INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL SUPPORT ON EDUCATION OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN BUMULA SUB-COUNTY, BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA

JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA

1065348

A Thesis submitted to the Department of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty of Education, in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration and Planning

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

NAIROBI, KENYA

SEPTEMBER 2026

DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original academic work. It has not been submitted to any institution of learning for the conferral of academic credit. All the sources I have used here are appropriately acknowledged.

Signature: ..... Date: 25/9/2026

JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA

Reg No. 1065348

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the duly appointed University Supervisors.

Prof. Peter Koros

Dean and Professor, Economics of Education and Planning.

Faculty of Education

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Signature: ..... Date: 25/09/2026

Dr. Madeleine Sophie Barat.

Lecturer, Educational Administration and Planning.

Faculty of Education

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa



Signature: ..... Date: 25/09/2026.

ii

DEDICATION

I earnestly dedicate this work to my dear parents, the late Mr. Felix Wesonga Sudi and Mrs. Margret Nabangala Wesonga and the teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-county, Bungoma County, Kenya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the Almighty God for giving me strength, courage, good health and the gift of wisdom throughout this academic journey. My sincere and heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors, Prof. Peter Koros and Sr. Dr. Madeleine Sophie Barat, for their professional guidance, exceptional insights and unstinting support, which have greatly encouraged me in this work. The Catholic University of Eastern Africa has offered a very supportive environment for my learning, research and intellectual development, for which I am most grateful. I am profoundly thankful to the Catholic Diocese of Bungoma, through the Rt. Rev. Bishop Mark Kadima Wamukoya, that has enabled me to accomplish my studies upto this stage. Additionally, to the Little Sisters of St. Francis, West of Rift Valley Region, whose love, prayers and encouragements have been my constant source of hope and strength throughout. Finally, I acknowledge all the participants in this study for their unwavering cooperation.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of parental support on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the study employed a concurrent mixed methods design combining a cross-sectional survey with a phenomenological qualitative strand. From a target population of 100 public junior schools, 145 respondents participated, including 70 re-admitted teenage mothers, 52 teachers, 10 heads of institutions, 11 religious leaders, 20 parents and guardians, and the Sub-County Director of Education. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, correlation, and regression; qualitative data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Descriptively, parental social support was the most highly reported dimension ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.66$), followed by emotional support ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.71$) and psychological support ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.77$), with logistical support the lowest ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.37$). Educational outcomes were reported at a high level ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.60$). On analysis of variance, the null hypotheses concerning psychological support, $F(1, 68) = 5.25$, $p = .025$, social support, $F(1, 68) = 5.26$, $p = .025$, and logistical support, $F(1, 68) = 17.59$, $p < .001$, were rejected, while the null hypothesis concerning emotional support failed to be rejected, $F(1, 68) = 2.34$, $p = .131$. In multiple regression accounting for 24.5% of the variance, only parental logistical support retained a statistically significant unique contribution ($\beta = .39$, $p = .001$). Qualitatively, seven themes emerged on challenges facing parents, led by household poverty and community stigma, with childcare supplied without payment by ageing grandmothers and aunts. Ninety per cent of heads of institutions reported that parents do not provide required stationery. All respondent categories converged on four strategies: school-linked childcare, financial relief, counselling and mentorship, and stronger enforcement and follow-up of national re-entry guidelines. The study concludes that parental support influences the education of teenage mothers, but its dimensions are not equivalent, and material provision, especially childcare, is the decisive dimension in this rural day-school setting. It recommends a targeted bursary and materials instrument, school-linked childcare provision, a named teacher-mentor for every re-admitted girl, mandatory quarterly returns of re-admitted learners, and community sensitization that engages grandmothers, fathers, and male elders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ii

DEDICATION ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

ABSTRACT v

TABLE OF CONTENTS vi

LIST OF TABLES xiii

LIST OF FIGURES xv

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS xvi

CHAPTER ONE 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background to the Study 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem 5

1.3 Research Questions 7

1.4 Research Hypotheses of the Study 8

1.5 Significance of the Study 8

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study 10

1.7 Theoretical Framework 10

1.7.1 The Ecological Systems Theory 11

1.7.2 Strengths of the Ecological Systems Theory 11

1.7.3 Weaknesses of the Ecological Systems Theory 12

1.7.4 Application of the Ecological Systems Theory 14

1.8 Conceptual Framework 18

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms 20

CHAPTER TWO 22

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 22

2.1 Introduction 22

2.2 Critical Review of Related Theories 22

2.2.1 Social Support Theory 23

2.2.2 Hierarchy of Needs Theory 24

2.3.1 Parental Psychological Support and Education of Teenage Mothers 26

2.3.2 Parental Social Support and Education of Teenage Mothers 28

2.3.3 Parental Logistical Support and Education of Teenage Mothers 29

2.3.4 Parental Emotional Support and Education of Teenage Mothers 31

2.3.5 Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers in School 33

2.3.6 Strategies to Enhance Parental Support for Education of Teenage Mothers ... 34

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gaps 35

CHAPTER THREE 37

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 37

3.1 Introduction 37

3.2 Research Design 37
3.3 Locale of the Study 38
3.4 Target Population 38
3.5 Description of Sample Size and Sampling Procedures 40
3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments 42
3.6.1 Questionnaires for Teachers and Teenage Mothers 43
3.6.2 Interview Guides for Heads of Institutions, the Sub-County Director of Education, Religious Leaders and Parents 44
3.6.3 Observation Guide and Focus Group Discussion Guide 44
3.7 Validity, Pilot Testing, Reliability and Trustworthiness of Research Instruments. 45
3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instruments 45
3.7.2 Pilot Testing of the Research Instruments 45
3.7.3 Reliability of the Quantitative Research Instruments 47
3.7.4 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Tools and Process 48
3.8 Description of Data Collection Procedures 51
3.9 Data Analysis Procedures 55
3.10 Ethical Considerations 60
CHAPTER FOUR 62
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS 62
4.1 Introduction 62

4.2 Instrument Return Rate 62

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents 63

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Teenage Mothers 64

4.3.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Teachers 67

4.3.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Heads of Institutions 69

4.4 Findings According to Research Questions 70

4.4.1 Parental Psychological Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers 70

4.4.2 Parental Social Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers 74

4.4.3 Parental Emotional Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers 78

4.4.4 Parental Logistical Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers 81

4.4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Parental Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers 86

4.4.6 Educational Outcomes of the Re-admitted Teenage Mothers 88

4.5 Testing of the Research Hypotheses 91

4.5.1 Testing of Hypothesis One: Parental Psychological Support 95

4.5.2 Testing of Hypothesis Two: Parental Social Support 98

4.5.3 Testing of Hypothesis Three: Parental Emotional Support 99

4.5.4 Testing of Hypothesis Four: Parental Logistical Support 102

4.5.5 Multiple Regression Analysis of the Four Dimensions 104

4.5.6 Sensitivity Analysis of the Logistical Support Composite 106

4.5.7 Summary of the Hypothesis-Testing Decisions 107
4.6 Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers 108
4.6.1 Household Poverty and Insufficient Income 109
4.6.2 Community Stigma and the Cultural Devaluation of the Girl 111
4.6.3 The Childcare Burden and the Ageing Caregiver 112
4.6.4 Time Poverty and Competing Livelihood Demands 113
4.6.5 Emotional Difficulty and the Absence of Parenting Skills 113
4.6.6 Weak School - Parent Cooperation and Unfulfilled Promises 115
4.6.7 Limited Knowledge of the Re-entry Policy and the School System 115
4.6.8 Challenges Experienced by the Teenage Mothers Themselves 116
4.7 Strategies for Enhancing Parental Support 117
4.7.1 Strategies Proposed by the Teenage Mothers 119
4.7.2 Strategies Proposed by the Teachers 119
4.7.3 Strategies Proposed by Key Informants 120
4.8 Integration of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings 123
4.8.1 Points of Convergence 124
4.8.2 Points of Complementarity 125
4.8.3 Points of Divergence 126
4.9 Chapter Summary 128
CHAPTER FIVE 130

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 130

5.1 Introduction 130

5.2 Summary of the Findings 130

5.2.1 Parental Psychological Support 130

5.2.2 Parental Social Support 131

5.2.3 Parental Emotional Support 131

5.2.4 Parental Logistical Support 132

5.2.5 Challenges Faced by Parents 132

5.2.6 Strategies for Enhancing Parental Support 132

5.3 Conclusions 133

5.4 Recommendations of the Study 135

5.4.4 Recommendation from Conclusion Four: Emotional Support Is Not Statistically Detectable but Qualitatively Consequential 138

5.4.5 Recommendation from Conclusion Five: Challenges Are of Capacity Rather Than Willingness 139

5.4.6 Recommendation from Conclusion Six: Stakeholder Consensus on Four Strategies 140

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research 140

REFERENCES 143

APPENDICES 149

Appendix I: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LETTER 149

Appendix I: Introduction Letter 150

Appendix II: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT 151

Appendix III: Ethics Review Permit 152

Appendix IV: Antiplagiarism Report 153

Appendix V: Introduction Letter 154

Appendix VII: Questionnaire for Teachers 155

Appendix VIII: Questionnaire for Teenage Mothers 157

Appendix IX: Interview Guide for Heads of Institutions 159

Appendix X: Interview Guide for the Sub-County Director of Education 160

Appendix XI: Interview Guide for Parents and Guardians 162

Appendix XII: Interview Guide for Religious Leaders 164

Appendix XIII: Map of the Study Area 166

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sampling Frame Matrix 36
Table 2: Response Rate by Category of Respondent 51
Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the Study Scales 53
Table 4: Demographic Characteristics of the Re-admitted Teenage Mothers (n = 70) 55
Table 5: Demographic Characteristics of the Teachers (n = 52) 59
Table 6: Demographic Characteristics of the Heads of Institutions (n = 10) 61
Table 7: Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Psychological Support (n = 70) 62
Table 8: Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Social Support (n = 70) 67
Table 9: Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Emotional Support (n = 70) 70
Table 10: Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Logistical Support (n = 70) 73
Table 11: Teachers' Responses on Parental Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers (n = 52) 79
Table 12: Teenage Mothers' Responses on Educational Outcomes (n = 70) 81
Table 13: Descriptive Statistics for the Composite Study Variables 83
Table 14: Pearson Correlations Among the Four Dimensions of Parental Support and Educational Outcomes (n = 70) 85
Table 15: Alignment of the Research Questions, Null Hypotheses, Variables and Statistical Tests 86
Table 16: Assumptions Underlying the Analysis of Variance and the Evidence Bearing on Each 87
Table 17: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Psychological Support (n = 70) 89
Table 18: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Social Support (n = 70) 91
Table 19: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Emotional Support (n = 70) 93
Table 20: One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Logistical Support (n = 70) 95
Table 21: Multiple Regression of Educational Outcomes on the Four Dimensions of Parental Support (n = 70) 98
Table 22: Sensitivity of the Logistical Support Finding to Three Scoring Rules (n = 70) 99
Table 23: Summary of the Analysis of Variance Results and the Decisions on the Null Hypotheses 101

Table 24: Themes on the Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers 103
Table 25: Themes on the Challenges Faced by Re-admitted Teenage Mothers.....110
Table 26: Strategies Proposed by Teachers and Teenage Mothers for Enhancing Support 112
Table 27: Joint Display of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings by Research Question 118

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework 14
Figure 2: Mean Scores on the Four Dimensions of Parental Support and on Educational Outcomes 82
Figure 3: Scatterplot of Parental Logistical Support and Educational Outcomes 86

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBC	Competency Based Curriculum
CBE	Competency Based Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HOI	Head of Institution
ISERC	Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee
KDHS	Kenya Demographic and Health Survey
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPSA	Parental Participation in School Activities
RL	Religious Leader
SCDE	Sub County Director of Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the deeply entrenched and multifaceted challenges to universal education globally is teenage pregnancy. Worldwide, adolescents aged 15 to 19 years in low- and middle-income countries have an estimated 21 million pregnancies each year, of which about half are unintended (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024). The impact on girls' education is dire: adolescent pregnancy is consistently linked to dropping out of school, lower lifetime earnings, intergenerational poverty, and adverse maternal and child wellbeing. Internationally, education systems have become increasingly aware of the need to provide inclusive education and support for pregnant learners and young mothers so that they remain in school. This is evident in countries such as the Netherlands, where teenage mothers report to school with their infants and leave them at day-care centres attached to the school compound.

Additionally, those from very needy families receive donations of sanitary items and clothing for themselves and their babies while at school. This enables them to access and check on their children as they attend to the daily school programme. International bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme(UNDP), through the United Nations(UN), spearheaded the declaration of the Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs), the fourth of which calls upon all member states to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Equally, Sustainable Development Goal 5 on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is closely related to this study, whose

findings, suggestions and recommendations may be helpful to teenage mothers in the pursuit of their future career aspirations. These goals highlight governments' responsibility to tackle the structural obstacles that hinder girls' education, whether in developed or in developing countries.

In South Korea, teenage mothers face intense social stigma and severe economic hardship, which makes parental and familial support crucial for their educational and economic survival. Because the burden of childcare often leads to dropping out, teenage mothers rely heavily on their own parents for childminding, financial assistance and emotional backing in order to continue their education or sit qualification examinations.

In high-income countries, alternative education, childcare allowances and parental leave policies have shown that institutional support can substantially reduce the risk of discontinued education when teenage girls become pregnant. Even with these developments, however, evidence from around the world suggests that even where the school environment is supportive, a poor family environment remains the most significant factor in whether a teenage mother continues in, or returns to school (UNESCO, 2021).

In sub-Saharan Africa, the situation of teenage pregnancy and its impact on education of adolescent girls is especially severe. Adolescent birth rates in the region remain the highest in the world, at 97.9 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 years compared with a global rate of 41.3 (WHO, 2024). Pregnancy-related school dropout is prevalent in the region, alongside deep-seated inequalities between girls and boys, early marriages, poverty and cultural attitudes that undervalue girls' education. While a number of re-entry policies are in place across Africa to enable teenage mothers to return to school after giving birth, implementation has been inconsistent and, in some cases, policies have

failed to take into account the family and community circumstances that make school attendance easy or difficult. Continental studies have shown that parental attitudes to education, socio-economic status, and emotional and social support within the family are the key factors determining the re-enrolment of adolescent mothers in Africa (Ajayi et al., 2023).

Research in Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania consistently finds that involving parents in supporting, encouraging and emotionally affirming their teenage daughters increases the likelihood of school continuation. However, where parents react to a pregnancy with shame, rejection or the withdrawal of material support, dropping out of school is virtually assured. The African evidence therefore makes parental support a key element of any credible strategy for improving the educational outcomes of adolescent mothers.

Teenage pregnancy remains one of the major causes of school dropout, especially for girls in rural communities and low-income urban settlements in Kenya. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey(KDHS), about 15% of girls aged 15 to 19 years have begun childbearing, down from 18% in 2014, with higher figures reported in the Rift Valley, Western, Nyanza and Coast regions (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS] & ICF, 2023). Social, economic and cultural factors contributing to this trend include poverty, limited access to sexual and reproductive health information, gender-based violence, peer pressure and changes in traditional protective family structures. In response, the Government of Kenya has progressively strengthened its policy on the education of teenage mothers. The National School Re-entry Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2020) provide for the re-enrolment of pregnant learners and teenage mothers in the same grade

and require schools to create stigma-free learning spaces, remedial support and linkages to health and child protection services. More recently, in January 2026, the Ministry of Education issued a National circular reinforcing and operationalising these guidelines and directing all Boards of management, school heads and education officials to implement re-enrolment as a non-negotiable administrative requirement.

Implementation challenges nevertheless persist, and parental support is a very important and easily underestimated factor in the success of teenage mothers' school re-entry and retention in Kenya. Studies in counties such as Narok, Nairobi, West Pokot, Kilifi and Machakos have confirmed that the family is the nearest and most powerful support system available to a teenage mother as she navigates the demands the responsibility of schooling and parenthood (Rotich, 2019; Marende, 2022; Mukabana et al., 2024).

An empirical study conducted in Kilifi County found that the socio-economic status of re-admitted teenage mothers and the availability of resources from their parents greatly influenced their participation in education-related activities (Murong'a et al., 2020). Parents with financial resources are better able to afford uniforms, transport and childcare services, which helps to remove the obstacles to re-engaging with school and makes consistent attendance possible. Field research in Kenya further indicates that parental involvement in school is crucial in supporting re-enrolment after childbirth. A study in Narok County showed that parental support was among the most significant factors relating to teenage mothers' re-enrolment rates under the re-entry policy framework (Marende, 2022). This highlights the significance of communication and parental involvement in school processes. Parental Participation in School Activities(PPSA) acts as a strong

motivator for re-enrolled teenage mothers as well as for teachers, Heads of institutions and other education stakeholders.

Bumula Sub-County in Bungoma County, Western Kenya, presents a demanding case for this research. It is pre-dominantly rural and dependent on subsistence agriculture, with high poverty rates, low levels of development and deeply entrenched patriarchal cultural norms that have historically limited girls' access to school and continuity in education. The sub-county lies within the Western Kenya region, which records among the highest rates of teenage pregnancy and early marriages in the country.

With the introduction of the Competency Based Curriculum and the creation of Public Junior Schools covering Grades 7 to 9, a new and critical educational transition has emerged in which teenage mothers are especially susceptible to dropping out. Many families in Bumula Sub-County lack the resources, awareness and emotional capacity to care for a teenage mother after childbirth, and they frequently face stigma in both family and school settings because of community attitudes and patriarchal norms.

In this context, parental support psychological, emotional, social, and logistical is a critical determinant of whether a teenage mother in Bumula can remain in school, attend regularly, and achieve academically (Ajayi et al., 2023; Gebrekristos et al., 2022; Morgan et al., 2023; Mukabana et al., 2024).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Magara (2018) indicates that the adoption of Competency Based Education (CBE) in Kenya has placed parents as active partners and important actors in their children's academic journey. The ideal is that all children, including those experiencing life changes such as adolescent pregnancy or early childbearing, should be able to access, remain in and

complete their formal basic education equitably, without barriers and with legal protection. In Kenya this principle is institutionally backed by the National School Re-entry Policy (Ministry of Education, 2020), which make it an administrative non-negotiable requirement for all Public Schools to re-admit and retain teenage mothers. Moreover, within the Competency Based Curriculum(CBC), parents are both legally and pedagogically positioned as the principal co-educators and structural pillars of support in their children's academic journey.

Yet the literature on the support structures available to teenage mothers has been sparse, with the majority of studies conducted in secondary schools or urban informal settlements, leaving the newly established Public Junior Schools covering Grades 7 to 9 unexamined. Moreover, previous studies have largely treated "parental support" as a uni-dimensional construct, with none dis-aggregating and separately measuring its logistical, psychological, emotional and social sub-dimensions or their respective predictive influences on actual educational outcomes such as attendance and retention.

This structural and literature gap is mirrored by a pressing social reality in Bumula Sub-County. Despite the National Re-entry requirements, Heads of institutions and classroom teachers report persistently high rates of chronic absenteeism and repeat dropout among re-admitted teenage mothers arising from the absence of sufficient logistical and psychological support. At the same time, sub-county education director and religious leaders report considerable concern about entrenched cultural norms, the practice of early marriage and widespread community stigma that systematically denies these teenage mothers a voice.

The teenage mothers themselves report severe financial pressure, loneliness, and emotional and psychological distress (Ajayi et al., 2023; Mukabana et al., 2024). They are caught between the two responsibilities of parenthood and education without childcare support, school uniforms, or fees from their families (Gebrekristos et al., 2022; Morgan et al., 2023). In this rural sub-county, parents and guardians also report being constrained by subsistence poverty and by a lack of the financial resources and information they need to protect their daughters from community ostracism (Mukabana et al., 2024; Oyedele et al., 2018). This shared problem threatens to make it impossible for these teenage mothers to pursue their further educational aspirations and to keep them within a cycle of intergenerational poverty. It is this problem that the present study set out to investigate.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

i. To what extent does parental logistical support influence education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
ii. How does parental psychological support influence education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
iii. How does parents' emotional support influence education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
iv. To what extent does parental social support influence education of teenage mothers in Public Junior Schools in Bumula Sub-County?
v. What challenges do parents face while supporting their teenage mothers during and after re-admission into Public Junior Schools in Bumula Sub-County?

vi. What strategies can Public Junior Schools put in place to enhance parental support for education of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County?

1.4 Research Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study at the .05 level of significance.

H_{01}: Parental psychological support has no statistically significant influence on the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

H_{02}: Parental social support has no statistically significant influence on the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

H_{03}: Parental emotional support has no statistically significant influence on the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

H_{04}: Parental logistical support has no statistically significant influence on the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for multiple stakeholders, including teenage mothers, parents and guardians, the Bumula community, policymakers and educators, non-governmental organizations, and scholars and researchers. Each stakeholder group stands to benefit from the findings in distinct ways.

Teenage mothers may be the first to benefit from this study through insights into how parental support can enhance their educational opportunities and enable them to pursue their future careers. The findings may also inform them of the specific forms of

support that are most strongly associated with educational success, thereby empowering them to advocate for their own needs.

Parents and guardians may gain a fuller understanding of their role in their daughters' academic continuation despite the numerous challenges they face. The findings may help them identify which forms of support are most effective and how they might allocate their limited resources to maximise their daughters' educational outcomes.

The Bumula community may gain insights that could positively impact attitudes towards teenage mothers and their education. The findings may contribute to reducing stigma and fostering a more supportive environment for re-admitted learners.

Policymakers and educators may use the findings to improve school re-entry policy and guidance and counselling programmes at primary, junior, and secondary school levels. The study's identification of logistical support as the decisive dimension of parental support may inform the design of targeted interventions, such as bursary instruments and school-linked childcare provision.

Non-governmental organizations and community self-help groups may use the findings to design better support systems for teenage mothers, for instance income-generating projects that help them become self-reliant and reduce dependency. The study's emphasis on capacity rather than willingness as the primary constraint on parental support may guide the design of more effective interventions.

Scholars and researchers in related fields may use the data and findings to add to the body of existing knowledge on gender, education, and youth development programmes in Kenya and beyond. The study's contribution to knowledge lies in its disaggregation of parental support into four measurable dimensions, its focus on the newly created public

junior schools, and its identification of logistical support as the only dimension with a statistically significant unique association with educational outcomes.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of a study defines its boundaries and extent, outlining what is and is not covered. This study focused on teenage mothers who were pursuing, or had resumed formal education in selected Public Junior Schools in Bumula Sub-County. It examined the different forms of parental support, namely psychological, emotional, social and logistical supports. It included the views of teenage mothers, their parents and guardians, teachers, Heads of institutions, religious leaders and the Sub-County Director of Education. It also considered advocacy and communication strategies and the setting of goals for the education of teenage mothers.

The study did not address support from peers such as the teenage fathers, who in most cases avoid taking responsibility for the pregnancies they have caused. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and religious were not included as respondents because their presence in the sub-county is not consistent. The findings are not generalizable to all sub-counties and counties in Kenya and beyond because of the geographical delimitation of the study. Finally, the study addressed current educational participation rather than long-term outcomes such as later career progression.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

A Theory is a set of interrelated constructs, concepts, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting that phenomenon (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). This study was guided by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, which

provided the primary theoretical lens for examining the influence of parental support on the education of teenage mothers in Public Junior Schools in Kenya.

1.7.1 The Ecological Systems Theory

According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979), Ecological Systems Theory, says that human development is the result of an ongoing process of interactions within a nested configuration of five concentric environmental systems, rather than the product of isolated psychological factors. Contemporary elaborations of the theory have retained this nested structure while extending it to account for the changing character of the proximal environments in which development now occurs (Navarro & Tudge, 2023).

1.7.2 Strengths of the Ecological Systems Theory

Within the microsystem, a strength of this theory is that the family, and parental support in particular, directly influences an individual's behaviour and development. For teenage mothers this translates into emotional support, financial assistance and childcare support from parents, which lead to increased attendance and improved performance in school. The theory is further strengthened by its holistic approach to multiple interacting systems, as opposed to the examination of a single factor. The ecological framing allows researchers to move beyond explanations at the individual level and to consider how structural factors such as poverty, culture and government policy interact with factors at the immediate family level. This is particularly useful in a setting such as Bumula Sub-County, where teenage mothers face challenges at several social levels. The theory also allows for reciprocity, in that the teenage mother is not only shaped by her context but also shapes it, which restores a sense of agency that purely structural theories lack. The model

further highlights the reciprocal effects of the family system on the adolescent mother and of her developing self-efficacy, values and coping strategies on the responses of the micro- and mesosystems. This framework enabled the study to consider institutional policies and intimate family relationships simultaneously.

1.7.3 Weaknesses of the Ecological Systems Theory

Despite its widespread application in developmental and educational research, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory has been subject to several substantive criticisms. The theory has been described as overly general and complex, making it difficult to apply effectively in empirical studies (Tudge et al., 2009). It identifies multiple environmental layers without making explicit which of these has a quantifiable impact on outcomes or which system should be given priority in a particular study (Christensen, 2016). As Neal and Neal (2013) observed, the theory's broad scope often leaves researchers without clear guidance on which variables to measure or how to operationalize the proposed systemic interactions. Although the theory helps to situate parental support within a wider context, it does not by itself explain how much parental support influences educational attainment.

A further criticism is that the theory may underplay individual agency, in this case, the personal determination and resilience of the teenage mothers themselves. Critics argue that Bronfenbrenner's framework places disproportionate emphasis on environmental factors at the expense of the individual's capacity to shape their own development (Lerner, 2005). This limitation is particularly relevant when studying teenage mothers, whose personal motivation and resilience have been identified as significant factors in their educational persistence (Groves et al., 2022). The theory's structure does not adequately

account for how individuals actively select, modify, and respond to their environments (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017).

The theory has also been noted to have been formulated within Western cultures and must be interpreted with care in sub-Saharan African contexts, where social structures, economic conditions, and cultural norms differ substantially (Kaplan & Owusu-Ansah, 2014). For example, the mesosystem linking family and school in Kenya is shaped by gendered power dynamics and economic constraints that the original formulation does not adequately address (Ngwaru, 2014). Oyedele et al. (2018) argued that the theory's individualistic orientation fails to capture the communal and interdependent nature of African family systems, where child-rearing responsibilities are often shared among extended family members and the broader community.

Additionally, the theory offers no concrete interventions, which limits its direct usefulness to policymakers and practitioners (Darling, 2007). While it effectively describes the nested systems that influence development, it does not specify how interventions should be designed or at which system level they should be targeted to achieve maximum impact. This limitation has been noted by researchers seeking to translate the theory into actionable educational and social programmes (Eriksson et al., 2018). The theory also presents methodological challenges for researchers. Its emphasis on reciprocal interactions and dynamic processes makes it difficult to capture in cross-sectional research designs (Tudge et al., 2016). The theory's call for examining process, person, context, and time in Bronfenbrenner's later work requires longitudinal data that are often impractical to collect, particularly in resource-constrained settings such as rural Kenya (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Furthermore, the theory's complexity makes it challenging to establish clear causal

relationships between specific environmental factors and developmental outcomes (Neal & Neal, 2013).

1.7.4 Application of the Ecological Systems Theory

In this study, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory was applied with parental support as the major microsystem factor directly affecting the educational outcomes of adolescent girls who have become mothers. As the first and most proximal source of influence, the family and the support it provides are central to the teenage mother's ability to cope with her new responsibilities and remain engaged with her education. However, the theoretical weaknesses identified in Section 1.7.3 were systematically addressed through five deliberate mitigation strategies to ensure that they did not negatively influence the findings of this study.

