

Content is available at: CRDEEP Journals  
Journal homepage: <http://www.crdeepjournal.org/category/journals/ijssah/>

## International Journal of Social Sciences Arts and Humanities

(ISSN: 2321-4147) (Scientific Journal Impact Factor: 6.002)



### Full Length Research Paper

## Analysis of Trends and Challenges in The Implementation of School Reentry Policy Among Adolescents in Zambia

Phir George\* and Kasongo Mumba

Mulungushi University School of Social Sciences, Kabwe, Zambia.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

**Corresponding Author:**  
Phiri, George

**Key words:**  
Adolescents  
Educational Attainment  
Readmissions  
Reentry policy

### ABSTRACT

To promote girl child education, the Government of the Republic of Zambia introduced the School Re-entry policy in 1997 so that girls who become pregnant could be readmitted into school after delivery. Despite the introduction of re-entry policy, many girls are not readmitted into the schools after delivery. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges associated with the implementation of re-entry policy. The specific objectives of the study were to find out levels of awareness of school re-entry policy; the trends in the school re-entry, and whether re-entry policy can enhance the educational attainment of the adolescents. This study used the survey method involving questionnaires to collect data from the participants who included 122 adolescents, and 50 key informants from primary and secondary schools. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequency tables and graphs generated through SPSS. Results showed that 95.7% of the respondents are aware of re-entry policy. Re-entry policy has a positive effect on educational attainment of the adolescents as suggested by the opinions of the male (64%) and females (73%). The challenges experienced include low percentage readmissions for primary and secondary schools (48.4%). Analysis of trends on readmissions using Educational Statistical Bulletin revealed that primary school re-entries increased slightly from 40% in 2014 to 41.2 % in 2020, (Representing 1.2%). Whereas re-entries for secondary schools, during the same period, increased from 66.7% to 70.3% (Representing 3.3%). The implications of the findings are discussed, and recommendations made based on the information provided by the participants.

### 1. Introduction

Most countries in the southern African region have faced challenges in the education of children. Therefore, measures to promote the education of vulnerable children such as school reentry have been developed. The challenges related to the school reentry policy are that the policy is not working effectively in increasing participation of disadvantaged girls and women in education and ensuring gender equity in education for adolescents (Republic of Kenya, 2007, in Omwecha, 2012). Adolescence is defined as a transition period between childhood and adulthood characterized by onset of puberty (Melgosa, 2013). Adolescents continue to depend on their parents for support on their education and job security until they are about 20 to 25 years or older. Sigmund Freud a psychoanalyst explains adolescence as the establishment of sexual impulses repressed

\*Author can be contacted at: Mulungushi University School of Social Sciences, Kabwe, Zambia

Received: 17-October 2023; Sent for Review on: 02-November-2023; Draft sent to Author for corrections: 02-March-2024; Accepted on: 12-April- 2024

Online Available from 15-April- 2024

DOI: [10.13140/RG.2.2.32020.92800](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.32020.92800)

IJSSAH: 2024-19/© 2024 CRDEEP Journals. All Rights Reserved.

in childhood. Such repressed urges may result into mental disorders in adolescents' life that may be manifested through isolation, anxiety guilty or confusion. According to Jean Piaget, a cognitive psychologist, the intellectual aspects of adolescents include the development of intellectual abilities, and the adolescence stage gives the individual the mental skills to acquire knowledge and to understand their environment (Ibid).

To promote girl child education, the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) introduced the reentry policy in 1997, in response to the United Nations declaration of human rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The reentry policy is designed to give the girls who have left school due to teenage pregnancy a second chance to be readmitted in the school system. "The reentry policy advocates that girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy should be readmitted after giving birth. The aim of this policy is to implement measures that will help prevent the exclusion of young mothers from furthering their education" (Mwansa, 2011). In 2012, the Government of the Republic of Zambia developed guidelines to support the implementation of the school reentry policy. However, despite efforts at promoting reentry not all girls who have dropped out of school due to teenage pregnancy are readmitted into the schools.

