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**Conditions for a Successful/Unsuccessful Reintegration Process
back to High School: Former Adolescent Mothers’
Recollections/Reflections.**

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Declaration of honesty

I, Onthatile Mmathabo Mokoena the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work. Where secondary material has been used (either printed sources or the internet), this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria.

Signature 

Date: 6 November 2020

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Abstract

The following study explores the conditions under which former adolescent mothers were successfully or unsuccessfully reintegrated back into high school before and after giving birth. 12 semi-structured, in-depth, interviews were conducted with former adolescent mothers aged 22-23. An exploratory qualitative research approach was adopted as the study sought to acquire information that was specific to the social context and opinions of the former adolescent mothers. In addition, the study sought to explore the factors that contributed to the successful or unsuccessful reintegration of former adolescent mothers back into schools making sense of their recollections of their experiences before and after giving birth.

The findings show that despite the interlinked causal factors that may have led to the unplanned pregnancies of adolescent mothers, the journey of adolescent pregnancy and motherhood worked to reinforce their motivation to complete school. Furthermore, the findings indicate that successful reintegration into high school and dealing with adolescent pregnancy and motherhood required various interventions that involved schools, families and the community to ensure the best possible chances for successful reintegration into high school.

Recommendations were suggested in the study to enhance the provision of support interventions in managing adolescent pregnancy and parenthood, including, revised curriculum of sexual education, educator training and development, as well as provision of support by families and communities.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Background of the Study

For most developed and developing countries, adolescent pregnancy and parenthood is framed as a societal problem and a major impediment to successful development and completion of basic education for adolescent girls. In South Africa, the recent Recorded Live Births indicated that there were almost 123 000 learners between the ages of 10 and 19 who registered births (Statistics South Africa 2018 cited in Mlambo 2018). Many learners experience challenges with their schooling, despite the fact that there are policies and a commitment to facilitating their reintegration back to school. For example, South Africa has developed the *National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools* to detail the processes schools need to follow in assisting learners (Department of Education 2018). Despite these attempts, some adolescent mothers successfully resume their schooling after their children are born, some are unsuccessful.

This proposed research investigated the conditions that contributed to the successful/unsuccessful reintegration process of adolescent mothers into the schooling system after their children were born. The study focused on the recollections of former adolescent mothers, who were able to successfully and unsuccessfully complete their high school education.

1.2. Research Problem

Research conducted by Grant and Hallman (2006) suggests that 29% of the 14-19-year adolescents who drop out of school in South Africa due to pregnancy return to school but that only a third of the returning group successfully complete schooling. The reason why the retention number is so low can be because the mothers have challenges in “managing and negotiating the demands of schooling, pregnancy and parenting” (Bhana et al. 2010:872). Other scholars have reported that adolescent mothers who returned to school face numerous difficulties in and outside the school setting which make it hard for them to finish their schooling (Hanna 2001, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Willan 2013). For example, Chigona and Chetty (2008) found that there was a lack of social support of adolescent mothers and their

children from school, home and the community. Furthermore, they reported that the family's socio-economic status influenced their stay in school. Willan (2013:47) reported that their changing social status was challenging as they had to adjust between being a school learner, a mother and a teenager in a critical developmental stage.

The presence of policies such as The Department of Education *National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools* (Department of Education, 2018) as well as the *South African Schools Act of 1996-No.84* (Department of Education, 1996), serve to protect pregnant adolescents and mothers by detailing measures to prevent unfair treatment, stereotyping, stigmatization and lack of support by educators and peers in schools. What is more, the policies are aimed at providing educators with guidelines on how to work with adolescent mothers returning to school. However, the implementation of such policies continues to be poor due to policy and practice disconnect on how to effectively work with pregnant adolescents and mothers (Bhana et al. 2010, Ramulumo & Pitsoe 2013, Shefer et al. 2013).

Given the continuing problem of poor reintegration, the proposed study sought to explain the reintegration process from the perspective of former adolescent mothers who fell pregnant whilst still in high school. This study approached reintegration as a process and not a single event which happens after the adolescent mother has given birth. Focusing on young women's recollections and reflections of their process of reintegration, this study argues that reintegration is a process that starts the moment a female learner discovers that she is pregnant until she returns and has to manage a new routine and expectations.

Some authors have suggested that there is a need for a new approach to adolescent parenthood and specifically motherhood that "looks at the diverse voices of young women in order to obtain a detailed understanding of the experiences and responses of young mothers" (Mjwara and Maharaj 2018). This study considered voices of mothers who reintegrated successfully and those who did not.

1.3. Rationale of the study

As a youth development coordinator working with adolescent learners in my community, I have observed that adolescent mothers and pregnant adolescents do not receive enough support from different societal institutions including schools. The reviewed literature also suggested

that there was a gap in terms of former adolescent mothers' recollections and reflections. The above points led me to think about reintegration as a process and to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the experiences of adolescent motherhood and education. I am also interested in ways to eliminate the barriers that adolescent mothers face in trying to complete their high school education when returning to school.

1.4. Aim and objectives of the study

The broad aim of this project was to explain the conditions under which an adolescent mother is able to be successfully/unsuccessfully reintegrated into the schooling system. Specifically, the study explored and identified the twists and turns in former adolescent mothers' process of reintegration into high school from the minute they found out they were pregnant.

1.5. Research questions

The fundamental question posed by this research is: For former adolescent mothers, what are the conditions that contributed to and facilitated a successful/unsuccessful process of high school reintegration?

1.6. Overview of Chapters

This dissertation is divided into 6 chapters: **Chapter one** introduces the study and provides a brief background and context of the research problem. It also describes the aim and rationale of the study, speaking to the issues surrounding adolescent pregnancy. **Chapter two** critically reviews existing literature on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. The literature review firstly looks at contributing factors of adolescent pregnancy. Secondly, it looks at enablers and obstacles to reintegration based on past research. Thirdly, the literature speaks to the role of expectant fathers and lastly, policies on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. **Chapter three** provides the theoretical framework upon which this study is based. **Chapter four** explains the research methodology applied to conduct the study and discusses possible ethical issues that could be encountered in the study. **Chapter five** presents the research findings and discusses the emerging themes from former adolescent mothers' experiences of pregnancy during high school. **Chapter six** provides a discussion of key findings, policy implications, as well as provides limitations and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on adolescent pregnancy in South Africa. Firstly, it looks at factors that contribute to adolescent pregnancy. Secondly, it discusses the enablers and obstacles to reintegration. Thirdly, it considers the policies in place to deal with adolescent pregnancy and motherhood and concludes by highlighting the need to think about the reintegration of adolescent mothers into school as a process.

Adolescent pregnancy and parenthood are a global phenomenon that seems to affect both developed and developing countries (Hanna 2001, Ramulumo and Pitsoe 2013, Malahlela and Chireshe 2013, Masemola -Yende and Mataboge 2015, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Globally, the United States of America (USA) has shown the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the developed countries followed by the United Kingdom (UK) (Ehlers 2003, McDermott and Graham 2005, Malahlela and Chirese 2013, Watson and Vogul 2017, Naidoo et al. 2019). Even though evidence has shown that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood is prevalent globally (Macleod 2001, Macleod 2002), several authors have explained that it is more prevalent in developing countries (Kaufman et al 2001, Grant and Hallman 2008, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Mpanza and Nzima 2011, Madiba and Nsiki 2017, Naidoo et al. 2019).

In South Africa, adolescent pregnancy is constructed in multiple ways. Some frame it as a socioeconomic challenge that continues to escalate both in education and public health realms (Kanku and Mash 2010, Chohan and Langa 2011, du Preez et al. 2019, Naidoo et al. 2019, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). This is as a result of the triple challenges experienced in South Africa of poverty, unemployment and inequality (Chohan and Langa 2011: 87). Moreover, others attribute adolescent pregnancy to multiple factors which have been related to risk factors to be described in 2.2 (Kanku and Mash 2010, Mchunu et al. 2012, du Preez et al. 2019, Singh and Naicker 2019).

According to several authors who have conducted studies within South Africa, by the age of 18 more than 30% of young woman have given birth at least once (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Grant and Hallman 2008, Willan 2013, Odimegwu, Amoo, and De

Wet 2018, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Ehlers (2003) and the World Health Organization (2004) have stated that adolescent mothers could refer to anyone below the age of 19 years at the time of delivery. Some authors have stipulated that adolescent mothers could refer to anyone between the ages of 10 and 24 years (Mchunu et al. 2012, Masemola-Yende and Mataboge 2015, Kassa et al. 2016). However, Panday et al. (2009) makes a distinction between pre-teen and adolescent mothers stating that pre-teens are children under the age of 14 whilst adolescents are from ages 15-19. The focus of my study is on former adolescent mothers who completed Grade 12 or dropped out and were pregnant and gave birth between the ages 14 and 20-years.

2.2. Understanding contributing factors to adolescent pregnancy

Studies have been conducted in South Africa about adolescent pregnancy. Additionally, reports by Statistics South Africa (2017), Department of Education (2018) as well as news outlets have pointed to the rates of pregnancy and parenthood amongst pre-teens and adolescents. According to Mlambo (2018), The Recorded Live Births report for 2018 as ordered by Statistics South Africa has found that in South Africa, almost 123 000 learners under the age of 19 gave birth between 2017 and 2018. What is more, further studies commissioned by the Department of Education through Statistics South Africa have reported that in 2017, an estimated 97 000 adolescent mothers between the ages of 15 and 19 gave birth in South Africa whilst 3261 learners between 10 and 14 were reported to have given birth (Mlambo, 2018). In reviewing literature about adolescent pregnancy and parenthood, it is important to note that majority of adolescent pregnancies are unplanned (Ehlers 2003, Mchunu et al. 2012, Willian 2013, Singh and Naicker 2019) and that they may occur due to several interwoven causal factors (Kaufman et al. 2001, Kanku and Mash 2010, Chohan and Langa 2011, du Preez et al. 2019).

Most of the research on adolescent pregnancy has mapped the contributing factors to adolescent pregnancy often indicating that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood may be a result of many interlinked factors such as inequality, poverty, unemployment, poor school performance and dropout rates, rape, lack of education and, cultural beliefs that deterred parents from speaking to their children about sexual reproductive health (Macleod 2001, Grant and Hallman 2008, Chohan and Langa 2011, Willian 2013, Odimegwu and Mkhwanazi 2018, Singh and Naicker 2019).

Economic hardships may lead some adolescents to perform poorly at school and ultimately dropout (Panday et al. 2009, Willan 2013). Due to being trapped in a cycle of poverty, they may make poor decisions as they lack positive role models (Panday et al. 2009, Singh and Naicker 2019). Kaufman et al. (2001), Panday et al. (2009), Odimegwu and Mkhwanazi (2018) note that socio-economic disadvantages may lead to a lack of parental support and guidance as well as supervision due to unstable or fragmented family structures and single-parent households in which parents are unemployed, absent or working and living in different cities (Panday et al. 2009, Kanku and Mash 2010). This lack of parental support and supervision may produce negative consequences in which children experiment risky behaviours or seek comfort in other adults who would then take advantage of them (Jewkes et al. 2005). Furthermore, adolescents are put in vulnerable position which allow them to be easily manipulated and pressured by their partners (Panday et al. 2009, Willian 2013). Panday et al. (2009: 34) postulate that the familial makeup plays a very important role in understanding and determining teenage sexual behaviour which includes pregnancy.

The unequal power distribution, gender inequalities and traumatic experiences may result in sexual abuse and rape (Kaufman et al. 2001, Panday et al. 2009, Chohan and Langa 2011, Mchunu et al. 2012, Willan 2013). Panday et al. (2009:35) emphasize how sexual and physical abuse have come to define relationships between men and women in some South African communities. There are studies conducted in South Africa that have shown that there is a link between adolescent pregnancy and sexual abuse of teenagers (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Panday et al. 2009, Makiwane 2010, Bhana et al. 2010). This is supported by Moloto (2011) who asserted that many teenagers fell pregnant through rape from their first sexual encounters. The evidence on rape that Moloto refers to was gathered from a report in the Limpopo Province by the Department of Social Development, which sought to find the factors that contributed to high adolescent pregnancies and parenthood rates.

Some other reasons may be related to risky behavior amongst teenagers, alcohol and substance abuse, peer pressure and sexual coercion (Panday et al. 2009, Kanku and Mash 2010, Mchunu et al. 2012).

There is also the element of the young mothers having a lack of access to and knowledge about sexual reproductive health education and pregnancy prevention methods (Kaufman et al. 2001, Mchunu et al. 2012, Willian 2013). Access to reproductive health services or lack thereof has been reported as another reason of adolescent pregnancy due to the stigma attached to

adolescents gaining access to contraceptives and reproductive health services (Kaufman et al. 2001, Ehlers 2003; Kanku and Mash 2010, Masemola-Yende and Mataboge 2015, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). A study conducted by Ehlers (2003:238) explained that nurses' attitudes towards adolescents' use of contraceptives may impose barriers preventing the effective use of contraceptives and access to reproductive health services. In the same way, other scholars had similar findings in studies on access to information and decision- making on adolescent pregnancy prevention and reluctance to visit clinics regarding family planning (Panday et al. 2009, Masemola-Yende and Mataboge 2015, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Healthcare workers in clinics have in the past been accused of turning away or contributing to the stigma of adolescents wanting to be educated and receive family planning (Kanku and Mash 2010: 564.)

The reasons cited for the lack of assistance in family planning include the fact that adolescents are told that they are 'too young' to engage in family planning and that they should not be having sex. With above in mind, Masemola-Yende and Mataboge (2015) propose that curriculum for nursing education needs to continuously evolve and be updated such that it provides information to empower healthcare workers with updated sexual reproductive health and family planning information. Furthermore, they put emphasis on the need to train healthcare workers to respect teenagers' choices and their ability to provide care for teenagers in order for reproductive health services to be used effectively.

Research by Grant and Hallman (2008:30) has also suggested that poor school performance may be a reason for adolescent pregnancy. Poor school performance may be due to several reasons such as learning disabilities, periods of temporary school withdrawal because of the family's socio-economic status or grade repetitions. Some research studies have suggested that this is one of the issues that affects teenagers' ability to finish high school successfully (Macleod 2001, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Willian 2013). In contrast, it has been reported that adolescent pregnancy and motherhood may motivate some learners to complete school in order to provide for their children (Romo and Nadeem 2007:132, Chigona and Chetty 2008:268). In her research on shifting intergenerational career expectations of South Africans challenged by structural disadvantage, Theron (2016: 41) found that "hope and goal directed behavior" are fundamental enablers to South African youth's success. Through her research, Theron (2016) has found that many young South Africans find the completion of Grade 12, is a key metric in opening more opportunities for them to change their circumstances and which will ultimately define their success. With this in mind, it can be said that adolescent pregnancy and

motherhood, worked to reinforce the motivation of some young mothers' ability to complete school.

Below I discuss in more detail the enablers and obstacles towards successful reintegration.

2.3. Reintegration: Enablers and Obstacles

Much of the research that has been conducted on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood can be considered a part of trying to understand the reintegration process since it focuses on how pregnant adolescents and mothers experience this chapter of their lives and the mechanisms that can be put into place to decrease the rate of adolescent pregnancy as well as how educators and other members of the community can support adolescent mothers (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Bhana et al. 2010, Willian 2013, du Preez et al. 2019).

While adolescent pregnancy is considered to be a problem, some authors have critiqued this standpoint by arguing that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood is not always experienced negatively by the mother and that it has brought more aspirations for the mother to do better in their lives and rise above the stigma of being an adolescent mother (Macleod 1999b, Kaufman et al. 2001, Macleod 2003, Bhana et al. 2010, Macleod and Durrheim 2010, Chohan and Langa 2011, Ngum Chi Watts 2015).

Some studies also emphasized the need for a multiple-actor collaborative strategy that involves schools, families and broader community to support pregnant adolescents and mothers in order for them to successfully complete their schooling (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Naidoo et al. 2019). To reiterate this point further, Bhana et al. (2010:876) inform us that the social context and support structures in the environments that the pregnant adolescents and mothers find themselves in, are essential to the successful negotiation of schooling.

2.3.1. Enablers to reintegration

Adequate educator training and support

The school environment plays a critical role in whether pregnant adolescents and mothers stay in school to be successfully reintegrated or drop out of school before and after pregnancy. The support provided within the school environment cannot be underestimated. According to Bhana et al. (2010:872), the support and assistance from educators in being sensitive and aware to the

needs of pregnant adolescents and mothers can have profound long-term implications to the extent that their support could help improve the learner's educational goals as well as life prospects. To this end several scholars have asserted that support within schools is vital to empower and motivate pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers to remain in school (Bhana et al. 2010, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Furthermore, there is an emphasis discussed by scholars that an attitude which facilitates support by educators is crucial for pregnant adolescents and mothers who are already dealing with extremely challenging circumstances (Malahela 2012, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019).

Several scholars have also reported a reluctance by educators to assist pregnant adolescents as they are afraid that should in the event of an emergency where a learner gives birth and there are complications, the educators may be blamed for negligence or asked to account even though they are not professional healthcare workers or midwives by profession (Matlala et al. 2014, du Preez et al. 2019).

Mpanza and Nzima (2010) have stipulated that educators need to undergo skills-training in midwifery so that if the learners go into labour at school, they are better equipped with a skillset to assist them as trained birth assistants. What is more, the policies on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood require that policymakers provide more practical steps and support to help educators work with pregnant adolescents and mothers.

Putting it into context, it is important that we are mindful of the burden of responsibility placed on teachers, who by profession are trained to be educators and not professional healthcare workers. Several scholars have reported that there is a substantial burden that has been placed on educators to fulfil their role as educators and also become midwives and/or counsellors to the pregnant adolescents and mothers even though they lack skills, competencies and resources to efficiently cater to and support the learners (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, du Preez et al. 2019, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Bhana et al. (2010:878) inform us that a complaint amongst educators has been that there is no designated staff member assigned to ensure that pregnant adolescents and mothers receive adequate information before and after giving birth.

Having noted the above concerns, Bhana et al. (2010; 878) assert that, even though educators have to deal with demands of their profession as teachers, they still support pregnant adolescents and mothers even though much of this support is often unrewarded, unacknowledged and invisible.

