges they are encountering.

Since most teenage mothers become pregnant because of poverty and poor society economic background, staying in school without any form of financial support would be impossible since they now have extra responsibility of taking care of the child making their economic misery worse. Support therefore is vital in ensuring that they remain in school and complete their studies successfully. Also since lack of understanding of basic principles of the use of contraceptives in general and other issues considered in Life Orientation constitutes why some teenage mothers became pregnant, they need academic assistance to not only take care of their baby effectively and

stay in school, but also to ensure that things like that don't happen again. Also most teen mothers often miss classes either because they were too tired taking care of the baby throughout the night or because the baby is sick and they have to take care of it. Without academic support, they will not be able to catch up with other studies in class due to these absences.

Also the pressure exerted upon teen mothers by parents, communities, inconsiderate teachers, classmates, boyfriends amongst others becomes too much to bear on the learners who are neither adult or children; that is who lack the emotional and psychological maturity of adults to deal with pressure and other crisis but who have a child or children to take care of in ways that they either don't understand or lack the social capital to deal with. Emotional support therefore is vital if teen mothers are supposed to stay in school and successfully complete school. The importance of the support provided to teenage mothers cannot be over emphasized since most of them don't get any support at home. Without the support they receive in school therefore they wouldn't be able to successfully complete school.

### 6.2.3 The contextualisation of school based psycho-social support

Teenage mothers go through diverse challenges in their academics and their personal life, and these challenges are specific to a particular teen mother. While some are under the menace of poverty, some are under the heavy pressure from their families as a result of being a teenage mother. Better still others are under constant marginalisation and victimisation from their peers and teachers. Since teenage mothers come from different homes and backgrounds with different social capitals, the kind of support they require differ from one person to another because their challenges also differ. It is therefore vital that the psycho social support provided to teenage mothers be contextualised to fit the kind of challenges they are facing. A one size fit all kind of solution will not work for all teenage mothers because as their faces differ so too does their challenges differ. Even in the same school,

providing the same kind of solution to the challenges all teenage mothers are facing would be wasting valuable resources which would not lead to maximum unitisation.

From the experiences of teenage mothers, it is clear that their challenges differ and psycho-social support provided to them must be tailored in ways that will meet them exactly at the point of their needs. Contextualising the support provided to teenage mothers would go a long way to ensure that they remain in school and successfully complete school. Some teenage mothers had problems financing their studies while others required psychological or emotional support. For others their primary challenge is that they need educational support to be able to go through school and complete successfully. Without contextualising the support provided to teenage mothers to meet their specific needs, support would be provided but teenage mothers would still be facing diverse challenges which would make them drop out of school or perform poorly in ways that they would not be able to complete school and even if they end up completing school, it would be after a very long struggle and time. Without contextualising the support provided to teenage mothers they would not be able to maximally utilise this support making its effect in their academics of little or no effect. Schools therefore need to recognise the difference in teenage mothers and their challenges and tailor solutions which would meet these challenges on individual bases just like the experiences of teenage mothers demonstrated. Just like the mentors and teachers were giving different kinds of help to teenage mothers, any support provided to teenage mothers must be contextualised to ensure that every need of the teenage mothers is met.

## 6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Cohen et al., (2011) a major challenge for almost all qualitative case studies is that the results or findings of the study cannot fully be generalised as the experiences of teen mothers in all of KwaZulu-Natal or the country at large, but only pertains to the specific school which was the part of

the study since experiences are subjective. Secondly, since non-probability purposive sampling was used in this research, the participants chosen might not be the best and might be biased due to the researcher's convenience or previous encounters with such teen mothers. To add to this, since the study deals with experiences, for the purpose of appearing bright or for the fear of being perceived as dull, participants might provide data which is inaccurate. But in the face of all this limitations, the researcher ensured that the she explained to the participants that since it is their experience it cannot be invalid

## 6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the researcher therefore recommends that another study of a wider context be carried to know the kind of support provided to teenage mothers in other schools in KwaZulu-Natal and the rest of South Africa so that the findings can be used to provide guidelines for the provision of such services. With the provision of such guidelines, funds would also be made available for the provision such services such that teenage mothers can be met at the point of their needs thereby ensuring that they remain in school and successfully complete school.

Secondly, the researcher also recommends that the Department of Education or the Department of Social Welfare should take full responsibility for the provision of these services to ensure that some teenage mothers don't benefit from the services more than others. Since teachers were the ones sourcing and providing these services, those under them could only benefit from what they were able to raise or offer. Some teen mothers got uniforms which they needed while others didn't get the academic or emotional support they needed. But if the provision of such services is guided by the department, everybody would benefit equally depending on their needs.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that the challenges teenage mothers are facing should be the bases for the provision of psycho-social support and not the resources available to the school or that which

the mentor or teachers can raise on behalf of the teenage mothers. All resources needed should be sourced by the school and made available to the different teachers providing such services so that such resources can be used to tailor solutions which would meet the needs of teenage mothers.

