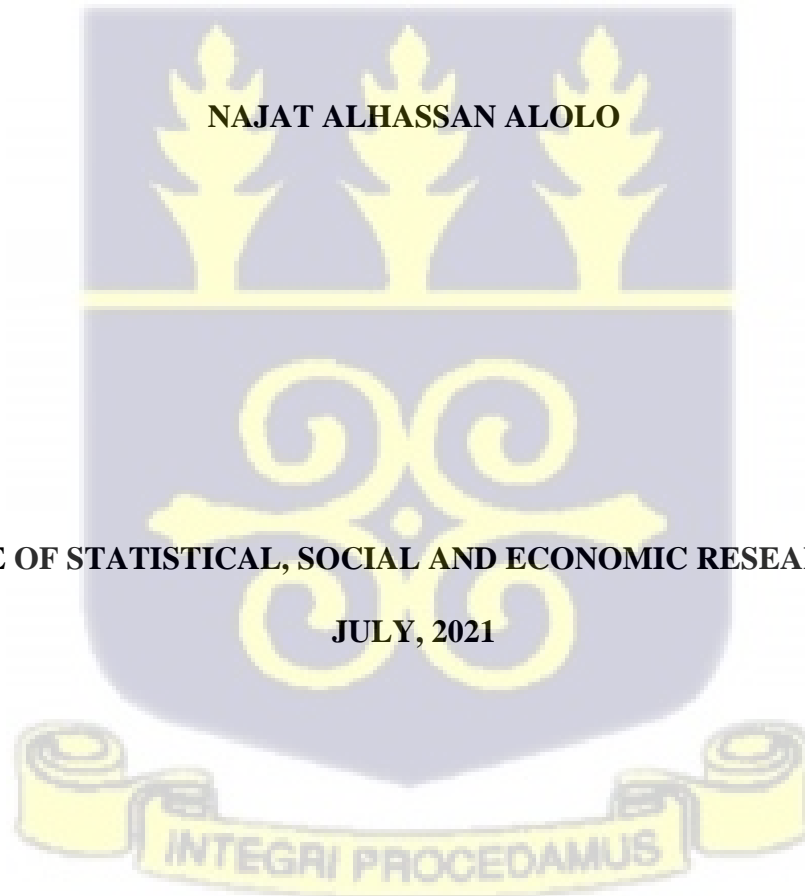


**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**WHY AM I NOT ABLE TO RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER DELIVERY? A STUDY  
OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN LA- NKANTANANG MADINA**



**NAJAT ALHASSAN ALOLO**

**INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH (ISSER)**

**JULY, 2021**

**INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS**

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA  
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**NAJAT ALHASSAN ALOLO  
(ID. NO. 10805328)**

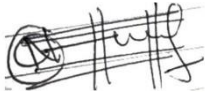
**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES DEGREE**

**INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH (ISSER)**

**JULY, 2021**

## DECLARATION

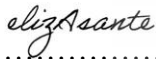
I, Najat Alhassan Alolo, hereby declare that except for the references to other peoples' work which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation titled "Why I am not able to Return to School after Delivery? A Study of Teenage Mothers in La- Nkantanang Madina" is the result of my work under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth A. Asante and Dr. Aba Obrumah Crentsil of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), and as such, this dissertation has neither been submitted in full nor part anywhere else for the award of any degree.



DATE: 21/2/2023

NAJAT ALHASSAN ALOLO

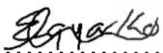
(STUDENT)



DATE: 21/2/2023

DR. ELIZABETH A. ASANTE

(SUPERVISOR)



DATE: 21/2/2023

DR. ABA OBRUMAH CRENTSIL

(CO-SUPERVISOR)



INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved late Grandfather, Alhaji Seidu Yaatiyati for his unfailing love.



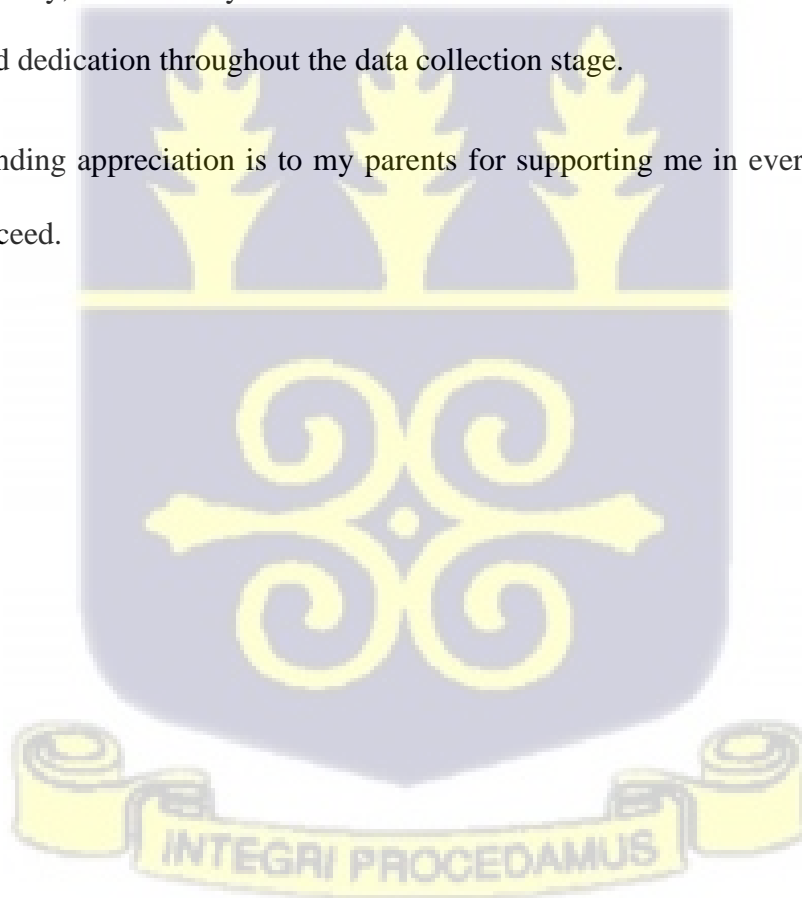
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Finally, my unending appreciation is to my parents for supporting me in every way possible to ensure that I succeed.



## ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La- Nkantanang Madina. The objectives of the study were: to examine social-cultural factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery; to examine institutional factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery, and to ascertain the extent of students and teachers knowledge about the existence of policies for the reincorporation of teenage mothers into the formal school scheme. The study used the mixed-method approach for arriving at the sample size which in sourcing for teenage mothers to participate in this study. The results showed teenage mothers agreed that teenage mothers who may decide to resume school after delivery encounter several challenges. Among these was the lack of financial support, lack of child care centers, stigmatization, discrimination, lack of guidance and counselling and family rejection and mockery. There was also the revelation that teenage mothers are judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats. The study recommended that Non-Governmental Organizations, the Girl Education Unit and Ghana Education Service should work in partnership to put a stop to all forms of stigmatization and discrimination against teenage mothers who may want to go back to school. Parents should support and assist teenage mothers financially to enable them to go back to school after delivery. In Addition, all female students should be taken through series of workshops to create their awareness on the policy of re-entry to school after delivery. All female students should also be taken through the mandates of the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) on re-admission into schools following a dropout.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

UDHR	-	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EFA	-	Education for All
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
TMA	-	Teenage Mothers Association
GEU	-	Girls' Education Unit



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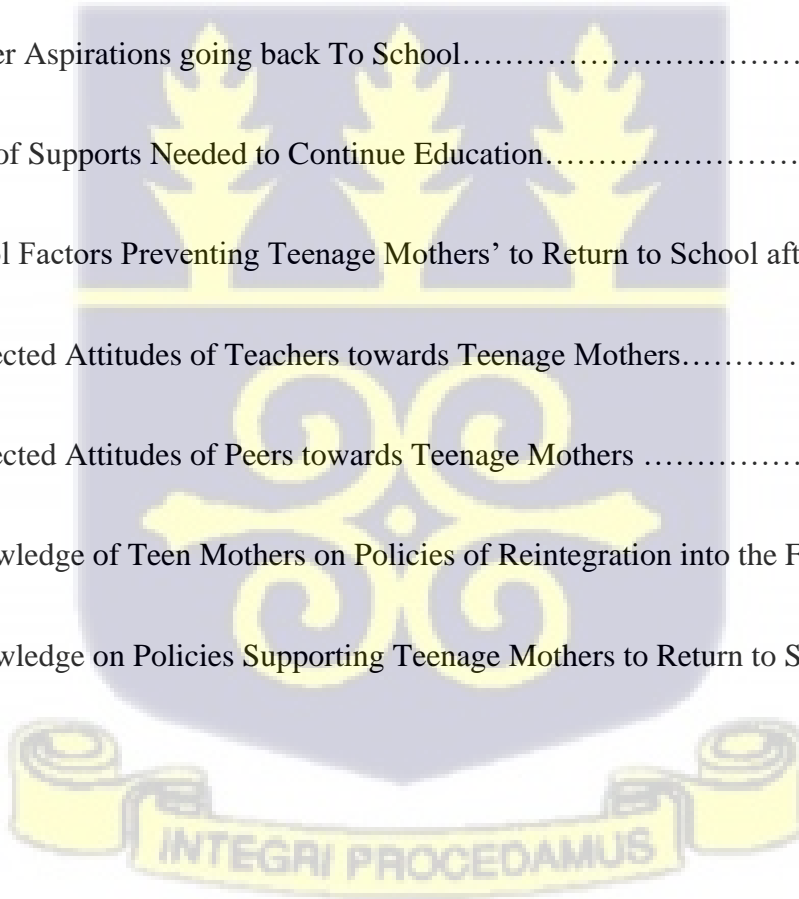
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Teenage mothers in Ghana are faced with numerous challenges in returning to formal schooling after delivery. Hence, this study sought to investigate why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La- Nkantanang Madina. This Chapter comprises the background of the study, problem study, research questions and objectives, justification and the organization of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

In recent times, the right to education has remained one of the important laws that have been entrenched in most countries. International Conventions and Declaration such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has made education one of the core human rights worldwide. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), goal two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDGs) all see to it that, all persons should be given equal access to education.

Every year, an estimated 21 million girls aged 15–19 years in developing regions become pregnant and approximately 12 million of them give birth (WHO, 2018). Globally, ABR has decreased from 64.5 births per 1000 women in 2000 to 42.5 births per 1000 women in 2021. However, rates of change have been uneven in different regions of the world with the sharpest decline in Southern Asia (SA), and slower declines in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) regions. Although declines have occurred in all regions, SSA and

LAC continue to have the highest rates globally at 101 and 53.2 births per 1000 women, respectively, in 2021 (WHO, 2019).

More than half a million teenagers are on record to have gotten pregnant over the last five years, data from the Ghana Health Service District Health Information Management Health System (DHIMS) (2018) reveals. Between 2016 and 2020, about 555,575 teenagers aged 10 to 19 years, are said to have gotten pregnant. Within the five years, 13,444 teenagers between the ages of 10 and 14 got pregnant, while some 542,131 teenagers aged 15 to 19 years got pregnant.

However, gender inequality or disparity in education still exists in Africa and Ghana, despite the efforts and progress made in addressing gender parity in education worldwide, teenage mothers in Ghana face numerous challenges in returning to formal schooling (Education for All, 2015). Lerner and Steinberg (2004) explain that the issue of teenage mothers returning to school after delivery for their educational attainments has become a matter of concern in many countries as a result of challenges they might have faced during pregnancy or after child birth.

Evidence from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in Cameroon and Kenya direct to the fact that early childbearing continues to be prevalent in developing nations and continues to pressure girls and teenage mothers from partaking in education (Eloundou –Enyegue, 2004; Wekesa, 2010).

Yet, the Human Rights Watch (2018) highlights that irrespective of motherhood, pregnancy or marital status, all girls have a right to education. In recent years across Africa, there have been sincerely charged conversations concerning the right of married and pregnant girls to further their education. The consequence of this conversation is that teenage mothers and pregnant girls

have experienced various forms of chastisements, comprising of discriminatory practices that prohibit them from the satisfaction of the right to education (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

In Ghana, Baa-Poku (2016) states that government mandates on pregnant students' rights, admittance to proceed with education and the provisions of the Inclusive Education Policy are expected in addition to other things to resolve issues of prohibition in schooling and guarantee educational attainment among pregnant students in Ghana. However, in Ghana, the possible challenges faced during implementation and the extent to how teenage mothers are exploiting this arrangement is not well known.

Several reasons impact a girl's re-entry into school after pregnancy. Baa-Poku (2016) has directed to the nonexistence of available and affordable childcare arrangements, teenage mothers' unwillingness to return to school, teenage mother's ability to manage plans related to schooling and mothering concurrently are some of the key reasons for their failure to continue schooling. Socio-cultural factors such as poverty, gender preference, early marriage, lack of child-care support and the lack of financial backing also perform essential roles in teenage mothers return to school (ibid). Based on the above background, this study aims to explore the reasons why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La-Nkantanang-Madina.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

As mentioned by Moore and Waite (1997) teenage pregnancy is strongly associated with a decreased educational attainment and a subsequent school dropout. While Gyepi-Grabrah (1985) laments that many young women drop out of school as a result of pregnancy and returning to school becomes a hindrance for them.

Furthermore, why the participation of pregnant girls and teenage mothers in education is still a big problem to deal with in Ghana? The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2003) explains that the prevalence of girl pregnancy in schools remains one of the major challenges to girls' educational attainment. However, the factors that impact the ability and decision of student mothers in Ghana to return or not to return to school have not been adequately explored. There seem to be limited empirical literature and comprehensive studies that explore the experiences and factors that inform their decision not to return to school after delivery.

Earlier studies have focused largely on pregnancy-related school dropout but not particularly on teen mothers resuming school. In the United Kingdom, for example, Birchall (2018) states that as a result of marriage or pregnancy, girls tend to drop out of school. Those who have already exited school are bound to wed or become pregnant early (Birchall, 2018). Again, a study conducted by Uche (2013) in Bayelsa state Nigeria, on the purposes behind dropout among young ladies at high school found, pregnancy to be one of the reasons for their dropout. In Nandi North District, Kenya, research conducted found teenage pregnancy to be the prime factor for the rate of dropout among primary school pupils (Birchall, 2018).

In Ghana, Akugri (2017) claims two out of three pregnant girls drop out of school every year. Those who become mothers are less probable to complete their High School Education because of the low probability of them receiving educational support and since the parental perception of their ability to transit and complete a higher level of education is quite poor (Akugri, 2017).

There are also studies on the reasons why teenage mothers do not return to the formal school system after delivery, for example, Birchall (2018) mentions financial pressing factors on

families as well as on the girls as the reason why teenage mothers are not able to return to school after delivery. Grant and Hallman (2006) cited teenage mothers' failure to pay school expenses as the motivation behind why they can't get back to class after delivery. Runhare and Vandeyar (2011) state negative reactions from other students as the reason why teenage mothers cannot return to school after delivery while the Guyana Ministry of Education (2018) claims stigmatization and subjection to discrimination from both students and teachers are the reasons why teenage mothers cannot return to school after delivery.

Even though in Ghana, there have been government directives such as the establishment of the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) and the inclusive education policy to address the problems of teenage pregnancy, they seem not enough to measure to get teenage mothers into formal schooling. Reports by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Ghana (2015) pointed out there is the nonexistence of an authorized and inclusive national returning to school policy that safeguards that the Ghanaian teen mother can return to school after pregnancy. Also, Adu-Gyamfi (2014) suggests the need for an investigation into specific policy options for pregnant school girls on the impact of teenage pregnancy on primary education in Ghana and the re-integration into school after childbirth.

In La-Nkwantanang, in the Madina municipality, the issue of teenage mothers returning to school after delivery is a matter of concern. There are beliefs that teenage mothers in the municipality experienced several factors which act as barriers to their right to returning to school. This study, therefore, seeks to establish the factors that deter teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery in the La-Nkwantanang- Madina. The study also seeks to establish the knowledge of both teenage mothers and school authorities on policies related to the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school scheme.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

The main research objective of the study is to investigate the reasons why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La- Nkantanang Madina Municipality.