The first weakness, that the theory is overly general and complex and does not specify which system should be given priority in a particular study (Christensen, 2016; Tudge et al., 2009), was mitigated by explicitly delimiting the scope of the study to the microsystem, and within the microsystem, to the specific construct of parental support. While the theory identifies five nested systems and multiple interacting influences, this study did not attempt to measure all ecological levels simultaneously. Instead, it focused on a single, clearly defined independent variable, parental support, and decomposed it into four measurable and distinct sub-constructs: logistical support, psychological support, emotional support, and social support. This approach responds directly to the criticism that the theory fails to specify which elements should be prioritised in empirical research (Neal & Neal, 2013). By treating parental support as a discrete microsystemic variable and testing the predictive relationship of each dimension against educational outcomes, the study

avoided the analytical paralysis that can arise from attempting to capture the entire ecological system in a single investigation (Tudge et al., 2009). The exosystemic and macrosystemic factors, such as community poverty, stigma, and the national re-entry policy, were treated as contextual or intervening variables rather than as primary independent variables, and they were explored qualitatively to provide context rather than tested as primary predictors. This delimitation ensured that the statistical analysis remained focused and interpretable, and that the findings were not diluted by an overambitious attempt to measure every ecological layer.

The second weakness, that the theory underplays individual agency and the personal determination of the developing person (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Lerner, 2005), was mitigated by the deliberate incorporation of the concepts of self-efficacy and resilience into the interpretation of the findings. While Bronfenbrenner's framework emphasises the influence of environmental systems on development, it does not adequately account for how individuals actively select, modify, and respond to their environments (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017). To address this limitation, the study included measures of the teenage mothers' own motivation, participation, and expectation of completion within the dependent variable composite for educational outcomes. Furthermore, the discussion of the findings in Chapter Five draws on the concepts of self-efficacy and resilience (Bandura, 1997; Masten, 2014) to interpret how the personal attitude and determination of the teenage mother operate as internal factors that mediate or moderate the influence of parental support. For example, the finding that educational aspirations were high even among girls reporting severe material obstacles was interpreted through the lens of resilience, and the non-significant finding for emotional support was partly explained by reference to the girls'

own agency. This integration ensured that the teenage mothers were not portrayed as passive recipients of environmental influences but as active agents in their own educational journeys.

The third weakness, that the theory was formulated within Western cultures and may not adequately capture the communal and interdependent nature of African family systems (Kaplan & Owusu-Ansah, 2014; Ngwaru, 2014; Oyedele et al., 2018), was mitigated in three ways. First, the study's conceptualisation of parental support was deliberately broadened to include not only biological parents but also guardians, grandmothers, aunts, and other relatives who carry the practical burden of care. This decision reflected the demographic reality documented in Section 4.4.1, where only 25.7% of the teenage mothers lived with both parents and 32.9% lived with guardians or relatives. Second, the qualitative component of the study was designed to capture culturally specific experiences and meanings. The interview guides encouraged participants to describe their experiences in their own words, and the reflexive thematic analysis was sensitive to cultural contexts, including the role of grandmothers in decision-making, the transfer of stigma to caregivers, and the influence of patriarchal norms (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Third, the interpretation of the findings was grounded in the local context of Bumula Sub-County, and the recommendations were tailored to the socio-economic and cultural realities of the setting rather than imported from Western models. This contextual sensitivity addresses the criticism that the theory's individualistic orientation fails to capture the communal nature of African family systems (Oyedele et al., 2018).

The fourth weakness, that the theory offers no concrete interventions and is therefore of limited practical use to policymakers and practitioners (Darling, 2007;

Eriksson et al., 2018), was mitigated by ensuring that the study's findings were translated into specific, actionable recommendations in Chapter Five. Rather than leaving the theoretical insights at an abstract level, the study identified the point of highest leverage for intervention, namely the provision of childcare and material support, and proposed concrete measures such as a targeted bursary instrument, school-linked childcare provision, the assignment of a named teacher-mentor, mandatory quarterly returns of re-admitted learners, and community sensitisation targeting grandmothers, fathers, and male elders. These recommendations were derived directly from the empirical findings and were designed to be implementable at the school, sub-county, and national levels. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, the study addresses the criticism that the ecological framework does not specify how interventions should be designed or at which system level they should be targeted (Eriksson et al., 2018).

The fifth weakness, that the theory's emphasis on reciprocal interactions and dynamic processes makes it difficult to capture in cross-sectional research designs and requires longitudinal data that are often impractical to collect (Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Tudge et al., 2016), was mitigated through the adoption of a concurrent mixed methods design. The cross-sectional survey provided a snapshot of the relationships between parental support and educational outcomes at a single point in time, while the qualitative interviews provided depth and contextual detail that a purely quantitative design would have missed. The integration of the two strands at the interpretation stage allowed the study to examine not only whether parental support was associated with educational outcomes but also how and why those associations operated in the specific context of Bumula Sub-County (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Furthermore, the study acknowledged the limitations of its

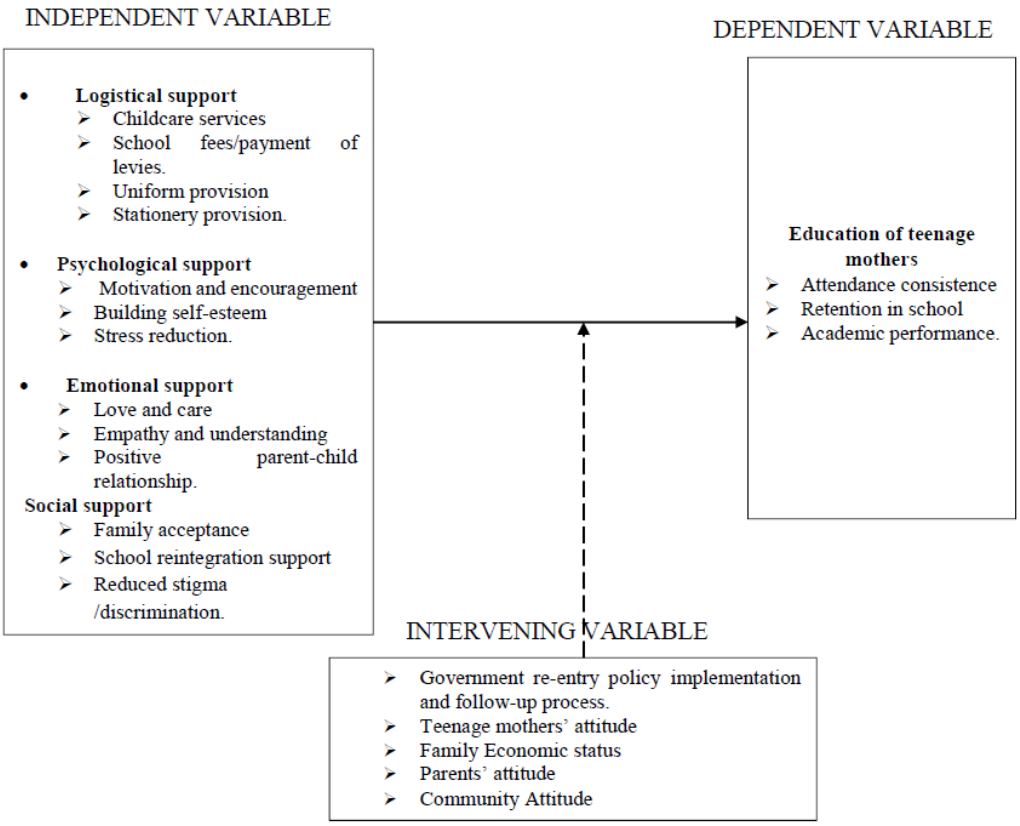
cross-sectional design in Section 5.7 and recommended longitudinal research as a direction for future studies. This transparency about the design's limitations, combined with the triangulation of multiple data sources, ensured that the findings were interpreted with appropriate caution and that the theoretical weaknesses did not compromise the integrity of the conclusions (Dawadi et al., 2021).

In summary, the application of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory in this study was not a passive or uncritical adoption of the framework. Rather, the identified weaknesses were systematically addressed through the delimitation of the study to the microsystem, the integration of self-efficacy and resilience concepts, the cultural adaptation of the conceptualisation of parental support, the translation of findings into concrete recommendations, and the use of a mixed methods design that compensated for the limitations of a cross-sectional approach. These mitigation strategies ensured that the theoretical framework served as a robust and contextually appropriate lens for examining the influence of parental support on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, and that the weaknesses of the theory did not negatively influence the findings of the study.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks interpret the relationship between the key variables in a study and make the assumed pathways between them explicit (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The conceptual framework is the logical scaffold that clarifies the relationship between the independent and dependent variables while taking intervening dynamics into account. The conceptual framework guiding this study is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Source: *Researcher, 2026.*

Parental support encompasses multiple dimensions that directly influence teenage mothers' ability to participate in education. The independent variables, namely parental psychological support, parental social support, parental logistical support and parental emotional support, were expected to influence the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in public junior schools. Educational outcomes were measured in terms of attendance consistency, retention in school and academic performance.

The relationship between these variables may be affected by intervening variables such as the implementation of the re-entry policy, community attitudes and stigma, parents'

perceptions of teenage pregnancy and education, the teenage mothers' own attitudes and motivation, and the socio-economic status of the family. These factors may strengthen or weaken the effect of parental support on educational outcomes. Enhanced parental support was therefore expected to contribute positively to improved educational outcomes among teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County.

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Childcare:- The supervision and care of the teenage mother's infant during school hours, typically provided by a family member such as a grandmother, aunt, or other relative, and identified in this study as a critical component of logistical support.

Head of Institution (HOI):- The principal or school head responsible for the administrative and pedagogical leadership of a public junior school, and in this study ten heads of institutions from the selected public junior schools were interviewed.

Logistical support:- The material and practical assistance provided by parents to teenage mothers to facilitate their schooling, including payment of school levies, provision of uniforms and stationery, arrangement of transport, and assistance with childcare for the teenage mother's infant, operationalized in this study as the mean score on a five-item scale.

Parental support:- The multidimensional assistance provided by parents or guardians to their teenage daughters, encompassing psychological, emotional, social, and logistical dimensions, and measured in this study using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire administered to teenage mothers.

Public Junior Schools:- Government-funded learning institutions offering Grades 7 to 9 under Kenya's Competency Based Curriculum, and in this study the term refers specifically to the ten selected public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County.

Teenage mothers:- Adolescent girls who have given birth before marriage and who are of school-going age, and in this study the term refers specifically to girls enrolled in Grades 7 to 9 in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County who have been re-admitted after childbirth.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to the influence of parental support on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools. The chapter is organised into four main sections. Section 2.2 presents a critical review of the theories that underpin the study, namely the Social Support Theory and the Hierarchy of Needs Theory, examining their strengths, weaknesses, and suitability to the rural Kenyan context. Section 2.3 reviews empirical and conceptual studies organised according to the six research questions guiding the study, covering parental psychological support, parental social support, parental logistical support, parental emotional support, the challenges parents face in supporting teenage mothers, and the strategies that schools can adopt to enhance parental support. Section 2.4 provides a summary of the literature reviewed and identifies the knowledge gaps that the present study sought to address.

2.2 Critical Review of Related Theories

This section reviews the theories underpinning the study. The Social Support Theory and the Hierarchy of Needs Theory were selected for their explanatory value in examining how parental support, or its absence, affects the education of teenage mothers. Their strengths, weaknesses, and suitability to the rural Kenyan context are assessed. These theories complement Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, presented in Chapter One, and informed the research questions, data collection tools, and interpretation of findings.

2.2.1 Social Support Theory

Social Support Theory, developed by Cobb (1976) and elaborated by House (1981) and Thoits (1985), highlights the role of social support in enhancing individuals' wellbeing and their capacity to cope with challenges. It distinguishes several forms of support: emotional support, that is, the expression of empathy and care; instrumental support, that is, financial or material assistance; informational support, that is, the provision of guidance and advice; and appraisal support, that is, feedback that helps individuals evaluate their situation (House, 1981). The theory holds that those who receive social support are better able to cope with stress, to maintain a positive psychological state and to achieve long-term goals (Cohen & Wills, 1985). In educational contexts, social support can serve as a protective factor that helps individuals withstand adverse experiences and remain on course in their education (Malecki & Demaray, 2003).

Parental support is an important form of social support for adolescent mothers. Parental emotional support can reduce stigma and stress (Ajayi et al., 2023), while financial support enables teenage mothers to balance parenting and schooling by meeting the direct costs of education and childcare (Gebrekristos et al., 2022). Informational support, such as parental advice on managing the school re-entry process, can facilitate re-enrolment and help the girl overcome bureaucratic and social obstacles (Morgan et al., 2023). Parental validation and affirmation, as forms of appraisal support, strengthen the teenage mother's self-belief and her conviction that academic success remains possible despite her circumstances (Groves et al., 2022). This theory relates directly to the variables of the present study because it explains the relationship between distinct types of parental support and educational outcomes, and it provides a structure for decomposing parental support

into discrete components that can be assessed separately, thereby increasing the precision of the analysis (Thoits, 2011).

While Social Support Theory is useful, its application in the rural Kenyan context has limitations. The theory assumes that all support is beneficial, whereas research has shown that some forms of perceived support can create a sense of indebtedness or dependency and thereby reduce the recipient's autonomy and self-efficacy (Thoits, 2011). Moreover, the theory does not adequately address the structural obstacles, such as poverty, gender inequality and cultural stigma, that limit parents' capacity to provide support in the first place (Kaplan & Owusu-Ansah, 2014). In Bumula Sub-County, where households typically face severe economic constraints, the extent and quality of parental support may be determined as much by resource limitations as by parental willingness (Mukabana et al., 2024). Despite these limitations, Social Support Theory offers a strong conceptual vocabulary for examining how the relational resources provided by parents shape the educational pathways of teenage mothers, and it forms an essential complement to the Ecological Systems Theory in this study.

2.2.2 Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow (1943) developed the hierarchy of needs theory, which proposes that human needs are ordered hierarchically, beginning with physiological needs, followed by safety needs, love and belonging, esteem needs and finally self-actualisation. The theory argues that lower-order needs must be met to a significant extent before higher-order needs can be meaningfully pursued. Maslow subsequently added cognitive, aesthetic and transcendence needs, although the five-tier model remains the version most frequently used in educational research. The theory has been widely applied in educational settings to

explain the conditions under which students can learn productively, and researchers have argued that students whose basic and social needs are unmet are unlikely to sustain the motivation and focus that successful learning requires (Kaur, 2013).

For teenage mothers, parental support is crucial in meeting needs at each level of the hierarchy. Physiologically, financial support from parents enables the young mother to meet her basic needs and those of her baby, including food, shelter, clothing and care materials, so that she can attend school. Safety includes emotional and psychological safety: by establishing a home free of blame, hostility and the threat of abandonment, parents provide security. At the level of love and belonging, acceptance and affection from parents meet the young mother's need to feel valued as a daughter and as a mother, a need that is frequently unmet after an adolescent pregnancy. When parents affirm the teenage mother's capacity to learn and encourage her to see herself as a learner, they support her esteem needs and help her to remain engaged in school. Once these needs are met with consistent parental guidance, the teenage mother can pursue self-actualisation through educational and career achievement.

The Hierarchy of Needs Theory has attracted criticism, particularly in different cultural and economic settings. Critics point to the rigidity of the hierarchy, noting that people on low incomes frequently pursue multiple goals simultaneously, including education and the meeting of basic needs, and therefore do not follow the strictly sequential order the theory proposes (Wahba & Bridwell, 1976). In rural Kenya, adolescent girls become mothers and continue to attend school in the face of food insecurity, poor housing and unreliable care, which demonstrates the simultaneous pursuit of several needs. The theory has also been criticised for its individualistic, western perspective, which does not

adequately represent the communal and interdependent character of need satisfaction within African family systems, where relatives and community members contribute to an individual's wellbeing. Despite these limitations, the theory provides a useful lens for this study because it illuminates the several levels of parental support required if a teenage mother is to remain in school, and it highlights the compounded deprivation that occurs when parental support is absent or inconsistent.

2.3.1 Parental Psychological Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

Parental psychological support involves encouragement, affirmation, instruction, and the nurturing of self-belief, all of which affect the capacity of adolescent mothers to continue their studies (Gebrekristos et al., 2022). Evidence from South Africa shows that adolescent mothers with psychological assets, especially confidence and self-efficacy fostered in supportive family relationships, are much more likely to return to school after childbirth than those without such assets (Gebrekristos et al., 2022). Similarly, in a mixed methods study, Groves et al. (2022) found that adolescent mothers' resilience was fostered through supportive interactions with caregivers that enabled the young women to navigate the dual role of mother and student. These results suggest that the psychological dimension of parental support functions as an internal resource on which teenage mothers draw in coping with stigma and academic pressure (Groves et al., 2022).

A critical examination of these studies, however, reveals several limitations. Gebrekristos et al. (2022) employed a quantitative design that established a statistical association between psychological assets and school return but could not explain the processes through which psychological support operates within the household. Groves et al. (2022) addressed this limitation through a mixed methods design, but their sample was

drawn from urban and peri-urban settings in South Africa, and the findings may not be transferable to rural Kenyan contexts where family structures and community attitudes differ substantially. Furthermore, both studies treated psychological support as an undifferentiated construct and did not examine its specific components, such as monitoring of academic progress, communication with teachers, or provision of study time. Neither study measured the magnitude of the relationship between psychological support and specific educational outcomes such as attendance or academic performance, relying instead on the binary outcome of school return. This limits their utility for understanding how psychological support influences the quality of educational engagement after re-entry.

In the Kenyan context, Mukabana et al. (2024) found that girls in a Nairobi informal settlement experienced low self-esteem and rejection from their parents, and that this sustained feelings of shame and hopelessness about attending school. A continental scoping review reported a comparable finding (Ajayi et al., 2023). These studies, however, focused on urban informal settlements and secondary school learners, and their findings cannot be assumed to apply to rural public junior schools. The Mukabana et al. (2024) study was qualitative and did not quantify the magnitude of the links between psychological support and educational outcomes. The Ajayi et al. (2023) scoping review synthesised evidence across the continent but did not disaggregate findings by country, educational level, or type of support, which limits its specificity. The present study addressed these gaps by combining quantitative measurement with qualitative exploration in Bumula Sub-County, thereby producing evidence directly relevant to the junior school level introduced under the Competency Based Curriculum (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Wekesa Nafula et al., 2025).

2.3.2 Parental Social Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

Social support from parents is a key mechanism for reconnecting an isolated teenage mother with wider institutional structures. Mukabana et al. (2024) found that adolescent mothers in Kenyan settlements who experienced high levels of hostility and discriminatory treatment from peers and teachers were nevertheless able to continue attending school where their parents were strongly present in the school to defend their rights. This finding is valuable because it identifies parental advocacy as a protective factor. However, the study was qualitative and based on a small sample in an urban informal settlement, and it did not examine whether the protective effect of parental advocacy varied by the type or severity of hostility experienced.

A cross-sectional study of 220 adolescent mothers in Ghana found that parental and external support were important factors in school re-entry, with adolescent girls who received high parental support being much more likely to return to school (Morgan et al., 2023). The same study also found that fewer than a third of the adolescent mothers had actually returned to school despite most wishing to do so, which indicates that aspirations alone, without supportive social structures, are insufficient. While this study is valuable for its large sample and quantitative design, it was conducted in Ghana's Volta Region, and the socio-cultural context may differ from that of rural western Kenya. The study also measured parental support as a composite variable and did not distinguish between its social, emotional, and instrumental components, making it difficult to determine which form of support was most influential. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design established association rather than causation, and the study did not examine the mechanisms through which parental social support operates.

Continental evidence shows that the attitudes of family members and of wider society determine whether schooling is a positive or a negative experience for adolescent mothers (Ajayi et al., 2023). While this finding is consistent across multiple settings, the scoping review nature of the study means that it did not systematically appraise the quality of the evidence reviewed or account for publication bias. The review also did not distinguish between different types of social support or examine how social support interacts with other forms of support.

Further findings emphasise the interplay between parental social support and the wider social context of the school. Mukabana et al. (2024) found that stigma and discriminatory attitudes among fellow learners and teachers had a negative impact on adolescent mothers returning to school, and that supportive parent–child interaction helped the girls to resist such attitudes. Gebrekristos et al. (2022) found in South Africa that supportive relationships within the household made it easier for adolescent mothers to return to school. These studies, however, examined social support at the point of re-entry rather than after re-entry, and they did not examine how social support influences attendance consistency, retention, or academic performance over time. The present study therefore examined the influence of parental social support on the education of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County, with attention to both the inward-facing and outward-facing components of that support.

2.3.3 Parental Logistical Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

Logistical support refers to the material and practical support provided by parents, such as payment of school levies, purchase of uniforms and learning materials, provision of transport and, most importantly, childcare support. Quantitative evidence from South

Africa shows that adolescent mothers who used formal or family childcare were significantly more likely to return to school after giving birth than those who took on the entire responsibility of raising the infant themselves (Gebrekristos et al., 2022). This study is methodologically strong in its use of a large sample and quantitative analysis, but it measured childcare as a binary variable and did not examine the quality, reliability, or cost of the childcare arrangement. The study also did not distinguish between formal and informal childcare, despite the likelihood that these have different implications for sustainability and for the teenage mother's peace of mind.

A study in a low-income settlement in Nairobi found that poverty and childcare duties were the most common barriers to school attendance (Mukabana et al., 2024). Evidence from the same source indicates that families with stable economic means are better able to meet the direct and indirect costs of their daughters' education. For teenage mothers in Ghana, socio-economic status was likewise a key factor in re-entering school (Morgan et al., 2023). These findings converge to show that logistical support is a precondition for consistent attendance, retention, and academic performance among teenage mothers. However, all three studies examined logistical support at the point of re-entry rather than after re-entry, and none measured the relative contribution of different components of logistical support, such as fees, learning materials, transport, or childcare, to educational outcomes. The Mukabana et al. (2024) study was qualitative and did not quantify the relationship between logistical support and outcomes. The Morgan et al. (2023) study treated socio-economic status as a demographic variable rather than as a measure of parental support, which limits its ability to inform interventions.

The reviewed studies do not answer several important questions in relation to the Kenyan junior school context. Much of the evidence concerns secondary schools and urban informal settlements, whereas the financial requirements and childcare arrangements facing families in rural sub-counties such as Bumula may differ substantially (Mukabana et al., 2024). Furthermore, the studies seldom distinguish among the specific components of logistical support, which makes it difficult to determine whether fees, learning materials, transport, or childcare exert the greatest influence on educational outcomes. The present study therefore measured the extent to which parental logistical support influences the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools and explored, through qualitative methods, how parents prioritize such support within constrained household budgets.

2.3.4 Parental Emotional Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

Emotional support is manifested in the warmth, acceptance, empathy, and love expressed towards the teenage mother during and after her pregnancy. The continental scoping review conducted by Ajayi et al. (2023) confirmed that adolescent pregnancy and parenthood in Africa are commonly accompanied by rejection and blame from family members and by emotional distress on the part of the adolescent, and that those who reported acceptance had significantly better psychosocial wellbeing and educational aspirations. Among adolescent mothers in South Africa, Groves et al. (2022) reported that warm and caring relationships with caregivers played an important role in the resilience processes that facilitated remaining in or returning to school.

These studies, however, have several limitations. The Ajayi et al. (2023) scoping review synthesised evidence from multiple countries but did not appraise the methodological quality of the included studies, and its findings are therefore only as strong

as the studies it reviewed. The review also did not disaggregate emotional support from other forms of support, making it difficult to determine the unique contribution of emotional support to educational outcomes. The Groves et al. (2022) study was conducted in South Africa and used a mixed methods design, but its sample was drawn from urban and peri-urban settings, and the findings may not be transferable to rural Kenyan contexts. Furthermore, the study measured emotional support as part of a broader construct of caregiver support and did not examine its specific influence on attendance, retention, or academic performance.

There is some evidence that emotional support is the least visible and least consistently provided form of parental support. Qualitative data from Kenya indicate that anger and disappointment, and a consequent culture of blame, can persist in the household long after the child has been born (Mukabana et al., 2024). Another group of parents provides materially while withholding affection, a pattern that the literature associates with reduced motivation and self-esteem among adolescents (Ajayi et al., 2023). Few previous studies have assessed emotional support as a separate variable; most have subsumed it within general dimensions of family or social support. As a result, there is limited understanding of the specific impact of parental emotional support on attendance regularity, retention, and academic achievement at the junior school level. The present study treated emotional support as a separate independent variable and examined its influence on the education of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County both quantitatively and qualitatively.

2.3.5 Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers in School

Parents who seek to support the education of their teenage daughters face economic, social, and emotional challenges. Poverty is the most universal constraint, as many households struggle to meet school fees and the needs of an infant simultaneously (Mukabana et al., 2024). Parents must also contend with community stigma, since a daughter's pregnancy is frequently read as a failure of parenting (Ajayi et al., 2023). Furthermore, many parents have little knowledge of the re-entry guidelines and are unaware of their daughters' right to return to school after giving birth (Mukabana et al., 2024).

A critical examination of these studies reveals that they tend to examine challenges from the standpoint of the daughters rather than the parents. The Mukabana et al. (2024) study, for example, interviewed adolescent mothers and captured parental challenges only indirectly through the daughters' accounts. The Ajayi et al. (2023) scoping review similarly focused on the experiences of pregnant and parenting adolescents rather than on the parents themselves. This is a significant limitation because parents are the primary providers of support, and their own accounts of the challenges they face are essential for designing effective interventions. The reviewed studies also tend to treat challenges as static rather than dynamic, and they do not examine how parents' challenges change over time as the teenage mother progresses through school.

Structural and informational problems are also reported in the wider literature. In many countries, school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic deepened household poverty and increased adolescent pregnancy (UNESCO, 2021). Ghanaian evidence suggests that parents who have themselves experienced teenage pregnancy, and those of

below-average socio-economic status, face the greatest difficulty in facilitating their daughters' return (Morgan et al., 2023). A further challenge is emotional exhaustion, as parents must manage their own disappointment while reassuring their daughters. There is very little Kenyan evidence on how parents in rural sub-counties experience and cope with these challenges, particularly at the junior school level. The present study therefore gave direct voice to parents through interviews in order to document the challenges they encounter in supporting their teenage daughters in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

2.3.6 Strategies to Enhance Parental Support for Education of Teenage Mothers

Empirical research suggests several approaches through which schools and education systems can strengthen parental support for the schooling of teenage mothers. Childcare support, financial support, and the deliberate creation of a stigma-free school climate are recommended by Mukabana et al. (2024). A priority mentioned repeatedly is the sensitisation of parents and communities to the school re-entry guidance (Morgan et al., 2023). International evidence also shows that flexible school arrangements, such as catch-up programmes and provision for breastfeeding, alleviate practical burdens on families (UNESCO, 2021).

These recommendations, however, are not without limitations. Mukabana et al. (2024) based their recommendations on a qualitative study in an urban informal settlement, and their applicability to rural public junior schools is unclear. The Morgan et al. (2023) study was conducted in Ghana and its recommendations may not be directly transferable to the Kenyan context. The UNESCO (2021) report is a global synthesis that does not provide context-specific evidence for Kenya, let alone for Bumula Sub-County.

Furthermore, the strategies proposed in the literature have rarely been evaluated for their effectiveness. In Africa, programmes addressing the needs of pregnant and parenting adolescents are frequently fragmented, short in duration, and dependent on external funding, with limited reach and sustainability (Ajayi et al., 2023). Evaluation of these strategies is rarely thorough, and there is limited information about the most effective combination of school-based interventions for mobilising parental support in particular contexts (UNESCO, 2021).

Most of the reviewed studies base their recommendations on urban or secondary school settings, and their applicability to rural public junior schools in Kenya is unclear. There is therefore a need for context-specific evidence on the strategies that public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County can use to improve parental support. The present study met this need by asking teachers, heads of institutions, education officials, religious leaders, parents, and the teenage mothers themselves to identify workable practices, and the findings are intended to inform school-level practice and the continued implementation of the national re-entry guidelines.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gaps

This chapter reviewed theoretical and empirical literature on the relationship between parental support and the educational outcomes of teenage mothers. Three theories underpinned the study: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which identifies the family as the most proximal influence on development; Social Support Theory, which provides a vocabulary for disaggregating parental support into emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal dimensions; and the Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which highlights the layered nature of the supports required for learning. Together, these

perspectives support the conceptualisation of parental support as a multidimensional independent variable.

