

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS  
TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS:  
A CASE STUDY IN THE ELLIOTDALE SUB-DISTRICT**

**Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the degree of  
Master in Education**

**at**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

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**Date: November 2010**

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation submitted for the degree MED: Psycho-socio Issues in Education at the University of Fort Hare is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

.....

Eunice Xoliswa Konkco

DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to the Konkco family, my late father, my mother, my sisters for their encouragement, and my children for their love and support.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to everyone who contributed to the completion of this study. I also want to give special thanks to the following:

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## **ABSTRACT**

The focus for this study was to determine the factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in the Elliotdale sub-district in secondary schools, in the Eastern Cape. The researcher used the qualitative approach to obtain data from a sample of 8 pregnant learners, two departmental officials, four principals, four school governing body members, and four educators in this research. Interviews were conducted to gain first hand information regarding factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in four secondary schools in Elliotdale, a rural area of the Eastern Cape.

The theoretical construct framing this study is grounded in the theories of Bandura and Bronfenbrenner who shape an understanding of social cognitive theory and ecological systems theory. In the study poverty was a contributory factor as a result of unemployment. Ignorance, as well as the attitude of the learners towards moral values, were the major concerns and findings noted by the respondents in this study.

The study revealed that the Elliotdale district officials are determined to find ways of eliminating the rate of teenage pregnancy in secondary schools; however, the approach by the district towards the implementation of the existing programmes is not effective. The school principals are unaware of the current policies on preventative measures regarding teenage pregnancy in schools.

## ACRONYMS

DEO	District Education Officer
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
EDoE	Eastern Cape Department of Education
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
NMF	Nelson Mandela Foundation
NRC-IOM	National Research Council and Institute of Medicine
MEC	Minister of Education Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
SMT	School Management Team
SADoE	South African Department of Education
SADTU	South African Democratic Union
SGB	School Governing Body
STD	Sexual Transmitted Disease
WCED	Western Cape Department of Education
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African School's Act
SADC	South African Developing Countries

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

Teenage pregnancy, which is predominant in rural areas, apparently poses a threat to female education. This study investigated factors that contributed towards teenage learner pregnancy in secondary schools, in the Elliotdale district in the Eastern Cape. Current research shows that teenage learner pregnancy is now on the increase in South African schools (NRC-IOM, 2007). Chapter one introduces us to factors that contribute to teenage learner pregnancy and covers the following sections of the study: the background of the study; statement of the research problem and questions; purpose of the study; research objectives; assumptions; significance of the study; rationale of the study; definition of terms; delimitations of the study; limitations of the study; definition of terms; and chapter outline.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The context of my study is in Elliotdale, a rural district in the Eastern Cape, where poverty is evident within the community. Parents are keen to send their children to school despite numerous challenges such as poverty and teenage learner pregnancy. In most developing countries, teenage pregnancy has been one of the major hindrances to educational access and gender equality (Sunday Times News, 2007). In South Africa, for example, current research shows that teenage pregnancy is reaching crisis proportions in some schools,

mostly in the rural areas (EMIS, 2006, 2007 and 2008; NRC-IOM, 2005; Sunday Times, 2007). A recent report detailed the case of one school that had 144 pregnant pupils in 2006 (Sunday Times, 2007 as cited by Chigona and Chetty 2007). Other studies in South Africa have shown that by the age of 18, more than 30 percent of teens have given birth at least once (NRC-IOM, 2005). It is evident from the above studies that teenage pregnancy is becoming a significant barrier to girl's education.

Despite a decade of financial outlay on sex education and AIDS awareness in South Africa, recent figures released by a South African provincial education department indicate that learner pregnancies have doubled in the past year (IRIN, PlusNews, 2007). For example, the statistics released in parliament (IRIN PlusNews, 6 March (2007), show that the number of pregnant school girls increased from 1,169 in 2005 to 2,336 in 2006. In Gauteng, teenage learner pregnancy continues to be a community health problem that requires serious attention. This has implications for all the provinces in South Africa.

In a similar vein, recent statistics revealed by the Department of Education in the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) survey indicates that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is alarming in the Eastern Cape (EMIS, 2007). The same source reported that four secondary schools in Elliotdale had an alarming number of pregnant learners ranging from ages 14 to 19 years (EMIS, 2006, 2007 and 2008). Table 1.1 below shows the number of learner pregnancies in four secondary schools in Elliotdale sub-district.

Table 1.1: Teenage pregnancy in four secondary schools in Elliotdale

School	Year	Grades	No. of Female Learners	No. of Pregnant learners Age 14 to19	%
A	2006	8 and 9	106	8	7.5
B	2006	10	90	19	21
C	2007	8 and 9	101	10	10
D	2007	10	87	20	23

Eastern Cape Department of Education Dutywa EMIS data (2006).

It is clear from Table 1.1 that the rate of pregnant learners is higher in grade 10,

than in grades 8 and 9. Studies suggest that a lack of parental supervision significantly affects sexual activity (Francis, 2001). Francis states that:

*The research tells us that the vast majority of parents don't want their children to get pregnant, they don't want them to catch sexually transmitted diseases, and they don't want them to have their hearts broken. There will be a small percentage of parents who make a fuss about it, but we should be making policy that addresses the needs of the majority rather than pandering to the sentiments of a very small minority.*

The above quotation by Francis (2001) clearly confirms that the majority of parents are opposed to learners being sexually active or falling pregnant while at school. This research has focused on socio-cognitive and ecological factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy and hence advising both

parents and educators to organise awareness programmes that will conscientise the children in their care. Moral values as an aspect of community culture need to be addressed.

This study is undertaken in Elliotdale district in the Eastern Cape, where the researcher is a principal at one of the secondary schools in this study. As such, the researcher is familiar with the nature of teenage pregnancy problems that are experienced in this district. The number of boys and girls in the Elliotdale district consists of 9,215 male (boys) and 9,713 female (girls) learners with the total enrolment of 18,928 learners; there are 541 educators serving 98 schools in this particular area. There are 7 senior secondary schools ranging from grade 10 to grade 12, and 42 secondary schools ranging from grade R to grade 9, as well as 35 senior primary schools from grade R to grade 7, and 14 junior primary schools from grade R to grade 3 in this district (EDoE, 2008b). The context in this Elliotdale area reveals that most learners come from a rural area as only one junior secondary school is in a semi-urban area.

With reference to the female (girl) learners in the Elliotdale sub-district the Annual Surveys in 2008 revealed that some female learners in Elliotdale secondary schools are not residing with their parents. They stay with their relatives and guardians when they attend their grade 10 classes in a particular secondary school. The school system therefore contributes towards teenage pregnancy as learners relocate for further school studies. It is fundamental

that learners as young as 14 should stay with their parents so that they can get parental help and guidance as a family unit. The above scenario seems to make school girls vulnerable as sexual engagements such as rape and sexual abuse take place either on their way to, or from school, or in the flats where they stay alone, and sometimes when a peer group live together. This, nevertheless indicates that the youth in South Africa continue to practise risky sexual behaviours (Esterhuizen, Jinabhai, Sullivan, and Taylor 2008) due to their unstable living conditions and educational needs in rural areas.

Frank (2008) found that many youth have had their first sexual experience at age 14 or younger, even though the legal age of consent is 16. In a study about risky behaviours of high school pupils in an era of HIV and AIDS, Esterhuizen *et al.* (2008, p.395) found that, in South Africa, girls aged 15 to 19 years reported having had partners, five or more years older than themselves. Risky sexual behaviour is further compounded by the use of alcohol and drugs, which the literature reports as being associated with sexual victimisation of adolescents (Esterhuizen *et al.*, 2008).

### **1.2.1 The Government Policy on Teenage pregnancy in South Africa**

In South Africa, a policy formalised in 1996 allows pregnant school girls and mothering learners to continue schooling logistically and financially (Grant and Hallaman, 2006). The policy on teenage pregnancy in South African schools is clearly set out in the document entitled *Measures for the Prevention and the Management of Teenage learner pregnancy (2007)*, which was developed

recently and dispatched to all public schools. The document discourages school girl pregnancy; the subject Life Orientation encourage children to abstain from risky sexual behaviour since pregnant and mothering learners drop out of school, which is a risk to our society's social and economic fabric (DoE 2007). According to the previous Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, "failure to finish matric is a major cost to our society and economy, and cultural issues also make girls' school attendance a complex decision for the girls' parents" (South African Government Information, 30 August 2007). This comment by Minister Pandor implies that teenage pregnancy has a negative impact on both the society and the economy of the country.

### **1.2.2 Problems faced by pregnant learners**

The problems of teenage learner pregnancy range from ignorance to moral collapse (Jewkes,2003). However, Jewkes (2003), cautioned against drawing conclusions from incomplete data, stating that there was no systematic process for tracking learner pregnancies in South Africa and that the rising numbers were the result of previous under-reporting. According to Jewkes (2003), the assumption that teenage pregnancy is always unwanted, is incorrect. It is common for boys to encourage their girlfriends to fall pregnant as there is pressure on both sexes to prove their fertility at a young age. There is likelihood of high teenage pregnancy in these rural schools because learners travel long distances to school passing forests and shrubs on route to their homes (Jewkes, 2003). In other words due to the following problems :

(a) operational travelling teenage pregnancy seems to be a problem, (b)

socio-ecological problem are evident , as well as (c) learners are placed at risk when on foot through secluded areas on their way to school.

In their study, Wright and Associates (2000) found that Life Orientation educators felt that the major factor contributing to the increase in teenage pregnancy was a lack of comprehensive sex education provided by trained educators in schools. The same study also reports that a lack of opportunity for youth to gain more knowledge and access to contraceptive measures was a significant factor in learner pregnancies, particularly among teens living in poverty. This implies that even though educators observe that the curriculum is relevant; teachers may not be comfortable to teach the content of the curriculum in schools. Hence teachers may avoid teaching controversial topics for fear of criticism from parents. Other factors such as embarrassment, lack of knowledge, poor communication and an inexperienced level of parenting skills, differences in values about sex and dating, and the desire to avoid conflict have been implicated by the poor parental participation in sex education (Department of Health, 2001). Regardless of these factors, most parents still acknowledge that their children need basic sex education. Ozonous & Wodarki (1995, p. 13 and 433) emphasise that parents think it is improper to discuss sex with their children. Bragg (1997, p. 47) states that few parents discuss media portrayals and moral values of sex with their children. The implication is that adolescents spend hours conversing about sex with their peers, yet often do not discuss sexual issues openly with their parents.

Kunene (1995, p. 48) states that teenagers are more at risk of unplanned pregnancies if they communicate poorly, or if they are exposed to sexual awareness through advertising and the influence of the media. The same source indicates that teenage boys revealed that girls sell sex to older men in exchange for money. This confirms the idea that teenagers are easily influenced and act submissively even though they know the consequences.

According to Reddy and McCouley (2003), 41 % of learners aged 14 to 19 (N=10699) had sex, and the age of initiation of sexual activity was under 14 years for 14 % of them. Among the learners that have been sexually active 54% had more than one sexual partner in the past, 14 % had sex after consuming alcohol or drugs, only 29 % practised consistent condom usage, 16 % had fallen pregnant, and overall 72 % had received education regarding HIV/AIDS. The above findings show that most teenagers rarely use condoms when having sex in South Africa (Reddy and McCouley 2003).

Given the misery that teenage pregnancy can generate, the government has taken a pragmatic approach to the problem. Rather than insisting that teenage pregnancy is a social evil that must be stamped out, it has opted to improve the availability of contraception, and educate young people about sex and sexual relationships to ensure that those who become parents can have the support they need to ensure that their children flourish as well as have success to completing their education (Cooper, 2002). South African youth

have cited that their parents ought to be the most influential source of sex education predisposed to them (Baillie and Steinerg, 1995).

Research shows that the risk of teenage pregnancy is also high with one-third of learners under 20 reported as being pregnant or giving birth. (Mantel,2006). As such, most teenage learner pregnancy in South Africa is non-marital and unintended. Barring both medical and physical concerns, problems of teenage pregnancy arise from individual, familial, and social factors. These are not limited to culture, religion, moral values, or beliefs. Mantel, (2006) states that poor academic performance by the children of teenage mothers has also been noted; with many of their children more likely than average to fail to graduate from secondary school, to be held back to grade level, or to score lower on standardised tests. Very little is known, particularly in the Eastern Cape, about socio-cognitive or ecological factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy. There is a lack of statistical data reflecting the situation contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Eastern Cape secondary schools. Hence, there is a need for research to investigate and reflect on mitigating factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools being in a rural area.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The argument in this study is that teenage pregnancy poses social, economic, and health problems and hinders access to education for school girls, because most of them drop out of school. In order to address the problem of

teenage pregnancy, this study intended to reveal mitigating factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in secondary schools in the Elliotdale sub-district of the Eastern Cape. Despite the availability of preventative measures such as condoms, injections, pill, and sex education, school girls continue to fall pregnant at school level in South African schools. Studies in the Eastern Cape show that teenage pregnancy is now on the increase (EMIS, 2008; Sunday Times, 2007). Recent research figures show that the rate of teenage learner pregnancy in the Eastern Cape increased from 3 264 in 2005 to 5 015 in 2007 and, is still on the increase (Sunday Times, 2007). This research hopefully contributes to a deeper understanding of the mitigating factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in a rural area of the Eastern Cape.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions have been addressed in this study:

### **1.4.1 Main Research Question**

1.4.1.1 What are the factors that contribute towards teenage Pregnancy in secondary schools in the rural area of Elliotdale?

### **1.4.2 Sub Research Questions**

1.4.2.1 How do the socio-economic conditions contribute towards learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools?

1.4.2.2 What do pregnant learners consider as factors contributing towards their own situation

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to identify factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in secondary schools in the Elliotdale sub-district. Relevant literature reviewed will ascertain how the researcher identified factors contributing to the exploitation of school girls when falling pregnant at such a vulnerable age.

## **1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study seeks to determine:

- 1.6.1 The socio-economic context and conditions of pregnant secondary school girls in Elliotdale.
- 1.6.2 The employment status of parents.
- 1.6.3 The domestic situation of learners and their living conditions at home or elsewhere.
- 1.6.4 What pregnant learners consider as factors that contribute towards their own situation.
- 1.6.5 The moral values, beliefs, and attitudes of parents, the community, and peers towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools.

## **1.7 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The researcher assumes that:

- 1.7.2 There are defining mitigating factors within the rural community that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in schools.
- 1.7.1 Teenage pregnancy is a barrier against the completion of girls' education

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study will contribute towards policy-making by stakeholders determining effective measures to limit teenage pregnancy in schools. The study will also provide the necessary information to learners to educate and guide themselves towards preventing teenage pregnancy. The study will enhance the re-alignment of the DoE policy document in relation to pregnant learners' continuation of schooling. The study also hopes to regenerate good morals and values among learners in schools and within the rural community at large.

## **1.9 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

The researcher was inspired to carry out this study due to the alarming increase in the number of pregnant learners in our schools, despite DoE policies and the availability of contraceptives such as injections and condoms. This makes these school girls vulnerable to promiscuous behaviour and

immoral sexual exploitation leading to unplanned pregnancies, inability to complete their schooling and the possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS. Although the DoE policies on HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy is evident through the curriculum in Life Orientation, a learning area in the current curriculum, the researcher argues that, according to personal experience as an educator in a secondary school, there is still no reduction in teenage pregnancy in rural schools. These issues prompted the researcher to investigate, conceptualise and develop a deeper understanding of the mitigating factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools.

#### **1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study will focus on 4 secondary schools (2 with a low rate and, 2 with a high rate of teenage learner pregnancy) in the Elliotdale district. This information will compare factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in the two types of schools. The population for this study will comprise of pregnant learners, school heads, educators, School Governing Body members in four secondary schools, as well as the education district officials, who serve in the Elliotdale sub-district Confidential purposive sampling of the schools would be undertaken in this study.

#### **1.11 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

The following terms will be defined in this study:

1.11.1 **Teenage pregnancy** refers to a girl under the age of 20 who is still at school and hence of school age going and falls pregnant.

1.11.2 **Investigation** refers to an official or formal study with an attempt to find out about something.

1.11.3 **Factors** refer to those issues that influence the conditions of a situation to change.

1.11.4 **Rural area** refer to an underdeveloped remote area

1.11.5 **Secondary schools** refer to schools from grade 7 to grade 12

## **1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study focuses on the mitigating factors contributing towards teenage pregnancy in two secondary schools in the General Education and Training (GET) and another two secondary schools in the Further Education and Training (FET) band. This study is a very confidential and sensitive issue as some learners could have been victims of sexual abuse at home or within the rural community. This study is therefore a very contentious and sensitive study to be embarking on. Hence, participation is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time, or may not even want to answer some of the sensitive questions the participants will make their own decision and choices. The research findings cannot be generalised over the whole population of school girls since the study is only dealing with a small albeit significant part of the school population, namely four secondary schools from grades 8, 9 and 10 in the rural area of Elliotdale sub-district.

### **1.13 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

**Chapter one** has covered the following introduction and the background to the study; statement of the research problem and questions; purpose of the study; research objectives; rationale of the study assumptions; significance of the study; delimitation of the study; ethical considerations; definition of terms; and limitations of the study.

**Chapter two** has covered the literature review, and the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study.

**Chapter three** has covered the research methodology of the study namely the research approach; research design; population; sample and sampling; instrumentation; validity; reliability; and trustworthiness.

**Chapter four** has covered the data collection and data analysis.

**Chapter five** is a discussion based on the research findings.

**Chapter six** is the final chapter covering the recommendations and conclusion for the study.

### **1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In conclusion, the negative impact of teenage pregnancy and its effect on the females education is a disruption for the promising future of the pregnant learners. The disturbance which the pregnancy will present in terms of interrupted schooling, and the subsequent abortion, or birth and upbringing process of the baby, are significant factors contributing to the life of a young pregnant learner. This study is concerned about the neglect of rural

environments and schooling that plays a significant role in this investigation, pertaining to teenage pregnancy at secondary schools.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on research conducted on psychosocial issues based on learner pregnancy in schools. Researchers have investigated the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy, but relatively few investigations have focused on rural adolescent populations (Bennet, Loda and Skatrud, 1998). It is, therefore, the objective of this study to investigate factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in rural secondary schools in the Elliotdale sub-district in the Eastern Cape. Mohase, (2006) states that there are changes in learner behaviour during and after the period of pregnancy, which may have an adverse effect and influence on their academic progress, such as poor performance, learner dropout, or even have the potential to become a barrier against the girl's education which may generally affect the life of the learner as a whole.

This chapter covers the following sections: the policy statements and principles on teenage pregnancy in South Africa, prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South African schools, prevalence of teenage pregnancy in the Eastern Cape, and prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in other African countries. Furthermore, the mitigating factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in South African schools, challenges faced by pregnant learners, factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in other African countries, factors contributing towards

teenage pregnancy in developed and other countries, and finally preventive strategies regarding teenage pregnancy used in South African schools, and in other African countries.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This study is guided by the social cognitive theory of Albert Bandura (1997) and Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979). Bandura's theory claims that learners learn through imitation or copying and observation. The emphasis is on the social origins of behaviour in addition to the cognitive thought processes that influence behaviour and functioning. Bandura further presents his theory that learning can occur simply through observations of models, and in the absence of influence. Bandura used the term self-efficacy to refer to a person's belief that they have behavioural competence in a particular situation (Bandura 1997). Bandura's theory implies that learners observe and imitate how their role models behave.

According to Bandura (1997), learning occurs outside the boundaries of pleasure and pain. Thus, people learn a great deal simply by watching or observing others, by reading about what people do, and by making general observations of the world. This learning may or may not be demonstrated in the form of behaviour. Parents and educators should be role models even though they can be exposed to bad behaviour from the community. Traditionally, behaviourists did not pay much attention to people's thoughts, observation, and measurable behaviour (Bandura, 1997). Bandura's theory is relevant to this

study because the social environment is the one that influences the behaviour of students through family members, friends, and colleagues.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), will also guide this study because microsystems are concerned with the individual lives, its context, the person's family, school, peer group, and neighbourhood. It is the microsystem that directs interactions with social agents such as parents, peers, and teachers. The individual is not a passive recipient of experiences in these settings but is someone who helps to construct the settings. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory suggests that human behavioural development is shaped by one's environment. This implies that the setting of the environment contributes to the behaviour of a child because the child is nurtured by this environment. Therefore Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory has a strong impact on this study as this study is contextually grounded in a rural context that plays a significant role in the contributing factors that surround teenage pregnancy.