#### **The specific research objectives are:**

- i. To examine social-cultural factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery.
- ii. To examine institutional factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery.
- iii. To ascertain the extent of students and teacher's knowledge about the existence of policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study is sought to address three basic research questions:

- i. What are the social-cultural factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery?
- ii. What are the institutional factors that prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery?
- iii. What is the extent of students and teacher's knowledge about the existence of policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system?

### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

This study is worth investigating because, based on a girl's reproductive status, some government policies that discriminate against girls end up violating their regional and international human rights responsibilities. As a result, this destabilizes national development plans, and often disregard constitutional and rights national laws (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

This study is worth carrying out because of the belief that teenage mothers and pregnant schoolgirls are poor students or incompetent. This has both long- and short-term effects on their academic experiences. Teachers are unwilling to extend to such students in supporting their educational and academic experiences (Chigona & Chetty 2007; Wekesa, 2010).

The study would be of relevance to various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, the District Assemblies and the Ministry of Health in devising policies to address the issues of school dropout among teenage mothers. Teachers, parents, Municipalities, The Ministry of Gender and Ghana Education Gender Desk Officials would likewise acquire knowledge into the fact and will empower them to react emphatically and adequately towards stretching out some assistance to people who succumb to teenage pregnancy and school dropouts. The findings of the study could also be used by the researchers as a baseline study for future studies in the area.

### **1.6 Organization of the Study**

This dissertation is systematically organized and presented in five chapters. The first chapter, Chapter One, introduces the study. It covers areas such as the problem statement, objectives of the study and the questions it seeks to answer as well as the justification and limitation.

Chapter Two is a review of relevant literature on the themes of the research topic whiles Chapter Three discusses the research methodology utilized in the study. Chapter Four provides an

empirical presentation and analysis of the research findings. Chapter Five provides a summary of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents existing literature on issues surrounding teenage mothers not returning to school after delivery. The review focuses on the following: (a) theoretical framework and (b) conceptual framework of the study (c) barriers to teenage mothers returning to school after delivery, (d) policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system,

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

The theory that underpins this study is the Social Integration Theory. Social Integration Theory is a multidimensional construct that can be defined as the extent to which individuals participate in a variety of social relationships, including engagement in social activities or relationships and a sense of communality and identification with one's social roles (Holt-Lunstad & Uchino 2015). Émile Durkheim, one of the founders of social integration theory believed society to be a shared mindset of individuals. All in all, how we think, feel and act is affected by society in a significant manner.

Durkheim came up with a couple of different types of social integration, which he referred to as kinds of solidarity (Study.com. 2017). If we do not achieve this integration, in Durkheim's view, it will lead to a problem known as anomie or a sense of feeling very disconnected from others and our community. Decreased social integration leads to anomie and potentially, conflict (Ibid). The Social Integration Theory helps teenage mothers to return to formal school after delivery and to successfully integrate them socially with other students and teachers without barriers. It also

assists in strengthening teenage mothers' social belongingness and their engagement with academic work in schools (Gail & Hanson, 2014).

Moving out of their home environment back to school after delivery has been seen traditionally as a rite of passage for many young mothers. However, the emotional resilience needed for the modification and the complexity of this process is often misjudged (Qualter, Whiteley, Morley & Dudiak, 2009). This is because assumed that teenage mothers are capable of returning to school smoothly without barriers their expectations about returning to school and their interpretation of their experiences are shaped by their prior cultural experiences, those who lack any prior experience of the lives of teenage mothers in formal schools may well lack the social resources and supports essential for successful incorporation into the environment of their new school (Leese, 2010).

The social integration theory also holds that teenage mothers upon their return to formal school may experience different challenges such as being marginalized by socialization activities (Gail & Hanson, 2014). In schools, teenage mothers do form another group with specific socialization challenges as they are not socially integrated well with teenagers who are not mothers on campus. There are strong associations between students' learning and their informal social interaction since social networks can be a foundation of academic and social resources to assist in education (Hommes, Rienties, de Grave, Bos, Schuwirth & Scherpbier, 2012).

To guarantee the incorporation of teenage mothers in the formal school scheme, schools should help them to fit in and give more attention to enabling their social incorporation (Leese, 2010), also school should provide the appropriate opportunities to develop the social relationships of teenage mothers with other students and teachers (Gail & Hanson, 2014). When that is done,

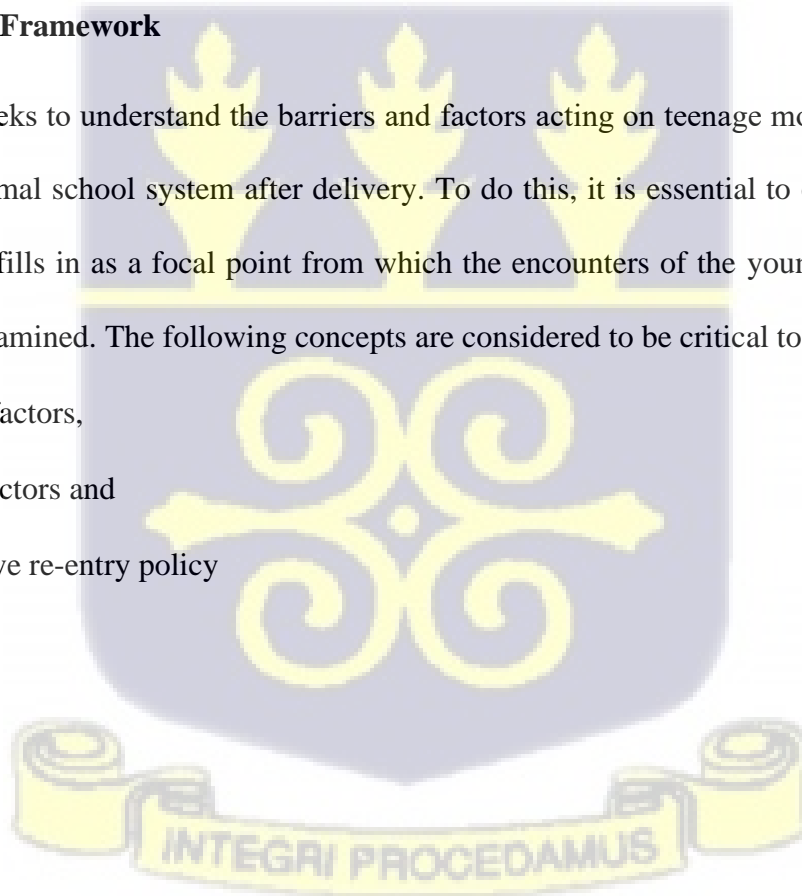
some of the barriers to teenage mothers' returning to the formal schooling system would be minimized.

Teenage mothers in schools who feel more socially included are less probable to reflect about being discriminated against or dropping out of school since friends and teachers do provide the direct emotional support they need to succeed academically (Wilcox, et al., 2005). It is important to also highlight that the most important influence on teenage mothers' returning to school and being socially integrated is the support they receive from teachers, peers and family members (Gail & Hanson, 2014).

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

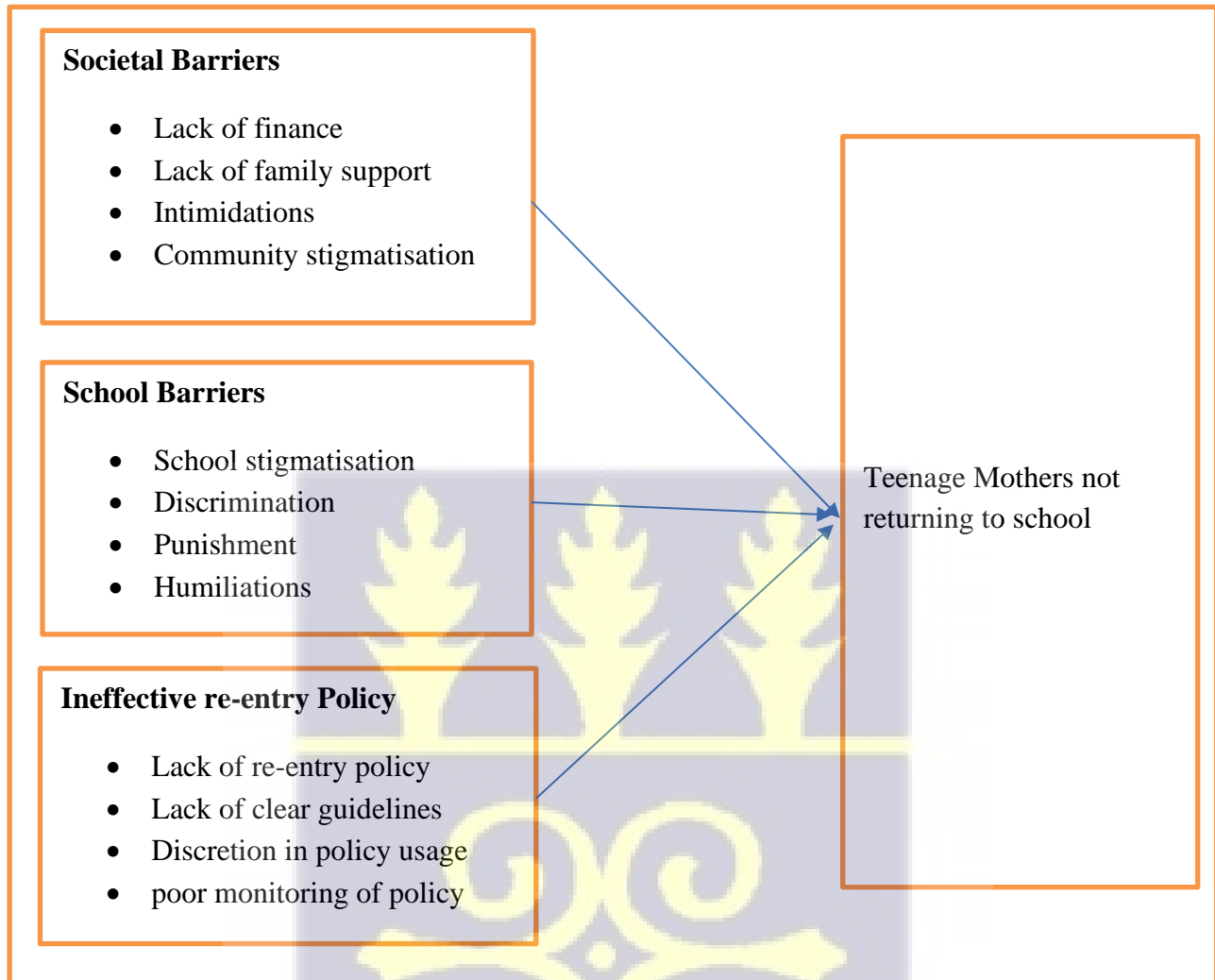
This research seeks to understand the barriers and factors acting on teenage mothers' inability to return to the formal school system after delivery. To do this, it is essential to offer a conceptual framework that fills in as a focal point from which the encounters of the young mothers can be observed and examined. The following concepts are considered to be critical to this research:

- societal factors,
- school factors and
- Ineffective re-entry policy



These concepts with their accompanying variables are represented in the below framework:

**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework**



Source: Researcher Construct, July 2020.

In the above conceptual framework, it shows that teenage mothers and pregnant girls do encounter separation and stigmatisation from society and their families, which restrains their certainty to proceed with their schooling as well as setting diverse obstructions in their way (Birchall, 2018). In some societies, childbearing and sexual relations outside the socially authorized institution of marriage are disapproved (Wekesa, 2010). Young unmarried student-mothers and pregnant school girls are indications of intimate sexual relations done outside the

authorized atmosphere and are therefore classified as dishonest malicious females or sexually exploited victims (Wanda 2006).

School-based barriers also have effects on pregnant girls and teenage mothers' abilities to return to school. In schools, unmarried student-mothers are considered to be immoral and perceived to be social dangers that conceivably set off a scourge of unethical and indiscriminate conduct within the student body. This had prompted the derision of student-mothers and pregnant school schoolgirls and some oppressive practices that send undesirable notions on the educational possibilities of student-mothers (Wekesa, 2010).

This projecting of teenage mothers and pregnant schoolgirls as unfit or helpless students has had both long- and short-term consequences on their educational experiences just as those of student-mothers who might want to return after delivery. For the time being, this outlining brings down the academic prospect of teenage mothers and decreases the educational help that teachers will reach out to such students (Chigona & Chetty 2007; Wekesa, 2010).

It is also clear that teenage mothers in some schools do face lots of challenges on their return to school after delivery. For example, in South Africa, many teenage mothers have reported been teased, bullied, isolated by their peers and oppressed as such, these teenage mothers drop out completely or in some situations skip classes (Chigona and Chetty, 2008). For girls who return after delivery or stay in school are confronted with a blend of moralistic mentalities and criticism from classmates and sometimes teachers which bring about the girls exiting school (Birchall, 2018).

It is also evidence that most teenage mothers would have loved to return to school after delivery but there are no effective re-entry policies to aid in their re-admissions and to protect them from

been discriminated against and stigmatized in schools. According to Martinez and Odhiambo (2018), some countries have laws or policies that expressly permit new mothers and pregnant students to be excepted from school.

Policies intended to ensure teenage mothers return to school suffer some enforcement challenges. A typical example, a return to school policy for teenage mothers' is not joined by clear rules for teachers on execution (Birchall, 2018). Some of the policies are prone to the application of discretion and interpretation, as a result, stereotypes, discriminatory behaviors and beliefs can influence policy enforcement (Birchall, 2018).

## **2.4 Barriers Affecting Teenage Mothers in Returning to School**

Although much has been done towards the attainment of gender equity in education as envisaged in the MDGs, gender disparities persist in many parts of the country. Most of the girls who drop out of school due to pregnancies do not return to class after childbirth (Onyango, Ngunzo, & Nyambedha, 2015). The predominant barriers acting against these teenage mothers' returning to schools are socio-economic barriers, policies and laws as barriers, teachers as barriers, families and communities as barriers and peers as barriers. These barriers are presented and discussed below:

### **2.4.1 Socio-Economic Barriers**

Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school as a result of poverty (Cook & Cameroon, 2015). Teenage pregnancy is associated with a reliance on social welfare in the long term and a high risk of poverty which affects teenage mothers' chances of returning to school after delivery (Maravilla et al., 2017). According to Birchall (2018), economic pressures on families and girls themselves play a part in teenage mothers' inability to return to school after delivery. Grant and

Hallman (2006) indicated the main factor for teenage mothers inability to return to school after delivery was due to their failure to pay for school expenses.

Human Rights Watch (2018) states that the African continent has the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the world as indicated by the United Nations. Consistently, a great number of young girls become pregnant when they ought to be learning at school. These teenage mothers are frequently profoundly influenced by financial barriers and the absence of help to get back to class after delivery (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Teenage mothers in Zambia encounter a lot of trials in continuing with their education after delivery, these include the incapability to pay fees and the lack of childcare centers (Ntambo & Malvin, 2017). Therefore, the socio-economic barriers include poverty, over dependency on welfare, lack of finance and inability to pay school fees.

#### **2.4.2 Policies and Laws as Barriers**

Martinez and Odhiambo (2018) assessment of policies in Equatorial Guinea, Tanzania and Sierra Leona indicate that pregnant girls are permitted to be sacked from school and this is backed by laws or policies. Students in Tanzania can be dismissed from class if they have ‘entered into wedlock’ or committed an ‘offence against morality’ according to education regulations (Martinez and Odhiambo, 2018). Pregnant unmarried girls in countries like Sudan and Morocco can be charged with crimes like indecency and adultery (Martinez and Odhiambo, 2018).

The Centre for Reproductive Rights (2013) gauges that somewhere in the range of 2003 and 2011, over 55,000 teenage girls in Tanzania had to quitter or were ousted from secondary or primary schools because of pregnancy (Martinez & Odhiambo, 2018). This, therefore, means

that the lack of Re-Entry Policies to formal schooling for teenage mothers in Tanzania is a barrier to their returning to school after delivery.