Studies on educators' experiences with pregnant adolescents and mothers inform us that there is a willingness from educators to assist pregnant adolescents and mothers granted that they are equipped with the relevant resources and skills such as courses in midwifery and counselling to facilitate adequate health and social (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Matlala et al. 2014). Furthermore, there is a need for in-service training which focuses on understanding the changes and developments that the pregnant adolescents and mothers experience (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Matlala et al. 2014, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). This comes against the backdrop that educators themselves could be in need of guidance and heightened sense of awareness to support the mothers (Chigona and Chetty 2008). Without this training, it is hard to understand the premeditated attitudes of the teachers which may have been previously influenced by various factors including age, gender, race, educational level, religious beliefs, etc. (Bhana et al. 2010, Mpanza and Nzima 2010).

Chigona and Chetty (2007:13) have also noted the importance of training for educators geared towards encouragement and motivation of the learners. This recommendation is supported by Nkosi and Pretorius (2019:111) who have asserted that “educators do attempt to provide support and are often important motivators and enablers for pregnant adolescents to stay at school before and after childbirth”.

Watson and Vogul (2017) have also suggested that policymakers include day-care services for adolescent mothers. This will not only help the adolescent mothers but also those learners who live in child-headed households who are not able to attend school because of having to care for younger siblings, etc.

Adequate family support

Many scholars have asserted that supportive families may contribute to the pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers having a positive parenting experience (Romo and Nadeem 2007; Chigona and Chetty 2008, Singh and Naicker 2019). Furthermore, Mokwena et al. (2016:430) also, postulated that families who were supportive towards pregnant adolescents and mothers contributed to a “superior sense of well-being”. This is supported by Bhana et al. (2010: 877) who have explained that the well-being of adolescent mothers could be directly influenced by the social and economic context in which they find themselves in.

As with educators, parents and family attitudes and support play an important role in ensuring that pregnant adolescents and mothers continue schooling before and after giving birth (Kaufman et al. 2001, Romo and Nadeem 2007, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019, Singh and Naicker 2019). Whilst it has been noted that some families may express judgement and disappointment over the pregnancy, they come to accept the circumstances and provide support to the adolescent mothers and pregnant adolescents (Singh and Naicker 2019: 571).

Many scholars have expressed that it has been particularly difficult for adolescent mothers to balance the demands of school and childcare, to this end, this could be one of the primary enablers why mothers are able to stay in school as they rely on the support of their families to assist them whilst they are at school (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Grant and Hallman 2008, Willan 2013; Singh and Naicker 2019).

Due to the situation that families find themselves in and the frustrations that may be brought by the adolescent pregnancy and parenthood, Chigona and Chetty recommend that parents should also be provided with counselling and support which could be organized by the school or through public social services within the community (2008:278).

Teen mother training and counselling

Educators are not trained to counsel learners with regards to issues they may develop, as they are supposed to be focused on education. Therefore, resources like school social workers, psychologists and counsellors should be available and accessible to provide the much-needed psychosocial support in schools.

According to Chigona and Chetty (2007) the lack of counselling for pregnant adolescents and parents is a concern especially in a time where they are experiencing a lot of stigma and shame from school, families and the community as well as challenges accompanied by parenthood. If learners are provided with adequate counseling. They may be able to cope with the pressures of being young mothers and school-going learners. Furthermore, they will not feel as overwhelmed with the challenge of balancing both learner and parent roles (Romo and Nadeem 2007; Chigona and Chetty 2007).

Scholars have suggested that adolescent mothers and their families should be provided with counselling services (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Mokwena et al.

2016). Whilst research has suggested that there has been a lack of counselling, Mpanza and Nzima (2010:432) have reported that historically, counselling and support were provided to pregnant adolescents and mothers in white schools as this showed a positive attitude towards the school's willingness to support mothers.

In ensuring successful reintegration into school, Romo and Nadeem (2007:135) have also suggested that adolescent mothers be put into a peer support group facilitated by a school psychologist in which learners are able to share experiences on the challenges and solutions to parenting.

2.3.2. Obstacles to reintegration

A lack of support by educators

Educators' attitudes and beliefs about adolescent pregnancy and parenthood, are strong determinants of the learners' trajectory in school and it is these attitudes and beliefs that have the potential to create a positive or negative learning environment for both the learners and educators (Bhana et al. Matlala et al. 2014).

The lack of support by educators is exacerbated by several reasons. Firstly, the teachers' conceptions of adolescent pregnancy may be fuelled by attitudes of various factors including age, gender, race, educational level, religious beliefs, etc. (Bhana et al. 2010, Mpanza and Nzima 2010). These also contribute to the stigma and discourage pregnant adolescents and mothers from continuing with school (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Bhana et al. 2010).

Secondly, schools are not adequately equipped and resourced to support pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents. There is a lack of equipment, training and understanding of how to deal with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood as mentioned above may also be one of the reasons for the lack of support by the teacher, which may lead to dropping out by pregnant adolescents and mothers.

There are push and pull factors which drive teachers to wanting to help, however their biggest challenge has been the lack of facilities and skills in dealing with pregnant adolescents and mothers (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, du Preez 2019, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019). Studies in the USA have also reported similar findings citing that educators lack training in dealing with pregnant teens and mothers (Romo and Nadeem 2007).

Educators also expressed a reluctance to help learners in case they are blamed for complications that the adolescents may experience (Chigona and Chetty 2007, du Preez et al. 2019).

Bhana et al. (2010) have emphasized how critical the role of the educator is in keeping the adolescents in school before and after giving birth. This argument has also been highlighted by several scholars (Romo and Nadeem 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Vinson and Stevens 2014, du Preez et al. 2019). Mpanza and Nzima (2010:433) have made an important point that when adolescent pregnancy is viewed as a problem in its locality within schools, pregnant girls have nowhere to go, to seek support and care.

A lack of support by family

Insufficient support from family and relatives was also cited as a reason for pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers dropping out of school. A lack of support by family may also be as a result of the financial situation in which families find themselves in (Chigona and Chetty: 277). The lack of support by family as stipulated by various scholars (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Willian 2013, Mokwena et al. 2016), could have several negative consequences such as increased mental health issues of both the adolescent mother as well as their child, increased tension between the adolescent mothers as well as their parents or primary caregivers (Macleod 1999b, Romo and Nadeem 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2008). In a study conducted by Kassa et al. (2018), they asserted that adolescent pregnancy has been a major health issue more especially, in Africa.

Some studies have also emphasized the need for adolescent parents and family to undergo professional counselling to assist them in adjusting to the needs of being parents and dealing with the pregnancy (Bhana et al. 2010; Romo and Nadeem 2007).

Authors writing on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood postulate that the lack of support is related to poverty that results from poor socio-economic status and unemployment (Hanna 2001: 457, WHO 2004: 5, Chohan and Langa 2011: 88). Odimegwu and Mkhwanazi (2018) highlight that 'race' and poverty overlap. Given the history of racial disparities that put black women at a significant disadvantage, 'race' and social class intersect to compound their disadvantage. Macleod (1999a, 1999b) has described this link further by arguing that literature has in some way implied that the poor woman refers to the black women.

Some scholars have also indicated that adolescent pregnancy and motherhood could contribute to the adolescents being further entrenched in the cycle of poverty or being further disadvantaged socio-economically (McDermott and Graham 2005, Makiwane 2010, Bhana et al. 2010, Romo and Nadeem 2007), being dependent on social grants and negative consequences for the health of both the mother and the child (Ehlers 2003, McDermott and Graham 2005, Odimegwu and Mkhwanazi 2018) as well as poor educational outcomes in high school, which makes it harder to progress to higher education (McDermott and Graham 2005).

2.4. Visibility of expectant fathers and adolescent fatherhood

Research shows us that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood does not only affect young women disproportionately but that it is not reported and researched in the same ways. According to Bhana et al. (2010: 880) “the gendering of pregnancy is located within the specific social, cultural and economic contexts and where women insubordination is reproduced”. In addition, Madiba and Nsiki (2017: 501) suggest that the reasons building up to lack of research conducted on adolescent fathers, could be as a result of the teen fathers’ ability to deny paternity making them less in numbers.

Some scholars have noted that not much research in the past has been conducted on the adolescent pregnancy and parenthood that focuses on adolescent fathers (Macleod 2001, Panday et al. 2009, Langa and Smith 2012, Bhana and Nkani 2014, Madiba and Nsiki, 2017). Bhana and Nsika (2014:338) have also postulated that research focused on South African fathers is rare which contributes to them being invisible.

As much as adolescent fatherhood is under researched and underreported, it is beginning to receive attention (Panday et al. 2009, Bhana et al. 2010). Madiba and Nsiki (2017:502) argue that the reasons why the phenomenon may be under researched may be that it is hard to identify and recruit teen fathers to participate in research.

Furthermore, some studies inform us that interventions have also been geared towards assisting pregnant adolescents and mothers as opposed to expectant fathers and adolescent fathers (Odimegwu et al. 2014, Madiba and Nsiki 2017). To this end, Odimegwu et al. (2014:49) caution that “not considering young men's involvement may prevent a holistic approach to addressing the challenge of teenage pregnancy”.

Panday et al. (2009: 7) have also found that the profile of adolescent fathers is similar to that of adolescent mothers in that they come from families with low income and generally tend to have poor school performance. Furthermore, these scholars point out that teen fathers may lack financial resources to be able to support their children and the adolescent mother. What is more, Chohan and Langa (2012:255) postulate that adolescent fathers, like the adolescent mothers, face many difficulties as their support from schools, families and the community is also limited.

Upon hearing about the pregnancies, the adolescent fathers have also expressed similar feeling and emotions to those of adolescent mothers in that they were riddled with shock and regret (Panday et al. 2009, Chohan and Langa 2012, Bhana and Nkani 2014). There has also been an ignorance portrayed by fathers in that they did not think about the consequences of their risky social behaviour which could lead to a girl falling pregnant (Bhana and Nkani 2014, Madiba and Nsiki 2017).

The most important observation reported in research has pointed out that teen fathers see their role primarily in economic terms in their ability to financially support their children (Langa and Smith 2012, Bhana and Nkani 2014, Madiba and Nsiki 2017). To this end, Bhana and Nkani (2014), inform us that how adolescent fathers perceive their roles is “embedded in complex gender dynamics and constructions of masculinity”. Some studies have paved a way in documenting the cultural experiences of young fathers and how masculinity plays out within the South African context (Kaufman et al. 2001, Bhana and Nkani 2014). For many the constructions of fatherhood are linked to masculinity and deeper cultural practices in which fathers in accepting responsibility of impregnating the mother out of wedlock have to pay *damages* and therefore accept responsibility of the child (Kaufman et al. 2001, Langa and Smith 2012, Bhana and Nkani 2014).

The inability of the adolescent fathers to support the child and mother financially may create barriers to these adolescent fathers fulfilling their role of being father and also being able to see their children (Kaufman et al. 2001, Panday et al 2009, Bhana and Nkani 2014).

With the above in mind, it can be said that there is gap in the literature that focuses on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood particularly looking at the young men involved. There is still a lot of research to be done on the adolescent fatherhood in South Africa. It is important to note that looking at the experiences of adolescent fatherhood and expectant fathers could be a

possible avenue for reducing adolescent pregnancy and providing interventions that would favour both parents and the child (Bhana and Nkani 2014, Madiba and Nsiki 2017).

2.5. Policy on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood

2.5.1. Unpacking policy on prevention and management of learner pregnancy

Adolescent motherhood according to Ngum Chi Watts et al. (2015) occurs during a developmental stage of adolescence and that it can have very negative social and health outcomes for the young mothers. Past research has established that a lack of support from family, peers and educators may contribute to high dropout rates amongst pregnant adolescents and mothers (Macleod 2001, Romo and Nadeem 2007; Panday et al. 2009, Willian 2013). The South African Schools Act of 1996 provides for non-discrimination of adolescents before and after they give birth (Mpanza and Nzima 2010). Guidelines in the School's Act were further articulated in the Department of Education's Measure on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools (2007). However, these measures were revoked in 2011 due to the breach of the Constitution in which the learners right to schooling was compromised. A new draft policy on the Measures on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools was issued in 2018 stating in clause 6.4.3 that the school must accept and be flexible in dealing with teenage parents and young mothers' absenteeism.

Clause 6.4.3 policy states:

“the school will accept and be flexible in dealing with these absences provided only that the learner is not taking of a disproportionate amount of time. In this event the school principal will seek a meeting with the learner and her parents, guardians or caregivers to agree on a leave of absence. At all times the school, its principal and educators will be supportive and sympathetic to each case.” (Department of Basic Education, National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools, 2018, 18).

It seems that social support or lack thereof is one of the main factors that determines whether the reintegration process will be successful or unsuccessful. According to Cohen et al. (2000:28), social support can be defined as “the process of interaction in relationships which improves coping, esteem, belonging, and competence through actual and perceived exchanges of physical or psychosocial resources”. By this definition, social support can be achieved

through a collective process based on the effective communication and participation of different parties.

Furthermore, social support as stipulated in the South African Schools Act of 1996 (No.84) can be understood as protecting adolescents from being expelled before or after giving birth. The draft policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancies in Schools (Department of Education, 2018) stipulates that school, family and the community at large have an obligation to support learners during pregnancy and after they give birth (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy 2018, 19*).

In this study, I refer to support provided to adolescent mothers by educators as well as family and the community at large. Schultz (2001:584) argued that “too often, pregnancy during high school is a signal for school personnel and families to abandon young women, designating them as school failures” (Schultz cited in Chigona and Chetty 2008:2). Scholars such as Cohen et al. (2008) provide a definition of social support that connects with the approach taken to understanding reintegration as a process. Grant and Hallman (2006) add to the idea of support by suggesting that financial and social resources within the family unit determine whether an adolescent mother continues with schooling. If there are limited resources, it makes it harder to for the teen mothers to gain access to social support (Hanna 2001, Kaufman et al. 2001, Grant and Hallman 2006, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Chohan and Langa 2011). The need for this policy came when pregnant adolescents and mothers were being unfairly excluded due to “stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination” (Link and Phelan 2001 cited in Yardley 2008: 672). Furthermore, Chohan and Langa (2011: 87) have reported that the learners are subjected to negative social judgement and marginalization in schools and the community at large. Consequently, the Department of Basic Education sought to create a policy that would protect the pregnant adolescent’s or mother’s rights to access education.

The *Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (2018) was drafted in order to provide guidelines that could prevent and manage unplanned pregnancies amongst learners.

The measures address three main themes:

- A communication and guideline into educating learners about sexual reproductive health and helping them exercise responsibility in regard to healthy lifestyles and avoiding risky sexual behaviour.
- Providing guidance to learners, schools and parents who find themselves in a situation where the learner has fallen pregnant.
- Ensuring that learners are fully informed about their rights to education.

Furthermore, the *Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (2018: 6) was according to the Department of Education geared towards the prevention and reduction of adolescent pregnancy and other sexually transmitted infections.

In trying to understand and implement pregnancy prevention strategies for learners, the policy reiterates that the government's mandate is to ensure that all learners get access to educational opportunities; ensuring learners make the right choices when it comes to their health and that learners need to be mindful about the possible outcomes of engaging in sexual activity (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2018:6).

The measures also stipulate that support into prevention and reduction strategies should take into the co-creation and collaborative action that is inclusive of NGOs and institutions who are able to impart and build on the knowledge and skills that learners have been taught (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2018:12).

Another important clause within the Measures which could be developed further is the notion that educators should provide special support to vulnerable learners who could be most at risk (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2018:16). However, there is no further definition or guidelines into identifying troubled or vulnerable learners and how the support would take shape.

The measures suggest that prevention should also target the involvement of parents and guardian such that they are in constant dialogue with the school to develop strategies towards prevention and also providing information to parents through school communication (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy*, 2018:7). This is very important as several scholars have recommended that multiple-player interventions which include schools, families and the community could be effective in managing adolescent

pregnancy and parenthood as well as the stigma which comes to affect the pregnant adolescent and parents.

2.5.2. Problems identified with policy implementation

Overall, the *Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (2018) offer a reasonable starting point into addressing learner pregnancies. The management of pregnancy as stipulated in the Measures focuses on the learner, parents/guardians, school and the various departments. However, the policy remains vague. Several scholars and organizations (Equal Education Law Centre [EELC] and SECTION27) have pointed out that dealing with unplanned pregnancies amongst learners remains unclear (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, du Preez et al. 2019). EELC and SECTION27 have explained that whilst the policy drafted has been open to critique, “in its current form it does not provide sufficient information for implementers to understand and to effectively implement the Policy.” (Equal Education Law Centre and Section 27 2018: 4).

Whilst the biggest focus of the policy pertaining to addressing unplanned pregnancies has been focused on learners, there is no mention of procedures that can effectively guide learners into disclosing their pregnancies as well as addressing forms of discrimination and stigma that they may experience.

In looking at parental and guardian involvement, the *Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (2018) does not expand into the ways in which parents can support the schools and learners as well as how they ought to be guided throughout the unplanned pregnancy. There is a need for the policy to define how collaborative action between parents/guardian and schools to support learners unplanned pregnancies would take shape.

The policy focus on the ways schools should deal with unplanned pregnancies in schools, provides guidelines mostly on a social support basis. The vagueness of these guidelines would make it difficult for educators to translate and implement the policy practically.

Furthermore, the policy does not protect educators in the event that they have to assist learners with pregnancy. Should there be complications, there is no clause which explicitly speaks to the liability or responsibility of the educators. To this end, the policy is also lacking in providing

guidelines of dealing with childbirth as well as any other emergencies that may result from the pregnancy.

The policy as it explains the role of the provincial education department has also not been fully developed. In the context of departments providing support to schools, the measures do not inform of the type of training and capacity building that should take place as well as the way in which these should take place. There needs to be a deeper understand of the departments and ministries that could be involved in dealing with unplanned pregnancies as well as doing the training to ensure that schools and the community at large are an effective way of managing unplanned pregnancies amongst learners.