The empirical review confirmed that all four dimensions of parental support influence the education of teenage mothers. Psychological support strengthens resilience and coping (Gebrekristos et al., 2022; Mukabana et al., 2024). Social support prevents exclusion and facilitates reintegration (Ajayi et al., 2023; Morgan et al., 2023). Logistical support supplies the material conditions for attendance, including fees, learning materials, and childcare (Mukabana et al., 2024; Gebrekristos et al., 2022). Emotional support counteracts shame and promotes wellbeing (Groves et al., 2022; Ajayi et al., 2023). The literature also identified challenges that limit parental capacity, including poverty, stigma, emotional exhaustion, and limited policy knowledge, and proposed strategies such as sensitisation, counselling, childcare provision, and flexible school arrangements.

Five gaps emerged from the review. First, existing studies focused on urban informal settlements and secondary schools, leaving rural public junior schools under the Competency Based Curriculum undocumented. Second, western Kenya, including Bumula Sub-County, remained under-researched. Third, parents' own accounts of the challenges they face had received little attention. Fourth, most studies used composite measures of parental support without quantifying the unique contribution of each dimension. Fifth, the strategies proposed in the literature had not been tested or adapted to rural Kenyan contexts. The present study addressed these gaps through a concurrent mixed methods design in Bumula Sub-County.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter describes the research design, the locale of the study, the target population, the sample and sampling techniques, the data collection instruments, the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of those instruments, the data collection procedures, the data analysis procedures and the ethical considerations that governed the study.

3.2 Research Design

A mixed methods research design was employed. The quantitative strand used a cross-sectional survey design and the qualitative strand adopted a phenomenological design. This concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach permitted a comprehensive understanding of both the measurable patterns and the lived experiences of the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The descriptive orientation of the design was appropriate for establishing the current state of parental support and the educational experiences of teenage mothers, since it allowed the characteristics of the population to be described without the manipulation of variables (Field, 2024). The choice of a mixed methods design rather than a purely quantitative or purely qualitative approach was deliberate. A quantitative-only design would have measured the strength of relationships between parental support and educational outcomes but would have failed to capture the contextual processes and meanings that shape those relationships in the specific setting of Bumula Sub-County (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2021). A qualitative-only design would have provided rich contextual detail but would not have permitted the statistical testing of the four null hypotheses that the study sought to examine (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). By combining

both approaches, the study was able to test the statistical significance of the relationships between the four dimensions of parental support and educational outcomes while simultaneously exploring the mechanisms, challenges, and contextual factors that explain those relationships (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Both strands were conducted within the same period, and the two sets of results were brought together at the interpretation stage, as reported in Section 4.14 of Chapter Four.

3.3 Locale of the Study

The study was carried out in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya, in Ten Public Junior Schools. Bumula Sub-County is pre-dominantly rural and its economy is based on subsistence agriculture. The sub-county lies within the western Kenya region, which records among the highest rates of teenage pregnancy and early marriages in the country, and it comprises the County Assembly wards of Bumula, Khasoko, Kabula, Kimaeti, South Bukusu, Siboti and West Bukusu. A map of the study area is presented in Appendix VIII. The Sub-county was selected because it combines high poverty levels, entrenched patriarchal norms and documented incidences of re-admitted teenage mothers in the newly created Public Junior Schools, and furthermore because no previous study had examined parental support in this setting.

3.4 Target Population

The target population of this study comprised all individuals and institutions in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya, that were directly involved in or affected by the education of re-admitted teenage mothers in public junior schools. Specifically, the target population consisted of eight categories of respondents: 100 Public Junior Schools, 100 Heads of Institutions, 520 teachers, 150 teenage mothers (both those currently enrolled

and those who had recently dropped out), 200 parents and guardians of teenage mothers, 38 Religious Leaders, and one Sub-County Director of Education (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). These eight categories were selected because each holds a distinct and necessary vantage point on the phenomenon under investigation, and together they provided a comprehensive picture of the support systems available to teenage mothers in the sub-county (Mukabana et al., 2024).

The Public Junior Schools constituted the institutional target population because they are the settings in which re-admitted teenage mothers pursue their education under the Competency Based Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2020). The Heads of Institutions were included because they are responsible for the administrative implementation of the National School Re-entry Guidelines and for maintaining records of re-admitted learners (Marende, 2022). The teachers were included because they interact with re-admitted teenage mothers daily and can observe the effects of parental support, or its absence, on attendance, participation, and academic performance (Morgan et al., 2023). The teenage mothers themselves were the primary target population because they are the direct recipients of parental support and the individuals whose educational outcomes the study sought to examine (Gebrekristos et al., 2022). The parents and guardians were included because they are the providers of support and the decision-makers within the household who determine whether and how a teenage mother continues her education (Ajayi et al., 2023). The Religious Leaders were included because they are influential community figures who shape attitudes toward teenage mothers and can mobilise material and social support (Mukabana et al., 2024). The Sub-County Director of Education was included

because the office oversees the implementation of the re-entry policy at the sub-county level and holds administrative data on re-admissions (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The total target population was 1,109 individuals and institutions, as summarized in Table 1 in Section 3.5. This population was selected because it represents all the key stakeholders whose perspectives were necessary to answer the six research questions guiding the study. The inclusion of multiple categories of respondents also enabled the triangulation of data, thereby strengthening the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Korstjens & Moser, 2021).

3.5 Description of Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The study drew a sample from eight target groups comprising ten selected Public Junior Schools and 174 individual respondents. The eight target groups were: (1) Public Junior Schools, (2) Heads of Institutions, (3) Teachers, (4) Re-admitted Teenage Mothers, (5) Teenage Mothers Who Dropped Out, (6) Parents and Guardians, (7) Religious Leaders, and (8) the Sub-County Director of Education. The individual respondents were 80 teenage mothers (both those currently in school and those who had recently dropped out), 52 teachers, 20 parents or guardians, 10 Heads of Institutions, one Sub-County Director of Education, and 11 Religious Leaders (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). These categories were selected because each holds a distinct and necessary vantage point on the phenomenon under investigation (Mukabana et al., 2024).

Purposive sampling was used to select the ten Public Junior Schools, the ten Heads of Institutions, the 52 teachers, the 20 parents and guardians, and the Sub-County Director of Education. Purposive sampling was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to select information-rich cases that were directly relevant to the research questions (Palinkas

et al., 2015). The ten schools were purposively selected based on documented cases of re-admitted teenage mothers and their rural day-school status. The teachers were purposively selected to include those with pastoral or supervisory responsibilities for re-admitted learners, such as class teachers, senior teachers, and guidance and counselling teachers. The parents and guardians were selected using criterion purposive sampling, with the criterion being that they were the primary caregivers of a re-admitted teenage mother (Etikan et al., 2016). The Sub-County Director of Education was selected because of the office's administrative oversight of the re-entry policy.

Systematic sampling was used to select the 80 teenage mothers from the target population of 150 teenage mothers in the sub-county. The sampling frame was obtained from school registers of re-admitted learners, and every second name on the list was selected until the desired sample size was achieved (Field, 2024). This approach ensured that the sample included teenage mothers from all three junior school grades and from both those currently attending school and those who had recently dropped out, thereby capturing the full range of educational experiences relevant to the study (Morgan et al., 2023). The 11 Religious Leaders were sampled through simple random sampling from a list of 38 religious leaders in the sub-county, in order to obtain a representative cross-section of religious institutions (Taherdoost, 2021).

The sampling frame matrix is presented in Table 1, which sets out the target population, sampling technique, sample size, and percentage for each of the eight target groups. The response actually achieved against this frame is reported in Section 4.2 of Chapter Four.

Table 1
Sampling Frame Matrix

Participants' category	Target population	Sampling technique	Sample size	Percentage
Institutions	100	Purposive	10	10.0
Institution Heads	100	Purposive	10	10.0
Teachers	520	Purposive	52	10.0
Teenage mothers	150	Systematic sampling	80	53.3
Parents	200	Criterion purposive	20	10.0
Sub-County Director of Education	1	Criterion purposive	1	100.0
Religious leaders	38	Simple random	11	29.0
Total	1,109		184	

Note. **Source: Researcher (2026).**

The 80 teenage mothers sampled included both those currently in school and those who had recently dropped out, as drawn from the combined target population of 150 teenage mothers in the sub-county. The two sub-groups were not separated in the sampling frame because they were identified through the same school registers and community contacts. The response actually achieved against this frame is reported in Section 4.2 of Chapter Four.

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

The selection of appropriate instruments was critical because it determined the quality, depth and reliability of the evidence generated in response to the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). In keeping with the concurrent mixed methods design, four instruments were prepared: a structured questionnaire, a semi-structured interview guide, an observation schedule and a focus group discussion guide. Each was designed to elicit specific types of data from distinct categories of respondent, so as to cover the research

problem from several perspectives and to permit the triangulation of data. The instruments that yielded the data analysed in this study were the two questionnaires and the interview guides; the observation schedule and the focus group discussion guide did not produce data available for analysis, and this is acknowledged among the limitations reported in Section 5.7.

3.6.1 Questionnaires for Teachers and Teenage Mothers

The questionnaire was the principal instrument for the collection of quantitative data. Structured questionnaires were administered to teachers and to re-admitted teenage mothers in the selected public junior schools. Each questionnaire contained a section on demographic information followed by sections of closed items on a five-point Likert scale measuring parental psychological, social, logistical and emotional support, together with a small number of open-ended items allowing respondents to elaborate on their experiences. The teachers' questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix II and the teenage mothers' questionnaire in Appendix III. The questionnaire was justified because it enabled the collection of standardised data from a relatively large number of respondents within a short period and at modest cost (Taherdoost, 2021). The anonymity it affords was particularly important for teenage mothers, who may be reluctant to disclose sensitive information in face-to-face settings. The instrument yielded the numerical data required for the descriptive and inferential analyses through which the research hypotheses were tested (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

3.6.2 Interview Guides for Heads of Institutions, the Sub-County Director of Education, Religious Leaders and Parents

Interview guides were prepared for key informants holding institutional, administrative, religious and parental roles in relation to the education of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County. They were administered to the Sub-County Director of Education, the heads of institutions of the ten selected public junior schools, religious leaders and parents or guardians of re-admitted teenage mothers. These respondents were selected because of their specific knowledge of the situation and their first-hand experience of its administrative, social, spiritual and familial dimensions. The guides comprised open-ended questions organised around the six research questions, together with probes that allowed the researcher to pursue issues as they arose. The semi-structured format was appropriate because it permitted exploration of the individual experiences and perceptions of each informant while retaining the structure of predetermined questions (Roberts, 2020). Interviews lasted between thirty and sixty minutes and were held at a place convenient to the informant. The guides are reproduced in Appendices IV, V, VI and VII.

3.6.3 Observation Guide and Focus Group Discussion Guide

An observation guide and a focus group discussion guide were prepared during the proposal stage but were not used to generate analysable data. Classroom observation was not feasible because re-admitted teenage mothers were not alone in class; singling them out would have risked stigma and violated ethical protections for vulnerable participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Observation would also have disrupted instruction and duplicated data already obtained through self-report and teacher questionnaires (Taherdoost, 2021). Focus group discussions were not conducted because grouping teenage

mothers would have publicly identified them and risked psychological harm (Gundumogula, 2020). Existing interviews and open-ended questionnaire items sufficiently addressed the qualitative research questions. Consequently, the qualitative findings rest on the interview guides and open-ended items, a limitation acknowledged in Section 5.7 and addressed in the suggestions for further research in Section 5.6.

3.7 Validity, Pilot Testing, Reliability and Trustworthiness of Research Instruments

The study applied established measures to verify that the data collection instruments were valid, reliable and suitable for the target population, since these properties are essential to credible and defensible findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Content validity was established by having the instruments reviewed by experts, namely the university supervisors and lecturers in education, to confirm that the items adequately covered all aspects of parental support, including its emotional, financial and social dimensions; their feedback was used to revise and improve the tools. Face validity was addressed by ensuring that the questions were clear, simple and comprehensible to the respondents, that is, to the teenage mothers, parents and teachers. Construct validity was addressed by aligning each item with the study objectives and variables, so that the items measured the intended constructs of parental support and educational outcomes.

3.7.2 Pilot Testing of the Research Instruments

A pilot test was conducted in one public junior school in Bumula Sub-County that did not form part of the main study, in order to identify ambiguous or unclear items and to assess the suitability of the instruments for the target population (Creswell & Creswell,

2023). The pilot school was selected because it shared similar characteristics with the sampled schools, namely being a rural day school with re-admitted teenage mothers, but it was excluded from the main study to avoid contamination of the main data (Taherdoost, 2021).

The pilot group comprised ten re-admitted teenage mothers and five teachers who were not included in the main study. These participants were selected using the same criteria as the main study, namely re-admitted teenage mothers enrolled in Grades 7 to 9 and teachers with pastoral or supervisory responsibilities for re-admitted learners (Etikan et al., 2016). The pilot group was representative of the main study population in terms of age, grade level, and teaching experience, thereby ensuring that the feedback obtained was relevant and applicable to the main study (Field, 2024).

The test-retest method was applied, with the same questionnaire administered twice to the pilot group after a short interval of two weeks in order to check the consistency of responses over time (Taherdoost, 2021). The two-week interval was chosen because it was long enough to reduce the likelihood of recall bias but short enough to assume that the constructs being measured had not changed (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The responses from the two administrations were compared, and the correlation between them was computed to assess the stability of the instrument. In addition to the test-retest procedure, the internal consistency of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a coefficient of .70 or higher regarded as acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

After the pilot test, the completed questionnaires were collected and analysed, and the participants were asked to provide feedback on the clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance of the items. The feedback obtained from the pilot group was used to revise and

improve the instruments before the main data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Specifically, ambiguous items were reworded, and items that were found to be unclear or irrelevant were either modified or removed. The pilot testing process therefore ensured that the final instruments were valid, reliable, and suitable for the target population, and that the data collected in the main study would be of high quality and dependable (Morgan et al., 2023).

3.7.3 Reliability of the Quantitative Research Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the research instruments, that is, the degree to which they would produce similar results if administered repeatedly under the same conditions (Field, 2024). Three measures were taken to establish the reliability of the quantitative instruments. First, the pilot study described in Section 3.7.2 identified ambiguous items and allowed revisions before the main data collection. Second, the test-retest method assessed the consistency of responses over time by administering the same questionnaire twice to the pilot group after a short interval (Taherdoost, 2021). Third, internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used as the measure of internal consistency because it is the most widely used statistic for assessing the reliability of Likert-type scales in educational and social science research (Field, 2024). A coefficient of .70 or higher was adopted as the threshold of acceptability, in accordance with the recommendation of Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), who argued that .70 represents an acceptable level of internal consistency for attitudinal scales used in exploratory research. This threshold is also consistent with the conventions adopted in recent studies of parental support and adolescent mothers in sub-Saharan Africa (Morgan et al., 2023; Mukabana et al., 2024).

Scales that achieved a coefficient of .70 or above were considered to have adequate internal consistency and were retained for the main analysis. The coefficients obtained from the main study data are reported in full in Section 4.3 of Chapter Four, including the anomalous coefficient obtained for the reverse-scored logistical support composite and the sensitivity analysis undertaken in consequence (Ilhan et al., 2024). Where a scale produced an unexpected reliability coefficient, this was reported transparently and investigated through a sensitivity analysis in which the arithmetic combination of items was varied while every respondent's answer was left unchanged, as reported in Section 4.11.6 (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

3.7.4 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Tools and Process

Trustworthiness in qualitative research concerns the rigour, authenticity, and quality of the findings. Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability remain the accepted criteria for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research (Korstjens & Moser, 2021; Varpio et al., 2021). This section explains how each of these four criteria was applied and determined in the present study.

Credibility refers to the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings and the extent to which the findings accurately represent the experiences of the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Credibility was established through four strategies. First, sustained interaction with participants was maintained during data collection in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences in context. The researcher spent extended time in the selected schools and communities, conducting interviews that lasted between thirty and sixty minutes and engaging in informal conversations with participants before and after the formal interviews (Creswell &

Creswell, 2023). Second, data triangulation was employed by collecting data from six categories of respondents, namely teenage mothers, teachers, heads of institutions, parents and guardians, religious leaders, and the Sub-County Director of Education, so that convergence across multiple perspectives could be assessed (Varpio et al., 2021). Third, member checking was conducted, in which participants were given the opportunity to review and verify summaries of their interviews, in line with current best practice on participant validation (Birt et al., 2020; Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Participants were provided with a summary of the key points from their interviews and were asked to confirm whether the summary accurately reflected what they had said, and any corrections or clarifications were incorporated into the final analysis. Fourth, peer debriefing with supervisors was undertaken throughout the analysis process, in which the researcher discussed the coding framework, emerging themes, and interpretive decisions with the supervisors, who provided critical feedback and challenged assumptions (Nowell et al., 2020).

Dependability refers to the stability, consistency, and repeatability of the research process over time and is supported by the systematic documentation of that process in an audit trail (Nowell et al., 2020; Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Dependability was determined through the maintenance of a detailed audit trail comprising six components. First, the raw data were retained, including all completed questionnaires, audio recordings of interviews, and field notes, so that the original evidence could be traced back to the source (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Second, field notes were maintained during all interviews, recording the date, time, location, duration, and context of each interview, as well as the researcher's observations of non-verbal cues and the interview environment (Roberts, 2020). Third,

transcripts were checked against the original audio recordings for accuracy, and any sections in the local language were translated into English and verified by a bilingual research assistant (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Fourth, the coding framework was documented, including the initial codes, the process of grouping codes into themes, and the decisions taken to merge, split, or discard codes as the analysis progressed (Nowell et al., 2020). Fifth, the analytical decisions were recorded, including the rationale for the thematic structure, the selection of illustrative quotations, and the interpretation of themes in relation to the research questions (Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Sixth, the interview guides were retained as part of the audit trail, showing the predetermined questions and the probes that were used to elicit detailed responses. This documentation enables external reviewers to follow the methodological route and to evaluate the consistency and logic of the research process, thereby increasing transparency and the reliability of the findings (Varpio et al., 2021).

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are grounded in the data and not influenced by the researcher's biases, motivations, or preconceptions (Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Confirmability was established through three strategies. First, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal throughout the data collection and analysis process, recording personal reflections, assumptions, and reactions to the data, and examining how these might influence the interpretation of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Second, the original completed instruments and transcripts were retained, and direct quotations from participants were used extensively in the presentation of findings so that readers could judge whether the interpretations were supported by the data (Nowell et al., 2020). Third, the researcher employed a conscious strategy of bracketing, in which personal assumptions

about teenage motherhood and parental support were set aside during the analysis in order to allow the participants' voices to emerge (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts, settings, or populations (Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Transferability was established through the provision of thick description of the research context, participants, and setting. The study provided detailed contextual information about Bumula Sub-County, including its rural agrarian economy, high poverty levels, patriarchal cultural norms, and the prevalence of teenage pregnancy (Varpio et al., 2021). Detailed demographic characteristics of the participants were also provided, including age, grade level, living arrangements, and time out of school before re-admission, so that readers could assess the applicability of the findings to their own contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The description of the public junior school setting, including the fact that all respondents attended day schools and that the Competency Based Curriculum had recently been introduced, further enables readers to judge whether the findings are transferable to similar settings in other rural sub-counties in Kenya (Morgan et al., 2023).

3.8 Description of Data Collection Procedures

Data collection proceeded in five sequential phases: ethical clearance and formal permissions from the relevant authorities; identification of participants and securing of informed consent; administration of questionnaires to teachers and teenage mothers; semi-structured interviews with key informants; and the recording and transcription of the data collected (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Each phase was planned so as to minimise disruption to school activities, to respect the dignity and rights of those involved, and to maintain the quality and completeness of the data (Taherdoost, 2021).

Phase One: Ethical Clearance and Formal Permissions

Before any data were collected, the researcher obtained the required approvals. The process began with an introductory letter from the Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, followed by an application for a research licence from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Approval was thereafter sought from the Bungoma County Director of Education, the Sub-County Director of Education for Bumula, and the heads of the selected public junior schools (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Formal approval at each level validated the study, protected participants' rights, and secured institutional cooperation. Ethical clearance was of particular importance because teenage mothers are a vulnerable group whose participation requires additional protection (Ajayi et al., 2023). The researcher retained copies of all letters of authorisation and produced them to the appropriate authorities during fieldwork, and did not enter the schools until all permissions had been granted.

Phase Two: Identification of Participants and Securing of Informed Consent

After clearance, the researcher liaised with the heads of institutions and the guidance and counselling teachers in order to identify the re-admitted teenage mothers, their parents, and the other categories of respondent. Each potential participant received a clear explanation of the purpose of the study and the procedures to be followed, and was informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without penalty (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Written informed consent was obtained from all adult participants, and for teenage mothers under the age of eighteen, both parental consent and individual assent were obtained, in accordance with ethical guidelines for research with

minors and vulnerable groups (Mukabana et al., 2024). Because adolescent mothers frequently face stigma, and because recruitment processes can expose their situation publicly, identification and recruitment were carried out discreetly through the schools rather than by public announcement (Ajayi et al., 2023). Consent forms were written in simple language and translated orally where necessary to ensure comprehension.

Phase Three: Administration of Questionnaires to Teachers and Teenage Mothers

The questionnaires were administered in person by the researcher, who was present at each school throughout the exercise, with the assistance of two trained research assistants who had been briefed on the purpose of the study, the ethical requirements, and the correct procedure for administering the instruments (Taherdoost, 2021). The research assistants were holders of bachelor's degrees in education and were fluent in both English and the local language, which enabled them to clarify any items that respondents found difficult to understand. The researcher and the assistants visited each of the ten selected schools on dates and at times agreed upon with the heads of institutions, so as to minimise disruption to teaching and learning (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

At each school, the administration of the questionnaires followed a standardised procedure. First, the researcher or a research assistant introduced the team to the respondents and explained the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the measures in place to ensure confidentiality. Second, the respondents were given the questionnaires and were asked to complete them independently. Third, the researcher and the assistants remained present throughout the exercise in order to clarify any ambiguity in the items, but they did not influence the respondents' answers in any way. Fourth, the completed questionnaires were collected on the same day, which secured a high

rate of return (Taherdoost, 2021). The teenage mothers completed their questionnaires in a quiet, private space within the school compound, away from the presence of teachers or other learners, in order to protect their privacy and encourage honest responses (Mukabana et al., 2024). The teachers completed their questionnaires in the staff room or another designated space. All completed questionnaires were coded and stored securely so as to protect the identity of respondents.

Phase Four: Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Informants

The Sub-County Director of Education, the heads of institutions, the religious leaders, and the parents and guardians were interviewed at a place and time convenient to them (Roberts, 2020). The interviews were semi-structured and were guided by the interview guides reproduced in Appendices IV, V, VI, and VII. Each interview began with an explanation of the purpose of the study and a reassurance of confidentiality, after which the researcher asked the predetermined questions and used probing techniques to elicit detailed responses. The researcher maintained a neutral and non-judgemental stance throughout, allowing participants to express their views freely and without fear of judgement (Roberts, 2020). Interviews were conducted in English or in the local language, depending on the preference of the informant, and were audio-recorded with the participant's permission. Detailed field notes were also taken during and immediately after each interview in order to capture non-verbal cues and contextual details (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Each interview lasted between thirty and sixty minutes, and the researcher ensured that the sessions did not exceed one hour in order to respect the time of the informants.

Phase Five: Recording and Transcription of Data

All quantitative data were recorded from the coded questionnaires, and the qualitative data from the interview records and field notes. Interview records were transcribed verbatim as soon as possible after each interview to preserve accuracy, since verbatim transcription supports trustworthy thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The transcripts were checked against the original audio recordings for accuracy, and any sections in the local language were translated into English and verified by a bilingual research assistant. The quantitative data were entered into a coded data file and checked for entry errors before analysis (Field, 2024). All records and transcripts were stored securely, with passwords used on electronic files and physical documents kept under lock and key. The data were used only for this study and will be destroyed after the period allowed by university regulations.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed the logic of the concurrent mixed methods design. The quantitative data from the questionnaires were coded, entered, and checked for entry errors. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the levels of psychological, social, logistical, and emotional support provided by parents (Field, 2024). Composite scores were formed for each of the four support dimensions and for the dependent variable by taking the mean of the constituent items, and the internal consistency of each composite was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Inferential statistics were then used to test the four null hypotheses. Each of the four null hypotheses was tested by analysis of variance at the .05 level of significance (Field,

2024). For each hypothesis, the total variance in the dependent variable, the education of teenage mothers, was partitioned into the portion attributable to differences between respondents in the level of the dimension of parental support under test and the residual portion attributable to all other sources. The ratio of the resulting mean squares yielded the F statistic on which the decision to reject or to fail to reject each null hypothesis was taken, and eta squared, computed as the between-groups sum of squares divided by the total sum of squares, was reported as the measure of effect size (Cohen, 1988).

Each of the four dimensions of parental support was measured as a continuous composite on a five-point scale and not as a set of discrete treatment groups. Consequently, the between-groups term in each analysis carried a single degree of freedom and represented the linear component of the relationship between that dimension and the outcome (Field, 2024). This specification was preferred to the alternative of collapsing each continuous composite into categories. The categorisation of a continuous predictor discards information, reduces statistical power, and requires cut-off points that neither the instrument nor the reviewed literature supplies (Cohen, 1988). No categorisation of any predictor was therefore performed and no cut-off point was introduced at any stage of the analysis. The F ratio obtained under this specification is mathematically identical to the F ratio of the corresponding analysis of variance of the linear model and to the test of the associated product-moment correlation, so that the three statements of each result are equivalent rather than independent, and they are reported together in Chapter Four for that reason (Field, 2024).

The decision rule applied to every hypothesis was as follows. The null hypothesis was rejected where the probability associated with the obtained F ratio was less than .05.

The study failed to reject the null hypothesis where that probability was equal to or greater than .05 (Field, 2024). The expression "accept the null hypothesis" is not used at any point in this thesis. A non-significant result establishes only that the evidence is insufficient to reject the hypothesis of no influence and not that the hypothesis of no influence is true (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Exact probabilities are reported throughout except where they fall below .001, in which case they are reported as $p < .001$, in accordance with the reporting conventions of the seventh edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2020).

Three assumptions underlie the analysis of variance and each was addressed. Independence of observations was secured by design, since each respondent completed one questionnaire and no respondent contributed more than one record (Field, 2024). Approximate normality was assessed through the skewness and kurtosis of every composite and, for the multivariable model, through the Shapiro-Wilk test applied to the residuals (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). Homogeneity of variance in the form of Levene's test is defined for the comparison of two or more independent groups. No grouping variable was created in this study, and Levene's test is therefore not applicable to these data and none was computed (Field, 2024). The corresponding assumption for a continuous predictor is homoscedasticity of the residuals, and the evidence bearing on it is presented in Section 4.11. Post-hoc multiple comparison procedures such as Tukey's honestly significant difference test are likewise defined for the comparison of three or more group means. The between-groups term in each of the four analyses carried a single degree of freedom, and no multiple comparison therefore arose, and no post-hoc test was computed or is reported (Field, 2024). The evidence on each assumption is set out in full in Section 4.11.