Restrictive strategies frequently contain hazardous measures that increment separation and shame against pregnant students and new moms. For instance, in Malawi, pregnant girls are suspended for one year. They can apply for readmission after this period exclusively by sending solicitations to the Ministry of Education and their school. In Senegal, young ladies should give a clinical affirmation that they are adequately solid to go to class before they can return. While pregnant girls are permitted to reappear to school after conceiving an offspring in Botswana, this is solely after a year's suspension (Birungi, Undie, MacKenzie, Katahoire, Obare, & Machawira, 2015).

According to Birchall (2018), a few policies specify that young ladies can continue their education after pregnancy if they go to an alternate school. In Mozambique, an announcement was given expressing that pregnant young ladies ought to be moved to night school. While the point of the pronouncement was to challenge the custom of ousting pregnant understudies, permitting them to proceed with their schooling during pregnancy and parenthood, it builds up the message that pregnant young ladies ought not to blend in with different understudies. There is proof that the arrangement has truth be told prompted more prominent dropouts, with young ladies thinking that it is hard to go to classes in the evening because of the absence of childcare and worries around security (Salvi, 2016).

According to Birchall (2018) an audit of Malawi's readmission strategy for school-going mothers tracked down that numerous teachers had not seen the policy and were uncertain how to execute it. In Anambra State, Nigeria, qualitative research conducted with 46 teachers found that a

portion of the teachers had unavailability to a written policy concerning unplanned pregnancy in their schools or had no idea about re-entry policy for teenage mothers. Just under half of the teachers interviewed said that such pregnancies were managed by ejection from the school (Onyeka, Miettola, Ilika & Vaskilampi, 2011).

For over a decade, teenage mothers who drop out of school as a result of pregnancy in Zambia, however, have a re-entry policy in place (Ntambo & Malvin, 2017). However, a recent study taking a gander at the encounters of students who become pregnant found that teenage mothers face various difficulties in getting back to class, which includes schools failing to adequately implement the policy (Ibid).

Enforcement of government policies, laws, and monitoring of adolescent mothers' re-entry to education continues to be feeble, though the tendency of them choosing to have adolescent mothers in school is durable (Human Rights Watch, 2018). There are additional worries about corrective and destructive parts of certain policies. For instance, some governments do not operate a continuation policy for re-entry in the case where a pregnant student would be permitted to stay in school however long she decides to (Ibid).

The capability to catch up with their studies or readiness to resume school can be adversely influenced by strict conditions teenage mothers encounter when applying for readmission to an alternative school, complex re-entry processes such as in Malawi where letters must be sent to various education officials, or in Senegal where medical certification is required. (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Despite the positive steps by some African countries to implement re-entry policies for teenage mothers, a substantial number of them still face discrimination enacted by some policies and

laws. For instance, public schools in Tanzania, Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone refuse teenage mothers the right to study and dismiss pregnant girls from school. As a result, a girl's chances of ever going back to school come to an end due to such policies and expose her and her children to hardship, abuse and child marriage (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

The implementation of the Re-Entry Policy might not have a significant influence as intended on teenage mothers' ability to further their schooling after delivery if the suitable support schemes are not in place to address challenges such as teenage mothers' inability to take responsibility for caring for their children, new financial obligations they may face and the planning of habitually breastfeeding their babies which are possible to inhibit a number of them from resuming education after delivery (Guyana Ministry of Education, 2018).

In Ghana, continuation or re-entry of teenage mothers into school is facilitated by two government directives: re-entry directive and inclusive education policy. These directives guarantee access to formal education after childbirth. The re-entry directive is in line with Girl Education Unit (GEU) strategies to reduce the dropout rate for girls in primary and junior high schools whilst increasing the transition rate of girls from junior to senior schools (GEU, 2002) while inclusive education policy defines the strategic path of the government for the education of all children with special needs which includes pregnant school girls. A recent preliminary study on girls' re-entry to school has however shown that only a few girls participate in the process and eventually return to school after pregnancy (Baa-Poku, 2016).

The cumbersome processes teenage mothers go through before they are readmitted into formal schooling may be the reasons why teenage mothers in La- Nkantanang Madina find it difficult in returning to school after delivery.

### **2.4.3 Teachers as Barriers**

According to Birchall (2018), in nations where there are no particular arrangements or enactment on pregnancy and education, choices about whether a student is permitted to stay at school while pregnant or to get back to class after pregnancy are regularly conceded to head teachers. In certain schools, teachers see teenage pregnancy and sexuality as a social issue, disgraceful and problematic to different students and the school, as such teenage mothers find it difficult to return to the same school after delivery (Birchall, 2018; Ngabaza & Shefer, 2013). From the perspective of Onyeka et al. (2011) those who return to school after birth feel they are not given much attention and care by their teachers, as such, receive punishment and humiliation whenever they fall behind the class.

### **2.4.4 Families and Communities as Barriers**

A study by Runhare and Vandeyar (2011), taking a gander at perspectives around pregnancy in schools in Zimbabwe and South Africa tracked down that the sociocultural convictions inside societies could affect pregnant students' involvement and access to education than official school policies. According to Birchall (2018), a Tanzanian opinion poll organized in 2009 uncovered that 66% of citizens accept that "the young lady is at fault" if she gets pregnant while going to class.

In Uganda, the gendered social norms active among communities dampen tolerating new mothers or pregnant girls to get back to class since they may set an awful model for other female students (Watson, Bantebya & Muhanguzi, 2018). Likewise, Chigona and Chetty (2008) claim in South Africa, some communities do hold the view that pregnant students or teenage mothers should not be allowed to return to school after delivery. These communities do intimidate

pregnant girls and teenage mothers on their trip from and to school, resulting in them dropping out regardless (ibid).

Family backing can have a significant effect on the possibility of student-mothers dropping out or furthering their education after delivery (Birchall, 2018). Gender power imbalances and Social norms imply that as often as possible, most of the parenting and child care falls onto the teenage mother, instead of the father of the child (Ibid). If girls have monetary help from their families, the possibility of dropout is reduced (Ngabaza & Shefer, 2013).

Chigona and Chetty (2008) express that the absence of help from home, in the form of parental behaviors, communication breakdown and financial pressures reinforce the stigma of teenage pregnancy acting as motives why teenage mothers cannot get back to class after delivery.

#### **2.4.5 Peers as Barriers**

Several studies taking a gander at the encounters of pregnant students and the individuals who are mothers, show the manners in which negative responses from different students can prompt dropout and refusal to get back to class (Birchall, 2018; Runhare and Vandeyar, 2011). As per Birchall (2018), the accompanying statement from a 17-year-old Kenyan young lady delineates the manners in which pregnant students can be stigmatized: *“My classmates in my former school would laugh at me when they realized I was pregnant. They even drew cartoons to illustrate my condition on the blackboard just to ridicule me”*.

Ngabaza and Shefer (2013) concentrate on young South African mothers attending school and the relevance of peer response to pregnancy, with one girl saying: *“I was too embarrassed to face my class ... so I quickly dropped out of school on my own before many people even noticed I was pregnant”*. According to the Guyana Ministry of Education (2018) upon resumption of

schooling, teenage mothers may be stigmatized and exposed to unfairness from both teachers and students. Teenage mothers wishing to return to school will have to struggle with these certainties, which may impede others from furthering their education as well.

## **2.5 Policies for Reintegration of Adolescent Mothers into the Formal School System**

### **2.5.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the General Comment No. 20 (2016) on the Implementation of the Rights of the Child during Adolescence of which Ghana is a Signatory**

Ghana as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ensures the following are implemented:

- “Emphasises the child’s right to freedom from discrimination and education.”
- “The committee of the CRC which monitors the Convention has authorised governments to deliver support and guidance to teenage mothers and fathers for their well-being and that of their children.”
- The Committee also calls on State parties to “foster positive and supportive attitudes towards adolescent parenthood” and “develop policies that will allow adolescent mothers to continue their education”.
- The Committee advises governments to “ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers and that comprehensive and appropriate affirmative action measures are introduced to diminish or eliminate conditions that result in direct or indirect discrimination against any group of adolescents on any grounds.”

Government strategies that victimize young ladies based on marriage or pregnancy abuse their regional and international human rights duties, and frequently repudiate constitutional rights and

public laws and subvert national development plans (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Abandoning teenage mothers and pregnant girls behind is detrimental to Africa's development. Leaving nobody behind implies that African governments ought to commit once again to their comprehensive improvement objectives and human rights commitments toward all children, and guarantee they accept human rights compliant policies at the local and national levels to protect pregnant and teenage mothers' right to education (Ibid).

Early and unplanned pregnancies endanger educational achievement for a huge number of girls. Hence, governments must guarantee their educational institutions offer skills, knowledge and information, with the goal that teenage mothers and pregnant girls can partake in their right to further their schooling (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

### **2.5.2 The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of which Ghana is a Signatory**

A key element in Article 12 (1) of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) refers to adolescent girls who are often susceptible to sexual abuse by older men and family members, thereby placing them in jeopardy of unwanted and early pregnancy, and physical and psychological maltreatment. This Convention recognizes that “the realization of the right to education is critical for providing girls with the tools necessary to overcome entrenched discrimination and inequalities”.

### **2.5.3 The International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of which Ghana is a signatory**

States Parties to this Covenant identify the right of everyone to education (Art.13). The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) which offers oversight of the

ICESCR noted that “education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities.” Research has confirmed the link between adolescent pregnancy and poverty. This Reintegration Policy can serve as a tool to achieve the realization of this right and help to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and adolescent pregnancy.

#### **2.5.4 Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development of which Ghana is a Signatory**

Governments are focused on not abandoning anybody. The new worldwide goals and the more extensive sustainability plan address the all-inclusive requirement for advancement that works for all individuals and the underlying drivers of poverty. The public authority of Ghana is focused on advancing wellbeing and prosperity and guaranteeing comprehensive and fair quality education for all, and ending poverty. The reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal educational system is a stage in accomplishing the worldwide plan, specifically SDGs 1, 3, and 4 which are to end poverty, guarantee great wellbeing and health and give quality education respectively.

#### **2.5.5 The Human Rights Watch Policy on Reintegration of Teenage Mothers into Formal School System of which Ghana is a Signatory**

To eliminate the difficulties that arise for adolescent mothers in their quest to completion of their secondary education, admission to school, and their accomplishment, the Human Rights Watch in 2018 recommends all African Union Governments to adhere to the following:

- “Immediately End Pregnancy-Based Discrimination in Schools in Policy and Practice”
- “End, in policy and practice, the expulsion of female students who become pregnant or get married and provide accommodations for pregnant and married students in schools.”

- “Immediately end pregnancy testing in schools.”
- “Ensure cases of sexual harassment and abuse, including by bus drivers, teachers, or school officials, are reported to appropriate enforcement authorities, including police, and that cases are duly investigated and prosecuted.”
- “Ensure Pregnant Students and Young Mothers Can Resume Education”
- “Immediately adopt positive re-entry policies and expedite regulations that facilitate pregnant girls and young mothers of school-going age returning to primary and secondary school.”
- “Ensure that pregnant and married students who wish to continue their education can do so in an environment free from stigma and discrimination, including by allowing female students to choose an alternative school, and monitor schools’ compliance.”
- “Link pregnant, married and student mothers to health services, such as family planning clinics.”
- “Introduce formal flexible school programs, including evening classes or part-time classes, for girls who are not able to attend full-time classes, and ensure students receive full accreditation and certificates of secondary education upon completion.”
- “Include adolescent mothers in programs that target female students at risk of dropping out, and ensure targeted programs include measures to provide financial assistance to at-risk students, counselling, school grants, and distribution of inclusive educational materials and sanitation facilities, including menstrual hygiene management kits in schools.”
- “Expand options for childcare and early childhood development centres for children of adolescent mothers so that girls of school-going age can attend school.”

- “Ensure that humanitarian education responses in conflict contexts include the particular needs of pregnant girls and young mothers of school-going age.”
- “Provide access to information to parents, guardians, and community leaders about the harmful physical, educational, and psychological effects of adolescent pregnancy and the importance of pregnant girls and young mothers continuing with school.”
- “Provide school-based counselling services for students who are pregnant, married or mothers. Provide long-term psychosocial support to adolescent survivors of sexual abuse and harassment.”
- “Engage with teachers and other education officials to support the education of pregnant girls and adolescent mothers, and to ensure they guarantee a safe school environment.”
- “Improve Data and Monitor Implementation of School Policies on Pregnant Students. Schools should:
  - ✓ Improve monitoring and data collection on girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy or marriage;
  - ✓ Develop and implement mechanisms to follow up on and keep track of girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy or marriage, to initiate their return to school;
  - ✓ Monitor implementation of school re-entry policies by keeping data on the number of pregnant and married students who get readmitted, their school attendance and completion rates; and use the information to improve support for pregnant, married, and student mothers.”

When all the above policies are adhered to and implemented, teenage mothers will have the right to return to formal school after delivery without barriers. The implementation of the policies by

countries will help eliminate all the hindrances that come in the way of teenage mothers' completion of their secondary education, access to school and their accomplishments.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the study area and the methods used in conducting the study. It presents. This includes research approach, target population, sampling, data collection instruments, data collection sources and data analysis. The second part presents the study area.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

La-Nkwantanang-Madina municipality is situated in the Greater Accra Region. The Municipality has a total population of 111,926, with 57,655 being females and 54,271 males (Population and Housing Census, 2010). It forms part of the 29 MMDAs in the Greater Accra Region and it is one of the 260 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana. Its Municipal district offices are situated in Madina (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015).

La-Nkwantanang Madina Municipal district was established in 2012 by Legislative Instrument (L.I.) 2131 when it was carved from Ga East District. The district is bordered to the north by Akuapim South District (in the Eastern Region), to the east by Kpone Katamanso District and Adenta Municipal District, to the south by the Accra Metropolis District, and the west by Ga East District. The total area of the district is 70.887 square kilometers. Some major settlements in the municipality include Adenta, Oyarifa, Amanfokroo, Oshiyie, Teiman, Amanfro, Damfa and Malejor (as shown in Figure 2.1).

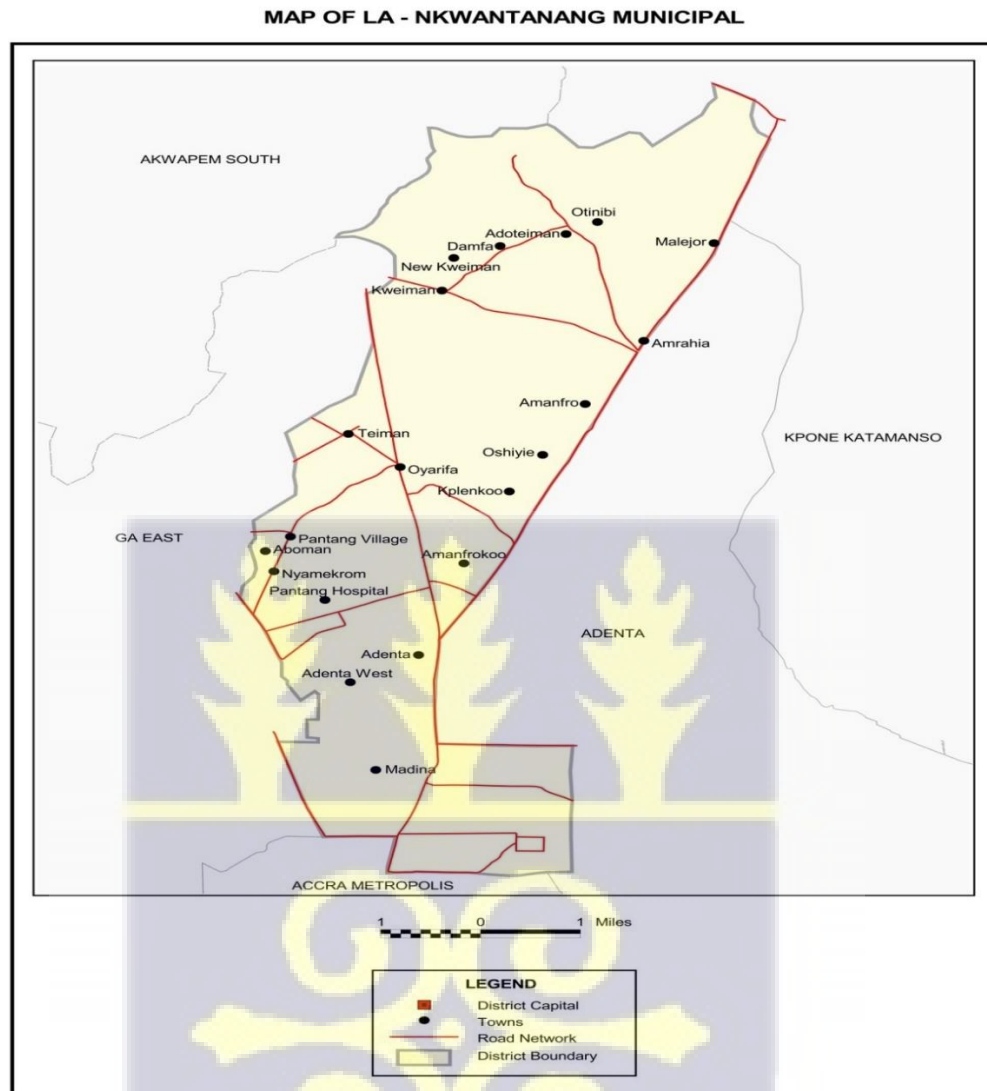
Education in Madina can be categorised into Government, religious and private. Some tertiary and second cycle schools located within the municipality includes and not limited to University of Professional Studies formerly known as the Institute of professional Studies, Islamic

University College Ghana established with the aim of providing quality tertiary education to the youths, especially Muslim and the less-privileged or marginalised communities in Ghana, Wisconsin International University. Accra College of Education is the only public teacher training college located in Accra.