Research by Mpanza and Nzima has indicated that the policy has made mention of the fact that every school should be in possession of a copy of these measures (Mpanza and Nzima 2010). However, this is concerning as research has shown that educators may not be aware or are ignorant of the policy guidelines as set out by the Department of Education (Bhana et al. 2010, Mpanza and Nzima 2010).

Some scholars and NGOs in South Africa have highlighted the clear disconnect between policies as stipulated by the Department of Basic Education and the South African constitution and the implementation of the policies by schools (Grant and Hallman 2008, Bhana et al. 2010, Willan 2013, Section 27 (2017)). Whilst the South African constitution and policies assert the right for children and moreover pregnant adolescents and mothers to stay in school, there are very few guidelines and support for educators on how to assist in the reintegration process. The South African Schools Act of 1996 “regulates the support of pregnant adolescents and mothers in schools” (Bhana et al. 2010). In other words, pregnant adolescents and mothers can stay in school during the pregnancy and may return after giving birth.

Some of the contradictory statements that have been identified are references to the recommendations for learners return after giving birth. Clause 22 of the policy put in place by the Department of Education (DoE) recommends that the learner exercise a leave of absence from school for up to two years, in order for them to fulfil their responsibilities as parents (Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy 2007:5). On the other hand, the recommendation for educators in support of pregnant learners and adolescent parents is that “schools should strongly encourage learners to continue with their education prior to and after the delivery of the baby” (Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy 2007:6). These

contradictions may have a vast impact on the learner's ability to be successfully reintegrated and finish school.

It is also worth noting that the uneven implementation of the policy may be a factor in whether adolescent mothers return to school before and after giving birth (Panday et al. 2009). To support this Willan (2013) has postulated that implementation of policies within schools could be informed by the subjective beliefs of the very educators, governing bodies, families and communities.

2.6. Comprehensive Sexual Education as part of the School Life Orientation Curriculum

In trying to curb risky sexual behaviour amongst teenagers, the Department of Education has since the year 2000 taught Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the compulsory subject Life Orientation from Grade four to Grade 12. CSE has come under scrutiny from various stakeholders such as “parents, educators, schools, religious bodies and civil society” (de Jager 2019). This has been extended in scholarly work which we will unpack in more detail.

The core aim of CSE was to “ensure that learners do not get confusing and misleading messages on sex, secularity, gender and relationships” (UNFPA 2015, Department of Basic Education 2019). Furthermore, CSE was put in place to provide information to learners about “building positive values and attitudes which enable young people to safely navigate the transition to adulthood” (Department of Basic Education 2019).

Several studies have shown the challenges that have come to light with CSE in Life Orientation studies, which in itself has hindered the successful implementation and transference of skills and knowledge to youth to ensure their transition from adolescence to adulthood as the government has proposed. Prior to 2019, South Africa did not have a clear way in which the CSE curriculum was to be taught to learners (UNFPA 2015, de Jager 2019).

Glover and Macleod reviewed insights into the Life Orientation sexual education in South Africa and found that of the qualitative studies conducted “many learners have reported feeling disconnected from what they are taught in Life Orientation and view the content as largely irrelevant to their lives” (Glover and Macleod 2016, 3). This can be further supported by Shefer and Macleod (2015) who explain that sexuality education as taught in Life orientation does not meet the needs of young people but rather reinforces the power relations that exist between

educator and learners. This could prevent the learners from freely discussing sexuality as experienced by young people as well as providing a platform for them to ask questions around sex and sexuality. This is similar to the study done by Mayeza and Vincent (2018; 480), where Life Orientation educators were seen to be more as authoritative figures that resembled parental figures, who were reserved on topics addressed during sexual education. This is in contrast to Clause 13 of the policy drafted by the Department of Education which stipulate that “Peer education as an approach must be emphasized and incorporated in any intervention programme” (Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy 2007:3).

2.7. Previous Approaches to Adolescent Pregnancy

Three approaches have been used for research pertaining to adolescent pregnancy. namely the mainstream, revisionist and constructionist approaches. the first approach that being of mainstream, seeks to suggest that the causal factors will ultimately lead to the adolescent pregnancy and ultimately have negative consequences which impact both adolescent mothers and children.

Secondly, the revisionist approach So too sought to critique the mainstream approach that has suggested that adolescent pregnancy is linked to negative consequences. this approach argues that the mainstream approach was fundamentally flawed and that the link between adolescent pregnancy and negative outcomes was not as clear cut as this approach would suggest. To support this approach Mkhwanazi (2014:1085), has explained that “since teenage pregnancy is an ‘embedded social phenomenon’... it stands to reason that any changes in society and in people's ideas and perceptions of early childbearing will affect how young mothers experience pregnancy and motherhood”.

The last approach is that of constructionists which takes into consideration some of the underpinnings of intersectionality such as race, class and gender. What is more, it is worth noting the contributions of Morrell et al. (2013) who have adopted this approach to look at the gendered nature of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. In their book, they look in great detail into these intersectionality’s and how they work to reinforce different expectations for both girls and boys. To this end, this would be one such approach that this research can be located in as we look into the multiple identities and categories that adolescent mothers assume and the discourses thereof that reinforce the identities and dynamics.

2.8. Conclusion

There have been qualitative and quantitative studies that have reported reasons for adolescent pregnancy and parenthood as well as provided possible solutions on how to curb it. However, I have identified a gap in the literature, which requires more exploration. From former adolescent mothers, how do they remember and think about their reintegration process back into school? Did they know anything about the policy on the management of adolescent pregnancy in schools? At what point did they consider their reintegration successful or unsuccessful? This gap has also been noticed by Watson and Vogel (2017: 2) who admit that there is a gap in the literature on adolescent pregnancy and adolescent mothers' first-hand accounts of their educational experiences.

Furthermore, there is limited literature that explores female learners' voices to fully understand how educators can support them to continue in school and complete their high school education. I will argue that a consideration of reintegration as a process that starts when a female learner discovers that she is pregnant is important. This is because everything that happens after the female learner discovers that she is pregnant has the potential to contribute to successful or unsuccessful reintegration.

CHAPTER 3:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

The literature review discussed adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. It can be said that adolescent pregnancy has been a consistent concern for many stakeholders in the past few decades. The review focused on the factors that contributed to adolescent pregnancy and parenthood which included the socio-economic status of the teenagers such as inequality, poverty, as well as other factors such as poor school performance and dropout rates, rape, poor education and cultural beliefs. Furthermore, there was a lack of access to health services and a lack of trust in seeking family planning advice from healthcare workers who have been reported to judge and mistreat young people. There are also reports of poor parental guidance which can be linked to the socioeconomic status of the teenager and their family.

Looking at past literature, I tried to map out what were the possible obstacles and enablers to the reintegration of young mothers. I identified some of the reintegration factors related to the learners, families and educators' experiences of dealing with unplanned adolescent pregnancies as well as how policies and guidelines on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood have been developed in South Africa.

This chapter will look into various concepts that are associated with a lot of the research conducted around adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. Some of these include the constructions of adolescence and motherhood, stigma and social support. These concepts will be explained throughout this chapter as I expand on the theoretical framework which is used for the current study. The aim of this chapter is to provide context into the intersectional theoretical framework which this research is situated in. This particular framework will help to explain the findings of the current study.

3.2. Intersectionality as a framework

With the literature in chapter two, it can be said that there are multiple factors that can contribute to the support or lack of support for pregnant adolescents and mothers in their process of reintegration. Since I decided to think about reintegration as a process, it seemed

fitting for this proposed study to use an intersectional framework to make sense of the reintegration process.

Intersectionality was conceptualised by Crenshaw (1989) who used the framework as an intervention to feminism to explain how there is a direct correlation between different systems of oppression such as 'race', class and gender, which affect women of colour (black women in the context of South Africa). Crenshaw argued that women of colour have been distinctly positioned in the "economic, social and political worlds" (1989: 1246). What is more, followers of intersectionality have put emphasis on how these categories of oppression "mutually strengthen or weaken each other" (Winker and Degele 2011:51). To strengthen this claim, Bowleg (2012:1271) asserts that one of the most noteworthy advantages of using this framework is that it widely acknowledges the multiple intertwined identities and the multiple interlocking privileges and oppressions. Furthermore, some authors have pointed to the notion that intersectionality acknowledges that no social identity or category is more important than the other and that the identities and categories exist in relation to one another (Bowleg 2012, Collins 2015).

Carastathis (2014) argues that within feminist theory it has become normal to understand that the lives of women are a result of systems of oppression that seem to be intertwined. Crenshaw's (1989) initial conceptualisation of intersectionality was meant to illustrate the paucity of the different systems of oppression as they exist in relation to women of colour and how they exist on an interwoven spectrum that contributes to the poverty cycle which women of colour continuously find themselves in. To elaborate she asserted that "Many women of colour are burdened by poverty, child-care responsibilities, and the lack of job skills" (Crenshaw 1989: 1245).

Some scholars have argued that intersectionality is not a new concept (Davis 2008; Bowleg 2012). Many scholars and movements prior to Crenshaw coining the term had already started interrogating and challenging how different social categories such as 'race' and gender, do not exist outside of each other (Brah and Phoenix 2004; Bowleg 2012), to "address the issue of how black women's experiences have been marginalized or distorted within feminist discourse" (Davis 2008:72) .

Traces of intersectionality were already being recognized and being acknowledged as seen in Sojourner Truth's speech in 1851 at the Women's Convention in Akron, Ohio titled "*Ain't I a*

Woman?” in which she argued that the treatment of black women as though they were black men was discrimination and further entrenched the oppression they were already enduring (Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Goff, Thomas and Jackson, 2008; Bowleg 2012). With the above in mind, it can be asserted that intersectionality has its roots in black feminist theory where western or imperialist feminist theory failed to acknowledge the intertwined challenges that women of colour and in particular black women face.

To say that the categories or systems of oppression are intertwined is not enough. Winker and Degele (2011: 54) suggest that “inequality-creating phenomena must first be able to be properly described”. With this in mind, I will explain the constructions of some important categories for the purposes of this study. As Ngum Chi Watts et al. (2015) have reported, for the intersectionality framework to be used to its best potential, one must consider the many roles that the marginalized women assume. The use of this framework is also based on Ngum Chi Watts et al. assertion that intersectionality “captures the nuances and differences that are central to individual lives” (2015:3).

Scholars have argued and battled with the idea that intersectionality can never be completely defined (Collins 2015; Davis 2008). However, Davis (2008: 67) has expressed how intersectionality “was absolutely essential to feminist theory and they had no intention of ‘missing the boat’” (Davis 2008:67). In essence, intersectionality is crucial to understanding the experiences of black women through the lenses of the multiple evolving identities that they assume. Furthermore, Bowleg (2012) suggest that intersectionality presents a theoretical lens for interpreting novel and unanticipated findings. This helps us to understand the context of the study in which pregnant adolescents and mothers assume multiple identities and categories which may not always fit the social categories prescribed by society.

3.3.Categories embodied by adolescent mothers

The following section will cover the various intersectional identities and categories that pregnant adolescents and mothers assume and further go on to define them giving context to the current study. In the context of this study, intersectionality is important as it makes it possible to consider multiple factors, which could contribute to a successful/unsuccessful reintegration process. Ngum Chi Watts et al. (2015) argue that intersectionality includes but is not limited to categories and identities of ‘race’ and gender. They argue that it encompasses other social categories, which in the context of this study, as identified in the literature, include

constructions of motherhood, constructions of gender, class, biological age, constructions of adolescence, cultural practices and pregnancy. Collins (2015:14) informs us that in looking at intersectionality, one needs to recognize that these categories cannot be experienced or understood in isolation but that they are mutually constructing categories which come to shape interacting systems of power.

3.3.1. Motherhood, adolescence and pregnancy

In its simplest form, motherhood can be understood as the “state of being a mother” who provides acts of care and nurturing to children and other people (Hornby et al. 2010: 963). It is worth noting that motherhood can be a very crucial part of the pregnant adolescent and adolescent mothers’ construction of their identity as a responsible young woman. This definition would support Macleod’s (2001) argument that motherhood turns to be associated with a certain type of woman. Macleod has analysed the ways in which motherhood has been constructed and regulated within South African literature, more especially in the medical and psychology fields (Macleod 2001, Macleod 2003). She makes a compelling argument that literature on adolescent pregnancy in South Africa conforms to the mother and children relationship being defined as “dyadic”, which pathologizes the relationship between the adolescent mother and their offspring basically rendering her unfit to be a mother (Macleod 2001: 498). Furthermore, Yardley (2008) informs us that adolescent motherhood is seen as diverting from the “ideal” type of motherhood.

To further contextualise the conceptions of adolescent motherhood, literature has painted adolescent mothers as lacking enough skills and competencies to be ‘good’ mothers and that they need professional intervention (Macleod 2001, McDermott and Graham 2005, Chohan and Langa 2011). Additionally, Macleod has argued that the way in which motherhood has been framed requires as a set of “pre-requisites” that need to be fulfilled in order to successfully achieve or embody the role of being a ‘good’ mother (2001: 501). One of these pre-requisites is marriage. To support this category, Riessman (2000) has indicated that gender defines women by their marital and childbearing status. Bhana et al. (2010) explain this further stating how society has defined conditions under which childbearing may be favourable and unfavourable by stating that “women are valued and valuable for their reproductive capacity, but reproduction outside of marriage is censured and devalued” (Bhana et al. 2010:877).

The issue of meeting the requirements of being a competent mother is not only experienced by adolescent mothers but rather a group of women who fall under the category of marginalized women who “become accountable for social problems” (Macleod 2001: 501). This is further supported by several studies which explain how adolescent motherhood have been blamed for the social ills and disruption in society as it is perceived as a social problem (Macleod 1999a, McDermott and Graham 2005, Chohan and Langa 2011).

There are other constructions of an adolescent mother’s inability to mother. Macleod (2001: 502) has elaborated on these competencies and pre-requisites by making mention of the adolescent mothers “ability to give birth”. There is also the idea that they are incapable of being good mothers as the “skill” discourse situates teen mothers as deficient through their youthfulness” (Macleod 1999b:196). The constructions of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood often overlooks the embodiment which the young mothers have to deal with. According to Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:570), “being pregnant is not just a narrative but also a bodily experience”. Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:570) argue that the physical embodiment of the pregnancy would refer to the “experience of living in, perceiving, and experiencing the world from the physical and material place of our bodies”. The very embodiment and actual physical perception are what contribute to the stigmatization and narrative of motherhood in which small or young bodies can only be seen and understood in a certain light. The physical aspect of the adolescent pregnancy is therefore a taboo in the eyes of a society which has constructed ideas of how young teenage girls should look and behave

Some literature has reported that adolescent motherhood results in problems such as the mother having health problems (Hanna 2001, McDermott and Graham 2005, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Ngum Chi Watts et al. 2015, Mjwara and Maharaj 2018, Odimegwu and Mkhwanazi 2018), school disruptions and dropping out (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Ngum Chi Watts et al. 2015, Mokwena et al. 2016). This contrasts with the evidence put forward that many adolescent mothers tried their best to overcome the circumstances and obstacles of being young mothers and pushed to “achieve their aspirations” (Mjwara and Maharaj 2018: 138). Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:569) argues that, not all the mother’s experiences of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood are experienced in negative terms. It is for this reason why in talking about adolescent pregnancy and parenthood, it becomes important for the young women to tell the stories about their experiences themselves. Furthermore, Cense and Ganzevoort (2019) assert that “the process through which young woman understand, reproduce and rework existing

narratives on adolescent pregnancy can be understood as strategic negotiations” of the social identities that they embody.

Some scholars have reported how constructions of adolescence often clash with those of motherhood and that society finds it hard for these roles to co-exist given that teenagers are socially constructed to be pure and innocent (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Bhana et al 2010, Willian 2013, Cense and Ganzevoort 2019). Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:576) remind us that adolescent pregnancy becomes a juncture in their lives as they are suddenly confronted with big responsibilities usually meant for ‘adults’.

These young mothers are caught between being mothers and caregivers to their children (Willian 2013). Some scholars have described contradictions concerning an adolescent mother's biological age which shows how they ought to be treated like children, however, this treatment is not fully achieved as she is treated like neither a child nor a mother (Macleod 2003, Chohan and Langa 2011).

Macleod has also shown how literature obscures the perception of adolescent mothers’ ability to be good mothers “through a link of ‘bad mothering’ and poverty” (2001:502). Moreover, there are also preconceived notions that adolescents from lower socio-economic classes are more likely to give birth (Ngum Chi Watts et al. 2015). To add to these misconceptions and obscurities, in South Africa the inability to be a good mother has been racialized as Macleod explains that often, the framing of “poor mothers implicitly mean ‘black’ poor mothers” (Macleod 2001: 502). There has been a racialization of adolescent pregnancy, which would also explain why black adolescent mothers are blamed for the social problems in society. Macleod and Durrheim (2010: 796) assert that “black people... become the pathologized presence” when social problems arise.

3.3.2. Adolescent Motherhood and Stigma

There is also a stigmatisation that comes with being an adolescent mother, which often overshadows the role that fathers play. Arguments made by several scholars have shown how women embody what society sees as a problem both in the physical and psychological sense (Macleod 2001, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Mjwara and Maharaj 2018, Madiba and Nsiki 2017). There is a body of literature which indicates that the role of the father and fatherhood has led most understandings of what it means to be a father to be understood mostly in economic terms

(Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Madiba and Nsiki 2017, Mjwara and Maharaj 2018). Macleod has gone as far as suggesting that fatherhood is presented as adding “positive ingredients to the deficient mother-child relationship” (Macleod 1999b: 194), which is in contrast to the demonized perception that adolescent mothers have to endure.

The stigma that comes with being a pregnant adolescent or mother, especially through the lens of intersectionality, reminds us how easy it is to reinforce existing social inequalities. By painting adolescent pregnancy in a negative light, various stakeholders continue to contribute to the stigma. To this end, Cense and Ganzevoort (2019) postulate that social norms and stigma play a fundamental role in the construction of adolescent pregnancies.