Three further analyses were conducted in support of, and are clearly distinguished from, the four formal hypothesis tests. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to establish the strength and direction of each bivariate relationship, with Spearman rank-order correlation computed as a distribution-free check (Field, 2024). Simple linear regression was used to express each relationship as a coefficient in the units of the scales. Standard multiple linear regression was used to establish the relative contribution of the four predictors when modelled simultaneously. This analysis is not a test of any of the four null hypotheses, each of which concerns a single dimension considered on its own, and it is reported and interpreted as a supplementary multivariable analysis (Field, 2024). Effect sizes and 95% confidence intervals are reported throughout, together with variance inflation factors and the Durbin-Watson statistic as regression diagnostics. A significance level of .05 was used for all hypothesis tests, as is conventional in educational research (Field, 2024). Results are presented in tables and figures accompanied by interpretive commentary linking them to the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The data were analysed exactly as they were collected and entered. No case was deleted, no response was altered, no outlier was removed, and no missing value was imputed or replaced (Field, 2024). Where a scale produced an unexpected reliability coefficient, this was reported and investigated through a sensitivity analysis in which the arithmetic combination of items was varied while every respondent's answer was left unchanged, and every variant is reported in Section 4.11.6 (Ilhan et al., 2024). Where a result was not statistically significant, it is reported as obtained.

Thematic content analysis was used for the qualitative data obtained through the interviews and the open-ended questionnaire items. The analysis followed the six phases

recommended for reflexive thematic analysis, namely familiarisation with the transcripts, the systematic generation of initial codes, the search for themes, the review of themes, the definition and naming of themes, and the production of the report (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Coding was conducted manually, and codes were grouped into themes organised around the six research questions. The prevalence of each theme is reported as the number and percentage of respondents in whose account it appeared, so that the reader can judge the weight of the evidence behind each theme. An audit trail was maintained and peer debriefing with supervisors was undertaken in order to enhance trustworthiness (Nowell et al., 2020). The findings are presented in narrative form with direct quotations from the participants so as to preserve their voices, and each quotation is followed by analytical interpretation. Thematic analysis was appropriate because it is a flexible and rigorous method suited to the analysis of experiential data from vulnerable groups (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Finally, the quantitative and qualitative strands were integrated at the interpretation stage, in line with the concurrent mixed methods approach. The statistical results were compared with the thematic results in order to establish the degree of convergence, complementarity, or contradiction between them. This integration permitted the triangulation of findings and strengthened the validity of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Where the two strands differed, the difference was investigated and explained rather than resolved by discarding either source of evidence, and the outcome of that investigation is reported in Section 4.14. The integrated findings are presented around the six research questions, each of which is answered using a combination of numerical and narrative evidence, so that the conclusions and recommendations rest on a broad evidential base.

This approach is consistent with the principles of mixed methods research, which hold that the integration of quantitative and qualitative data at the interpretation stage produces a more complete understanding of the phenomenon under investigation than either strand alone (Dawadi et al., 2021).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount in this study because it involved a vulnerable population exposed to stigma, emotional sensitivity and social risk thus the teenage mothers. All respondents were treated with respect, dignity and fairness throughout the research process.

Informed consent was secured from all adult participants before data collection. Each teenage mother was informed of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the risks and her rights as a participant. In accordance with ethical research guidelines, assent was obtained from participants under the age of eighteen in addition to the consent of a parent or guardian. Information was provided in simple, comprehensible language so that participants could make voluntary and well-informed decisions (World Health Organization, 2021).

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout. No respondent's name appears in this thesis; respondents are identified only by codes assigned for the purpose of analysis, namely T for teachers, TM for teenage mothers, HOI for Heads of institutions, P for parents, G for guardians, RL for religious leaders and SCDE for the Sub-County Director of Education. Participant anonymity is preserved in all reporting arising from the study, and identifying details of schools and individuals have been withheld.

Ethical approval was sought from the Institutional scientific and ethical review committee (ISERC) of the African International University (AIU), and, upon approval, a data collection permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation(NACOSTI) before any fieldwork was undertaken. Appendix:

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The findings from the questionnaires and interview guides are analysed, interpreted, and discussed in this chapter. The findings are arranged in accordance with the six research questions of the study. An overview of the research instruments' return rate and the respondents' demographic characteristics is given at the beginning of the chapter. Each research question is presented under its own sub-heading, and the relevant null hypothesis is tested immediately after the findings for that research question have been presented, so that the statistical decision flows directly from the evidence.

4.2 Instrument Return Rate

The study targeted 174 individual respondents drawn from ten public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County. Of these, 145 respondents returned usable instruments, giving an overall response rate of 83.3%. The response rate varied considerably across the respondent categories, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Response Rate by Category of Respondent

Category of respondent	Targeted	Achieved	Response rate (%)
Teachers	52	52	100.0
Re-admitted teenage mothers	80	70	87.5
Heads of institutions	10	10	100.0
Sub-County Director of Education	1	1	100.0
Religious leaders	11	7	63.6
Parents and guardians	20	5	25.0
Total	174	145	83.3

Source: Field Research 2026

An overall response rate of 83.3% is well above the 70% threshold that Creswell and Creswell (2023) regard as adequate for survey-based educational research, and the

study can therefore be considered to rest on a sufficient volume of evidence. The variation between categories is nonetheless instructive in its own right. The full return from teachers and heads of institutions reflects the fact that these respondents were approached through the school administration during working hours, and that the researcher administered and collected the instruments personally on the same day. The 87.5% return from teenage mothers, while high, means that ten of the eighty girls who had been identified as re-admitted learners did not complete a questionnaire. The two categories with markedly lower returns are the religious leaders and, most conspicuously, the parents and guardians.

The 25.0% return from parents and guardians is itself a substantive finding rather than a mere methodological limitation. Parents were the most difficult category to reach, and the reluctance of parents to present themselves for an interview about their support for a daughter who had given birth is consistent with the sensitivity of the topic reported in the literature and with the accounts of community stigma that emerged in the qualitative data of this study. Mukabana et al. (2024) similarly reported difficulty in recruiting parents of adolescent mothers in Nairobi, noting that families frequently prefer to manage the matter privately. The low parental return therefore restricts the depth of the parental voice in this study, and this is acknowledged in the limitations, but the five interviews that were obtained were detailed and internally consistent and are reported below with due caution about their representativeness.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were established in order to describe the population from which the data were drawn and to provide the interpretive

context within which the substantive findings should be read. The characteristics of the three largest respondent categories are presented in turn.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Teenage Mothers

Table 4. presents the demographic characteristics of the seventy re-admitted teenage mothers who completed the questionnaire.

Table 3
Demographic Characteristics of the Re-admitted Teenage Mothers (n = 70)

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Age bracket	13–14 years	12	17.1
	15–16 years	36	51.4
	17–18 years	19	27.1
	Above 18 years	3	4.3
Grade	Grade 7	13	18.6
	Grade 8	34	48.6
	Grade 9	23	32.9
Type of school	Day school	70	100.0
	Boarding school	0	0.0
Number of children	One	56	80.0
	Two	10	14.3
	More than two	4	5.7
Person lived with	Both parents	18	25.7
	Mother only	21	30.0
	Father only	5	7.1
	Guardian or relatives	23	32.9
	Alone	3	4.3
Time out of school before re-admission	Less than 6 months	21	30.0
	6 months to 1 year	25	35.7
	More than 1 year	24	34.3

Source: Field Research 2026

Just over half of the teenage mothers (51.4%) were aged between 15 and 16 years, and a further 17.1% were Aged between 13 and 14 years. Taken together, more than two

thirds of the sample (68.6%) were aged 16 years or below, which places them at the younger end of the adolescent range and confirms that teenage motherhood in Bumula Sub-County begins early. This distribution is consistent with the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey finding that 15% of girls aged 15 to 19 years nationally have begun childbearing (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS] & ICF, 2023), and it is significant for the present study because girls of this age are developmentally dependent on their parents and are legally minors. The younger the mother, the more completely her educational continuation rests on decisions made by adults in the household rather than on her own agency, which strengthens the theoretical case for treating parental support as the pivotal microsystemic influence in Bronfenbrenner's terms.

The girls were distributed across all three Junior School grades, with the largest concentration in Grade 8 (48.6%) and a substantial group in Grade 9 (32.9%). That teenage mothers are present in every grade of junior school, including Grade 7, indicates that the phenomenon is not confined to the older learners approaching transition to senior school but is present from the beginning of the junior school cycle. This finding directly addresses the contextual gap identified in Chapter Two, where it was noted that the existing literature has concentrated on secondary schools and has left the newly created public junior schools largely unexamined.

Every one of the seventy respondents (100.0%) attended a day school. This is an important structural feature of the setting and it shapes the interpretation of the entire study. Because none of the girls was accommodated in a boarding facility, each of them returned home daily to a household in which an infant was waiting, and each of them depended daily on household arrangements for transport, food, childcare and the physical means of

attending school. In a boarding setting, a significant part of the material burden would be absorbed by the institution once fees were paid. In a day setting, by contrast, the household is the operative unit of support on every school day, which makes the logistical dimension of parental support structurally decisive rather than merely helpful. This observation anticipates and helps to explain the inferential results reported in Section 4.8.

Four fifths of the respondents (80.0%) had one child, but 20.0% already had two or more children, which indicates that repeat pregnancy is a real feature of the Sub-county. The living arrangements of the girls are perhaps the most striking demographic finding. Only 25.7% lived with both parents. The largest single group (32.9%) lived with a guardian or other relatives, 30.0% lived with their mother only, 7.1% lived with their father only and 4.3% lived alone. In other words, almost three quarters of the re-admitted teenage mothers in this study were not living in an intact two-parent household, and more than one in three was being supported by someone other than a biological parent. This has direct implications for the meaning of "parental support" in this context. The term must be understood to include grandmothers, aunts and other kin who carry the practical burden of care, and this is exactly what the qualitative data revealed, since two of the five parental interviews were conducted with a grandmother and a maternal aunt rather than with a biological parent. Participant -Catechist RL 4 captured the significance of this configuration when she observed that grandmothers "control family decisions" and that winning them over determines whether the whole family follows.

Finally, the period spent out of school before re-admission was substantial for most respondents. Only 30.0% returned within six months, while 35.7% were out for between six months and one year and 34.3% were out for more than one year. Seven in Ten girls

therefore lost at least two school terms, and one in three lost more than a full academic year. This is a critical finding for the interpretation of academic performance in this study, because a girl who has lost a year of instruction begins from a position of academic disadvantage that no amount of subsequent parental encouragement can immediately reverse. It also helps to explain the Age–grade mismatch that emerged so strongly in the qualitative data as a source of shame and demotivation.

4.3.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Teachers

Table 5 presents the demographic characteristics of the fifty-two teachers who completed the questionnaire.

Table 4
Demographic Characteristics of the Teachers (n = 52)

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Gender	Male	22	42.3
	Female	30	57.7
Age bracket	21–30 years	17	32.7
	31–40 years	22	42.3
	41–50 years	8	15.4
	51 years and above	5	9.6
Teaching experience	1–5 years	11	21.2
	6–10 years	16	30.8
	11–15 years	15	28.8
	16–20 years	0	0.0
	21–25 years	8	15.4
	26 years and above	2	3.8
Position in school	Deputy head teacher	4	7.7
	Senior teacher	15	28.8
	Class teacher	15	28.8
	Guidance and counselling teacher	6	11.5
	Teacher	12	23.1

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Highest academic qualification	Diploma in Education	32	61.5
	Bachelor of Education	13	25.0
	Master's degree	7	13.5

Source: Field Research 2026

The teaching force in the sampled schools was slightly more female than male (57.7% against 42.3%), which is relevant because the qualitative data repeatedly identified female teachers as the staff most trusted by teenage mothers. Three quarters of the teachers (75.0%) were below the age of 41, and 51.9% had ten or fewer years of teaching experience. The relative youth of the teaching force is a direct consequence of the recent establishment of Junior Schools under the Competency Based Curriculum, and it means that most of the teachers responsible for implementing the Re-entry guidelines with these learners are themselves early in their careers.

Considerable importance attaches to the fact that 76.9% of the teachers occupied a position of pastoral or supervisory responsibility, namely deputy head teacher, senior teacher, class teacher or guidance and counselling teacher, rather than being classroom teachers without such a designation. Their responses may therefore be taken as informed observations from staff who deal with re-admitted learners directly rather than as distant impressions. At the same time, only 11.5% were designated guidance and counselling teachers, which is a slender specialist resource for the psychosocial needs documented later in this chapter and which supports the recommendation, made in Chapter Five, that guidance and counselling capacity in junior schools be strengthened.

In terms of qualification, 61.5% of the teachers held a diploma, 25.0% held a bachelor's degree and 13.5% held a master's degree. That the modal qualification remains the diploma is consistent with the recent conversion of primary school staff into junior

school teaching, and it reinforces the finding, reported in Section 4.10, that in-service training on the handling of re-admitted teenage mothers is a strategy endorsed by the respondents themselves.

4.3.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Heads of Institutions

Table 6 presents the demographic characteristics of the ten heads of institutions who were interviewed.

Table 5
Demographic Characteristics of the Heads of Institutions (n = 10)

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Age bracket	31–40 years	5	50.0
	41–50 years	4	40.0
	Over 50 years	1	10.0
Highest level of education	Diploma	5	50.0
	Bachelor's degree	5	50.0
Experience as head teacher	0–5 years	4	40.0
	6–10 years	5	50.0
	11–15 years	1	10.0

Source: Field Research 2026

Nine of the ten heads of institutions (90.0%) had held headship for ten years or less, and four (40.0%) had held it for five years or less. The heads who are responsible for admitting and retaining teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County are therefore, for the most part, recently appointed leaders operating in institutions that are themselves new. This finding is important for the interpretation of the re-entry policy data reported in Section 4.10, because the Sub-County Director of Education attributed weak documentation of re-admission partly to informal school-level practice. A recently appointed head, managing a newly created institution under a curriculum that is still being rolled out, is unlikely to have inherited established systems for tracking re-admitted learners. This is a systemic rather

than an individual explanation, and it points toward the recommendation that induction and continuing training of heads on the re-entry guidelines be institutionalized.

4.4 Findings According to Research Questions

This section presents the findings, interpretations, and discussions organised according to the six research questions that guided the study. Each subsection presents the quantitative and qualitative findings, interprets them, and discusses them in relation to the reviewed literature.

4.4.1 Parental Psychological Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers

This section addresses research question two of the approved proposal, which asked how parental psychological support influences the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County. Parental psychological support was operationalised in the questionnaire for teenage mothers as the parental monitoring, urging and structuring of the girl's schooling: monitoring of academic progress, encouragement of regular attendance, communication with teachers, provision of time to study at home and encouragement to complete assignments. The five items and the distribution of responses are presented in Table 7.

Table 6
Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Psychological Support (n = 70)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
D11. My parents monitor my academic progress.	26 (37.1)	24 (34.3)	16 (22.9)	4 (5.7)	0 (0.0)	4.03	0.92
D12. My parents encourage me to attend school regularly.	20 (28.6)	17 (24.3)	27 (38.6)	6 (8.6)	0 (0.0)	3.73	0.98
D13. My parents communicate with teachers about my education.	8 (11.4)	31 (44.3)	22 (31.4)	8 (11.4)	1 (1.4)	3.53	0.90
D14. I receive enough time at home to study.	14 (20.0)	17 (24.3)	24 (34.3)	11 (15.7)	4 (5.7)	3.37	1.14
D15. My parents encourage me to complete assignments and homework.	24 (34.3)	22 (31.4)	16 (22.9)	5 (7.1)	3 (4.3)	3.84	1.11
Composite scale						3.70	0.77

Source: Field Research 2026

The composite mean for parental psychological support was 3.70 (SD = 0.77) on a five-point scale, which falls between the "undecided" and "agree" anchors and indicates a moderate rather than a strong level of support. The item pattern within the scale is, however, more informative than the composite. The girls agreed most strongly that their parents monitored their academic progress (M = 4.03, SD = 0.92; 71.4% agreement) and encouraged them to complete assignments (M = 3.84, SD = 1.11; 65.7% agreement). Agreement fell markedly on the two items that require the parent to act rather than merely to speak: only 55.7% agreed that their parents communicated with teachers about their education (M = 3.53, SD = 0.90) and only 44.3% agreed that they received enough time at home to study (M = 3.37, SD = 1.14), which was the lowest-scoring item on the entire teenage mothers' questionnaire. More than one in five girls (21.4%) actively disagreed that she received enough time to study at home.

This gradient is the substantive finding of the section. Parental psychological support in Bumula Sub-County is expressed principally in the verbal and supervisory register, and it thins out at precisely the point where it would require the parent to negotiate

with the school or to protect the girl's time from competing household demands. The item on study time is the most diagnostic: a girl may be told repeatedly to work hard and yet be given no hours in which to do so, because the evening after school is consumed by the infant and by domestic chores. Psychological encouragement that is not accompanied by the redistribution of household labour is, in this sense, exhortation without enablement.

The teachers' data corroborate this reading. In the open-ended items, 61.5% of the fifty-two teachers spontaneously mentioned encouragement and motivation as a mechanism through which parental support operates, and the most frequently recurring formulation was that "when parents keep urging the girl to work hard, she recovers quickly from poor performance and stays motivated" (26.9% of teachers). At the same time, 13.5% of teachers observed that "lack of encouragement at home makes even bright girls give up and their attendance becomes irregular." The teachers, in other words, saw parental encouragement as genuinely consequential while also recognizing its limits.

The qualitative evidence from key informants gave the mechanism greater texture. The Sub-County Director of Education identified parental encouragement as the single most powerful determinant of persistence beyond the first term after re-admission and located its force in the gendered authority structure of the community:

> Parental encouragement is perhaps the single strongest determinant of whether a re-admitted teenage mother stays in school beyond one term. When a father tells his daughter, *"You are still my child and I want you to finish school,"* that statement carries immense weight in our patriarchal society. It shields her from community gossip and gives her the internal resolve to endure stigma from peers. (SCDE)

The Director's account is analytically important because it specifies what psychological support does. It does not raise achievement directly; it confers social legitimacy on the girl's continued presence in school, and that legitimacy is what allows her to withstand the stigma that would otherwise drive her out. The same informant added the counterfactual: "when parents are hostile or indifferent, these girls drop out quietly within weeks. They develop a sense of fatalism believing that motherhood has permanently closed the door on their dreams."

Religious leaders described the same mechanism in the vocabulary of their traditions but with a consistent underlying claim. RL 1 contrasted two parental scripts in a single sentence:

> Parents are the first line of defence. When a mother tells her daughter, *"You can still become a doctor,"* that girl gathers courage. But when parents say, "You have ruined your life," the girl collapses. (RL 1)

Participant RL 5, added a developmental qualification that distinguishes effective from ineffective psychological support: "Parents who understand child development know that the teenage brain is still growing. They do not expect the girl to be a perfect mother and student overnight. They allow mistakes and provide guidance. This patience is what these girls need most." The distinction between patient and impatient encouragement is not one the questionnaire could capture, and it illustrates the complementarity function of the qualitative strand.

The parental interviews revealed a wide variation in the capacity to provide psychological support, and this variation was closely tied to parental resources and literacy. The most articulate account came from a mother who described a deliberate strategy of linking her daughter to a successful role model: "I link her with successful people in this

Bumula community to talk to her, that is, her aunt who is a high school principal in one of the schools around, because she loves her" (P 1). At the other extreme, a father stated flatly that in response to his daughter's discouragement he did "nothing" (P 2), and a grandmother explained that she could not discuss her granddaughter's educational progress at all because, in her words, "I am illitrate / didn't go to school" (G 1). Parental psychological support is therefore not simply a matter of goodwill; it is distributed according to the educational and economic capital of the household.

These findings are broadly consistent with the existing literature while adding an important qualification. Gebrekristos et al. (2022) found in the Eastern Cape of South Africa that adolescent mothers with psychological assets fostered in supportive family relationships were substantially more likely to return to school after childbirth, and Groves et al. (2022) reported that supportive caregiver interactions built the resilience that enabled young women to hold the dual role of mother and student. Mukabana et al. (2024) similarly found in Nairobi that parental rejection produced shame and hopelessness that suppressed school-going. The present study confirms the direction of these relationships in a rural junior school setting that none of those studies examined. The qualification it adds is that psychological support in Bumula is reported at only a moderate level, and that its weakest components are precisely those which require the parent to intervene in the school or to restructure the household, which is where the resource constraints documented in Section 4.9 bite hardest.

4.4.2 Parental Social Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers

This section addresses research question four of the approved proposal, which asked to what extent parental social support influences the education of teenage mothers.

Social support was operationalized as the relational work by which parents connect their daughters to networks of care and shield them from exclusion: protection from stigma, help in balancing childcare and school, family support, encouragement of positive relationships with teachers and classmates, and the building of confidence. The item distribution is presented in Table 8.

Table 7
Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Social Support (n = 70)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
E16. My family protects me from stigma and discrimination.	26 (37.1)	28 (40.0)	13 (18.6)	3 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	4.10	0.85
E17. My parents help me balance childcare and school responsibilities.	41 (58.6)	18 (25.7)	10 (14.3)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	4.41	0.79
E18. I feel supported by my family members.	21 (30.0)	27 (38.6)	19 (27.1)	2 (2.9)	1 (1.4)	3.93	0.91
E19. My parents encourage positive relationships with teachers and classmates.	11 (15.7)	29 (41.4)	25 (35.7)	5 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	3.66	0.83
E20. Family support has improved my confidence in school.	24 (34.3)	35 (50.0)	8 (11.4)	3 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	4.14	0.79
Composite scale						4.05	0.66

Source: Field Research 2026

Parental social support recorded the highest composite mean of the four support dimensions (M = 4.05, SD = 0.66), which places it in the "agree" band. The strongest single item on the whole teenage mothers' questionnaire was E17, "My parents help me balance childcare and school responsibilities" (M = 4.41, SD = 0.79), with which 84.3% of the girls agreed or strongly agreed. Family support was also reported to have improved confidence in school (M = 4.14, SD = 0.79; 84.3% agreement) and to have protected the girls from stigma and discrimination (M = 4.10, SD = 0.85; 77.1% agreement).

The one item that dropped noticeably below the others was E19, on parental encouragement of positive relationships with teachers and classmates (M = 3.66, SD =

0.83), with which only 57.1% agreed and on which 35.7% were undecided. The contrast between E17 and E19 defines the character of parental social support in this setting. Support directed inward, into the family and toward the practical management of the baby, is strong and widely reported. Support directed outward, into the school and the peer group, is markedly weaker. Parents in Bumula are willing and largely able to hold the child while the girl attends school; they are much less likely to enter the school and negotiate on her behalf. This is the same boundary that appeared in the psychological support scale at item D13, and the convergence of the two independent items strengthens the inference.

The heads of institutions confirmed this from the school side. Their accounts of parental contact were dominated by the payment or non-payment of fees rather than by any relational engagement with the girl's social position in the school, and none of the ten volunteered an example of a parent intervening with staff or peers on a daughter's behalf. The parental interviews are consistent with this: while the most educated respondent reported that "When results (Academic Results) are out for every exam, I call the class teacher or at times visit the school to discuss her academic progress" (G 2), and one mother reported weekly telephone contact with the head of institution (P 1), a father conceded that he communicated with the school "Yes, though not always" (P 2), a mother stated "not very much, I don't go to her school often" (P 3), and a grandmother explained that reaching the school was difficult "due to lack of means of transport and old age" (G 1).

The Sub-County Director of Education articulated why the outward-facing form of social support matters so much, framing it explicitly in mesosystemic terms:

> *Social support determines the girl's social safety at school. When parents are visibly supportive, teachers handle the girl with dignity, and fellow learners are less likely to bully her. Parents who maintain communication with the school, attending PTA meetings,*

checking on progress, create a mesosystem where the family and school work in tandem. This integration is critical under the CBC framework, which demands parental involvement. (SCDE)

Several informants identified the specific obstacles that prevent parents from performing this outward role. Participant RL 2 located it in social class: "Parents lack social power. They are poor farmers or labourers; they cannot challenge wealthy community members who look down on them. Some teachers also stigmatise the girl, and parents do not know how to confront authority figures." Participant Catechist (RL 4) located it in generational authority, describing grandparents who tell parents, *"You are wasting money on a spoiled girl,"* and observing that the resulting "generational conflict splits families" because parents *"want to support the girl, but they fear disrespecting their own parents."* Given that 32.9% of the girls in this study lived with a guardian or relatives, this intergenerational dynamic is not peripheral but central.

The teenage mothers' own open-ended responses show that outward-facing parental support does occur and is noticed when it does: 31.7% of the sixty girls who completed the typed open-ended forms mentioned parents monitoring their progress or meeting teachers, one writing that her parents *"follow up on my performance and ask my teachers about my progress"* and another that *"my parents meet teachers during parent days and listen to their advice."* The point is not that such support is absent but that it is unevenly distributed and reaches barely half the cohort.

These findings correspond closely with the international evidence. Morgan et al. (2023) found in Ghana's Volta Region that parental and external support were the key correlates of school re-entry, and Mukabana et al. (2024) reported that adolescent mothers in a Nairobi settlement who experienced hostility from peers and teachers were nonetheless

able to continue attending where parents were visibly present in the school to defend their rights. Ajayi et al. (2023) concluded from a continental scoping review that family and societal attitudes determine whether schooling is experienced as a positive or a negative environment. The present study confirms all three findings and specifies their internal structure: in this rural junior school setting, the protective, inward-facing component of parental social support is robust, while the advocacy component that these earlier studies emphasise is the weaker link.

4.4.3 Parental Emotional Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers

This section addresses research question three of the approved proposal, which asked how parents' emotional support influences the education of teenage mothers. Emotional support was operationalised as the expression of warmth, acceptance, attentive listening and guidance. The item distribution is presented in Table 9.

Table 8
Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Emotional Support (n = 70)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
B1. My parents encourage me to continue with school.	18 (25.7)	26 (37.1)	20 (28.6)	5 (7.1)	1 (1.4)	3.79	0.96
B2. My parents motivate me to work hard in my studies.	21 (30.0)	15 (21.4)	21 (30.0)	10 (14.3)	3 (4.3)	3.59	1.19
B3. My parents make me feel accepted despite being a teenage mother.	11 (15.7)	25 (35.7)	25 (35.7)	8 (11.4)	1 (1.4)	3.53	0.94
B4. My parents listen to my school-related challenges.	13 (18.6)	35 (50.0)	15 (21.4)	7 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	3.77	0.87
B5. I receive guidance and counselling from my parents.	31 (44.3)	27 (38.6)	12 (17.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.27	0.74
Composite scale						3.79	0.71

Source: Field Research 2026

The composite mean for parental emotional support was 3.79 (SD = 0.71), placing it second among the four dimensions but still short of consistent agreement. The

distribution within the scale is again more revealing than the aggregate. The highest-scoring item was B5, on receiving guidance and counselling from parents (M = 4.27, SD = 0.74), on which 82.9% agreed and not a single respondent disagreed. The lowest-scoring item was B3, "My parents make me feel accepted despite being a teenage mother" (M = 3.53, SD = 0.94), on which only 51.4% agreed, 35.7% were undecided and 12.9% disagreed.

That acceptance should be the weakest emotional item and guidance the strongest is a finding of considerable interpretive weight. It suggests that parents in Bumula Sub-County are more willing to instruct their daughters than to accept them. Nearly half of the girls in this study could not affirm that their parents made them feel accepted despite being a teenage mother, and item B2 shows a similar profile, with 18.6% disagreeing that their parents motivated them to work hard and the highest standard deviation in the scale (SD = 1.19), which indicates a polarised household experience: some girls are strongly supported, others are not supported at all.

The Sub-County Director of Education corroborated this pattern directly, and was explicit that emotional support was the scarcest of the four dimensions in the sub-county:

> *Emotional support is the scarcest form of parental support in our sub-county. Many parents operate from a framework of "tough love," believing that showing warmth will encourage further waywardness.* (SCDE)

The same informant added that the effective providers of emotional support were "mothers who themselves experienced early pregnancy or who have been sensitized by community health workers," which suggests that emotional support is a learned capability rather than a spontaneous parental disposition, and that it is therefore in principle amenable

to intervention. The religious leaders converged on the same judgement from independent vantage points. Participant RL 2 reported that "accepted girls attend school regularly, perform well, and even help other girls. Rejected girls become withdrawn, miss school, and some run away to towns where they are exploited. The difference is like night and day." Participant RL 8, who disclosed that she had herself been a teenage mother, framed the consequence of withheld affection in protective terms: "when parents withhold affection, the girl seeks it elsewhere - from boyfriends, bad friends, or dangerous places."