The study is conducted in the district capital, Madina, which has a total population of 79,832. It is mainly a of a diverse ednicity society. They are traditionally farmers and traders. Madina is located in the South eastern part of the Municipality and is bordered by communities such as The University of Ghana, Legon, West Legon, Adenta, and Malejor. Although the majority of the inhabitants are largely Muslims, there is an appreciable number of them being Christians and some practice African traditional religion (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015).



Figure 3.1 Electoral Area Map of La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality



Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2015

### 3.3 Research Design

The mixed method was used in this study. The approach has both quantitative and qualitative features which allow one to obtain in-depth information from the respondents and which makes it necessary for one to obtain a strong and broad conclusion. Mixed methods research offers strengths that counterbalance the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research

(Creswell, 2003). Johnson and Onwuegbuze (2004) explain that mixed methods research is a class of research where the investigator combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods and approaches, concepts or language in a single study. One of the justifications for employing mixed methods in the study is to understand the complex issue involving the factors preventing teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches provides better insight into the research problem than using either a qualitative or quantitative approach alone.

### **3.4 Target Population**

The population of the study comprised all the teenage mothers of the La-Nkantanang, Madina Municipality. Teenage mothers refer to females of school-going age (below 19 years of age) who have given birth to newborn babies and entered into maternity. Mwenj, (2015) explains that a teenage mother is a young girl under the age of 19, who becomes pregnant, delivers and chooses to raise or is raising the child.

### **3.5 Sample size**

Fifty (50) teenage mothers and nine (9) officials (MHC, head teachers, education officers, municipal officers, social welfare officers) of the La-Nkantanang, Madina Municipality were selected for the study. The total number of teenage mothers in the study area is unknown, even though the researcher requested for it from the Maternal and child health Unit of the Medina municipal hospital, the number was still unknown. Therefore, the decision to select the entire fifty (50) teenage mothers was based on the rule one of Leedy and Ormod (2010) which states that for a smaller population, (say,  $N=100$  or fewer), there is little point in sampling; survey the

entire population. That is why the study selected all the fifty (50), teenage mothers, in the municipality.

### **3.6 Sampling technique**

Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling whereby researchers depend on their judgment when selecting members of the population to partake in their study. Hence, this technique was utilized to select two (2) municipal education officers, two (2) Maternal Health Care clinics, four (4) school heads from four different schools and one (1) official at the Ministry of Education in charge of re-entry policy for teenage mothers into formal schooling.

Again snowball sampling, a type of purposive sampling, was used to select teenage mothers. It is a recruitment or sampling technique in which respondents are requested to support researchers in finding other possible participants. The researcher identified teenage mothers from the Municipal Social Welfare Office from which traces were made from the first contacted teenage mother.

### **3.7 Instrument of Data Collection**

Data for the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data used for this research were obtained from books, journals, reports and other public articles. The primary data on the other hand was obtained from the study respondents through the use of questionnaires and interviews.

In the primary data collection questionnaires were administered to teenage mothers while officials purposively selected were interviewed. For the quantitative method, a questionnaire was used to collect data from teenage mothers. The questionnaire consisted of sections according to the concepts that inform the research questions. Section A measured the demographic information of respondents. Section B measured the social-cultural factors which prevent teenage

mothers from returning to school after delivery. Section C measured the school factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery, while section D measured the knowledge of teenage mothers about the existence of policies for the reincorporation of teenage mothers into the formal school structure.

A qualitative semi-structured interview schedule was designed for officials to answer in writing or orally. The interviews questions sought information on the social factors which stop teenage mothers from resuming school after delivery, the school factors which prevent teenage mothers from continuing school after giving birth and the knowledge of the respondents about the existence of policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system.

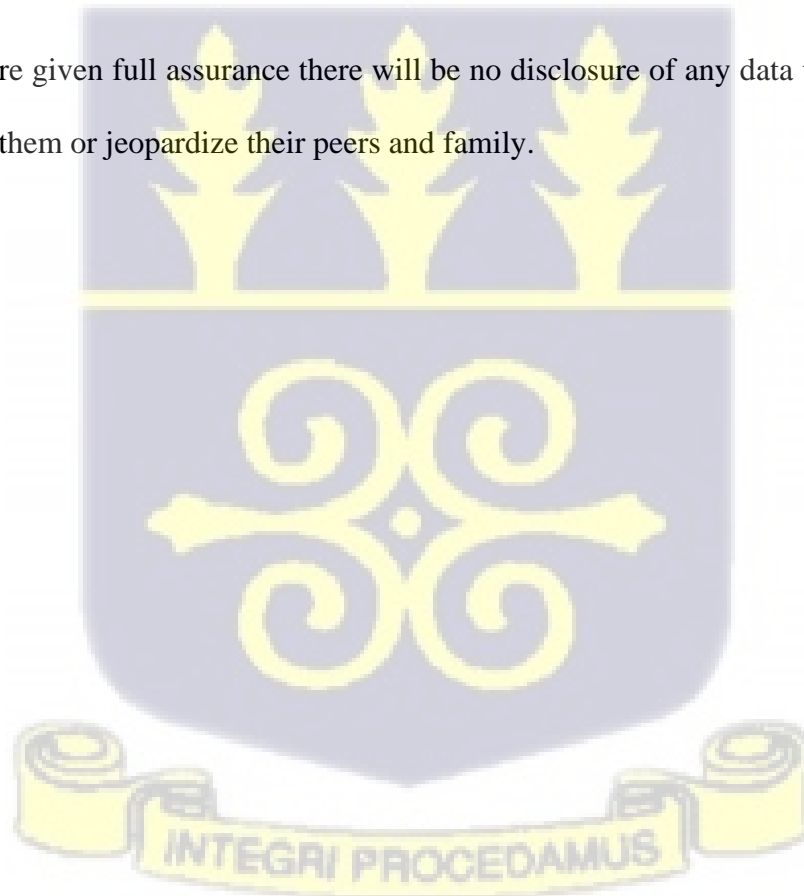
### **3.8 Data Analysis**

Given the nature and the objectives of this thesis, both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data analysis were adopted. The qualitative raw data such as field notes were typed, interviews recorded with the audio device were transcribed and carefully edited where necessary to ensure that the original meanings given by the respondents were preserved. Data from secondary sources were arranged based on pre-set themes. The raw data were read through several times to get the overall sense of the information gathered. Themes or patterns which are the ideas, concepts, behaviors, interactions, incidents, terminologies or phrases used were identified. Data obtained from the questionnaires were also processed (edited, coded and tabulated) through the use of a computer software programme called Statistical Package for the Social Scientists (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were applied in the data analysis. Presentation of data was done with the aid of tables.

### 3.9 Ethical Consideration

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the parents of the teenage mothers, the welfare workers and the school heads. Participants were presented with written forms that explained the research and they were made to sign the forms to record their agreement to partake in the study. In line with Neuman (2006) position on informed consent, the researcher explained the risks and time involved in participating in the study. Participants were also informed of their right to participate or not to participate in the study. Likewise, the study didn't distinguish a given reaction from a given respondent. The study strived to guarantee the self-sufficiency of the respondents and to shield them from any sort of misuse.

Respondents were given full assurance there will be no disclosure of any data they provided that may discomfort them or jeopardize their peers and family.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

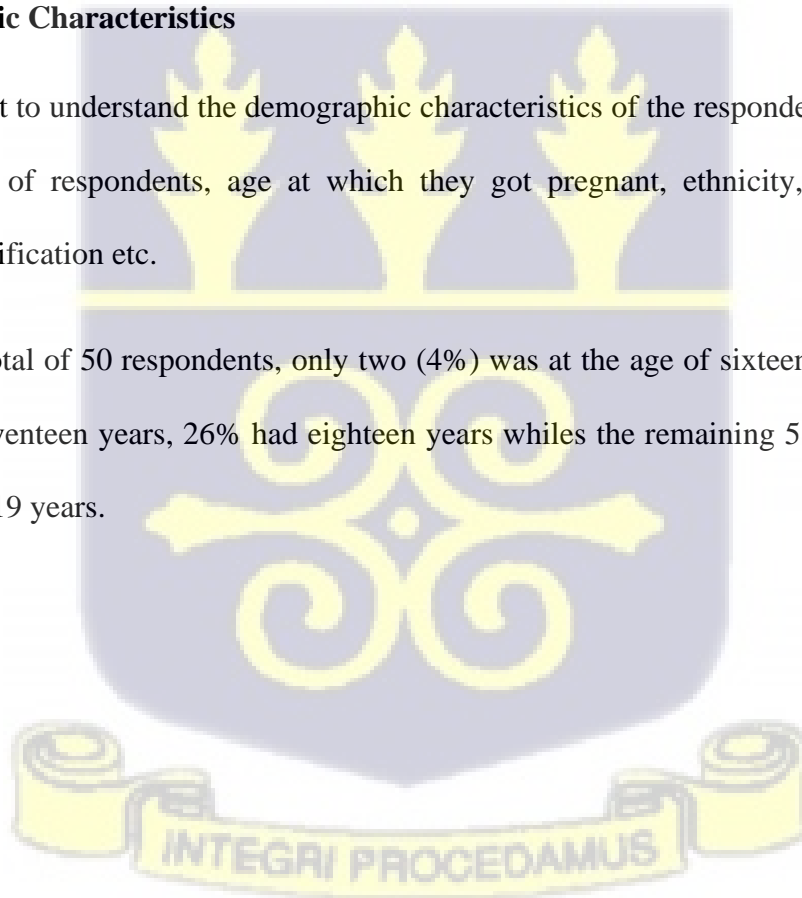
#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a presentation of findings and analysis of findings. The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part presents a report of findings of data gathered from both qualitative and quantitative methods and is arranged along with the objectives of the study. The second part of this section seeks to answer the research questions of the study by thematically analyzing and discussing data gathered from primary and secondary sources.

#### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics

The study sought to understand the demographic characteristics of the respondents which include the current age of respondents, age at which they got pregnant, ethnicity, religion, highest educational qualification etc.

**Age:** Out of a total of 50 respondents, only two (4%) was at the age of sixteen years, 10% were of the age of seventeen years, 26% had eighteen years whiles the remaining 58% were found to be at the age of 19 years.



**Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentages (%)
16	2	4
17	5	10
18	13	26
19	29	58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data (2020)

**Age of pregnancy:** Table 4.2 indicates the age when respondents got pregnant.

**Table 4.2: Respondents Age when they Got Pregnant**

Age of Pregnancy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
19	4	8
15	7	14
18	6	12
17	12	24
16	20	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data (2020)

As Table 4.2 on the age at which respondents got pregnant indicates, the majority (26% of the total respondents) got pregnant at the age of 18 years, while three (6%) indicated that they got pregnant at the age of 19 years. Twenty teenage mothers attested that they were sixteen years (16 years) of age when they got pregnant, six (12%) were eighteen years (18 years) when they

got pregnant and finally, seven (14%) were fifteen years old (15 years) when they had their first pregnancy.

**Education:** Table 4.4 on educational level indicate that most respondents had their highest educational level at Junior High School (JHS). This recorded a frequency of 35, representing 70% of the total respondents. In addition, 6% of the respondents had their highest educational qualification at Senior High School (SHS) and 24% had primary school educational level.

**Table 4.3: Educational Level of Respondents**

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Primary	12	24
JHS	35	70
SHS	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data (2020)

Aside from their highest educational qualification, respondents were made to indicate the grade/level which they were when they got pregnant. Table recorded that 11 (22%) of the mothers were in JHS 3 when they got pregnant, one got pregnant when she was in primary 5, 12 (24%) were in JHS 2, 14 (28%) in JHS 1 and 12 (24%) in Primary 6 when they got pregnant.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they were currently working and type of work, involvement in school activities before pregnancy and any plan going back to school. It was found that 9 of the respondents, representing (18%) are married and 41 (82%) are single.

### 4.3 Reasons for Dropping out of School

To ascertain the reasons for dropping out of school due to respondents being pregnant, respondents were asked to cite reasons and rank the reasons for their drop-out. The majority of respondents (45 out of 50) ranked that they were ashamed hence had to drop out of school (see Table 4.5). Respondents being mocked by colleagues were ranked second as it obtained 38 out of a total of 50 respondents, stigmatization was ranked third while “sacked by the school” was ranked fourth. The least ranked (7 responses) was “married off”.

**Table 4.4: Reasons for Dropping out of School**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Was ashamed	45	90	1
Being mocked by colleagues	38	76	2
Was stigmatized by society	21	42	3
Was sacked by the school	15	30	4
Was married off	7	14	5

**NOTE:** Percentages vary for the table because respondents gave more than one response.

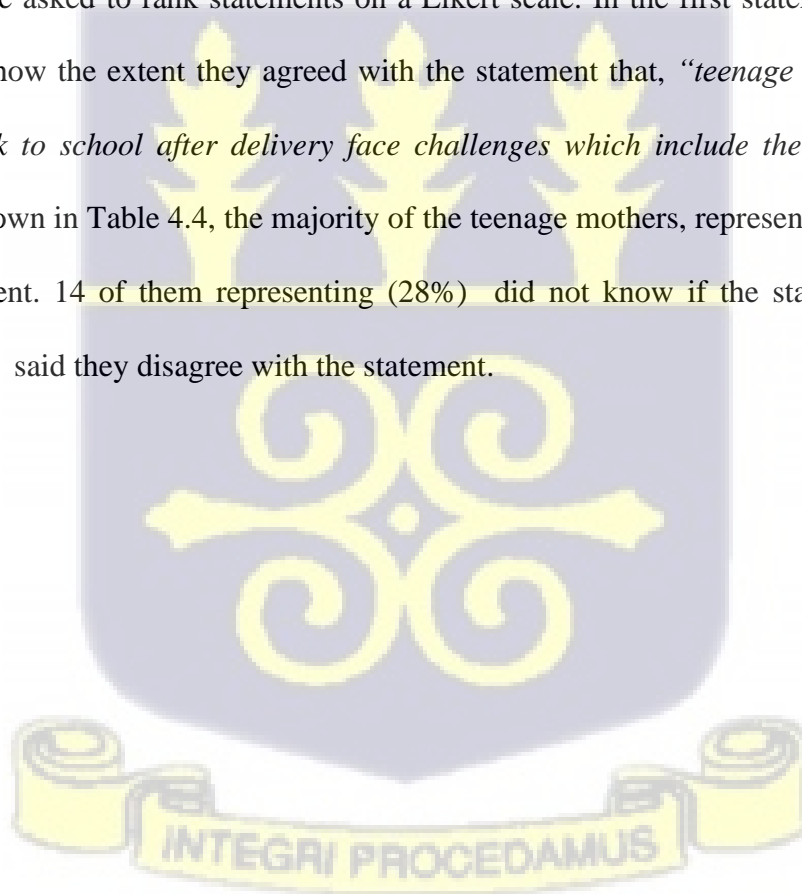
Source: Field data (2020)

### 4.4 Social-Cultural Factors Preventing Teenage Mothers from Returning to School

The research sought the views of participants on the possible social-cultural factors which prevent teenage mothers from going back to school after delivery. Social-cultural factors range from norms and values in the communities that deter teenage mothers from going back to school after a safe delivery. These include marriage, economic status, post-natal care, cultural practices, etc.