### **2.3 Department of Education (DoE) policy statements and principles on teenage pregnancy in South Africa**

The policy on teenage pregnancy for South African public schools is clearly set out in the *Measures for Prevention and Management of Teenage learner pregnancy* (DoE, 2007, pp.1-6), disseminated by the Department of Education to all public schools in South Africa. The DoE recognises the responsibility and the influence of education hence this document aims to clarify the position regarding teenage pregnancy in public schools (DoE, 2007, p.1).

The Department of Education further emphasizes its intention to provide an environment in which learners are fully informed about reproductive matters and the risks thereof, through policies which address teenage pregnancy by means of circulated education through the life orientation subject and curriculum. The information in these documents are underpinned by three important constitutional principles: the right not to be discriminated against, the right to education, and the rights of the child (DoE, 2007).

The three important principles mentioned above give evidence that many learners in public schools misunderstand what the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* says about the rights and responsibilities (DoE, 2007, p.1). Furthermore the document takes into consideration the legal and other requirements pertaining to children and teenage learner pregnancy looking at the conditions of the new born baby and for the possibility that the learner goes back to school. The DoE documents are supported by, and supplement, *the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators* (Government Gazette No.20372 of 10 August, 1999), which states,

*“...there are high levels of “sexually” active persons within the learner population group in schools. This increases the risk of HIV transmission in schools and institutions for further education and training considerably.*

*Besides sexual education, morality, and Life Skills education being provided by educators, parents, and guardians should be encouraged to provide children with healthy morals, sexuality education, guidance,*

*sexual abstinence, and faithfulness to their partners”.*

The quotation above supports the view that parents should promote moral values by encouraging their children to adopt a healthy positive attitude towards sound morals. The motive thereof is that learners should be educated about the repercussions of unprotected or promiscuous sex. The above policy clearly outlines that parents and guardians need to play a major role in guiding their children on health, moral, and sex education issues. This would support the educators who are implementing the DoE programmes on HIV/AIDS in schools.

The Department of Education (DoE) stipulates that no learner should be re-admitted in the same year that she left school due to a pregnancy (DoE, 2007). Even though the Constitution stipulates the learners rights to education the DoE overlooked this during its intervention strategy on teenage pregnancy. This hopefully implies that the DoE is organising intervention strategies for pregnant learners to continue with their studies without being discriminated against the schools. Educators, parents, guardians, and the public should therefore morally guide learners to understand and hopefully avoid early sexual encounters, as such measures on prevention of teenage pregnancy highlights the importance of sex education (DoE, 2007). According to the DoE (2007) guidelines, learners are required to take a leave of absence from school in order to address pre- and post-natal health concerns as well as to care for the new born baby. The learner’s absence from school will affect

the learner's education negatively and that would result in lower academic performance, due to interrupted studies. In addition the guidelines state that a learner must produce a medical report declaring that the learner is fit to resume classes.

The pregnant learner should also be able to demonstrate to the school principal and School Governing Body (SGB) that proper arrangements have been made for the care and safety of the baby (DoE, 2007). These school authorities should abide by the policy in place in order to avoid any action that may constitute unfair discrimination against a pregnant learner (SASA 1996 Section 9, p.3). However, pregnant learners should also understand that some members of the school community might not readily accept the pregnancy and not be supportive of their situation because of the value systems to which they subscribe (SASA Section 9 (3), p.3). This implies that though the guidelines are to be implemented school community should be clearly capacitated to understand the implications of the departmental policies.

In a similar vein, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) policy on managing teenage pregnancy is attached to the Bill of Rights, as contained in the Constitution of Republic of South Africa , Act 108/1996, where it affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality, and freedom, including rights of children and the right to education (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) 1996, Section 29). This policy replaces the section on

teenage pregnancy contained in Circular 007/98: General Manual for the Suspension and Expulsion of Learners from public schools (excluding public schools for learners sent or transferred thereto in terms of the Child Care Act of 1993, Act 74/1993). It is therefore supporting an imperative that the school managers and governing bodies ensure that the rights and development of female learners are not curtailed and that special supporting measures are taken in respect of pregnant school girls.

### **2.3.1 Prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South African schools**

According to Richter, (2005), teenage pregnancy is a major health problem health and their in South Africa, since learners are unable to cope well with their studies. Therefore, it is important to develop an understanding of the learner's perceptions regarding factors contributing towards teenage pregnancy in our schools. According to Tolmay's (2005) study, one third of South African school girls fall pregnant before the age of 20, this leads to a high level of high school girls dropping out of school and raises the following challenges as issues in our schools:

- The inadequacy of sex education in schools: Sexual education is still confined to the classroom without parental involvement. As such, some teachers strongly believe that they are assuming parental responsibilities. The issue is controversial especially in conservative communities and needs to be integrated into the whole school development plan.

- Inadequacy of reproductive health facilities for boys and girls: Even if sex education were to improve, it would still not be accompanied by adequate reproductive health facilities for young people in both urban and rural areas.
- Blaming women: Tolmay (2005) states that the issue of learner pregnancies in schools is approached in a discriminatory way. Young girls bear the entire consequences, without the boy who fathers the children taking co-responsibilities or even sharing the burden of teenage pregnancy.

Tolmay significantly draws our attention to discrepancy between theory and practice with regards to the issue of girls returning to school. Although theoretically girls who fall pregnant at school are free to continue their schooling and, or return to school, in practice they are stigmatised or blatantly expelled, and seldom complete their education (Tolmay, 2005).

The issues raised by Tolmay (2005) imply that there is a need for stringent awareness and supporting to be implementing programmes in schools. Learners should be educated about the repercussions of teenage pregnancy in order to know more about how to abstain or avoid these sexual activities. The statistics for teenage pregnancy indicated in the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) data are directly from districts. Currently, the DoE does not have the formal monitoring systems for school girl pregnancy

necessary to collect and collate data for pregnant learners in formal schooling. Teenage pregnancy in schools is one of those subjects regarded as taboo, not newsworthy, and not worth sensationalizing because it shames the affected party, immediate relatives, school and community (IRIN PlusNews 24, 2009). Yet this study hopes to unveil the lack of knowledge through this study about teenage pregnancy.

According to IRIN PlusNews 24 (2009), the pregnancy of school girls is alarming in South African schools; for example, one secondary school in Johannesburg noting 30 cases of pregnant learners. In another instance the spate of pregnancies at Eqinisweni Secondary School in Ivory Park, Midrand, has divided teachers, with some calling for the repeal of the South African School's Act 84 of 1996. In a similar vein, Limpopo Education MEC, Aaron Motsaoleli, claims that the province is fighting a losing battle because children as young as 10 years are among those becoming pregnant, with some dropping out of school or opting for backyard abortions to escape the consequences (Chuenyane, Hlongwana and Sokana, 2008).

News 24 (2009) also indicates that the same Limpopo Education MEC, revealed that an eighteen year old Grade 10 learner at Westenburg High School in Polokwane, who wished to remain anonymous, fell pregnant in 2008. The learner tried to have an abortion but the process went awry leading to her unexpectedly giving birth in a toilet at the local clinic. The learner risked her life because she was not ready for the responsibility as she admits:

*“I felt my future would be ruined. I faced spending a year at home raising the child and was not even sure if the father would be supportive or continue with the relationship. Everything was confusing and I just couldn’t stand it”.*

The statement by the principal learner clearly outlines the fact that when learners fall pregnant they suffer the consequences and their future may be ruined by the situation. The girl said that she knew of 10 other learners at her school that fell pregnant in the same year. On the contrary, the Limpopo Education Department spokesperson Mangala reported that the department had no pregnancy statistics and explained:

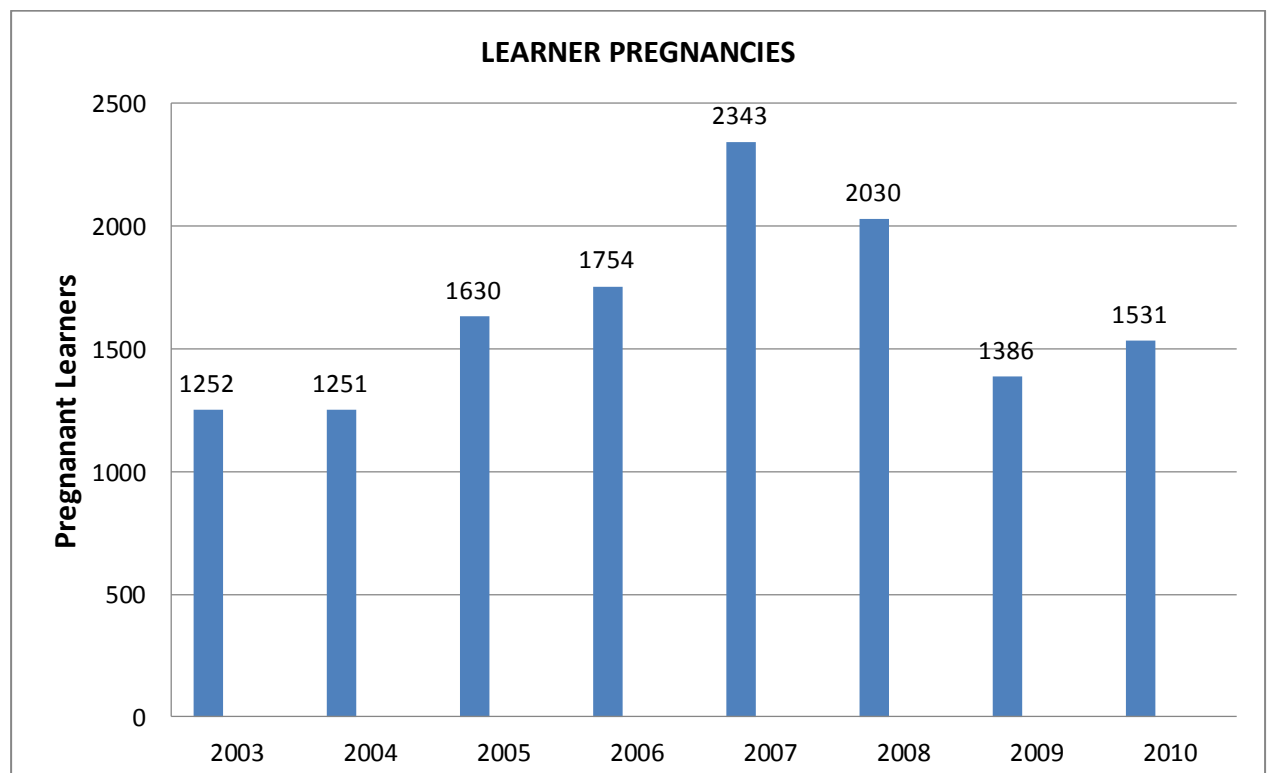
*“We do not have those figures because we have never had a tool to collate that information from our schools and the circuits. It is only now that we have developed that mechanism and we hope to have statistics for the first time by the end of this financial year”*  
*(Chuenyane, Hlongwana and Sokana,2008).*

The above statement makes reference to the Limpopo districts developed of a statistical assessment tool when the district officials noted that learners were falling pregnant while schooling. This tool will assist the district in the collection of statistics on teenage pregnancy; (Chuenyane, et al. 2008) reported that “Phuti Seloba said that pregnant learners visiting health facilities or giving birth were getting younger each year”. For example, a 14-year old

gave birth in 2006 followed by a 13-year old and, then a 10 year old. “The 10 year old gave birth at a hospital in Pharaborwa in December 2008. This is how rough the situation is”. (Chuenyane, et al.2008).

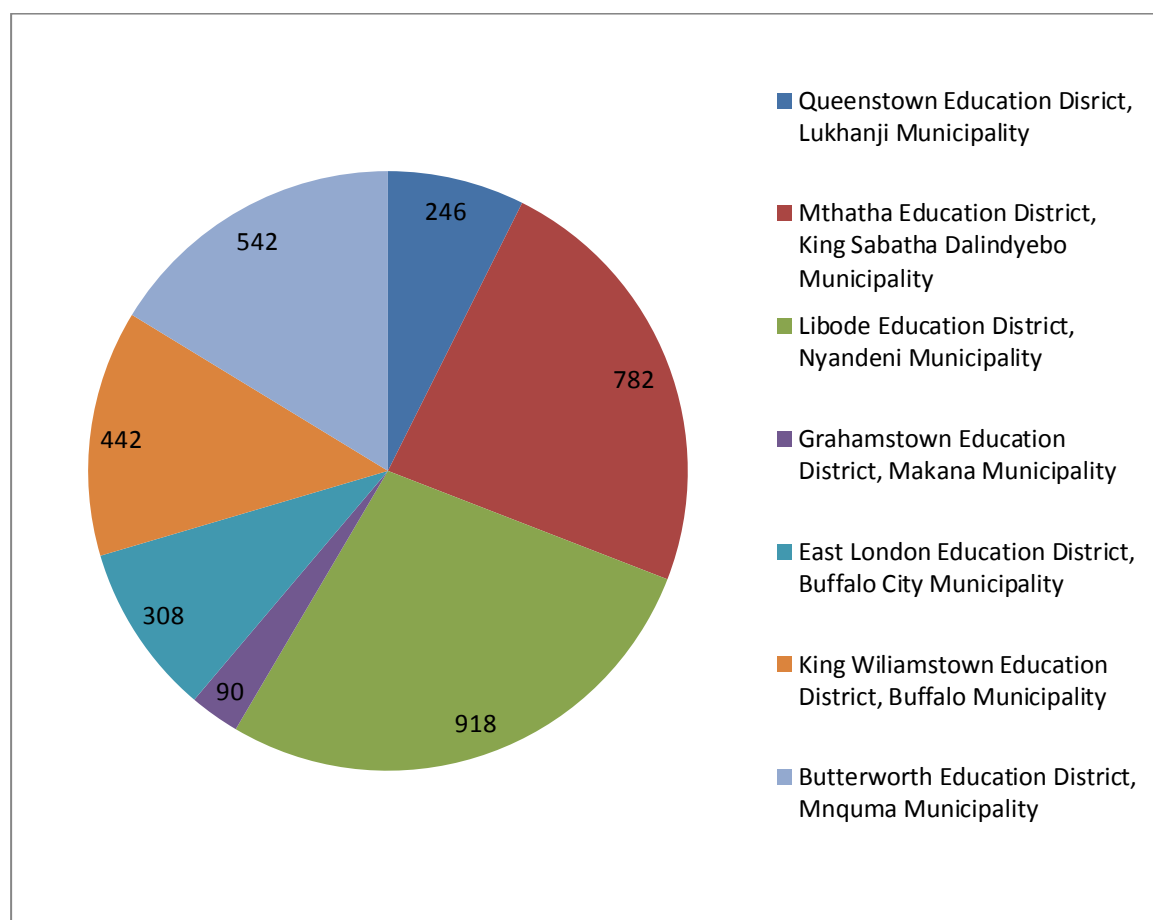
It is clear from the literature reviewed that despite the existence of sexual health education, where Life Orientation as a learning area in schools covers topics such as; sexuality, HIV/AIDS, morality, and culture are being taught, learners disregard the impact of the importance education and continue to fall pregnant.

Figure 2.3.1 Number of learner pregnancies in Free State Province 2003-2010



Source : Education Management Information Systems statistics on learner pregnancy in the province of Free State Education Department, 2010.

Figure 2.3.2 The figure below shows the number of pregnancies in the Eastern Cape Education districts and their municipalities.



Source; Masimanyane women's project. (2010)

The above statistics shows the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in six education districts in the different municipalities in the Eastern Cape Education districts.

Limpopo Minister of Education, Mrs Motsoaledi admits that the fight against teenage pregnancy was far from being won and states that;

*“It’s a social issue rather than just an educational one. There are untested allegations that it has to do with child support grants but nobody can provide any scientific evidence”.* (Chuenyane, et al. 2008).

This comment by Motsoaledi, confirmed by the Chuenyane, et al, mentions the support grant, however this grant is not a pregnancy allowance. The revised literature has also stated that pregnancy was evident before the support grant was offered by the government. However, Minister Motsoaledi dismissed the link between teenage pregnancy and government child grants. According to Chuenyane, et al. (2008, p.13), “the government provide grants not a pregnancy allowance.

According to Chuenyane, Hlongwana and Sokana, (2008, p.13), Seloba claims that teenage pregnancy is on the rise because parents and guardians are not playing their parental role. “Current additional strategies introduced by the DoE include Lovelife and Khomanani campaigns as a way to curb HIV infections and pregnancies” (Chuenyane, et al. 2008). In their study, Chuenyane et al. (2008) reported that more than 3000 school girls fell pregnant in Mpumalanga in 2008. A similar survey by Chuenyane et al. (2008) conducted at Gert Sibande, Nkangala and Bushbuckridge region recorded 1671 pregnancies. Ehlanzeni has already recorded 1486 pregnancies, an increase from 1463 in 2008.

Mpumalanga education spokesperson Jespar Zwane said the survey might not be accurate as it was not based on medical reports or scientific research.

Zwane said,

*“Some learners voluntarily disclose their status but others don’t and in some cases educators might have relied on mere observation”*. Chuenyane et al. (2008).

This quotation by Zwane, cited in Chuenyane et al (2003), confirms that pregnant learners hide their situation from the educators while others report their pregnant status, or educators know the learner’s status through observation. Ehlanzeni regional director, Mfana Lushaba said the figure for Ehlanzeni might be higher because two of the thirty educational circuits in the region have not submitted statistics as yet, “more than 1000 pregnant school girls is really shocking to us as a region.” This implies that there is no sound educational programme offered in schools. Lushaba disclosed that one educational circuit in the region had 211 pregnant girls, and further commented that “It is a usual sight to see a heavily pregnant minor walking around unashamed in full school uniform”. Research revealed for this area, showed that grade 10 school girls, between the ages of 13 and 15 years, are the most likely to fall pregnant.

The **South African Department of Education** released statistics in 2008 indicating that teenage pregnancy in our country remains a worrying problem. A report by the HSRC Review (November, 2007) written by an ex- teacher

and HIV /AIDS educator Joan Dommissee claims that 1748 school girls were reported pregnant in the Free State in 2008; 5000 in the Limpopo area; 5 868 pupils in KwaZulu-Natal; and ,around 2550 girls over a two year period in the Gauteng Province. These statistics are alarming hence this study is relevant to unearthing the factors that influence teenage pregnancy at school level.

The United Nations Report (2000) found that for each 1000 learners in South Africa 66 will fall pregnant in each calendar year. The present Minister of Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga (2009) commented that a high rate of teenage pregnancy seems to occur in dysfunctional schools in the country. Minister Motshekga agreed that the DoE will develop comprehensive strategies towards addressing teenage pregnancy. Harrison, Richter and Desmond (2007, p.6) argued that other factors that seem to put learners at risk of pregnancy includes: poor educator discipline, a lack of parental involvement, gangsterism and alcohol/drug abuse.

The studies revealed that teenage pregnancy is on the increase in South African schools, a recent study by Makiwane and Daniel (2007) found no evidence to suggest that teenage girls are deliberately falling pregnant in order to receive the child care grant. In the study, Makiwane et al. (2007) suggest that this is not a widespread phenomenon because only 20% of teens who bear children are beneficiaries of the child support grant. In the same study, Makiwane et al. (2007) found that the number of pregnancies among girls aged between 15 and 19 years peaked in 1996, two years before the

grant was introduced. However, this phenomenon has been declining slightly although the number of pregnant learners still remains high. On the contrary, Shereen Gorvalla, the director of Leliebloem House, a centre for children of high risk backgrounds claims that,

*“I do know that in some communities like Elsie’s River and Delft, in Cape Town, where girls fall pregnant as a means to getting the grant. Some girls fall pregnant by drug and gang lords who will then encourage them to go for extra money given by the state’ (HSRC 2007)”.*

The HSRC is of the opinion that learners fall pregnant in order to get extra money from the department of social welfare and noted the use of drugs that can contribute to teenage pregnancy. Research conducted at 120 KwaZulu-Natal schools since 2004 found that the average age at which most school girls fell pregnant was at age 16, but also noted pregnancies in girls as young as 11 years of age. Statistics further showed that 887 schoolgirls had fallen pregnant in KwaZulu-Natal (Bua News, 2007). Research reveals that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy has spread into all the provinces in South Africa. The table below shows the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in all nine South African provinces.

