

Parental Perception and Retention of Teen Mothers in Schools in Schools in West Pokot County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

The statistics indicate that teen mothers' failure to return to school lower their chances of employment opportunities and make them more vulnerable. The purpose of this study was to evaluate parental perception on retention of teenage mothers in Public Secondary Schools in West Pokot County, Kenya. The statistics indicates that prevalence of teen mothers is higher than national average. Thus, there is need of the urgent interventions for retention of teen mothers in schools to enable teen mothers enjoy education opportunities. The study evaluated influence parental perception on retention of teen mothers in West Pokot County, Kenya. The research is based on Resiliency theory. The research focused on 1205 individuals categorized as principals, guidance and counseling teachers, and teenage mothers in West Pokot County, Kenya. The research used a descriptive design and gathered quantitative data through questionnaires, while qualitative data was collected through interview schedules. The survey was employed to gather quantitative data from guidance and counseling teachers, and teen mother learners, while the interview schedule gathered qualitative data from principals. The supervisors and expert from Educational Planning and Management verified the credibility of data collection tools, while reliability was assessed through Cronbach alpha. Descriptive statistics helped to summarize sample characteristics like means, frequencies, and standard deviation, while inferential statistics determined relationships between independent and dependent variables (regression and correlation) using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The study established that parental perception had positive significant influence on retention of teen mothers. The study recommends that government should sensitize both school administrators and communities about re-entry policies and retention teen mother learners in schools. Lastly, the government and other supporting agencies should increase support for teen mothers to improve their retention in Secondary Schools in Kenya.

Key words: parental perception, Retention of teen mothers.

BACKGROUND TO STUDIES

The re-entry policy is implemented worldwide to ensure that learners who dropout of schools return to schools. The objective of the policy is to achieve inclusivity in education. However, the prevalence of teen motherhood continues to exclude teen mother learners from schools. Study conducted by Mays and Brevetti (2020) in USA found that re-entry policy was effective and efficient in returning mother learners in schools. However, the study conducted by Bettengowda et al. (2022) in Africa indicated that prevalence of teen motherhood and adolescent pregnancies were higher. The study further noted that in many African community teen marriages were rampant. According to Human Rights Watch (2018), African nations such as Gabon and Malawi had implemented policies and strategies known as "continuation" or re-entry policies to support pregnant teenagers in returning to school after giving birth. The study further observed that enforcement of laws and policies were effectiveness, and oversight of teen mothers' return to school was generally inadequate. Complicated re-entry procedures and strict readmission criteria in Namibia hinder teenage mothers from returning to and finishing their education.

In Tanzania, a student can be removed from school if they have violated moral standards. School authorities frequently view pregnancy as a violation. Girls face disciplinary actions like mandatory pregnancy tests and expulsion, leading to them dropping out. In certain societies and cultural groups, there is a common belief that allowing pregnant girls and teenage mothers to stay in school could lead to an acceptance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, absolve the girls of their mistakes, and promote more pregnancies among girls (Akwilapo, 2016).

A study conducted by UNICEF (1993) in Kenya discovered high prevalence of school dropout. The study further noted high drop out of teen girls from schools. This required urgent interventions by stakeholders in education to return teen mothers in schools. In 1994, Kenya introduced a re-entry policy to ensure that pregnant students and teenage mothers can return to school after giving birth. Following EFA and SDG commitments, the Kenyan government created additional rules and laws to enhance the re-entry policy, allowing pregnant girls and young mothers to resume their education with minimal interruption (GoK, 2013). The 2020 National Guidelines for school re-entry in Basic Education recently issued by Ministry of Education sought to improve upon the re-entry policy established in 1994. However, high prevalence of teen mothers in West Pokot County continues to threaten retention of this vulnerable group in schools. The statistics indicates that on average prevalence of teen motherhood rate stands at 165 per 1000 women aged 10-19 years in West Pokot County which is higher than National average of 88.5 per 1000 women 10-19 years (UNFPA, 2020). Thus, there was an urgent need of interventions to ensure that teen mother re-entry and retention in schools address inclusivity and avoid wastage of parents and government resources.

Theoretical framework

The Resiliency theory guided this study. Resilience is the capacity to adjust and recover from challenges, setbacks, disagreements, obstacles, and unfortunate events. Michael Rutter, Norman Garmezy, Emmy Werner, and Suniya Luthar (2012) are among the supporters of Resilience theory. The focus is on managing challenges rather than understanding the nature of hardships. According to Norman Garmezy (2018), resilience is the ability to bounce back and continue to adapt effectively following a challenging experience. Resilience theory offered a structure for examining a positive-focused method in comprehending child and adolescent growth and guiding intervention planning (Zimmerman & Brenner, 2010).

The research concentrated on the significant obstacles faced by pregnant students and teenage mothers when re-entering public high schools in West Pokot County, as well as how these girls successfully conquered them and remained in school until graduation. The affected girls had positive internal factors like self-efficacy and self-esteem. Resilience theory was relevant to this study at a time when teen pregnancy and parenthood continued to limit girls' retention for quality educational experiences and outcomes. Resilience theory therefore opened up new understanding of how teen mothers in West Pokot County can be retained in schools.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework depicts the study independent variables (re-entry strategies) and dependent variable (retention of teen mothers in schools). Creswell and Creswell (2018) point out that the conceptual framework illustrates the direct link between independent variables and dependent variable.