Qualitative data from the field revealed that stigmatization from family, relatives, students and teachers in the school environment, lack of support from parents to return to school, too many responsibilities on teenage mothers and lack of proper guidance are some of the reasons why teenage mothers have not returned to school after delivery. A head teacher laments as follows: *To me, I think some of these factors will be the lack of support from their parents to return to school and the way these teenage mothers have too much responsibilities and also the lack of proper guidance and counselling to go back to school after they have delivered.*

To further explore social-cultural factors preventing teenage mothers from schooling, respondents were asked to rank statements on a Likert scale. In the first statement, respondents were asked to show the extent they agreed with the statement that, *“teenage mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges which include the lack of financial support.”* As shown in Table 4.4, the majority of the teenage mothers, representing (68%) agreed with the statement. 14 of them representing (28%) did not know if the statement was valid while two (4%) said they disagree with the statement.



**Table 4.5: Social-Cultural Factors in Preventing Teenage Mothers from Returning to School**

Statement	Agree (%)	Don't Know (%)	Disagree (%)	Total (%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teenage mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges which include the lack of financial support.</li> </ul>	34 (68%)	14 (28%)	2 (4%)	50 (100%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this community, most teenage mothers' new roles and identities push them to exit from formal education.</li> </ul>	24 (48%)	24 (48%)	2 (4%)	50 (100%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most teenage mothers are unwilling to return to school because of early marriage.</li> </ul>	18 (36%)	17 (34%)	15 (30%)	50 (100%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are teenage mothers who may want to return to formal schooling but there is no child-care assistance in this community.</li> </ul>	30 (60%)	16 (32%)	4 (8%)	50 (100%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some teenage mothers do</li> </ul>	30 (60%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)	50 (100%)

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experience stigma and  
discrimination from families  
and communities which  
inhibits their confidence to  
continue with their education.

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Source: Field data, July 2020.

In the second statement, *“In this community, most teenage mothers’ new roles and identities push them to exit from formal education.”* 24 of the teenage mothers representing 48% agreed while another 24 (48%) asserted that they did not know whether the statement was true. The remaining two respondents (4%) disagreed.

Concerning the third statement *“most teenage mothers are unwilling to return to school because of early marriage,”* 18 of the teenage mothers, representing (36%) agreed with the statement. Seventeen of the teenage mothers, representing (34%) said they did not know whether the statement was true, while 15 respondents, representing (30%) disagreed with the statement that most teenage mothers are reluctant to go back to school because of early marriage.

Again, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement *“there are teenage mothers who may want to return to formal schooling but there is no child-care assistance in this community.”* As shown in Table 4.6 a greater number of teenage mothers (30), representing 60% agreed to the statement. Sixteen (32%) of the teenage mothers said they did not know whether the statement was true, while four respondents who represented 8% disagree with the statement.

In the fifth and final statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “*some teenage mothers do experience stigma and discrimination from families and communities which inhibits their confidence to continue with their education.*” Thirty of the teenage mothers, representing 60% agreed to the statement. Fifteen respondents representing 30% said they do not know whether the statement was valid, while five respondents representing 10% disagreed with the statement.

In addition to the responses from the Likert Scale, respondents cited some social-cultural factors that affect their going back to school after delivery. Social-cultural factors such as stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities were cited by 30 (60%) of teenage mothers. Twenty-five (50%) respondents stated that they were ashamed of their predicaments. Twenty-three (46%) could not return because of lack of money, while 16 (32%) did not have any reasons for not being able to go back to school.

Furthermore, findings through in-depth interviews discovered that social-cultural factors in the community that avert teenage mothers from resuming school after delivery comprises; lack of support from parents, lack of proper guidance and counselling and stigmatization from family and relatives, financial challenges, family rejection and mockery. A head teacher laments as follows: *To me, I think some of these factors will be the lack of support from their parents to return to school and the way these teenage mothers have too much responsibilities and also lack proper guidance and counselling to go back to school after they have delivered.* Regarding financial challenges, family rejection and mockery, the following statement was made by the Gender Desk Official of the Ghana Education Service.: *From our research conducted, most challenges of these teenage mothers from going to school are poverty, stigmatization and not getting anyone to take care of the child.*

It was interesting to note that stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities are the reasons teenage mothers fail to return to school after delivery. This is because the community makes them believe that they cannot be successful, and as a result, this put some level of shyness, hopelessness in them. A Municipal Education officer lament that “*Some teenage mothers have been disrespected through verbal abuse*”. These findings also co-note with the Human Rights Watch (2018) that in public schools in countries like Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Equatorial Guinea, teenage mothers have been discriminated against and denied the right to study.

From the perspective of Baa-Poku (2016), that most Ghanaian teenage mothers are always forced to drop from the educational systems due to push factors found in school and society as what Baa-Poku listed and confirmed by respondents as bullying, discrimination and embarrassment since their societies do judge teenage mothers as immoral and so to a very large extent do not give them the respect and dignity they should have. The findings are also similar to Coinco (2010), who found that only unmarried pregnant teenage girls and unmarried teenage mothers in Sierra Leone faced stigmatization as well as harassment from their communities. To concur with respondents, Ngabaza and Shefer, (2013) confirm the above by stating that if teenage mothers can have psychological and social support from their families the chance of going back to school will be high.

#### **4.4.1 Further Aspirations going back to School**

Respondents were asked if they had any plan of going back to school.

#### **Table 4.7: Further Aspirations going back To School**

<b>Any plan to go back to school</b>		
<b>Responds</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	12	24
No	38	76
<b>If No why</b>		
Trade	5	13
Nothing	10	26
No support	4	10
Can't go back	9	23
Married	5	13
Academically weak	5	13
<b>If Yes why</b>		
Banker	3	25
Nurse	4	33
Teacher	4	33
Nothing	1	8

Source: Field data, July 2020.

Twelve (12) of the respondents, representing 24% said “Yes” they do have a plan for going back to school while the rest who made the larger proportion (76%) said “No” they do not plan to go back to school. Of those planning to go back to school, it was revealed that three respondents out of the 12 representing 25% said they plan on going back to school because they wanted to become bankers. Another four (33%) wanted to go back to school because they wanted to become nurses in the future whiles the other four (33%) said they plan to go back to school.

After all, they wanted to become teachers. One respondent (8%), however, said she had nothing to back her reason for going back to school.

Some reasons were given by respondents for not going back to school. The study found that five (13%) out of the 38 who had no plans of going back to school said they are academically weak and therefore had no reason of enrolling. A different set of 5 respondents, representing 13% of 38 said they are married hence education is not needed. Nine respondents representing (23%) stood firmly that they cannot go back to school while the last four (10%) said categorically that they have no support to go back to school. Ten respondents, representing (26%) of the total number of respondents said they have no reasons while the last five of them who represented (13%) said they want to trade.

#### **4.4.2 Kind of Support Needed to Continue Formal Education after Childbirth**

After childbirth, the study sought, through the perspective of Gail & Hanson (2014), teenage mothers would need various kinds of support to enable them to continue with formal education. With this, respondents were made to select multiple support they would need to help them get back to school after childbirth.

Almost all respondents (96%) indicated that they would need financial support. Respondents further indicated, through the qualitative data, that parents mostly feel reluctant to support them financially to get back to school after accepting to take care of their baby. One respondent recounted that *“I need financial support to get back to school because my parents are unwilling to pay for my schooling after they have paid for feeding and up-keep of me and my baby”*.

Again, 40 students representing 80% of the total responses indicated that they want their partners and or their parents to assist them with child care to go back to school. With this, they explained

that this kind of support would enable them to have full concentration in class at school because there would be someone who can take care of their baby. “Child care support” and “parental support” recorded 22% and 42% respectively with the same view that it helps them to have a concentrated mind in class because they have someone who can assist them take care of their baby.

Only 18% and 8% of a total of 50 respondents each indicated that they need separate schools for teen mothers and child care centers respectively. They further revealed that these supports would help them with a safe place and time to take care of their babies. Table 4.7 below gives a representation.

**Table 4.7: Kind of Supports Needed to Continue Education**

<b>What kind of support do teen mothers need to help them continue their education</b>		
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
School provide child care centres	4	8
Separate school for teen mothers	9	18
Child care support	11	22
Parental support	21	42
Partner/partner family support	40	80
Financial support	48	96

**NOTE:** Percentages vary for tables because respondents gave more than one response.

Source: Field data, July 2020.

The sociocultural findings correlate with the Human Rights Watch study (2018) that found out that teenage mothers who are interested in going back to school after delivery are frequently

profoundly affected by the absence of support from parents. It was interesting to note that stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities are the reasons teenage mothers fail to return to school after delivery. This is because the community makes them believe that they cannot be successful, and as a result, this put some level of shyness, hopelessness in them. A Municipal Education officer lament that “*Some teenage mothers have been disrespected through verbal abuse*”. These findings also co-note with the Human Rights Watch (2018) that in public schools in countries such as Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Equatorial Guinea, teenage mothers have been discriminated against and denied the right to study.

With regards to the findings of the key-informants interviews on objective two, the study revealed that discrimination in the school environment, feeling rejected and lack of belongingness in the school environment, by teachers and pupils, are some of the school factors cited as acting as barriers for teenage mothers return to school. A headteacher lamented that; *Teachers and some pupils treat teenage mothers as not serious in schools, as such, these teenage mothers are forced to drop from school again.*

The interviews also revealed that societies do judge teenage mothers as immoral and so to a very large extent do not give them the respect and dignity they should have. A headteacher laments as follows: *To be frank with you, 80% of the people judge teenage mothers to be immoral and assume they are social threats to all other young girls and students.* This confirms the works of Chigona and Chetty (2008) who revealed in their research that most teenage mothers lose their dignity in their society hence are not taken seriously as people who fit into society.

Judging teenage mothers as deviant students also affect them psychologically, the study revealed. This discourages them and hence perform poorly. A headteacher said in the interview that

*“Personally, I think such views make the teenage mothers to psychologically think they will definitely perform poorly when they return to school to study”.*

The study also revealed the following additional societal challenges teenage mothers faced that prevent them from returning to school after delivery: the belief that it is an embarrassment for teenage mothers to go back to school, the constant accusations, judgment and branding in the society, the neglect, reject and disapproval of teenage mothers’ and wanting to further their studies and the way society sees teenage mothers as immoral. The following assertions came from a school head: *In our societies, teenage mothers lack respect, trust and are considered as immoral.*

#### **4.5 Institutional Factors Preventing Teenage Mothers from Returning to School**

The study also sought the views of respondents on school factors that prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery using a Likert scale. In the first statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“Teen mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges which include discrimination which sends negative messages on their educational prospects”*. Thirty-four (34) of the teenage mothers agreed to the statement. Fifteen (15) said they don’t know whether the statement was true while 1 representing 2% disagreed with the statement (see Table 4.8).

In the second statement, respondents were asked to agree to the statement that *“Within schools, teenage mothers are judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats”*. Twenty-nine (29) teenage mothers, representing 58% agreed to the statement. Nineteen (19) respondents representing 38% said they don’t know whether the statement was true, while the last two respondents who represented (4%) disagreed with the statement.

In the third statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“In schools, teenage mothers are framed as deviants who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations”*. Twenty-seven (27) respondents, representing (54%) agreed to the statement. Nineteen (19) respondents who also represented (38%) said they don’t know whether was true, while four (8%) of the last respondents disagreed with the statement.

In the final and fourth statement on school factors, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“Many teenage mothers in schools have been teased, bullied and isolated by their peers”*. Thirty-four (34) of the teenage mothers who represented 68% agreed to the statement. Fifteen (15) of them who represented (30%) said they don’t know if the statement was true while only one respondent (2%) disagreed with the statement,

With regards to objective two, further analysis from the qualitative study from the teenage mothers revealed that 34 (68%) of the teenage mothers mentioned discrimination in schools as a challenge to their return to school after delivery. Twenty-nine (58%) mothers claimed within schools they are perceived to be dishonest and presumed to be social dangers. Twenty-seven (54%) again are framed as deviants who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations whiles thirty-four (68%) agreed that teenage mothers have been teased, bullied and isolated by peers.

**Table 4.8: School Factors Preventing Teenage Mothers’ to Return to School after Delivery**

Statement	Agree (%)	Don’t Know (%)	Disagree (%)	Total (%)

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Teen mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges that include discrimination which sends negative messages on their educational prospects.

34 (68%)	15 (30%)	1 (2%)	50(100%)
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Within schools, teenage mothers are judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats.

29(58%)	19 (38%)	2 (4%)	50(100%)
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In schools, teenage mothers are framed as deviants who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations.

27 (54%)	19 (38%)	4(8%)	50(100%)
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Many teenage mothers in schools have been teased, bullied and isolated by their peers.

34 (68%)	15 (30%)	1 (2%)	50(100%)
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Source: Field data, 2020.

Analysis of the data, also showed that 80% of teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery because of teasing and bullying from teachers and peers. This is because some teenage mothers are humiliated when teased and bullied as such may not return to school. Teasing and bullying also make teenage mothers feel they are not treated well and are not welcomed to the school and as such perform badly. To confirm the above claims, a headteacher made the

following statement: *For me, teasing and bullying can make teenage mothers feel they are not treated well and are not welcomed to the school.*

The results from the study also showed that school teachers also faced the following challenges when dealing with teenage mothers who returned to school after delivery: Poor performances, absenteeism and finally dropping out again *negatively*. The Municipal education official made the following: *absenteeism and final dropping out again are the challenges faced by teenage mothers.*

Even though there have been government directives such as the establishment of the Girls' Education Unit (GEU), the inclusive education policy, and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) in Ghana to address the gaps of teenage pregnancy in Ghana. Reports by the FAWE (2015) and from key informants' points out that an official and comprehensive national "return to school" policy is absent. This will ensure that teenage mothers can return to school after childbirth. This does not encourage young mothers with supporting institutions such as the GES and Social Welfare to encourage teenage mothers to return to school after birth. The findings of this study corroborate with that of, Martinez and Odhiambo (2018) who indicated that teenage mothers in Tanzania find it difficult to return to formal schooling because of the lack of Re-Entry Policies.

#### **4.5.1 Expected Attitudes of Teachers towards Teenage Mothers Returning to School**

The study again sought participants' views on the expected attitudes of teachers towards teenage mothers' returning to school after delivery. Twenty-four (24) of the respondents representing 48% said they expect a supportive attitude from teachers when they return to school. Fourteen percent (14%) stated they expect guidance and counselling from teachers, while six respondents

representing (13%) said they expect an abusive-free teacher attitude when they return to school. Ten respondents representing (20%) said they only need morale in the form of encouragement and the remaining two (4%) stated that they expect nothing from the teachers when they return to school after delivery. This is shown in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9: Expected Attitudes of Teachers towards Teenage Mothers**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Moral (encouragement)	10	20
Positive attitude	7	14
Not abusive	6	13
Supportive	24	48
Nothing	3	5

Source: Field data, July 2020

Further analysis on the attitudes of peers towards teenage mothers' returning to school after delivery showed that two respondents representing (4%), did not expect any form of good treatment from their peers when they return to school after delivery. 40% and 56% of respondents cited that they did not want to be mocked and also expect friendliness from their peers upon returning to school after delivery respectively.