The parental interviews illustrated the "tough love" framework in practice. Two of the five respondents described a deliberate strategy of withdrawal in response to their daughters' emotional difficulties: "I leave her sometimes to see how she handles it, then I intervene later" (P 3) and "at times I talk to her, at times I leave her to overcome it on her own" (P 2). The teenage mothers' own accounts registered the effect: 38.3% of the sixty girls who completed the typed open-ended forms described stigma, mockery or isolation among their principal challenges, several of them locating it within the family and the immediate community rather than only in the school.

Notwithstanding this qualitative weight, the quantitative analysis reported in Section 4.11.3 found that parental emotional support was not significantly associated with the educational outcomes reported by the girls. This is the most important divergence between the two strands of this study, and it is examined in the integration section (4.14) and discussed at length in Chapter Five. It must be emphasised here that the non-significant result is reported exactly as obtained and that no adjustment of any kind was made in an attempt to produce significance.

The literature would have predicted a stronger quantitative association. Ajayi et al. (2023) found across the African evidence base that adolescents who reported family acceptance had significantly better psychosocial wellbeing and educational aspirations, and Groves et al. (2022) found that warm caregiver relationships underpinned the resilience processes that sustained schooling. The descriptive and qualitative findings of the present study are fully consistent with that literature; the inferential finding is not. Chapter Five considers three explanations for this divergence, namely the restricted range of the outcome measure, the mediated rather than direct nature of the emotional pathway, and the possibility that in conditions of acute material scarcity emotional warmth is insufficient on its own to convert into attendance and performance.

4.4.4 Parental Logistical Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers

This section addresses research question one of the approved proposal, which asked to what extent parental logistical support influences the education of teenage mothers. Logistical support was operationalised as the material and practical provision that makes daily school attendance possible: timely payment of fees, provision of learning materials and uniform, assistance with the infant's needs, and the absence of financial obstruction to attendance and performance. The item distribution, presented as the respondents recorded it, is shown in Table 10.

Table 9
Teenage Mothers' Responses on Parental Logistical Support (n = 70)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
C6. My parents provide school fees on time.	27 (38.6)	18 (25.7)	13 (18.6)	10 (14.3)	2 (2.9)	3.83	1.18
C7. My parents provide learning materials such as books and uniforms.	18 (25.7)	21 (30.0)	20 (28.6)	8 (11.4)	3 (4.3)	3.61	1.12
C8. Lack of financial support affects my school attendance.	22 (31.4)	16 (22.9)	18 (25.7)	10 (14.3)	4 (5.7)	3.60	1.23
C9. My parents assist in meeting my child's needs.	27 (38.6)	24 (34.3)	16 (22.9)	3 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	4.07	0.89
C10. Financial difficulties interfere with my academic performance.	27 (38.6)	31 (44.3)	11 (15.7)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	4.20	0.75
Composite scale (C8 and C10 reverse-scored)						3.14	0.37

Source: Field Research 2026

Read as recorded, the items on this scale tell a coherent and sobering story. The two negatively worded items attracted the highest levels of agreement of any items in the scale: 82.9% of the girls agreed that financial difficulties interfered with their academic performance (M = 4.20, SD = 0.75) and 54.3% agreed that lack of financial support affected their school attendance (M = 3.60, SD = 1.23). At the same time, 72.9% agreed that their parents assisted in meeting their child's needs (M = 4.07, SD = 0.89), while agreement fell to 64.3% on the timely payment of fees (M = 3.83, SD = 1.18) and to 55.7% on the provision of learning materials and uniform (M = 3.61, SD = 1.12). Almost one in five girls (17.1%) actively disagreed that her parents paid fees on time and 15.7% disagreed that they provided books and uniform.

Because items C8 and C10 were reverse-scored in forming the composite, the resulting composite mean of 3.14 (SD = 0.37) is the lowest of the four support dimensions and sits almost exactly on the "undecided" midpoint of the scale, with an unusually narrow dispersion. The narrowness of the dispersion is itself informative: the girls clustered tightly around a middling level of logistical provision, with none reporting either complete

deprivation or complete sufficiency. Whichever scoring rule is adopted, the substantive picture is the same. Material support is the dimension of parental support that is least adequately supplied and the one whose insufficiency the girls themselves identify most emphatically as an obstacle to attendance and performance.

The heads of institutions provided the most direct institutional corroboration of this finding. When asked whether parents provided all the stationery needed by teenage mothers, nine of the ten (90.0%) answered plainly "No", and only one answered "Yes". On the payment of school fees, six answered affirmatively, two answered "No" and two gave a qualified answer, namely "Some parents pay" (HOI 9) and "Some they pay" (HOI 8). On the provision of childcare for the infants, seven answered "Yes" and three answered "No". The stationery finding is the starkest consensus in the entire qualitative dataset, and the heads were uniform in describing its consequences. HOI 6 gave the most complete account:

> It hinders academic performance, diminished student engagement, and causes profound emotional distress like anxiety and shame. (HOI 6)

HOI 10 added that lack of stationery "lowers self-esteem of learners and lead to absentism", and HOI 1 described the classroom mechanics of the shortage: "Most pupils do not complete the given homeworks on time. Time is also wasted since they wait for others to share." HOI 2 explained the fee mechanism with equal directness: "For those who are not supported especially paying fees, most of them remain at home since in school fees payment is a must", and HOI 4 stated that untimely fee payment "leads to poor performance. It also leads to total drop out from school."

The childcare question produced the most operationally significant testimony. HOI 4 observed that where childcare was not provided, the girls "end up performing poorly in

academics due to lateness in school or not attending class as they take care of their babies", and HOI 7 stated that "they end up being absent in school most of the time while taking care of the baby". HOI 6 described the same phenomenon as "poor time management among the teen mothers as most of the time they stay at home". Because every girl in this study attended a day school, the childcare arrangement in the household governs attendance on a daily basis, which is precisely the structural feature identified in Section 4.4.1.

The Sub-County Director of Education drew the strands together in the strongest terms used by any informant, and identified childcare as the decisive component within logistical support:

> *Logistical support is the sine qua non of retention. A girl whose school fees are paid and who has books and uniform can attend school without the daily humiliation of being sent home. Childcare support is even more decisive: if a mother knows her baby is safe, she can concentrate in class. When parents provide this logistics consistently, attendance regularity improves dramatically. Without logistical support, even the most determined girl is eventually worn down by the daily friction of unmet material needs.* (SCDE)

The teenage mothers' own open-ended responses converge on the same point from the other direction. Half of the sixty girls who completed the typed forms (50.0%) named material or fee shortages among their principal challenges, more than any other category, and 45.0% identified fees, uniform, books and materials among the ways in which their parents supported them. Individual accounts made the mechanism concrete: "sometimes I lack school fees and I am sent home while others remain in class"; "I do not have money for lunch on some days so I stay hungry in class"; "I lack enough books, uniform and other

learning materials." The most frequently reported single form of support named by the girls (53.3%) was childcare provided by a mother or grandmother, one respondent writing simply that "my mother takes care of my baby when I am in school so I can attend lessons" (TM 34) and another, in the scanned handwritten forms, listing as the support she most needed a sponsor "to take care of my child so that I can get ample time to study" (TM 6).

Teachers reported the same hierarchy. Logistical and material provision was the mechanism most frequently named by teachers as the route through which parental support affects outcomes, appearing in 90.4% of the fifty-two responses, and childcare for the infant appeared in 53.8%. Nine of the fifty-two teachers (17.3%) used almost identical language in observing that "reliable childcare at home allows the girl to remain in school the whole day without sneaking out to breastfeed."

The parental interviews confirmed both the willingness and the incapacity of the households. Every one of the five parents and guardians described providing what they could while conceding that it was not enough. One father, a motorcycle taxi operator, explained: "At times I don't cater for all requirements because minimum income from boda boda riding" (P 2). A mother reported: "I do provide but at times I get stuck due to low income (farming)" (P 1). A grandmother, born in 1954, stated that she did not provide school requirements at all because "the school head teacher helps to pay and the Government" (G 1), and named her own principal challenge as "old age". The constraint documented here is one of capacity rather than of will, and this distinction carries directly into the recommendations of Chapter Five.

These findings align closely with the strongest evidence in the existing literature. Gebrekristos et al. (2022) found in South Africa that adolescent mothers who had access

to formal or family childcare were significantly more likely to return to school after birth than those who carried the full burden of infant care. Mukabana et al. (2024) identified poverty and childcare responsibilities as the two most common barriers to school attendance in a Nairobi informal settlement, one participant stating that "if I am to go back to school, there is no one to take care of my baby". Morgan et al. (2023) found socioeconomic status to be a key determinant of school re-entry in Ghana. The present study replicates these findings in a rural Kenyan junior school setting and, through the inferential analysis reported in the next section, establishes that logistical support is not merely one influence among four but the only one that retains a statistically significant unique association with educational outcomes when all four dimensions are modelled together.

4.4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Parental Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers

The teachers' questionnaire approached the same construct from the professional vantage point of the staff who receive the re-admitted learners. The ten items of Section B and the distribution of responses are presented in Table 11.

Table 10

Teachers' Responses on Parental Support and the Education of Teenage Mothers (n = 52)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
i. Teenage mothers feel psychologically supported by parents after re-admission to the same grade.	29 (55.8)	18 (34.6)	2 (3.8)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)	4.37	0.95
ii. Parents' emotional support increases teen mothers' ability to perform well academically.	11 (21.2)	34 (65.4)	1 (1.9)	2 (3.8)	4 (7.7)	3.88	1.04
iii. Parental moral support to teen mothers enhances their retention in school.	25 (48.1)	21 (40.4)	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	4.35	0.74
iv. Logistical support to teenage mothers increases chances of attendance consistency.	20 (38.5)	23 (44.2)	5 (9.6)	2 (3.8)	2 (3.8)	4.10	1.00
v. Teen mothers perform poorly academically when logistical support is inadequate.	26 (50.0)	21 (40.4)	4 (7.7)	1 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	4.38	0.72
vi. Family economic status determines the re-admission of teen mothers.	18 (34.6)	26 (50.0)	2 (3.8)	4 (7.7)	2 (3.8)	4.04	1.03
vii. Teen mothers' attitude influences parental support to their education.	22 (42.3)	22 (42.3)	4 (7.7)	4 (7.7)	0 (0.0)	4.19	0.89
viii. Lack of implementation and follow-up on the re-entry policy limits chances of re-admitting teen mothers.	18 (34.6)	28 (53.8)	2 (3.8)	3 (5.8)	1 (1.9)	4.13	0.89
ix. Parents' attitude influences re-admission of teenage mothers at the same grade.	15 (28.8)	24 (46.2)	7 (13.5)	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	3.90	1.00
x. Inadequate advocacy and communication limits re-admission of teen mothers to the same grade.	24 (46.2)	19 (36.5)	3 (5.8)	2 (3.8)	4 (7.7)	4.10	1.18
Composite scale						4.14	0.72

Source: Field Research 2026

The teachers endorsed every one of the ten propositions at a high level, and the composite mean of 4.14 (SD = 0.72) is appreciably higher than any of the composites reported by the girls themselves. This discrepancy between professional and lived accounts is itself a finding and is examined in Section 4.14. The two highest-scoring items are directly relevant to the hypotheses. Item v, "Teen mothers perform poorly academically when logistical support is inadequate", attracted 90.4% agreement (M = 4.38, SD = 0.72), and item i, on psychological support after re-admission, attracted the same level of agreement (M = 4.37, SD = 0.95). The lowest-scoring item was ii, on emotional support and academic performance (M = 3.88, SD = 1.04), with 11.5% disagreement. The rank order of the teachers' endorsements therefore mirrors, in broad outline, the rank order of

the inferential findings reported below: the logistical proposition is the most strongly endorsed and the emotional proposition the least.

Three further items deserve comment because they extend beyond the four support dimensions. Item vi, on family economic status determining re-admission, attracted 84.6% agreement, which locates the study's central finding within a wider structural account of household poverty. Item viii, on the consequences of weak implementation and follow-up of the re-entry policy, attracted 88.5% agreement, and item x, on inadequate advocacy and communication, attracted 82.7%. Taken together, these three items indicate that the teachers regard the constraints on teenage mothers' education as simultaneously economic and administrative, and they anticipate the strategies reported in Section 4.13.

Item vii, on which 84.6% of teachers agreed that the teenage mother's own attitude influences the parental support she receives, is theoretically notable because it describes a reciprocal rather than a unidirectional relationship. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory holds that the developing person both shapes and is shaped by the microsystem, and the teachers' endorsement of this item is the clearest empirical trace of that reciprocity in the present dataset.

4.4.6 Educational Outcomes of the Re-admitted Teenage Mothers

The dependent variable, the education of teenage mothers, was measured through five self-report items covering attendance consistency, academic performance, motivation, classroom participation and expectation of completion. The distribution is presented in Table 12.

Table 11
Teenage Mothers' Responses on Educational Outcomes (n = 70)

Statement	SA f (%)	A f (%)	U f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)	M	SD
F21. I attend school regularly after re-admission.	26 (37.1)	34 (48.6)	6 (8.6)	4 (5.7)	0 (0.0)	4.17	0.82
F22. My academic performance has improved since re-admission.	29 (41.4)	25 (35.7)	15 (21.4)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	4.17	0.82
F23. I am motivated to complete my education.	32 (45.7)	24 (34.3)	12 (17.1)	2 (2.9)	0 (0.0)	4.23	0.84
F24. I participate actively in classroom activities.	30 (42.9)	26 (37.1)	14 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.23	0.76
F25. I believe I will successfully complete my education.	29 (41.4)	32 (45.7)	9 (12.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.29	0.68
Composite scale						4.22	0.60

Source: Field Research 2026

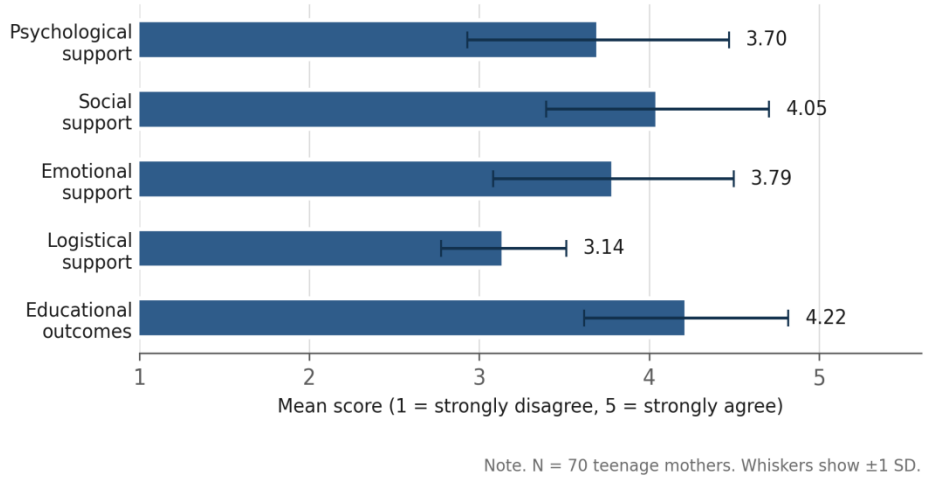
The composite mean for educational outcomes was 4.22 (SD = 0.60), the highest of all the composites in the study. The girls were most confident about the future: 87.1% believed they would successfully complete their education (M = 4.29, SD = 0.68) and 80.0% reported being motivated to complete it (M = 4.23, SD = 0.84), with no respondent disagreeing with either statement. Attendance regularity attracted 85.7% agreement (M = 4.17, SD = 0.82), although 5.7% disagreed, and improvement in academic performance attracted 77.1% agreement, with 21.4% of the girls undecided (M = 4.17, SD = 0.82).

Two features of this distribution require careful interpretation. First, the responses are markedly positively skewed and the standard deviations are the smallest in the study, which produces a restriction of range in the dependent variable. Statistically, a restricted range attenuates the correlations that can be observed between the dependent variable and its predictors, and this attenuation must be borne in mind when reading the modest coefficients reported in Section 4.11. Second, the girls' assessments are self-reports of aspiration and perceived progress rather than institutional records of attendance, retention or examination performance. The confidence expressed here therefore describes the girls'

educational self-belief rather than their measured attainment, and the disjunction between that self-belief and the material obstacles they simultaneously reported is one of the most striking patterns in the data. The same girls who overwhelmingly believed they would complete their education also reported, at similar rates, that financial difficulties interfered with their performance.

This resilience is not an artefact. The literature on adolescent mothers in sub-Saharan Africa consistently records high educational aspiration alongside low realisation. Morgan et al. (2023) found in Ghana that fewer than a third of adolescent mothers had actually returned to school despite the great majority wishing to do so, and concluded that aspiration in the absence of supportive structures is insufficient. The present study documents the aspiration side of that finding with unusual clarity and, through the hypothesis tests that follow, identifies which supportive structure matters most.

Figure 2
Mean Scores on the Four Dimensions of Parental Support and on Educational Outcomes



Source: Field Research 2026

Figure 2 displays the relative standing of the five composite variables. The visual summary makes plain the central descriptive finding of the chapter: educational aspiration and social support are reported at high levels, psychological and emotional support at moderate levels, and logistical support at the lowest level of all, with the narrowest dispersion. Table 13 presents the same composites in full.

Table 12
Descriptive Statistics for the Composite Study Variables

Variable	n	M	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
Parental psychological support	70	3.70	0.77	1.80	5.00	−0.46	−0.57
Parental social support	70	4.05	0.66	2.00	5.00	−0.87	0.53
Parental emotional support	70	3.79	0.71	1.80	5.00	−0.23	−0.34
Parental logistical support	70	3.14	0.37	2.00	4.00	−0.46	0.53
Educational outcomes	70	4.22	0.60	2.60	5.00	−0.68	−0.14
Teachers' composite rating	52	4.14	0.72	2.10	5.00	—	—

Source: Field Research 2026

The skewness and kurtosis statistics reported in Table 13 confirm that the distributional assumptions underpinning the parametric analyses that follow are reasonably satisfied. All five composites are negatively skewed, which reflects the generally favourable tenor of the responses, but none exceeds the ±1 threshold for skewness or the ±2 threshold for kurtosis that Field (2024) regards as compatible with parametric testing. No transformation of any variable was undertaken.

4.5 Testing of the Research Hypotheses

The study advanced four null hypotheses, each asserting that one dimension of parental support has no statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County. Each of the four was tested by analysis of variance at the .05 level of significance, using the data from the seventy teenage mothers, since only that instrument measured both the four predictors and the dependent

variable on the same respondents. In each analysis the total variance in the educational outcomes the girls reported was partitioned into the portion attributable to differences between them in the level of the dimension of parental support under test and the residual portion attributable to all other sources, and the ratio of the resulting mean squares provided the *F* statistic on which the decision was taken. The decision rule is that stated in Section 3.9: where the probability associated with *F* was less than .05 the null hypothesis was rejected, and where that probability was .05 or greater the study failed to reject it. Eta squared is reported as the measure of effect size for every analysis. Pearson and Spearman correlations and simple linear regression are reported alongside each analysis of variance as supporting statistics that express the same relationship in other units, and the multiple regression reported in Section 4.7.5 is a supplementary multivariable analysis rather than a test of any of the four hypotheses.

Table 14 presents the correlation matrix for the four predictors and the dependent variable.

Table 13
Pearson Correlations Among the Four Dimensions of Parental Support and Educational Outcomes (n = 70)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Parental psychological support	—				
2. Parental social support	.37**	—			
3. Parental emotional support	.36**	.31**	—		
4. Parental logistical support	.26*	.23	.19	—	
5. Educational outcomes	.27*	.27*	.18	.45***	—
M	3.70	4.05	3.79	3.14	4.22
SD	0.77	0.66	0.71	0.37	0.60

Source: Field Research 2026

Three features of the matrix are important. First, all four predictors are positively correlated with educational outcomes, so the direction of every relationship is as the study anticipated. Second, the strongest correlation by a substantial margin is that between logistical support and educational outcomes ($r = .45$, $p < .001$), which is more than one and a half times the magnitude of the next strongest. Third, the four predictors are only modestly inter-correlated, ranging from .19 to .37, which means that they are measuring reasonably distinct constructs and that multicollinearity will not distort the multiple regression model. The relationship between logistical support and educational outcomes is displayed in Figure 3.

The data presented in Figure 3 were derived from the questionnaires administered to the seventy re-admitted teenage mothers who participated in the study. Specifically, each data point on the scatterplot represents one respondent's paired scores on two composite variables:

Parental Logistical Support (x-axis): The composite mean score for each respondent on the five-item logistical support scale (items C6–C10). As explained in Section 4.3, items C8 and C10 were reverse-scored before the composite was computed, in accordance with the instrument design. Each respondent's composite score could range from 1.00 to 5.00.

Educational Outcomes (y-axis): The composite mean score for each respondent on the five-item educational outcomes scale (items F21–F25). Each respondent's composite score could range from 1.00 to 5.00.

The scatterplot therefore contains 70 data points, one for each teenage mother who completed the questionnaire. The points were plotted by pairing each respondent's

logistical support composite score with her educational outcomes composite score. The regression line superimposed on the scatterplot represents the simple linear regression of educational outcomes on parental logistical support, as reported in Section 4.4.1: Educational outcomes = 1.90 + 0.74 (logistical support), with *r* = .45, R^2 = .21, *p* < .001.

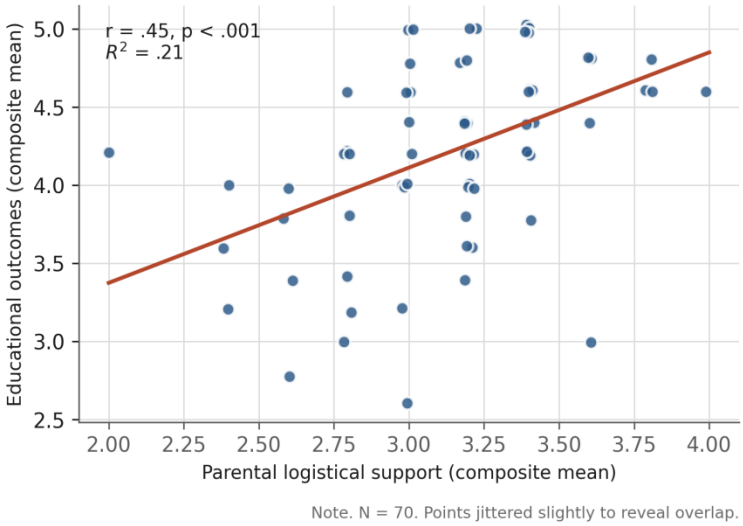
The data were drawn from the coded questionnaire responses entered into the statistical data file described in Section 3.9. No data point was fabricated, estimated, or imputed. As stated in Section 3.9 and reiterated in Section 4.1, no case was deleted, no response was altered, no outlier was removed, and no missing value was imputed. Every point on the scatterplot corresponds directly to a real respondent's answers.

The scatterplot was generated using IBM SPSS Statistics, the software package identified in Section 3.9 for quantitative data analysis. The points were slightly jittered in the figure to reveal overlapping observations, as noted in the figure caption. This jittering is a visual aid only and does not alter the underlying data values or the statistical results.

The raw data file containing the individual respondent scores is retained by the researcher and is available for inspection by the university examiners upon request, in accordance with the audit trail procedures described in Section 3.7.4.

Figure 3

Scatterplot of Parental Logistical Support and Educational Outcomes



Source: ***Field Research 2026***

Table 15 sets out the correspondence between each research question, its null hypothesis, the variables concerned, the statistical test applied, the table in which the analysis of variance is presented and the subsection in which the decision is recorded.

Table 14

Alignment of the Research Questions, Null Hypotheses, Variables and Statistical Tests

Null hypothesis	Research question	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Statistical test	ANOVA table	Section
H_{01}	Question ii	Parental psychological support	Education of teenage mothers	One-way ANOVA, α = .05	Table 17	4.11.1
H_{02}	Question iv	Parental social support	Education of teenage mothers	One-way ANOVA, α = .05	Table 18	4.11.2
H_{03}	Question iii	Parental emotional support	Education of teenage mothers	One-way ANOVA, α = .05	Table 19	4.11.3
H_{04}	Question i	Parental logistical support	Education of teenage mothers	One-way ANOVA, α = .05	Table 20	4.11.4

Source: Field Research 2026

4.5.1 Testing of Hypothesis One: Parental Psychological Support

H_{01}*:* Psychological support has no statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

The independent variable in this analysis is the five-item composite measure of parental psychological support described in Section 4.5 (M = 3.70, SD = 0.77), and the dependent variable is the five-item composite measure of educational outcomes described in Section 4.10 (M = 4.22, SD = 0.60). Both were measured on the same seventy re-admitted teenage mothers. The analysis of variance is presented in Table 17.

Table 15

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Psychological Support (n = 70)

Source	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	*p*	η^2
Between groups (parental psychological support)	1.78	1	1.78	5.25	.025	.072
Within groups (residual)	23.06	68	0.34			
Total	24.84	69				

Note. df = degrees of freedom; η^2 = eta squared. The total sum of squares is $(n - 1)s^2$, computed from the standard deviation of the educational outcomes composite reported in Table 13; the sums of squares are therefore exact to the precision of that statistic. The F ratio and its probability are computed from unrounded values, so recomputation from the rounded entries displayed may differ slightly in the second decimal place. Because parental psychological support is a continuous composite and not a set of discrete groups, the between-groups term carries one degree of freedom and represents the linear component of the relationship, as explained in Section 3.9. α = .05.

The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 5.25$, $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .072$. Differences between the girls in the level of parental psychological support they reported therefore accounted for 7.2% of the total variance in the educational outcomes they reported, and an F ratio of this magnitude would arise with a probability of .025 if parental psychological support had no influence on those outcomes. The supporting statistics express the same relationship in other units. Parental psychological support was significantly and positively correlated with educational outcomes, $r(68) = .27$, 95% CI [.04, .47], $p = .025$, and simple linear regression gave $b = 0.21$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [0.03, 0.39], $\beta = .27$, $t(68) = 2.29$, $p = .025$, so that a one-point increase on the five-point psychological support scale was associated with an increase of approximately 0.21 of a point on the

educational outcomes scale. By Cohen's conventions an eta squared of .072 represents a small to medium effect.

Because the obtained probability of .025 is smaller than the adopted significance level of .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is concluded that parental psychological support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, which is the answer returned to research question two. The girls whose parents monitored their progress, urged their attendance and structured their study time reported better attendance, performance, motivation, participation and completion expectancy than those whose parents did not. The effect is nonetheless small. An eta squared of .072 means that more than nine tenths of the variance in the girls' reported educational outcomes is attributable to factors other than parental psychological support, and, as Section 4.11.5 shows, the relationship does not survive the introduction of the other three support dimensions into a single model. That indicates that its significance in isolation rests in part on the covariance which psychological support shares with the other dimensions, and particularly with logistical support ($r = .26$, $p = .029$). Because the design of the study is cross-sectional, this finding establishes a statistically significant association and not a demonstrated causal effect.

This finding is consistent in direction with Gebrekristos et al. (2022) and Groves et al. (2022), both of whom identified psychological assets nurtured within supportive families as predictors of postpartum school return in South Africa, and with the qualitative Kenyan evidence of Mukabana et al. (2024). It is weaker in magnitude than those studies would suggest, and Chapter Five considers why.

4.5.2 Testing of Hypothesis Two: Parental Social Support

H_{02}: Social support has no statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

The independent variable in this analysis is the five-item composite measure of parental social support described in Section 4.6 ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.66$), and the dependent variable is the educational outcomes composite ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.60$), both measured on the same seventy re-admitted teenage mothers. The analysis of variance is presented in Table 18.