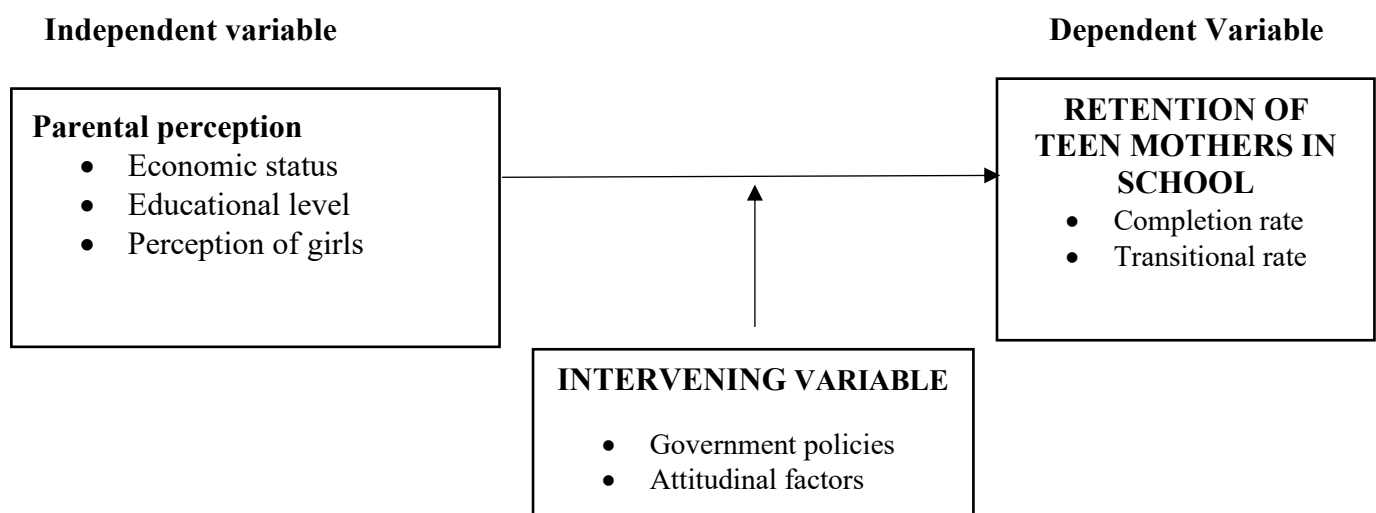


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Study conducted by Mays and Brevetti (2020) studied the traits of households impacting the enrollment and continued attendance of schools for teenage pregnant girls and teen mothers in the USA. The employed quantitative approach and researchers found strong positive connections between parental literacy levels, family income, career paths, and the ability for teen mothers to stay in school. Similar to Nabwire (2023) who found that parental occupation, educational and family size had positive significant effects on retention of teenage mother learners in schools in Uppsala. The researcher also discovered that educated parents monitored teenage mother learners' preps and organized remedial teaching improved transitional rate. The upcoming research took place in Kenya fill geographical gap, a developing nation where the majority of families live in extreme poverty, making it difficult to afford education.

Chinkondenji (2022) discovered that certain cultural beliefs, like young marriages and the acceptance of polygamy, hindered teenage mothers from going back to school to stay in school in Malawi. The present research aimed to investigate how parental traits impact the ability of adolescent mothers to stay in school in West Pokot County, Kenya. The study by Kirui (2023) found that parents rarely checked books or academic progress of their daughters Kericho county in Kenya. The researcher also discovered that parents were not aware of re-entry policy of teenage mothers in. Some arguments were echoed by Miriti and Mutua (2019) who discovered that lack of parental supervision led to both teen pregnancies and school dropouts. The research also found that parents completely neglected their children and did not supervise them. Both studies employed quantitative approach to carry out their studies. The current study attempted to fill both geographical and methodological gaps by adopting mixed research design in examining parental perceptions and seeking of other financial support in retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot in Kenya.

The study conducted by Ihoro, Piliyesi and Wambiya (2024) found that parents inspired teenage mothers to return to school after delivery to continue learning until completion in Bungoma County in Kenya. The study further discovered that parents with endowed resources were able to cater for the needs of teenage mothers. Concurred with Mutua, Miriti and Mogeni (2019) found that majority of parents motivated teen mothers to return to schools after delivery. The studies only relied on school principals as respondents. The current study aimed to fill methodological gaps by including teenage mothers, guidance and counselling teachers and principals as respondents.

The study conducted by Okondo (2022) discovered that majority of parents did not motivate their daughters to return to school in Bondo Sub County. The study employed qualitative approach and 15 teenage mother learners participated in the study. Halima (2021) argued that majority of parents had no arrangements for remedial teaching in Mombasa City in Kenya. However, Wanjiru (2019) found that parents played vital roles in deciding whether teenage mothers return and complete their education in secondary schools in Kenya. The researcher also established that a stable home environment, emotional encouragement and financial ability were more likely to keep teenage mothers in schools. The researcher also discovered that the support provided by parents contributed to self-esteem and transitional rate. The study filled methodology void by adopting both qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate parental roles on retention teen mothers in West Pokot County.