Table 4.10 below gives a graphical representation of the expected attitudes of peers towards teenage mothers' returning to school after delivery

**Table 4.10: Expected Attitudes of Peers towards Teenage Mothers**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
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Friendliness	28	56
No mockery	20	40
Nothing	2	44

Source: Field data, July 2020

#### 4.6 Awareness of Students on Reintegration Policies of Teenage Mothers

In finding whether students and teachers know existing policies that allows teenage mothers to go back for formal education, the teenage mothers were asked to respond to a number of statements on a Likert scale.

In the first statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“All Ghanaian teenage mothers are aware that there are re-entry policies that allow them to return to school after delivery”*. Out of the total of 50 respondents, 16 teenage mothers representing (32%) agreed to the statement. Twenty-three (46%) said they don’t know if the statement was true while the remaining 11 respondents representing (22%) disagreed with the statement (see Table 4.11).

In the second statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“There are no policies against discriminatory practices that deny teenage mothers the right to education”*. Ten agreed to the statement. Thirty-five (70% of total responses) said they do not know if the statement was true, while the remaining five (10%) disagreed with the statement.

In the third statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that *“All teenage mothers in Ghana know that the Girls’ Education Unit (GEU) supervises the re-admission of teenage mothers into schools following a dropout”*. Eleven (11) respondents agreed

to the statement. Thirty-two (32) respondents claimed they did not know whether the statement was true while seven respondents representing 14% disagreed with the statement.

In the final and fourth statement, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that “*There are no policies to sensitize teachers, pupils and the whole community to support the re-admission of teenage mothers into school after delivery*”. Thirteen (13) teenage mothers, representing (26%) agreed to the statement. Eight respondents who also represented 16% disagreed with the statement while 16 (32%) of the teenage mothers said they did not know whether the statement was valid.

Further analysis from the key-informant interviews revealed that teenage mothers have inadequate knowledge of re-entry policies in Ghana. Results indicate that most of the mothers are not aware of any re-entry policy in the country. The Ghana Education Service gender desk official opined as follows: *I do not think these teenage mothers have any knowledge or about any re-entry policy in Ghana. They do not know of such policies as they do not what action to take when they are being discriminated against.*

Table 4.11 below gives a graphical representation of the knowledge of teen mothers on policies of reintegration into the formal system.

**Table 4.11: Knowledge of Teen Mothers on Policies of Reintegration into the Formal System**

Statement	Agree (%)	Don't Know (%)	Disagree (%)	Total (%)

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All Ghanaian teenage mothers are aware 16 (32%) 23 (46%) 11 (22%) 50 (100%)  
 that there are re-entry policies that allow  
 them to return to school after delivery

There are no policies against 10 (20%) 35 (70%) 5 (10%) 50 (100%)  
 discriminatory practices that deny teenage  
 mothers the right to education

All teenage mothers in Ghana know that 11 (22%) 32 (64%) 7 (14%) 50 (100%)  
 the Girls' Education Unit (GEU)  
 supervises the re-admission of teenage  
 mothers into schools following a dropout

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There are no policies to sensitize teachers, 13 (26%) 29 (58%) 8 (16%) 50 (100%)  
 pupils and the whole community to  
 support the re-admission of teenage  
 mothers into school after delivery

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Source: Field data, July 2020

The study also investigated on knowledge of policies supporting teenage mothers to return to school after delivery and found that two respondents representing (4%) said they know about policies supporting teenage mothers to return to school after delivery and the rest of them who summed 48 and representing (96%) held firmly that they do not know about such policies.

Table 4.12 below gives a graphical representation of knowledge supporting teenage mothers to return to school after delivery

**Table 4.12: Knowledge on Policies Supporting Teenage Mothers to Return to School**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	2	4
No	48	96
Total	50	100

Source: Field data, July, 2020

Furthermore, knowledge about Ghana Education Service policy on re-entry for teenage mothers after delivery was also investigated and found that all the respondents who represented (100%) said they do not know the Ghana Education Service policy on re-entry for teenage mothers after their delivery.

To eliminate all the hindrances that come in the way of adolescent mothers' completion of secondary education and even to the higher or tertiary level, access to school, and their accomplishment, The Human Rights Watch in 2018 recommended that all African Union Governments, design a policy document to;

- Instantly terminate pregnancy-based discrimination in Schools,
- Conclude the dismissal of pregnant female students
- Guarantee young mothers and pregnant students can recommence education
- Guarantee that married and pregnant students who desire to further their schooling can do so in an atmosphere that desists from discrimination and stigma.

In addition to this, Ghana is a signatory to; The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and the General Comment No. 20 (2016), the International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Interviews with personnel from the Municipal Education Office revealed that there is no written down policy document that stipulates and protect the rights of teenage mothers to return to school after birth. Only two out of the 50 respondents indicated their awareness of such policies.

This means that Ghana as a country only participated in international treaties for teenage mothers to return to school but has failed in its implementation in practice. The results from the research indicate that Ghana has no policy to help and aid teenage mothers to return to school. The absence of such policy also means that teenage mothers who can return to school do so on their own will, hence face numerous challenges ranging from cultural, societal, financial, etc.

#### **4.7 The Kinds of Support Needed by Teenage Mothers to go back to School**

The qualitative data shows that parents need to educate, sensitize and encourage teenage mothers, to go back to school after delivery. A headteacher said the following claims: *Parents should support their teenage mothers with some home counselling and some finance to enable them return to school with less challenges.*

The following were identified as supports community members must provide to aid teenage mothers to return to school after delivery: motivation of teenage mothers, showing of love and support in cash and kind, welcome teenage mothers and let them feel at ease and safe at school.

The following expression came from a Municipal education official: *Providing counseling sections and inviting role models to talk to teenage mothers and share their experiences*

The study identified the following as the assistance that teenage mothers need to get from the fathers of their children when they want to return to formal schooling: love and motivation from the fathers, fathers assisting the teenage mothers to adapt to their motherhood situation and proceed with schooling life and the fathers must provide the needed support in terms of finance and encouragement. A headteacher had the following to say: *I think the most assistance from the fathers will be the love, finance and motivation given to the teenage mothers.* A Municipal Education Official also said the following: *They will some financial support from the fathers of their children.*

Supports needed from school authorities were also identified as effective motivation, guidance and counselling from the school authority, they need encouragement and policy to stop others from treating them badly. The following comments came from a school head: *From us, there should be effective motivation, guidance and counselling for teenage mothers.*

Good attitudes which are to be exhibited by teachers to help teenage mothers return to school include: transparency when dealing with teenage mothers to avoid doubts of their academic strengths, giving them support and motivating them to move on, being tolerant of who they are, counselling and special attention given to them to help them academically, effective feedback from teachers and given teenage mothers learning and instructional support. The comments below came from Ghana Ed. Gender Desk Official: *Creating cordial relationships with the teenage mothers will be motivational and encouraging.*

Finally, recommendations were made from all categories of respondents; teenage mothers, teachers, the Municipal Education Office and the Municipal Assembly.

First, both teachers and students should be sensitized against the discrimination of teenage mothers. Secondly, parents and relatives should help in the upbringing of the newly born child. Thirdly teachers and counsellors on the other hand should provide teenage mothers counselling to settle well. Fourthly it was recommended that special attention should be given to teenage mothers and also their right to education and schooling must be protected by the school authorities just as any other student. Lastly, it was recommended that teenage mothers should concentrate on their studies to achieve their aspirations in life. The following statements from the in-depth interviews illustrate these recommendations. A headteacher mentions the following; *“The best advice will be for parents and relatives should help in the upbringing of the newly born child, teachers and counsellors on the other hand should provide teenage mother in schools all their needs to settle well. Ghana Ed. gender desk official also said the following: Teenage mothers must concentrate on their studies to achieve their aspirations and vision”.*

From the counselling department of the Education office, the respondent remarked; *“it is not easy getting back to school after delivery as a teenage mother but from my office, we advise, motivate and encourage such mothers to accomplish their dreams. My advice to the teen mothers is to take a bold step and defile all odds and get back to school since my office is there to protect them from stigmatization”.*

The Municipal office revealed that their office is prepared and ready to support any teenage mother. The office advised that *“teenage mothers should not feel intimidated or embarrassed to return to school. They advised that teachers should support such mothers with motivational support and the needed attention to catch up with their mates”.*

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the dissertation from the points of view of participants concerning the reasons why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La-Nkantanang Municipality. This summary is followed by the conclusion as well as recommendations that will be useful to policymakers, stakeholders and future researchers.

#### **5.2 Summary**

In La-Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality, the issue of teenage mothers returning to school after delivery is a matter of concern. Teenage mothers in the municipality experience challenge that act as barriers to their right to returning to school. This study, therefore, seeks to establish the experiences of teenage mothers returning to school after delivery in the La-Nkantanang- Madina. Even though there have been government directives such as the establishment of the Girls' Education Unit (GEU), the inclusive education policy, and the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Ghana to address the gaps of teenage pregnancy in Ghana. Reports by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Ghana (2015) points out that there is the nonexistence of an authorized and inclusive national "return to school" policy that guarantees that a teenage mother can return to school after childbirth.

The main research objective of the study was to investigate the reasons why teenage mothers do not return to school after delivery in the La-Nkantanang Madina Municipality. The Specific research objectives were: to explore social-cultural factors which prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery, to explore school factors that prevent teenage mothers from

returning to school after delivery and to ascertain students and teachers knowledge of the existence of policies for the reincorporation of teenage mothers into the formal school scheme.

The review of the literature included barriers to teenage mothers returning to school after delivery, policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

The mixed-method approach was used which integrated both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The data collection method used was a survey for quantitative inquiry interviews for qualitative inquiry. The population of the study comprised all the teenage mothers, school heads, municipality and education officials of the La-Nkantanang, Madina Municipality.

In the case of quantitative sampling, Leedy and Ormod (2010) guidelines for selecting a sample size, which is referred to as the symbol N method was used to select fifty (50) teenage mothers. The qualitative sampling on the other hand used the purposive sampling technique to select two (2) municipal education officials, two (2) social Welfare workers, four (4) school heads from four different schools, eight (8) parents of teenage mothers and one (1) official at the Ministry of Education in charge of re-entry policy for teenage mothers into formal schooling. A questionnaire and interviews guide were used to collect data from the respondents.

Key findings were:

Some teenage mothers are willing to go back to school after delivery but face challenges that include the lack of financial support, the prevalence of stigmatization and discrimination, the lack of support from parents, the lack of proper guidance and counselling and teenage mothers' level of shyness, hopelessness and isolation.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Based on the findings derived from the field, the study can conclude that teenage pregnancy has become a problem for most developing countries across the globe, especially Ghana, and most West African countries. This problem threatens the promotion of girl child education which aims at promoting and encouraging the increase of girls' participation in educational activities.

The study confirmed the existence of socio-cultural factors which discourage and prevent teenagers who has given birth to return to school after their delivery. The factors identified were as a result of moral obligation and stigmatization in society. Indeed, there exist some institutional factors which encourage girls to return to school, it was found that those policies were not effective and were over shadowed by the societal factors. the embarrassment for teenage mothers to go back to school, the constant accusations, judgmental and stigmatization in the society, the neglect by parents, financial difficulties, reject and disapproval of teenage mothers' willingness and desire to further their studies. girl child education still remains one of the challenge of development in developing countries hence the vital need to push and encourage girls or teenagers who by mistake give birth along their educational journey to get back to the classroom.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are suggested to facilitate teenage mothers return to school after delivery,

Parents should be encouraged to support teenage mothers with financially, especially, payments of school fees and other help that will encourage them to stay in schools, whiles the government, Non-Governmental and Organizations the relevant government agencies set up child care centers in the communities where teenage mothers can leave their children while they attend school.

Stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities against teenage mothers should be stopped by law enforcement agencies and other law agencies to help teen mothers return to schools successfully. And stakeholders, such as religious bodies, the counselling unit of the municipality office and the Municipal Education Office, must ensure teenage mothers have adequate guidance and counselling at home and in school.

Parents should be encouraged by relevant bodies and agencies such as the education directorate, social welfare and the Ghana counselling bodies to have confidence in teenage mothers, encourage and support them socially. And school authorities should ensure teenage mothers are protected from any form of stigmatization.

Lastly, girl child education workshops should be encouraged and more focused on creating awareness on teenage pregnancy more to reduce and prevent the occurrence of the pregnancy first and also to create awareness of the re-entry policies that allow them to return to school after delivery.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix1. Questionnaire for Teenage Mothers

#### WHY I AM NOT ABLE TO RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER DELIVERY? A STUDY OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN LA- NKANTANANG MADINA

This study on “**Why I am not able to return to School after Delivery? A study of teenage mothers in La- Nkantanang Madina**” is undertaken by **Najat Alhassan Alolo** in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Development Studies, Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana.

This questionnaire is to gather information from you, this exercise is expected to last not more than thirty (30) minutes. Information gathered from this will serve as the basis for writing the dissertation, therefore, your participation remains anonymous and voluntary. All your answers will be kept completely confidential. As a prospective participant, you have the right to withdraw at any point of the exercise without having to give reasons.

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Locality: .....
2. Date: .....
3. Respondent ID: .....
4. Age (current).....
5. How old were you when you got pregnant? .....
6. Ethnicity .....

Please mark with **X** or (**√**) in the box with the appropriate response. Mark one box only.

7. Religion

Islam	Christianity	Traditional Religion

8. Highest Qualification

Primary School	Junior High School	Senior High School

9. Which grade were you in, when you got pregnant? .....

10. What happened to your schooling when you realized you were pregnant?

Dropped	Continued

11. If you dropped, what informed your decision?

Being mocked by colleagues	Was ashamed/shy	Was sacked from the school	Was married off	Was stigmatized by society	Other (specify)

12. How long has been, since you left school?

1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	other (specify)
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13. Marital status

Single	Married

14. Number of children.....

15. Currently working

Yes	No

16. If working, what type of work .....

17. Your involvement in school activities before pregnancy

.....  
 .....

**SECTION B: Social factors preventing teenage mothers from returning to school after**

**Delivery**

18. What is/are the reasons why you have not been able to return to school after your delivery?

(tick as many as may apply)

Reasons

Reasons	Tick(✓)
No money/ lack of finances	

No one to look after child /child care	
No parental support	
Stigmatization from members of the community	
Stigmatization from school ( teachers, other students)	
Shy	
Married	
Got pregnant again	
lack of awareness about re-entry policies	
Specify (other )	
.....	
.....	

19. Do you plan on going back to school?

Yes	No

20. If No why.....

21. If yes why .....

22. What kind of support do you think teen mothers need to help them continued their education?

(thick as many as may apply)

Supports	Tick(√)
Financial support	
Child care support	
Parental support	
Partner/ Partner Family support	
Separate school for teen mothers	
Schools provide child care centers	
Other (specify) ..... .....	

Please put a cross (X) or a tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only.

No	Item	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree

23.	Teenage mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges which include the lack of financial support.			
24.	In this community, most teenage mothers' new roles and identities push them to exit from formal education.			
25.	Most teenage mothers' are unwilling to return to school because of early marriage			
26.	There are teenage mothers who may want to return to formal schooling but there is no child-care assistance in this community.			
27.	Some teenage mothers do experience stigma and discrimination from families and communities which inhibits their confidence to continue with their education			

**SECTION C: School factors that prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery**

Please put across (X) or a tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only.

No.	Item	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree
28.	Teen mothers who may want to go back to school after delivery face challenges that include discrimination which sends negative messages on their educational prospects.			
29.	Within schools, teenage mothers are judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats.			
30.	In schools, teenage mothers are framed as deviant students who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations.			
31.	Many teenage mothers in schools have been teased,			

	bullied and isolated by their peers.			
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32. What support do you need from the school authority to help you return to formal schooling system?

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33. What attitudes of teachers would be good for you when you return to school after delivery?

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34. What attitudes of peers would be good for you when you return to school after delivery?

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**SECTION D:** The knowledge of teen mothers about the existence of policies for the reintegration of teenage mothers into the formal school system.