## 2. Reentry policy in Kenya

Reports on the Education systems in Kenya, such as the commission of enquiry into the education system of Kenya and Koech report 2000, have sought to reform the education system inherited from the Colonial Government to make it more responsive to the needs of Kenyans. In addition, the Kenyan Government has devised policy initiatives directed at enhancing education for all (EFA) and Universal Primary education (UPE) whose key concerns are access, retention equity, quality, and relevance in the education system. Omwecha (2012) conducted a study in Kenya in which the main aim was to explore the implementation of reentry policy for girls who dropped out of public schools due to teenage pregnancy and how the policy might be improved. A qualitative method using a case study approach revealed that there were mixed feelings regarding the value, nature, and implementation of the reentry policy. It was also noticed that social cultural factors were responsible for preventing teenage girls from returning to school. Research findings also pointed to the need for inclusive policies that consider the voices of the girls and teenage mothers that are not heard. The challenges to the reentry policy are that the policy is not working effectively in increasing participation of disadvantaged girls and women in education and ensuring gender equity in education (Republic of Kenya, 2007, in Omwecha, 2012). The Center for Study on Adolescents (CSA) found that in Kenya, about 13,000 girls leave school every year due to teenage pregnancy. The CSA also showed that whereas only 35% of girls between the ages of 17 and 20 attend school, 50% of boys with the same range are in school (CSA, 2008, in Omwecha, 2012). The strategies adopted to counteract school dropouts in Kenya among girls include the following:

- a. Ensuring the reentry of girls who drop out of school due to teenage pregnancy.
- b. Sensitizing stakeholders and community to discard social cultural practices that hinder effective participation of girls and boys in secondary education.
- c. Enforcing legislation against vocations of children's rights.

### 2.1.1 Reentry Policy in Zambia

The Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) introduced the School Reentry policy in 1997 so that girls could be readmitted into the school after they become pregnant. This policy was intended to promote the education of the girl child, so they progress with their education after delivery. However, despite the introduction of reentry policy, many girls are not readmitted into the school system. Teenage pregnancy is a major contributing factor to high school dropout for girls. It was observed that about 36,256 cumulative pregnancy figures were recorded in Zambia between 2004 and 2007 but the number of pregnant girls readmitted nationwide was only one third the total numbers of school dropouts. In 2007, the total readmissions were only 34% (UNICEF, 2011).

### 2.1.2 Challenges associated with school reentry.

The introduction of the reentry policy has faced some challenges such as the following:

#### 2.1.2.1 Low number of school reentry

In one study, the outcomes of sensitization campaigns involving traditional leaders over raising awareness over girl child education in communities was assessed. Results showed that the Traditional Leaders sensitizations workshops provided important information in reentry policy (UNICEF, 2010). However, the Educational statistical bulletin indicates that 15,724 pregnancy cases were recorded in Zambia, but only 8,827 (representing 56%) girls were recorded to have returned into school under the reentry policy program (GRZ, 2018). The number of girls who were reentering school after pregnancy has remained low compared to the number of pregnancy cases being recorded.

### 2.1.2.2 Stigma and discrimination

Stigma and discrimination are some of the main reasons which hinder girls who have become pregnant from reentry into school. The Ministry of General Education (2007) report that the church and parents in mission schools were against the idea of readmitting girls and would opt to give affected pregnant girls transfers. Wendkind et al., (2015) reports that some church-based schools do not accept the girls back after the pregnancy. However, some adolescents refuse to be readmitted at the same school following pregnancy (GRZ, 2020). Although there is some form of resistance to reentry policy, this situation is slowly reducing.

### 2.1.2.3 Lack of awareness over the Reentry policy

Reports tend to indicate that some parents and teachers, especially in rural areas, are not aware of the existence of reentry policy and the mechanisms under which it is being implemented. In addition, there is reluctance by some school managers in disseminating information about reentry to the community (GRZ, 2018). Muyunda (2021) investigated the effectiveness of reentry policy implementation in public secondary schools in Lusaka, Zambia. Results showed that there seems to be missing links between the reentry policy and the actual practice in schools. In addition, most secondary schools are not aware of its existence due to unclear goals and objectives including its monitoring strategies. Communities tend to have social and cultural obligations that hinder teenage mothers from attending school, and schools which are the implementers tend to stigmatize the teenage mothers (McGee and Blank 1989, Burdell, 1998, Flinders et al., 2014, in Chiyota, 2020). In his study, Chiyota (2020) found that more still needs to be done on the implementation of reentry policy as there is lack of clarity on policy guidelines among the stakeholders.

### 2.1.2.4 Inadequate guidance and counselling skills

Some teachers are appointed to offer guidance and counselling services in schools. However, they lack guidance and counselling skills. Guidance and counseling services on reproductive health to prevent teenage pregnancy among girls in most schools are still lacking (Gender Links, 2011). Therefore, more support towards implementation of school reentry policy is required. This should include advocacy programs for advancement of the girl child education.