Table 2.2.1: Teenage learner pregnancy rates per province, 2004-2008

PROVINCE	NUMBER OF PREGNANT LEARNERS/1000 REGISTERD	NUMBER OF LEARNERS CAPTURED
Eastern Cape	68.8	11 852
Free State	53.6	2 837
Gauteng	34.1	4 866
Kwa-Zulu-Natal	62.2	15 027
Limpopo	60.3	12 848
Mpumalanga	55.7	5 015
Northern Cape	59.3	1 070
North West	55.8	3 211
Western Cape	34.4	2 710
TOTAL	53..8	59 436

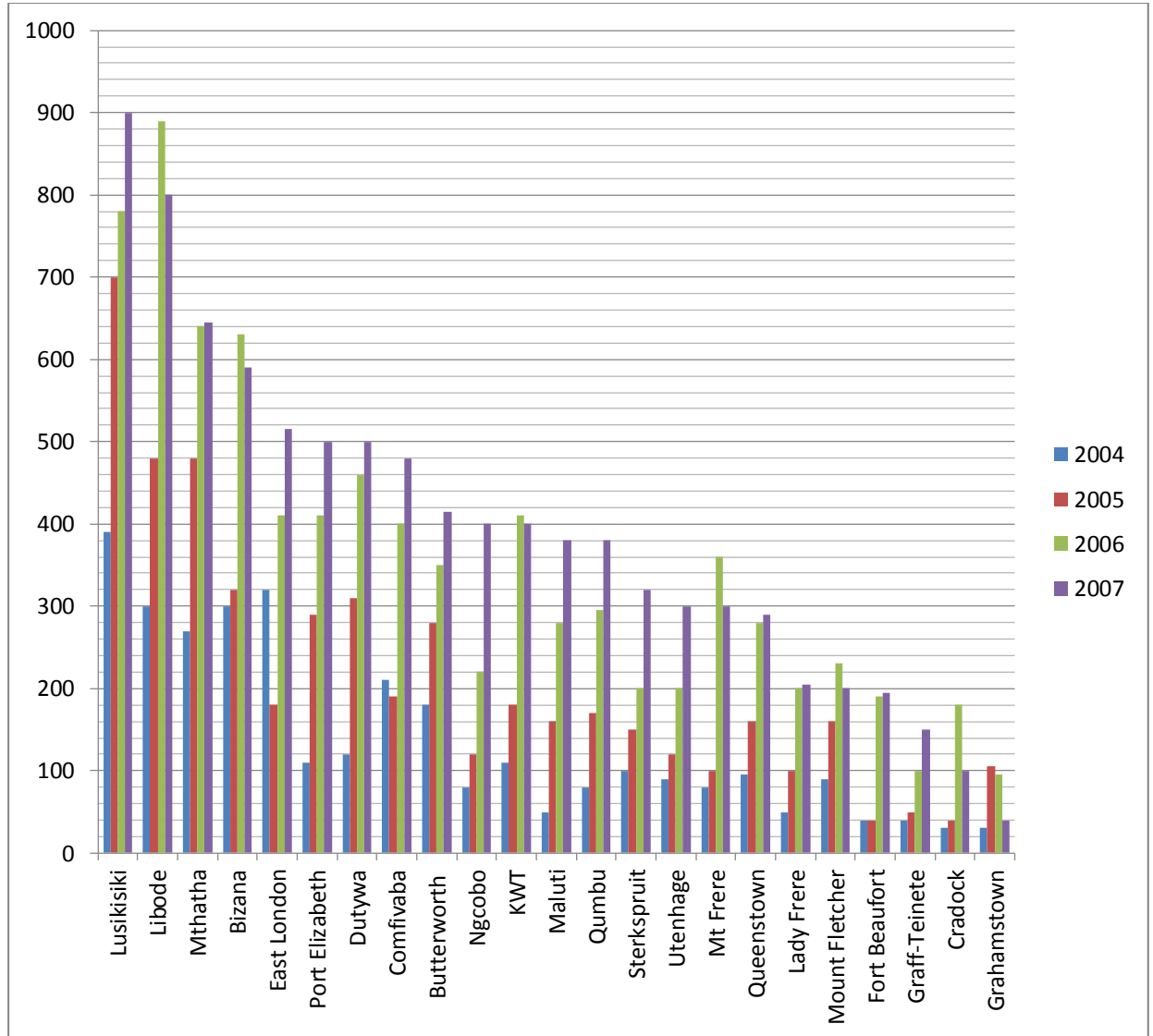
Source : EMIS data for 2004-2008

Table 2.2.1 provides a provincial breakdown of the number of pregnancies per 1000 learners, consistent patterns of higher pregnancy rates are reported in provinces where poverty exist and mostly in rural areas namely, in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, and a significant reduction is evident in Gauteng and the Western Cape.

## **2.4 Prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in the Eastern Cape**

The Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) data for 2008, Education Management Information Systems reveals varying statistics on teenage pregnancy in schools in the Eastern Cape. For example, Mqikela High School in Lusikisiki registered 144 pregnancies; Colosa High School in Dutywa registered 55 pregnant learners; Lehana High School in Mount Fletcher registered 50 pregnant learners; Queenstown Nompumelelo High registered 41 pregnant learners; and Bizana Village High registered 40 pregnant learners (EMIS, 2008). In this study, more than 50 % of these school girls were in Grade 5. In 2007, 8,221 school girls fell pregnant, 23 of the pregnant learners were in Grade 3 or 4. This implies that through the data collated on secondary schools there is also significant evidence of teenage pregnancy in lower grades (DoE 2007). In 2008, 9010 pregnancies were registered in the Eastern Cape and 3 of the girls were in Grade 3 (DoE, 2008). Although learners were educated about the danger of casual sex that could lead to unwanted pregnancies, the number of pregnant learners continues to be on the increase in Eastern Cape schools. The figure and the statistics in the table following is an overview of this study according to years and grades.

Figure 2.3.1 Number of learner pregnancies per district 2004-2007



Source : Eastern Cape Department of Education (2008)

The graph in figure 2.3.1 shows that between 2006 and 2007 teenage pregnancy increased in 16 out of the 24 districts in the Eastern Cape. This is an indication that teenage pregnancy is on the increase in the Eastern Cape in a greater number of the districts.

Table 2.3.2 below shows the reported cases of pregnant learners in the Eastern Cape districts in 2006. These figures and statistics form an overview for this study.

Table 2.3.2 Cases of pregnant learners in Eastern Cape districts in 2006

Grade Levels	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12	TOTAL
Districts									
Libode	8	21	35	60	101	112	75	48	460
Lusikisiki	12	21	46	77	10	164	128	133	701
Maluti	1	4	13	23	38	37	36	14	166
Mbizana	5	10	28	37	59	80	61	49	329
Mt Fletcher	4	10	10	20	29	25	47	32	169
Mt Frere		2	13	19	34	16	9	15	110
Qumbu	1	4	13	24	38	30	22	35	166
B\Worth	1	3	20	32	54	57	57	57	284
Cofimvaba	1	6	18	37	40	31	33	21	187
Dutywa	8	12	28	44	56	80	60	35	232
Lady Frere		2	8	15	35	11	19	14	104
Mthatha	2	12	50	71	76	94	84	71	460
Ngcobo	2	9	12	26	28	29	35	17	158
Queenstown	3	3	7	17	30	46	35	19	160
Sterkspruit	3	3	12	37	32	35	18	14	154
Cradock			1	7	6	11	10	7	42
East London	1		6	14	26	37	46	32	162
F\Beaufort		2	5	4	10	10	10	11	52
G\Reinet				6	10	12	14	12	54
Grahamstown			3	13	11	25	33	30	115
KWT	2	5	4	29	26	35	39	29	169
Port Elizabeth		4	4	13	28	97	78	50	274
Utenhage	1		9	12	18	33	36	25	134
TOTALS	55	129	346	648	913	1131	1003	790	5015

Source: Eastern Cape Department of Education Annual Survey (2006).

Table 2.3.3 Number of pregnant girls increased in all Grades from 2004.

YEAR	GR 5	GR 6	GR 7	GR 8	GR 9	GR 10	GR 11	GR 12	TOTAL
2004	22	70	184	318	538	591	497	395	2615
2005	26	102	236	599	680	589	552	480	3264
2006	55	129	346	648	913	1131	1003	790	5015

Source: Eastern Cape DoE Annual Survey (2006)

Table 2.3.3 shows that the number of pregnant learners in Eastern Cape schools has doubled since 2004. This study is, therefore necessary to determine factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Eastern Cape schools, particularly in the rural areas, as these above-mentioned figures are alarming. These above-mentioned figures prompted the researcher to undertake this study, as a reason for concern pertaining to the interrupted study of grade 8 to 11 girls in secondary schools in the rural area of Elliotdale.

Tables 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 show statistics of teenage pregnancy in schools in the Transkei, where the highest statistics of teenage pregnancy is revealed. The outcome of these statistics is alarming as there are schools with very high numbers of teenage pregnancy evident in the Transkei area. The researcher believes and argues that there is definitely a need to research and determine the factors that contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy in Eastern Cape schools, as it is clearly and statistically evident that the Eastern Cape needs intervention strategies to address this alarming and stressing situation

Table 2.3.4 Pregnancy Statistics in some schools in the former Transkei.

DISTRICT	SCHOOL	GR 8	GR 9	GR 10	GR11	TOTAL
Lusikisiki	Mqikela		65	40	38	144
Dutywa	Colosa		29	21	5	55
Mt Frere	Lehana		10	30	10	50
Queenstown	Nompumelelo	5	17	10	9	41
Mbizana	Bizana Village		15	17	8	40

Source: Eastern Cape Department of Education Survey (2006)

Table 2.3.5 Districts with the highest statistics of pregnant learners.

Districts	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12	TOTAL
Lusikisiki	12	21	46	77	120	164	128	133	701
Libode	8	21	35	60	101	112	75	48	460
Mthatha	2	12	50	71	76	94	84	71	460
Bizana	5	10	28	37	59	80	61	49	329
BWorth	1	6	20	32	54	57	57	57	284
Port Elizabeth		4	4	13	28	97	78	50	274

Source: Eastern Cape Department of Education Annual Survey (2006)

The above statistics clearly show that teenage pregnancy doubles from Grades 9 and above. In a similar vein, Chigona et al (2008) concurs with the

above statistics and claims that the Eastern Cape had the highest number of learner pregnancies in the country in 2008. According to Chigona et al (2008),

*“Fifteen school girls are pregnant at East London Secondary Schools so far this year, eight more than last year. This number does not take into account the number of girls that have had abortions”.*

Chigona and Chetty, (2008) voiced their concern about the involvement of parents in their children’s lives and said, *“as parents, there is a need to monitor the child’s friends and associates, if not, a child could become one of the AIDS statistics”*. Chigona et al (2003) revealed a student Geordie Schultz who narrated her story, *“My school is a lot more lenient than the schools my friends attend. I have many pregnant friends. I am allowed to take my baby to the doctor when she gets sick. “I just need a certificate”*. However, the girl is disappointed that sex education in the classroom provides access to condoms and other contraceptives. She said, *“They are giving us the permission to have sex by making the condoms available”*. Her emphatic stance is that educators should be teaching abstinence to the youth, not correct condom usage. Schultz also confided that girls as young as eleven are engaging in risky sexual behaviour in her neighbourhood. It appears from the above statement that despite the availability of condoms, teenage pregnancy is still on the increase in Eastern Cape schools.

According to Kirby (2007) pregnancy results to the following consequences:

1. *Education consequences*

- School dropout
- School absenteeism
- Poor academic performance
- Lower educational attainment
- Poorer cognitive development of children
- Poorer educational outcomes for children

2. *Health consequences*

- Risk of maternal death
- High risk of infant mortality

3. *Social consequences*

- Less supportive and less stimulating home
- Learners most likely to suffer abuse
- Stigma and discrimination of teenage pregnancy
- Increased behavioural problems among learners

4. *Economic consequences*

- Lower family income
- Increased dependency ratio on guardians
- Children most likely to be poor
- Exacerbated poverty

Kirby (2007) indicates that teenage pregnancy results in negative consequences. According to Kirby (2007) this clearly defines the researcher's

thinking in relation to teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. Kirby links his theoretical thinking significantly impacting on the context for this particular research in the rural area of Elliotdale secondary schools.

## **2.5 Prevalence of teenage pregnancy in other African countries**

### *2.5.1 Tanzania review*

Only six African countries were considered under this section. These include Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. In Tanzania President Kikwete said the number of primary school drop-outs rose to 44 742 in 2006 from 32 469 the previous year due to pregnancy related matters. A total of 7 734 students abandoned secondary school in 2006, up from 6 921 in 2005. The president said in his monthly address to the nation, "We must find the solution to this problem as soon as possible," calling for the arrest of people who made school girls pregnant and urging parents and community leaders to ensure that school girls completed their schooling. The problem of teenage pregnancy among school girls is a major concern in African countries. For example, teenage learner pregnancy has been cited as a constraint in the elimination of gender disparities in education and in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of Universal Education and Gender Equality in Education by 2015.

### 2.5.2 *Namibian review*

In Namibia, factors leading towards teenage pregnancy include social and psychological variables (lack of contraceptive knowledge, lack of self-esteem, poverty, absence of a father figure, desire for love, domestic violence, child sexual abuse and dysfunctional family patterns), and such psychological factors as earlier onset of menarche (Mkhwanazi, 2006, p. 97). Official statistics of 1406 pregnancy-related school drop-outs in Namibia for 2007, show that a total of 1465 learners dropped out of school for pregnancy reason with 96% of them being pregnant girls (Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2000). The Namibian National Health statistics also show that girls aged 15-19 are sexually active (Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2000). Although sexuality is viewed as a “taboo” subject in some cultures, the above statistics are an indicator of how vital it is to address this issue (Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2000).

A further underestimated factor is the fact that many learner pregnancies may be as a result of forced sex rather than free choice or risky sexual behaviour (Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2000). For example, recent police statistics indicate that just over one-third of all victims of rape and attempted rape are under the age of 18, with the vast majority of juvenile rape victims being female. Moreover, even where there is no overt coercion, the disparities in gender equality in Namibia often mean that girls may feel powerless to negotiate sexual behaviour or contraceptive use (Namibia Demographic Health Survey, 2000).

Further need for a revised policy is indicated by evidence that illegal abortion and even baby dumping or infanticide are options currently utilised by learners to prevent motherhood from interfering with their education (Namibian Education Act 16, 2001). The new Namibian policy on teenage pregnancy has taken into account these issues and has been designed to minimise some of the challenges that learner-parents face. The need to improve the education and rights of girls who fall pregnant is also based in part on the knowledge that this will affect the fate of their children and future generations. The Namibian policy includes guidelines for both the prevention and the management of teenage pregnancy (Namibian Education Act 16, 2001). The policy emphasises that prevention of teenage pregnancy should start at home.

It must be acknowledged that not all learners have stable home environments. When learners have a secure family situation, it is envisioned that schools can assist in the prevention of learner pregnancies through the provision of reproductive and sexual health education. This can be done by creating an atmosphere in which young people are protected from exploitation and taught that all relationships must be based on mutual respect for the dignity of the individual (Namibian Constitution: Education Article 20(1), (2009).

### *2.5.3 Zimbabwean review*

In Zimbabwe, girls joining Form One aged 14 often get bullied by Form Four aged 19 boys, who take advantage of the age difference to force the young

girls into illicit activities (Phil, 2008). As a result, new girls are forced into a form of liaison with the older male schoolmates involving unsafe sex. The harsh economic environment in Zimbabwe has also made it even more difficult for girls because those males with resources lure young girls into sex (Phil, 2008). According to Phil (2008), teenage pregnancy is not a sign of poor health or lack of knowledge but is a career choice that some girls make in some deprived areas. In a study carried out in Zimbabwe, Phil (2008) found that, “better educated women are much more likely to have used a modern contraceptive method than women without any schooling”. This implies that illiterate girls are less likely to use modern contraceptive methods to prevent themselves from falling pregnancy.

#### *2.5.4 Botswanian views on teenage pregnancy*

In Botswana, the school system has experienced the problem of teenage pregnancy for quite some time and has dealt with this issue in a punitive manner (Gathu, 2005). For example, students who fall pregnant (and in some case the boys who were implicated in the pregnancies) were expelled and most of the time never returned to the public school system. According to Gathu (2005), a small percentage of these girls re-entered school and attended private night schools, or chose to pursue their studies through non-formal means. The present regulations in Botswana are more progressive because they exhibit greater tolerance and sympathy for young learners who fall pregnant. However, there are no specific targets set neither for reducing

teenage pregnancy or devised measures that would enable them to pursue their education.

#### *2.5.5 Lesotho's view*

In Lesotho, girls often face sexual pressure from their mid-teens onwards (Gathu, 2005). In his study, Gathu (2005) found that in 2002, 13.1 % of girls in the 15 to 19 year of age range were either pregnant with their first child or already mothers. Those who become pregnant usually dropped out of school and discontinue their school education.

#### *2.5.6 Tanzanians perspective*

Teenage pregnancy is also a serious problem in Tanzania (Yumini, 2009). For example, recent statistics released by the Ministry of Education in Tanzania in 2007 show that 4,362 primary school learners become pregnant, compared to 2,550 in 2003 (Yumini, 2009). In secondary schools, the increase was more dramatic with 3,965 pregnancies in 2007 compared to 668 pregnancies in 2003. In Tanzania, pregnant learners are expelled from school and most girls are impregnated by people who are not their peer age group (Yumini, 2009, p.1).

A total number of 41 female students in primary and secondary schools in Longido district have dropped out of school due to pregnancy. According to the District Education Officer (DEO) for Longido, Mr Supeet Mseyu. These statistics revealed are based on the data from the period 2007 to 2009, where 36 of the drop outs were secondary school students.

Mr Supeet Mseyu stated that authorities have arrested 23 of the adult males who had impregnated the girls and criminal cases have been opened against these adult males. Out of 23 cases, eight cases were in the final stages of investigation, and the rest were in preliminary stages of investigations. The DEO complained about the parent's indifference in dealing with males impregnating school girls. Mr Mseyu stated that in some cases parents received "payment" in the form of cattle from the suspects who impregnated school girls. Mr Mseyu called on the government to take stringent measures in the future against "lenient" parents of the culprits go free after impregnating school children, (IRIN Arusha Times 2009).

In the city of Dar-es Salaam, Tanzanian, authorities have expressed concern over the large numbers of learners, mostly girls, who drop out of school because of pregnancy (IRIN, 2007,p.1). Thirty percent of Tanzanian children enrolled in school fail to complete seven years of primary education, while in secondary schools, the drop-out rate is twenty percent, Ludovic Mwananzila, deputy Minister for Education and vocation training, informed the IRIN, stating that drop-outs due to pregnancy were higher in some areas than in others, citing the southern regions of Mtwara where at least 400 school girls became pregnant in 2006. In Rukwa in the southwest of Tanzania, 200 school girls discontinued their education because of pregnancy. President Kikwete commented at a rally in the western district of Mpanda in Tanzania that some

of the school girls falling pregnant were as young as 14 years. "It is absurd," Kikwete said IRIN (2007.p.l).

## **2.6 Factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in South African schools**

South Africa has the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world. This implies that learners who fall pregnant are at risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS. Young people in South Africa have misconceptions about sexuality. For example, there are young people who think that contraceptives can protect them against AIDS and can prevent pregnancy (Van Dyk, 1999, p.138).