Please put across (X) or a tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only.

No.	Item	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree
35.	All Ghanaian teenage mothers are aware that there are re-entry policies that allow them			

	to return to school after delivery.			
36.	There are no policies against discriminatory practices that deny teenage mothers the right to education.			
37.	All teenage mothers in Ghana know that the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) supervises the re-admission of teenage mothers into schools following a dropout.			
38.	There are no policies to sensitize teachers, pupils and the whole school community to support the re-admission of teenage mothers into school after delivery.			

39. Do you know of any regulation/policies supporting teenage mothers return to school after delivery? Yes No

If Yes, please name them

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.....

40. Do you have knowledge about the Ghana Education Service policy on re-entry for teenage mothers after delivery? Yes or No

41. If yes, what do you know about the Ghana Education Service policy on re-entry for teenage mothers after delivery?

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42. Do you know any teenage mothers who have returned to school successful after delivery and what were the supports that aided their returns to formal schooling?

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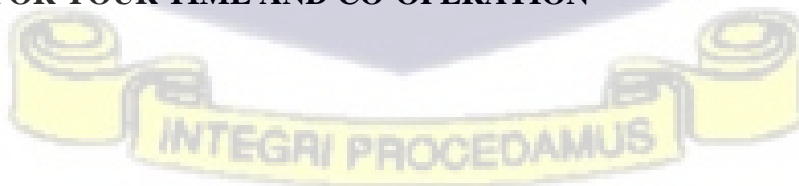
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43. What advice do you have on how to deal with teenage mothers returning to formal schooling system after delivery?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION**



**Appendix 2: Interview Schedule (Municipality and GES Gender Desk)**

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out a study on the topic “**Why I am not able to return to School after Delivery? A study of teenage mothers in La- Nkantanang Madina**”. You have been purposefully selected to participate in the research; therefore, it would be very helpful if you assist in answering the questions below. You are required to provide the most appropriate answer in your opinion. Your responses will be kept confidential and use for purely academic purposes. Thank you.

Date: .....

Sex: .....

Age: .....

Respondent Position: .....

Municipality: .....

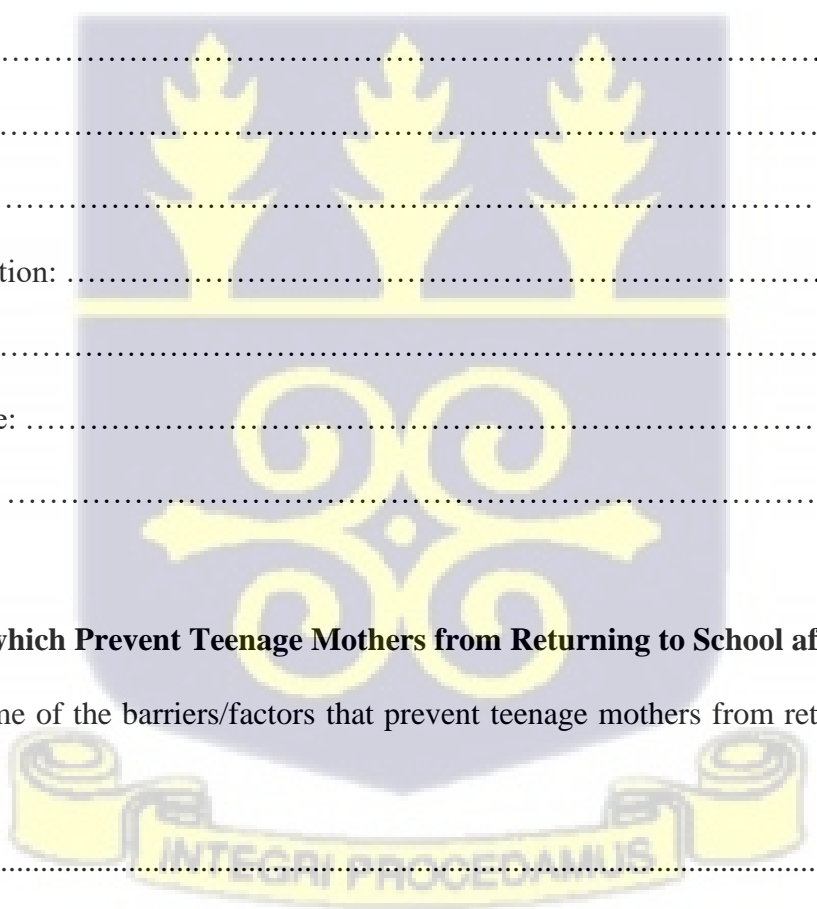
Length of service: .....

Responsibilities: .....

**Social Factors which Prevent Teenage Mothers from Returning to School after Delivery**

1. What are some of the barriers/factors that prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery?

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2. How do stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities prevent the teenage mother from returning to school after delivery?

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3. What kinds of supports must parents provide to their teenage mothers to assist them to return to school after delivery?

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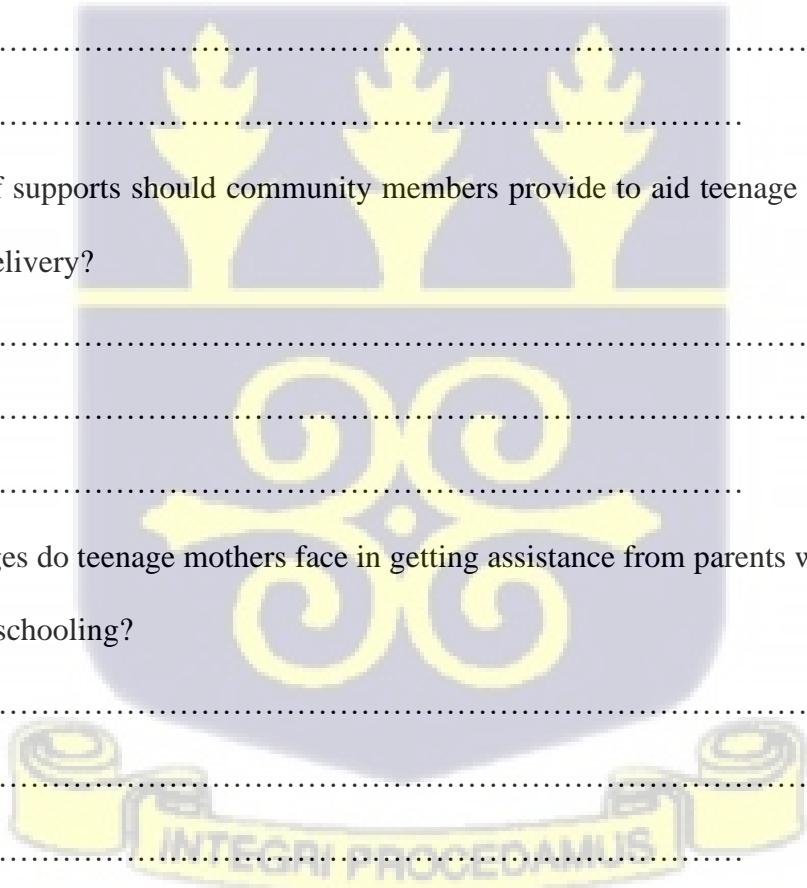
4. What kinds of supports should community members provide to aid teenage mothers to return to school after delivery?

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5. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from parents when they want to return to formal schooling?

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6. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from community members when they want to return to formal schooling?



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7. What kinds of assistance can teenage mothers get from the fathers of their children when they want to return to formal schooling?

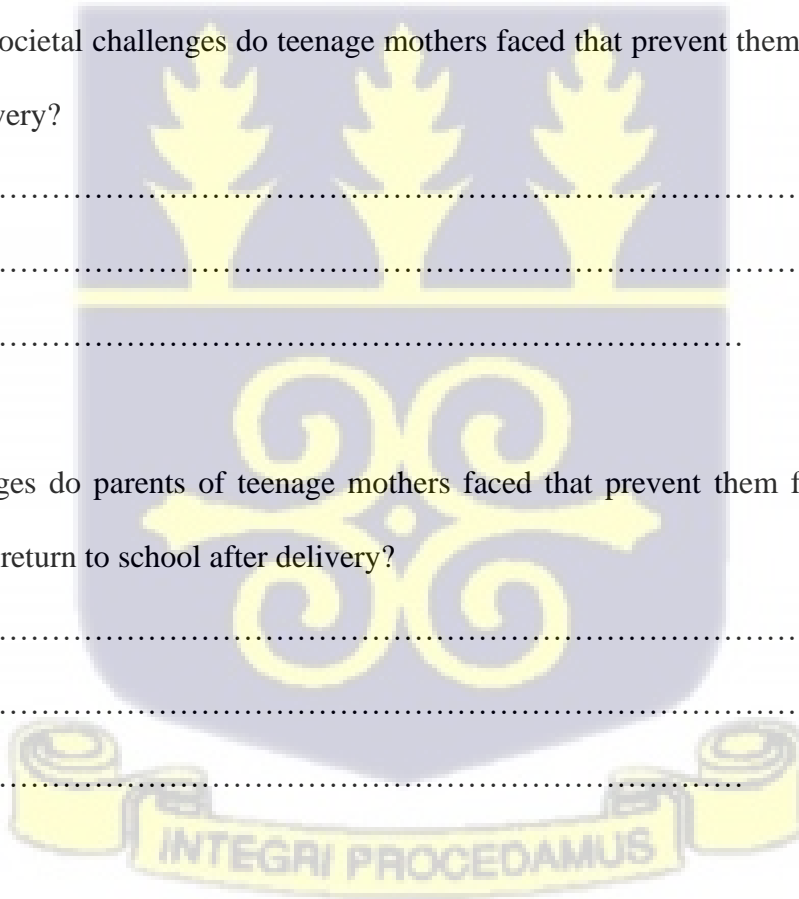
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8. Which other societal challenges do teenage mothers faced that prevent them from returning to school after delivery?

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9. What challenges do parents of teenage mothers faced that prevent them from helping their teenage mothers return to school after delivery?

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**School Factors which Prevent Teenage Mothers from Returning to School after Delivery**

10. How does discrimination in the school environment act as a barrier to teenage mothers returning to school after delivery?

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.....11. To what extent in schools are teenage mothers judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats?

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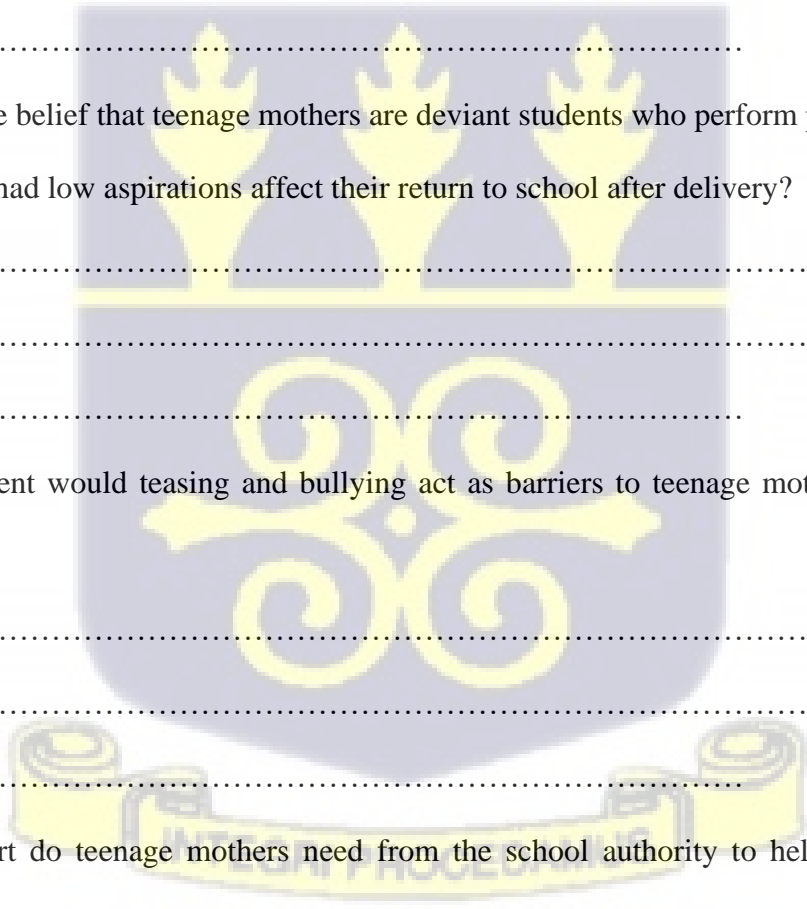
12. How does the belief that teenage mothers are deviant students who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations affect their return to school after delivery?

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13. To what extent would teasing and bullying act as barriers to teenage mothers returning to school?

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14. What support do teenage mothers need from the school authority to help them return to formal schooling after delivery?



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15. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from the school authority when they want to return to the formal schooling system?

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16. What are the reasons for teenage mothers not returning to school after delivery?

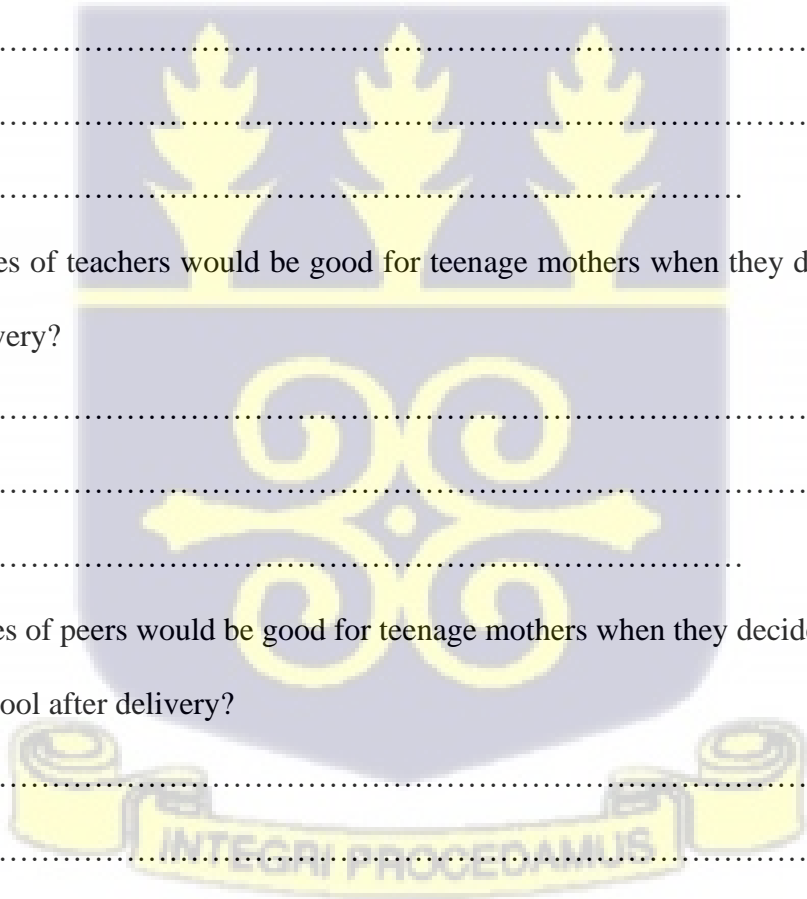
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17. What attitudes of teachers would be good for teenage mothers when they decide to return to school after delivery?

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18. What attitudes of peers would be good for teenage mothers when they decide to return to school after delivery?

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19. What challenges do teachers face in dealing with teenage mothers who returned to school after delivery?

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20. What challenges do learners faced in interacting with teenage mothers who returned to school after delivery?

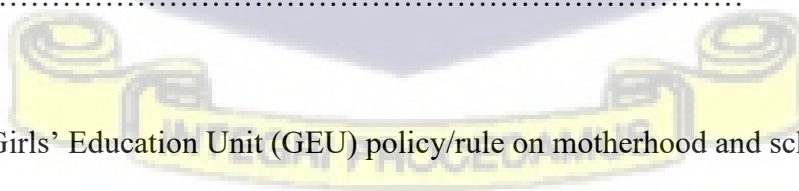
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**The Knowledge of Students and Teachers about the Existence of Policies for the Reintegration of Teenage Mothers into the Formal School System**

21. What policy does the Ghana Education Service has on re-entry for teenage mothers after delivery?

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22. What is the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) policy/rule on motherhood and schooling?