### 2.1.3 Reentry policy perceived as perpetrating teenage pregnancies.

Some reports suggest that reentry was being received with mixed feelings although it is being embraced slowly by the community. Some parents and teachers (18% of the respondents) were against the policy as they felt that it encourages immorality among the pupils (UNICEF, 2011). Other reports suggest that some sections of people in communities believe the reentry policy was contributing to teenage pregnancies as the girls are aware that they would still get back to school after falling pregnant (GRZ, 2018).

### 2.1.4 Financial constraints and misunderstanding of the policy.

Camfed, British Council, and Zambia Accountancy program (2015), have cited constraints to educational attainment of girls as including misunderstanding of reentry policy, financial constraints, cultural beliefs that position marriage as a great attainment in life for females and lack of counseling and guidance for young mothers. These factors lead to ineffective implementation of reentry policy.

### 2.1.5 Effectiveness of School reentry policy

Chulu (2016) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of Reentry policy in Government schools and focusing on *Itezhi-tezhi*, Central Province of Zambia. The study used a data analysis approach involving coding of emerging themes on the effectiveness of the reentry policy in government schools and how they made sense of their social world, from an educational management perspective.

Results showed that reentry policy was not being implemented effectively in the selected government schools. In addition, most of the learners were not aware of the reentry policy. This suggests that the management was not actively involved in the sensitization of the pupils on the policy, in some parts of the country (Chulu, 2016). The study recommended that reentry policy should be included in the school curriculum to increase awareness among learners and teachers. In another development Banda et al., (2017) asked the respondents to comment on government intervention to ensure retention of girls in the education system. Results showed that 46.4% of the participants showed high appreciation for the policy while 17.9% felt the policy was effective and 25.7% felt the intervention were not influencing the girl child in school. It was observed that while reentry was effective at retaining girls in school regarding aspects of readmission, progression and completion, there has been challenges regarding their performance, achievement, and behavior. The study recommended increased sensitization to deal effectively with misconceptions surrounding reentry policy.

### 2.1.6 Mixed emotions towards the school reentry policy

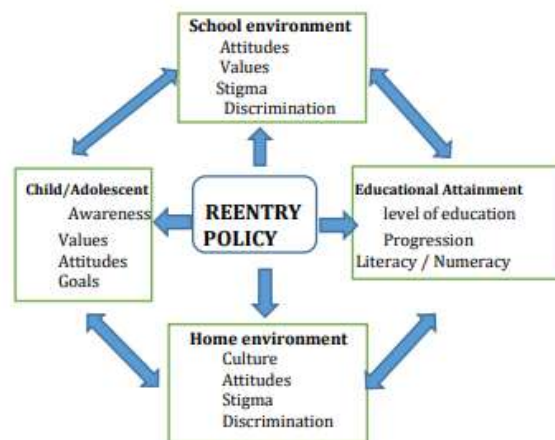
People tend to have mixed emotions, and this has affected the implementation of the policy. According to McCadden (2015, in Camfed, 2018), reentry policy is a critical step in establishing girls' rights to education after pregnancy and childbirth. Much more should be done to encourage adolescent mothers to return to school after delivery. Mwansa (2011) reports that some stakeholders have been left out in the reentry policy implementation process. Although it is a good policy, this policy is perceived as an agenda being influenced by the donor community. Furthermore, Chiyota (2020) has reported that policy implementers have often failed to listen to teenage mothers' views and challenges associated with childcare, financial support and this makes it difficult for them to appreciate the effect of reentry policy.

### 2.2 Significance of the study:

The problem of teenage pregnancy is a major challenge in most communities in Zambia. Despite the introduction of reentry policy, not all girls who fall pregnant are readmitted into school due to various challenges. According to UNESCO (2010) reports, the number of adolescent girls who become mothers has continued to increase in low- and middle-income countries. In addition, there tends to be mixed feelings among people about the value, nature, and implementation of school reentry policy (Omwecha 2012, GRZ 2018). It was expected that, the policy makers including stakeholders could use the findings in this report as a guide towards strengthening the measures for implementation of the school reentry policy to enhance the progression of the girls in their education, so they contribute to national development.