3.3.3. Gender

Strongly linked to motherhood is the way in which society constructs gender. Riessman (2000) has indicated that “gender identity is performed, produced for (and by) audiences in social institutions”. To support this, Macleod (2001, 2003) has argued that gender identities are through social interactions, which would explain why certain groups of marginalized women are devalued for having children outside of marriage. Most importantly, Riessman (2000) postulates that gender defines women by their marital and child-bearing status. The gendering of pregnancy and parenthood has been framed within a specific social, cultural and economic context and that is the realm in which women’s insubordination is reproduced (Bhana et al. 2010: 880). This gives weight to Macleod and Durrheim’s (2010:796) argument that racialization “allows for the articulation, deployment and maintenance of a set of power relations”.

Bhana et al. further argue that “gender and the effects of social and cultural power are intricately related to the experience of pregnancy and parenthood.” (2010: 879). Some scholars have shown how gendered power relations have been reproduced through pregnancy which shows how the systems of oppression are interwoven (Macleod 2001, Macleod 2010, Bhana et al. 2010). While gender and race are not the only factors that affect adolescent mothers, these categories impact a great a deal on “teenage girls’ experience around pregnancy and motherhood” (Willan 2013: 46).

The way in which gender is constructed when young women fall pregnant rarely addresses the manner in which they fell pregnant, which some sources have reported happened through

coerced sexual relations (Hanna 2001, Kaufman et al. 2001, Bhana et al. 2010, Willian 2013). It is not always the case but as Jewkes et al (2009:679) argue, “women under 19 who were pregnant were 14 times more likely to report forced sex than their peers”.

3.3.4. Culture

There is a body of literature that acknowledges young motherhood could be due to cultural practices and traditions in which women must constantly prove themselves as being mature and fertile or in some cases secure marriage (Kaufman et al. 2001, Bhana et al. 2010, Mokwena et al. 2016). Chigona and Chetty (2007) argue that whilst the above may be true for some, cultural practices may impact female learners negatively prior to even falling pregnant. Macleod (1991b:229) has also explained how culture has been used as a tool to hold teenagers accountable for falling pregnant. Furthermore, culture has been depicted as “something which has rules, exerts pressure and determines outcomes” (Macleod 1991:229). So, in this way, some instances of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood are justified through a culture which renders them either right or wrong. Linked to culture is the construction of tradition which has also been used to legitimize certain rules and practices.

3.4. Conclusion

The use of intersectionality as a theoretical framework for the proposed research study will show how these different categories and identities as explained above, work together in the narratives of the participants. Furthermore, having assessed these categories and identities, I am inclined to understand how they contributed to the reintegration of the adolescent mothers. In addition, one of my objectives in using this framework, is that it will provoke further discussions about using intersectionality as platform to ask new questions and offer new perspectives in trying to understand adolescent pregnancy and motherhood. It will also be useful in trying to understand the multiple narratives which pregnant adolescents and mothers come to embody physically and non-physically as they live through their experience.

CHAPTER 4:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I provide more insight on the processes I followed in conducting this research. This chapter discusses various issues such as the research and design, study setting and target population, sampling strategy, data collection methods, data analysis and ethical considerations.

4.2. Research approach and design

A qualitative approach was adopted as the study sought to acquire information that was specific to the social context and opinions of a targeted population. According to Creswell (2007: 67), the qualitative approach to research takes into consideration the natural setting of a phenomenon to help the researcher gain a high level of detail from their involvement with the phenomenon. A qualitative research approach was adopted as the researcher sought to explain the conditions that contributed to adolescent mothers' successfully/unsuccessfully reintegration towards completing high school.

The research design was exploratory in nature. Babbie and Mouton have asserted that this type of research can be used to fulfil a researchers' interest and will to better understand social phenomenon (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 80). The study took on this research design as it sought to explore the factors that contributed to the successful or unsuccessful reintegration of former adolescent mothers back into schools. What is more, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 80) have suggested that the exploratory approach when a topic or field is relatively new, and this could lead to new insights and perspectives. The research also took on an explanatory approach as it attempted to make sense of the recollections of former adolescent mothers' experiences of their reintegration into high school during pregnancy and after giving birth.

4.3. Study setting and participants

Target population refers to the group of individuals with the specific attributes of interest and relevance that the researcher wants to study (Neuwman 2006: 224). The targeted population has to be clearly defined as the characteristics will determine whether the targeted population

are qualified or unqualified for the study. In this research, the target population were former adolescent mothers who had either successfully or unsuccessfully completed high school in a normal school setting.

The study was conducted in Atteridgeville Township, which is in the west of Pretoria in the Gauteng Province. The requirement of the participants was that they should have completed their high school education in or dropped out from one of the nine high schools in Atteridgeville. I opted to centre the research on mothers between the ages of 20 and 33 who had a child between the ages of 14 and 21.

4.4. Sampling

Snowball sampling was used to identify and recruit the participants as this form of sampling is mostly used with exploratory research (Neuuman 2006). Furthermore, this type of sampling can be beneficial as a researcher is looking for “members of a difficult-to-reach, specialized population” (Neuuman 2006:222). This type of sampling is also useful when trying to identify types of cases, which in the context of this study were mothers who were once considered adolescent mothers and successfully/unsuccessfully completed their secondary school education. The researcher knew a few former adolescent mothers who grew up in the township. She was able to ask them to provide references of former adolescent mothers who had been in a similar situation. Biernacki and Waldorf's assert that “certain persons, as a result of past or present situations, have greater accessibility and knowledge about specific areas of life than others do” (1981: 151). What is more, there is a likely possibility that these first participants are “aware of potential respondents” (Biernacki and Waldorfs 1981: 152)

For this study, the researcher was able to find participants through the first two initial interviews. All but three participants, were found through the snowball sampling technique and what was revealed is that majority of the mothers regardless of age, knew each other. One of the mothers explained that a lot her friends would refer the participants to her, in order to give them advice upon finding out about pregnancy about dealing with the teachers and friends during the difficult times that they faced as pregnant adolescents in the school environment. Some also stayed close to each other and news about pregnancy would spread fast around the area. The close proximity of schools also enabled the mothers to find out about each other and

connect because peers and school learners across the different schools would speak about learners who were pregnant.

4.5. Data collection

12 Semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted for this study, all lasting between an estimated 15 and 45 minutes. The initial course of action had targeted 10 former adolescent mothers who had successfully completed grade 12 and 10 mothers who did not successfully complete grade 12. Based on the recruiting of the mothers, the researcher discovered that she found more mothers had completed high school than those that dropped out, which is something that was not anticipated. Ultimately, I was able to recruit eight mothers who had successfully completed grade 12 and four mothers who were unsuccessful.

Most of the interviews were done in the homes of the participants as they expressed challenges of leaving children at home or that interviews would have to be conducted once they came back from work. Prior to commencing the interviews, the researcher explained in detail the purpose of the research to ensure that the mothers knew what they were agreeing to. In introducing myself as a researcher, I explained to the participants that I was also a resident of Atteridgeville community. An interview schedule was used for the interviews (see appendix A). In addition, the researcher was aware that she would be asking mothers about a period that may have been difficult, thus the questions were asked in a sensitive way and the participants were told that they did have to answer questions that they felt uncomfortable with and that they could withdraw from the interview at any point.

With consent from the participants, interviews were recorded for transcription. Prior to the interviews being recorded, I requested permission to record and allow for any clarity of the information that was read on the informed consent form (see appendix B). Only three participants were uncomfortable with the recording. This is despite efforts to explain to the three participants the purposes of being recorded and it was the researcher's obligation to accept the condition and make them feel comfortable.

For some of the interviews, follow up questions were made to gain more detail and understanding into the former adolescent mothers' perspectives. It was very important for the researcher to provide a safe space for the participants to be able to provide comments and ask questions pertaining to the research. With this in mind, even after the interview was completed,

the researcher was conscious and mindful to the conversations and actions that could be noteworthy in the research.

The researcher had previously indicated to the former adolescent mothers when organising the interviews that an interview would take as long as 60 minutes. An average interview with a participant took 20 to 25 minutes. The longest interview was 45 minutes whilst the shortest interview only lasted 15 minutes. Upon conducting the first few interviews, it became apparent that on average an interview would be 25-30 minutes long. As a result, the researcher would tell participants who were yet to be interviewed that the duration would last from 30 to 40 minutes. The names of the participants were not recorded. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the mothers.

4.6. Data analysis

The researcher sought to organise the data collected into themes. The first step in this process was to listen to each recording a few times before transcribing. During the interviews, the researcher was also able to take notes and in essence she had begun to fill in missing information from recordings.

The interviews were translated where necessary, paying careful attention to the selection of the use of English words to capture the correct translation of the participants experiences and not distort the messaging behind their recollections and experiences. Following each interview, the researcher translated and transcribed the data from the recordings into a notebook firstly in the spoken language then in English. The recordings were played various times throughout the transcribing process as well as during the phase of writing out the findings and recommendations chapters to ensure that the researcher did not miss any important recollections of the former adolescent mothers. Through the transcription process, the researcher was able to identify key themes and key words that would ultimately guide the way in which the narrative analysis was to be conducted.

Similarities and differences were identified throughout the interviews. The sections that were automatically split from the beginning were the experiences that facilitated a successful reintegration and those that did not. In between, there were responses that were similar from sections A to D. There were overlaps identified from both groups which will be addressed in the findings chapter. Similarities and differences were clustered together respectively. The

themes were identified from two sources: firstly, through the interview schedules and secondly by wording of the participants responses.

Narrative analysis was used to analyse the interviews. Specifically, the researcher followed the eight-step guide to intersectional analysis as provided by Winker and Degele (2011:63), which essentially consists of three phases. The first is the evaluation of individual interviews through three steps. 'The first step being describing identity constructions' which Winker and Degele (2011:59) have described as the step-in which participants compartmentalize themselves into observable or visible categories which work as "self-positioners in an interview". For example, former adolescent mothers identifying as single mothers speaks to the first step of the identity construction.

The second step is identifying symbolic representations which according to Winker and Degele aim to make all norms, values and ideologies to which persons refer, explicit" (2011:60) and thirdly "finding references to social structures" (2011: 60) which would summarize into the fourth step, which according to Winker and Degele involves "naming interrelations of central categories on three levels" (2011:63). For example, step two of identifying symbolic representation, former adolescent mothers embody the narrative of adolescent mothers as being delinquents in society. Simultaneously, they have to defend themselves from this narrative and prove such constructions to be false to show that they too are capable of being citizens not necessarily dependent on the welfare system of the government.

The second phase of the narrative analysis procedure is "analysis of all interviews of the research" (Winker and Degele 2011:63) through three steps (step five 'comparing and clustering of subject constructions'; step six 'analysing structural power relations' and step seven 'deepening the analysis of denominated representations' Winker and Degele 2011:63), which ultimately lead to the third phase (step eight), which analyses the "intersectional interrelations" (2011:63).

Winker and Degele (2011:64) have further argued that the intersectional narrative analysis is beneficial to studies because "it takes identity constructions as its starting point" and then

further goes on to elaborate on the categories identified in the study to make sense of participants' narratives about their experiences and how these become interlinked.

The findings will be presented in themes. According to Alhojailan and Ibrahim, this method makes it possible to “detect and identify, for example, factors or variables that influence an issue generated by participants” (Alhojailan and Ibrahim, 2012: 40). From this, identified similarities/dissimilarities in the participants' descriptions and reflections of their reintegration process can be presented.

Taking into consideration reflexivity and examination of the researchers' beliefs, the expectation was that more former adolescent mothers would not have successfully been reintegrated into high school and completed school. This belief was immediately proven to be false, as the researcher realized very early on during the interview process that the mothers did in fact complete high school, notwithstanding the difficulties but also the support from various sources and motivation for them to finish.

4.7. Ethics

Given that my research involved human subjects, it was of great importance that ethical considerations were taken into account to ensure that all participants who were involved in the research were protected, including me as the researcher. Babbie and Mouton (2001) explain that research in social science often, involves participants revealing personal details about themselves and the social settings they find themselves in. Ethical considerations should be remembered and applied throughout all stages of the research until the final write-up of the research (Ogletree and Kawulich, 2012).

For this study, the participant's consent was gained through informed consent (see appendix B). That is to say, that over and above the consent form; it was my responsibility as a researcher to explain to the participants using the appropriate language: the purpose and nature of my study. I also stated and put a lot of emphasis that participation in the study was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time; as well as that the study could possibly have effects on their emotional wellbeing. The participants were informed that they could choose to not answer questions they are not comfortable with.

Furthermore, the researcher has experience working with vulnerable individuals and she has training in working with individuals in vulnerable situations and how to approach the questions and information asked from vulnerable individuals. The researcher has relations with Rata Saul Social Services who often assist with individuals who may be in vulnerable situations. It was also mentioned to the participants that, if a participant mentioned that she fell pregnant because of rape, the researcher would seek their permission to refer them to Rata Saul Social Services, as well as the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). However, no participant required the assistance of social services. One participant, who was orphaned only gave advice that social workers need to treat children in foster care better.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will present the primary findings of the study which were gathered through interviews with former adolescent mothers. The interview schedule consisted of five themes which will be presented as follows. The first two sections (5.2 and 5.3) of this chapter provide demographic profiles of the participants. In the third and fourth (5.4 and 5.5) sections, the focus shifts towards the former adolescent mothers' general school experiences prior to falling pregnant and explaining their experiences of adolescent pregnancy inside and outside of the school environment before giving birth. Furthermore, this section will look into the reactions to the pregnancies by the participants as well as those around them such family and educators. The fifth, sixth and seventh sections (5.6, 5.7 and 5.8) will primarily focus on the overlapping factors and differences between former adolescent mothers who were successfully reintegrated into high school and those who were unsuccessfully.

In this chapter, I will argue that successful or unsuccessful reintegration of adolescent mothers into high school does not take place as a result of a single development but rather that, reintegration is a process which starts when a female learner discovers that she is pregnant and requires multiple aides to be involved.

5.2. Profiles and Demographic Data

There is a need to profile the participants in the study due to the intersectional approach that has been adopted. Winker and Degele (2011: 52) argued that connections between the various forms of inequalities can be structured and understood as part of the research process. To this end, they have also explained that to understand the identity construction of individuals, the use of such an approach has to constantly "keep open the number socially defined categories available and necessary for analysis" (Winker and Degele 2011: 52). Furthermore, they argue for delimiting the known categories of the construction of identities such as gender, class and ethnicity. For the purposes of this study pseudonyms have been assigned to the participants to protect their identities.

5.2.1. Mafoko

Mafoko is a 22-year-old born in and raised in Atteridgeville. She lives in her family home. Her mother passed away when she was still very young which meant that her grandmother had to raise her. She stayed in Atteridgeville for 20 years of her life and only moved after high school when she got a job. She fell pregnant at the age of 14. Mafoko is currently single and not with the father of her child. She maintains no contact with the father of her daughter. The father established contact with her after eight years, but he still has not taken responsibility for the child. Mafoko is employed as a receptionist and supports her grandmother and her daughter. She has also recently started studying towards a certificate in Business Administration which she believes will open more career opportunities for her.

5.2.2. Masechaba

Masechaba is a 33-year-old mother of two. She was born and raised in Atteridgeville, where she continues to live with her immediate family. She was raised by both her parents, but her mom moved to another province with her little brother and she was left in the care of her father and aunt. She completed her matric and is currently a single mother and keeps minimal contact with the father of her first child. Masechaba has been living with respiratory condition since she was a child and her condition ultimately led to her finding out about her pregnancy. She fell pregnant at the age of 18. Masechaba was recently promoted at work to become a supervisor at a cleaning company. She mentions that this is a step in the right direction for her as things are coming together. Furthermore, she says she still has aspirations of pursuing her higher education because she believes that it is not too late for her to continue studying. Masechaba does not keep in contact with the father of her child and she has explained that he stopped supporting their son after his family brought up issues of the child not having the father's surname.

5.2.3. Mmathapelo

Mmathapelo is a 30-year-old woman born in Limpopo. She grew up with her four sisters and one brother. Her mother died when she was still very young, leaving her to be raised by her father and siblings as she was the youngest of her siblings. For most of her childhood, she lived in a different province but moved to Atteridgeville when she commenced her high school education and lived with her eldest sister, her sister's husband and kids. Mmathapelo is a

mother of three currently living with the father of her third child. She fell pregnant at the age of 15. She only completed grade 11 and has been working ever since.

5.2.4. Moipone

Moipone, a 27-year-old woman, was born in Pretoria. She was raised in Atteridgeville since she was a little child. She is a mother of three daughters, and she is currently single. Moipone is still in contact with the father of her first daughter as he still maintains her. Moipone was raised by foster parents in what she has called an unloving home. She was only reunited with her father in recent years and she now assumes the responsibility of being his primary caregiver due to his ill-health. Whilst she is unemployed, Moipone is the breadwinner and sole provider of her family, relying on her children's social grants. She fell pregnant at the age of 19. Her mother passed away a long time ago and she explained that this has affected her efforts in trying to further her studies because her mother's family does not want to give her a death certificate which would enable her to apply for funding.

5.2.5. Modiegi

Modiegi, a 31-year-old mother of two was born and raised in Atteridgeville. She grew up in a loving home raised by both her parents and an older sister. Both her parents were working and able to provide for both her and her sister's needs. She obtained her matric. She is currently single and raising her daughters with the support of her parents. She fell pregnant at the age of 16. Her mother stopped working after Modiegi gave birth to her first daughter allowing her to complete high school. Thereafter, the mother was never able to get work as she was already old and that is how Modiegi started her working career to be able to support her dad as the breadwinner. Modiegi has explained that she maintains little contact with the father of her child as he rarely provides for the child.

5.2.6. Mapula

Mapula is a 26-year-old mother of two who was born and raised in Atteridgeville. She completed grade 11. Mapula explained that she grew up in a 'broken' home and that things were very tough growing up. She often did not get along with her family and growing up she felt that she could not trust her family. When she fell pregnant at the age of 21 the situation got worse as they started fighting more. She is currently single and raising her children by herself.

Mapula is unemployed. She said that she would like to go to school but that she does not have the financial means to be able to continue into higher education. Mapula explained that she maintains contact with the father of her child and that he never gave her problems when asking for assistance.

