

**A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS TO
MAINSTREAMING OF PREGNANT LEARNERS IN FORMAL EDUCATION**

by

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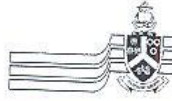
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DEDICATION

First, I dedicate this research to God for all the protection and provision during the study. Second, the study is dedicated to my dear wife, Molina, for her understanding and endurance during the period of my studies. Third, I dedicate this work to all the members of my extended family, to emulate my late hardworking father, Sabhuku Vudege Runhare.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore how social institutions in South Africa and Zimbabwe respond to the mainstreaming of pregnant learners in formal education. A case study was used as the strategy of inquiry. Utilising a phenomenological, social constructivist and interpretivist lens and guided by a theoretical framework of action science theory, this exploratory qualitative study set out to investigate and compare how various stakeholders in South Africa and Zimbabwe respond to the policy of mainstreaming pregnant learners in schools. Data collection methods took the form of focus group and key participant semi-structured interviews, document analysis and a researcher observation and reflective journal. Two research sites comprised the case study. The sample at each of the identified sites consisted of 12 pregnant and former pregnant learners; 12 mainstream learners; 6 parents/legal guardians; 6 teachers; 6 community representatives on the school governing body. Data analysis consisted of a mix of hermeneutic, content and discourse analysis. Three findings emanated from this study. First, the socio-cultural beliefs, norms, practices and expectations of the community about pregnancy and ideal motherhood were more influential governing variables to educational access and participation of pregnant teenagers than the official school policy. Second, educators at both sites were found to have inadequate capacity to assist pregnant learners with schooling. Third, the South African school was found to provide more access to pregnant learners because of the more liberal and open response to teenage pregnancy. In contrast the conservative tendency to conceal the problem was observed at the Zimbabwean site. This study revealed that institutional policies that do not take into consideration the social, cultural and lived experiences of the relevant stakeholders are difficult to implement. The proposition is that there is usually a split between policy and practice, and that policy can be nothing more than political symbolism. An all-inclusive and consultative approach to policy formulation processes is recommended as an intervention strategy that could be used to counteract the problem.

KEY WORDS

Teenage pregnancy

Mainstreaming

Responsiveness

Action science theory

Theories-of-action

Single motherhood

Formal education

Institution

Governing variables

Theories-in-use

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ACRONYMS

ACRWC:	African Charter for the Right and Welfare of the Child
AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficient Syndrome
B.Ed:	Bachelor of Education
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DoE:	Department of Education
EFA:	Education for All
ELRC:	Education, Labour Relations Council
EO	Education Officer
EPC:	Education Policy Consortium
F G:	Focus Group
FAWE:	Forum African for Women Educators
FET:	Further Education and Training
GoZ:	Government of Zimbabwe
HIV:	Human Immune Virus
HoD	Head of Department
HSRC:	Human Sciences Research Council
LO:	Life Orientation
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
MEC:	Member of the Executive Council
MoESC:	Ministry of Education Sport and Culture
NFS:	New Feature School
NGO:	Non-governmental Organisation
SA:	South Africa
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SAFAIDS:	Southern Africa Information Dissemination Services
SASA:	South African Schools Act
SCC:	Second Chance Club
SDC:	School Development Committee

SGB:	School Governing Body
TAPP:	Teen-Age Parenting Programmes
UDHR:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO:	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	United Nations Children’s Education Fund
WEEA:	Women’s Educational Equity Act
Zim:	Zimbabwe