### 2.3 Conceptual framework

Reentry policy is intended at giving girls who have left school a second opportunity to advance their education. The policy is meant to implement measures that will help prevent the exclusion of young mothers from furthering their education. The conceptual framework suggests that several factors in the school environment (e.g., management, values attitudes stigma and discrimination) and home environment (e.g., values, culture, attitudes) may affect the implementation of reentry policy. Such factors are likely to affect the adolescents' school progression and educational attainment (Figure 1):



**Fig 1:** Factors related to School Reentry policy.

### 2.4 Objectives of the study:

- To investigate the challenges related to the implementation of school reentry policy.
- To investigate whether there is increased awareness of reentry policy among parents and teachers.
- To find out the trends in the implementation of reentry policy.
- To investigate whether school reentry can enhance educational attainment of adolescents.

### 2.5 Research Questions:

- a. What are the challenges associated with the implementation of reentry policy in schools?
- b. What is the level of awareness by parents, teachers, and adolescents over reentry policy?
- c. What are the trends in the implementation of school reentry policy?
- d. What is the effect of school reentry on education attainment of the adolescents?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research design

The study used the descriptive survey method to generate information. Questionnaires were developed and administered to the participants to generate quantitative data and interview schedules were used to generate qualitative information for the study.

### 3.2 Research site

The research site was primary and secondary schools in Kabwe where children and adolescents attended school. Primary schools offer primary education for children and runs from grade 1 to 7. On the other hand, secondary schools offer secondary education from grade 8 to 12.

### 3.3 Subjects:

A total number 172 subjects participated in this study. 122 were children and adolescents aged between 14 and 24 years. The children and adolescents were comprised of 67 boys and 55 girls. A purposeful sample of 50 key informants, which included teachers, parents, and education officers was obtained. The key informants were selected based on their experience and knowledge on school reentry. Thirty one of the 122 adolescents, who had dropped out of school were also included in the sample.

### 3.4 Data collection

The participants were required to respond to the questionnaires and interview schedules. Primary data was collected from the participants using questionnaires. Secondary data on school reentry for the period from 2014 to 2020 was obtained from Educational Statistical Bulletin by the Ministry of General Education (GRZ 2020, Camfed, 2018).

### 3.5 Data analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed through percentages, graphs and tables using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). It was expected that the use of SPSS would enhance the accuracy in the analysis of quantitative data, to provide better understanding of the subject matter.

## 4. Results

This section starts with presentation on the distribution of the sample followed by a presentation of the data on reentry as captured through the Educational Statistical Bulletin (GRZ 2020).

### 4.1 Sampling Distribution

The sample was composed of 172 participants who included 50 key informants (i.e., parents and teachers) who had knowledge on the subject in their area or schools; and 122 adolescents. The adolescents consisted of 31 pupils who had dropped out and 91 pupils enrolled in school (Table 1).

**Table1:** Distribution of the participants: Adolescents, and key informants (N=172)

	Male		Female		Total
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
<b>Adolescents</b>	67	55	55	45	122
<b>Key informant</b>	23	46	27	54	50
<b>Total</b>	90		82		172

### 4.2 Challenges over reentry policy

To investigate the challenges related to re-entry policy, the participants were asked to indicate whether they were aware of the existence of the re-entry policy.

#### 4.2.1 Awareness of Reentry Policy

Fifty parents and teachers were asked to indicate their opinion whether they are aware of reentry policy. Information was recorded for 46 participants. The results showed that 95.7% of the participants are aware of the reentry policy (Table 2):

Table 2 shows that 95.7% of the respondents are aware of reentry policy.

**Table:2** Reentry Awareness Policy

Aware of Reentry Policy	Frequency	%	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	2.1	2.2	2.2
Yes	45	95.7	97.8	100.0
<b>Total</b>	46	<b>97.9</b>	100.0	
<b>Total</b>	47	<b>100.0</b>		