Study conducted by Ndanu and Mberia (2020) found that many teenage mothers face financial barrier that discouraged retention in Machakosi County in Kenya. The study further found that parents provided school fees, transport, personal care, baby care assistance that contributed teenage retention in schools. Wanjala and Maiyo (2019) argued that parental endowed with resources were able to pay for their children school fees promptly in Busia County in Kenya. The study further revealed regular attendance of classes by students improved their score in examination. Similar sentiments were deduced by Naliaka and Maiyo (2019) who discovered that parents endowed resources and occupations were more likely to retain their children in schools in Kakamega South Sub County. The study filled geographical void by considering parental roles on retention teen mothers in West Pokot County.

Study conducted by Keengwe and Ogutu (2024) explored parental self-efficacy skills, wellbeing of Kenyan teenage mothers in Kenya. The study employed qualitative approach and teenage mothers participated in the study. The study found that burden of taking of babies were left on teenage mothers' girls that discouraged

retention of teen mothers in schools. concurred with those of Odhiambo (2022) who discovered that majority of educated parents in Kisumu City organized for remedial classes for their daughters, the remedial classes improved mastery of contents. Also, Mutua, Muthoni and Njoroge (2021) found that mothers and grandmothers helped in caring for the baby, the teen mothers could concentrate on education in Kibra slum. The study further discovered that shared responsibility reduced the emotional and physical burden on young mothers, improving class attendance and transitional rate.

The study conducted by Lagat (2020) discovered that parents majority of parents were not aware of teenage re-entry to schools. The researcher established that adolescent child outside marriage were condemned. discovered that parents had no arrangements for remedial teaching for teenage mother learners in Nandi County in Kenya. Wekesa (2020) argued that patriarchal communities or parents were more likely marry off their daughters after pregnancy rather than support their return to schools. the study further discovered that patriarchal communities attached low premium to their education. Korir (2020) discovered that majority parents were not willing to pay fees their adolescent mothers.

The study conducted by Njuguna (2022) examined effects of family size on retentions of children in schools in Murang'a County. The study employed qualitative approach and both teachers and teen mothers participated in study. The study found that parents with many children were unable to pay fees of children. The researcher also established majority of preferred to pay fees of their son first. Barasa and Maiyo (2019) argued that family size only affected burden of education expenditure but not interest in daughters' education in Kiminini Sub County. The current study aimed to fill geographical gaps considering family size on retentions of children in schools in West Pokot County in Kenya.

Study conducted by Kapleen (2021) examined factors that influence accessibility to primary Education in Turkana and West Pokot Counties. The study found that high prevalence of poverty among households derailed access to education. The current study attempted to fill geographical void by examining parental perceptions and seeking of other financial support in retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County in North Rift, Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

The research utilized a descriptive study design that gathers data at a specific moment in time. Splendor and Chikeme (2020) suggested that a descriptive survey design offers information on the current state of phenomena or relationships between phenomena at a specific moment in time. The research employed both qualitative and quantitative data to address both what and why aspects of the study.

Study Population

Jeovany et al. (2014) observe that target population consists of individuals or objects with common distinguishable characteristics about which study intends to draw conclusions. In this study the target population consisted of the 105 school Principals, 107 teachers of guiding & counseling) and 993 teen mothers who were learners from 105 public secondary schools (80 mixed and 25 girls) in West Pokot County. The researcher perceived that school principals were in charge of schools and thus they were deemed to provide vital information regarding re-entry and retention of teen mothers.

The researcher included guidance and counselling teachers in the study since they had access to confidential about teenage mothers. Adole (2023) teenage mother learners shared their traumatic experiences with guidance and counselling teachers. All schools in the study had a teacher in charge of guidance and counselling. Lastly, researcher aimed to get accurate information about re-entry strategies and retention of teen mothers in schools. Teen mothers were included in the study to yield insight on retention in schools.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a portion of the target population. For the sample to be consistent in estimating population

parameters, it must be sufficient and representative of target population. Cresswell and Cresswell (2018) observe that a well selected sample provides accurate understanding of population parameters. A representative sample enables a researcher to accurately estimate population parameters. The researcher chose a sample that represented the specific group of people.

The researcher utilized stratified sampling to place elements in strata of principals, guidance and counselling teachers and teen mothers. Stratified sampling enabled researcher to infer to specific group of target population. Simple random sampling was employed to select elements from strata of teen mother and principal. Simple Sampling technique is suitable where the population or stratum is uniform. The technique was justified since it accorded all elements equal chances of appearing in the study sample.

The purposive sampling method was used to choose 107 guidance and counselling teachers. The researcher perceived that guidance and counselling teachers were custodian of pertinent information on teen mother learners. The overall numbers of participants were 449 individuals, amounting to 37% of the total 1205 respondents in 105 public secondary schools (80 mixed and 25 girls) in West Pokot County. The study sample size composed of 11 school Principals, 107 guidance and counselling teachers and 331 teen mothers. Mugenda (2003) stated that a sample proportion of 10-50% of the target population is an appropriate representation for any target population less than 10,000. The distribution of respondents was as follows in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Sample Size of the Study

Participants	Target Population (N)	Sample Size (n)	Sample Proportion	Sampling Technique
School Principals	105	11	10%	Simple Random
Teachers (G&C)	107	107	100%	Purposive
Teen Mothers	993	331	30%	Simple Random
Total	1205	449	37%	

Source: West Pokot County Education Office, 2025

Instruments for data collection

The tools for data collection consisted of a structured questionnaire and an interview schedule. The aforementioned tools allowed a quicker collection of both qualitative and quantitative data with more precision. Two different instruments were utilized to gather data in order to supplement each other. Ntisa (2015) stated that researchers have a range of measuring instruments to choose from, allowing them to select the one that suits the study's characteristics and needs the most. The study also employed document analysis such as class registers and transitional (promotional) documents to compute transitional rate.