5.2.7. Mamello

Mamello is a 22-year-old born in Atteridgeville. She lived with her mother and siblings until she was in high school then she was sent to live with her married sister and husband when she got to high school. Mamello completed her grade 11, she left thereafter after being advised by the school to go to the local TVET College. She fell pregnant at the age of 17. She felt she was misinformed about her school options. She explained that even though she did not get along with the father of her child, he is very supportive of their child.

5.2.8. Mosela

Mosela is a 28-year-old born and raised in Atteridgeville. She grew up in her family home where she lived with her parents as well as her aunt. She has two younger siblings. Mosela has three children and she is still in a relationship with the father of her second and third born. She fell pregnant at the age of 20. She finished grade 11 and eventually went to a private education institution where she acquired a certificate in systems development. Mosela explained her relationship with the father of her first born as him being absent but living. Most of the support received were from his family and not necessarily him.

5.2.9. Matshidiso

Matshidiso is a 27-year-old mother of one who was born and raised in Atteridgeville. She is currently living with her mother and her sister her sister's children. Matshidiso completed her matric. She fell pregnant at the age of 18. She is not in contact with the father of her child as he had always been in denial of their child. She describes herself as a woman of prayer as prayer was what got her through some of the most difficult times of raising her daughter who was diagnosed with autism developmental disability.

5.2.10. Mashadi

Mashadi is a 25-year-old woman born in Limpopo. She grew up in Limpopo and moved to Atteridgeville during her high school years. Upon moving to Atteridgeville, she lived with her mom and younger sister. She explains how the neighbours were often very friendly and helpful towards her family. She fell pregnant at the age of 17. Mashadi explained that the father of her child supports the child but that they do not get along. She and her child get along with the father's family and they are often supportive. She is also engaged to her current partner who is fully supportive of her and her child.

5.2.11. Mmathabo

Mmathabo is a 26-year-old woman born in Atteridgeville. She was moved to Limpopo when she was younger to live with her aunt and cousin. She is a mother to a nine-year-old girl. She attended most of her schooling in Limpopo, until the year after she fell pregnant at the age of 17. At the end of her grade 11 year, her family moved her back to Atteridgeville in Pretoria. Mmathabo describes herself as a former tomboy as she used to spend with a lot of boys growing up. It was only after her cousins convinced her that "a girl can never be a boy", that she was introduced to a guy which ultimately led to her pregnancy.

5.2.12. Moyahabo

Moyahabo is a 29-year-old single mother of two born and raised in Atteridgeville. She had an elder brother who passed prior to her birth. She stays with her mother and two kids and she is currently self-employed as a hairstylist. She fell pregnant at the age of 17. She explains that she maintains no relationship with the father of her first born but that her child maintained a relationship with her grandmother and the grandfather who has since passed on.

5.3. Summary of participants demographic profiles

	Participant	Age	Age when you fell pregnant	Number of children	Highest level of education	Relationship status with father	Current Occupation
1	Mafoko	22	14	1	Grade 12	Single	Employed and Studying
2	Masechaba	33	18	2	Grade 12	Single	Employed
3	Mmathapelo	30	15	3	Grade 11	Single	Employed
4	Moipone	27	19	3	Grade 12	Single	Unemployed
5	Modiegi	31	16	2	Grade 12	Single	Employed
6	Mapula	26	21	2	Grade 11	Single	Unemployed
7	Mamello	22	17	1	Grade 11	Single	Employed
8	Mosela	29	20	3	Grade 11/ TVET College	Single	Unemployed
9	Matshidiso	27	18	1	Grade 12	Single	Employed and Studying
10	Mashadi	25	17	1	Grade 12	Single	Studying
11	Mmathabo	26	17	1	Grade 12	Single	Employed
12	Moyahabo	29	17	2	Grade 12	Single	Self-Employed

Nine out of the twelve participants were born and raised in Atteridgeville. Two of the participants were originally born and raised in Limpopo but moved to Atteridgeville when they commenced high school. One participant was born in Atteridgeville but moved to Limpopo at age seven. When she fell pregnant, her family moved her back to Atteridgeville. Some of the participants were already over age for the grades they were in which indicates that they might have been struggling or started school late. Almost all of them were no longer in a relationship with the father of the child, even though some fathers were involved in the lives of their children. Three mothers were unemployed, six mothers were employed (of which one is self-employed), two mothers were employed and were involved in further education and training and one mother was involved in further education and training.

5.4. School Experiences and Sex Education

Studies around adolescent pregnancy and parenthood have shown how learners and educators within the school environment have had mixed reactions of sensitivity and empathy or hostility and discomfort (Bhana et al. 2010, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Shefer et al.2013, Matlala et al. 2014). Prior to the development of the '*Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy*' framework by the Department of Basic Education, there was no clear guidance for educators and schools at large on how to deal with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood in schools. According to the Department of Basic Education's *Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools* (2018:6), the policy drafted was crucial due to the growing concerns in the rate of pregnancies amongst school going learners. The aim of the policy was to provide guidelines that would encourage learners to abstain from sexual activities and other risky sexual behaviour, whilst also providing guidelines to schools, educators and learners on dealing with developing cases of adolescent pregnancy and early parenthood of school-going learners (*Draft National Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2018:6).

Several studies (Panday et al. 2009; Shefer et al. 2013) have critiqued the policy for its contradictory standpoint on decisively dealing with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood whilst protecting the learners and educators.

5.4.1. School experiences of former adolescent mothers before pregnancy

Most of the women that were interviewed spoke about having good school experiences prior to falling pregnant. Responses from most of the women participants contained the following phrases: “*Ne go le monate*” or “*ne go le sharp*”. When directly translated, these basically mean that their school environments were ‘fun’ and ‘okay’. Most mothers also made mention of their schools being good, however, the issue was with the students as they explain that adolescents were naughty and rebellious by nature:

“School was good. I didn’t have problems but just ‘high school fever’” ~ Mamello

“Ne go le monate [It was nice]. It was perfect but as teenagers, we were the ones who used to rebel and play” ~ Moipone

“Teachers were alright, classmates were just naughty” ~ Masechaba

The ideas about ‘high school fever’, being a ‘rebel’ and ‘naughty’ are in line with constructions of teenagerhood as a period of exploration and challenging social norms (Macleod and Durrheim 2010, Mkhwanazi 2011, Cense and Ganzevoort 2019).

After completing matric the mother’s aspirations were all similar in that they wanted to study further. There were two mothers who expressed that they were not sure what they wanted to do after matric. For Mashadi, she had never thought about her career. She just wanted to finish matric and be successful. This response was similar to that of Matshidiso who thought that she would get a job, buy a house and car.

Three mothers spoke about their experiences at school in relation to their marks and how their aims were to finish with access to bachelor’s degree. However, in the end they only got access to diplomas:

“I wanted to go to university. I knew what I wanted to study because someone put it in my mind. I wanted to study radiography and I was inspired by a girl she used to live with us. So that is how I made up my mind.” ~ Mmathabo

“I wanted to go to university, but my APS (Admission Point Score) was too low, and I got access to a diploma.” ~ Mafoko

“It was good. I did relatively well most of the time. After getting pregnant it was bad because I failed most of my subjects but then I passed second time around. My aim was to get access to a bachelor’s degree, but I got access to Diploma.” ~ Matshidiso

According to Anakpo and Kollamparambil (2019,4817), some studies conducted in South Africa on adolescent pregnancy have fallen short of taking into account the consequences of adolescent motherhood on “other life outcomes such as life satisfaction, psychological and physical health”. For many of the mothers, even with the constraints and challenges that come with being school going mothers, some may opt to go back to school as a form of motivation to support their children.

According to Willan (2013: 41), after the mothers gave birth, a driving force for them returning to school was their own determination and ambition to successfully complete grade 12. This determination was usually stimulated by an understanding that completion of their education would increase their plausibility of being able to find employment and better chances of earning a good income to support their children as they grow up.

This has also been echoed in findings by various studies where some adolescent mothers expressed that they had no regret with falling pregnant as they believed that their experiences of adolescent parenthood contributed to their personal growth and that adolescent pregnancy and motherhood had a positive impact on them (Chohan and Langa 2011, Cense and Ganzevoort 2019, Singh and Naicker 2019). This echoes Moyahabo’s motivation for wanting to go back to school. She wanted to do better for herself and for her child:

“I had resilience and determination - I just had to go back and I wanted to go back because life continues” ~ Moyahabo

The findings of this study were similar to those of Theron (2015) and Willan (2013), as some of the participants in the current study expressed that if they did not complete their education, it would be difficult to find stable employment (Theron 2016)

5.4.2. Comprehensive Sex Education as part of the School Life Orientation Curriculum

Some participants in the study made mention of sex education being futile and ineffective. This came up when participants were asked if any health officials visited the school to discuss adolescent pregnancy. Majority of the participants reported that no officials came to the school,

but the question was understood in the context of receiving sex education or information from private organizations. The discussions around sex education for most of the women were futile as seen in their responses:

“People from Love Life used to come. It would be young people coming and they would make it a joke. They never explained properly, and they never supported in any way they just spoke about abstinence. It was just games and the questions asked by learners were playful.” ~ Mafoko

“When I was in Grade 8 people from Love Life came. In grade 8 you are still playful, and I don’t think I was attentive. I couldn’t listen to the things they were saying.” ~ Modiegi

“Not really but people from Always Ultra talked about pads and sex” ~ Matshidiso

The findings show that some of the participants understood sex education only in reference to campaigns done by external or private organizations who visited their schools to speak to them about sex from the point of view of abstaining from sexual activities. The above findings are similar to a study by Mayeza and Vincent (2018) where learners described their experiences of CSE in Life Orientation as being “detached from learners’ lifeworld’s, experiences, interests and concerns” (Mayeza and Vincent 2018: 473).

5.5. Reactions to Pregnancy

Studies have shown that adolescent pregnancy has consequences for family dynamics (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Shefer, Bhana and Morrell 2013, Naidoo et al. 2019). For many families, adolescent pregnancy brought about the reactions of shame and disgrace for the family and often, families would distance themselves from the teenagers or punish them by withdrawing support for the adolescents before and after giving birth (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Naidoo et al. 2019).

The form of support adolescent mothers may receive could contribute to the ease with which they dealt with finding out about the pregnancy. Furthermore, this would inform how they were able to disclose to their families, friends and educators that they were pregnant.

5.5.1. Adolescent mothers’ reactions to finding out about their pregnancy

Most of the former adolescent mothers reported that their reactions to finding out about the pregnancy were that of being scared and shocked. Here are some of the recollections of the mothers finding out about their pregnancy:

“I cried on my own. It was a difficult moment because I saw signs that I was pregnant, but I couldn’t tell anyone because I was young and scared. - Mmathabo

“Yho...I was scared, I was planning to run away from home and abort the baby” ~ Mamello

“I was scared and angry. I had told myself I didn’t want a child. Plus, I wasn’t getting along with the father of the child anymore” ~ Mapula

Kaufman et al. (2001:151), explain that such reactions are a result of “the difficulty of accepting, and then acting on, the advent of a pregnancy”. Of the former adolescent mothers who were scared, two of them reported that they were more worried about what their parents/guardians would say. Often when adolescent mothers felt scared of telling their parents, it can be attributed to reactions that the family will have of shame, anger and disappointment (Chigona and Chetty 2008; Mjwara and Maharaj 2018). To explain further Naidoo et al. (2019:7) explain that, “teenage mothers were constructed as deviant and as people who have violated social norms and values..., as moral problems and as objects of shame”.

The reactions of the mothers below speak to the observations that were also made in the studies mentioned above:

“Scared. I didn’t know how to hide it out. But even worse, I was scared to tell my parents especially because I was looking at the fact that I was still in school. I was five months pregnant” ~ Modiegi

“I was very scared. My mom was very strict, and she was working very hard to make sure my little sister and I were going to finish school and be successful.” ~ Mashadi

“It was stressful. I didn’t grow up at home. I was adopted and my adoptive parents decided they can’t take it anymore and kicked me out. At that time, I was pregnant, in matric and I didn’t have a place to stay” ~ Moipone

Three of the mothers recalled how they did not know about their pregnancies until very late:

“The time I fell pregnant I didn’t know. I noticed after 6 months that I am pregnant. I felt like the father of the child betrayed me because he knew all along.” ~ Mmathapelo

“Yho I collapsed. That was my first reaction because when I went to the clinic, I am Asthmatic. When I went to the clinic, I was going for an Asthma check-up. Only to find out that they are giving me a result that I wasn’t going for.” ~ Masechaba

“Shocked. I was 8 months pregnant when I found out and there was nothing I could do.” ~ Mosela

From the reactions of Mmathapelo, Masechaba and Mosela, it is clear that they were not prepared for the pregnancy. They presented different circumstances in contrast to the other female participants as they had no choice but to keep their children. The mothers found themselves in a position whereby they could not negotiate or think about their pregnancies and possible options such as termination as they were too far along in their pregnancies. According to the Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996, an abortion may be performed voluntarily by the woman only up until the 12th week. From the 13th to the 20th week of pregnancy a termination of pregnancy can only be performed if the mother presents with significant risk to her physical and mental health (Act 92, Of 1996, Government Gazette 1996).

The reactions of Mmathapelo, Masechaba and Mosela are similar to those recorded in a study by Kaufman et al. (2001), which the adolescents struggled when they found out about the pregnancy. Kaufman et al. (2001: 149) narrated the reactions of their participants as follows: “They often feel confused about their condition and the options open to them and betrayed by their partners”.

From all the reactions upon finding out about the pregnancy, only one woman had a positive reaction at the time they found about the pregnancy. Matshidiso thought she could trust the father of her child and she thought he would be understanding.

“I was very excited and in love with the father of child, thinking I was going to have a baby with my soulmate.” ~ Matshidiso

The reaction by Matshidiso speaks to Chohan and Langa's (201:841) observation that whilst there has been a body of literature detailing the negative reactions and experiences of adolescents to negotiating pregnancy and parenthood, the experience was subjective and it is possible for some adolescents to experience their pregnancy and parenthood in a positive light.

5.5.2. Reactions of family members to the pregnancy

Some of the participants reported not telling their families and that the parents found out for themselves. In the case of Mmathabo, her aunt took her to the doctor for a different matter which was a nose bleeding, but unbeknownst to her, the aunt asked the doctor to take some tests which came out positive for pregnancy:

"My aunt noticed something. She didn't tell anyone. She took me to the doctor because I had a nosebleed problem, so they took the opportunity to find out. They asked the doctor to secretly do tests and that was how they found out. The doctor did a scan and that was when I saw that I was 4 months pregnant" ~ Mmathabo

For the two, Mamello and Masechaba, they recalled how their families noticed that they were different:

"I never told my family anything. I used to stay with my sister and her husband. My sister was a 'never mind'. She wouldn't notice when I went on my period or not. So, my brother in law saw that I was pregnant." ~ Mamello

"At home I didn't tell anyone. They saw for themselves. When I found out, I was 6 months pregnant and I had normal periods and no abnormal movement from the child. They just kept quiet. They never made noise or shouted or ask questions. They knew my boyfriend at that time." ~ Masechaba

Mostly, family members were disappointed and angry in their reactions to the former adolescent mothers' pregnancies. This echoes the reactions of participants in a study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:277), in which they noted that some parents became angry which was followed in turn by a "communication breakdown for a long – period". This often leaves the adolescents feeling helpless and having little to no support (Willard 2013; Naidoo et al. 2019).

Some also expressed their concerns about the adolescent mother's education. This was the case with Mmathapelo, Modiegi, Mashadi and Moipone as their families wanted them to push to finish school. In these instances, the mothers were able to negotiate their motherhood when they gave birth. With such a reaction from the families, it speaks to the observations made in various studies that families are pivotal actors in determining whether the mothers are able to return to school before and after giving birth (Grant and Hallman 2006; Panday et al. 2009).

However, in some cases the family members would use having a child as punishment for the mothers. They were not able to go back to school because they had to take care of their children by themselves as in the case of Mapula and Mosela:

“My family never gave much support. When I was pregnant, I fought with my mom and she said I would see how I would take care of the child and as a result I raised the child by myself.” ~ Mapula

“It was punishment from my family. How was I supposed to go back to school with a new-born baby?” ~ Mosela

The reactions from Mapula and Mosela families can be best described by the account given by Schultz (2001) in Chigona and Chetty (2008) in which she explains that: “Too often, pregnancy during high school is a signal for school personnel and families to abandon young woman, designating them as school failures” (Schultz 2001: 584).

Eight mothers recalled receiving support from their families even after they had expressed their disappointment, shock and anger. Mafoko's case was particularly interesting as her family organized for her to go get an abortion which she said no to. After a few months, a family meeting was held in which her family apologized, then her grandmother and uncle helped her raise her child whilst she was still in school.

For Mapula and Moipone, they never received support from their families after they found out they were pregnant. Moipone was kicked out by her foster parents as they felt they had enough, and that is how the father of the child's family came to intervene and help her:

“They decided I have to move out. That's when I got my own place and the family of the father of the child helped with paying of the place and maintenance... It was

difficult. Where I found a place to stay, I was living with an elderly couple. So, I had to do everything on my own. The paternal grandmother would come help me.” ~ Moipone

5.5.3. Reaction of the children’s fathers to pregnancy

Ten of the female participants reported telling the father of the child about their pregnancy immediately after they found out. Similar observations were made in a study by Madiba and Nsiki (2017: 503) in which the father learned about the pregnancy from the mother of the child. In some cases, the fathers were with them. There were mixed reactions in that some were in denial and some were willing to accept responsibility for what had happened. For the fathers who were in denial some reactions were recorded as follows:

“He was the first person to know, he was hesitant and in denial.” ~ Matshidiso

“At first he did not support me. He was avoiding me. But after I told my mom, we went to his house “go isa molato”. She was very dramatic.” ~ Mashadi

The reactions by fathers on initially hearing about the pregnancy were similar to those reported in a study conducted by Madiba and Nsiki (2017: 503) in which news of the mothers’ pregnancy resulted in the fathers’ reacting with feelings such as “shock, fear, disbelief, denial, and confusion”. The reactions recorded were also common in various other studies that have been conducted particularly looking at adolescent fathers (Kaufman et al. 2001; Langa and Smith 2012; Odimegwu et al. 2018).

