Teenage pregnancy is a global challenge as it is a major contributor to school drop-out among girls. Permanent expulsion was initially used to help curb teenage pregnancy, but this proved ineffective and also unfair to the girls. The return to school policy introduced gives a second chance to girls who temporarily drop-out due to teenage pregnancy to further pursue their education. However, such girls go through numerous challenges as they try to fit back into the school system. This study was intended to look into the challenges faced by student-mothers, their coping mechanisms and the support they got on resuming studies at secondary school level in Nyando District. The purpose of this study was to identify the schooling challenges, coping mechanisms and the support accorded to student-mothers by their parents, fellow students, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders on resuming studies.

The study had the following objectives: to identify factors that influence the school completion for girls who resume studies after delivery; to identify the kind of institutional and parental support student-mothers receive on resuming studies and to find out how student-mothers cope with the role of being a mother and a student on resuming studies. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A complete enumeration of mixed day secondary schools in the two randomly selected divisions was considered for the study. In collecting the data, 83 student-mothers, 19 principals, 14 guidance and counselling teachers, 9 parents/guardians and 28 other students participated in the study.

Data was collected using Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions, and interview schedules. This study used descriptive statistics to analyse data. The data were presented in tables and figures using percentages and frequencies. The findings of this study were categorized into three areas namely: student-mothers' schooling challenges, their coping mechanisms and the support they received upon resuming studies. The student-mothers' schooling challenges included: lack of concentration, lack of professional counselling, stigma and discrimination (lack of acceptance by some teachers and peers), fear and loneliness at school, low self-esteem and guilt, lack of skills to handle student-mothers situation by teachers, lack of finances to adequately meet the demands of their babies and themselves, lack of basic resources for study and reluctance in fees payment. Their coping mechanisms included: problem-focused, avoidance and emotion-focused strategies and the support they received upon resuming studies were spiritual and social support. Teachers admitted their inadequacy in supporting student-mothers. Student-mothers therefore adapted some coping mechanisms.

However, majority were not well adjusted as very few had a positive self concept and set realistic goals. In conclusion, student-mothers go through a number of challenges as they double up as mothers and students. Support accorded to them was not adequate due to other factors like lack of finances and time being limited. The student-mothers need adequate support to enable them complete secondary education and get access to higher education. There is need to advise them to adopt effective strategies rather than use reactive and defensive methods.

The thesis argues that social problems cannot be dealt with solely by the school or the teacher. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education, the community, parents, as well as other social service organizations, should jointly create preventive and intervention strategies to assist learners with social problems like student-mothers. Such a holistic approach: could assist schools and teachers to deal with learners' social problems more effectively. This study also recommends that teachers need guidance and training on how to encourage and support teen-mothers and that there is a great need to sensitize stakeholders on the policy.