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23. To what extent do teenage mothers in Ghana know about the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) which supervises their re-admission into schools following a dropout?

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24. How knowledgeable are teenage mothers that there are re-entry policies that allow them to return to school after delivery?

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25. How extensive is the knowledge of teachers, learners and parents on GEU which supervises their re-admission into schools following a dropout?

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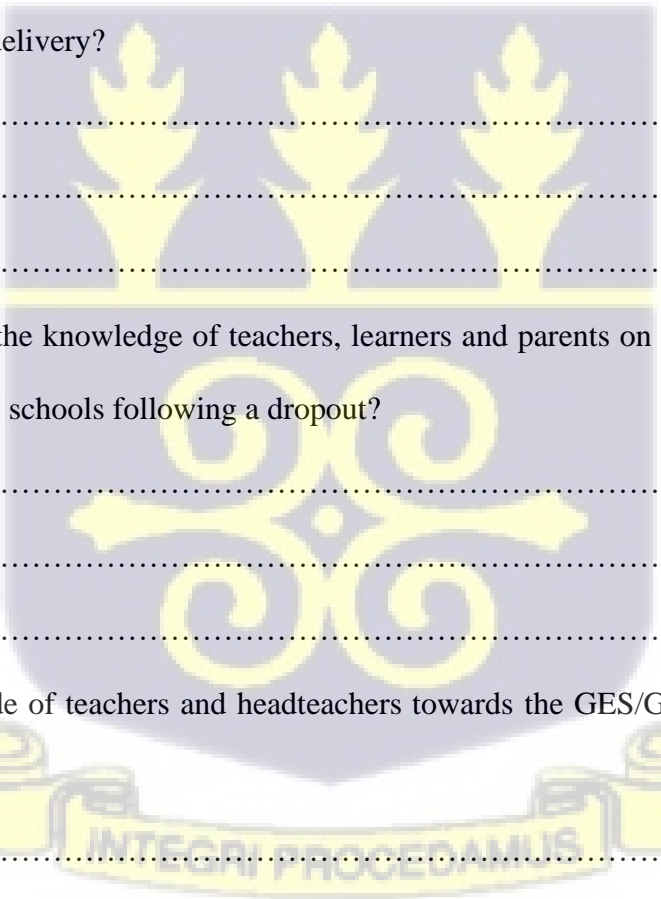
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26. What is the attitude of teachers and headteachers towards the GES/GEU re-entry policy for teenage mothers?

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27. What can you say about the level of awareness of teenage mothers on policies against discriminatory practices that deny them the right to return to school after delivery?

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28. Which are the policies aimed at sensitizing teachers, pupils and the whole school community to support the re-admission of teenage mothers into school after delivery?

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29. Any known cases of teenage mothers who have returned to school successful after delivery and what were the supports that aided their returns to formal schooling?

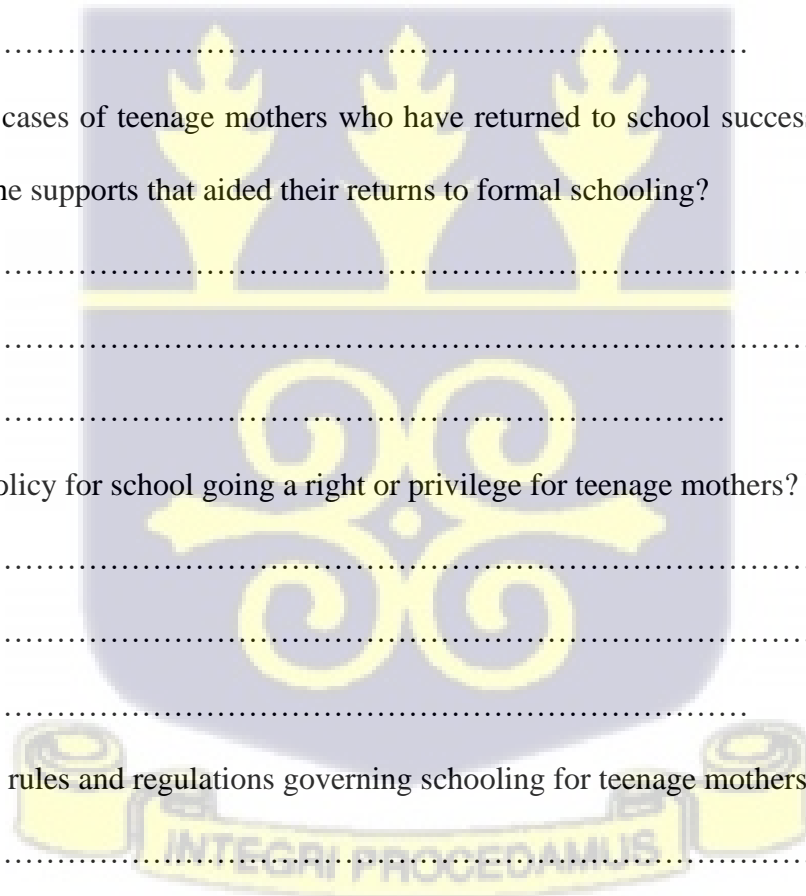
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30. Is re-entry policy for school going a right or privilege for teenage mothers? Why?

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31. What are the rules and regulations governing schooling for teenage mothers? Name those.

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32. What advice do you have on how to deal with teenage mothers returning to formal schooling system after delivery?

.....

.....

**THANK YOU**



**Appendix: 3. Interview Schedule (Headteachers)**

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out a study on the topic “**Why I am not able to return to School after Delivery? A study of teenage mothers in La- Nkantanang Madina**”. You have been purposefully selected to participate in the research; therefore, it would be very helpful if you assist in answering the questions below. You are required to provide the most appropriate answer in your opinion. Your responses will be kept confidential and use for purely academic purposes. Thank you.

Date: .....

Respondent Position: .....

School Name: .....

Sex: .....

Age: .....

**Social Factors which Prevent Teenage Mothers from Returning to School after Delivery**

1. What are some of the barriers/factors that prevent teenage mothers from returning to school after delivery?

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2. How do stigmatization and discrimination from families and communities prevent the teenage mother from returning to school after delivery?

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3. What kinds of supports must parents provide to their teenage mothers to assist them to return to school after delivery?

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4. What kinds of supports should community members provide to aid teenage mothers to return to school after delivery?

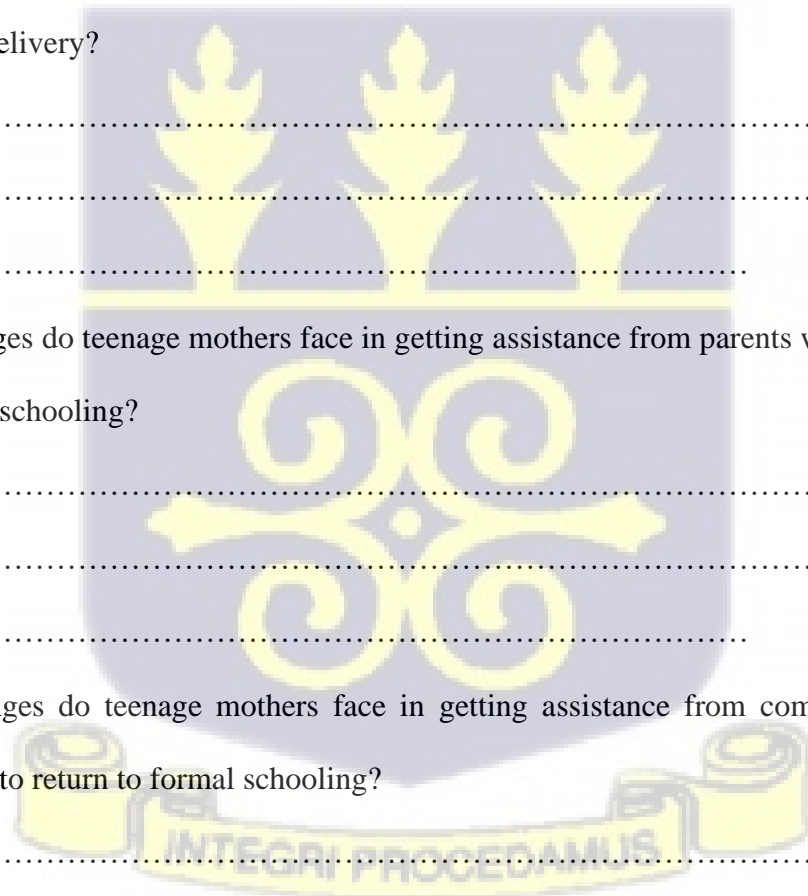
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5. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from parents when they want to return to formal schooling?

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6. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from community members when they want to return to formal schooling?

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7. What kinds of assistance can teenage mothers get from the fathers of their children when they want to return to formal schooling?

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8. Which other societal challenges do teenage mothers faced that prevent them from returning to school after delivery?

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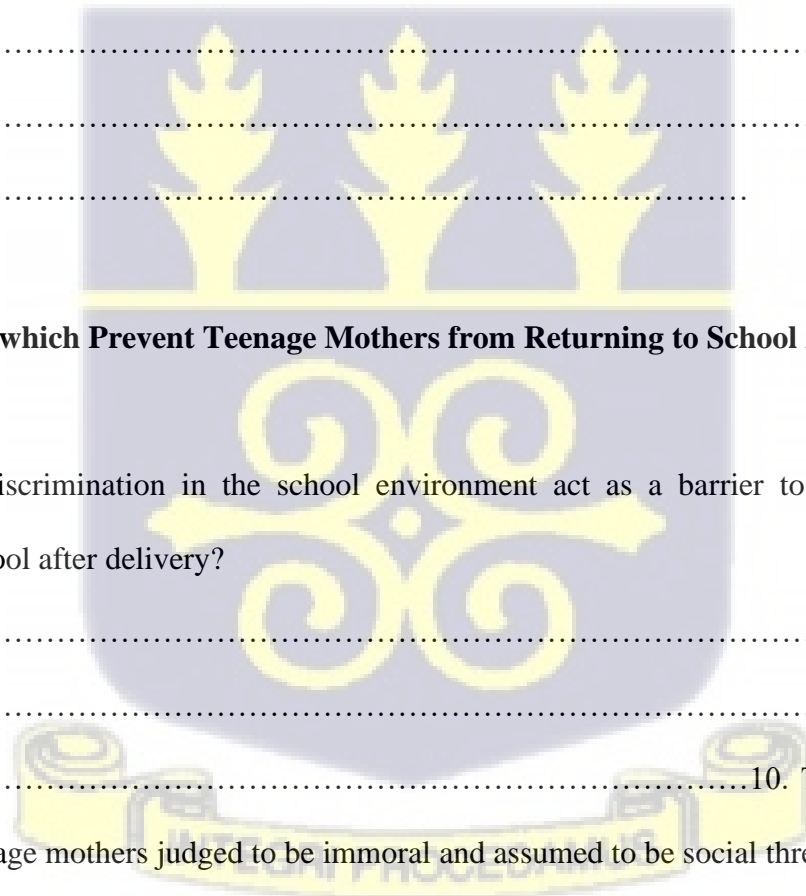
**School Factors which Prevent Teenage Mothers from Returning to School After Delivery**

9. How does discrimination in the school environment act as a barrier to teenage mothers returning to school after delivery?

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.....10. To what extent in schools are teenage mothers judged to be immoral and assumed to be social threats?



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11. How does the belief that teenage mothers are deviant students who perform poorly and therefore had low aspirations affect their return to school after delivery?

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12. To what extent would teasing and bullying act as barriers to teenage mothers returning to school?

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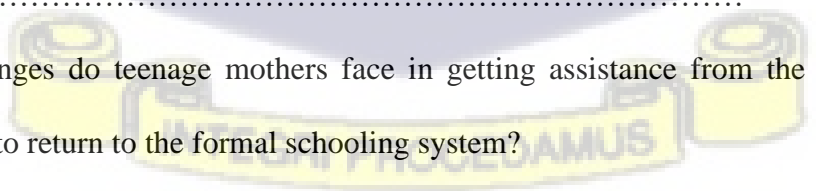
13. What support do teenage mothers need from the school authority to help them return to formal schooling after delivery?

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14. What challenges do teenage mothers face in getting assistance from the school authority when they want to return to the formal schooling system?



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15. What are the reasons for teenage mothers not returning to school after delivery?

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16. What attitudes of teachers would be good for teenage mothers when they decide to return to school after delivery?

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.....  
17. What attitudes of peers would be good for teenage mothers when they decide to return to school after delivery?

.....  
.....  
.....  
**The Knowledge of Students and Teachers about the Existence of Policies for the Reintegration of Teenage Mothers into the Formal School System**

18. In Ghana, how knowledgeable are teenage mothers that there are re-entry policies that allow them to return to school after delivery?

.....  
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.....  
19. What can you say about the level of awareness of teenage mothers on policies against discriminatory practices that deny them the right to return to school after delivery?

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20. To what extent do teenage mothers in Ghana know about the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) which supervises their re-admission into schools following a dropout?

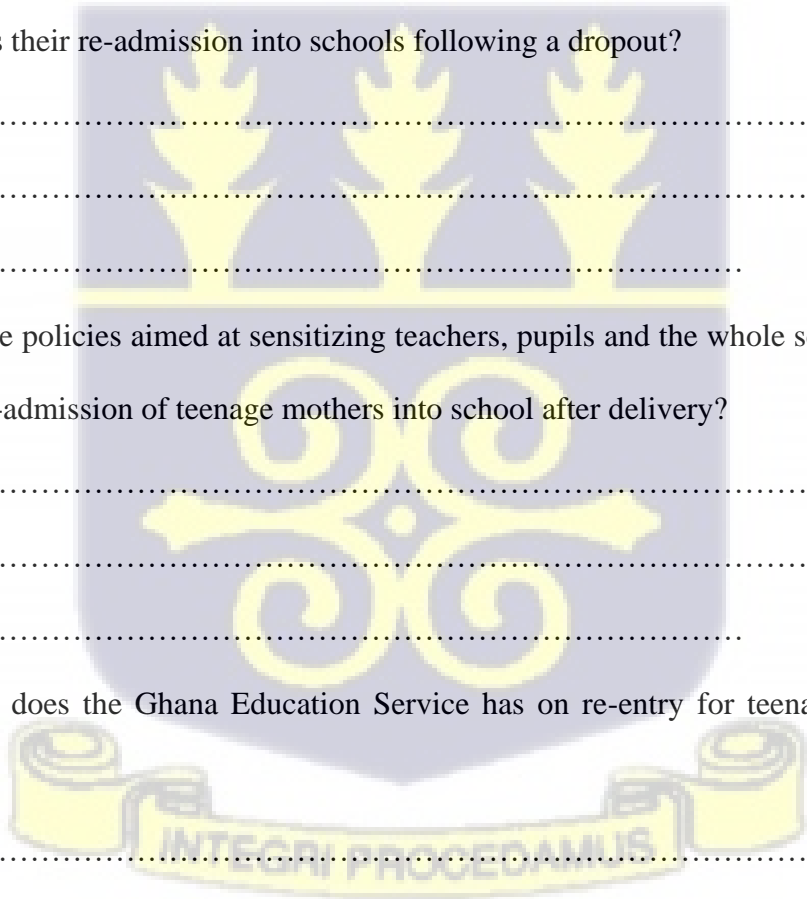
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21. Which are the policies aimed at sensitizing teachers, pupils and the whole school community to support the re-admission of teenage mothers into school after delivery?

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22. What policy does the Ghana Education Service has on re-entry for teenage mothers after delivery?

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23. Any known cases of teenage mothers who have returned to school successful after delivery and what were the supports that aided their returns to formal schooling?

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24. Is re-entry policy for school going a right or privilege for teenage mothers? Why?

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25. What are the rules and regulations governing schooling for teenage mothers? Name those.

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26. What advice do you have on how to deal with teenage mothers returning to formal schooling system after delivery?

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