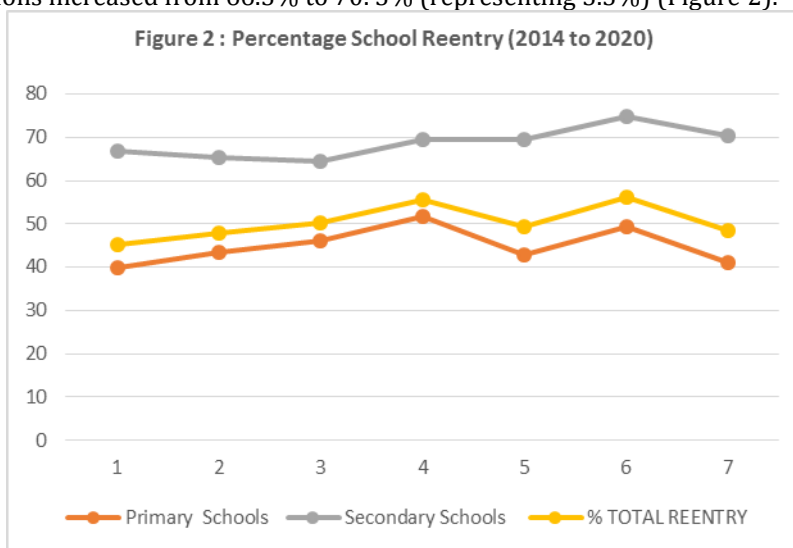
**Table 3:** Pregnancies and Readmissions in Primary and Secondary Schools

YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Primary schools</b>							
Pregnancies (cases)	13,275	11,989	11,765	10,684	11,453	11,502	12,330
Readmissions (Cases)	5,322	5,217	5,423	5,527	4,917	5,669	5,078
% Reentry	<b>40%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>51.7%</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>
YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Secondary Schools</b>							
Pregnancies(cases)	3,103	3,136	3,457	2,956	3,576	4,222	4,089
Readmissions (cases)	2,069	2,047	2,230	2,052	2,488	3,158	2,876
% Reentry	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>65.3%</b>	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>69.6%</b>	<b>74.8%</b>	<b>70.3%</b>
YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pregnancies (Cases)	16,378	15,125	15,232	13,640	15,029	15,724	16,419
Readmissions (Cases)	7,391	7,264	7,653	7,579	7,405	8,827	7,954
% Reentry	<b>45.1%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>50.2%</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>56.1%</b>	<b>48.4%</b>

(Source: GRZ: Ministry of General Education. Education Statistical Bulletin, 2020)

4.2.2 Trends of readmissions during implementation of school reentry policy (2014 to 2020)

In order to investigate the trends in the implementation of reentry policy in primary and secondary schools in Zambia for the period from 2014 to 2020, data obtainable from the Educational statistical bulleting (2020) was used. Results showed that readmissions in primary schools increased slightly from 40 % in 2014 to 41.2% in 2020, (representing 1.2%); whereas secondary school readmissions increased from 66.3% to 70. 3% (representing 3.3%) (Figure 2).



**Fig 2:** Analysis of trends in the implementation of reentry policy

Readmissions for both primary and secondary schools, showed that the percentage of readmissions increased by 3.3 % (i.e., from 45.1% in 2014 to 48.4 in 2020). Primary school reentry during the period from 2014 to 2020 were slightly lower compared to secondary school reentries during the same period (Figure 2).

4.2.3 Effect of school reentry policy on educational attainment of adolescents

Education attainment in this study was regarded as ability of adolescents to progress to higher grades or levels of education after pregnancy. Using a Likert type questionnaire, 122 adolescents were asked to indicate their opinion whether reentry policy was effective at enhancing their educational attainment.

Figure 3 suggest that the respondents have a favorable perception over the effect of reentry policy on educational attainment of the adolescents. Whereas 68% of the respondents agree that reentry policy would enhance educational attainment among adolescents, 22 % of the respondents disagreed with this statement, while 10% were undecided.

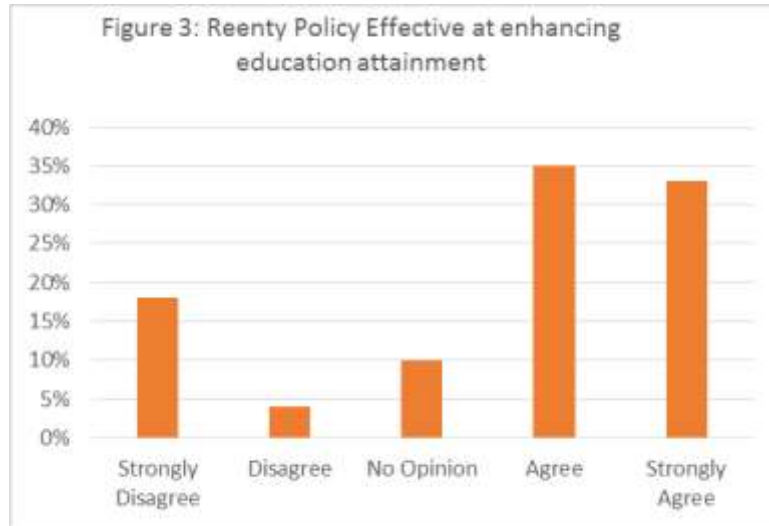


Fig 3: Analysis of effectiveness of reentry policy

4.2.4 Effectiveness of Reentry policy: a comparison between opinions of males and Female adolescents

Males and female adolescents were asked to indicate their opinion over the effectiveness of reentry policy on enhancing educational attainment (Figure 4):