## 6.5. CONCLUSION

This study is made up of six different chapters. The first was the introductory chapter which introduced the study by providing the aim and objectives, background to the study, critical research questions, research design and methodology and rounded off with the structure of the study. The next chapter was a review of literature around teenage motherhood and what other scholars have written about the subject and this was broken down into defining teenage motherhood, causes of teenage pregnancy, challenges experienced by teenage mothers, policies that support pregnant teenagers and mothers, and school-based supports services or programs implemented to assist teenage mothers go through school successfully.

The third chapter centred on the paradigm of the study which is interpretivism and the theoretical framework which is social constructivism. The fourth chapter dealt with the research design and methodology by discussing the approach to the study which is qualitative, the research type which is case study coupled with the sampling of the participants and the method for data generation. Ethical considerations were also discussed in this chapter alongside trustworthiness and the limitations of the study. The last chapter analysed and discussed the data generated and the data was divided into three major themes; educational support, financial support and emotional support which were further broken down into six sub themes; extra classes, mentoring, financial exclusion, financial upliftment, counselling and personal cares. This chapter which is the last summarizes the findings of the research and makes recommendations thereby concluding the study.

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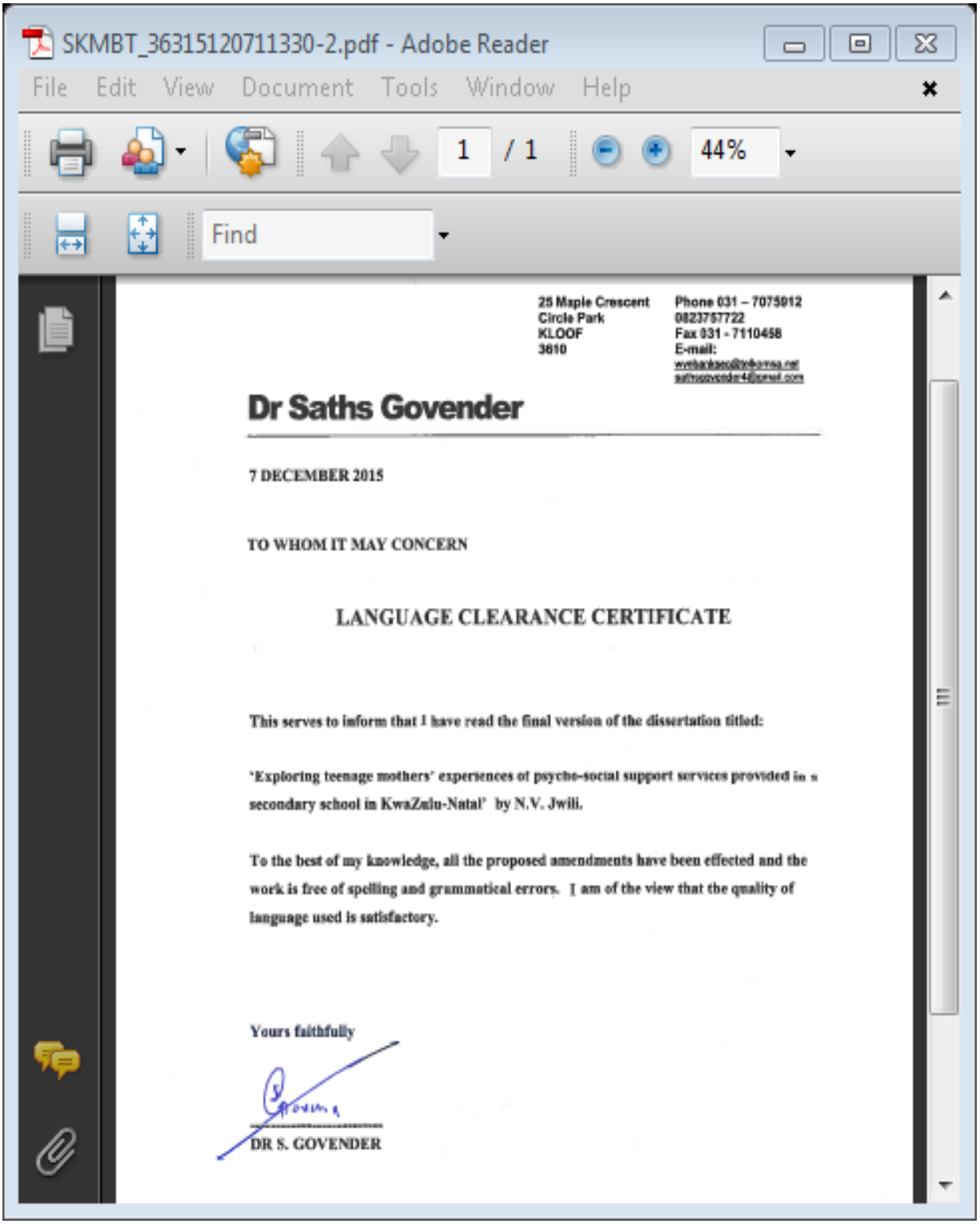
# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX 1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Find

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

Phone 031 – 7075912
0823757722
Fax 031 - 7110458
E-mail:
[redacted]

**Dr Saths Govender**

7 DECEMBER 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

'Exploring teenage mothers' experiences of psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal' by N.V. Jwili.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used is satisfactory.

