

**Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse: A case of Selected
Primary Schools in Mbarara City South**



By

Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza

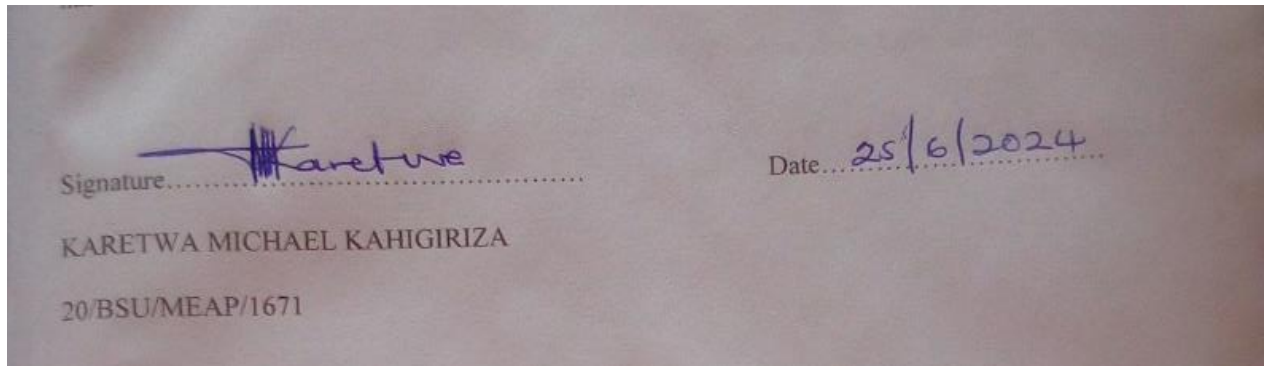
20/BSU/MEAP/1671

**A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty of Education, Arts and Media Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the
Degree of Master of Education Administration and
Planning of Bishop Stuart University**

May, 2024

DECLARATION

I, Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza, declare that this dissertation is the result of my own efforts and has not been submitted to any academic institution.



Signature.....*Karetwa*.....

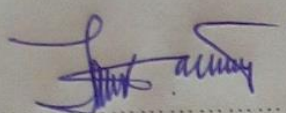
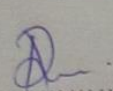
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APPROVAL

This is to verify that the working thesis titled “Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse: A case of Selected Primary Schools in Mbarara City South” is under the supervision of:

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Dr. Enock Barigye (University supervisor)	
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Rev. Judith Arinaitwe (University supervisor)	

DEDICATION

This research thesis is dedicated to my beloved wife for supporting me economically and morally.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

When I started this dissertation, I thanked Almighty God who, with His infinite grace, gave me the strength, wisdom and patience to pursue this challenging research. His divine guidance has been a source of inspiration and motivation that has helped me overcome obstacles and celebrate success.

To my beloved wife Patricia, your unwavering support, patience and understanding are my pillar of strength. Your support has inspired me and I thank you for your love and friendship.

My heartfelt thanks to the community leaders who generously shared their valuable knowledge and contributed to this research. Your participation will be important in explaining the importance of this research.

My research advisor Enock Barigye (PhD Candidate) and Rev. Judith Arinaitwe. Your guidance, support and valuable feedback played an important role throughout the research process. Your expertise and motivation are crucial to the success of this study.

Special thanks to those interviewed in primary schools in the south of Mbarara city. Your willingness to participate, share insights, and provide valuable information is crucial to this learning process.

I would also like to give thanks to my children, Faith (Late) and Tonny who stood by my side during the struggle. My friends, Mark Tumusiime and Vick Natumanya for giving me the first tuition, Sandra Nayebare who helped in typing the work and the husband Nekemiah for buying me a smart phone.

I would also like to thank Mr. Tumusiime Steven, Dr. Kanyesigye Hamson and Ainembabazi Lillian for the support towards my struggle.

I appreciate your openness and cooperation. I would like to thank everyone who supported me in many ways during this work. Your contributions are invaluable and I appreciate your assistance in this effort.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

NCANDA	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
KVAC	Kenya Violence against Girl Children
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
CBCPM	Community-Based Child Protection Mechanism
LASPNET	Legal Aid Service Providers Network
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SETB	School Education and Training Board
SMC	School Management Committee
FPU	Family Protection Unit
CDO	Community Development Officers
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
PSWO	Probation and Social Welfare Officer
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
DPSWO	District Probation and Social Welfare Officer
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UCRNN	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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ABSTRACT