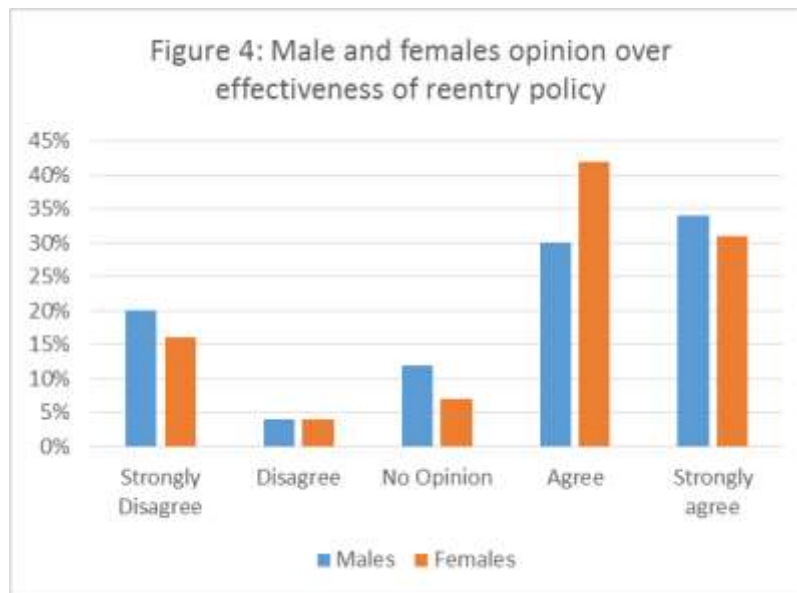


Fig 4: Analysis of trends of opinion of reentry policy

Figure 4: Results show that 64% of the males tended to agree with the statement that reentry policy was effective at enhancing educational attainment, whereas 73% of the females agreed with the same statement.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Awareness of reentry policy

The Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) under the Ministry of Education has provided guidelines to ensure that girls who drop out of school due to teenage pregnancy are given a second chance to reenter the school system to enhance their education following the introduction of reentry policy. In this study, the participants were asked to indicate whether they are aware of reentry policy in their area or schools. Research findings indicated that 95.7% of the respondents are aware of reentry policy. However, school reentry is still low especially for primary schools where percentage reentries has only increased by 1.2% during the period from 2014 to 2020. Secondary school reentry on the other hand increased by 3.3% during the same period. Overall, reentries for primary and secondary schools during this period (48.4%) is still very low. This may be explained in terms of difficulties in interpreting the school reentry policy by authorities, negative attitudes, stigma, and discrimination. The Ministry of General Education (2007) has reported that the church and parents in mission schools were against the idea of readmitting girls and would opt to give affected pregnant girls transfers. In addition, Wendkind et al., (2015) reports that some church-based schools do not accept the girls back after the pregnancy. Some teachers and school managers for some schools seem to misinterpret the policy. The low percentage of reentry could also be attributed to mixed feelings over the policy and difficulties in interpreting the reentry policy. Research on the subject Omwecha (2012) have revealed that there are mixed feelings regarding the reentry policy. In this respect further studies on the subject should seek to highlight the reasons for mixed feelings regarding school reentry. Other researchers have reported that reentry policy was not being implemented effectively in some selected government schools as learners were reported to have lower levels of awareness of reentry policy. Conducting his studies on the learners in *Itezhi-tezhi* Central Province, Chulu (2016) observed that most of the learners were not aware of the reentry policy. This shows that in some parts of the country the school management was not actively involved in the sensitization of the pupils on the policy. In this respect strategies should be devised by both primary and secondary schools to increase awareness of the policy especially in rural areas.