All these studies show that school girls fall pregnant whilst attending school. Similarly the statistics in table 2.3.1 indicate that teenage pregnancy is prevalent in South African secondary schools in the six African countries researched.

These misconceptions stem from either the environment, or from music and videos in which there are explicit sex scenes along with language that tells them that love equals sex (Strydom, 2002, p. 86). In a report by News 24 (2004, p.1), the school principal of Eqinisweni Secondary School in Ivory Park, Midrand, Mr Mpoku Tau, confirmed that 30 learners at his school were pregnant. Tau attributed the high rate of pregnancy among learners to three factors:

a) The lack of recreational facilities,

b) Settlement of Ivory Park, and

c) Poverty and ignorance among those who fall pregnant.

At this stage the mentioned factors by Mr Mpoku Tau will be discussed in depth in this study. The researcher would like to discuss the pertinent issues pertaining to the factors reviewed by the literature that contributes to teenage learner pregnancy at school level. The following issues will be discussed namely poverty, ignorance, and parent communication.

#### *2.6.1 Economic and social issues: Poverty*

According to Branch (2006) there is substantial evidence indicating that one of the most consistent risk factors for early pregnancy is lower socio-economic status and poverty. Due to the context of this study undertaken in a rural area it is evident that poverty is a major contributing factor. Similarly, Grant and Hallaman (2004), found that higher rates of pregnancy occur most among poor young women. Hallaman's (2004) analysis also revealed that lower socio-economic status reduces the odds of communicating with one's partner about safe sex practices for both males and females. Kearney and Levine (2007) commented that socio-economic disadvantage can lead to early childbearing through many different pathways. The poor employment opportunities in these communities may further deter adolescents from staying in school and preventing pregnancy (Kearney and Levine 2007). This shows that poverty inhibits the schooling of the girls both directly and indirectly. In South Africa where large numbers of young people live in conditions of poverty, such as in a rural areas, a lack of access to

reproductive health services could translate into increased levels of unwanted pregnancy and disease such as HIV/AIDS among this vulnerable group. Learner contraceptive use in South Africa is constrained by attitudes associating sexual involvement with marital commitment and stable relations (Mfono, 1998). This implies that although there are preventive measures people do not seem to value respect on these sound belief systems and moral values.

Poverty resulted in trade-offs between health and economic security such as the reciprocity of sex in exchange for material goods (Chohan and Gina 2009, p1). Despite all the causative factors of teenage pregnancy, the pregnancy itself disrupts the learners education and even destroys the future of some girls. The fact that she will be away from school for a certain period before the birth is not itself the only disturbance in the girl's academic journey. The fact that learners become pregnant shows in itself that they did not protect themselves during the sexual action, thus presenting itself as a possible scenario from which sexual transmitted disease (STD's) can obviously be transmitted to placing the pregnant learners and their baby at risk.

### *2.6.2 Ignorance*

According to Makiwane *et al* (2007), other contributing factors leading to teenage learner pregnancy include living in an impoverished area and coming from a dysfunctional family. His research has shown that children from poor families, from broken homes, or whose parents are working are more likely to

have a breakdown of value systems in the home. Makiwane advises that more civil society organisations should be created and supported to assist teenagers and to take some of the burden off government and struggling families.

### *2.6.3 Parent - child communication*

According to Langille and Hughes (2005, p.96), factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy operate at the individual level; that is to say, at the level of having knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, future expectations, and substance use. Bronfenbrenner (1979) structures the family into levels namely: a) the interfamilial level the family structure parent child communication, and socio economic status; b) the extra familial-level: the peer influences, sexual health education at school, and health services; and c) the community level: the societal norms and values concerning teenage learner pregnancy. The ecological approach therefore, recognises the multiple spheres of influence on health behaviour. These three family structures emanate from the seminal work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) who contextualised individual behaviour within the families, communities, and societies in which families are nested. Some of these factors are readily modifiable. For example, the DoE has included sex education in the curriculum through Life Orientation as a learning area. However, other factors are not easily changed or can not be change at all. The implication is that learners need healthy recreational facilities so that they are actively engaged in good healthy activities such as sport and school societies.

Bandura's theory (1997) in relation to the social context states that parents and carers can also be proactive and engage young people in discussions about sex, sexuality, and relationships. The study further stated that many parents and children naturally feel embarrassed about talking about some aspects of sex and sexuality. For example, young people can easily have one-to-one discussion with parents or carers which focus on specific issues, questions, or concerns. Sex education at home also tends to take place over a long time, and involves a lot of short interactions between parents and children. Bandura's view about parental support further states that school programmes which involve parents, notifying them what is being taught and when, can support the initiation of dialogue and discussion at home.

The roles of parents and sex educators' change as young people get older and are provided with more opportunities to receive formal sex education through schools and community-settings (Bandura 1997). The same source mentions that there is evidence that positive parent-child communication about sexual matters can lead to greater condom use among young men and a lower rate of conception among schoolgirls.

#### *2.6.4 The learner and the new born baby*

Chigona and Chetty (2007, in their study, claim that due to poverty many learners cannot afford to take their babies to crèche or to hire a babysitter. As such, these learners do not have time to study and don't do their homework. Kaufman (2000) argues that while most families try to provide for the newborn

child, many are born into conditions of extremely limited resources. In a similar vein, Chigona et al (2007) states that Frank Lerumo, a clinical psychologist, claims that factors contributing towards teenage pregnancy include poverty, lack of proper guidance, and peer pressure. Lerumo states,

*“People were educated about the dangers of casual sex that could lead to unwanted pregnancies and HIV/AIDS. They are committing suicide by exposing themselves to this deadly disease. There is nothing more the schools can do. We plead with parents to keep a close eye on their children”.*

This quotation outlines that despite the awareness message about casual sex and diseases that spread to learners, learners continue to fall pregnant. These learners face challenges in school as well as health, poverty and social issues that confront them.

## **2.7 Challenges faced by pregnant learners in schools**

Studies show that pregnant learners face many challenges including irregular class attendance, fear, loneliness at school, and a lack of time to study and do homework (Dunn & Theron, 2006). These challenges will be discussed in detail bellow.

2.7.1 *Class attendance:* Dunn and Theron (2006) found that teenage pregnancy may be associated with a syndrome of failure to remain in school because pregnancy is disruptive when it comes to school attendance. In their

study, Chigona and Chetty (2007) found that some teachers were not sure about how to handle pregnant learners at school because pregnant learners do not have time to do their homework. This implies that these girls come back to the school system as mothers without any emotional and supportive preparations for their new situations. As such, they are overwhelmed with the new expectations resulting in them not performing well academically and in many cases dropping out of school (Chigona and Chetty, 2007). The same study also found that most of the pregnant learners do not attend classes regularly and that their academic performance is usually below average resulting in very few succeeding in their matric examinations.

*2.7.2 Fear and loneliness:* Sometimes pregnant learners have a fear of participating in classroom discussions during Life Orientation programmes. Such fear and loneliness could lead to social isolation and to regression to an earlier phase of life where the learner felt secure (Taylor, Muller, and Vinjevold, 1997). Educators need to encourage these pregnant learners to participate during these programmes as their informed voices could help educate and support other learners in the class.

*2.7.3 Lack of time to study:* Pregnant learners may not have adequate time to study and to do their homework whilst at home because they need to pay attention to their babies and take on the responsibilities of motherhood. Chigona and Chetty (2007) found that both pregnant school girls and those who gave birth indicated that they do not have enough time to complete their

homework, or to study when at home. When they return from school, their relatives who take care of the child want to be free of the child-care chores. The babies also seek parental and maternal attention from their mother when they return from school. The same source also highlighted that teachers are not willing to support learners who missed lessons who may be sick or attending clinic. One of the learners cited in Chigona and Chetty (2007, p. 5) study said:

*“Sometimes you need to be a student, sometimes a mother, and to balance the two is a bit hard. But the mothering takes much of you because like when the child is sick you have to think about the child all the time and for me it is hard to keep the baby at the back of my mind when I am at school. So, it is really much more difficult just to break away from my child”.*

Chigona and Chetty (2007) state that pregnant learners face many challenges both at school and at home and this results in girls dropping out of school because they cannot cope with school and the demands and pressures of motherhood.

## **2.8 Factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in developed countries**

According to a study conducted in Canada through the Public Health Agency in (2000), Life Skills educators felt that the major factor contributing to rising rates of teenage pregnancy was the inadequate comprehensive sex education provided by good, trained educators in schools. They observed that although there are good curriculums, teachers may not be comfortable with the content and may avoid controversial topics for fear of criticism from parents. These Life Skills educators also felt that the lack of opportunities for youth was a significant factor in learner pregnancies, particularly among young girls living in poverty and those in small towns, remote or native communities such as rural areas. The researcher strongly argues and supports the Canadian thinking that poverty and remote areas have a direct impact on teenage learner pregnancy.

Life Skills educators in Canada felt that the focus on sexuality in the media is also a contributing factor in rising teen pregnancy rates (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2000, p.3). In their study of teenage learner pregnancy, the Economic and Human Biology (2007, p. 337) found that factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy include; a) peer pressure and b) social environment-related factors like inappropriate forms of recreation. Although sex education has been introduced in schools in South African Developing Countries (SADC), it is often confined to the classroom and parents are not being educated and involved by the school. As such, some teachers believe strongly that they are to assume parental responsibilities (Tolmay, 2005).

## **2.9 DoE policy statements for teenage pregnancy in South African schools.**

Makiwane (2007) claims that South African schools have made knowledge readily available to both boys and girls in school but that it is not always translating into positive behaviour. The youth need more than knowledge and facts. He claims that they need to be instilled with good morals and values, ambition and self-governance. They need to know that they control the outcomes of their lives.

Makiwane (2007) implies that although Life Skills education is taught in schools, most learners do not take it seriously as an instilled value system. This perhaps explains why teenage pregnancy is increasing in South African schools because, the strategy by the DoE with the inclusion of Life Orientation as a learning area in 2011 does not translate the learner's behaviour into positive expectations and good morals and good beliefs in society. The DoE (2007), strives to ensure that learners (both boys and girls) are educated to make choices that protect their health and support their access to educational opportunities (DoE, 2007). But the DoE fails to support their policy with moral education and relevant support systems to educate to the benefit of the learners.

Schools strive to ensure that all learners receive information and guidance to:

- a) Encourage them to attend school every day;
- b) Stay on in school;

- c) Practice healthy lifestyles, and
- d) Make appropriate and informed decisions about activities that will impact  
on their future health and educational prospects (DoE, 2007, p.3).

An address by the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, at the Love Life Conference held in September 2009, stated that “young people are often accused of focusing on the present or at best the immediate future. We need to encourage them to lift up their eyes and plan for their future”. Programmes aim to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and teenage learner pregnancy and to open up debate on the life choices for young people.

#### 2.9.1 *NCS Curriculum*

The NCS Curriculum states that prevention programmes should be offered in collaboration with NGOs and other agencies, and should provide information and education that builds upon the learner’s own knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. As a targeted preventive measure, schools should provide special guidance and support to vulnerable or troubled learners, who are most at risk.

Bandura (1979) advised that consultation with young people at the point at which programmes are being designed help to ensure that they are relevant and the involvement of young people in delivering programmes may reinforce messages as they model attitudes and behaviours to their peers. To Bandura,

the importance of the milieu is that “school is the place where children develop the cognitive competencies and acquire the knowledge and problem solving skills essential for participating effectively in society. Bandura critically addressed the school milieu that there is a lack of a holistic approach to health education. He claims that health education goes beyond the static presentation of information, and includes opportunities for guided mastery of behaviours necessary to secure personal control over good health throughout the remaining stages of a learner’s development. The annual report by the ECDoE (2009) stated pregnancy in schools as a challenge that is gradually posing problems in schools due to the fact that pregnant learners stay in school until just prior to giving birth. The National Curriculum Statement document provides for a comprehensive Life Skills programmes in the Life Orientation learning area which is compulsory from Grade R to Grade 12. Life Skills, is a programme that deals with topics that affect each and every learner and educator as a valuable citizen of the society. These Life Skills programmes include the following topics:

- Human sexuality; Developing and maintaining self esteem; Interpersonal and decision-making skills, including communication skills, negotiating abstinence, assertiveness, and dealing with peer pressure;
- Teenage pregnancy, including contributory factors, consequences and prevention; sexuality transmitted diseases;
- Sexual abuse, including the “ touch continuum” gender-based violence, incest and rape DoE (2007, p.3).

Prevention programmes should also involve parents and guardians through:

- Their involvement in the governance of the school, and in the Development of a school's code of conduct with specific strategies to eliminate learner pregnancy;
- Providing information and support through school news letters, circulars and meetings;
- Workshops on pertinent issues (effective parenting, values in education, identifying substance abuse, preventing gender-based violence, as well as information on HIV/AIDS);
- Creating links between the school and the community it serves, and supporting community activities;
- Developing and sharing a common vision regarding the well-being of the community's children; and
- Supporting healthy lifestyles through positive role modelling, encouraging learners to participate in sporting and cultural activities, as well as advocacy and awareness on the positive consequences of a healthy lifestyle, (DoE 2007).

### *2.9.2 Union Support*

The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) welcomed an address by the present Minister of Basic Education's plan to develop a comprehensive strategy towards teenage pregnancy in South Africa. Outlining definitive interventions for implementation through the school system. The Minister of Education (MoE), Mrs Motshekga, announced this at the launch of

a study on teenage pregnancy in schools hosted by the Human Sciences Research Council, (HSRC 2007). SADTU gender officer, Lulama Nare, stated:

*“As SADTU, we hope this strategy will bring guidance and much needed leadership to ensure uniformity as schools continue to expel pregnant learners further plunging these girls into the cycle of poverty.” Pregnant girls learners have for far too long been made to compromise their futures when they are expelled, we would also urge the department to look into the availability of school nursing, provision of career guidance and counselors in schools as teachers are not equipped to deal with pregnant learners”*

In this quotation, SADTU welcomes the broader participation of stakeholders including school managers, governing bodies, learners, and teacher’s organizations to support intervention strategies for pregnant learners.

### 2.9.3 HSRC Views

The HSRC (2007) study found, among other things, that it was crucial for the learners to return to schools without much delay after giving birth so as to increase their chances of completing their studies. The longer they stayed at home after giving birth, the less their chances of completing their studies and schooling. This statement contradicts ideas presented by the *Measurements on Preventing Teenage Pregnancy in Schools* issued in 2007 by the DoE. Previous strategies laid down by the prior Minister for Education, Naledi

Pandor, stated that pregnant learners should spend two years with their babies before returning to complete their education. Within the DoE itself there are conflicting ideas pertaining to pregnant learners and the future of their school education.

#### *2.9.4 Teenage learner pregnancy summit*

According to Chigona and Chetty (2007), there is a need for parents and teachers to equip learners with Life Skills which would enable them to manage their problems and challenges. Similarly, Olivier and Bloom (2000) also emphasise that teachers need to be knowledgeable about problems that pregnant learners face. In an attempt to address teenage pregnancy in our public schools, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has developed a number of strategies including: (a) a provincial summit on teenage pregnancy and (b) research on teenage learner pregnancy in each of the 12 education districts. The

Learner Pregnancy Summit was held on the 23 October 2006, where the research findings were presented. Issues raised during research, such as cultural, religious, economic and other influences on teenage pregnancy as well as the role of the school in approaching and managing the issue of teenage pregnancy, and supporting pregnant learners was discussed.

The stakeholders invited to the summit included religious leaders, Amakhosi, Izinduna, local councillors, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and education officials. The department used the inputs from stakeholders who

attended the summit when finalising the teenage pregnancy policy (Bua News Online, 2007). The KwaZulu-Natal cabinet had called for an investigation into school girl pregnancies following an alarming increase in teenage pregnancy in the province. These girls fall pregnant despite the condom campaign, which means they practice unsafe sex and expose themselves to HIV and AIDS. Premier Sibusiso Ndebele said, at the meeting, which formed part of the “taking parliament to the people” campaign. The Premier expressed concerns regarding the future of the province’s young people regarding their risky behaviour. The cabinet further noted that, if not stopped in time, the growing number of school girl pregnancies could have a negative impact on the literacy levels of girls, as many of those who fell pregnant dropped out of school. It also noted that the increasing number of such pregnancies could be a result of older men, and not school boys, taking advantage of young girls.

#### *2.9.5 Ministerial Views*

Bua News (2007) quoted Deputy Minister Enver Surty, stating that caring and supporting a child was the responsibility of both parents. “If the girl learner gives birth, the boy learner has a responsibility to also take care of the child. It’s not only a maternal duty but it’s a paternal duty as well”. “You can’t say that the girl learner is going to be punished and has a responsibility of bonding with the child and that the boy learner has no responsibility at all with regard to the child,” he said.

Mr Surty said that although there would be instances where the boys are asked by their schools to take time off to care for their babies, this would depend on the merits of the case, he said. He said that the intention of the guidelines were not to punish but rather to ensure that learners took responsibility for their actions. (BuaNews, 2007).

#### 2.9.6 SADC views

In other SADC countries like Malawi and Zambia all pregnant school girls are allowed to continue with their studies after giving births for as long as they are fit. However, there are no policies on this issue in Angola and Mozambique and both governments encourage school girls to continue with their studies after giving birth. In Zimbabwe pregnant school girls are expelled from school (Tolmay, 2005). Family planning clinics mainly focus on married couples in Zimbabwe and pay little attention to young people. According to Gallan and Maticka-Tindale (2004), several school-based interventions have also exhibited success in increasing knowledge, raising tolerance, and teaching skills associated with risk-behaviour reduction in Tanzanian schools. For example, Tanzanian society for a considerable period of time has been at an impasse over whether to accept female learners back in school pregnant learners after delivery or not. There is much debate whether the pregnant learners should be accepted back into school or not. Accepting pregnant girls back into school is likely to encourage men who want to have sexual relationships with learners to continue. This implies that they will not fear anymore and they will treat these girls as normal lovers or wives (Ngonji,

2007, p.1). This study leads the researcher into developing an understanding of the theoretical frameworks that support the study and frames the contextual premise for this study.

## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

This study attempts to investigate the factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. No one can deny the negative impact of teenage pregnancy which can be a learning barrier for better education and a promising future. Adolescents between the developmental stages of childhood and adulthood face internal conflicts which prevent them from making firm and wise decisions and make them prone to certain behaviours. During these development stages both boys and girls experience a number of changes, physical, social and psychological, as stated by Bronfenbrenner in the literature reviewed. The literature reviewed is the grounding and supporting evidence that teenage pregnancy is a reason for concern in South African schools and in rural areas in South Africa in particular.

This chapter reviewed the theoretical framework for this study grounded in Bandura and Bronfenbrenner's theories on the important aspects that contribute to understanding the content and context of a situation. This chapter also reviewed significant factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy, which ultimately affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools. None of the studies reviewed in the literature have given reference

to contributing teenage pregnancy factors in rural communities such as the Elliotdale. The widely accepted dictum is that, “if you educate a man, you educate one person, but if you educate a woman you educate the entire nation”.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the research methodology that is used in this study and attempts to give a clear and concise description of how the research was undertaken. The study presents all the significant stages of research in progress. This chapter also focuses on the following strategies used by the researcher to plan for the study: the research design, population, sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.

Methodology refers to the range of approaches used in research to gather data to be used as a basis for inference, interpretation, explanation, and prediction (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2002, p.44). According to Opie (2004, p.16) methodology refers to the theory of knowledge, to the consideration of the best ways, methods or procedures, by which data will provide the evidence basis for the construction of the knowledge about whatever is being researched is obtained. Methodology is concerned with the description and analysis of research methods rather than with the actual practical use of those methods. Methodology is therefore based on philosophical thinking (Opie, 2004, p.16). A researcher justifies and argues a methodological case as their reasons for choosing a particular approach and specific procedures. This study seeks to investigate the factors that are

contributing towards teenage pregnancy in rural schools by means of a sound methodological framework and structure.