Pilot Study

Pilot study is the prior study run before the main study. Creswell and Creswell (2018) observe that pilot study is done to review the logistics and feasibility of a more in-depth study to be done in future. Prior to data collection, a questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure clarity and content validity. Thus, testing the instruments with respondents with similar characteristics as the target population was important in ensuring the tools measured what they ought to. A pre- test sample of between 1% and 10% is considered sufficient (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The study distributed 28 questionnaires for pilot study among respondents in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The results of pilot study created insight on time and adjustment requirements before proceeding to main study. The Cronbach alpha was computed for study variables to measure reliability.

Validity

It is the ability of research tool to measure accurately what it intends to measure. If the tool is fault, it will lead into wrong measurement and fault conclusion and generalization. The study ensured construct validity, content,

face and criterion validity. The researcher ensured construct validity by using correct concepts to operationalized variables. Orodho (2019) suggested wide literature review to address construct validity.

The content validity is the ability of research tool to measure adequately a given construct (variable) in a study. The researcher gave questionnaires and interview schedule to the lecturers from Educational Planning and Management Department of Kibabii University to analyze. They were asked to provide feedback on how well each question measures the construct in question. Lastly, face validity involves a preliminary evaluation whether a research tool appear to be appropriate in measuring variables in terms of arranging of questions. The researcher used supervisors and lecturers from EPM department of Kibabii University to check content and face validity.

Reliability

Reliability is the ability of research instrument to give consistent results on repeated use. The study used short statements in questionnaires to ensure reliability of research findings. This minimized respondents' confusion. The study gave questionnaire and interview schedule to supervisors and experts from EPM to assess questions. The comments from experts were used to review data collection instruments. The study employed Cronbach alpha Coefficient to measure internal consistency of reliability of variables of study from a single test. Bonett and Wright (2014) observe that Cronbach alpha's reliability is widely used to measure reliability in the social and organization sciences with likert rating questions. The rule of the thumb is that $\alpha = 0.7$ above is considered reliable. All research variables yielded Cronbach alphas above 0.7 the threshold. It implied that the variables were adequate for the study.

Data Analysis

The study generated both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was analyzed by both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with aid of Statistical Package of Social Science. The descriptive statistics was employed to summarize sample characteristics (mean, standard deviation, frequency). The inferential statistics was employed to estimate relationship through testing of hypotheses. The regression and correlation were employed to test hypotheses at 0.05 (5%) significance level.

The quantitative data aimed to fit simple regression model

$$Y = \beta + \beta_1 X_n = 1,2,3,4. \text{ Representing study variables}$$

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

Instrument Return Rate

In this study, a total of 107 guidance and counselling teachers and 331 teenage mothers were sampled to participate in the study by filling the questionnaire and 11 principals supposed to be interviewed respectively. This comprised a total of 449 expected respondents. Table 4.1 reflects a summary of research instruments' return rate by various respondents in this study.

Table 4.1: Instrument Return Rate

Instruments	Sample size	Dispatched	Returned	Response Percentages
School Principals	11	11	7	63.6%
Teachers (G&C)	107	107	91	85.0%
Teen Mothers	331	331	227	68.6%
Total	449	449	325	72.4%

Information from Table 4.1 show that the study had distributed 438 questionnaires and interviews schedule to principals, teachers and teenage mothers out of which 325 (72.4 %) were returned. The study had planned to

interview 11 principals, but only 7 principals were interviewed making the response rate to be 63.6 %. 107 questionnaires were distributed to teachers, 91 questionnaires were returned making the response rate to be 85.0 %. 331 questionnaires were distributed to teenage mothers, 227 questionnaires were returned making the response rate to be 68.6 %. The overall return rate was 72.4 %. This return rate is considered adequate for the study. A response rate of 50% is considered sufficient, 60% is considered good, and 70% is considered extremely well, according to academics (Nulty, 2008).

Transitional rate of teen mother

The dependent variable of the study was retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County. The retention was also operationalized by transitional rate teen mother learners from one to form four from 2020 to 2023. The year 2023 had highest transitional rated of 20.6 % of teen mothers who did KCSE. However, the transitional rate is lower than MOE Projection of 100 %. The research suggested that transitional rate of teen mother learners in public secondary in West Pokot County was a serious concern that required concerted effort from all stakeholders in education and community in order to achieve 100%. Table 4.3. One of respondent (principal) felt that, “*The transitional of teen mother learners were lower than other learners in forms. The respondent further indicated teen mothers missed classes regularly resulted into involuntary repletion of classes.*”

The findings of the study are supported by Koech, Simiyu and Ndimu (2019) who found that majority of teenage mother learners experienced high absenteeism resulted into involuntary repetition of classes in public secondary schools Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. The researchers also established majority of teenage mother learners had repeated class involuntarily and their self-esteem was low due difficulties they facing schooling. The study further discovered that all schools had strategies in place to allow teen mothers return to schools which included guidance and counselling service to assist teen mother’s learner manage stigma and low esteem associated with teenage pregnancy. Kabiru et al. (2018) found that transitional rate of teen mother learners was lower that class average in public secondary schools in Nyahururu Sub County. The researchers suggested that schools’ program tailored to assist teen mothers adjust might increase retention mothers in schools in Kenya.