### 5.2 Analysis of Trends on school reentry

The trends of the girls who reenter was determined through the Education statistics bulletin reports by Ministry of General Education on reentry in the Zambian schools for the period from 2014 to 2020. The reports suggest that the percentage reentry in primary schools and secondary schools have increased slightly (Figure 1). Whereas primary school reentries increased from 40% in 2014 to 41.2% in 2020, representing an increase of 1.2%, the school reentry in secondary schools increased from 66.7% to 70.3%, representing an increase of 3.3%. School reentry in primary schools is very low compared to secondary school reentry. Although there is an increase in the percentage of school reentries, there seems to be a slow response in the reentries. Probably this reflects the indifference that people have concerning implementation of reentry policy in their areas. This observation is like the Kenyan studies on reentry, which have revealed mixed feelings regarding the value, nature, and implementation of the reentry policy. This suggests the need for intensifying intervention strategies for those adolescents who would have dropped out of school following pregnancy especially in primary schools. The teachers and parents should consider providing emotional support to the adolescents, understanding reasons underlying their behavior, set standards and expectations. They should also provide social support to the girls to develop their self-esteem so that they don't doubt their capabilities (Melgosa, 2013) and reduce stigma and discrimination following the pregnancy.

Camfed (2018) has reported that there are more teenage pregnancies in primary schools than secondary schools. However, there tends to be a positive trend in the implementation of school reentry. But the number of pregnancies at primary school has remained the same. Camfed (2018) has recommended high need for advocacy, and counseling among pupils regarding sexual reproductive health. Omwencha (2012), has noticed that social cultural factors were responsible for preventing teenage girls from returning to school. Research findings also pointed to the need for inclusive policies that consider the voices of the girls and teenage mothers that are not heard.

### 5.3 Relation between school reentry and educational attainment

To obtain information on the relationship between school reentry and education attainment, 122 adolescents were asked to indicate their opinion whether reentry policy was effective in enhancing educational attainment of those who reenter the education system after delivery. A comparison was made between the responses obtained from male and female adolescents. Results showed that 68% of the respondents agree with the statement that reentry policy can enhance educational attainment among adolescents (Figure 3), whereas 22 % disagree with the same statement. The results reflect the importance of the school reentry policy in enhancing girls' educational attainment. Therefore, the school reentry policy may provide a rare opportunity for the girls to advance in their education, if there is an enabling environment to enhance their education. Banda



and Nowanga (2017, in Camfed 2018) also reported that reentry policy could be effective in readmitting girls and ensuring their completion of education.

#### 5.4 Challenges in the implementation of the school reentry

The levels of awareness over school reentry policy are high among the parents and teachers. However, most of the girls who become pregnant in Zambia are less likely to be readmitted into school. This suggests that much more still needs to be done to increase awareness especially in primary schools where reentry levels have been consistently low. The low percentage of school reentry could be attributed to the problems of misinterpretation over the objectives of the reentry policy, problems of stigma and discrimination. Camfed, British Council and Zambia Accountancy program (2018), have cited constraints to educational attainment of girls as including lack of understanding of reentry policy leading to its ineffective implementation, financial constraints, cultural beliefs that position marriage as a great attainment in life for females and lack of counseling and guidance for young mothers (Camfed 2018). Challenges associated with school reentry should be overcome for successful progression of the adolescents in their life.

### 6. Recommendations

The school reentry provides a legal basis for the girls to reenter or go back to school after delivery. However, the success of this program depends largely on ability for regular sensitization among the girls and addressing the potential challenges associated with the low percentage of school reentry in primary and secondary schools. The low school reentry may be due to negative attitudes and misconceptions over the policy, stigma and discrimination of the girls including the cultural barriers that may inhibit the girl's educational progression. To address the challenges, schools may consider intensifying intervention strategies for those adolescents who would have dropped out of school following pregnancy especially in primary schools.

The schools should devise support systems for the girls and provide an enabling environment for the learners to change negative attitudes and stigma. There is also the need to consider increased social and financial support for the vulnerable children so that they could reenter the school system after delivery. Furthermore, other factors that hinder girls from reentry into school should be addressed through regular sensitization in schools and community.

### 7. Conclusions

This study was conducted to investigate the challenges in the implementation of school reentry policy for children and adolescents in primary and secondary schools. In addition, the study was aimed at finding out the trends in readmissions and the perceptions of the adolescents over the effect of reentry and education attainment. According to the current research findings most parents and teachers are aware of reentry policy. However, most of the girls who become pregnant while in school are less likely to be readmitted into the school system due to various challenges.