### **3.2 Research methodology and theoretical construct**

#### **3.2.1 Research paradigm**

This research approach is a qualitative study in the social sciences. The researcher has selected the interpretive paradigm because this paradigm aims to understand people's social action. Babbie and Mouto (2007). Bandura (1997) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) theories guided and shaped this study through understanding the social interactions and behavioural changes as argued by the mentioned theorists.

The interpretive paradigm is relevant to this study as the enquirer must grasp the meanings that constitute particular actions (Schwandt, 1997). A qualitative researcher attempt to study human action from the insider's perspective of the social actors themselves. (Babbie and Mouton, 2007). Babbie, et al (2007) further mentioned the primary goal for studies using this approach is defined as describing and understanding rather than explaining human behaviour. The interpretive paradigm has framed this study in terms of understanding factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools.

This links to qualitative research methodology as it is concerned with the individual's point of view and will help interpret the findings of the study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). A qualitative method is used because of its

pragmatic stance. A qualitative method develops a deeper understanding of the behaviour and social imperatives of people, namely parenting, pregnant learners, education officials, and all other stakeholders.

### **3.2.2 Interpretive paradigm**

Qualitative research involves an interpretive paradigm where the researcher believes that the human experience is profoundly different from the natural world. The theoretical understanding of this study is shaped by theorists such as Bandura and Bronfenbrenner who infuse their theories into understandings. The primary goal of the interpretive researcher is to understand the web meanings in which humans as people from different cultures or social groups are embedded in different systems of meaning, (Baxter and Babbie 2004, p. 58) The interpretive approach also aims at discovering how the participants understand their lives (Baxter and Babbie 2004, p.326).

The interpretive paradigm encompasses a broad range of orientations, each with its own historical roots (Baxter and Babbie, 2004, pp. 58-59). In general, researchers who embrace the interpretive paradigm believe that human action stands apart from the rest of the physical and biological world because of the reflective capacity of human beings. Human action is purposive i.e. it is action intended to accomplish some purpose (Baxter and Babbie, 2004, pp. 58-59). This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Various perspectives from the people in this study will

contribute to the interpretation of the factors that are contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools, these people are in the environment and are able to interact with the learner's social, scholastic and emotional levels. They, therefore have influence in understanding learner behaviour.

### **3.2.3 Research design**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 74) a research design is defined as a plan or blueprint of how the researcher is intending to conduct the research. Similarly, Welman and Kruger (1999, p. 46) view research as a plan in which the researcher obtains and collects information from the participants. In this study the selected participants would be the learners, school principals, educators, parents participating on School Governing Body (SGB), and Departmental Officials.

The research design enables the researcher to anticipate appropriate research decisions that will maximize the validity of the result findings. Qualitative methods as an umbrella term encompass a wide range of research methods such as participant observation, interviews, case studies, ethnographic research, and discourse analysis (Muijs, 2004). Qualitative methods are used by researchers with diverse worldviews, some of which clearly lean towards the realistic end of the spectrum. Therefore, to ascribe radical subjectivist views to all qualitative researchers is a fallacy (Muijs, 2004). Research comes into the lives of people who are the focus in various ways: taking up their time, involving them in activities they would not otherwise have been involved in, providing researchers with privileged knowledge about them. It is important to think about how the

researcher receives the situation and refers to the members of the research population (Opie 2004, p. 25). The methods to be used in this study will assist the researcher in gaining significant primary information necessary for this study.

#### 3.2.2.1 *Qualitative method*

Qualitative research investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003, p. 430). According to Bogdan and Biklen as cited by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003, pp. 431-432), qualitative research has the following general characteristics:

- The natural setting is the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument
- Qualitative data is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers
- Qualitative researchers are concerned with process as well as product
- Qualitative researchers tend to analyse their data inductively
- How people make sense of their lives is a major concern to qualitative researchers.

Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Qualitative research is also an inquiry in which researchers collect data in a face-to-face situation by interacting with selected persons in their settings (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p. 395). This approach is in line with an important assumption of the qualitative paradigm, which is the understanding of a situation from the

perspective of participants in the situation (Mouton and Marais, 1992, p. 204). Participants in this study are therefore given an opportunity to express and share their views regarding factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools.

Qualitative research is based on non-numerical data (Babbie, 2001, p. 36). The study proposes to use the qualitative case study design. The case study design will be used to collect data from a) pregnant learners, b) heads of schools, c) educators, d) SGB member and e) district education official because this in- depth study seeks to understand the situation and mitigating factors of teenage pregnancy in these secondary schools. According to Neuman,(1997, p. 227), “Every method of data collection including the survey is only an approximation to knowledge; each provides a different glimpse of reality; and all have limitations when used alone”. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality and the intimate relationship between the researcher and the study. This implies that the qualitative researchers seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003 p 147). This study uses a qualitative research approach as the research is interpretive since it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p.147).

The interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher including the questions he or she asks and the interpretations the researcher

brings to them. The characteristics of qualitative research are that it describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perspectives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). Qualitative research through interviews is also an inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p.395). This research focuses on secondary schools in a rural environment.

The purpose of qualitative methodology is to seek to understand people's interpretations, through people's perceptions and opinions. Since people are the primary source of information they present primary and useful data which will in turn be analysed and interpreted in order to contextualize the meaning and environmental setting regarding the study, based on factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. Significant tables are presented for clarity in presenting the relevant data.

#### **3.2.4 Population**

A population can be described as possible elements that can be included in the research. According to White, (2005), the population referred to in this context can be people, or TV programmes, or curricula or anything that is investigated as a focus for research projects. Therefore, the population for this study consists of pregnant learners, heads of schools/educators, school governing body members from the particular secondary schools, and district education officials in the Elliotdale area.

The subjects have been chosen from a selected population for the purpose of this study.

### **3.2.5 The Study Site**

Elliotdale is a rural area in the Eastern Cape where secondary school learners tend to fall pregnant in their school going years. This study seeks to investigate factors that contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy in this particular rural area. Interviews were conducted in order to develop understanding and explore responses from school principals, departmental officials, educators, learners, and SGB members on factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale. Particular educators were chosen because they are the educators responsible for the welfare of the learners in the investigated schools.

### **3.2.6 Sampling**

Sample is defined as the smaller group of examples chosen from the population that the researcher actually measures (Reaves, 1992, p. 94). Sampling means making a selection from the sampling frame or concrete listing of the elements in the population in order to identify the people or issues to be included in the research. Purposive sampling has been done in this study since the researcher sought to maximize the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about the context by purposely selecting locations and informants that differ from one another (Babbie and Mouton 2004, p. 277). Larger samples enable researchers to draw more

accurate conclusions and make more accurate predictions (Schaller as cited by Strydom and De Vos, 1998, p. 19).

Purposive sampling is used in research to select the sample to be used in a study. According to Neuman,(1997, p. 206), purposive sampling explores particular types of cases for in-depth investigations. In purposive sampling, subjects are hand-picked by the researcher based on the subject's typicality of the situation being investigated (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2002, p.103). Through purposive sampling, the researcher selected the sample based on her knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of the research aims (Baxter and Babbie, 2004, p. 134). The researcher therefore involved Elliotdale school community to investigate factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale rural secondary schools as there is no significant research evident in this area. The study sample is comprised of 8 pregnant learners identified together with school heads or guidance teachers, 4 school heads, 4 educators, 4 School Governing Body members and 2 district education officials.

Table 3.1 Distribution of the study Sample stakeholders

SAMPLE	NO.OF RESPONDENTS
Principals/Deputy Principal/HOD	4
School Governing Bodies	4
Educators	4
Education Officials	2
Learners	8
TOTAL	22

The table above shows the distribution of the number of selected participants for the study.

The researcher involved stakeholders from the management team, educators, and learners in order to have a broader view from all the relevant stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with learners. It is imperative that learner's confidentiality will be protected, and this will be discussed late under ethical issues.

### **3.2.7 Instrumentation**

#### *3.2.7.1 Interviews*

In this study, data will be collected from a purposive sample of pregnant learners, school heads/educators, SGB members and district education officials using interviews. According to Patton (1990, p 278), the researcher will have an opportunity to interact with the respondents face-to-face. The purpose of interviewing participants is to determine and develop an

understanding of these subjects. The population sample as referred to in the Table 3.1 consists of mother tongue speaking people who are not educated and educated participants who can speak English. The researcher is familiar with the stakeholders in the area. This will allow the researcher to pose questions and observe the reactions of the respondents through verbal and non-verbal communication as well as body language.

According to Tuckman, as cited by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1981,p.243), an interview “provides access to what is inside a person’s head, makes it possible to measure what the person knows (knowledge or information), or what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs). According to Steiner (1996) as cited by Babbie and Mouton (2004, p. 290), the interview process is complete only if it takes the shape of seven steps, including schematisation, where the researcher clarifies the purpose of the interviews and the concepts to be explored. The purpose of an interview is to try and obtain such information. Interviewers should encourage respondents to develop their own ideas, feelings, insights, expectations, or attitudes and in so doing allow the respondents to say what they think and act with greater richness and spontaneity (Opie, 2004, p. 112). However, questions need to be asked which will promote such response; hence it is essential to develop an interview schedule following the processes and stages to be included:

- Carefully and thoughtfully translating research questions into interview questions;

- Deciding on the degree of structure in any questions;
- Ordering of questions; and
- Deciding how responses collated have been discussed in this document. (Opie, 2004).

According to Hofstee (2006, p.136), the researcher should be alerted to the respondent's emotions. Hofstee (2006) states that body language, like looking puzzled, nodding, or smiling, is an important form of communication and effective use of body language can not only help create the right atmosphere, but can also help the researcher to get better answers to the questions. The researcher designed the interview by stating the process, purpose, and ethical issues pertaining to the research and used audio taping as a method for the researcher to transcribe the accuracy of the text after the interviews. The analysis has been determined by the interpretation of the gathered materials in relation to the purpose and focus of the study. It is also important for the researcher to analyse the data by checking the reliability and validity of the materials (Babbie and Mouton, 2004, p. 290).

Interviewing is a technique which encourages informants to talk naturally using their own expressive means through words. Interviews are advantageous as the researcher will gain first-hand information by hearing from learners themselves as a primary source. Since the issue of teenage learner pregnancy is a sensitive issue, all the information collected will be confidential. Participation in this study has been voluntary and participants are

free to withdraw from the study at any stage or they have the right not to answer any sensitive questions. The more the interviewee communicates the better for the researcher (Baxter and Babbie, 2004, p. 327) it is vital for the researcher to keep accurate records of the interviews as thoughts and ideas need to be written soon after the interviews to prevent misinterpretation of the information shared, if not the researcher has the possibility of losing some good information (Hofstee 2006, p.136). Interviews are suitable for this particular study because of the following advantages:

- Flexibility: Interviewers can lead the interview for more specific answers and can repeat a question when the responses indicate that the respondent misunderstood the question;
- Response rate: The interviewer has a much better response rate than the mailed questionnaire as pregnant learners and educators who are unable to read and write, can still answer questions in an interview;
- Non-verbal behaviour: The interviewer is present to observe non-verbal behaviour and to assess the validity of the respondent's answers such as emotions and attitudes towards the interview;
- Control over environment: An interviewer can standardise the interview environment by making certain that the interview is conducted in privacy;
- Question order: The interviewer has control over the sequence and can ensure therefore that the respondents do not answer questions unrelated to this study;

- Spontaneity: Spontaneous answers may be more informative as answers where the respondent has time to think could dampen the effect of the study;
- Respondent alone can answer: The respondent is unable to 'cheat' by receiving prompting or answers from others as it is a dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee; and
- Completeness: The interviewer can make sure that all answers are to the questions asked (White, 2005, p. 144).

### **3.2.8 Case Study**

The researcher used a case study because it is an intensive investigation of a single unit (Yin, 1994) as cited by Babbie and Mouton, 2004, p. 281). In the case study the researcher is investigating the factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. Case studies take multiple perspectives into account, such as opinions and ideas towards the study. Case studies attempt to understand the influences of multi-level social systems, such as the participants, lifestyles and environmental influences on the participants' perspectives. However, it is not uncommon for case study researchers to look at a few variables measured over time and to virtually ignore context (Bloom and Hall, 1999; Hersen and Barlow 1984 as cited in Babbie and Mouton, 2004).

According to (Opie, 2004, p. 74), a case study is viewed as an in-depth study of inter-actions of a single instance in an enclosed system. The issue of

numbers for a case study is therefore meaningless because it could involve a single person, a group of people within a setting, a whole class, or a department within a school (Opie, 2004). The focus of a case study is based on a real situation, with real people in an environment often familiar to the researcher. As the researcher has been working in the area for thirteen years she is familiar with the environment. The researcher's aim is to provide a picture of a certain feature of social behaviour or activity in a particular setting and the factors influencing this situation. For example, the interactions of events, human relationships and other factors are studied in a unique location, in this case the rural area in the Elliotdale district.

### **3.2.9 Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness**

#### *3.2.9.1 Reliability*

According to (Muijs, 2004, p.71) reliability is defined as the extent to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomena and to which there is agreement on the description of the phenomena between the researcher and participants. In qualitative research, reliability refers to the consistency of the researcher's interactive style, data recording, data analysis, and interpretation of the participant's meanings from the data. In other words, reliability measures consistency in research. In this study reliability and validity have been discussed as indicators of effectiveness, of data-gathering processes and of the relationship between claims and data gathering processes which impacts on the design of the research (Opie, 2004, p. 70).

The researcher collated and triangulated the views of pregnant learners, school heads, educators, SGB members, and district officials in this study. This enhance the trustworthiness (or reliability) of the data collected, since the data from the various sources will be collated. This process will help to determine if there is any compatibility between the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the respondents and those that are attributed to them. Credibility is therefore achieved through various procedures. The qualitative researcher, therefore, does not maintain, or claim, that knowledge gained from one context will necessarily have relevance for other contexts.

#### 3.2.9.2 *Validity*

Validity has been defined as the appropriateness, correctness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences researchers make, based on the data collected (Fraenkel and Wallen 2003, p.158). Validity also refers to the degree to which the method, test, or a research tool actually measures what is supposed to be measured (Wellington 2000, p.201). In this study the researcher has collected primary sources through interviews from pregnant learners, educators of learners who are pregnant and school principals who have been dealing with these learners over the years and are aware of the problems prevalent in this rural area.

#### 3.2.9.3 *Trustworthiness*

Trustworthiness according to Lincoln and Cuba (1985, p. 290) involves credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The basic

issue with regard to trustworthiness is how a researcher can persuade his audience that his qualitative findings are worth paying attention to. In this case the researcher starts with the statistics proving the prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy, and then mounts what arguments that are persuasive to readers based on the authenticity of the study. According to Babbie and Mouton (2005, p.277). Through transferability the findings can be applied

### **3.2.10 Data collection and analysis methods**

The researcher has systematically processed and analysed the data obtained from the interviews. The relevant information has been broken into phrases or sentences, which reflect a single specific thought. Data analysis is an attempt by the researcher to summarise collected data in a dependable and accurate manner. According to Gay (2000, p. 467), data analysis is the presentation of the findings of the study in a manner that has an air of reliability. In-depth interviews will be conducted using a sample of pregnant learners, school heads, educators, SGB members and district education officials.

Qualitative data analysed has been presented in a quantitative way by means of tabulation using themes and statements in the study. Data analysis is an attempt by the researcher to summarise collected data in a dependable and accurate manner. Qualitative data analysis is characterised by its own unique features; the process of coding is common to most qualitative endeavours. Charmaz (1983, p. 111) stated that, “coding, the initial phase of the analytical

method is simply the process of categorizing and sorting data.” This implies that after the interviews the researcher transcribed the data accurately.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that triangulation is an important way in which a qualitative researcher establishes the credibility of the study, and compiles and organizes data. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), negative case analysis obliges the researcher to gather additional data, usually making an extra effort to locate deviant cases that do not fit the categories the researcher has identified to that point. In a similar vein, Lindlof (1995, p. 240) says that negative case analysis means that the researcher is accountable for 100 percent of her data collection and analysis. This brings the researcher to a discussion on ethical considerations when analysing the data.

### **3.3 Ethical Considerations**

When researchers think about ethics, they must ask themselves if it is professionally acceptable according to the norms and standards for ethical procedures to conduct a particular study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003, p.56) define ethical issues as behaviour that conforms to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group; ethical issues are largely a matter of agreement among researchers. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003, p. 57) suggested three ethical issues of great importance in research namely, the protection of participants from harm, ensuring the confidentiality of research data, and the question of deception of subjects.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher has not subject the respondents to any harm, or any form of deception. The researcher has complied with the research code of ethics applied by the *University of Fort Hare Faculty of Education's Handbook on Postgraduate Qualifications Policies and Procedures* (2008), as well as the DoE ethical clearance for the research. Measures has been taken to ensure respect, dignity, and confidentiality. Since teenage learner pregnancy is a sensitive issue, participants were guaranteed anonymity and the information collected remain confidential. It is imperative that participants know that they participate on a voluntary basis in this particular rural area. A consent form has been completed by the participants. Since learners are minors consent sought from their parents and, or guardians, before including them in the study as participants is ethically required.

Data collected has been transcribed and the researcher would check the accuracy of the transcription with the participants. A letter was written asking for permission to conduct this study from the DoE, through the District Director. The District Director wrote letters of permission to the school principals. For ethical reasons, all the schools referred to in this study were coded as school A, B, C, and D, so as to protect their identity. Mouton and Marais (1992, p.157) argues that respondents tend to be reluctant to participate since they may regard the investigation as an invasion of their privacy. However for this study all four schools agreed to participate.

### **3.4 Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methodology used to gather data for the analysis of the study and determine the research findings. The researcher applied qualitative strategies to collect data such as interviews and observations as suitable strategies for this study. The methods of collecting data from the sample of learners, educators, principals, School Governing Body, and education officials respectively, in the form of responses to the interviews will be collected in this study. In chapter 4, the researcher analysed the data collected from the qualitative research through interviews and observation focusing on the factors contributing towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents, analyses, and interprets the qualitative data collected during this study. An interview schedule was used to collect data from school principals, departmental officials, educators, pregnant learners and SGB members. Whereas, the previous chapter focused on the research design and methodology, discussing how the study had to be conducted, the aim of this chapter was to present the results of analysis of data on factors that contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. The analysis in this study is grounded in the theoretical understandings of Bandura and Bronfenbrenner, which emerged during the literature review; and reflect the findings of interviews which were used as face-to-face data collection strategies with research participants.

The researcher was able to get primary data directly from the research participants, and interviewees were tape recorded as mentioned in the previous chapter-so that the interviewer could focus on listening and responding to the interviewee. The tape-recorded data was analysed through notes taken while listening to the recorded interviews. Holding interviews which were transcribed into themes became relevant to the findings. The data

collected was based and formulated on the research questions addressing teenage learner pregnancy in rural areas.

#### **4.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data from Interviews**

The researcher analysed and synthesized the data obtained from respondents through interviews to be discussed later in the chapter. Data was collected through interviews from 22 respondents, comprising: 4 school principals, 2 departmental officials, 4 educators, 8 learners (ranging age from 15 to 18 years), and 4 School Governing Body members. Respondents gave their views on the scenarios and themes relating to the research question. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the possible factors that contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. The study was inspired by an increasing number of learners (girls) from 14 years of age who fall pregnant during the academic year; this has negative consequences such as the disruption of academic progress and increased dropout rates. School managers often see these learners as being unable to cope with their school work together with other school activities. The findings presented in this report should be regarded as small scale and contextualized. These findings will not be generalised over the whole population but useful and important inferences can be made on the basis of these findings.

Table 4.2.1 Respondents are distinguished from each other by means of the following coding in the various tables.