Table 4.3. Transitional rate of teen mothers in schools

Year	Form: 1-2 %	Form: 2-3 %	Form:3-4 %	Form: CSE%	Transitional rate %
2020	16.7	19.6	15	19.7	17.8
2021	15.7	21.6	17.8	22.4	19.4
2022	23.2	19.5	13.1	17.2	18.3
2023	20.7	15.3	21.9	24.3	20.6

Parental perception on retention of teen mothers in schools

The second objective of the current research was to examine parental perception on retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County. Responses were sought from teachers and teenage mothers.

Response from teachers on Parental perception on retention of teen mothers

This Section endeavored to analyze the extent to which teachers identified practices, the significance, direction and strength of the linear relationship between Parental perception on retention of teen mothers in schools and also testing of the hypothesis. The results of descriptive analysis were presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Response from teachers on Parental perception on retention of teen mothers in schools

Parent perception on completion of teen mothers	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
Parents provide needs for teen mothers	3	12	9	38	29	4.407	.623

retention in schools	3.2%	13.2%	9.9%	41.8%	31.9%		
Parents inspired teen mothers' retention in schools	7	2	13	29	40	3.615	.695
	7.7%	2.2%	14.3%	31.8%	44%		
Parents assist in taking of the babies	0	18	4	28	41	4.011	.865
	0.0%	19.8%	4.4%	30.8%	45%		
Parents monitor teen daughters' educational progress	13	37	8	21	12	2.802	1.321
	14.3%	40.7%	8.8%	23.1%	13.1%		
Parents organize remedial learning programs for retention in schools of teen mothers in schools	24	37	6	16	8	2.418	.982
	26.4%	40.7%	6.6%	17.5%	8.8%		
Parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mother's completion of education schools	4	13	8	43	23	3.747	.568
	4.4%	14.3%	8.8%	47.3%	25.2%		
	11%	14.3%	12.1%	30.7%	31.9%		
The size family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools	7	33	9	25	17	3.131	1.021
	7.7%	36.2%	9.9%	27.5%	18.7%		

Table 4.2 showed that more than half of the teachers (73.7 %) agreed or strongly agreed that Parents provide needs for teen mothers retention in schools. 38 (41.8 %) teachers agreed and 29 (31.9 %) strongly agreed. While 16.4% strongly disagreed or disagreed that Parents provide needs for teen mothers retention in schools. 12 (13.2%) teachers disagreed and 3 (3.2%) strongly disagreed. The mean of 4.407 implies agreement. The study observes that Parents provide needs for teen mothers' retention in public secondary schools in West Pokot County. The findings of the study are supported by those of Miriti and Mutua (2019) who found that Parents provide needs for teen mothers' retention in schools in Nzambani Ward, Kitui County, Kenya. Mays and Brevetti (2020) found that there are strong positive connections between parental characteristics such as literacy levels, family income, career paths, and the ability for teen mothers to stay in school in USA. However, Ethuro and Rutto (2023) found that more 60 % of teen mothers in secondary schools Turkana County depended on Constituency Development Fund for payment of their children fees.

Three quarters of the teachers (75.8%) strongly agreed or agreed that parents assist in taking care of the babies. 40 (44%) teachers strongly agreed and 29 (31.8 %) agreed. While (9.9%) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed. 7 (7.7%) of teachers strongly disagreed and 2 (2.2%) disagreed. The mean of 3.515 implies agreement. The study observes that Parents assist in taking of the babies; this enhances teenage mother's retention. The findings of the study are supported by those of Kapleen (2021) who found that parents assist in taking care of the babies of teen mothers to access Primary Education in Turkana and West Pokot Counties. Muraya (2023) discovered that some mothers and caregivers helped teenage mothers with breastfeeding and encouraged girls to go back to school, while most teen mother students had to balance schoolwork and motherhood, affecting their learning.

A majority of the teachers (55%) strongly disagreed or disagreed that parents monitor teen daughters' educational progress. 13 (14.3 %) teachers strongly disagreed and 37 (40.7 %) disagreed. While (36.2%) teachers strongly agreed or agreed. 21 (23.1 %) teachers agreed and 12 (13.1%) strongly agreed. The mean 2.802 on a likert scale of 1-5 implies disagreement. The study observes that parents do not keenly monitor teen daughters' educational progress. Makokha and Maiyo (2020) found that many parents and guardians do not monitor their children educational progress in Mt Elgon Sub County. However, Lagat and Makatian (2020) found that close monitoring of teen mothers' education by teachers improved their performance significantly in Uasin Gishu County. Nabwire (2023)

A majority of the teachers also (67.1 %) strongly disagreed or disagreed that parents organize remedial learning

programs for retention in schools of teen mothers in schools: 24 (26.4 %) teachers strongly disagreed and 37 (40.7 %) teachers disagreed. While (26.3%) strongly agreed or agreed. 16(17.5%) of teachers agreed and 8(8.8) strongly agreed. The mean of 2.418 implies disagreements. The study indicates that Parents did not organize remedial learning programs contributing to less retention in schools of teen mothers in schools. The findings the study are supported by those of Miriti and Mutua (2019) who discovered that lack of parental supervision led to both teen pregnancies and school dropouts in Nzambani Ward, Kitui County, Kenya. The research also found that parents completely neglected their children and did not supervise them. This means that the traits of the parents play a crucial role in supporting teenage mother students in schools. Wekesa (2020) found that patriarchal communities or parents were less support their daughters return to schools in Kajiado County in Kenya. The study further discovered that patriarchal communities attached low premier to their daughter's education.