Table 16
One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Social Support (n = 70)

Source	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	*p*	η^2
Between groups (parental social support)	1.78	1	1.78	5.26	.025	.072
Within groups (residual)	23.06	68	0.34			
Total	24.84	69				

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 5.26$, $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .072$. Differences between the girls in the level of parental social support they reported accounted for 7.2% of the total variance in the educational outcomes they reported. The supporting statistics agree. Parental social support was significantly and positively correlated with educational outcomes, $r(68) = .27$, 95% CI [.04, .47], $p = .025$, and the Spearman rank-order correlation, computed as a distribution-free check, was somewhat stronger, $\rho = .35$, $p = .003$. Simple linear regression gave $b = 0.25$, $SE = 0.11$, 95% CI [0.03, 0.46], $\beta = .27$, $t(68) = 2.29$, $p = .025$. By Cohen's conventions an eta squared of .072 represents a small to medium effect.

Because the obtained probability of .025 is smaller than the adopted significance level of .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is concluded that parental social support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, which is the answer returned to research question four. As with psychological support the effect is small, social support accounting for 7.2% of the variance in the outcome. The finding acquires additional interest from the descriptive results: social support recorded the highest mean of the four dimensions (M = 4.05) yet accounts for only a modest share of the variance in outcomes. A dimension of support that is widely supplied cannot, by construction, explain much of the difference between girls who fare well and girls who fare poorly, because there is comparatively little variation in it to do the explaining. This is the statistical counterpart of a substantive point: the buffering, inward-facing social support that most families in Bumula do provide has become a common floor rather than a differentiator. Here too the cross-sectional design supports a statement of association rather than of causation.

The direction of the finding accords with Morgan et al. (2023), who found parental and external support to be significant correlates of school re-entry in Ghana, and with Mukabana et al. (2024) and Ajayi et al. (2023) on the protective role of family advocacy against stigma.

4.5.3 Testing of Hypothesis Three: Parental Emotional Support

H_{03}*:* Emotional support has no statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

The independent variable in this analysis is the five-item composite measure of parental emotional support described in Section 4.7 (M = 3.79, SD = 0.71), and the

dependent variable is the educational outcomes composite (M = 4.22, SD = 0.60), both measured on the same seventy re-admitted teenage mothers. The analysis of variance is presented in Table 19.

Table 17
One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Emotional Support (n = 70)

Source	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	*p*	η^2
Between groups (parental emotional support)	0.83	1	0.83	2.34	.131	.033
Within groups (residual)	24.01	68	0.35			
Total	24.84	69				

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

The analysis of variance was not statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 2.34$, $p = .131$, $\eta^2 = .033$. Differences between the girls in the level of parental emotional support they reported accounted for 3.3% of the total variance in the educational outcomes they reported, and an F ratio of this magnitude would arise with a probability of .131, more than one chance in eight, if emotional support had no influence on those outcomes. The supporting statistics agree. Parental emotional support was positively but not significantly correlated with educational outcomes, $r(68) = .18$, 95% CI [−.06, .40], $p = .131$, and the confidence interval includes zero, which means that a null relationship cannot be excluded. The Spearman correlation gave a similar result, $\rho = .21$, $p = .083$, and simple linear regression likewise failed to reach significance, $b = 0.15$, $SE = 0.10$, 95% CI [−0.05, 0.36], $\beta = .18$, $t(68) = 1.53$, $p = .131$.

Because the obtained probability of .131 exceeds the adopted significance level of .05, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. The study does not accept the null hypothesis: the analysis establishes only that the evidence available here is insufficient to reject the proposition that parental emotional support has no influence on the education of teenage

mothers, and not that the proposition is true. On the evidence of this study, therefore, parental emotional support did not have a statistically detectable influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County. That is the answer returned to research question three by the quantitative strand, and it is reported exactly as obtained. No item was removed from the scale, no case was excluded and no alternative specification was sought in order to produce a significant result.

It is important to state precisely what this finding does and does not mean. It does not mean that emotional support is unimportant to teenage mothers; the qualitative evidence in this study argues powerfully to the contrary, and the Sub-County Director of Education described parental love as "the foundation upon which all other forms of support rest". What the finding means is that, within this sample of seventy day-school teenage mothers, variation in reported parental emotional support was not associated to a statistically detectable degree with variation in reported educational outcomes. Three explanations are consistent with the data and are developed in Chapter Five: the restricted range of the outcome measure, which attenuates all the coefficients in this study; the possibility that emotional support operates indirectly, through psychological support and motivation, rather than directly on attendance and performance, which is plausible given that emotional support correlated .36 with psychological support but only .18 with outcomes; and the possibility that in a setting of acute material scarcity, warmth without material provision cannot convert into school attendance, since a girl who is loved but has no fare, no uniform and no one to hold the baby still cannot reach the classroom.

This result diverges from the pattern reported by Ajayi et al. (2023) and Groves et al. (2022), and the divergence is discussed rather than explained away in Chapter Five. It

is also worth noting that most of the studies reporting strong emotional-support effects have measured psychosocial wellbeing or resilience as the outcome, whereas the present study measured attendance, performance and completion expectancy; the difference in outcome construct may itself account for much of the difference in result.

4.5.4 Testing of Hypothesis Four: Parental Logistical Support

H_{04}: Logistical support has no statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County.

The independent variable in this analysis is the five-item composite measure of parental logistical support described in Section 4.8 (M = 3.14, SD = 0.37), computed with items C8 and C10 reverse-scored as the instrument requires, and the dependent variable is the educational outcomes composite (M = 4.22, SD = 0.60), both measured on the same seventy re-admitted teenage mothers. The analysis of variance is presented in Table 20, and the sensitivity of the result to the scoring of the composite is examined in Section 4.11.6.

Table 18
One-Way Analysis of Variance of Educational Outcomes by Parental Logistical Support (n = 70)

Source	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	*p*	η²
Between groups (parental logistical support)	5.11	1	5.11	17.59	< .001	.206
Within groups (residual)	19.74	68	0.29			
Total	24.84	69				

Source: Field Research 2026

The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 17.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .206$. Differences between the girls in the level of parental logistical support they reported accounted for 20.6% of the total variance in the educational outcomes they reported, which

is the largest proportion recorded for any of the four dimensions: nearly three times the proportion accounted for by psychological or by social support and more than six times that accounted for by emotional support. The supporting statistics agree. Parental logistical support was significantly and positively correlated with educational outcomes, $r(68) = .45$, 95% CI [.24, .62], $p < .001$, and the Spearman correlation was of comparable magnitude, $\rho = .50$, $p < .001$. Simple linear regression gave $b = 0.74$, $SE = 0.18$, 95% CI [0.39, 1.09], $\beta = .45$, $t(68) = 4.19$, $p < .001$, and the fitted equation was Educational outcomes = 1.90 + 0.74 (logistical support). By Cohen's conventions an eta squared of .206 represents a large effect.

Because the obtained probability is smaller than .001, and therefore far below the adopted significance level of .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is concluded that parental logistical support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, which is the answer returned to research question one. The effect is substantially the largest in the study: logistical support alone accounts for 20.6% of the variance in the educational outcomes reported by the girls, which is nearly three times the variance accounted for by psychological or social support and more than six times that accounted for by emotional support. By Cohen's conventions an r of .45 constitutes a medium to large effect in the behavioural sciences. Because the design of the study is cross-sectional, the finding establishes a strong and statistically significant association rather than a demonstrated causal effect, and it is discussed in those terms in Chapter Five.

This finding is the empirical core of the study. It converges with the strongest evidence in the international literature. Gebrekristos et al. (2022) found that access to

childcare significantly predicted postpartum school return in South Africa; Mukabana et al. (2024) identified poverty and childcare responsibilities as the leading barriers to school re-entry in Nairobi; and Morgan et al. (2023) found socioeconomic status to be a key determinant of re-entry in Ghana. It also converges with the recent Kenyan evidence of Wekesa Nafula et al. (2025), who reported in West Pokot County that parental engagement accounted for approximately 40% of the variation in the retention of teenage mothers. The present study extends this body of evidence into the rural public junior school context of Bumula Sub-County and, through the multivariate analysis reported next, establishes that logistical support is not merely the strongest of four influences but the only one whose influence survives when the four are considered together.

4.5.5 Multiple Regression Analysis of the Four Dimensions

Standard multiple linear regression was performed with the four dimensions of parental support entered simultaneously as predictors of educational outcomes. This analysis answers a question that the four separate tests cannot: which dimensions of parental support matter once the others are taken into account. The results are presented in Table 21.

Table 19
Multiple Regression of Educational Outcomes on the Four Dimensions of Parental Support (n = 70)

Predictor	b	SE b	β	t	p	95% CI [LL, UL]	VIF
(Constant)	1.35	0.65	—	2.09	.041	[0.06, 2.64]	—
Parental psychological support	0.08	0.10	.11	0.88	.382	[−0.11, 0.28]	1.29
Parental social support	0.12	0.11	.13	1.07	.287	[−0.10, 0.34]	1.23
Parental emotional support	0.02	0.10	.03	0.24	.812	[−0.18, 0.22]	1.21
Parental logistical support	0.63	0.18	.39	3.44	.001	[0.27, 1.00]	1.11

Source: Field Research 2026

The model as a whole was statistically significant, $F(4, 65) = 5.28$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 24.5% of the variance in the educational outcomes reported by the teenage mothers ($R^2 = .245$, adjusted $R^2 = .199$). The four dimensions of parental support taken together therefore explain roughly a quarter of the differences between girls in their reported attendance, performance, motivation, participation and completion expectancy. Diagnostic checks supported the model: all variance inflation factors fell between 1.11 and 1.29, far below the threshold of 10 at which multicollinearity becomes a concern (Field, 2024), and the Durbin–Watson statistic of 2.28 lies comfortably within the acceptable range for the independence of residuals. The Shapiro–Wilk test on the residuals was marginally significant ($W = .96$, $p = .038$), indicating a slight departure from normality; in accordance with the analytical protocol adopted for this study, no transformation was applied and the result is reported as obtained. Ordinary least squares regression is robust to mild departures of this kind at this sample size.

Within the model, only one predictor made a statistically significant unique contribution. Parental logistical support was a significant positive predictor, $\beta = .39$, $t(65) = 3.44$, $p = .001$, 95% CI [0.27, 1.00]. Parental social support ($\beta = .13$, $p = .287$), parental psychological support ($\beta = .11$, $p = .382$) and parental emotional support ($\beta = .03$, $p = .812$) did not make statistically significant unique contributions, and the confidence intervals for all three include zero.

This is the pivotal result of the study and it requires careful interpretation. It does not mean that psychological and social support are unimportant, since both were significantly associated with outcomes when examined on their own. What it means is that the predictive information they carry is substantially shared with logistical support, and

that once the material dimension is accounted for they add little that is distinctive. In substantive terms, the parents who encourage their daughters, who protect them from stigma and who negotiate with the school are, to a considerable extent, the same parents who pay the fees, buy the books and arrange for someone to hold the baby. Where those material conditions are absent, encouragement alone does not appear to move the educational outcomes these girls report.

4.5.6 Sensitivity Analysis of the Logistical Support Composite

Because the reverse-scored logistical support composite produced an unacceptable reliability coefficient, as reported in Section 4.3, the analysis of hypothesis four was repeated under two alternative scoring rules in order to establish whether the conclusion depends on the scoring decision. The results are presented in Table 22.

Table 20
Sensitivity of the Logistical Support Finding to Three Scoring Rules (n = 70)

Scoring rule	Items	α	M (SD)	r	R^2	β	p
C8 and C10 reverse-scored (primary)	5	−.78	3.14 (0.37)	.45	.206	.45	< .001
All items scored as recorded	5	.84	3.86 (0.82)	.39	.156	.39	< .001
Positively worded items only (C6, C7, C9)	3	.76	3.84 (0.88)	.46	.214	.46	< .001

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

The conclusion is unaffected by the scoring rule. Under all three specifications the association between parental logistical support and educational outcomes is positive, of similar magnitude and significant beyond the .001 level, and the variance accounted for ranges narrowly from 15.6% to 21.4%. The three-item composite restricted to the positively worded items, which achieves an acceptable reliability of .76, produces the strongest association of the three ($r = .46$, $R^2 = .214$). The multiple regression was likewise re-estimated with the logistical composite scored as recorded; the model remained significant, $F(4, 65) = 3.78$, $p = .008$, $R^2 = .189$, and logistical support remained the only

significant unique predictor, β = .31, p = .013, with psychological support (β = .11, p = .383), social support (β = .12, p = .351) and emotional support (β = .02, p = .876) again non-significant.

Examination of the individual items reinforces the same conclusion. The three positively worded items correlated significantly with educational outcomes: assistance with the child's needs, r = .44, p < .001; provision of learning materials and uniform, r = .42, p < .001; and timely payment of fees, r = .31, p = .010. Of the two negatively worded items, the statement about financial difficulties interfering with academic performance correlated r = .25, p = .038, while the statement about lack of financial support affecting attendance did not reach significance, r = .16, p = .179. The finding that assistance with the infant's needs is the single most predictive item on the whole logistical scale is entirely consonant with the qualitative testimony of the heads of institutions and of the Sub-County Director of Education, all of whom identified childcare as the decisive component of material support.

The rejection of hypothesis four therefore rests on a robust foundation. The reliability anomaly created by the two negatively worded items affects the internal consistency of the composite but not the substantive conclusion, which holds under every scoring rule examined.

4.5.7 Summary of the Hypothesis-Testing Decisions

Table 23 summarizes the analysis of variance obtained for each null hypothesis and the decision reached at the .05 level of significance. The entries in the table are identical to those reported in Tables 17 to 20, and no decision recorded here differs from the decision recorded in the corresponding subsection above.

Table 21
Summary of the Analysis of Variance Results and the Decisions on the Null Hypotheses

Null hypothesis	Predictor	*F*	*df*	*p*	η^2	Decision at $\alpha = .05$	Conclusion
H_{01}	Parental psychological support	5.25	1, 68	.025	.072	Reject H_{01}	Psychological support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers
H_{02}	Parental social support	5.26	1, 68	.025	.072	Reject H_{02}	Social support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers
H_{03}	Parental emotional support	2.34	1, 68	.131	.033	Fail to reject H_{03}	No statistically significant influence of emotional support was detected in this study
H_{04}	Parental logistical support	17.59	1, 68	< .001	.206	Reject H_{04}	Logistical support has a statistically significant influence on the education of teenage mothers

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

Three of the four null hypotheses were therefore rejected and one failed to be rejected. Ranked by the magnitude of the effect, parental logistical support accounted for 20.6% of the variance in the educational outcomes the girls reported, parental social and parental psychological support for 7.2% each, and parental emotional support for 3.3%, the last of these not reaching statistical significance. The four decisions recorded in Table 23 are carried forward without alteration into the summary of findings, the discussion, the conclusions and the recommendations presented in Chapter Five.

4.6 Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers

This section addresses research question five of the approved proposal, which asked what challenges parents face while supporting their teenage daughters during and after re-admission into public junior schools. The evidence comes principally from the five parent and guardian interviews, supported by the seven religious leader interviews, the interview with the Sub-County Director of Education and the accounts of the ten heads of institutions.

Reflexive thematic analysis of this material generated seven themes, which are summarized in Table 24 and elaborated below.

Table 22
Themes on the Challenges Faced by Parents in Supporting Teenage Mothers

Theme	Sub-themes	Sources in which the theme appeared
1. Household poverty and insufficient income	Inability to meet fees, uniform, stationery, transport and infant costs; irregular income from subsistence farming and casual labour	All five parents and guardians; six of seven religious leaders; SCDE; all ten heads of institutions
2. Community stigma and cultural devaluation of the girl	Neighbourhood gossip; blame directed at parents; the belief that a girl who has given birth has lost value	All five parents and guardians; five religious leaders; SCDE
3. The childcare burden and the ageing caregiver	Grandmothers and aunts absorbing infant care; caregiver ill health and advanced age; competing demands on the girl's time	Two parents and both guardians; two religious leaders
4. Time poverty and competing livelihood demands	Parents unable to attend school meetings because of work; long working hours; unsustainable parental sacrifice	Two parents; one guardian; two religious leaders
5. Emotional difficulty and absence of parenting skills	Parental shame and disappointment; not knowing how to communicate empathy; illiteracy preventing engagement with schoolwork	One parent; one guardian; SCDE; two religious leaders
6. Weak school–parent cooperation and unfulfilled promises	Perceived negative attitudes from school staff; promised assistance not delivered; distance and lack of transport to reach the school	Two parents; one guardian
7. Limited knowledge of the re-entry policy and of the school system	Unawareness of re-entry guidelines, fee waivers and available support; not knowing how to navigate the school	One religious leader; SCDE

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

4.6.1 Household Poverty and Insufficient Income

Poverty was the challenge named by every source in the study and was almost always named first. All five parents and guardians identified financial incapacity as their principal difficulty, and their formulations were nearly identical in substance: "Poverty, low economic status, lack of fees/finances" (P 1), "insufficient funds and poverty" (P 2), "insufficient funds" (P 3), and "Time inadequacy and insufficient resources eg money" (G 2). What distinguishes their accounts from a generic statement about poverty is the specificity with which each parent identified the livelihood from which the shortfall arose. A father who operates a motorcycle taxi explained that he could not cater for all his

daughter's requirements "because minimum income from boda boda riding" (P 2); a mother attributed the same shortfall to "low income (farming)" (P 1). A grandmother born in 1954 reported that she provided no school requirements at all, relying instead on the head teacher and the Government (G 1).

RL 1-located the difficulty in the structure of the rural economy:

> *"Poverty is the root challenge. Most parents are small-scale farmers with irregular income. They have other children to feed and educate. The shame of teenage pregnancy also makes some parents emotionally unable to help. They are grieving the loss of their "perfect" daughter. (Religious Leader 1, personal communication, September 2026)"*

RL 4 - identified a specific and contemporary aggravating factor, namely the cost profile of the Competency Based Curriculum: "The CBC curriculum is expensive. It requires project materials, digital devices, and frequent levies. Parents who supported their daughters under the old 8-4-4 system now cannot cope. The financial gap is the single biggest reason for dropout among teenage mothers today." This observation is significant for policy because it indicates that the curriculum reform within which junior schools were created has itself raised the material threshold that families must cross, at the very moment when a new and vulnerable cohort of learners has been brought into the system.

RL 8 - drew attention to the unsustainability of the coping strategies that poor parents adopt: "The most supportive parents work as casual laborers on other people's farms. They wake at 4 AM, work all day, and give every shilling to the girl's education. But this is unsustainable. These parents age quickly and fall sick. We need systemic support, not just parental sacrifice." The same informant identified the most serious

consequence of unrelieved material need, namely that “the lack of financial support forces girls into transactional relationships”, which in turn produces the repeat pregnancies observed in a fifth of the present sample.

4.6.2 Community Stigma and the Cultural Devaluation of the Girl

Every parent and guardian interviewed reported that community attitudes constrained their ability to support their daughter, and their accounts show that the stigma is directed at the parents as much as at the girl. A mother reported “a lot of negative talk from neighbors on how I lacked skills of caring for my children, especially her” (P 1), and a grandmother reported the accusation “that we grandmothers sometimes encourage teenage pregnancies by not disciplining them” (G 1). Both statements describe a transfer of blame from the girl to the caregiver, which is a distinct and under-documented mechanism: the parent who chooses to support a re-admitted daughter must first absorb a public judgement on her own competence.

The most analytically precise statement of the cultural logic came from a maternal aunt:

> *“Yes, a girl who has given birth before marriage is seen to be a person who has "dropped in value" according to our culture. (Guardian 2, personal communication, September 2026)”*

The vocabulary of value is important. It expresses a calculation in which investment in the girl’s education is weighed against a diminished expected return, and it is precisely this calculation that the re-entry policy is intended to override. A father identified the same logic in a different register when he named the community attitude he had to contend with as “disbelieve in re-admission after pregnancy or child-birth” (P 2), that is, an outright

disbelief that re-admission is a legitimate course of action at all. The Sub-County Director of Education confirmed that this disbelief is widespread: “Many parents still believe that once a girl gives birth, her education is automatically terminated.”

The Director also identified the way stigma inhibits parental emotional support: “there is fear of community judgment: parents worry that showing emotional support will be interpreted as condoning premarital sex”. This is a particularly consequential finding, because it means that the parent who wishes to support her daughter emotionally must weigh that support against a reputational cost, and it helps to explain the low endorsement of the acceptance item (B3) reported in Section 4.7.

4.6.3 The Childcare Burden and the Ageing Caregiver

The care of the infant during school hours fell, in every case reported in this study, on a woman in the household, and most often on an older woman. Asked who cared for the child while the girl was in school, respondents answered “myself as the grandmother of the child” (P 1), “myself” (P 3), “grandmother and sometimes herself” (P 2), “Myself as the grandmother to the teenage mother and Great Grandmother to the infant” (G 1) and “the house help” (G 2), the last being the only household in the sample with the means to pay for care.

The grandmother whose own age was the difficulty stated her challenge in four words: “Old age - born 1954.” She elaborated that “she has workload. I experience poor health so I can’t help to reduce the work” (G 1). This account exposes the fragility of the arrangement on which the attendance of these girls depends. The childcare that makes school possible is being supplied, without payment, by women in their sixties and seventies whose own health is failing, and it has no institutional backstop. RL 4 - named the

ambivalence directly: “Grandmothers help with the baby, but they also demand that the girl contributes to household chores, which takes time from studying.” This qualitative observation supplies the mechanism behind the lowest-scoring quantitative item in the entire teenage mothers’ questionnaire, namely item D14 on receiving enough time at home to study, on which only 44.3% of the girls could agree.

4.6.4 Time Poverty and Competing Livelihood Demands

Parents reported that even where the will to engage with the school existed, the working day precluded it. A father named his challenge in supporting his daughter as “insufficient time to be at school and also working to earn her daily bread” (P 2), and a maternal aunt named “time inadequacy” alongside insufficient money (G 2). The same father, asked whether he discussed his daughter’s educational progress with her, answered “sometimes, because am busy looking for their up keep” (P 2). Time poverty is therefore not separable from material poverty; it is the form that material poverty takes in the parent’s daily schedule, and it directly suppresses the outward-facing social support identified as the weak link in Section 4.6.

4.6.5 Emotional Difficulty and the Absence of Parenting Skills

Several parents described a difficulty that was neither financial nor social but a matter of not knowing what to do. A grandmother explained that she could not discuss educational progress with her granddaughter because, in her words, “I am illiterate / didn’t go to school” (G 1), and a maternal aunt named her difficulty as “helping her choose priority is difficulty” (G 2). A mother reported the interpersonal friction that arises from the dual demand: “sometimes we quarrel with her when she doesn’t hurry to go to school”

(P 1), and another parent named "negative attitude from the teenage mother" among her own challenges (P 3).

The Sub-County Director of Education offered the most systematic account of this dimension, identifying four distinct mechanisms:

> *"First, there is the cultural script of shame — many parents genuinely do not know how to process their disappointment without blaming the girl. Second, economic stress consumes their emotional bandwidth; a parent worrying about school fees, food, and the new baby has little emotional reserve left. Third, marital conflict often erupts when a daughter becomes pregnant, with fathers blaming mothers for poor supervision, which destabilizes the entire household. Fourth, some parents lack emotional literacy — they have never been taught how to communicate empathy. (Sub-County Director of Education, personal communication, September 2026)"*

The second of these mechanisms is of considerable theoretical interest, because it proposes a causal pathway from material deprivation to emotional withdrawal. If economic stress consumes emotional bandwidth, then the material and the emotional dimensions of parental support are not independent; the former is a precondition of the latter. This proposition is consistent with the pattern observed in the quantitative data, where logistical support was the only dimension to retain unique predictive significance, and it is developed further in Chapter Five.

4.6.6 Weak School - Parent Cooperation and Unfulfilled Promises

Two parents described the school itself as a source of difficulty. One reported "lack of co-operation from the school sometimes due to negative attitude" (P 3), and another reported of those who offered assistance that "sometimes they promise but don't deliver the help they committed" (P 1). A grandmother reported a purely practical obstacle: "difficulty in reaching them due to lack of means of transport and old age also" (G 1). These accounts, though drawn from a small number of respondents, are consistent with the teachers' own acknowledgement, reported in Section 4.9, that inadequate advocacy and communication limits re-admission, an item with which 82.7% of the teachers agreed.

4.6.7 Limited Knowledge of the Re-entry Policy and the School System

RL 5 - identified an informational deficit that he considered as damaging as poverty itself:

> *"Parents lack information. They do not know about the re-entry policy, school fee waivers, or available NGOs. They also lack skills - they do not know how to talk to teachers or navigate the school system. This ignorance is as damaging as poverty. (Religious Leader 5, September 2026)"*

The Sub-County Director of Education corroborated this and located the deficit within the wider implementation problem: out of the 147 public junior schools in the sub-county, documented cases of re-admission at the same grade existed in approximately 38 schools, but the Director suspected the true number to be higher "because many cases go unreported. Schools sometimes re-admit these girls informally without filing the mandatory returns to this office." Where re-admission is handled informally and quietly,

parents cannot learn from public example what their daughters are entitled to, and the informational deficit is thereby reproduced.

4.6.8 Challenges Experienced by the Teenage Mothers Themselves

Although research question five concerns the challenges faced by parents, the challenges reported by the girls and observed by their teachers are reported here because they define the burden that parental support is required to carry. Table 25 presents the themes generated from the open-ended responses of the sixty teenage mothers who completed the typed forms and of the fifty-two teachers.

Table 23
Themes on the Challenges Faced by Re-admitted Teenage Mothers

Theme	Teenage mothers (n = 60) f (%)	Teachers (n = 52) f (%)
Material and fee shortages (books, uniform, lunch, fees)	30 (50.0)	29 (55.8)
Fatigue, ill health and impaired concentration	23 (38.3)	30 (57.7)
Stigma, mockery and social isolation	23 (38.3)	29 (55.8)
Childcare demands and the illness of the infant	24 (40.0)	24 (46.2)
Age–grade mismatch and shame at repeating the grade	26 (43.3)	21 (40.4)
Time poverty and domestic workload	19 (31.7)	12 (23.1)
Distance to school and physical weakness after delivery	12 (20.0)	—
Negative treatment by some teachers	12 (20.0)	16 (30.8)
Pressure toward early marriage	—	18 (34.6)

Source: Field Research 2026

The two groups converge closely. Material shortage, fatigue, stigma and childcare are the four largest themes in both, and the ordering differs only marginally. The girls wrote of being “sent home while others remain in class”, of staying “hungry in class”, of missing lessons “whenever the baby is sick because nobody else can care for her”, and of getting “very tired because I breastfeed at night and do not sleep well”. The teachers described the

same conditions from the outside: “she is exhausted from night breastfeeding and cannot concentrate in morning lessons”; “nobody reliable cares for the child, so she stays home whenever the baby is sick”; “she lacks uniforms and stationery, which embarrasses her before others.”

Two themes deserve particular note. First, the age–grade mismatch created by re-admission at the same grade was reported by 43.3% of the girls and 40.4% of the teachers, one girl writing that “I feel embarrassed sitting in class with learners who are younger than me” and one teacher observing that “repeating the same grade with younger learners embarrasses her and some lose motivation.” This is a direct and unintended consequence of the re-entry policy’s own provision that learners be re-admitted to the same grade, and it merits explicit attention in policy. Second, negative treatment by some teachers was reported by 20.0% of the girls and, notably, by 30.8% of the teachers themselves, one of whom wrote that “some teachers stigmatize her and do not give her the attention she needs.” That nearly a third of teachers should volunteer a criticism of their own profession lends this finding particular credibility.