In a similar fashion, Mmathabo’s partner thought that she was joking because she was a tomboy.

“I told him after I went to the doctor. At that time, he didn't believe me. As you know with tradition one needs to take “go isa molato” [damages] to the man’s family. I told him that my family would be coming to report the damages. My family went to report the damages and he accepted responsibility. After December, my family moved to Atteridgeville where I would live with my mom and I never went back.” ~ Mmathabo

“I told the father of the child and he immediately denied saying “ke sfebe”. He accused me of sleeping around because his “pull out” was strong. I was 4 months pregnant. I

had also just found out after going to the clinic... He was in denial. He saw me once and he was shocked then he started avoiding me.” ~ Mashadi

According to Kaufman et al. (2001: 152), confirming the paternity of the child is an important motivation which will determine the “long-term social and economic consequences to the young parents and their child”. If the paternal family of the child acknowledges responsibility, Kaufman et al. (2001) explain a financial compensation from the paternal side if the family may follow in the form of *damages*.

The idea of paying *damages* from the pregnancy which happened outside the traditional norm of marriage, can be seen as problematic as it devalues women, which speaks various scholars’ reiterations that women having children outside of marriage brings shame and disappointment to the family (Kaufman et al. 2001, Chigona and Chetty 2007, Singh and Naicker 2019). So, the idea of paying *damages* can be seen as a way of rectifying the defacement and harm that has been done to the women and her family. The use of the word *damage* is used to refer to the financial compensation, which is as a result of perceiving a woman who has a child outside of marriage, as being desecrated. This is compensation for the decrease in her bridal value as a result of the pregnancy. Similarly, in the study conducted by Kaufman et al., parents in the study understood *damages* by way of “the amount of bride wealth - usually reduced if the woman to be married has had a child by another man” (2001: 152).

In looking further at the payment of *damages*, there is a consensus that can be drawn from the current study as well as Kaufman et al.’s (2001) study that the financial compensation of *damages* symbolically constituted that the father was acknowledging and/or accepting responsibility of the child.

Whilst the above reasons have been given for the payment of *damages*, it is important to note that the meaning of such a notion can be contested as the understanding may be based on the subjective experiences of the families involved. The payment to the mother’s family by the family was not always in monetary terms. Also, the rituals performed upon the birth of the child by the father’s family were/are intended to introduce the child to the family. Looking beyond the practices of paying *damages*, it may be a positive way of establishing the commitment of the father and his family towards accepting responsibility and raising the child. Kaufman et al. (2001:153) expands on this by stating that “In practice, the payment of the fine

leaves open the possibility of future support from the boy and his family, or, conversely, allows the boy to return to claim the child at a later date”.

In almost all cases, the partners were not happy with the pregnancy. Whilst Matshidiso was happy, she reported that her partner denied ejaculating and that he was very shocked and hesitant. This speaks to Madiba and Nsiki (2017: 504) concern that adolescent fathers’ reactions to pregnancy also display a level of ignorance and obliviousness with regards to the consequences that may follow of having unprotected sex. For Mafoko, she reported that her partner did not want to see her anymore and that he wanted her to abort the baby, which was similar to Mashadi’s situation in which the partner started avoiding her.

Naidoo et al.’s (2019) research into adolescent motherhood explores the negative connotations and stereotypes that come with being an adolescent parent. They further explained that negative connotations paint an image of the adolescent parent as a “perpetrator of poverty with negative outcomes for parent and child, and the economic costs to society which will impact on both child and adolescent parent negatively, often coming at an economic cost for society (Naidoo et al. 2019:1).

What is more, much of the scholarly work that has been documented on adolescent motherhood has reported how mothers have been the subject of ridicule, blame, shame, and social ostracism by various institutions and members of the society for the situations they find themselves in (Chohan and Langa 2011; Shefer et al. 2013; Mjwara and Maharaj 2018; Naidoo et al. 2019). A lot of society’s social ills are blamed on adolescent mothers as opposed to the social structures such as poverty, unemployment and inequality which could contribute to adolescent pregnancy (Rolfe 2008 in Chohan and Langa 2011: 87, Macleod 2001).

As in the case with some mothers, the paternal side of the child’s family were helpful in taking care of the child. For some it came as normal practice as the father had accepted paternity whilst in other cases it was difficult, and parents would also be in denial if the father denied paternity.

5.5.4. Teachers and learners’ reactions to pregnancy

The reactions of the teachers and learners finding out about the former adolescent mothers’ pregnancies varied amongst the participants. Of all the mothers interviewed, the most common

reaction to the pregnancy from the teachers, was disappointment and concern. Some teachers stepped in to encourage them to finish school.

For Modiegi, she mentioned how the female teachers were supportive.

“Teachers would encourage me. Even after giving birth it was normal. There were women teachers who were supportive. There were times where I was experiencing difficulties and school children speaking about me, the teachers would support me by raising the issues and shouting at them for speaking about me.” ~ Modiegi

The learners’ reactions were the ones that affected the young mothers the most in the school environment. This can be supported by Chigona and Chetty (2008: 277), who assert that adolescent mothers assuming the role of learner are “misunderstood and pressurized by their fellow learners”. Educators observed that more often than not, there were poor relationships between pregnant adolescents and their peers (Malahlela and Chireshe 2013: 142). For example, Mafoko, Modiegi, Mmathapelo, Mashadi and Mmathabo spoke about how some of the learners and friends would make jokes or go behind their backs to speak about them and spread rumours.

*“I was joke to students. I was scared to go to school because I was being made fun of.”
~ Mafoko*

“You know students. There are those that will laugh and gossip about me. Throughout the pregnancy, I would go to school, I gave birth before school holidays. Then when schools opened, I went back to school. It was not nice. There were supportive friends but there were also peers who would gossip.” ~ Modiegi

“School children had a problem. You know teenagers at school. Friends will go behind your back and talk about why I fell pregnant at that age.” ~ Mmathapelo

“My friends were embarrassed so most of them stopped talking to me and I only had one friend who supported me at school.” ~ Mashadi

“You know how school children are. They would speak and say things like how she can be pregnant when she is a tomboy. They would ask who the father of the child was and who I was dating because they did not believe I could date boys.” ~ Mmathabo

Shefer et al. (2013:5), inform us that such reactions from school learners could be as a result of the “‘othering’ through discourses of shame”. Mmathabo’s recollection of the learner’s treatment was interesting. Whilst it was not always negative, she was very self-conscious and annoyed at the attention she was receiving.

In their study, Naidoo et al. (2019:6), reiterate that dominant discourses of adolescent pregnancy further entrench oppression. To this end, Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:570) suggest that being pregnant is not just a narrative, but also a bodily experience which scholars do not explicitly address in undertaking studies of adolescent pregnancy. Cense and Ganzevoort (2019: 570) assert how being pregnant needs to also be understood from the embodiment which they have defined using Tolman et al.’s (2014) explanation of “the experience of living in, perceiving, and experiencing the world from the physical and material place of our bodies”. Adolescent pregnancy forces many people to confront its visibility and it is this visibility and presence which makes it intolerable to bear (Bhana et al. 2010: 875).

The young women have to navigate being ostracised and stigmatized as they are the ones carrying the pregnancy, which goes against societal norms that dictate the moral discourse of how teenagers ought to carry themselves:

“The school learners were spreading rumours and gossiping about my pregnancy. They were all shocked because they knew me as a tomboy. Drimacs helped me because they would cover the pregnancy.” ~ Mmathabo

Later on, Mmathabo speaks about falling sick during class, in her day to day experiences:

“I would be sick. I would be in class and have to go vomit and when I came into class everyone would be curious and want to know what was going on and I didn't want to speak about it.”

She would also get annoyed when her peers would be too cautious around her and warn each other that she was pregnant. She believed those kinds of situations would bring her unwanted attention. For mothers like Mapula, Moipone, Masechaba and Mamello, they experienced this differently as learners and friends were supportive. They would often lend assistance especially when it came to doing school homework and assignments.

Moipone's account is very important given the circumstances she was under. Her friends were sensitive and aware of her situation at home:

“My friends were supportive. They knew my situation at home and that my adoptive parents weren't supportive.” ~ Moipone

For mothers like Mmathabo and Mosela, they did not have much of a reaction they had reached the end of the school year. For Mosela, she found out very late in the pregnancy, but it was also at the end of the school year. For Mmathabo, she explained that the teachers had no reaction as it was during her final exams and they never used to attend classes and after writing exams they would usually go home.

5.6. Overlapping factors between former adolescent mothers who were successfully and unsuccessfully reintegrated into high school

5.6.1. Social and Financial Support

The social and financial support can be said to be very important factors in whether pregnant adolescents and mothers remain and return to school before and after giving birth (Grant and Hallman 2008, Chigona and Chetty 2008).

For some mothers like Masechaba and Modiegi, they were able to remain and return to school through the holistic support offered by family, teachers and friends who were accommodating towards their pregnancy and adolescent motherhood. For example, Masechaba explained that her aunt would always take her child to the clinic, so she never missed school. Modiegi also explained the support she received as follows:

“Much as my family was disappointed, my mom left her job to take care of my child when I went back to school... I also got encouragement from my family, friends and teachers to stay in school” ~ Modiegi

Grant and Hallman have explained that whilst adolescent pregnancy and motherhood do not always interrupt schooling for the young women, they are still presented with different circumstances which may determine whether they stay in school or not. The circumstances to consider for many of the young women who come from low-income households include household chores, childcare responsibilities and managing schoolwork loads. Furthermore,

these circumstances may become even more negative if there is lack of support from the father of the child (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Grant and Hallman 2008, Mjwara and Maharaj 2018).

Several scholars have also explained that the presence and support of adult women who are able to share household work could play an important role following the birth of a child and determining whether the young mothers return to school (Grant and Hallman 2008, Mjwara and Maharaj 2018).

This was the case for Modiegi, Mmathapelo and Mamello who received support from their mothers and older sisters. Some of the experiences from the former adolescent mothers were explained as follows:

“After giving birth, my father said I must stop going to school and take a gap year to take care of the child, but I refused. My sister intervened, took me in and helped me take care of the child so I wouldn’t have to leave school” ~ Mmathapelo

“My sister was always supportive. She went to check-ups with me even after the baby was born. My sister and her husband made sure that I was always well taken care of. There was not a time where I was stressed financially because they were there. My mother also supported me and the child after I gave birth. my child was always like my younger sibling.” ~ Mamello

Two of the former adolescent mothers explained that their children’s paternal grandmothers were important sources of support in ensuring that they were able to cope with the demands of schooling and motherhood:

“The paternal grandmother would come help me. She would come help me bathe the baby in the morning before I went to school... The child’s paternal family also helped me to find a place to stay.” ~ Moipone

“The paternal family supported me with diapers and the mom [paternal grandmother] would take me to the clinic because she wasn’t working” ~ Mashadi

“Me and the mom [paternal grandmother] are very tight. She would help where she can with school uniforms and stuff.” ~ Grace

5.6.2. Knowledge of policies to protect pregnant adolescents and mothers in school

None of the mothers interviewed were aware of the policies to protect them as pregnant adolescents and mothers. That is to say no teacher ever explained the policies in place to protect the young mother before and after giving birth. This is in contrast to the policy which stipulates that an “educator or educators should take responsibility for the implementation and management of the measures, on behalf of the school” (*Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2007:5).

In the case of Matshidiso, she explains how teachers would pass comments about her pregnancy. Furthermore, she explained how her school was more concerned with its reputation because it was a religious school. She explained her school’s unwritten policy as follows:

“I already had peers who were pregnant very early on. The school at the same time was more concerned about its reputation, so once you started showing they send you home and you come back the next year... A Catholic School meant expulsion or suspension. If you tell them first, they will allow you to be in school but if you don’t tell them and they find out for themselves they would suspend you or expel you.” ~ Matshidiso

This experience of a religious school was different to Mmathapelo who attended the same school a few years earlier. She explained that teachers were okay and never had a problem. Instead, it was the learners who had a problem as they would gossip about her. For many other mothers, they experienced the same challenge with students who would speak about them and make fun of them.

Regardless, it can be said that educators at the religious school did not take into account the measures to protect young mothers. Furthermore, they were in contravention of Clause 24 which states that “A school should avoid any action that may constitute unfair discrimination against a pregnant learner” (*Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* 2007:5).

The experiences of being pregnant at school varied for most of the former adolescent mothers. Masechaba experienced pregnancy differently as she explained that teachers were very accommodating to her as a pregnant learner. They allowed her to write exams after everyone

had written and gave her time to recover after birth. Similarly, for Modiegi, the teachers would protect her against other learners:

“I gave birth in November during exams. They [teachers] allowed me to give birth and 2-3 days after giving birth, I was allowed to write special exams.” ~ Masechaba

“If I experienced learners speaking about me, the teachers would raise the issues and reprimand the other learners.” ~ Modiegi

This is in contrast to Mamello’s experience who states that a male teacher was the reason she left school while pregnant. To a certain extent the teachers’ actions were a form of physical abuse as he poked at her stomach with a pipe and went classroom to classroom announcing that she was pregnant. Neither the school nor her family ever addressed the situation even after she returned to school. Explaining the teacher’s behaviour, Mamello pointed out that nothing was ever done to the teacher as the principal was also scared of him:

“He is a teacher who does wrong at school and we are used to him getting away with things. He is a teacher that dates school kids. I feel that it is useless because the principle is also scared of him and there are a lot of kids who drop out of school because of him. There are parents who tried to report him, but nothing happens.” ~ Mamello

Mamello’s experience confirms Bhana et al. s (2010: 876) point that, within the context of a township school, poverty may become a complicated and distressing for adolescent mothers to cope with the demands of schooling and parenting in the absence of resources and support structures from the school and community at large.

5.6.3. Adolescent mothers schooling and career aspirations

All the participants expressed a desire to become more educated and further their studies in pursuit of becoming successful in order to provide for their children. The mothers associated educational attainment with better opportunities for jobs to be able to provide the best resources to raise their children. These included mothers who never completed school as they felt that life was much more difficult without qualifications. In a similar study, Singh and Naicker (2019: 571) reported that adolescent mothers recognized understood the idea of being educated “as the linchpin that can change their lives and lift them out of poverty”. This is in contrast to

previous narratives that render adolescent mothers as being powerless individuals with a lack of agency.

5.6.4. Adolescent mothers' experiences of schooling before and after giving birth

In looking at the day-to-day experiences of the adolescent mothers during pregnancy, they all had different experiences. Some of the participants like Mosela and Masechaba explained how they never knew they were pregnant until their last trimester, so they never got a chance to really experience pregnancy a school:

"I was shocked. Because I found out when I was eight months pregnant and there was nothing I can do" ~ Mosela

"When I found out I was six months pregnant... my day to day was good. I was never tired. When I was hungry my teachers allowed me to eat and they made me feel free. They would change me and put me in comfortable seats in class" ~Masechaba

For some mothers the experiences were not as easy and pleasant. The recollections of Mamello, Mmathapelo and Mapula explain their experiences:

"When I found out that I was pregnant, I was tired and had cravings. I would go to school, but I would go so that people don't notice that I am pregnant. I changed a lot, my complexion and those that knew me were surprised that I am lighter. I always used to be tired and I slept when I got back from school. I did not have time to study because I was always tired, and I had homework waiting for me. At school I would sit still during break. Where I sat in the morning I would sit there. I wouldn't even go to the bathroom I would wait until after school when I go home. At times some learners would come and sit with me not knowing what was going on, but I would mostly sit by myself."- Mamello

"It wasn't easy, and I pushed to go to school. I just wanted to focus before I got a child."-Mmathapelo

"I was so bored. I was always annoyed because I was always tired. When I was with people, I was moody and when I thought about the situation at home and them finding out about my pregnancy, I used to get irritable."- Mapula

The recollections of the adolescent mothers above speak to the Cense and Ganzevoort's (2019: 570) claim that meanings "strategic negotiations of young women to give meaning to their pregnancy, ...or teenage motherhood, can be viewed as an ongoing process in interaction with social norms and discourses, opinions and moral judgements of family and friends, their sense of self and their ideas about their future, and the embodiment of being pregnant"

5.6.5. School and educator support before and after giving birth

School and educator support before giving birth varied for the participants. There were teachers who expressed genuine concern; those who provided supported and encouragement for the expectant adolescents:

"After stopping to go to school, there was one women teacher who came to see me at home because she was worried and concerned that I was no longer attending school. "So, my family explained that I was pregnant, and she understood. We also told her about the incident with the male teacher and she was shocked and hurt as to why that male teacher would do that. She came on a monthly in her personal capacity and she did not even teach me". ~ Mamello

"At school, there was a teacher I could speak to. I could share my struggles and frustration." ~Mapula

"The teachers were supportive. The teachers would tell me not to leave school and they would encourage me to come to school every day. They would say if I don't feel well, they will send me home". ~ Masechaba

The above speaks to Bhana et al.'s (2010:877) study that there was a willingness from some teachers to care. Furthermore, teachers who took interest in caring for pregnant adolescents and mothers, offered emotional, social and spiritual support in relation to the circumstances in which the mothers found themselves in. Much of this support is invisible and unacknowledged as we have seen with the case of Mamello in which an educator who did not teach her, went to her house after noticing that she had not been coming to school.