Over half of the teachers (72.5 %) strongly agreed or agreed that parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mother's completion of education schools: 23 (25.2 %) teachers strongly agreed and 43 (47.3 %) teachers agreed. while (18.7%) of teachers disagreed or strongly agreed that parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mother's completion of education schools. 4(4.4%) of teachers strongly disagreed and 13(14.3%) disagreed. The mean of 3.747 implies agreement. The study observes that Parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mother's completion of education schools. Chinkondenji (2022) discovered that adolescent mothers were more likely to stay in school if their parents or guardians were educated and supportive. The research also showed that educated parents had positive attitude on retention teen mothers in school. They provided materials necessary accommodated their daughters boarding

A majority of the teachers (62.6%) strongly agreed or agreed that parents' occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. 29(31.9 %) teachers strongly agreed and 28 (30.8 %) teachers agreed. While (25.3%) of teachers disagreed or strongly agreed. 10(11%) of teachers strongly agreed and 13(14.3%) disagreed. The mean of 3.582 implies agreement. The study observes that parents' occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. The findings of the study are supported by those of Mays and Brevetti (2020) who found that there were strong connections between parental occupation, income level and family size on retention of teen mothers in schools in Texas, United States of America. Korir (2020) The study further discovered positive insignificant relationship between parental resources and transition of adolescent mothers in Narok County in Kenya.

Less than half of the teachers (46.2 %) strongly agreed or agreed that the size family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools. 25(27.5%) teachers strongly agreed and 17 (18.7%) agreed. While (33.9%) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed. The mean of 3.131 implies agreement. The study observes that the size family influence on retention completion of education of teen mothers in public secondary schools is not. Kemei (2019) found that majority of households in West Pokot County had an average of 6-7 children. The study further indicated that majority of those households were unable to pay fees and provide general provisions of households. Nabwire (2023) found that parental occupation, educational and family size had positive significant effects on retention of teenage mother learners in schools in Uppsala. Njuguna (2022) found that majority of parents with many children were unable to pay fees of children in schools in Murang'a County. The researcher also established majority of preferred to pay fees of their son first.

One of the respondents {principal} felt that, *“Parents of teen mothers were vital in deciding whether to bring their daughters to schools or not. The initial cost of buying uniform and other basics were responsibility of parents”*.

Another respondent felt that, *“Majority of parent were not aware of return to school policy for teen mothers and dropout learner. The chiefs are supposed to create aware through barazas' and social gatherings.”*

Another respondent felt that, *“That majority of parents lacked means to pay fees for their daughters. the major barrier for low return to schools is lack resources and CDF was inadequate to pay fees”*.

The findings of the study are supported by those of Kapleen (2021) who found that parents made vital decisions whether to return teen mothers to schools or not, they helped in taking care of the babies of teen mothers to

access Primary Education in Turkana and West Pokot Counties. Muraya (2023) discovered that some mothers and caregivers helped teenage mothers with breastfeeding and encouraged girls to go back to school, while most teen mother students had to balance schoolwork and motherhood, affecting their learning.

Response from teenage mothers on parental perception on retention

This Section endeavored to analyze the extent to which teen mothers identified practices, the significance, direction and strength of the linear relationship between school preparedness and retention of teen mothers and also testing of the hypothesis. The results of descriptive analysis were presented in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Response from teenage mothers on parental perception on retention of teen mothers in schools

Parent perception on completion of teen mothers	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
I was encouraged by my parents to go back to school	34	37	19	76	61	4.410	.561
	15%	16.3%	8.3%	33.5%	26.9%		
Parents inspired to work hard to complete education	38	28	13	87	61	4.463	.635
	16.7%	12.3%	5.7%	38.4%	26.9%		
Parents assist in taking of the babies	0	53	16	91	67	4.758	.854
	0.0%	23.3%	7.0%	40.2%	29.5%		
Parents perceive that daughter education important for empowerment	20	67	31	67	42	3.194	.961
	8.8%	29.5%	13.7%	29.5%	18.5%		
Parents organize remedial learning programs at home to enhance retention of teen mothers in school	92	68	23	39	5	2.106	.92
	40.5%	30.0%	10.1%	17.2%	2.2%		40.5%
Parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mothers completion of education schools	24	94	21	49	39	2.934	1.632
	10.6%	41.4%	9.3%	21.6%	17.1%		
Parents occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools	29	38	34	65	61	3.401	1.234
	12.8%	16.7%	15.0%	28.6%	26.9%		
The size family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools	48	73	21	38	47	2.837	1.023
	21.1%	32.2%	9.3%	16.7%	20.7%		

Table 4.3 showed that more than half of the teenage mothers (60.4 %) agreed that they were encouraged by their Parents to go back to school. 61 (26.9 %) teenage mothers strongly agreed and 76 (33.5 %) agreed. While (31.3%) of teen mothers strongly disagreed or disagreed. 34 (15 %) teenage mothers strongly disagreed and 37(16.3%) disagreed. The mean of 4.410 on a likert scale 1-5 implies agreement. The study observes that the teenage mothers are encouraged by their parents to go back to school. The findings of study are supported by those of Ihoro, Piliyesi and Wambiya (2024) who found that parents inspired teenage mothers to return to school after delivery to continue learning until completion in Kajiado County. Similar arguments were echoed by Onyango (2021) who found that parents played a key role in retention of teen mothers in Siaya County. However, Andiemba (2020) observed that less than 20% of teen mothers access secondary education in West Pokot County.