Learners	Educators	Principals	SGB	Education Officials
L.A1 and 2	ED.A	P.A	PAR.A	EDO. A
L.B1 and 2	ED.B	P.B	PAR.B	EDO. B
L.C1 and 2	ED.C	P.C	PAR.C	
L.D1 and 2	ED.D	P.D	PAR.D	

### 4.3 PROFILES OF THE RESPONDENTS

#### 4.3.1 Biographical data of respondents used in this study

(Distribution of participants used in this study)

Schools	Learners (N=8)	Educators (N=4)	Principals (N=4)	DoE Officials (N=2)	SGB (N=4)
A	2	1	1	2	1
B	2	1	1		1
C	2	1	1		1
D	2	1	1		1
TOTAL	8	4	4	2	4

Table 4.3.1 shows the distribution of respondents used in this study. Educators used in this study comprised of those directly involved with the welfare of pregnant learners in guiding, counselling, and preparing them for their future through discussions during Life Orientation periods and

organising programmes like awareness campaigns about sexuality education in schools. Parents referred to in the study are those serving on the School Governing Body as parent representatives. The district officials are the supervisors in the schools that advise, support, and help schools with the prescribed departmental policies based on learner development.

Table 4.3.2 Distribution of educators by gender

GENDER	PRINCIPALS (N=4)	%	EDUCATORS (N=4)	%
FEMALE	2	50	3	75
MALE	2	50	1	25
TOTAL	4	100	4	100

Table 4.3.2 shows the distribution of principals and educators by gender. The number of male and female principals in this study is equal, whilst that of educators comprised of more female than male educators. ( evident in Table 4.3.3).

Table 4.3.3 Distribution of principals and educators by their ages

AGE	PRINCIPALS (N=4)	%	EDUCATORS (N=4)	%
20-39	0	0	3	75
40-49	2	50	1	25
50-59	2	50	0	0
TOTAL	4	100	4	100

Table 4.3.3 indicates that the age range for the 2 principals are between 40 and 59, and the other 2 between 50 and 59. Three educators were aged between 20 and 39 and one educator between age 40 and 49.

Table 4.3.4 Professional qualifications of respondents

QUALIFICATION	PRINCIPALS (N=4)	%	EDUCATORS (N=4)	%
Primary teacher's certificate	0	0	0	0
Senior certificate	0	0	0	0
Teachers Diploma/ Degree	2	50	3	75
Degree Hon/ MEd	2	50	1	25
TOTAL	4	100	4	100

Table 4.3.4 indicates that both the principals and educators have the required professional qualifications.

Table 4.3.5 Number of years teaching experience for principals and educators

EXPERIENCE IN YEARS	PRINCIPALS ( N=4)	%	EDUCATORS (N=4)	%
1 - 5	0	0	3	75
5 -10	0	0	0	0
10 -15	2	50	0	0
15 - 20	0	0	1	25
20 - 30	2	50	0	0
TOTAL	4	100	4	100

Table 4.3.5 shows that principals are within the range of 10 to 30 years of teaching experience whilst educators range between 1 to 20 years of teaching experience.

Table 4.3.6 Distribution of respondents, learners at school by gender

GENDER	LEARNERS (N=8)	%
Female	8	100
Male	0	0
TOTAL	8	100

Table 4.3.6 Indicates that only 8 female learners participated in the study.

Table 4.3.7 Learner distribution according to ages and grades

GRADES	FEMALE (N=8)	%	AGE	LEARNER (N=8)	%
8	2	25	15-16	2	25
9	2	25	16-17	2	25
10	2	25	17-18	2	25
11	2	25	17-18	2	25
TOTAL	8	100		8	100

Table 4.3.7 Indicates that Grades 8, 9, and 10 in the secondary schools are represented by pregnant learners ranging from 15 to 18 years of age.

Table 4.3.8 Distribution of parents and district officials by gender

NO OF PARENTS	GENDER (N=4)	%	DISTRICT OFFICIALS (N=2)	%
Female	4	100	1	50
Male	0	0	1	50
TOTAL	4	100	2	100

Table 4.3.8 indicates that 4 female parents, 1 male district official and 1 female district official participated in the study.

Table 4.3.9 Distribution of parents by age

NO OF PARENTS (SGB)	AGE (N=4)	%
30-40	1	25
40-45	2	50
45-50	1	25
50-and above	0	0
TOTAL	4	100

Table 4.3.9 shows that the parents interviewed were between the ages of 30 and 50 and representative members of the School Governing Bodies of the 4 schools selected for the study. This leads into the presentation of findings based on the interviews of respondents undertaken by the researcher in the various categories.

#### **4.4 Presentation of interviews and findings**

The following questions were asked based in the research questions of the study. Refer Annexure A, B,C, D and E.

4.4.1 Researcher: *What is the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools?*

*(a) School Principals' responses:*

*P.A Ok, E-e-e last year the rate was very high but this year the numbers have dropped due to the school policy that we have introduced this year.*

*P.B Maam teenage learner pregnancy rate is high as I see most learners are dropping out the reason is that they fall pregnant.*

*P.C OK yes we do get some cases of teenage pregnancy but e-e-e they are minimal this year to such an extent that only four cases was reported officially but others just left the school because of pregnancy.*

*P.D For this year the rate is low; compared to other years it was high. Last year the school had about 10 if not 11 pregnant learners. This year its about 6 learners are showing that they are pregnant.*

The principal's comments on the rate of teenage pregnancy differ from one principal to another. Three revealed that the rate of teenage pregnancy was higher in previous years. One confirmed that it remains high and that any reduction may be because of the school policy adopted. Pregnant learners dropout of the school without the school even noticing that they are pregnant.

*(b) Educators' responses:*

*ED. A A-a am I think the rate of pregnancy is very high in our school, is very high reasons being they might be different but the most common one is the-e I think is the environmental pressure or the so called peer pressure.*

*ED.B Maam I am not clear exactly as I arrived only last year in this school but this year only one learner I saw that she is pregnant, others just dropped out*

*even in other grades while they are not yet seen but parents came to report their pregnancy e-e like there are five cases reported in my class this year.*

*ED.C This year is very low rather as compared to last year because this year we have four learners i-y-a-a the number is decreasing.*

*ED.D E-e what I can say here at school is decreasing as compared to last year, The rate was high only six reported this year, may be as Life Orientation teachers and School Management Team we both had an input.*

Educator's responses revealed that they are not happy about teenage pregnancy as it is disturbing effective teaching and learning. Educators indicated that in their schools teenage pregnancy is decreasing although it is accelerating in other schools in the same district, the reason for this differ from one environment to another .

*PAR. A I can't say its increasing or decreasing it's just stand still because the Department of Health and social workers do come and educate learners so learners listen, other learners do not.*

*PAR. B Maam the teenage learner pregnancy rate is high as I see learners and others are reported to the SGB by the principal, while others just dropout.*

*PAR.C Pregnancy rate here at school is there but not too much, they become pregnant in a very young age getting the information from peers at school.*

*PAR.D This year the rate is low; parents decided that they do not want pregnant learners at school. It was the government that give pregnant learners a chance to learn. This year we said we don't want any pregnant learner in our school.*

The above findings from the interviews reveal that parents are not happy about teenage pregnancy. Respondents (SGB) parent component revealed parent's decisions about teenage pregnancy were against the DoE policy that pregnant learners should remain at school. Parents want pregnant learners to be off the school premises while they are pregnant.

*(d) Education Officials' responses:*

*EDO A Yes, teenage learner pregnancy is common in schools, we only detect it on e-e EMIS that is Education Management Information Systems only though other schools do not report that, some do give the report.*

*EDO.B E-e you see if I may be honest the rate of pregnancy is very high from Junior secondary to Senior Secondary it is very high.*

The above findings from the EDO interviews revealed that teenage pregnancy is high in both junior and secondary schools in Elliotdale. The departmental

officials detect the statistics on teenage pregnancy on EMIS only from those schools that reported the pregnancy rate in various grades.

*(b) Socio-economic factors contributing towards teenage pregnancy*

*4.4.2 Researcher: What are the Socio-economic factors contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy?*

*(a) School Principals' responses:*

*P.A. E-e that is poverty, poverty is one reason I have been citing. The learner herself is an adult they rely on people for support those who say I love you, come with food on the table, that makes them to sleep even if they don't feel like sleeping because something is going to come his or her way.*

*P.B E-e-m you see there is a this question of e--- grant, we of the opinion that since the area is e-e surrounded by people who are not working I think our learners are tempted by this child support grant.*

*P.C: In this area there are few professionals, once learners are in high school they think they have done their best. More awareness campaigns on teenage learner pregnancy as well about their future, I think, will make them set goals for themselves nothing attracts them since there's not even money to go further.*

*P.D Ma'am I think because of poverty. Poverty cause these learners to look for money by being in love with working people, very few parents that are*

*working most are getting pension some because of age, some because of sickness.*

The principals revealed that the area is dominated by high levels of unemployment which results in poverty. The response by the principals is that clearly the message is poverty and unemployment. The issue of the child support grant is noted as a possible contributing factor because it is a stream of income in such a poverty stricken area.

*(b) Educators' responses:*

*ED.A E-e-m I would say I do not think it's poverty, poverty isn't one of them I think it's ignorance because everything has been laid out for them everything has put into their faces but they don't want to take the measures it's the ignorance that's the main point, that that they are ignorant.*

*ED.B Well when at home there is nobody working its when some of these learners she go for working people like taxi man he will give her money, you know! And the money will help her to buy things that she can't get at home.*

*ED.C E-e- maam when you look at this location very few educated people, they take children to school both boys and girls dropout, reason that they do not have money to take them further even to support them with school needs.*

*ED.D The children of this area are struggling to get school needs like school uniform. Their parents are only getting pension and the rate of unemployment*

*can let these learners go for working people or those who have money like taxi men so it is easy for the men to sleep with them and become pregnant.*

The educators response findings indicated that though poverty is a contributory factor, ignorance is noted as another such factor. Even though learners know the protective measures they do not consider the consequences which shows their ignorance. The school girls are growing up in a society where there is high rate of parental unemployment. Parents are receiving pension and so learners seek a relationship with men who are working and have financial means.

*(c) Education Officials' responses*

*EDO. A Factors that contribute to this teenage learner pregnancy is the grant, grant thus is the main factor, that is poverty in other words, because they gain something after they have the babies. Some children are staying alone, alone as orphans, men take advantage and sleep with them give them money.*

*EDO.B As I once indicated before the factors are vast, the illiteracy background, when parents do no regard importance of education, one could be viewed as the unemployment which result to poverty, that is poverty wherein learners in most cases due to the inability of their parents to meet their material demands they find themselves involved in these relationships that result to pregnancy.*

The above findings from the departmental officials show that poverty is a threat to people living in the rural area of Elliotdale. Literacy among parents plays a role; learners are more educated than their parents. Unemployment is another factor where young people in the district are not working thus leading to an increase in poverty. Many low income parents are living on government grants. Irresponsibility on behalf of learners leads to female pregnancy.

#### 4.4.3 Researcher: *What is the nature of employment of learners' parents?*

##### *(a) Learners' responses:*

*L.A 1 My brother is working, my mother is getting pension.*

*LA 2 my grandmother is getting pension, my mother is sick at home not working.*

*L.B 1 Only my father who is working in Cape Town.*

*LB 2 nobody working my father died and my sister is getting foster care grant for me and two children*

*L.C 1 No nobody working my parents are getting pension and my sisters are getting children's grant.*

*LC 2 We are staying alone getting foster care grant nobody working our parents died.*

*L.D 1 My mother is working in the laundry in the hospital, and my father is not working my sisters are getting grant.*

*LD 2 my aunt is working in the clinic as a cleaner.*

The above findings from learner responses show that unemployment continues to be a contributing factor because parents are not working; however, the pension that parents or grandparents are getting is not enough to meet the substance needs/levels. The fact that some learners are staying alone without parental support or care is another significant issue.

#### 4.4.4 Researcher: *Who are you staying with at home?*

*(a) Learner's responses:*

*L.A 1 I am staying with my mother, we are five my brother and my two sisters*

*L.A 2 I am staying with my grandmother my sister and my mother.*

*L.B 1 I am staying with my sister, my mother was sick then died.*

*L.B 2 I am staying with my sisters no parents they all died.*

*L.C 1 I am staying with my mother and five of my sisters children*

*L.C 2 We are staying alone our parents both died.*

*L.D 1 I am staying with both my parents, two sisters with children and my uncle.*

*L.D 2 I am staying with my aunt and two children.*

The above findings show that some of these learners are staying with grandparents, single parents or guardians in cases where biological parent

have died. It is also noted that other families are as big as twelve people in one family with one person working. Many of such families depend on child support grants and old age pensions.

4.4.5 Researcher: *Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?*

*(a) School Principals' responses.*

*P.A E-e that is poverty, poverty is one reason that is what I have been citing. And again there-there what is common here is that parents don't stay with their learners, our learners stay with their grandparents and more often than not they cheat on their grannies.*

*P.B Well e-e-m I should in fact according to my own opinion environment itself do contribute. Well the situation itself in some homes, do contribute where parents do not care of their children they go out to shebeens the whole day.*

*P.C E-e-e what I say some of these children have boyfriends at an early age. Sometimes when they go out with friends and see that girls have boy friends they also do.*

*P.D Advocacy is not enough as well as awareness, parents are not involved in awareness programmes and they do not talk to their children about pregnancy at home.*

The principals revealed that poverty has been identified as the main contributing factor as well as environmental factors such as the lack of parental awareness and involvement. Parental attitude to children is also a contributing factor.

*(b) Parent's responses: Peer Pressure ,Media, and Government policies.*

*PAR.A I think the learners are copying from others when one has fallen pregnant mos she will remain at school and others do the same.*

*PAR.B TV yho! Maam is wrong it shows bad images for our children, they copy and do all those bad things seeing people naked doing sex, its bad.*

*PAR.C Our children Mam I don't know how can I put it, I can say they are not disciplined their minds are telling them to do these things. They do not care both at home and at school. They even leave school early you will see them in groups in the location before the school is out. As a parent you will think she is at school yet not there. What is that Mam? Eyi...*

*PAR D Our children do not listen they go wherever they like as a parent you may never know her whereabouts until the next day. The reason for their pregnancy lies on the lack of discipline and control.*

The parent respondents noted that learner behaviour is a factor in teenage pregnancy. They are careless not focusing on their education, but rather

focusing on their friends and having a nice time. Peer pressure has been noted as a factor that learners copy from others at school. Parents feel that the media, for example television, is a contributing factor in teenage learner pregnancy since learners watch and copy these promiscuous behaviours.

*(c) Educator's responses: Socio economic problems*

*ED. A: I would say I do not think its poverty, I think its ignorance because during Life Orientation periods the content is about life, and they don't care. They are advised on the use of protective measures.*

*ED.B May be they talk to each other I mean maybe it's a peer pressure, they even bunk school when the educator get into class some do not come after break.*

*ED.C I see the environment other students they do not know condoms, the environment can be the one of the factors.*

*ED.D Poverty and unemployment of their parents change the learner's minds and they go for working people like taxi men. Also the rate of parents who are taking liquor they do not take care of their children.*

Abovementioned responses revealed that repeated factors (poverty, environment, ignorance, and peer pressure) were identified as contributing

factors and dysfunctional homes or households where parents are not there to monitor or supervise or provide good model for their children.

*(d) Learners' responses:*

*L.A 1 The reason is to be loved by the man while he has many other girlfriends.*

*and to sleep with a man without protection.*

*L.A 2 My boyfriend forced me to sleep with him on my way from school.*

*L.B 1 My boyfriend refused to use condoms, he once said he wants a child, we slept when we were from the beach.*

*L.B 2 I slept with a men once without using condom and become pregnant*

*L.C 1 Things like going to a boyfriend without using protection are leading to pregnancy.*

*L.C 2 To sleep with a boyfriend without using condom*

*L.D 1 I think its grant because its growing then they thought its right though the money didn't support the babies.*

*L.D 2 My boyfriend wanted the child I refused to sleep without condom*

Learners revealed that they sleep with their boyfriends without using protective measures and therefore are the victims of teenage learner

pregnancy. A learner who has never been pregnant thought that other learners wanted the child support grant.

*(e) Education Officers' responses*

*EDO.A Factors that contribute to this teenage learner pregnancy is the money, grant thus the main factor that is poverty in other words because they gain something after they have the babies hence some of them in the junior secondary level they have got three kids still in the junior secondary level.*

*EDO.B I once indicated before the factors are vast one could be viewed as the poverty, if I may look at some of the factors that contribute to this, its insufficient knowledge lack of proper awareness campaigns that should be within the school programmes for all the stakeholders.*

The EDO's responses clearly highlight the following factors: a) poverty, b) lack of parental care, as well as c) peer pressure, d) environment, e) ignorance and f) lack of parental monitoring, supervision and serving as models of socially acceptable behaviour.

*4.4.6 Researcher: How do you view teenage learner pregnancy and the government child support grant?*

*(a) Principal' responses*

*P.A E-e child support grant is a very good government intervention focusing at helping children not pregnancy allowance the way children treat it. For this poor area its good, very good.*

*P.B E-e- grant is a difficult one because I think when this grant was introduced it was for the children who are already there to look after these children and make sure that they are fed but people use the government policy on a wrong note.*

*P.C E-e-m you see there is this question of e-e grant we of the opinion that since the area is surrounded by unemployment a child fall pregnant to get the grant ,they copy from those who are having this grant.*

*P.D Iyaa grant is good but our children are not thinking well, falling pregnant for grant is not good, you see education needs dedication, pregnancy disturbs.*

The above principals revealed that the idea for the child support grant is good even though pregnant learners may take an advantage of the grant.

*(b) Educators' responses:*

*ED.A It's very frustrating if the child grant was on Monday then you will see them on Monday the following week when the whole two hundred rand and forty is gone.*

*ED.B Learners become pregnant although they know the contraceptives because they are happy when they get grant and use it for the wrong reasons.*

*ED.C. E-yi the issue of grant its bad because some of these children depend on this grant nobody working at home may be the boyfriend is not working, they even want to get one child after the other to increase the money.*

*ED.D Child Support Grant is for those who have children I do not understand why do other learners want it and also going through that experience of falling pregnant not education for their future.*

The educators revealed that the government policy i.e. social grant is used for the wrong reasons and that learners need assistance regarding the issue of pregnancy. Education should be the first priority for the better future.

*(d) Education Officials' responses:*

*EDO.A Factors that contribute to this teenage learner pregnancy are many, the child support grant is the contributing factor that is poverty in other words because they gain something after they have the babies.*

*EDO.B Government grant is a very good intervention strategy assisting the young ones, girls and boys use it for money making and will address their personal needs and find that the baby is still suffering very badly.*

The education officials' responses indicated that the government intervention strategy to alleviate poverty through child support the grant is for new born babies. They also identified the problem of misusing the grant for the learner's personal needs.

*(e) SGB Members' responses:*

*PAR. A e-e I don't know but because learners are taught they know what is wrong then the factors I can say is their misbehaviour I don't know carelessness because to go out and sleep out its misbehaviour.*

*PAR.B I think learners who fall pregnant are greedy because the taxi men entice them with money and the grant also since we are staying in town we see them prostituting themselves.*

*PAR.C Mam our children want to be beautiful, they like money too much. In olden days teenage learner pregnancy was scarce now they have more than one child. They take the money leave their children with parents.*

*PAR.D They fall pregnant intentionally they want this grant because they don't marry. The boyfriends are not working they depend on this grant.*

The findings revealed that parent respondents noted that the grant is a contributing factor towards teenage pregnancy. Learners like money more than their family status. Learners are the victims of taxi men since they have money.

#### 4.4.7 Researcher: *Who are the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy?*

##### *(a) School principals' responses*

*P.A m-m-m-h they fall pregnant either from-m boys in the school or from people who are out of the school, workers so those are the people they make them pregnant.*

*P.B Dropouts impregnate them and sometimes we don't even know who is responsible for the pregnancy. The learner just fall pregnant and left school not even noticed. The school get the information from parents.*

*P.C Well e-e-m I should in fact according to my own opinion environment itself contribute. Even those that are outside school, inside school are the reasons, I can say the environment they are in.*

*P.D Since our school is in town, there are bashes during weekends in town hall, and learners take alcohol that is the reason of pupils becoming victims.*

The above principal responses revealed that the environment (rural area) contributes hugely towards teenage pregnancy. The working class including dropouts are also taking part and delaying these learners' education.