Yours faithfully

DR S. GOVENDER

# APPENDIX 2

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

**05 October 2015**

**Mrs Nomusa Vitoria Jwili (213573071)**
**School of Education**
**Edgewood Campus**

Dear Mrs Jwili,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/0491/014M**
**Project title:** Investigation of teenage mothers' experiences of school-based psycho-social supports services provided in secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal

**Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol**
With regards to your response received on 05 October 2015 to our letter of 07 January 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have 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.**

**The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.**

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**

**/ms**

Cc Supervisor: Mr Henry Muribwathoho
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo / Ms Bongi Bhengu

**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**
**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**
**Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building**
**Postal Address:** Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
**Telephone:** +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 4609 **Email:** ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
**Website:** www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

# APPENDIX 3

**Informed Consent Letter**

School of Education, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Edgewood Campus,
ASHWOOD, 3605

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is **Nomusa Jwili**. I am a Masters 'student in Educational Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa.
I am interested in conducting a study titled "Exploring teenage mothers' experiences of school-based psycho-social support provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal''. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.
Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Willing** | |
| **Not willing** | |

Audio equipment
I can be contacted at:
Email:jwilinomusa@gmail.com Cell no.: 0847127751

My supervisor is Mr Henry Muribwathoho
School of Education Studies,
Edgewood campus
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Muribwathohoh@ukzn.ac.za, No; +27312607011
Or
Mr P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,
E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za Tel: 031 260 4557
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I…… (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

…… ……

APPENDIX 4

# Interview Schedule

1. Which grade are you in?
2. Is the school supporting you in anyway as a teenage mother?
3. What exactly is the school doing to help you as a teen mother?
4. Do you think the support you get is enough for you to successfully complete school?
5. How do you think the support can be improved to ensure that you successfully complete school?
6. What grade were you when you became a mother?
7. How old were you when you became a mother?
8. Are you still in a relationship with the child's father?
9. If not, can you tell what happened?
10. What are some of challenges you have experienced being a mother and a learner/student?
11. How have you dealt with some of these challenges?
12. What is your strongest ambition /what do you want to be after matric?
13. Are your parents supporting you emotionally?
14. Are your parents supporting you financially?

APPENDIX 5

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

16 March 2015

The Principal

Dear Sir,

**Request of Permission to carry out research in your school**

My name Nomusa Victoria Jwili a masters student in the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I write this letter to request your permission to carry out research in your institution. My study is titled ‘‘An exploration of teenage mothers’ experiences of school-based psycho social support services provided in a secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal’’. I am an educational psychology student interested in the support provided to teen mothers in your school. This study aims at answering two main research questions; what experiences do teenage mothers’ have of school-based psycho-social support services provided in a secondary school?

How can these school-based psycho-social support services can be improved to ensure excellent performance by the teenage mother?

I would love to study the school-based psycho-social support services provided to teen mothers so assist to develop better ways in which teen mothers can be assisted in school. By so doing I will interview the teen mothers who are receiving a support. Also I intend to observe each of the teen mothers who is receiving this support from the teachers or whoever is provided the support as a means of generating data from different sources.

Research expectations of participants: All participants will be expected to participate in an interview in a venue and at a time that is convenient for them. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to verify a transcript of interviews in order to confirm what was said earlier.

Research Ethics: Participants will participate in this study voluntarily, and are allowed to withdraw at any time. Participants will be protected from any harm, i.e. they will not be exposed to any risks. The participants will not under any circumstances be coerced to respond to interview questions in a particular manner, i.e. they have the right to refuse to answer some questions if they choose to do so. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms and different codes will be used for all participants. Each participant will only be aware of his/her own pseudonym and code. Data generation during this research will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Your participation in this research project will be highly appreciated. Copies of the transcripts of data and research findings will be made available for any participant who is interested in them. Should the participants become emotionally, my supervisor as a registered psychologist is available to come and give assistance to the participants.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully


Nomusa Jwili
jwilinomusa@gmail.com / 084 712 7751
School of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Supervisor: Mr. Henry Muribwathoho
muribwathohoh@ukzn.ac.za/0312607011
School of Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Mr. P Mohun
mohunp@ukzn.ac.za/0027312604557
HSSREC Research Office
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal


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**Permission**

I , ……..have read the above terms and agree with them. I understand that the name of my school will not be used in the write-up (dissertation) of

this study and that the information that will be provided will be used only for this project. I am also aware that no member of my school will be forced to answer any questions and that they are free to withdraw from the project at any point. Therefore, I am giving consent for my school to be used for this research project.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date:_____

APPENDIX 6

education

Department:
Education
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane Tel: 033 392 1004 Ref.:2/4/8/394

Mrs NV Jwili
364 Inanda Glebe
INANDA
4309

Dear Mrs Jwili

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS**

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"AN EXPLORATION OF TEENAGE MOTHERS' EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL-BASED PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN KWAZULU-NATAL",** 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 15 April 2015 to 15 April 2016.
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 Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
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.

Pinetown District

**Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD**
**Head of Department: Education**
**Date: 20 April 2015**

**KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za