

**CARE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND THE HEALTH STATUS OF  
THE CHILDREN OF TEENAGE MOTHERS RE-ENTERING  
SCHOOL: THE CASE OF CHOMA DISTRICT**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my wife Sangster N. Moono Hazyondo and my children Monde, Mwendalubi, Nchimunya, Sheila, Beene Ruth and my niece Luyando for their unfailing love, support, understanding and encouragement throughout my study period. Dedications are also extended to my parents, Jonah Mazili Hazyondo, my late Mother Ruth Hazyondo and my brothers Gift and Lavery for their immeasurable support and encouragement.

## DECLARATION

I **HAZYONDO K. VINCENT** declare that this report has been composed and compiled by me and that the work recorded has been done by me, the sources of all materials referred to have been acknowledged, and that the dissertation has not been accepted in any previous application for academic award at this or any other university.

Signature:..... Date:.....

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The dissertation of **HAZYONDO K. VINCENT** is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts in Population Studies** at the University of Zambia.

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## ABSTRACT

Using qualitative and quantitative paradigms, the study sought to investigate the care and support systems of the children of teenage mothers who return to school after they have delivered. Qualitative data was collected using observations, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth guides. Quantitative data was collected using open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires.

Among other things, the study revealed that there were three types of care arrangements for the children of teenage mothers in and out of school. These include; parental care, relative care and non-relative care. Relative care was predominantly practiced among teenage mothers in school. Children are absorbed in the extended family system and cared for by various family members. Among teenage mothers out of school, parental care is highly practiced and fathers are getting more involved in the care and support of young children. The study also revealed that immunization coverage in both categories was high. However, the absence of the mother affected immunization of children especially those that had been weaned. There were variations in the duration of breastfeeding between teenage mothers in school and those out-of-school. The duration of breastfeeding is relatively shorter with the teenage mothers in-school. The assessment of the nutritional status of children revealed that the levels of stunting, wasting and under-weight were more prevalent among teenage mothers out of school. The study reveals further that the young children born to teenage mothers in and out of school face a lot of challenges due to the high poverty levels and the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. The families are already overburdened with ever-increasing numbers of orphans. The additional number of children placed in their care when mothers go back to school over-stretches the meager resources in extended families. Teenage mothers out of school are pre-occupied with survival strategies and children in most cases are left in the care of other children.

In order to enhance the quality of care and support given to the children of teenage mothers in and out of school, the community, government and non-governmental organizations should work as a social fabric. Fathers should be sensitized and counseled to take responsibility over their children.

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## **ACRONYMS**

<b>RBM</b>	- Roll Back Malaria
<b>ICRC</b>	- International Convention on Rights of a Child
<b>OVC</b>	- Orphans and Vulnerable Children
<b>ZDHS</b>	- Zambia Demographic and Health Survey
<b>FAWE</b>	- Forum for African Women Educationists
<b>FAWEZA</b>	- Forum for African Women Educationists in Zambia
<b>NCCP</b>	- National Care for Children in Poverty
<b>CCDF</b>	- Child care and Development Fund
<b>JIL</b>	- Japanese Institute for Labour
<b>FGDs</b>	- Focus Group Discussions
<b>LBW</b>	- Low Birth Weight
<b>APU</b>	- Academic Production Unit
<b>SHN</b>	- School Health Nutrition
<b>UNZA</b>	- University of Zambia

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