For learners like Moyahabo, the teachers pretended they did not know about her pregnancy and they would not make her feel uncomfortable:

"The teachers were amazing. The teachers acted like they did not know but I could tell they knew. They never tried to make me feel uncomfortable." ~ Grace

The experiences of returning to school were normal for the learners, although some had expressed that they tried their best to get schoolwork done when they returned home after school. They were treated normally by most educators:

"When I went back to school, there was no difference. There were teachers who would judge other learners that some learners have been at school for long. They would say that I left and came back and learners are still in the same grade. The teacher who poked me with a pipe when I was a pregnant was my Sepedi teacher. I made sure that I do not interact with him a lot. I used to do his work and assignments so I could be out of his way. He is one of those teachers. He used to date a school child and when he lost interest, he would treat the learner badly. Some teachers who knew about the relationship and one confronted this girl and told her that she will always be a side chick. Teachers treated me normal. I made sure I did my work and after school I would go straight home". ~ Mamello

"When I had a child, it was in November during exams. The teachers let me write exams after everyone. I sat at home for two or three days after and I went back to write exams. Teacher showed that they cared". ~ Masechaba

Many of the mothers expressed that their peers were helpful and acted normal towards them. Apart from the little talks at times, they also had a friend or friends who they could rely on to help them with school and also be accommodating to their circumstances:

"There was nothing that changed. My friends were accommodating even when we went out. They would plan their time to accommodate me". ~ Masechaba

"My friends were okay. They used to help me with homework. I left a week before schools closed. Some of them would tell me what is happening and if I could not go to school they would come and help me". ~ Modiegi

"Even when I got back to school nothing changed. Learners were happy for me to be back." ~ Mamello

“Learners at school were fine. They never laughed or made fun of me. They were just fine.” ~Mapula

5.6.6. Family support

Some of the mothers received care and assistance from their families in order to balance childcare responsibilities, household chores as well as schoolwork. They would develop schedules to help them manage:

“My mom dropped everything to take care of the child. So, once every month I would miss school to take the child to the clinic. At times I would be under pressure where I had assignments and my mom was not there. It was strenuous. I had to choose between books and the child. And the child came first. So, when I had time, I would try study and sleep.” ~ Mamello

“I used to give myself time. I had a schedule. For example, on Saturdays from 6am to 12pm it was all about housework. Thereafter, it would be my time with the child and when she would sleep, I would do schoolwork. During the week the child would go to creche and I would pick her up after school. If I had to study, she would stay longer, or my sister would take care of her.” ~ Mmathapelo

“My aunt would take the child to the clinic. Studying during the day when I got home, I would give the child attention then sleep and wake up at midnight to start studying. She knew that if the child started crying during midnight, the aunt would give the child a bottle” ~ Masechaba

“Most of the time in the mornings I would bath, then make the child a bottle because she would stay with my mom as I was not breastfeeding. I would prepare the child’s things for the day and when I got back from school, I would take care of my child. If I had an assignment, my mom and sister would take the child so I could focus on school.” ~ Modiegi

The support from relatives’ echoes Mokwena et al.’s (2016) study which states that culturally in some African communities, assistance from extended family may relieve adolescent mothers from the pressures associated with parenting. What is more, the support received above, is also echoed in Willan’s (2013) study in which she asserts the importance of the critical roles that

the adolescent mothers' parents play in providing support which could also be a determining factor in their continuance of schooling.

5.7. Successful reintegration into high school

5.7.1. Former adolescent mothers' motivation to stay in school

There were varied responses for the mother being motivated to stay in school after giving birth. Successful reintegration into high school was highly dependent on multiple avenues of support such as family and school. Furthermore, the adolescent mothers' career aspirations were what motivated them to stay in school despite the situations they found themselves in.

For Matshidiso, Mafoko and Moyahabo, they always wanted to get educated and further their studies and so finishing matric would give them that opportunity:

"I have always wanted to go to university. I wanted to get a degree and finish the school race"- Matshidiso

"Before, I wanted to become better because no one in my family finished school. After having a child, I wanted to learn so I could support my child properly and not accept handouts. I wanted to buy her new things and clothes and take her to the best school."- Mafoko

"Resilience, determination. I just had to go back, and I wanted to go back. It was not the plan, but life continues, and you have to deal with what you have" – Moyahabo

Chohan and Langa (2011: 92) have asserted that the effort adolescent mothers put into their schoolwork upon return is symbolic of their motivation and determination to do well in school. For some adolescent mothers, returning to school was a solution to driving themselves out of the poor socioeconomic situations they found themselves in (Mjwara and Maharaj 2018: 137).

Some mothers mentioned their children as motivation as they wanted to provide better lives for them (Naidoo et al. 2019):

"From the time I knew that I was going to be a mother, I was thinking for the child and I told myself that I am not a failure. So, the way I had planned to finish school remained the same even with a child along the way, my child did not disturb anything, things

happened the way they were supposed to. I feel that to make the right choices in life and I wanted that when this child grew up, I could put food on the table for him and give him a better life...When I was in school, I would study because I have a child and the child will need to be taken care off. Even though my parents had been taking care of the child, I was thinking, should they die, this child would still need to be taken care off” – Masechaba

“The child motivated me to stay in school because I was bringing a child into the world who would be my responsibility and the child needed to be fed.” ~ Modiegi

The motivation from the mothers above confirms assertion that adolescent mothers demonstrated strong determination to take charge of their lives by continuing with school (Watson and Vogel 2017, Singh and Naicker 2019). In addition, this motivation from adolescent mothers shows that they had an understanding brought by the responsibility of motherhood (Chohan and Langa 2011, Watson and Vogel 2017, Naidoo et al. 2019). This is in contrast to literature (Hanna 2001, Sodi and Sodi 2012) on the preconceived negative perceptions of adolescent pregnancy having adverse negative effects on mothers and their inability to move past the challenges of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

Upon successful completion of grade 12, there were mothers who were fortunate to be able to study further whilst some were not able to study further due to financial circumstances as well as having marks that would not qualify them to get into institutions of higher learning:

“I got a government bursary to go to Tshwane South College. I finished matric in 2011. 2012 I did not know what was happening, I was just at home, and the bursaries I had applied for I did not qualify for them. So, whilst I was home, people would come to advertise after school programs, and I applied for one at local primary school and I became a homework supervisor. There were bursaries to go to Tshwane South College and I applied, I studied for one month before they bursary people told us that they cancelled, and I eventually got a job. Even as I was working, I got a learnership for health and safety.” ~ Mmathabo

“I went to study Financial Information Systems at Tshwane University of Technology. Now I am self-employed as a hairstylist and I ask God to lead me. I am taking my time to craft my journey” ~ Moyahabo

“No. I had to look for a job immediately after finishing school because my mom had stopped working and it was hard for her to get work at her age. So, I had to leave the thought of going to school and focus on getting an income. I have thought about going back to school, but it was never practical, and I never followed through with it.” ~ Modiegi

“I did not study further. Every time I tried to study my things would never come together because of my late mum. When you register, they want death certificates to apply for bursaries and I did not have a relationship with my dad’s family to help me register. So, I was always delayed by those glitches. It is difficult, even though I am lucky now that I have a relationship with my dad, and I want to further my studies and he wants to support. Going back to school will enable me to support my children financially without relying on anyone.” ~ Moipone

There was a strong need to continue schooling for some mothers who started working who said they did not feel that it was too late for them to continue with school:

“After school, I didn’t [continue]. I got a job as a receptionist for a property services company. I still told myself that I want to go back to school. I have now registered at Boston College for a course in Business Management” ~ Mafoko.

“There was no money to go to school and my marks were not good enough for bursaries. I worked in retail until now. I work somewhere and there is improvement. I feel happy about everything, but I still feel like I need to go back to school because I am not fully satisfied with where I am, and I got a promotion at my current job as a supervisor. If 50-year-olds can study, I can still do the same because I am still young.” ~ Masechaba

“I started off at UNISA. My marks were not good, so I had to upgrade. I also don't know how I finished matric, but I did, and I upgraded. I went to UNISA and applied for Law. Now I am finishing my last year in 2019 and hope to graduate next year”. ~ Mashadi

“Yes, Diploma in Nature Conservation. I left it for a few years but went back to it and now I’m in my last year (2019). I want to continue to study more and provide for my child.” ~ Matshidiso

The above responses show the determination of mothers to better their lives and uplift themselves out of poverty. Furthermore, there is a strong motivation that can be seen to provide more resources and opportunities for themselves to be able to empower their own children and be the best possible care providers. The participants in the current study, reflected a similar motivation those in the study by Chohan and Langa (2011), where a constant theme that came out from the adolescent mothers was one of “perseverance and motivation to perform well academically and reach their long-term career goals” (Chohan and Langa 2011: 92).

5.7.2. Family and peer support

The support provided by family and friends cannot be underestimated as this becomes part of the deciding factor in adolescent’s ability to remain in school before and after giving birth.

Whilst most of the mothers reported that their family was disappointed with their pregnancy, once the baby was born, their families and friends provide encouragement and support to ensure that they remained in school.

Former adolescent mothers like Mashadi, Moipone and Mmathabo received encouragement and support from family and friends:

“My mom supported me and the people in the yard where we were staying. My mom pushed me because she says she worked hard to bring us to Pretoria for a better life and she was not going to let me have more children.” ~ Mashadi

“My friends would encourage me to persevere... They supported me because they knew my circumstances. My friends would bring me schoolwork and help me with assignments.” ~ Moipone

“My friends were good after I gave birth. They would help me with schoolwork. When I had to go to the clinic, they would update me on the things I missed out on.” ~ Modiegi

Moyahabo explained her experiences of family support as being that of a team effort:

“It was more of a 50/50 thing. My dad was very supportive in terms of providing finances. He would encourage me to plait my friend’s hair at school to make extra

money. And my mom was supportive with raising her when I went to school. It was more of a team effort.” ~ Moyahabo

The above recollections speak to Singh and Naicker’s (2019:568) claim that the presence of family support, may have a vast effect on the reduction of stigma on adolescent mothers as well as act as driver of reaching broader goals of gender equality. In addition, it can be said that the involvement and cooperation of parents and families, contributes to a positive environment that could lead to the successful reintegration of adolescent mothers into school (Matlala et al. 2014; Mjwara and Maharaj 2018). Whilst parents and family support maybe crucial, Mjwara and Maharaj (2018: 134) have also cautioned the additional financial burden that the children bring for the families.

As explained above with Modiegi, she was not able to study after completing school as her mom was too old to get a job, so she sought employment immediately after completing grade 12.

5.7.3. Teacher support and encouragement

Nkosi and Pretorius (2019: 111) have asserted that when educators provide adequate support to pregnant adolescents and mothers, they become the most important motivators and enablers for them to stay in school before and after giving birth. This comes against the backdrop of the potentially scary and overwhelming demands that can be brought on by schooling and parenting.

Mmathabo and Matshidiso detailed the treatment that they received from their teachers.

“After giving birth, the teacher who they called to speak to me explained that just because I have a child it does not mean I have to dropout and there is always a life after being a mother. She would give a motivational talk to say at least if I have matric, I can still do something, and I do not have to give up on life” ~ Mmathabo

“My favourite teacher would give me food and offer her car to take me home. She wanted me to study and never wanted me to miss school. She was very supportive, and she would give me money to buy to get textbooks and school necessities.” ~ Mafoko

For mothers like Matshidiso, she had to deal with a disabled child, and she had spoken to her teacher about her child's condition. This put her at ease as the teacher was accommodating. Her recollection speaks to the accommodating nature of the teacher:

"I had a teacher who knew about my child's condition. During exams and at school, I was allowed to have my phone on me in case someone called regarding my child. My child has special needs and the teacher understood." ~ Matshidiso

The attitude of educators and provision of support provided by schools and educators can therefore not be underestimated in easing the pressures that adolescent mothers can experience in school. The above recollections further speak to the literature previously discussed by Bhana et al (2010:872) that educators' awareness, sensitivity and support towards pregnant adolescent and mothers could have serious long-term effects on the adolescent mothers' ability to reach their educational goals.

5.8. Unsuccessful reintegration into high school

Whilst we have identified overlapping factors between former adolescent mothers who were successfully and unsuccessfully reintegrated into high school, it is important to also try to explain why some former adolescent mothers were not successfully reintegrated into high school.

5.8.1. Reasons for leaving high school.

When asked why they left school, there were mixed responses ranging from just a loss of interest in school, misinformation from school educators as well as being tired:

"School was demanding and managing household duties and childcare was a lot. I was under a lot of pressure." ~ Mamello

"It was just naughtiness. There is no valid reason why I left. Perhaps it is because I had failed once and by then I was always just tired. So, I just left." ~ Mmathapelo

"I left because I wanted to care for my child and there was no one to help me take care of my child. My family told me that I will have to make a plan." ~ Mapula

“I was being punished by my family because they were saying, how was I going back to school when I have a baby?” ~ Mosela

Mosela’s reasons for leaving school can be linked to Chigona and Chetty (2008:272) who suggest that parents who gave up on the adolescent mothers, did not consider creating an environment in which the adolescent mothers could continue to learn. Without the support of parents or family, learners fall behind in school due to the demands of parenting causing a negative ripple effect on their social and academic wellbeing (Bhana et al. 2010, Willan 2013, Singh and Naicker 2019). Grant and Hallman (2008) put emphasis on resources being one of the main determinants for adolescent mothers to return to school.

Most of the young mothers left school a year or two after returning. There were some frustrations in that the various responsibilities took a toll on them. According to Chigona and Chetty (2008:264), when adolescent mothers continued with school it could sometimes be overwhelming and ‘prove to be an unyielding burden’ especially in-home environments that are not supportive or conducive for the adolescent mothers:

“After giving birth, I went back to school. I repeated grade 10. In grade 11, I felt that school was not working for me and it was too heavy. So, I felt like the college was a better place based on the information I received from school. So, I left in grade 11. I never went to the college because the information I got from school was wrong” - Mamello

“I left school in March. I was home for 3 months. I never took a gap year. Then in 2009 I left school after 4 years after I had my baby.” ~ Mmathapelo

“I left school after giving birth and I never went back. I tried to go to the local college when my child was 2 years.” ~ Mapula

For Mamello, she felt like her alternative study options were jeopardized by the misinformation received from her high school. Some of the mothers explained the duration after leaving school as a gap year before they started working or looking for work. This time enabled them to take care of their children.

Without support from family and limited financial and non-financial resources, the mothers who were unsuccessfully reintegrated and had to take on the parenting role on a full-time basis:

“I stayed at home for almost a whole year as I hadn’t decided what I wanted to do. I got a job at McDonalds. At first it was fun, and I did not have stress, then my family said that now that I am working, I can take care of my child and that is when I realized that the money, I was getting was too little. Between the money spent on childcare and transport I was not bringing any money home and I was getting into debt. So, I decided to leave and sat home whilst in debt. My brother-in-law tried to help me with my debt when I was still working at McDonalds, I was saving for a learner’s license and my brother-in-law tried to help me and he helped me with the lessons. ”-Mamello

“I sat home for two years doing nothing. I used to play basketball whilst at home. “~ Mmathapelo

“I have just been taking care of children. That is all I have been doing.” ~ Mapula

“I went to study Systems Development at Academy International. I was also looking for work.” ~ Mosela

The effects of this lack of support as explained in a study conducted by Malahlela and Chireshe (2013), could drive the adolescent mother and child further into what they have termed a “viscous cycle of poverty and ignorance.”

5.8.2. Adolescent motherhood and school performance

For some adolescent mothers, the pressures of schooling and parenting weighed heavy on their ability to multi-task. What is more, some mothers were never able to return to school because of the lack of family support. The recollections of Mamello, Mapula and Mosela make mention of this:

“There would be times where everything was heavy on me. I would have a lot of assignments. I would have to choose between my child and schoolwork, and obviously I would choose my child.” ~Mamello

“I left school because I wanted to take care of my child. There was no one at home to help me take care of the child. My family said to me that I would have to find my own plan.” ~ Mapula

“I got punishment from my family. How was I going to go back to school with a baby?”

~ Mosela

The above experiences speak to Malahlela and Chireshe (2013), who postulate adolescent mothers were able to return to school provided that there was parental support after the birth. The absence of this support would make it difficult for mothers to return to school following the birth of the child.

5.8.3. Prospects of continuing with school

Some of the mothers who did not successfully complete grade 12 sought to find alternatives. They went to colleges to try and get qualifications. Furthermore, some of the mothers expressed a desire to want to complete their grade 12 because they realised the lack of opportunities when they do not possess a matric certificate:

“I think about going to school a lot. Because it is difficult to get work and to do other things to support myself.” ~ Mapula

“I have a love for children, and I know what I have been through when I was in school. It is disheartening to see children going astray and so that is when I approached the local counsellor, to go to schools and motivate learners continuously and not just on a once off basis. The initial project failed but I really wish we could make it work. But in the next year I also want to do hospitality.” ~ Mamello

Taking the above into consideration, it is clear that whilst some former adolescent mothers were not successfully reintegrated into the high school system, they still wanted to continue learning. There was also a realization from some of the mothers that acquiring a grade 12 qualification was essential for them to participate in the labour market. Those mothers who were unemployed and in between jobs, they expressed the need to continue schooling, with the hopes of empowering themselves and improving their current living situations.

5.9 Conclusion

Adolescent pregnancy and motherhood as experienced by young women could be a positive or negative experience. The positive experiences as explained in the words of the participants, challenge the existing body of knowledge which paints adolescent pregnancy and motherhood

as a social issue in which young women are doomed for failure. The mothers expressed a desire to finish school in order to do better for themselves and challenge what society has deemed them to be – failures. It is worth acknowledging how the social and financial support towards pregnant adolescents and mothers became important factors in determining whether young women continued with school before and after giving birth.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

The study focused on the experiences of former adolescent mothers who lived and attended their schooling in the Atteridgeville Township of Pretoria. The broad aim of the study was to explain the conditions under which an adolescent mother is able to successfully or unsuccessfully be reintegrated into the schooling system. This chapter presents the conclusions from the study and highlights the limitations and recommendations that could serve as guidelines for future research and work for educators and healthcare providers in dealing with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

6.2. Key findings and arguments

This study considered and argued that reintegration is a process that starts the moment a female learner discovered that she was pregnant until she returned and had to manage with a routine and expectations. Through the findings, it is evident that dealing with adolescent pregnancy and motherhood requires various interventions that involve schools, family and the community to ensure the best possible chances for successful reintegrated into high school.

6.2.1. Reactions to pregnancy by adolescent mothers and support by father

In analyzing the reactions of the former adolescent mothers, it can be said that some participants, although having some information from external sources, were oblivious to the consequences that would follow from having unprotected sex like adolescent pregnancy. These reactions are similar to other studies (see Kaufman et al. 2001; Ehlers 2003; Panday et al. 2009; Mchunu et al. 2012; Masemola-Yende and Mataboge 2015). Furthermore, research by Willard (2013:28) on the use of contraceptives, revealed that there were still significant gaps in literature on the knowledge of contraceptives by teenagers.