##### *(b) Educator's responses:*

*ED.A I wouldn't blame anyone specifically because it starts with them the learners aren't that responsible they don't want to take responsibility as it is for their bodies at all.*

*ED.B Usually these learners are not preganated by other learners there are cases when they are preganated by other learners but mostly you will find that e-e-e the people who do this are old people who are working*

*ED.C It's the boys, people who are working around town, taxi-drivers.*

*ED.D Taxi men, our learners you find that they have an affair with working people its something like that. They want materialistic things like girls wanting the high social life with good clothes and cell phones*

The above respondents agreed with the view that the working class men like taxi men, attract learners with money and impregnate them. The perception from respondents is that most of them are impregnated by working men. School boys seem not to be the main perpetrators but three educators clearly refer to older men that are contributing to teenage learner pregnancy by giving these learners money.

*(c) Education Official's responses:*

*EDO. A We think both the parents and their boyfriends are the perpetrators, in this area teenage learner pregnancy is encouraged because they bring something home since it is a poor area dominated by poverty.*

*EDO.B You see the—the perpetrators of this teenage learner pregnancy could be a wide range of -of- factors some of them are the people who are*

*employed because of poverty in this area getting a boyfriend is associated with someone who will provide money in the course of the relationship.*

The education officials noted that parents and boyfriends are the perpetrators of teenage pregnancy, because having a working boyfriend is associated with money.

*(d) SGB Member's responses:*

*PAR.A I use to see school boys who are schooling with them.*

*PAR.B It's the boys, people who are working around town, and the taxi-drivers.*

*PAR.C these learners, pretend that they are going to school and go to sleep with these boys others go up and down with taxi men, we don't like this kind of behaviour spoil our school.*

*PAR.D The people in the location pregnant these learners and even teachers are sometimes pregnant learners.*

The parents revealed that perpetrators of teenage pregnancy are working men. Respondents revealed that teachers are sometimes the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy, and also states that there are very few cases where school boys impregnate the school girls. There is a view that the reason why they go for taxi men is because they want money.

4.4.8 Researcher: *Why do school girls not use the preventive measures against pregnancy.*

(a) *Learner's responses:*

L.A 1 *I did not want my aunt who is working in hospital to see me that I am taking contraceptives but I am using them when my friend give me sometimes do not have them.*

L.A 2 *The clinic is far from home, and the nurses do not give contraceptives on the week-end*

L.B 1 *I was afraid at home. They will ask why I am taking pills my parents were going to beat me.*

L.B 2 *my sister told me that if I am using injection I will not get children when I want them, for the condom I do not know where to put it at home, am afraid of my parents.*

L.C 1 *I was afraid to go to clinic; a rumour says there is a nurse who injects painfully, "ufaka isitofu kakhulu" [inject hard] so I decided to not go and my friends said menstruation is too heavy when using pills.*

L.C 2 *my boyfriend do not want contraceptives he said I will be cold and he will leave me.*

L.D 1 *My friend said contraceptives can cause me not to have children when I want them.*

*L.D 2 I used the injection then stopped because my menstruation was heavy for long like two weeks.*

Learners revealed that they are afraid of their parents reactions if they found them using contraceptives. The school girls have poor ability to negotiate sex with boyfriends. The end result of having sex without using contraceptives is pregnancy. This implies that there is still a need for parents to be involved in educating and handling the problem of teenage learner pregnancy, since education will assist in making both parents and learners understand the purpose of contraceptives.

*4.4.9 Researcher: What do pregnant learners say is the reason that they fall Pregnant ?*

*(a) School Principal's responses:*

*P.A Its one story it was a mistake, it was a mistake I never knew that I will become pregnant.*

*P.B They say we see other friends and sometimes say the boyfriend forced her without using condom.*

*P.C Learners say pregnancy is mistake, its not their intention.*

*P.D Mistake is their answer and will cry saying they do not want to stop schooling.*

The principals revealed that learners' responses regarding the reasons why they fall pregnant is that it is a mistake, and sometimes their boyfriends coerce them into sexual activities against their will.

*(b) Parent's responses*

*PAR.A Our children say it's a mistake they were not aware that they are going to fall pregnant.*

*PAR B Wow maam our children say it's a mistake, mistake always mistake*

*PAR C They do not know they do it nje-e to satisfy their boyfriends benza nje [they are careless]. To go around with a big tummy its not a problem to our children.*

*PAR D They do not tell us, their minds tell them to be pregnant and they do not care in olden days it was a disgrace but now yho!*

Parents reported that learners gave very different reasons. Some state that they were convinced to engage in sexual activities by their boyfriends. Learners are not afraid of embarrassment or shame, pregnancy is a modern and accepted practice in today's society.

4.4.10 Researcher: *What is the effect of teenage learner pregnancy and learner performance?*

*(a) School Principal's responses:*

*P.A High level of failure rate, where a learner is pregnant the attitude she displays to an educator or administrator won't be the same. Some tasks won't be submitted on time.*

*P.B Ok Ok you see if we may judge firstly a learner who is pregnant her performance once she gets goes down because she is faced one with personal problems, be it physical be it mental be it spiritual so her performance goes down.*

*P.C It has effects, looking at our school, pre-grade to grade 9, if a grade 9 fall pregnant, those young ones looking at the elders, that have a negative effect on the running of the school.*

*P.D Ma'am pregnancy is disturbing learners. It is a risk to keep pregnant learners at school, they absent themselves from school, they perform very bad in class and even dropout before the end of the year.*

The principal's response revealed that pregnancy disrupts the course of progressive learning and effective teaching, as well as the learning ability of the pregnant learners in both a direct and in an indirect way. Pregnancy reflects negatively on both education and learning. It negatively affects the whole school as these older girls lack moral integrity. Teenage pregnancy affects school results in a high failure rate and these learners dropout due to their physical condition.

*(b) Educator's responses:*

*ED.A We do not like it we don't like it because that thing it retards the progress of the learner you know the learner is wasting her time for becoming pregnant.*

*ED.B Pregnant learners do not perform well in class, others just cry one will say that she is not happy both at home and at school.*

*ED.C Ey- maam, girls do not consider the after effects of pregnancy. When they are given tasks to do they get low marks, even those who use to perform well their performance drop when they are pregnant.*

*ED.D They do not care tu-tu [at all] pregnancy lower their performance, change their attitudes make them lazy. They do not come to school regularly they absent themselves may be for two to three days.*

Educator's responses revealed that pregnancy destroys the learner's future. Clearly pregnancy influences their performance. One respondent revealed that they get low marks when given tasks as they are too lazy to do their work.

*(c) Education Official's responses:*

*EDO.A Despite all the causative factors of teenage learner pregnancy, the pregnancy itself disrupt their education and even destroys the future of some girls.*

*EDO.B You see pregnancy disrupts as it affects ones concentration in what one is doing it therefore very disruptive one it is costly on the part of the department because a learner that was budgeted for by the department for the whole year has to drop out leaving everything in the middle.*

The education officials see pregnancy as something that disrupts learner's future. They also noted its effect on DoE budget, as learners dropout without completing the year that was budgeted for. Lack of performance and concentration hampers learning.

*(d) SGB Member's responses:*

*PAR.A It affects them because one, the learner become pregnant at school and become she is cheeky and moody*

*PAR. B They are disturbed, even if they are not pregnant, its worse when they are pregnant. They don't care especially when they are pregnant.*

*PAR. C When you are pregnant there are changes in your body those changes that change the behaviour Mam the learner can not cope with her studies tu.*

*PAR.D They become pregnant and fail, eyonanto ibuhlungu [ one painful thing ] pregnancy is not easy ,you are tired today ,tomorrow you feel a pain, they can not do school activities well*

These findings reveal that pregnancy has a physical effect on learners. Parents see emotional changes, because pregnancy is very disruptive and affects ones concentration. Hormonal changes also affect their behaviour in class.

*4.4.11 Researcher: What is the attitude of parents, educators and community members towards teenage learner pregnancy and inclusion of sex education?*

*(a) School Principal's responses:*

*P. A Parents are one aspect that you cannot predict. We hope we are helping them by saying they should abstain or use a condom but when a learner is pregnant the first person to come to query the method suggested by the other parents is the same parent who was the part of the decision.*

*P.B Well I think to answer that question I may say not one parent would like to see e-e-e her child being pregnant. Then well there also that belief in our*

*communities should my child who is not yet pregnant associates herself with a child who is pregnant my child would also fall pregnant in one day.*

*P.C Iya- m-m-h Parents have got a role to play when it comes to this issue. Well even if they can teach these girls about the traditional matters of preventing pregnancy. Well education starts at home at first that is why I am involving or including the parents in so far as this issue is concerned.*

*P.D Since there is illiteracy and fear within the community, they are reluctant to speak openly about this. Its better when you invite nurses from Bomvana clinic and Madwaleni. Parents are so cagey about this, if the learner is pregnant they do not come to school to report, they don't want to address this issue, say teachers should be doing this not us.*

The principal's response revealed that education starts at home, therefore parents are responsible and have a significant role to play in helping their children, Learners need parental support. It is a parental concern not to see their child fall pregnant that is why they have to play an active role on child behaviour. Parents blame others or misplace their responsibilities according to these principal's views. Illiteracy play a role in as far as a lack of parental support, as learners are more educated than parents. These learners take advantage of parental ignorance.

*(b) Learner's responses:*

*L.A 1 They don't like it, they criticize or gossip about you, they say we do not want to listen and educated like those who are nurses and clerks.*

*L.A 2 Parents do not like pregnancy tu.*

*L.B 1 They don't like it, both parents and community. They said we listen our boyfriends because we leave things to be done at home and go to friends.*

*L.B 2 When a girl is pregnant parents look at her critically and if you are passing they talk you only here them saying WOW our children!*

*L.C 1 Other parents like it others don't like it, because they don't care about the children's whereabouts. Other girls say "my parents do not ask me if I went to the party or to my friend".*

*L.C 2 Parents do not like pregnancy they say it is a disgrace*

*L.D 1 To become pregnant is a shame in the community and educators at school do not like it.*

*L.D 2 Pregnancy is bad I am always afraid of parents and of getting a baby and my friends do not come to me*

Learner's responses revealed that parents and community members are against teenage pregnancy. They criticise it, since it delays the child's education and changes the behaviour as they listen to their peers and boyfriend.

*( c) Educator's responses:*

*ED.A Their attitude is positive for education not pregnancy. Parents say their children do not want to listen from them.*

*ED.B What you basically find out when you sit down with their parents there is no common ground at all they don't communicate about the preventive and consequences of pregnancy whatsoever.*

Educators' responses revealed that parents cannot communicate adequately with their children. There is no common ground when they talk about the effects of pregnancy. The learners do not listen to their parents and hence parents tend to give up.

*(d) Education Officials responses*

*EDO.A I think it depends on the area in some areas it is accepted, you know some are very grateful of this L.O. because it educates their learners how to go about their lives in order to succeed for their future.*

*EDO.B You see sex education is another problem area parents do not like to see those pictures with naked people doing sex in the television. Teachers themselves are not happy with handling such topics you see. When the teacher gets in class the lesson may not progress because once she starts the learners will break into laughter now and again and will not concentrate because she is dealing with something they are actively practising.*

The above findings from the EDO's in this study revealed that the environment plays a role, and that these parents are not happy about teenage pregnancy. The other respondent values Life Orientation as an important learning area that will assist the educators in the development of the learner's knowledge, education about sexual behaviour, and the consequences thereof.

4.4.12 Researcher: *What is the attitude of other learners towards teenage learner pregnancy in your district?.*

*(a) Education Official's responses:*

*EDO.A You see with regard to the attitude of learners particularly the female learners falling pregnant is a very good experience, because it is very common among female learners to go and visit a learner that has delivered some.*

*EDO.B. You see for boys if his girlfriend gets pregnant that boy you see, gets recognition from his peers that he is a man, therefore means that this indeed is a problem, schools and youth need a lot of campaigns on this lya –a-*

The education officials' responses revealed that some female learners regard pregnancy as a positive life experience, even boys feel that their peers will accept him if he fathered a child. The DoE officials regard teenage learner pregnancy as a problem, that needs attention by organising campaigns. It has gender power issues attached.

*(b) SGB Member's responses*

*PAR.A E-e-ey Maam they know contraceptives but they do not use them effectively, I can say they do not care.*

*PAR.B I heard a learner saying that how one can become pregnant while she is still young doing grade 9 and become pregnant.*

*PAR.C They do not care you will see them carrying their babies going to each other's home just for a visit, they are not even afraid of going around with big tummies.*

*PAR, D They visit each other staying together the whole day, whole day Maam some are afraid depending on that house. I do not know what they are talking about. In olden days pregnant girl was afraid even to walk around the location now they don't care.*

The findings from parents in the study revealed that the attitude of other learners towards teenage pregnancy is negative. However, other pregnant learners have positive attitudes as they visit each other once they've dropped out of school.

4.4.13 Researcher: *What are the intervention strategies being used by the DoE to tackle this problem?*

*(a) School Principal's responses:*

*P.A Iyaa-eem well because of the rights our children are enjoying today you see we have got these children rights human rights etc, etc, too little or too minimal the department can do.*

*P.B Yes we do have some meetings with parents, who happen to have girls getting pregnant, we do speak to parents on meetings so that they can talk to their children.*

*P.C We have got this we have this programme We have got we have got SCO. At least our SCO has made us proud by having learners in SCO do not get pregnant.*

*P.C Another programme that I think will help us is, we are starting something new where we have girl talks and boy talks, sessions for girls alone boys alone.*

*P.D More work need to be done, policies to be reviewed, more responsibilities, more knowledge is demanding. Department must come closer, presently they are not doing enough.*

The principals' responses revealed that there is a demand for the (DoE) to revisit the policies regarding teenage pregnancy. Some schools are already embarking on programmes to eliminate this kind of behaviour. There should be a closer link between the DoE and the schools.

*(b) Educator's responses:*

*ED. A You know there is something I like in Kwa-Zulu Natal learners are educated and there is virginity testing by old people.*

*ED.B The department has to review its policy. If a child falls pregnant and discovered after the trimester that child should stay at home for a while. It does not paint a good picture, not setting a good example for other children in the same institution.*

*ED.C If the department of education can organise support programmes for us to handle these pregnant learners it would be better. Parents also should be involved when discussing these problems about their children.*

*ED.D There is nothing that the department is doing in as far as educators are concerned no training on how to handle the situation even peer education is for learners by other young ones. We are binded by the constitution not to discriminate against these learners.*

The educator's responses revealed that the DoE has to embark on teacher training and counselling for educators on how to handle pregnant learners, even though they do not believe that this situation is the schools or educators problem. The educators further recommended that parents should be involved in any intervention strategy regarding teenage pregnancy. The traditional activities like virginity testing in other areas, such as in Kwa-Zulu Natal and

other countries, as mentioned by one of the respondents violates the learners' right to privacy as they want to ensure their virginity.

*(d) Education Official's responses:*

*EDO.A Department of Education cannot address the situation alone it needs the sister department to participate also if we are doing e-e-e workshops for instance or go out to these areas and do advocacy*

*EDO.B You see this would depend on the existence of the policy because it would be then easy to convey to schools because we would hold workshops with principals who are the custodians of the policy at schools.*

The findings revealed that the situation ought to be addressed by the DoE together with other sister departments, such as the Department of Health and Department of Social Development, to assist in the elimination of teenage learner pregnancy in schools.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided a comprehensive report of the responses of all participants as presented in chapter 3 of this study. In this chapter, the researcher analysed the qualitative data from the purposive sample of participants which was used since educators and parents from the SGB had relevant characteristics for inclusion in the study. The researcher found out that the government has put in place policies to handle pregnant learners

even though educators are not trained to cope with this situation. The findings will be discussed in Chapter 5. The findings revealed a lack of teacher training. The DoE does not offer sex education and support programmes to train educators on how to educate learners around issue of sexuality as well as how to handle pregnant learners in school. The Education officers noted that there is a need for Life Orientation educators to do guidance and counselling as it is not the part of their specialisation in teaching the Learning Area. All the stakeholders commented about the dropout rate and lack of sex education at school.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research findings presented in Chapter 4 using appropriate themes that reflect the outcomes of this study. The objective is to provide knowledge and possible outcomes to the main research questions. The researcher has argued that there are factors that contribute as possible outcomes towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. Chapter 4 of this research study discussed the responses of the various participants pertinent to the initial sub-questions focused on the factors that are contributing towards teenage pregnancy. Interviews held with school principals, educators, parents, learners and education officials in four secondary schools in Elliotdale revealed that pregnant learners are aware of the preventative measures despite the fact that they do not use them. The argument put forward by the respondents is the evidence that supports the investigation for this study.

#### **5.2 Findings and discussions**

The main objective for carrying out this study was to interview the various participants to gain first-hand information and to conceptualise the factors contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy.

- 1) Very few parents are working and so they depend on a government grant.
- 2) Poverty - female learners seek assistance from boyfriends who are working and are able to contribute to them financially.

- 3) Misbehaviour determined by learner's attitude
- 4) Defiant disregard of parental guidance.
- 5) The issue of the Child Support Grant
- 6) Defiant refusal to preventive measures, such as contraceptives.
- 7) Environmental factors - Pregnant learners are influenced by the culture of the society in which they are living for instance they attend activities which lead them to come home late, also Elliotdale is a rural area where learners travel on foot from far away homes to school.
- 8) Over-age male abuse of underage schooling girls.
- 9) Ignorance which hampers the natural academic progression of the learner

The literature in the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF, 2005) as well as the analysis of data revealed that the above factors are relevant. Many learners deliberately fall pregnant in order to get support grants after giving birth to bring relief to their families rather than support the dire and basic needs of their babies. However, Makiwane and Daniel (2007) found no evidence to suggest that girls are deliberately falling pregnant in order to receive the child care support grant. Findings from respondents revealed that the support grant is a contributing factor, (Chuenyane, et al. 2008, p.13). The government provides grant, not pregnancy allowances, meaning that the grant is for the support of the baby.

The researcher found that the support grant is a good intervention support programme that could improve the lives of the babies, unfortunately most of the

learners are not serious about their studies and their future. The findings revealed that ignorance regarding the outcomes which may affect the pregnant learners' future is also a contributing factor, as well as poverty. According to the report by News 24 (2004, p.1), Tau the school principal attributed the high rate of pregnancy among learners to three factors, 1) lack of recreational facilities where there is scarcity of resources for sporting activities like grounds .auditorium for film shows, indoor games and places of interest like zoological gardens and circus shows which may occupy them during their leisure hours, 2) poor settlement where there is not enough space for the aforementioned facilities due to the cluster situation of the settlement and, 3) ignorance amongst those who fall pregnant that some learners do sex without knowing the consequences for example out of ignorance some girls may think they are not old enough to become pregnant or their boyfriends are not old enough to make them pregnant as a result of sex education. Similarly Makiwane et al (2007) confirmed that "other factors leading to teenage pregnancy include living in an impoverished area and coming from a broken household". In his research he observed that children from poor families, from broken homes, or whose parents are not working have contributed to the breakdown of value systems in the home.

The comments from the respondents concur that when learners were left alone without parental supervision they misbehaved more than those who are under parental control. The findings revealed that teenage pregnancy is disruptive to progressive schooling. Dunn and Theron (2006) found that," teenage learner

pregnancy may be associated with a syndrome of failure to remain in school because pregnancy is disruptive when it comes to school attendance”, This was strongly highlighted by the respondents who claimed that teenage pregnancy contributes to a high failure rate because some of the pregnant learners cannot prepare properly for their schooling due to their physical condition.

Through this investigation the researcher realised that learners are aware of the consequences of falling pregnant while schooling, as they are taught the consequences of pregnancy through Life Orientation learning area at school. The view that it is a learner’s choice to fall pregnant as they imitate their peers is supported; Phil (2008) states that they are not afraid of the consequences. The respondent’s findings revealed that teenage pregnancy is not a sign of poor health or lack of knowledge but is a career choice that some girls make. Chuenyane et al (2008), supports that by stating that, ” some are dropping out of school or opting for backyard abortions to escape the consequences”.