4.7 Strategies for Enhancing Parental Support

This section addresses research question six of the approved proposal, which asked what strategies public junior schools can put in place to enhance parental support for the education of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County. Evidence was drawn from the open-ended responses of the fifty-two teachers and the sixty teenage mothers who completed the typed forms, and from the recommendations offered by the heads of institutions, the Sub-County Director of Education, the seven religious leaders and the five parents and guardians. Table 26 presents the strategies proposed by the two survey groups.

Table 24
Strategies Proposed by Teachers and Teenage Mothers for Enhancing Support

Strategy	Teachers (n = 52) f (%)	Teenage mothers (n = 60) f (%)
Counselling, guidance and mentorship for the girls and their parents	33 (63.5)	25 (41.7)
Enforcement, tracking and follow-up of the re-entry policy	32 (61.5)	12 (20.0)
Anti-stigma work in the school and the community	28 (53.8)	33 (55.0)
Bursaries, fee waivers and provision of uniforms and materials	23 (44.2)	16 (26.7)
Childcare or day-care provision linked to the school	22 (42.3)	19 (31.7)
Parent–school partnership and sensitisation of parents	15 (28.8)	9 (15.0)
Flexible learning, breastfeeding time and remedial catch-up	13 (25.0)	18 (30.0)
Mentorship by successful women and former teenage mothers	—	21 (35.0)
Provision of food, sanitary towels and personal necessities	—	21 (35.0)

Source: ***Field Research 2026***

The two groups agree on the substance of what is required but weight the elements differently, and the difference is instructive. Teachers gave their highest priority to counselling and mentorship (63.5%) and to enforcement and follow-up of the re-entry policy (61.5%), which are institutional and administrative levers. The girls gave their highest priority to anti-stigma work and community follow-up (55.0%) and to counselling (41.7%), and they added two categories that the teachers did not raise as distinct strategies at all: mentorship by successful women and former teenage mothers (35.0%) and the provision of food, sanitary towels and personal necessities (35.0%). The girls, in other words, asked for recognition and for the concrete means of daily dignity, while the teachers asked for systems. Both are required, and a strategy that supplies only one will fail.

4.7.1 Strategies Proposed by the Teenage Mothers

The girls' own proposals were notably specific. Twenty of the sixty (33.3%) asked in some form for counselling, one writing "I need regular counselling to cope with stress and stigma" and another "I need guidance on how to balance school and motherhood". Twelve (20.0%) asked for the school to follow them up when they were absent, a request that presupposes rather than resents institutional attention. Twelve (20.0%) asked for "a mentor mother who has been through the same to encourage me", and eleven (18.3%) for remedial lessons "to catch up on what I missed while away". Ten (16.7%) asked for childcare support or a day-care near the school, and nine (15.0%) for a flexible arrangement to allow breastfeeding during break time. Nine (15.0%) asked that their own parents be sensitised so that they would support them more, a request that is significant because it locates the intervention at the household rather than only at the school.

Among the ten girls whose handwritten forms were transcribed, the requests were equally concrete: the provision of sanitary towels, timely payment of fees, guidance and counselling introduced "as a lesson in schools", and, from one respondent, a sponsor or organisation "to take care of my child so that I can get ample time to study" (TM 6). Another asked that well-wishers be found "to support my child both emotionally and support me pay my fees" (TM 1).

4.7.2 Strategies Proposed by the Teachers

The teachers' proposals clustered around four institutional mechanisms. Twelve of the fifty-two (23.1%) proposed establishing or linking schools to childcare support so that the girls could attend full time; the same number proposed training counsellors and mentors to accompany the girls, and community barazas and church meetings to combat stigma.

Ten (19.2%) proposed anti-stigma campaigns within the school itself "to promote acceptance by learners and teachers", and nine (17.3%) each proposed coordination between schools, the sub-county education office and chiefs to monitor retention; bursaries and fee waivers; and the pairing of girls with supportive teachers who monitor their progress closely. Seven (13.5%) proposed the strict enforcement of the national re-entry policy by all schools in the sub-county, and the same number proposed early tracking of dropout signals with immediate intervention.

Two proposals bear directly on the findings of this study. The first is the pairing of each re-admitted girl with a named supportive teacher, proposed by 17.3% of teachers, which converts a diffuse institutional responsibility into an assigned one and would address the finding that outward-facing parental engagement with the school is weak. The second is the early tracking of dropout signals, which responds to the Director's evidence that re-admission is frequently undocumented.

4.7.3 Strategies Proposed by Key Informants

The Sub-County Director of Education proposed the most comprehensive package, organised around five measures. The first was the enforcement of quarterly returns on re-admitted girls, with administrative consequences for non-compliant heads. The second was the institutionalization of parent–school partnership through mandatory orientation meetings for the parents of re-admitted girls. The third was flexible schooling arrangements permitting the making up of missed practical assessments. The fourth was a sub-county tracking and mentorship programme linking the girls with education officers and local women professionals. The fifth was the strengthening of comprehensive sexuality education in upper primary before girls transition to junior school. The Director

summarized the underlying requirement in a single sentence: *"collect disaggregated data we cannot manage what we do not measure."*

On the community sensitization that would make the policy legible to parents, the same informant was equally specific:

> *First, we need barazas (community meetings) at the village level where chiefs, elders, and religious leaders are explicitly educated about the 2020 Re-entry Guidelines and the 2026 circular. Many parents still believe that once a girl gives birth, her education is automatically terminated. We must involve men - fathers and male elders - in these dialogues because they are often the decision-makers who either permit or block a girl's return to school. (Sub-County Director of Education, personal communication, September 2026)*

The religious leaders proposed measures that draw on the distinctive assets of their institutions, and several of these are directly actionable. Participant RL 2, proposed that parish councils allocate a proportion of Sunday collections to education support and that Catholic schools waive fees for teenage mothers. Participant Catechist RL 4 proposed that the Mothers' Union operate a sewing group to produce low-cost uniforms and that the church maintain a small lending library of textbooks, and she identified the strategic target that no other informant named: "The strategy is grandmother engagement. Grandmothers control family decisions. If we win them over through the Mothers' Union, the whole family follows." Given that a third of the girls in this study lived with a guardian or relatives, and that grandmothers supplied most of the childcare, this proposal is unusually well matched to the demographic reality documented in Section 4.4.1.

Participant RL 5 proposed community-based monitoring in which "a committee of religious leaders, teachers, and parents should track each teenage mother's progress and intervene when problems arise", together with the public celebration of success. Participant (RL 8) proposed a sponsorship scheme in which church members commit to monthly support, partnership with local businesses for income-generating internships, and advocacy for free sanitary provision and school meals. Participant - RL 3, placed the emphasis on institutional capacity, arguing that "schools must have daycare facilities" and that "the government must increase the education budget to cover the real costs of CBC for vulnerable girls."

The parents and guardians proposed measures of a strikingly consistent kind. Four of the five asked for free or subsidized education and the provision of learning materials: "offer free education and academic materials like stationery to such teenage mothers" (P 2), "free educational support to teenage mothers" (P 3), "allow teenage mothers to learn for free" and "Free education & free books by the Government" (G 1), and "Free Education and provision of some childcare services (day cares) to be brought near schools by Govt." (G 2). Two asked specifically for stronger implementation of the policy: "advocate for re-admission policy more" and "timely intervention by the Government" (P 2), and "reinforcement of the re-admission policy, especially follow ups to be made to see how effective it is" (G 2). One mother proposed a strategy of a different order, namely that stakeholders "support the little skills the teenage mothers already have — it encourages these teenage mothers" (P 1), and another proposed that "Apprentiship [sic] be encouraged by all stakeholders" (P 3).

It is analytically significant that the parents' proposals were almost entirely material and policy-directed. Not one parent proposed a strategy aimed at changing parental behaviour, whereas 15.0% of the girls asked that their parents be sensitised. This asymmetry suggests that parents perceive their difficulty as one of capacity rather than of disposition, which is consistent with the evidence reported in Section 4.12.1 and which has direct implications for the design of interventions: sensitisation alone, unaccompanied by material relief, is unlikely to change what these households are able to provide.

The convergence across all respondent categories is nonetheless notable. Every category proposed some form of childcare provision, some form of financial relief and some form of counselling or mentorship, and every category except the parents proposed stronger enforcement and follow-up of the re-entry policy. These four elements constitute the evidence base for the recommendations advanced in Chapter Five.

4.8 Integration of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The concurrent mixed methods design adopted for this study requires that the two strands be brought together at the interpretation stage rather than being reported side by side. This section performs that integration for each research question, identifying where the strands converge, where they are complementary and where they diverge. Table 27 presents the integration in the form of a joint display.

Table 25
Joint Display of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings by Research Question

Research question	Quantitative finding	Qualitative finding	Relationship between strands
Psychological support	M = 3.70 (SD = 0.77); r = .27, p = .025; R^2 = .072; not unique in the full model	Encouragement widely described as decisive for persistence; weakest at the points requiring parental action rather than speech	Convergence in direction; complementarity in explaining the small effect size
Social support	M = 4.05 (SD = 0.66), the highest dimension; r = .27, p = .025; R^2 = .072; not unique in the full model	Inward-facing protection strong; outward-facing advocacy at the school weak and constrained by class, time and generational authority	Convergence; the qualitative strand explains why a highly supplied dimension explains little variance
Emotional support	M = 3.79 (SD = 0.71); F(1, 68) = 2.34, p = .131; η^2 = .033; r = .18; null hypothesis not rejected	Described by the SCDE as the scarcest dimension; acceptance the weakest item; rejection linked to withdrawal and dropout by every religious leader	Divergence; the qualitative strand asserts an influence the quantitative strand cannot detect
Logistical support	M = 3.14 (SD = 0.37), the lowest dimension; F(1, 68) = 17.59, p < .001; η^2 = .206; r = .45; the only unique predictor, β = .39	Named first by every source; 90% of heads of institutions reported that parents do not supply stationery; childcare identified as decisive	Strong convergence; the qualitative strand supplies the mechanism for the statistical result
Challenges faced by parents	84.6% of teachers agreed that family economic status determines re-admission	Seven themes, led by household poverty and community stigma, reported by every source	Convergence and expansion
Strategies for enhancing support	88.5% of teachers agreed that weak policy implementation limits re-admission	Convergent proposals across all categories: childcare, financial relief, counselling and mentorship, policy enforcement	Convergence and expansion

Source: Field Research 2026

4.8.1 Points of Convergence

The strongest convergence in the study concerns logistical support. The quantitative analysis established that logistical support was the only dimension to retain a statistically significant unique association with educational outcomes (β = .39, p = .001) and that it accounted for one fifth of the variance when taken alone. Every qualitative source, without exception, identified material provision as the binding constraint, and the qualitative data supply the mechanism that the statistics can only imply. The chain is specific: no fee, therefore sent home; no childcare, therefore absent when the baby is ill; no uniform or stationery, therefore shame, non-completion of homework and withdrawal from lessons. HOI 2 described the first link ("most of them remain at home since in school fees payment is a must"), HOI 4 the second ("not attending class as they take care of their

babies") and HOI 6 the third ("it hinders academic performance, diminished student engagement, and causes profound emotional distress like anxiety and shame"). The Sub-County Director of Education compressed the whole chain into the observation that without logistical support "even the most determined girl is eventually worn down by the daily friction of unmet material needs." The convergence here is unusually complete, and it is reinforced by the finding that the single most predictive item in the logistical scale was assistance with the infant's needs ($r = .44$, $p < .001$), which is precisely the component that the qualitative sources identified as decisive.

A second convergence concerns the direction of all four relationships. Every dimension of parental support correlated positively with educational outcomes, and no qualitative source suggested that any form of parental support was neutral or harmful. The study therefore confirms the general proposition, common to both strands and to the reviewed literature, that parental support matters for the education of teenage mothers.

4.8.2 Points of Complementarity

The two strands are complementary in explaining why the effects of psychological and social support, though statistically significant when tested alone, are small and do not survive multivariate control. The quantitative data establish that these dimensions are highly supplied but weakly discriminating: social support recorded the highest mean of the four dimensions yet accounted for only 7.2% of the variance. The qualitative data explain this by identifying which components of these dimensions are supplied and which are not. Parents encourage, monitor and protect; they much less often enter the school, negotiate with teachers or restructure the household so that the girl has time to study. The two lowest-scoring items in the psychological and social scales, on communication with teachers

(55.7% agreement) and on encouragement of positive relationships with teachers and classmates (57.1% agreement), identify precisely the outward-facing components, and the parental interviews explain the constraint in terms of working hours, transport, literacy and social confidence. Without the qualitative strand, the small effect sizes would be uninterpretable; with it, they become intelligible as the statistical signature of a support repertoire that is broad but shallow at its institutional edge.

A second complementarity concerns the demographic finding that every girl in the sample attended a day school. Taken alone, this is a descriptive fact. Set beside the qualitative accounts of daily childcare arrangements, breastfeeding during school hours, lunch money and long walks to school, it becomes the structural explanation for why logistical support dominates in this setting. In a boarding school, once fees are paid the institution absorbs most of the daily material burden; in a day school, the household must supply it afresh every morning.

4.8.3 Points of Divergence

The principal divergence in this study concerns emotional support. The quantitative analysis failed to reject the null hypothesis, $F(1, 68) = 2.34$, $p = .131$, $r = .18$, while the qualitative evidence identified parental acceptance and rejection as among the most consequential influences on whether a girl remains in school. Participant - RL 2, stated that the difference between accepted and rejected girls “is like night and day”; Participant - RL 3 reported having “seen failing girls become top students after parental acceptance”; and the Sub-County Director of Education described parental love as “the foundation upon which all other forms of support rest.” No responsible reading of this study can dismiss either strand.

Four considerations help to reconcile them, and they are developed further in Chapter Five. First, the dependent variable exhibits a restricted range: educational outcomes recorded the highest mean and the smallest standard deviation of any composite in the study, and 87.1% of the girls expected to complete their education. Restriction of range attenuates all correlations, and it attenuates most severely those relationships that are already modest. Second, the qualitative sources are describing the extremes of the distribution — girls who were wholly rejected and girls who were wholly embraced — whereas the questionnaire measured graded variation among girls who had, by definition, already been re-admitted and were still in school. The most severely rejected girls are, on the qualitative testimony itself, precisely those who are no longer in school to be surveyed, which is a form of survivorship in the sampling frame rather than a defect in the analysis. Third, emotional support may operate indirectly rather than directly: it correlated .36 with psychological support and .31 with social support but only .18 with outcomes, a pattern consistent with an influence transmitted through motivation and encouragement rather than exerted on attendance directly. Fourth, and most importantly, the SCDE's own account proposes a hierarchy in which material conditions gate emotional capacity: "economic stress consumes their emotional bandwidth". If that is correct, then in a setting where logistical support is the scarcest dimension, emotional warmth alone cannot convert into attendance and performance, and the quantitative result is not a contradiction of the qualitative testimony but a measurement of what warmth can and cannot accomplish in conditions of material scarcity.

A second, smaller divergence concerns the level of support reported. The teachers rated parental support substantially higher (composite M = 4.14) than the girls rated their

own parents on any dimension (composite means from 3.14 to 4.05), and the heads of institutions were more negative still, with 90% reporting that parents did not supply the necessary stationery. The three perspectives are not interchangeable. Teachers responded to general propositions about the value of parental support and were, in effect, endorsing a principle; the girls reported their own households; the heads reported the aggregate material position of their schools. The divergence is therefore a difference of referent rather than a contradiction, but it carries a methodological caution against relying on staff perception as a proxy for the material circumstances of individual families.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented, analysed and interpreted the findings of the study. An overall response rate of 83.3% was achieved, with full returns from teachers and heads of institutions and a return of 87.5% from the teenage mothers, but only 25.0% from parents and guardians. All the scales except the reverse-scored logistical composite achieved acceptable internal consistency, and the anomaly in that composite was reported transparently and shown, through a sensitivity analysis, not to affect the substantive conclusion.

The re-admitted teenage mothers were young, with 68.6% aged sixteen or below; all attended day schools; almost three quarters did not live with both parents, and one in three lived with a guardian or relatives; and seven in ten had been out of school for at least six months before re-admission. Descriptively, parental social support was the most highly reported dimension ($M = 4.05$), followed by emotional support ($M = 3.79$) and psychological support ($M = 3.70$), with logistical support the lowest ($M = 3.14$).

Educational outcomes were reported at a high level ($M = 4.22$), reflecting strong aspiration among girls who simultaneously reported serious material obstacles.

On the analysis of variance, the null hypotheses concerning psychological support, $F(1, 68) = 5.25$, $p = .025$, social support, $F(1, 68) = 5.26$, $p = .025$, and logistical support, $F(1, 68) = 17.59$, $p < .001$, were rejected at the .05 level, while the null hypothesis concerning emotional support failed to be rejected, $F(1, 68) = 2.34$, $p = .131$. In the multiple regression model containing all four dimensions, which accounted for 24.5% of the variance in educational outcomes, only parental logistical support retained a statistically significant unique contribution ($\beta = .39$, $p = .001$). This finding proved robust across three alternative scoring rules for the logistical composite.

Qualitatively, seven themes were generated on the challenges faced by parents, led by household poverty and community stigma and including the fragility of childcare provided by ageing grandmothers, time poverty, the absence of parenting skills, weak school–parent cooperation and limited knowledge of the re-entry policy. On strategies, all respondent categories converged on four measures: childcare provision, financial relief, counselling and mentorship, and stronger enforcement and follow-up of the re-entry policy. The integration of the two strands showed strong convergence on logistical support, complementarity in explaining the modest effects of psychological and social support, and a genuine divergence on emotional support that is examined in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four established what was found. This chapter establishes what the findings mean. It opens with a summary of the findings organised by research question, proceeds to a discussion in which each finding is set against the reviewed literature and interpreted through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, and then draws conclusions that follow directly from the findings without introducing new evidence. Recommendations are then advanced for each category of stakeholder, followed by suggestions for further research, a statement of the study's contribution to knowledge, and an acknowledgement of its limitations.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Parental Psychological Support

Parental psychological support was reported at a moderate level ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.77$). The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 5.25$, $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .072$, so that differences in the level of psychological support accounted for 7.2% of the variance in the educational outcomes the girls reported, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The supporting correlation was $r(68) = .27$, $p = .025$. The support was concentrated in the verbal and supervisory register: 71.4% of the girls agreed that their parents monitored their academic progress, but only 55.7% that their parents communicated with teachers and only 44.3% that they received enough time at home to study. Qualitatively, every category of informant described parental encouragement as

decisive for persistence beyond the first term after re-admission, while also identifying its limits where it was not accompanied by a redistribution of household labour.

5.2.2 Parental Social Support

Parental social support recorded the highest mean of the four dimensions ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.66$) and was significantly associated with educational outcomes. The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 5.26$, $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .072$, accounting for 7.2% of the variance, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The supporting correlation was $r(68) = .27$, $p = .025$. The support was strongest in its inward-facing, protective form: 84.3% of the girls agreed that their parents helped them balance childcare and school, and 77.1% that their family protected them from stigma. It was weakest in its outward-facing, advocacy form, with only 57.1% agreeing that their parents encouraged positive relationships with teachers and classmates.

5.2.3 Parental Emotional Support

Parental emotional support was reported at a moderate level ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.71$) but the analysis of variance was not statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 2.34$, $p = .131$, $\eta^2 = .033$, and the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. The supporting correlation was $r(68) = .18$, $p = .131$. Acceptance was the weakest item in the scale, with only 51.4% of the girls agreeing that their parents made them feel accepted despite being a teenage mother. The Sub-County Director of Education described emotional support as the scarcest form of parental support in the sub-county, and every religious leader identified parental rejection as a proximate cause of dropout.

5.2.4 Parental Logistical Support

Parental logistical support was the lowest-reported dimension (M = 3.14, SD = 0.37) and the most strongly associated with educational outcomes. The analysis of variance was statistically significant, $F(1, 68) = 17.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .206$, accounting for 20.6% of the variance, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The supporting correlation was $r(68) = .45$, $p < .001$. In the multiple regression model containing all four dimensions, which explained 24.5% of the variance, logistical support was the only predictor to retain a significant unique contribution ($\beta = .39$, $p = .001$). The finding held under three alternative scoring rules. Ninety per cent of the heads of institutions reported that parents did not provide the stationery their re-admitted learners needed, and assistance with the infant's needs was the single most predictive item on the scale ($r = .44$, $p < .001$).

5.2.5 Challenges Faced by Parents

Seven themes were generated. Household poverty and community stigma appeared in every source. The remaining five were the childcare burden falling on ageing grandmothers, time poverty arising from livelihood demands, emotional difficulty and the absence of parenting skills, weak school–parent cooperation, and limited knowledge of the re-entry policy. Parents consistently framed their difficulty as one of capacity rather than of willingness.

5.2.6 Strategies for Enhancing Parental Support

All respondent categories converged on four strategies: the provision of childcare linked to schools; financial relief through bursaries, fee waivers and the provision of materials; counselling, guidance and mentorship for both girls and parents; and stronger enforcement, tracking and follow-up of the national re-entry guidelines. The girls added

two strategies of their own: mentorship by women who had themselves been teenage mothers, and the provision of food and sanitary necessities.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions arise directly from the findings reported in Chapter Four. No new evidence is introduced.

First, parental support influences the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County, but its four dimensions are not equivalent in effect. Taken together, the four dimensions account for approximately a quarter of the variance in the educational outcomes the girls report, which establishes parental support as a substantial but not exclusive influence.

Second, parental logistical support is the decisive dimension. It was the lowest supplied, the most strongly associated with educational outcomes, and the only dimension to retain a statistically significant unique contribution when all four were modelled together. The conclusion holds under every scoring rule tested and is corroborated by every qualitative source in the study. Within logistical support, assistance with the infant's needs is the most predictive single component.

Third, parental psychological and social support exert a statistically significant but small influence when considered on their own, and no distinctive influence once material support is taken into account. Both dimensions are supplied in a form that is broad but shallow at its institutional edge: parents encourage, monitor and protect, but comparatively few enter the school on their daughter's behalf or restructure the household so that she has time to study.

Fourth, on the evidence of this study, parental emotional support did not exert a statistically significant influence on the educational outcomes reported by the teenage mothers, although it was described by every qualitative source as consequential and was identified by the Sub-County Director of Education as the scarcest dimension of support in the sub-county. Only half the girls could affirm that their parents made them feel accepted. The most defensible reading of the two strands together is that emotional support matters greatly for the wellbeing of these girls but cannot, on its own and in conditions of material scarcity, convert into attendance and performance.

Fifth, the challenges parents face are principally challenges of capacity rather than of willingness. Household poverty and community stigma were reported by every source; the childcare that makes school attendance possible is being supplied without payment by ageing female relatives; and stigma is transferred from the girl to the supporting adult, so that visible support carries a reputational cost. Limited knowledge of the re-entry guidelines compounds these constraints.

Sixth, there is a strong and independently arrived at consensus among all categories of stakeholder on the strategies required, namely childcare provision linked to schools, financial relief, counselling and mentorship for both girls and parents, and stronger enforcement, tracking and follow-up of the national re-entry guidelines. The absence of systematic documentation of re-admitted learners at the sub-county level is a specific and remediable obstacle to all four.

Seventh, and as a matter of context that qualifies all of the above, the re-admitted teenage mothers of Bumula Sub-County are young, are overwhelmingly not living with both parents, attend day schools without exception, and have generally lost at least two

terms of instruction before returning. They nevertheless report high aspiration, with 87.1% expecting to complete their education. The gap between that aspiration and the material conditions in which it must be realised is the practical problem this study identifies.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

The following recommendations stem directly from the conclusions presented in Section 5.3. Each recommendation is linked to the specific conclusion from which it arises, ensuring consistency between the findings, conclusions, and proposed actions.

5.4.1 Recommendation from Conclusion One: Parental Support Influences Education but Its Dimensions Are Not Equivalent

Recommendation 1: Adopt a differentiated approach to strengthening parental support. The Ministry of Education, schools, and community organizations should design interventions that prioritize the material dimension of parental support rather than treating all forms of support as interchangeable. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that parental support influences the education of teenage mothers but that its four dimensions are not equivalent in effect, with logistical support accounting for 20.6% of the variance in educational outcomes compared with 7.2% for psychological and social support and 3.3% for emotional support. A uniform approach that gives equal weight to encouragement, awareness-raising, and material provision would misallocate scarce resources and produce disappointing returns.

5.4.2 Recommendation from Conclusion Two: Logistical Support Is the Decisive Dimension

Recommendation 2: Establish a targeted bursary and materials instrument for re-admitted teenage mothers. The Ministry of Education should establish a targeted bursary or fee-

waiver instrument covering school levies, uniform, learning materials, and examination costs for re-admitted teenage mothers. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that logistical support was the lowest-supplied dimension ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.37$) yet the strongest predictor of educational outcomes ($\beta = .39$, $p = .001$) and the only dimension to retain a statistically significant unique contribution in the multiple regression model. It is reinforced by the finding that 90% of heads of institutions reported that parents do not provide the stationery their re-admitted learners require.

Recommendation 3: Fund or facilitate school-linked childcare provision. The Ministry of Education should fund or facilitate childcare provision adjacent to public junior schools, whether through a school-based crèche, a community day-care, or a supervised space for infants. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that assistance with the infant's needs was the single most predictive item on the logistical support scale ($r = .44$, $p < .001$) and was identified by every category of key informant as decisive for attendance. It is reinforced by the qualitative finding that the childcare on which attendance currently depends is supplied without payment by ageing grandmothers and aunts, one of whom was born in 1954 and identified her own poor health as her principal difficulty. A system of universal junior schooling that depends on the unpaid labour of elderly women in failing health is not sustainable.

Recommendation 4: Assign a named teacher-mentor to every re-admitted teenage mother. Heads of institutions should assign each re-admitted teenage mother a named teacher-mentor responsible for monitoring her attendance and progress and for initiating contact with her parents or guardians. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that logistical support is decisive but that its provision depends on household capacity, which

is often absent. A teacher-mentor provides an institutional backstop that can identify and respond to material and attendance difficulties before they lead to dropout. It is reinforced by the finding that 17.3% of teachers proposed the pairing of girls with supportive teachers and that only 11.5% of teachers currently hold a guidance and counselling designation.

Recommendation 5: Require and audit quarterly returns of re-admitted learners. The Ministry of Education should require and audit quarterly returns of re-admitted learners disaggregated by school, grade, attendance, and progression. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that logistical support is the decisive dimension and that its provision must be tracked if it is to be improved. It is reinforced by the finding that documented re-admissions exist in only about 38 of the sub-county's 147 public junior schools and that many schools re-admit girls informally without filing returns, making it impossible to quantify the population requiring support or to monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

5.4.3 Recommendation from Conclusion Three: Psychological and Social Support Are Small and Not Unique

Recommendation 6: Pair encouragement programmes with material relief. The Ministry of Education, schools, and community organisations should ensure that any programme designed to strengthen parental encouragement, sensitisation, or advocacy is paired with measures that relieve the household's material and time constraints. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that psychological and social support exert statistically significant but small influences when considered alone, and no distinctive influence once material support is taken into account. Encouragement that is not converted into enablement has limited purchase on attendance and performance. The finding that parents encourage, monitor, and protect but much less often enter the school or restructure

the household so that the girl has time to study indicates that the outward-facing components of these dimensions are the weakest links and that they are constrained by material and time poverty.

Recommendation 7: Institutionalize school-initiated contact with parents. Schools should initiate contact with the parents and guardians of re-admitted learners at least once per term rather than waiting for parents to come to the school. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that the outward-facing components of parental social support are the weakest links, with only 55.7% of the girls reporting that their parents communicated with teachers and only 57.1% that their parents encouraged positive relationships with teachers and classmates. The qualitative evidence identified working hours, transport costs, literacy, social confidence, and generational authority as obstacles that prevent parents from initiating contact. School-initiated contact removes these barriers and places the responsibility for communication on the institution rather than on the household.