When asked about the support provided by the children's fathers, there were mixed reactions. For majority of the mothers, the children's fathers were absent but living. They did not provide support for the mothers after pregnancy. Some of the fathers were in denial of the pregnancy and they did not want to accept responsibility for the child. Family intervention was needed for

some mothers for the fathers to accept responsibility by approaching the paternal family to accept and pay damages. One respondent expressed that the father was initially supportive towards the child, however due to the child not sharing the same surname with the father, the family stopped the child support. Three mothers expressed how different partners became supportive of their children despite not being biological fathers of the children.

6.2.2. Adolescent pregnancy and motherhood as motivation and empowerment for mothers to uplift themselves out of poverty.

The findings have shown that the former adolescent mothers had a determination to better lives before and after pregnancy. They were all aware of the responsibility of being mothers and ensuring that their children received the best care possible despite the social challenges they encountered. These findings contribute to the argument that adolescent motherhood does not always have to be viewed in a negative light for those affected by it. The type of family and school support available is key in motivating learners' confidence to return to school before and after giving birth.

6.2.3. Reactions to pregnancy by families

Looking at the reactions from the families, it is evident that each case remains subjective and that the family dynamics and circumstances will determine how families react and come to support the pregnant adolescents and mothers. The reactions ranged from disappointment and anger, to supportive and open, as well as those parents or relatives who did not react. Some of the former adolescent mothers expressed that while their families were initially angry and disappointed, they provided support to adolescent mothers once the children were born. This is similar to Mjwara and Maharaj (2017) who reported similar findings.

Chigona and Chetty (2008: 278) have cautioned that in situations where parents become angry or disappointed by the actions of their children, they too may need counselling to help them process the situation and for them to be able to support their children during and after the pregnancy.

Support from the children's paternal side was also noted in the findings as key in the former adolescent mothers being able to cope with the demands of school and parenting. Some of the

paternal families would offer financial and non-financial support to the mothers and their children.

Without adequate resources and family support, some mothers were forced to make a decision to leave school in order to take care of their children. Coping with demands of schooling and parenting was sometimes experienced negatively by mothers, especially in the absence of support from families and schools (Naidoo et al. 2019).

6.2.4. Educators role in facilitating successful reintegration

Throughout this study, it was clear that educators' support was important as some of the former adolescent mothers expressed that supportive teachers made it easier for them to get through school before and after giving birth. The support sometimes came from educators who did not teach the former adolescent mothers but expressed concern for the pregnant adolescents and mothers. This speaks to Bhana et al. (2010; 878) who noted that, even though educators have to deal with demands of their profession as teachers, they still support pregnant adolescents and mothers even though much of this support is often unrewarded, unacknowledged and invisible.

On the other hand, there were cases where educators' actions and attitudes had a negative impact on the learners. Without knowledge of policies to protect pregnant adolescents in school, the learner decided to leave and the family never intervened. With this in mind, it is important that educators are sensitized to the needs of pregnant adolescents and mothers to ensure that they are encouraged to stay in school before and after giving birth. This can be supported by recommendations of various scholars who assert that educators can act as important motivators and enablers for pregnant adolescents to stay at school before and after childbirth (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019).

The support that former adolescent mothers in the study received from educators, echoes other scholars accounts (Malahlela and Chireshe 2013, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019), that educators could play a positive role in ensuring that pregnant adolescents and mothers stay in school.

6.2.5. The state of the Curriculum on Sex Education (CSE)

Majority of the mothers spoke of CSE in relation to campaigns that were brought to the school. Some of the adolescent mothers explained that when speaking about topics on sex education

learners would laugh and not take it seriously. This is similar to the study conducted by Mayeza and Vincent (2018:473) who report that learners would avoid the awkwardness brought on by the subject by using humour. The use of humour can be seen as a defence mechanism to avoid the awkwardness brought on by speaking about topics that relate to sex education. The realities of having unprotected sex only become clear for many of the young women only once they have fallen pregnant.

6.2.6 Intersectionality: Intertwining identities and social categories

Looking at the concepts of motherhood and adolescence, the point at which former adolescent mothers had to step out of their role as adolescents and take on the responsibility of being young mothers, can be considered a turning point for all of them. All pregnancies were unplanned and left the former adolescent mothers initially in a state of shock. The findings have shown that the former adolescent mothers did not fall pregnant or step into their role of mother due to cultural practices and traditions in which they had to prove their womanhood to show they were mature, fertile or to secure marriage. This is in contrast to what some studies such as Kaufman et al. 2001, Bhana et al. 2010, Mokwena et al. 2016) have noted about adolescent pregnancy and motherhood.

In understanding the concept of motherhood as posed in the framework, adolescent mothers can be seen to be taking responsibility by being responsible young women, taking mothering seriously. They were pursuing dominant constructions of motherhood (Macleod 2001). This is in contrast to the literature and preconceived ideas on the image of motherhood, which paint young mothers as unskilled because of their “youthfulness” and unable to fulfil this role (Macleod 1999b). Of course, the mothers still experienced stigma because of age.

According to Cense and Ganzevoort (2019:570), “being pregnant is not just a narrative but also a bodily experience”. On embodying the pregnancy, the findings and literature, help us to understand how the adolescent mothers experience the pregnancy in the face of a society that considers adolescent pregnancy and parenthood a taboo. What is more, society ensures that young women feel this embodiment through the shame, disgrace and stigma they attach to adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. The examples below capture Cense and Ganzevoort’s (2019) assertion that physical embodiment of the pregnancy alludes to the “experience of living in, perceiving, and experiencing the world from the physical and material place of our bodies”.

For some of the mothers, examples were made of them in the home and at school. Mamello, experienced this body shaming with a teacher who exposed her stomach to her classmates and the school. In addition, some of the participants pointed out that teachers would use them as examples of what would happen if adolescents fell pregnant and the consequences that would follow of teenage sexual behaviour. Teachers tried to separate motherhood as a social identity from adolescence as a social category by shaming female learners.

For participants like Mosela, her family simply did not assist her with the baby, which meant she had to drop out of school to take care of her child, alluding to the idea that you could not take care of a child and be an adolescent learner simultaneously. This intersection, speaks to the literature (Chigona and Chetty 2008, Bhana et al 2010, Willian 2013, Cense and Ganzevoort 2019, Macleod 2001) in the framework on the how constructions of adolescence and motherhood may clash. In addition, it can show why society may find it hard for these roles to co-exist, especially when considering other factors like: the construction of adolescents as innocent; their families' socio-economic status, which may make it hard for them to get access to additional caregivers in the face of them having to take on the school learner role.

The framework helps explain Bolweg 's (2012) the need to acknowledge the multiple intertwined identities and oppressions, that adolescent mothers carry throughout their pregnancy and as mothers, as well as trying to navigate the school learner role ensuring that they maintain their academic success. Furthermore, in working through these multiple identities and oppressions, they have to continuously work through negotiating the conflicting constructions, their space and proving that they cannot be defined by just the adolescent mother role but rather strategically negotiating to prove that they can rise beyond the stigma. They sought to be good mothers who are capable of completing school and being able to provide for themselves and their children.

Looking at the role of culture and women embodying the pregnancy, this brought about a lot of shame for their families, rendering them *damaged*. Such cultural practices I argue, continue to devalue women. The financial compensation in the form of *inhlawulo* for a woman who has had children outside of marriage, can sometimes have a negative impact on the mother and child, especially in the case where the father or paternal side does not accept the child. This removes responsibility from the paternal side of the child's family. The construction of certain rules and practices like accepting and paying *inhlawulo*, legitimizes the idea that should a man

not accept responsibility for the child, they can live without maintain their children if legal steps are not pursued.

The findings have shown the various intertwined social categories that adolescent mothers may have to negotiate. In this study, some of the former adolescent mothers strived to be good mothers despite the challenging circumstances they had to endure in their roles as school learners and adolescent mothers. For those who were not successfully reintegrated, they sought to better their conditions and complete school, as they believed that it was the only way to be successful and to be financially secure in order to provide for their children.

6.3. Policy implications

Taking the literature review and experiences of former adolescent mothers into consideration, the Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy (2007) must be developed further to protect learners, parents and educators. There is a need to critically review the policy guidelines and ensure that pregnant adolescents and mothers are made aware of the measures that have been put in place to protect them as learners and adolescent mothers. From the study, it is evident that the adolescent mothers were not aware of the policy and measures put in place to protect them.

Furthermore, there is a need to expand on the way in which the various departments are to be involved in enforcing the policy and disbursing adequate resources and training to educators to effectively manage teenage pregnancy and parenthood within schools. The Department of Basic Education should work together with the Department of Health to develop workshops and courses that would equip educators with the training, skills and resources to be able to assist pregnant adolescents and mothers, minimizing the risk of complications and dangers when dealing with pregnant learners.

With the recommendations suggested through a wide variety of scholarly work, it is important to note that adequate support from educators needs to come from a practical translation in the policies set out on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood to help educators facilitate support whilst also protecting them as professional educators and protecting the learners before and after giving birth (Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019).

6.4. Limitations and Recommendations

6.4.1. Limitations

The following study was conducted in Atteridgeville township, in Pretoria Gauteng and cannot be generalised. Furthermore, the study was limited to a small sample of former adolescent mothers who had experiences of adolescent pregnancy and motherhood at different times. Therefore, the findings do not permit for generalisation to other townships or provinces within South Africa. However, the study has given voice to former adolescent mothers and tried to highlight the everyday negotiations they were involved in.

6.4.2. Recommendations

Revised Curriculum of Sexual Education

There is a need for a revised curriculum that enables learners to ask and speak freely about sex education. To this end, campaigns need to be continuously assessed to ensure learners understand the consequences of engaging in unprotected sex and know how to access to family planning information. Through the former adolescent mothers' accounts as well as existing literature, it is therefore recommended that education on sex and sexuality be deliberate and unambiguous in Life Orientation.

Educator training and development

Through the analysis of the former adolescent mothers' experiences and the literature, it can be said that there is a need for in-service training which focuses on educators' understanding of the changes and developments that pregnant adolescents and mothers experience (Chigona and Chetty 2007, Chigona and Chetty 2008, Mpanza and Nzima 2010, Matlala et al. 2014, Nkosi and Pretorius 2019).

Furthermore, educators need to be provided with workshops and resources that would ease their concerns around pregnant adolescents' schooling and how to ensure they are able to assist them in the event of an emergency. With such training, the realities of dealing with pregnant adolescents and mothers may be explored. Furthermore, this could provide a platform for educators to make meaningful contributions to policy and ensure that they are able to make learners aware of the rights in place to protect them.

Provision of support by families and community

Counselling services should be provided by schools or through community social workers for pregnant adolescents and mothers as well as their parents. Through counselling, families may be able to provide more support to the young women as they are reintegrated into the schooling system. The use of counselling, may also facilitate a platform for parents and families to encourage adolescent mothers to stay in school and empower them to fulfil their career aspiration in order to support their children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A -Interview Schedule: One on One Interviews on Experiences of Adolescent Mothers

A, Biographical Data

- Age:
- Where were, you born?
- Area, Province, Country
- How long have you stayed in Atteridgeville?
- Child (ren):
- Status of the relationship with the father of the child (ren):

Single	Married	Never Married	Divorced	Widowed	Other: (Specify)
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- **Highest educational level:**

Level	Specific level achieved
High school grade	
College/Technikon	
University	
Other: (please specify)	

B, School experiences:

- Which High School did you attend?
- How was your experience at school?
- What were your plans after completing grade 12?

C, Experiences of Adolescent Motherhood at school:

- How old were you when you fell pregnant?
- What was your first reaction when you found out you were pregnant?
- Who did you tell? When and Why?
- How did the person/people you told react?
- How did the teachers and learners react when they found out?

- Were you aware of the policies put in place by the government to protect you as a pregnant teenager and adolescent mother?
- Did any health officials visit your school to discuss teenage pregnancy?

D, Experiences of Adolescent Motherhood at home:

- What was the reaction from your family when they found out?
- Did your family support you? How? If they did not support you, how did you manage?
- When did you tell your child’s father?
- Did your child’s father support you before and after giving birth? If yes, how? If no, how did you manage?

E, Teenage Mothers’ Experiences:

E1: Successfully Reintegrated Former Adolescent Mothers	E2: Unsuccessfully Reintegrated Former Adolescent Mothers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about your day-to-day experiences during pregnancy while at school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arriving on time, socialising, tests and examinations etc. • How did the school support you before and after giving birth? • How did individual educators treat you before and after giving birth? • How did your peers treat you before and after giving birth? • Did you have any other source of support? • Can you tell me about your day-to-day experiences after giving birth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time management ○ School work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me about your day-to-day experiences during pregnancy while at school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arriving on time, socialising, tests and examinations etc. • How did the school support you before and after giving birth? • How did individual educators treat you before and after giving birth? • How did your peers treat you before and after giving birth? • Did you have any other source of support? • Did you go back to school? • When did you leave school? • Can you tell me about your day-to-day experiences after giving birth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time management

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clinic visits ○ Caring for the child <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What motivated you to stay in school before and after giving birth? • Did you study further after completing high school? If yes, what did you study? If not, why not? • Is there anything that you would like to add that I did not ask? • Do you have any questions for me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School work ○ Clinic visits ○ Caring for the child <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you leave school before giving birth or after giving birth? • Did you receive any alternative training after leaving school? • Since you left high school before completion, what did you do while at home? • Do you have plans to study further? What would you like to study? • Is there anything that you would like to add that I did not ask? • Do you have any questions for me?
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Thank you

Appendix B – Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Conditions for a Successful/Unsuccessful Reintegration Process back to High School:

Former Adolescent Mothers' Recollections/Reflections.

My name is Onthatile Mokoena. I am enrolled at the University of Pretoria for a MSocSci Degree in Sociology. I would like to request your participation in the research for my Master's degree. I would like to request your participation in the research for my Master's degree. My research is interested in explaining the conditions that contribute to adolescent mothers' successfully/unsuccessfully reintegration into the school system. The research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of your experiences when you returned to school after giving birth to your child. Your participation will be helpful because there is limited research focusing on the stories of former high school mothers. The responses you give may shed light for scholars and policymakers on how to better assist adolescent mothers to successfully reintegrate and complete high school.

The information from the research will be available to academics in the form of a dissertation as well as further research, public presentations, conference papers and media interviews, extra care will be taken to protect the participants identity. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to leave the interview at any time. There will be no consequences. The interview will be tape recorded with your permission. Your name will not be tape recorded and will not be used in the final dissertation. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. All the information you provide will be kept confidential. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the interviews. All interviews and transcripts will be protected by a password. In accordance with the Research Ethics Rules of the University of Pretoria, the recordings will be kept for a period of 15 years in a locked safe at the Department of Sociology, University of Pretoria. There will be no monetary rewards for participating in the study. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for considering my request.

Should you require more information, you may call me on 083 299 3017 or speak to my supervisor Ms. Vangile Bingma at vangile.bingma@up.ac.za or 012 420 4897. If you agree to participate, please sign the consent form attached.

With Thanks

Onthatile Mokoena

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Conditions for a Successful/Unsuccessful Reintegration Process back to High School:

Former Adolescent Mothers' Recollections/Reflections.

1. **Purpose of the Study:** The study is investigating the conditions that facilitated the successful/unsuccessful reintegration process of adolescent mother's return to high school. It focuses on adolescent mothers between 20 and 27 years, who were able to complete their high school education and those who were not able to complete high school.
2. **Procedures:** I understand that I will be asked to answer questions about my experiences of reintegration before and after giving birth. The interview will be scheduled at my convenience and will be conducted at the Atteridgeville Community Hall, which is a central and safe space to meet and has private spaces to conduct interviews.
3. **Risks:** Should I feel distressed; I will inform the interviewer. Information about the South African Depression and Anxiety Group counselling services has been communicated to me. Contact information SADAG has been communicated to me. SADAG: 8am-8pm Monday to Sunday - 011 234 4837 and 24hr Helpline -0800 456 789.
4. **Benefits:** I understand that there are no direct benefits to me participating in the research and that there will be no monetary reward for participating. However, the research may assist researchers to gain a better understanding of how adolescent mothers can be supported to complete high school.
5. **Participant's rights:** I am aware that I can withdraw from the study at any time and I do not have to answer questions that I am not comfortable with.
6. **Confidentiality:** The researcher has made me aware that my responses will be tape recorded and transcribed to enable her to accurately capture your experiences. The transcripts will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisor, Ms. Vangile Bingma. Furthermore, all tape recordings will be kept for 15 years in the University of Pretoria's Sociology Department archives. All interviews and transcripts will be protected by a password. I am also aware that my name and the results of the study will remain confidential and anonymous throughout the study.

I understand my rights as a research participant and I voluntarily consent to participate in the research undertaken by Onthatile Mokoena.

Participants Signature: _____

Date: _____

Interviewers Signature: _____

Date: _____

Tape Recording Consent:

I am willing for the interview to be taped recorded. My name will not be mentioned in the tape recording.

I understand the purpose of the need for the interview to be tape recorded.

Participants Signature: _____

Date: _____

Interviewers Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C - University of Pretoria Ethics Approval



2 September 2019

Dear Miss OM Mokoena

Project Title: Conditions for a Successful/Unsuccessful Reintegration Process back to High School: Former Adolescent Mothers' Recollections/Reflections.
Researcher: Miss OM Mokoena
Supervisor: Ms VD Bingma
Department: Sociology
Reference number: 12325351 (HUM003/0619)
Degree: Masters

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was **approved** by the Research Ethics Committee on 29 August 2019. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maxi Schoeman'.

Prof Maxi Schoeman
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotho

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof MME Schoeman (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Harris; Mr A Bizo; Dr L Blokland; Dr K Booys; Dr A-M de Beer; Ms A dos Santos; Dr R Fassel; Ms KT Govinder Andrew; Dr E Johnson; Dr W Kelleher; Mr A Mohamed; Dr C Putterill; Dr D Beylunn; Dr M Soer; Prof E Tallard; Prof V Thebe; Ms B Tsebe; Ms D Mokalaa