A majority of the teenage mothers (65.3%) agreed that Parents inspired to work hard to complete education. 61 (26.9%) teenage mothers strongly agreed and 87 (38.4%) agreed. While (29%) teenage mothers disagreed or

strongly disagreed. 38(16.7%) of teen mothers strongly disagreed and 28(12.3%) disagreed. The mean of 4.463 on a likert scale 1-5 implies agreement. The study observes that Parents inspired teenage mothers to work hard to complete education. Miriti and Mutua (2019) observed that parents motivated teen mothers to return to schools after delivery.

A majority of the teenage mothers (69.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that Parents assist in taking of the babies. 67(29.5%) teenage mothers strongly agreed and 91 (40.1%) agreed. While (23.3%) teenage mothers disagreed, Parents assist in taking of the babies. The mean of 4.758 on a likert scale 1-5 implies agreement. The study suggests that Parents assist the teenage mothers in taking of the babies. Wafula and Maiyo (2018) observed that parents provided moral support for teen mothers to return to schools in Kabuchai, Bungoma County.

The findings of the study indicate that (48.0%) of teenage mothers agreed that parents perceive that daughter education important for empowerment. 42(18.5%) teenage mothers strongly agreed and 67(29.5%) agreed. The study suggests that parents perceive that daughter education important for empowerment. While (38.3%) teenage mothers disagreed or strongly disagreed parents perceive that daughter education important for empowerment. The mean of 3.194 on a likert scale 1-5 implies not sure. The study is not sure with parents' perception that daughter education important for empowerment. Mays and Brevetti (2020) observes that parental characteristics including literacy level, income, occupation and status in community played significant role for teen mothers' retention in schools in Texas, USA.

The findings of the study indicate that teenage mothers strongly disagreed or disagreed (70.5%) that Parents organize remedial learning programs at home to enhance retention of teen mothers in school. 92 (40.5%) teenage mothers strongly disagreed and 68 (30.0%) disagreed. While (19.4%) teen mothers strongly agreed or agreed that Parents do not organize remedial learning programs at home to enhance retention of teen mothers in school. 39(17.2%) teen mothers agreed and 5(2.2%) strongly agreed. The mean of 2.106 on likert scale of 1-5 implies disagreement. The study observes that Parents do not organize remedial learning programs at home to enhance retention of teen mothers in school. Sifuna and Rutto (2020) observed that parents assisted special learners to complete assignment. The study revealed that parental literacy contributed to learner's retention on schools.

More than half of the teenage mothers strongly disagreed or disagreed (52%) that Parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mother's completion of education schools. 24 (10.6%) teenage mothers strongly disagreed and 94 (41.4%) disagreed. While (38.7%) of teen mothers agreed or strongly agreed. 49 (21.6%) of teen mothers agreed and 39(17.1%) strongly agreed. The mean of 2.934 on a likert of 1-5 implies disagreement. The study observes that parent endowed with resources do not enhance teen mother's completion of education schools. Olekida (2016) found that many teen mothers in Kajiado county were sponsored by non-governmental organization to access secondary and tertiary education. The further indicated parental resources played little influence for teen mother retention in schools Kajiado county.

The teenage mothers (55.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that parents' occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. 61 (26.9 %) teenage mothers strongly agreed and 65 (28.6%) teenage mothers agreed. While (29.5%) teen mothers strongly disagreed or agreed. 29(12.8%) strongly disagreed and 38(16.7%) disagreed. The mean of 3.401 on likert scale of 1-5 implies not sure. The study is not influence of parents' occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. The findings study of the study are supported by those of Kariuki and Khatete (2020) who those parental characteristics (occupation, job status and level of education) and retention of their children in schools in Gatundu Sub County. Mutua, Muthoni and Njoroge (2021) found that mothers or ground mothers helped in caring for the baby, the teen mothers could concentrate on education in Kibra slum.

More than half of teenage mothers strongly disagreed or disagreed (53.3 %) that the size family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools. 48 (21.1 %) teenage mothers strongly disagreed and 73 (32.2 %) disagreed. While (37.4%) of teen mothers strongly agreed or agreed that the size family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools. 38 (16.7%) of teen mothers agreed and 47(20.7%) strongly agreed. The study observes that the size of the family did not

influence access to resources hence did not enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools. Wanjiru (2019) found that parents played vital roles in deciding whether teenage mothers return and complete their education. The study further established that a stable home environment, emotional encouragement and financial ability were more likely to keep teenage mothers in schools. in Kenya. Ndanu and Mberia (2020) found that family size less significant on retention mothers in Machakosi County in Kenya. The study further found that parents provided school fees, transport, personal care, baby care assistance that contributed teenage retention in schools.