5.4.4 Recommendation from Conclusion Four: Emotional Support Is Not Statistically Detectable but Qualitatively Consequential

Recommendation 8: Treat emotional support as a welfare priority, not a substitute for material provision. Schools and the Ministry of Education should treat counselling programmes and parenting sessions that address parental acceptance as valuable in their own right but should not expect them to raise attendance or performance in the absence of material provision. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that parental emotional support did not exert a statistically significant influence on educational outcomes, although it was described by every qualitative source as consequential and only half the girls could affirm that their parents made them feel accepted. The finding that only

51.4% of the girls felt accepted at home is an urgent welfare finding that warrants intervention on its own terms, but the evidence of this study provides no basis for expecting such interventions to improve attendance or performance if the material conditions remain unchanged.

5.4.5 Recommendation from Conclusion Five: Challenges Are of Capacity Rather Than Willingness

Recommendation 9: Prioritise income-generating support and material relief over awareness-raising alone. Non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, and religious institutions should prioritise income-generating support and material relief for the households of re-admitted teenage mothers over awareness-raising alone. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that the challenges parents face are principally challenges of capacity rather than of willingness, with household poverty and community stigma reported by every source and not one of the five parents proposing a strategy aimed at changing parental behaviour. Sensitisation alone, unaccompanied by material relief, is unlikely to change what these households are able to provide. Religious institutions can convert their existing welfare structures into predictable material support, for example through a standing education fund, collection and repair of uniforms, or a lending library of textbooks.

Recommendation 10: Target grandmothers and female guardians in sensitisation and support. Community and religious leaders should target grandmothers and other female guardians in sensitisation and support programmes. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that the childcare on which attendance depends is supplied without payment by ageing female relatives and that grandmothers control family decisions. It is reinforced by

the finding that a third of the girls in this study lived with a guardian or relatives, that grandmothers supplied most of the childcare, and that one religious leader identified grandmother engagement as the strategy through which whole families are won over. An intervention targeted at grandmothers reaches the actual decision-maker and the actual carer simultaneously.

5.4.6 Recommendation from Conclusion Six*:* Stakeholder Consensus on Four Strategies

Recommendation 11: Implement the four convergent strategies as a package. The Ministry of Education, schools, and community stakeholders should implement the four strategies on which all respondent categories converged—childcare provision, financial relief, counselling and mentorship, and stronger enforcement and follow-up of the national re-entry guidelines—as an integrated package rather than as isolated measures. This recommendation arises from the conclusion that there is a strong and independently arrived at consensus among all categories of stakeholder on these four strategies. The finding that no single strategy was proposed by all categories in isolation, and that the girls added mentorship by former teenage mothers and the provision of food and sanitary necessities to the list, indicates that the strategies are complementary and that a strategy that supplies only one element will fail.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas emerged from the findings and the limitations of this study as warranting further investigation.

A longitudinal study that follows re-admitted teenage mothers through the junior school cycle and records institutional data on attendance, progression, and examination

performance, in order to establish whether the associations reported here hold when the outcome is measured objectively rather than by self-report.

A study that includes teenage mothers who did not return to school or who returned and subsequently left, since the present study could only survey those who had been re-admitted and remained.

A mediation study testing whether parental emotional support influences educational outcomes indirectly through psychological support and motivation, as the correlation pattern in the present study suggests, rather than directly.

An intervention study evaluating school-linked childcare provision for re-admitted teenage mothers, since childcare was identified in this study as the highest-value point of intervention but its effect has not been experimentally established in the Kenyan junior school context.

A study of the parents and guardians of teenage mothers in their own right, using recruitment methods designed to overcome the reluctance that produced a 25.0% parental response rate in the present study.

A comparative study of day and boarding public junior schools, since every respondent in the present study attended a day school and the structural dominance of logistical support may be specific to that setting.

A psychometric study of the parental support instrument used here, particularly of the negatively worded items in the logistical scale, in order to develop a scale with stable internal consistency for use with adolescent respondents in this context.

A study of the cost of the Competency Based Curriculum for vulnerable households, since informants in this study identified the curriculum's material requirements as a rising and specific barrier that has not been quantified.

REFERENCES

Ajayi, A. I., Athero, S., Muga, W., & Kabiru, C. W. (2023). Lived experiences of pregnant and parenting adolescents in Africa: A scoping review. *Reproductive Health, 20*, 113. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-023-01654-4

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2020). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research, 26*(13), 1802–1811. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Cobb, S. (1976). Social support as a moderator of life stress. *Psychosomatic Medicine, 38*(5), 300–314. https://doi.org/10.1097/00006842-197609000-00003

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dawadi, S., Shrestha, S., & Giri, R. A. (2021). Mixed-methods research: A discussion on its types, challenges, and criticisms. *Journal of Practical Studies in Education, 2*(2), 25–36. https://doi.org/10.46809/jpse.v2i2.20

Field, A. (2024). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Gebrekristos, L. T., Groves, A. K., McNaughton Reyes, H. L., Maman, S., & Moodley, D. (2022). Who goes back to school after birth? Factors associated with postpartum school return among adolescent mothers in the Eastern Cape, South

Africa. *Global Public Health, 17*(11), 3155–3167. https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2022.2049846

Groves, A. K., Gebrekristos, L. T., McNaughton Reyes, H. L., Moodley, D., Raziano, V., & Maman, S. (2022). A mixed-methods study of resilience and return to school among adolescent mothers in South Africa. *Global Public Health, 17*(9), 2111–2124. https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2021.1970208

Gundumogula, M. (2020). Importance of focus groups in qualitative research. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies, 8*(11), 299–302. https://doi.org/10.24940/theijhss/2020/v8/i11/HS2011-082

House, J. S. (1981). *Work stress and social support*. Addison-Wesley.

İlhan, M., Güler, N., Taşdelen Teker, G., & Ergenekon, Ö. (2024). The effects of reverse items on psychometric properties and respondents' scale scores according to different item reversal strategies. *International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education, 11*(1), 20–38. https://doi.org/10.21449/ijate.1345549

Kaur, A. (2013). Maslow's need hierarchy theory: Applications and criticisms. *Global Journal of Management and Business Studies, 3*(10), 1061–1064.

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, & ICF. (2023). *Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022: Volume 1*. KNBS and ICF. https://www.knbs.or.ke/reports/kdhs-2022/

Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of behavioral research* (4th ed.). Harcourt College Publishers.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2021). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 120–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092

Magara, E. (2018). *Competency based education and the role of parents in Kenya*. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development.

Marende, J. (2022). *School re-entry policy and its effect on participation of teenage mothers in public secondary schools in Narok County, Kenya* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Kenyatta University.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*(4), 370–396. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346

Ministry of Education. (2020). *National guidelines for school re-entry in early learning and basic education*. Government of Kenya.

Miriti, J. M., & Mutua, M. N. (2019). Teenage pregnancies and girls' education capabilities in Nzambani Ward, Kitui County, Kenya. *International Journal of Gender Studies, 4*(1), 1–15.

Morgan, A. K., Ibrahim, R., Owusu, A. F. S., Awafo, B. A., Quartey, T., Aziire, M. A., Katsekpor, J. T., Owusu, A. S., & Katey, D. (2023). Prevalence and associated factors of school re-entry among teenage mothers in Ghana's Volta Region: A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 28*(1), 2242476. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2023.2242476

Mukabana, S., Abuya, B., Kabiru, C. W., & Ajayi, A. I. (2024). Poverty, childcare responsibilities, and stigma hinder adolescent mothers from returning to school in

a low-income urban informal settlement in Kenya. *PLOS ONE, 19*(7), e0307532. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0307532

Murong'a, H. M., Mwoma, T., & Ouko, H. (2020). Teenage mothers' involvement in their children's acquisition of pre-literacy skills: A case study of Kilifi County, Kenya. *European Journal of Education Studies, 7*(9), 168–184.

Navarro, J. L., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2023). Technologizing Bronfenbrenner: Neo-ecological theory. *Current Psychology, 42*(22), 19338–19354. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02738-3

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2020). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847

Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Roberts, R. E. (2020). Qualitative interview questions: Guidance for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 25*(9), 3185–3203. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4640

Rotich, M. J. (2019). *An exploration of how teen mothers cope with mothering and schooling* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Aga Khan University.

Taherdoost, H. (2021). Data collection methods and tools for research: A step-by-step guide to choose data collection technique for academic and business research projects. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management, 10*(1), 10–38.

Thoits, P. A. (1985). Social support and psychological well-being: Theoretical possibilities. In I. G. Sarason & B. R. Sarason (Eds.), *Social support: Theory, research and applications* (pp. 51–72). Martinus Nijhoff.

Thoits, P. A. (2011). Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 52*(2), 145–161. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022146510395592

UNESCO. (2020). *Global education monitoring report 2020: Inclusion and education — All means all*. UNESCO Publishing.

UNESCO. (2021). *When schools shut: Gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closures*. UNESCO Publishing.

UNICEF, & UNESCO. (2025). *The right to return: School re-entry policy and practice for pregnant and parenting adolescent girls in Eastern and Southern Africa* [Evidence-informed policy brief]. UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office. https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/16856/file/Right-to-Return-2026-EN.pdf

Varpio, L., O'Brien, B., Rees, C. E., Monrouxe, L., Ajjawi, R., & Paradis, E. (2021). The applicability of generalisability and bias to health professions education's research. *Medical Education, 55*(2), 167–173. https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.14348

Wahba, M. A., & Bridwell, L. G. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 15*(2), 212–240. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90038-6

Wekesa Nafula, G., Barasa, J., & Likoko, S. (2025). Parental perception and retention of teen mothers in schools in West Pokot County, Kenya. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 9*(8), 7855–7869. https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.908000654

World Health Organization. (2021). *Ethical standards for research during public health emergencies*. World Health Organization.

World Health Organization. (2024). *Adolescent pregnancy* [Fact sheet]. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy

APPENDICES

Appendix I: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department for Basic Education

TEL: OFFICE	**SUB-COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE**
TEL:	**BUMULA SUB-COUNTY**
deobumula142abc@g.mail.com	**P.O. BOX 142-50200,**
When replying please quote	**BUNGOMA.**
Our Ref: BUM/ED/ADM / 02	**DATE: 15/9/2026**

TO ALL HEADS OF INSTITUTION
PUBLIC JUNIOR SCHOOLS
BUMULA SUB COUNTY

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA – CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

The above has been granted permission to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act,2013 (Re.2014) in Bungoma dated 1ST September, 2026 to carry our research on **"Influence of Parental Support on Education of Teenage Mothers in Public Junior schools in Bumula Sub County,"** for a period ending, 1ST September 2027.

Please accord her the necessary assistance she may require.

Thank you.

SUB COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, BUMULA P.O BOX 142-50200, BUNGOMA SIGN:..... DATE:.....

SARAH A. AYUMBA
SUB-COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BUMULA SUB-COUNTY

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

Faculty of Education

Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

Our Ref: CUEA/DVC-ACAD/FOE/PGSE/NACOSTI/38/JULY 2026

21st July 2026

THE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (NACOSTI)
NAIROBI, KENYA

RE: – JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA : REG NO. 1065348

I wish to introduce to you **Juliet Nasimiyu Wesonga** a MED student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya; and request you to assist her accomplish her academic research requirements.

Juliet area of specialization is Administration and Planning. Every student in this programme is required to conduct research, write a report/dissertation and submit it for examination in the final years of study. Accordingly, **Juliet's** research proposal has been approved and she will conduct research on the following topic:

"Influence of Parental Support on Education of Teenage Mothers in Public Junior Schools in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya."

Thanking you in advance for according **Juliet** the assistance she may require to conduct her research successfully.

Sincerely,

21 JUL 2026

SR. PROF. ELIZBETH NDUKU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT - POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA), P.O. BOX 62157 00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel. 020-2525811-5, 8890063 ♦ Fax 8801084, Email: [illegible], Website: www.cuea.edu
Founded in 1984 by AMECEA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa)

ISO 9001:2015 Certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards

Appendix II: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **441199**

Date of Issue: **01/September/2026**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Sr.. JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA of Catholic University of Eastern Africa, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Bungoma on the topic: INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL SUPPORT ON EDUCATION OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN BUMULA SUB-COUNTY, BUNGOMA COUNTY , KENYA for the period ending : 01/September/2027.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/26/4195164**

441199

Applicant Identification Number

Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

Appendix III: Ethics Review Permit

AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Committed to His mission
Connected to His world

01st September 2026

JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA

Dear Juliet Nasimiyu Wesonga,

Re: Influence Of Parental Support On Education Of Teenage Mothers In Public Junior Schools In Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) at AIU, your proposal has been approved. Your approval number is **ISERC/EXT368/2026**. The approval period is from **01st September 2026** to **01st September 2027** and is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements.

i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, and MTA) will be used.
ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by the Institutional Ethical Review Committee.
iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to the Institutional Ethical Review Committee within 72 hours of notification.
iv. Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to Institutional Ethical Review Committee within 72 hours.
v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to Institutional Ethical Review Committee.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Africa International University (AIU)
P. O. Box 24686 - 00502
Nairobi KENYA

Prof. Joash Mutua
Chair, AIU-ISERC Committee

Appendix IV: Antiplagiarism Report

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA
INFORMATION SYSTEMS LIBRARIAN
TURNITIN ORIGINALITY REPORT

REF: PGS/FOE/1422/DEFENSE/LANGATA,

turnitin Page 2 of 161 - Integrity Overview Submission ID trn:oid:::1:3643406217

7% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

Filtered from the Report

- Bibliography
- Quoted Text
- Cited Text

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT **JULIET NASIMIYU WESONGA** REG NO: **1065348**, SUBMITTED A CHECK OF ANTIPLAGIARISM ON EVALUATION OF **INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL SUPPORT ON EDUCATION OF TEENAGE MOTHERS IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN BUMULA SUB-COUNTY, BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA. A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, FACULTY OFEDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER'S DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA.**

Verification by Systems Librarian:

Name: ..HARUN....MAINA..... Signature:..... Date: ...8/9/2026...

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa INFORMATION SYSTEMS LIBRARIAN P. O. Box 62157-00200, NAIROBI.

Appendix V: Introduction Letter

The Dean, Faculty of Education
Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN BUMULA SUB-COUNTY

I am a postgraduate student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa pursuing a Master of Education degree in Educational Administration and Planning. As a requirement for the award of the degree, I am conducting a study entitled "Influence of Parental Support on Education of Teenage Mothers in Public Junior Schools in Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya."

I kindly request permission to collect data in the selected public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County. The information obtained will be treated with the strictest confidence and used solely for academic purposes. No respondent will be identified by name in any report arising from the study, and participation is entirely voluntary.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Juliet Nasimiyu Wesonga (Reg. No. 1065348)

Appendix VI: Questionnaire for Teachers

You have been selected to participate in this study. I request you to respond to the questionnaire honestly and objectively. The information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. You are not required to write your name or include any identifying details. Participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any stage.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: a) Male ( ) b) Female ( )
2. Age bracket: a) 21–30 years ( ) b) 31–40 years ( ) c) 41–50 years ( ) d) 51 and above ( )
3. Teaching experience: a) 1–5 years ( ) b) 6–10 years ( ) c) 11–15 years ( ) d) 16–20 years ( ) e) 21–25 years ( ) f) 26 years and above ( )
4. Position in school: a) Deputy head teacher ( ) b) Senior teacher ( ) c) Class teacher ( ) d) Guidance and counselling teacher ( ) e) Teacher ( )
5. Highest academic qualification: a) Diploma in Education ( ) b) Bachelor's degree ( ) c) Master's degree ( ) d) PhD ( ) e) Other (specify) ……

SECTION B: Parental Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

Using the scale 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree, indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
i. Teenage mothers feel psychologically supported by parents after re-admission to the same grade.					
ii. Parents' emotional support increases teen mothers' ability to perform well academically.					
iii. Parental moral support to teen mothers enhances their retention in school.					
iv. Logistical support to teenage mothers increases chances of attendance consistency.					
v. Teen mothers perform poorly academically when logistical support is inadequate.					
vi. Family economic status determines the re-admission of teen mothers.					
vii. Teen mothers' attitude influences parental support to their education.					
viii. Lack of implementation and follow-up on the re-entry policy limits chances of re-admitting teen mothers.					
ix. Parents' attitude influences re-admission of teenage mothers at the same grade.					
x. Inadequate advocacy and communication limits re-admission of teen mothers to the same grade.					

SECTION C: Open-Ended Questions

7. In what other ways does parental support influence teenage mothers' academic performance, attendance consistency and retention in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
8. What are some of the challenges teenage mothers face when re-admitted at the same grade in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
9. What are some of the causes of teenage pregnancy in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
10. What strategies can be put in place to ensure that re-admitted teenage mothers are retained in school?

Appendix VII: Questionnaire for Teenage Mothers

I am conducting a study on the influence of parental support on the education of teenage mothers who have been re-admitted to school at the same grade. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. Please answer all questions honestly and without fear. Do not write your name on this questionnaire.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Age bracket: ( ) 13–14 years ( ) 15–16 years ( ) 17–18 years ( ) Above 18 years
2. Current grade: ( ) Grade 7 ( ) Grade 8 ( ) Grade 9
3. Type of school: ( ) Boarding ( ) Day school
4. Number of children: ( ) One ( ) Two ( ) More than two
5. Who do you live with currently? ( ) Both parents ( ) Mother only ( ) Father only ( ) Guardian/relatives ( ) Alone
6. How long were you out of school before re-admission? ( ) Less than 6 months ( ) 6 months – 1 year ( ) More than 1 year

SECTION B: Parental Emotional Support

Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree.

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1. My parents encourage me to continue with school.					
2. My parents motivate me to work hard in my studies.					
3. My parents make me feel accepted despite being a teenage mother.					
4. My parents listen to my school-related challenges.					
5. I receive guidance and counselling from my parents.					

SECTION C: Parental Logistical Support

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
6. My parents provide school fees on time.					
7. My parents provide learning materials such as books and uniforms.					
8. Lack of financial support affects my school attendance.					
9. My parents assist in meeting my child's needs.					
10. Financial difficulties interfere with my academic performance.					

SECTION D: Parental Psychological Support

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
11. My parents monitor my academic progress.					
12. My parents encourage me to attend school regularly.					
13. My parents communicate with teachers about my education.					
14. I receive enough time at home to study.					
15. My parents encourage me to complete assignments and homework.					

SECTION E: Parental Social Support

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
16. My family protects me from stigma and discrimination.					
17. My parents help me balance childcare and school responsibilities.					
18. I feel supported by my family members.					
19. My parents encourage positive relationships with teachers and classmates.					
20. Family support has improved my confidence in school.					

SECTION F: Educational Outcomes

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
21. I attend school regularly after re-admission.					
22. My academic performance has improved since re-admission.					
23. I am motivated to complete my education.					
24. I participate actively in classroom activities.					
25. I believe I will successfully complete my education.					

SECTION G: Open-Ended Questions

26. In what ways do your parents support your education?
27. What causes teenage pregnancy among learners of public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?
28. What challenges do you experience as a teenage mother in a public junior school?
29. What additional support would help you continue with your education successfully?

Appendix VIII: Interview Guide for Heads of Institutions

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age bracket? a) 21–30 years ( ) b) 31–40 years ( ) c) 41–50 years ( ) d) Over 50 years ( )
2. What is your highest level of education? a) Diploma ( ) b) Bachelor's degree ( ) c) Master's degree ( ) d) PhD ( ) e) Any other (specify) ……
3. How long have you served as a head teacher? a) 0–5 years ( ) b) 6–10 years ( ) c) 11–15 years ( ) d) Over 15 years ( )

Section B: Childcare Service Provision and Education of Teenage Mothers

4. Do parents provide childcare services to the infants of the re-admitted teen mothers in your school?
5. How does a lack of this support affect teen mothers in their consistency in school attendance?

Section C: Financial Support and Education of Teenage Mothers

6. Do parents pay school fees for teen mothers to support their academic journey?
7. How does a lack of timely fee payment for teen mothers affect their retention in your school?
8. Which other financial support do parents offer to the teenage mothers in your school?

Section D: Stationery Materials and Education of Teenage Mothers

9. Do parents provide all the stationery needed by teen mothers in your school?
10. How does a lack of stationery materials affect their academic performance?

Section E: Causes of Teenage Pregnancy and its Impact on the Education of Teen Mothers

11. What factors contribute to teenage pregnancies in the community around?
12. How does teenage pregnancy affect the academic progress of teenage mothers?

Appendix IX: Interview Guide for the Sub-County Director of Education

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age bracket? 2. What is your highest level of education? 3. How long have you served in administration?

Section B: Government Re-entry Policy Implementation

4. How many schools have cases of re-admission at the same grade in your sub-county?
5. What sensitisation strategies can be put in place to enhance effective implementation of the re-entry policy in public junior schools?

Section C: Psychological Support

6. What forms of psychological support do parents or guardians provide to teenage mothers who return to school?
7. How does parental encouragement influence the confidence and motivation of teenage mothers to remain in school?
8. In your view, how does parental psychological support influence the educational outcomes of teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County?

Section D: Social Support

9. Does parental social support increase the chances of re-enrolment of teen mothers at the same grade in public junior schools?
10. How does parents' social support affect the education of teen mothers?

Section E: Emotional Support

11. What forms of emotional support do parents or guardians provide to teenage mothers in Bumula Sub-County?
12. In your opinion, how do parental love, acceptance and understanding influence the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools?
13. What challenges do parents experience in providing emotional support to teenage mothers in public junior schools?
14. What measures can schools and the Ministry of Education put in place to strengthen emotional support for teenage mothers?

Section F: Logistical Support

15. What examples of logistical support do parents offer to the re-admitted teen mothers in public junior schools?
16. How do those supports increase the chances of attendance consistency, retention and academic performance of teenage mothers in public junior schools?

Section G: Suggestions and Recommendations

17. What support should be provided by the government, community and other stakeholders?
18. What recommendations would you give to improve the education and retention of teenage mothers in public junior schools?

Appendix X: Interview Guide for Parents and Guardians

Section A: Background Information

1. What is your relationship with the teenage mother?
2. How long has she been under your care or support?
3. Is she currently attending a public junior school?
4. What has been your experience in supporting her education since she became a mother?

Section B: Psychological Support

5. What do you do to encourage the teenage mother to continue with her education?
6. In what ways do you help her cope with stress, worry or challenges related to being both a student and a mother?
7. How do you motivate her when she feels discouraged about continuing with school?
8. In your opinion, how does your psychological encouragement influence her interest, attendance and participation in education?

Section C: Emotional Support

9. How do you show care, love and understanding towards the teenage mother?
10. How do you respond when she faces emotional challenges related to school or motherhood?
11. Do you discuss her educational progress and future goals with her? Please explain.
12. How do you handle situations where she feels discouraged, rejected or unsupported?

Section D: Social Support

13. What do you do to protect her from stigma, discrimination or negative attitudes from other people?
14. How do you encourage other family members and community members to support her education?
15. Do you communicate with teachers or school administrators concerning her educational needs and progress? Please explain.
16. What social challenges does she face as a teenage mother while attending school?

Section E: Logistical Support

17. What practical support do you provide to enable the teenage mother to attend school regularly?
18. Do you provide for her school requirements, such as fees or levies where applicable, uniform, stationery, books and other learning materials? Please explain.
19. Who takes care of her child when she is in school?

20. How does the availability or lack of childcare support affect her attendance and participation in school?
21. Do you assist her with transport or other costs related to attending school? Please explain.

Section F: Challenges Faced by Parents and Guardians

22. What challenges do you face in supporting the education of a teenage mother?
23. What difficulties do you face in helping her balance motherhood and schooling?
24. Are there social or cultural attitudes that make it difficult for you to support her education?
25. What challenges do you experience when working with the school or other people involved in supporting her?

Section G: Suggestions and Recommendations

26. What should schools do to support teenage mothers and their parents or guardians?
27. What support should be provided by the government, community and other stakeholders?
28. What recommendations would you give to improve the education and retention of teenage mothers in public junior schools?

Appendix XI: Interview Guide for Religious Leaders

Section A: Background Information

1. What is your role and responsibility as a religious leader in this community?
2. How long have you served as a religious leader in this community?
3. What is your experience in supporting teenage mothers and their families?
4. In what ways does your religious institution interact with teenage mothers who are continuing with their education?

Section B: Psychological Support

5. In your experience, what psychological challenges do teenage mothers face when they return to school after giving birth?
6. What role do parents play in helping teenage mothers cope with psychological challenges associated with motherhood and schooling?
7. In what ways can religious leaders and institutions support parents in providing psychological support to teenage mothers?

Section C: Emotional Support

8. From your experience, how does parental acceptance or rejection affect a teenage mother's education?
9. What role does the religious community play in encouraging parents to provide emotional support to teenage mothers?
10. What can religious leaders do to promote acceptance and reduce stigma against teenage mothers?

Section D: Social Support

11. How do parents support teenage mothers in maintaining positive relationships with their families, peers, teachers and other members of the community?
12. What role do religious leaders and institutions play in creating a supportive social environment for teenage mothers?
13. What challenges do parents face when trying to protect teenage mothers from negative social influences?
14. What strategies could be used to strengthen social support for teenage mothers in the community?

Section E: Logistical Support

15. In your experience, how do parents assist teenage mothers with school-related requirements such as uniforms, stationery, transport and other learning materials?
16. How does the availability or lack of financial support affect the education of teenage mothers?

17. What role can religious institutions play in assisting families experiencing difficulties in providing logistical support?

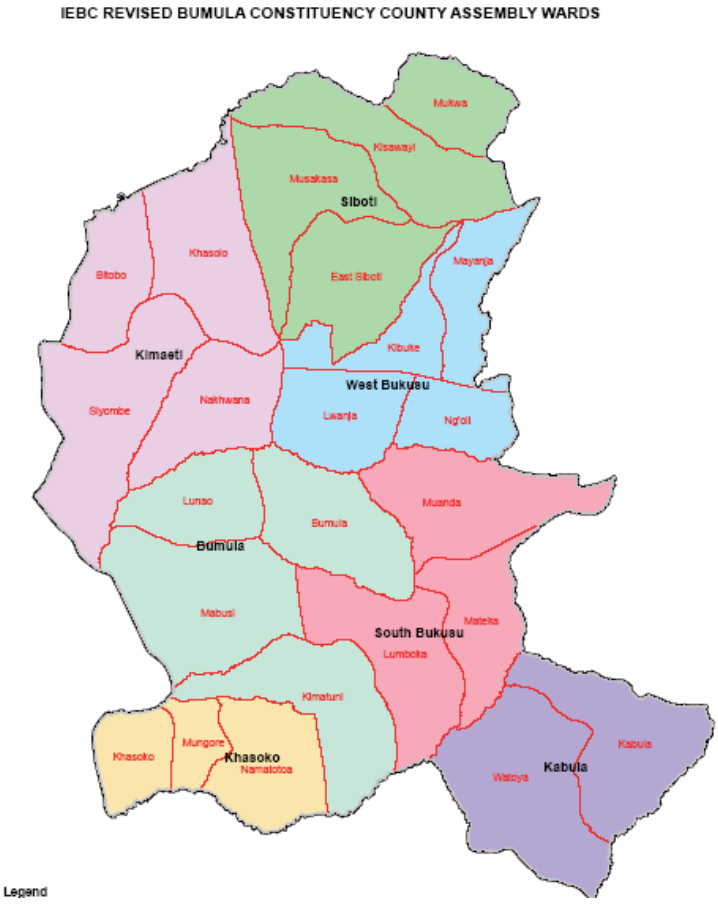
Section F: Challenges Faced by Parents

18. What challenges do parents face when offering support to teenage mothers in public junior schools in Bumula Sub-County?

Section G: Suggestions and Recommendations

19. What strategies can the Ministry of Education, schools, the community and other stakeholders use to enhance parental support for the education of teenage mothers in public junior schools?

Appendix XII: Map of the Study Area



Bumula Constituency county assembly wards. Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, reproduced from the approved research proposal.