In this study school principals, parents, and district officials stated that teenage learner pregnancy is high indicating carelessness, low morals and values, poverty ,lack of parental guidance as well misbehaviour as contributing factors contribute towards schoolgirl pregnancies. Richter, (2005), claims that teenage pregnancy is a major health problem in South Africa and remains high amongst learners. The evidence supporting these authors is evident in the statistics for both the Eastern Cape districts and the eight other South African Provinces. Respondents in the previous chapter revealed that teenage pregnancy is very

high as numbers vary according to statistics from different schools and different districts. From the interviews the researcher concluded that the education officials highlighted that, educators are not free to teach aspects of the Life Skills as they feel that it is the role of the Life Orientation teacher since learners laugh at the explanations as they practise this kind of behaviour. The findings therefore revealed that language has been found as a barrier in the clarity of the content on sex education.

One respondent, an educational official, indicated that learners turn to laughter when an educator is explaining sexual aspects in a sex education lesson. According to him the message of sex education loses its impact and turns into a joke. The SGB members revealed that the policy of retaining learners in schools when a learner is pregnant is not easy for the school, since it projects a negative image to other learners to see a learner moving around the school with a big tummy. The learners themselves revealed that they are not free, they wear jackets even in warm weather. Tolmay (2005) states that although, theoretically girls who fall pregnant at school are free to continue and or return, in practise they are stigmatised or blatantly expelled, and seldom complete their education. Most learners revealed that abstinence and condom use are the best options to prevent pregnancy and they encouraged other girls to use them.

### **5.3 Consequences of unprotected sex**

The learners admitted that when the relationship is old they stop using a condom and become the victims of pregnancy. Fisher and Libery (2000) found

that “despite knowledge that condoms prevent pregnancy and HIV/AIDS transmission, condom use has remained very low among learners”. The same respondents revealed that the reason for not going to the clinics for contraceptives is because they are afraid of their parents. The respondents revealed that there is a negative attitude surrounding girls going to the clinics for contraceptives indicating that they are engaging in sexual activities without protection. The study conducted by Mfono (1998) also confirms that learner contraceptive use in South Africa is constrained by attitudes associating sexual involvement with marital commitment and stable relationships.

From the interviews the researcher concluded and recommends that schools with a low rate of teenage pregnancy could inform and share their intervention strategies with other schools with high rates of teenage pregnancy. Through the data collection it became clear that full parental involvement is essential. This view enumerated what Chigona et al ( 2007) voiced in his concern about the involvement of parents in children’s lives.

#### **5.4 The learner’s behaviour changes**

From the interviews it was revealed that though school ethos exists, learners bunk school and loiter in the streets in the location during school hours. The literature reviewed confirms that it is not difficult for the effective schools to control the learners’ behaviour. The Minister of Education (2009) highlighted that “high rate of teenage pregnancy occurs in dysfunctional schools. The interviews revealed that the School Management Team (SMT), SGB, and

guidance teachers should collaborate to form programmes focusing on the elimination of teenage learner pregnancy and implementing departmental policies that can bring about a positive change on learner behaviour. Policies such as prevention and management of teenage learner pregnancy in schools and policies regarding the period that the pregnant learner should stay at school while she is pregnant.

The researcher realised through the data collection process and analysis of data in Chapter 4 that the school principals do not have the DoE policy documents that guide them on how to deal with teenage learner pregnancy in schools. This has been deduced from the interviews of parent's that the school's decision was to expel learners who were found pregnant at the school. The researcher concluded that there is a communication breakdown between the DoE, parents, and schools concerning the dissemination of information and intervention strategies. The lack of information cannot let the stakeholders draw effective policies to change learner behaviour without having the policy as guidelines. The study revealed that policy on teenage learner pregnancy in South African schools is clearly set out in the Measures for Prevention and Management of Teenage learner pregnancy (DoE 2007, pp.1-6). The problem is that not one school visited has a copy of this policy document.

One of the educators discussed the learners' attitude towards moral values, sexual ignorance and carelessness, dominating over learner values and morals. Mkhwanazi, (2006, p. 97) confirms that factors leading to teenage learner

pregnancy include social and psychological variables (lack of contraceptive knowledge, lack of self-esteem, poverty, absence of father figure, desire for love, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and dysfunctional family patterns) and psychological factors. The findings revealed that the intervention strategies in the district did not have any remarkable influence on teenage pregnancy. Educators noted that the DoE expect them to have skills to support. mentor and counsel pregnant learners in the schools.

### **5.5 Chapter Summary**

In the findings it was found that contributing factors such as a) poverty, b) ignorance, c) lack of moral values, d) lack of seriousness and care by learners e) illiteracy background of parents, and f) environmental factors including distance from school relate directly to the high rate of teenage pregnancy in the rural area of Elliotdale. Greater emphasis should be placed on the use of protective measures including abstinence and condom use. This will also protect learners from Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD).

This chapter presented on summary findings and a discussion based on the study, Finding these highlight the factors identified as contributing to learner pregnancy in the rural area of Elliotdale.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations made in relation to the research questions outlined in chapter one. It provides statements that provide general advice about how the knowledge of research can be applied. Recommendations will be presented to serve for the application of results and further education, as well as further topics of enquiry which can be researched in the future. The following aspects will be covered when concluding this research: summary of research findings, recommendations, and suggestions on future research.

#### **6.2 Summary of the research findings**

This case study took place in four secondary schools and investigated factors that are contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy in the Elliotdale district (rural area). In chapter one, the problem was introduced and the background mentioned. It was established that teenage learner pregnancy is being experienced by other countries both developed and under developed countries. The problem aroused the researcher's interest as she has been a teacher and school manager in the Elliotdale district for more than ten years. The objective of this study is to determine the factors that contribute towards

teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools, a rural area in the Eastern Cape.

Chapter two explored literature based on studies focusing on teenage learner pregnancy. The literature review contributed to the understanding of previous knowledge. At the same time it also gave clarity to the stated problem. It is evident that learners become pregnant in all the provinces in South Africa and the entire district in Eastern Cape where the case study was conducted, (Makiwane et al 2007).The findings revealed that the strongest factors contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy were a) poverty; b) unemployment, c) illiterate background of parents, and d) a lack of support and encouragement in their education which has an impact on failing to regard education as something important for their future.

#### *6.2.1 Socio-economic factors.*

The implications of poverty and unemployment were highlighted in both the literature and the interviews. Poverty led to teenage learner pregnancy since these learners were loved by mature and older men who tend to entice them into sexual activities. They even accept pregnancy as something that will bring food on the table in the form of a government grant. It is therefore concluded that unemployment is one contributing factor. One of the respondents argued that besides poverty another contributing factor is ignorance and carelessness. Learners tend to be careless about their future not knowing that success depends solely on their behaviour. In conclusion although poverty is prevalent in the Elliotdale community, learners who are

from working class families also fall pregnant due to peer pressure. Hence interactions with parents can demonstrate and improve self-development.

Learners used pregnancy to obtain child-grant to support them financially.

Learners are materialistic wanting the best things in life get lured by rich adults into engaging in unprotected sexual acts.

#### *6.2.2 Parental involvement.*

The respondents revealed that parents need to be involved and be clear about school activities even when the curriculum changes. Some were not even aware that there is inclusion of sex education through Life Orientation in their schools. It is vital to remember that charity begins at home, it is therefore recommended that parental involvement is important in the development of learners. Parents meetings organised by the schools are important to address the teenage learner pregnancy issue through workshops, childline and HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns to alert parents about the importance of their assistance on child behaviour.

#### *6.2.3 School environment.*

The researcher noted that the DoE needs trained staff to capacitate the SMT's, educators, and SGB's regarding the policies on teenage learner pregnancy and ensure the implementation of these policies. The researcher noted the inclusion of Life Orientation and peer education as an intervention strategy by the DoE to curb teenage learner pregnancy. The respondents referred to the DoE, policies that are by-passing the school should be

reviewed. Teenage learner pregnancy will definitely affect the standard of teaching and dropout rates of learner achievement learning in our country.

School environment can be described as promoting learner pregnancy:

- Schools not properly implementing government policies to discourage learners from getting pregnant.
- Schools not providing learners with adequate information on teenage pregnancy and consequences.
- Schools not teaching appropriate skills, values and attitudes through the curriculum to discourage learners from getting pregnant.
- Schools not providing support services such as counselling to learners to keep them from getting pregnant.

The current Minister of Education highlighted that disorder may also contribute, since learners go out even during school hours bunking classes to attend to their personal activities. The study found that some policy documents do not reach respondents for them to be familiar with the departmental policies. Therefore it is recommended that schools must develop policies that will assist them to become functional schools. Interviewed learners in secondary schools revealed that educators treat them as other learners there is no special treatment when they are pregnant, despite the fact that they have special educational needs. Teenage pregnancy contributes to absenteeism in the short term which may result in learner drop outs and poor future in the longer term.

This study revealed that both learners and teachers need to receive more specialized attention from the school. The respondents revealed that schools consider teenage learner pregnancy as a threat that needs more parental involvement. It is recommended that this should be done by developing school programmes that may incorporate all the girls and boys in groups. Learners will be educated about their future expectations in these learning programmes. Makiwane (2007) claims that “South African schools have made knowledge readily available to both boys and girls in schools”, however it is not always translating into acceptable sound behaviour and responsible citizenship. Learners need to be instilled with values, ambitions, and the capacity for self-governance. They need to know that they should control the outcomes of their lives”. This became significant through the data analysis process that deeper and good citizenship ought to be manifested through schools curriculum, ethos and culture of a school.

#### 6.2.4 *Peer pressure.*

In this study it was concluded that peer pressure influenced learners pregnancy while schooling. Peer groups in secondary schools and in their locations influenced one another in a direct and indirect way. It should be emphasized by both teachers and parents that the grant is an interim benefit from the government with an age limitation for the child.

#### *6.2.5 Family background and their environment.*

The findings revealed that learners sometimes are affected by their family backgrounds where it is a taboo for the girl to go to the clinic for contraceptives. Some communities believe that the girls pregnancy shows that she is fertile and can bear children. Traditional attitude of reluctance to talk about sex openly, for adults to talk about sex with children and for children to be found with contraceptives.

#### *6.2.6 The role of the school regarding teenage learner pregnancy.*

Schools should keep a stringent record of pregnant learners during an academic year this will help the school to keep track of teenage pregnancy and see whether it increases or decreases. One of the actions that should be taken, its an awareness campaign that focuses on the dangers involved in having relationships with men who are not interested in their education. Learners need to be taught about the importance of education first, as they see the support grant as something that may assist them when they become pregnant despite the fact that it is for the subsistence of the baby only.

### **6.3 Conclusions related to findings**

The findings indicate that there are pertinent factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. Conclusions from this case study are based on the respondents' views as well as the views expressed in chapter two. The findings strongly indicate that socio-economic factors, parental involvement, school environment, peer pressure, and

personal factors all play a major role in the prevalence of pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools. When analysing the research findings the researcher came to the conclusion that learners fall pregnant even though they know that their home background will not be able to cater for and support the baby. When one reviews the literature, as reflected in chapter two, it becomes evident that the significant findings pertaining to teenage pregnancy in schools in this study are issues that manifest themselves as mitigating factors in other African countries as revealed in literature. There is thus a significant commonality in the mitigating factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy in Africa. Bandura (1997) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) theories relate strongly to this study as the findings reveal that the social and socio-economic context play a vital role in contributing to these factors. Through this study it is clear that a lack of education, morals and values need to be more focused upon at school level good morals and values have a ripple effect into the community and, on the community. A further recommendation is that the law ought to take a stronger stance pertaining to men (taxi and working men) in exploiting and subjecting the school girls to promiscuity and sexual activities. Sister departments-such as the social services, welfare departments, clinics, police voice, local municipalities, churches and NGO,s need to provide a structures programme or support programme in liaison with the DoE and schools directly to support these pregnant girls and families as well as developing educational programmes that could assist the school in equipping students with better knowledge pertaining to sex and sex education as well as the implications thereof.

The policy documents need to be more seriously taken and enforced more stringently in schools where well-structured programmes are both educational and informative based on sound morals and values in society.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

The recommendations that become significant to this study is that government ought to take a more defined role in supporting schools and the communities through their various structures, developing educational opportunities in order to mould and shape good moral citizens. It is recommended that the DoE should definitely play a more active role in the policy making strategy. Furthermore it is recommended that, schools should develop “catch up” programmes for pregnant learners for them to continue their school education. They should assume their rightful position in trying to bring a solution to this problem of teenage learner pregnancy through good intervention strategies and sound education. Support groups should be established in order to allow learners to discuss issues pertaining to their pregnant status. Through the assistance of professionals, such as psychologists, pastors, and professional counsellors, girls could be better advised on pre-natal and post-natal birth as well as complications that could arise during the pregnancy.

The DoE should introduce an extensive curriculum which deals with sex and sexuality education, as it an important part of Life Orientation. The recommendation is that the the Department of Education, with the assistance of the other sister departments mentioned in the previous chapters, should

organize community awareness campaigns for learners in Elliotdale rural secondary schools. Social relief programmes should be provided in order to mitigate the factors of teenage pregnancy which are poverty related, clearly evident through this study.

It is necessary to revisit policies on this matter since the current Minister of Education (Motshekga) also agreed with the view that the department needs to revisit policy initiatives strongly to create a much needed practical solution to the challenges experienced by pregnant learners. The future of our country, as well as the safety and success of learners lies in the hands of every member of society, including the traditional leadership sector, teachers unions, SGB's, parents, and teenagers themselves; they must all join their hands and strive towards resolving challenges and building a society that reflects good citizenship and personal responsibility.

It is vital that the DoE, in conjunction with the DoH, organises training workshops to empower educators on how to respond to teenage pregnancy. The DoE should also ensure that educators teach learners without having fear of saying things as they are, they must draw the learners' attention towards the fact that sex education is included in the curriculum in terms of educating learners and for the benefit of their future and the future of the nation. Respondents revealed that some actions should be taken against perpetrators. Where possible perpetrators need to be brought to book because they are victimising underage learners who conceive below sixteen

years of age; according to law this constitutes statutory rape. The DoE does not offer enough support to schools in the form of monitoring, support, guidance and guidelines on how to deal with pregnant learners in our schools.

Youth Clinics should be established where learners can freely receive guidance and counselling related to learners. The DoE and schools should keep a stringent record of pregnant learners during an academic year which constitutes to school absenteeism. It is therefore recommended by the researcher that similar cases from and other continents should be viewed and reviewed in order to determine if there is a commonality in the mitigating factors of teenage pregnancy and how these countries are dealing with such issues.

### **6.5 Further research**

Further statistical research and validation needs to be explored to determine the success rate of the intervention strategies regarding the problem statement and ensure the effectiveness of the existing awareness programmes. The DoE should seriously track and monitor the EMIS statistics in order to inform schools and monitor the severity of teenage pregnancy at school level and develop intervention strategies to curb the situation. Future research may need to assess the total control of the situation of teenage pregnancy that every stakeholder should morally accept and assume the values and responsibility as stated in the DoE guidelines.

A further investigation into the academic results of learners who fall pregnant in secondary school over a period of their schooling would be useful to determine the learners' scholastic ability and verify accuracy of the pregnant learner dropout rates in the Eastern Cape. Current and updated EMIS statistics must be more readily available. A further investigation on teenage pregnancy through a comparative study on teenage pregnancy in urban and rural schools determining the common factors and other possible mitigating factors that influence these environments. A further recommendation would be a paradigmatic shift in the content and material as evident in the Life Orientation learning area where greater emphasis is about developing good citizens of society where the moral fibre of an accountable and balanced citizen is shaped into a balanced teaching and learning programme.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

Through this study the research confirms that there are clearly defined mitigating factors that contribute to learner pregnancy at secondary school level. In conclusion it is evident that the Life Orientation programme and policy document pertaining to teenage learner pregnancy in theory provides a framework for educators but in practice the factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy is not fully endorsed in any policy or support services to reduce teenage learner pregnancy in rural areas. Only once the literature supported by and with further research studies embrace rural areas through in-depth research, will this problem be understood and hopefully solved. Statistics need to be more consistent and accurate and reflect the seriousness of

teenage pregnancy in schools as it is life changing for a young girl. The right to be educated, the right to complete your education is not being enforced as a human right for these girls and hence remains discriminatory.

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## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### ***ANNEXURE A***

#### ***LEARNERS***

##### **QUESTIONS :**

- What is the nature of employment of parents?
- Who are these parents staying with at home?
- Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- Why do girls not use the preventive measures against pregnancy?
- What do pregnant learners say is the reason that they fall pregnant?
- What is the attitude of parents, educators and community members towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools and inclusion of sex education?

## ***ANNEXTURE B***

### ***EDUCATORS***

#### ***QUESTIONS:***

- What is the prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools?
- What are the socioeconomic conditions contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- How do you view teenage learner pregnancy and the government child support grant?
- Who are the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy?
- What is the effect of teenage learner pregnancy and learner performance?
- What is the attitude of parents, educators and community members towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools and inclusion of sex education?
- What are the intervention strategies being used by the DoE to tackle this problem?

**ANNEXTURE C**  
**SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

*QUESTIONS:*

- What is the prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools.
- What are the socioeconomic conditions contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy
- Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- What is the nature of employment of parents?
- Whom are these pregnant schoolgirls staying with at home?
- How do you view teenage learner pregnancy and the government child support grant?
- Who are the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy?
- What do pregnant learners say is the reason that they fall pregnant?
- What is the effect of teenage learner pregnancy and learner performance?
- What is the attitude of parents, educators and community members towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools and inclusion of sex education?
- What are the intervention strategies being used by the DoE to tackle this problem?

## **ANNEXTURE D**

### ***SGB PARENTS***

#### **QUESTIONS:**

- What is the prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools?
- What is the attitude of parents, the community and peers towards learner pregnancy in schools?
- Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- How do you view teenage learner pregnancy and the government child support grant?
- Who are the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy?
- What do pregnant learners say is the reason that they fall pregnant?
- What is the effect of teenage learner pregnancy and learner performance?
- What is the attitude of other learners towards teenage learner pregnancy in your district?

## **ANNEXTURE E**

### ***DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS***

#### ***QUESTIONS:***

- What is the prevalence of teenage learner pregnancy in Elliotdale secondary schools?
- What are the socioeconomic conditions contributing towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- Which factors contribute towards teenage learner pregnancy?
- How do you view teenage learner pregnancy and the government child support grant?
- Who are the perpetrators of teenage learner pregnancy?
- What is the effect of teenage learner pregnancy and learner performance?
- What is the attitude of parents, educators and community members towards teenage learner pregnancy in schools and inclusion of sex education?
- What is the attitude of other learners towards teenage learner pregnancy in your district?
- What are the intervention strategies being used by the DoE to tackle this problem?

**ANNEXURE F**

**Permission letter to the District Director**

No.3 Smithern Road  
Greenfields  
East London  
5201  
15 October 2009

The District Director  
East London  
Dutywa Education District  
Dutywa  
5000  
Dear Sir

**Re: Permission to conduct a research study in schools**

I hereby apply to conduct a research study on learner pregnancy in 4 secondary schools in the Dutywa Education District. This is for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements for a degree of Master of Education at the University of Fort Hare. I will always adhere to the research ethics ; hence the need to get permission from the District.

For further perusal refer to the attached letter from my supervisor.

Yours faithfully

.....

E.X. Konkco

## ANNEXURE G

### Consent form

I, **Eunice Xoliswa Konkco**, a **Med** candidate at the University of Fort Hare, School for Post Graduate Studies, as part of my academic programme, am conducting research on *An Investigation into factors that are contributing towards Teenage Pregnancy in Schools*. As part of this process I am inviting you to participate in an interview survey.

I wish to guarantee that any information that you may provide will be confidential. Your identity will not be divulged or made available to any other than the researcher.

Thank you.

Signature.....

Date.....

I, ..... ,hereby give/not give consent to participate in the study on *An Investigation into Factors that are Contributing Towards Teenage Pregnancy in Schools*.

Regarding the participation in this study I understand that I am participating freely without being forced. I also understand that I can stop participating at any time and my decision to do so will not affect me negatively.

Signature .....

Date .....