There tends to be an increase in school reentry despite the challenges being encountered. This study has revealed that, school reentry can enhance the educational attainment of the adolescents in the schools when they are readmitted. This suggests that strategies should be put in place to increase school reentry. The challenges in the implementation of reentry tend to be related to low reentry in some schools, stigma, and discrimination. It is in this respect that recommendations to enhance the education attainment of the adolescent girls in schools have been made to promote their participation in national development. Further studies on the subject should seek to analyze readmissions in rural and urban schools and address the problems of low rates of readmissions in the process of implementation of school reentry policy.

### 8. References

- Banda M., and Nowanga M.S., (2017). The Efficacy of Reentry policy and its Implications on the Zambian Education System. IJHSSE. Vol 4. <https://www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijhsse/v4-i12/11.pdf>. accessed 20/10/2020.
- Camfed, British Council, Zambia., (2018). Literature Review on the research and advocacy on the implementation of the Reentry policy in Zambian Schools.
- Chiyota N., (2020). Implementation of Reentry policy for pregnant mothers in Itezhi -tezhi Zambia. [https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/78508/Chiyota\\_Implementation\\_2020.pdf?sequence=1](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/78508/Chiyota_Implementation_2020.pdf?sequence=1). Accessed: 2022
- Chulu L., (2016). The effectiveness of Re- entry policy in government schools: A case study of selected schools in Itezhi -tezhi District of Zambia. Thesis. University of Zambia. <http://dspace.unza.zm/handle/123456789/4971> accessed: 20/10/2020.
- Gender Links (2011) Zambia Reentry policy puts back girls in school. <https://genderlinks.org.za/programme-web-menu/zambia-re-entry-policy-puts-girls-back-in-school-2011-09-30/>. Accessed: 04.04.23.
- Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) (2007) Ministry of General Education, FAWEZA and UNICEF, Guidelines for the Reentry Policy. Government printers. Lusaka.

- GRZ, (2014). Ministry of General Education (MoE). Educational Statistical Bulletin Government Printers. Lusaka.
- GRZ, (2016) Ministry of General Education (MoE). Educational Statistical Bulletin. Government Printers. Lusaka.
- GRZ, (2018) Education statistical Bulletin, in REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: FIRST SESSION OF THE 15<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. [https://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/committee\\_reports/final%20copy%20report%20on%20education%282%29.pdf](https://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/committee_reports/final%20copy%20report%20on%20education%282%29.pdf) Accessed: 17.06.22.
- GRZ, (2020) Ministry of General Education (MoE). Educational Statistical Bulletin. Directorate of information and planning. Government Printers. Lusaka.
- Luchembe K.F. (2018). An Evaluation of the Christian and Muslim views on the school re-entry Policy in Zambia. Thesis. <http://dspace.unza.zm/handle/123456789/3791>. Accessed 18/10/2020
- Melgosa J., (2013) To Adolescents and parents. New lifestyle, Safeliz. USA
- Muyunda, G., (2021). Re-entry Policy Implementation Effectiveness: A Case of Secondary Schools in Lusaka, District, Zambia. *International Journal of Asian Education*, 2(2), 167–181. <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v2i2.151> Accessed. 17.06.22
- Mwansa A., (2011) Reentry to school after giving birth: an evaluation of the process used to design and implement policy in Zambia. University of London, Institute of Education. [https://hivhealthclearinghouse.unesco.org/library/search/\\_all\\_/keyword/dropping-out](https://hivhealthclearinghouse.unesco.org/library/search/_all_/keyword/dropping-out) Accessed: 10/18/2020.
- Omwancha K.M., (2012). The implementation of an Educational Reentry policy for girls after teenage pregnancy. A case study of public secondary schools: A case study in the Kuria District Kenya. Thesis.
- Sampa K.J.,(2010) Zambia: Evaluation of Sensitization of Traditional Leaders on the Importance of Girls Education. UNICEF. Zambia.
- UNESCO, (2010): The effect of Adolescence Childbearing on Literacy and Numeracy in Bangladesh, Malawi, and Zambia. <http://hivhealthclearinghouse.unesco.org/library/documents.Effect-adolescence-childbearing>. Accessed: 18/10/2020
- UNICEF, (2011) The State of the World's children 2011. Adolescence: An Age of opportunity. UNICEF. Zambia.
- Wedekind V. and Milingo T., (2015) Second Chance for the Girls. The Zambian Re-entry into school Policy. UNESCO.