Hypothesis testing and model of Parent perception on retention of teen mothers

The research is endeavored to test the hypothesis on whether a significant relationship between Parent perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County existed. The null hypothesis was stated as:

H0₂: There are no statistically significant effects between parental perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County.

A Simple Linear regression check was done. The findings were presented in a model summary in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Model Summary for effects of Parent perception on retention of teen mothers

Model Summary					
Model	R	R- Square	Adjusted R- Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	p-value
1	.632 ^a	.399	.325	.8542	.001
a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent perception					
b. Dependent Variable: retention on teen mothers					

The R value was 0.632 represents the simple correlation. It indicated a relatively strong degree of correlation. The adjusted R Square value of 0.399 indicated how much of the dependent variable, “retention on teen mothers”, could be explained by school preparedness. In this case 39.9 % of retention on teen mothers’ variability could be explained to be as a result of parent perception. The R square and adjusted R squared had minimal difference, implying that parent perception predicated retention on teen mothers. That meant that 60.1% of the variation in retention on teen mothers could not be explained by the parent perception. To check how well the sample data fitted in the regression model, F value was obtained. The model summary of ANOVA was shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Goodness of Fit Summary for Parent perception on retention of teen mothers

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
1	Regression	2.5624	1	9.325	7.365	.000 ^a			
	Residual	130.652	323	1.236					
	Total	133.2144	324						
a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent perception									
b. Dependent Variable: retention on teen mothers									

Table 4.6 showed that parent perception helped to explain variation on retention on teen mothers. This was demonstrated by F value $F(1, 323) = 7.365$, $p < .001$ indicating that the model was justifiable for the regression equation. Accordingly, R^2 which was 39.9% was significant. A simple regression check was done to examine the effect of parent perception on retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County, Kenya. This was shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Simple Regression on Parent perception on retention of teen mothers

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	.965	.256	.865	2.265	.000
	school preparedness	.213	.152	.201	2.325	.003
a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent perception						
b. Dependent Variable: retention on teen mothers						

Table 4.7 shows that Parent perception had positive significant influence on retention on teen mothers. This was demonstrated by the (p value $< .05$). As a result, the null hypothesis which stated that: “There are no statistically significant effects between parental perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County, Kenya.” was reject. The results also showed that the coefficient of Parent perception on retention of teen mothers was positive (.213) which implied that, the slope “a” is statistically significant. The intercept of the regression line was: $Y = 0.965 + 0.213X$ meaning that when parent perception increased by 1 unit, retention on teen mothers increased by 0.213. The standardized beta value of 0.201 shows the improvement of Parent perception by 1% would cause an improvement in teen mothers by 20.1%. This meant generally that Parent perception resulted to positive retention on teen mothers. The regression finding of this research indicated that insignificant relationship between Parent perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County, Kenya existed.

The findings of the study are supported by those Mays and Brevetti (2020) who found those strong positive correlations between parental literacy levels, family income, career paths, and the ability for teen mothers to stay in school in USA. The study noted that parental perception determined teen mother learners’ completion of high schools.

Chinkondenji (2022) found that adolescent mothers were more likely to stay in school if their parents or guardians were educated and supportive in Malawi. The study further showed that certain cultural beliefs, like young marriages and the acceptance of polygamy, hindered teenage mothers from going back to school. Miriti and Mutua (2019) found that Parents provide needs for teen mothers’ retention in schools in Nzambani Ward, Kitui County, Kenya. The study further revealed that most parents depended on Constituency Development Fund for payment of their children fees.

Wanjiru (2019) found that parents played vital roles in deciding whether teenage mothers return and complete their education. The study further established that a stable home environment, emotional encouragement and financial ability were more likely to keep teenage mothers in schools. The researcher also discovered that the support provided by parents contributed to self-esteem and transitional rate.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study employed descriptive statistics to find the means of Parental perception on retention of teen mothers in public secondary schools in West Pokot County. The study observed that teachers agreed that parents provide for needs for teen mothers, Parents inspired teen mothers’ retention in schools, Parents assist in taking care of the babies, Parent endowed with resources enhanced teen mothers’ completion of education schools and Parents occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. However, teachers disagreed that Parents monitor teen daughters’ educational progress, Parents organize remedial learning programs for retention in schools of teen mothers in schools and the size of family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools.

The study observed that teen mothers agreed that parents encouraged teen mothers to return to schools, Parents inspired them to work hard to complete education, Parents assist in taking care of the babies and Parents occupation improved completion of education of teen mothers in schools. However, teen mothers disagreed that Parents perceive that daughter education was important for empowerment, parents organize remedial learning programs at home to enhance retention of teen mothers in school and the size of family influenced access to resources to enhance completion of education of teen mothers in schools. The study adopted alternate hypothesis that there were positive statistically significant effects between parental perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County. It implies that parental perception has significant variation on retention of teen mothers in West Pokot County.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there were positive statistically significant effects between parental perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County. The study concludes that parental perception has significant variation on retention of teen mothers in public secondary schools in West Pokot County.

Recommendation

The study recommends that community should embrace positive perception regarding girl child education especially teen mothers. The study recommends positive perceptions that may spur re-entry and retention of teen mothers in public secondary schools in Kenya.

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