The study was about Community Involvement and Protection of the Girl Child against Sexual Abuse: A Case Study of Selected Primary Schools in Mbarara City South. The study aims to identify different forms of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South, explore different ways of community involvement in the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse, and establish the relationship between community involvement and protection of the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The study used cross-sectional research design. The study targets headteachers, PTA members, teachers, community leaders, and pupils, with a total of 180 respondents. The study findings examined the various forms of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South, the study reveals alarming instances of physical abuse, overt exposure to sexual content in schools, verbal abuse, exploitation, grooming, and even cases of human trafficking. The gravity of these findings underscores the immediate need for targeted interventions, emphasizing the importance of early recognition, community vigilance, and comprehensive strategies to address both online and offline abuse. The findings highlight crucial strategies for community involvement in protecting girl children against sexual abuse. Education and awareness campaigns, financial and material support to schools, community watch programs, guidance and counseling for teachers, and evaluation and improvement initiatives emerge as key components of an effective community-based approach. These strategies collectively contribute to creating a supportive environment, fostering awareness, and encouraging active participation in initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing girl child sexual abuse. The study concludes that community involvement plays a crucial role in protecting the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The findings demonstrate a moderately strong positive correlation between community engagement and initiatives aimed at safeguarding girls, emphasizing the need for heightened awareness, education, and mobilization efforts. Recommendations include developing strategies to enhance community engagement by addressing identified gaps, such as targeted communication campaigns, community forums, and incentives to encourage active participation in initiatives related to girl child protection. Empowering community leaders through capacity-building programs is also recommended to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and support community-wide efforts against girl child sexual abuse.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Historical Background

According to (Gelles, 2019) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDA, 1970), approximately 900,000 girls in the United States have been severely injured or seriously injured; approximately 2,000 out of 1,000 girls were victimized and he died. People who survive the ordeal often suffer from depression, which takes time to recover physically.

According to the research conducted by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2016 on violence against children (Adeogun 2004), 133-275 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa are regularly exposed to violence. Parents, parent and teacher groups, local leaders, and school residents can participate in community partnerships to enhance teaching and learning in facilities (Adeogun 2014).

Similarly, child prostitution, child trafficking, child marriage, child labor, child abuse and child neglect are still prevalent in the country (Nigerian) (Aderinto, 2010). The consequences of this abuse are numerous and include teenage pregnancy and childbearing, youth insecurity and violence, leadership, youth, unemployment of others, armed forces, sexual violence and school dropout. Most children in Nigeria are affected by these hazards (Adherents, 2010).

Kenya Violence against girls at school According to a household survey of more than 3,000 young people in Kenya, violence against girls is a serious problem (KVACS, 2010). The report focuses heavily on sexual violence and its impact on individuals trying to overcome the legacy of sexual and gender-based violence against girls in schools. Victims of child abuse are more likely to be exposed to risks such as drug and alcohol abuse, sex with multiple partners,

and unprotected sex; this puts girls at risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Violence is still a harsh reality for thousands of children in Uganda; these children continue to engage in various forms of violence that are often permitted and encouraged by religion and practices throughout the center (Walakila, 2009). They are often victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse in the family, school, care and justice, communities and working children (Naker, 2005).

The police report on the abuse of girls in Mbarara district showed that the number of perpetrators fell by 11.4% in 2018, with a total of 13,682 children, mostly girls, victimized (Mbarara Police Crime Investigation, 2018). An analysis of differences in the country's response to orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and primary school girls exposed to violence in Mbarara found that 1,363 victims of violence from 10 districts were reported to the police; there are two reasons for this phenomenon. High risk (ANPPCAN, 2013).

Theoretical Perspective

Uri Bronfenbrenner's (1979) family systems model and human ecological theory were used in the research. Bronfenbrenner realized that the development of the human body and mind would be completed through social interaction and interaction between different systems (i.e., microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macro system).

Ecological systems theory explains how a child's environment affects his or her development by focusing on interconnected systems and processes in four physical environments (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem). In other words, the theory explains the development of the child through the influence of the child's development and the environment.

Children often cannot change the structure defined as microsystems and exosystems. The interactions between the various microsystems that make up the lives of young people

form the mesosystem. Because it is an important part of microsystems, it involves many connections between groups such as family and church, peer group and family, or home and school.

Ecosystems focus on the connection between two or more environments; Even though she doesn't have a growing child, she still has an indirect influence on him. The external system consists of other people and places that children may not have direct contact with but can influence them. Parents' workplaces, larger communities, and extended family members are some examples of these places and individuals.

The people and places that have the greatest impact and impact on children are considered macrosystems. It includes children's cultural, legal and social values, as well as political and financial institutions, as well as children's thoughts and ideas.

The temporal system is the fifth layer of ecosystem theory that deals with time. The timing of a child's physical development can directly affect them. The child's age will also affect his thinking, which will affect his later development. Ecological systems theory can reveal the many factors that influence child development by examining multiple systems that affect children simultaneously. Therefore, ecological systems theory will contribute to this research by examining protective systems, rules and policies to explain how children's urban environments are affected and how girls at school can be protected from violence. In other words, this theory helps explain how a girl goes to school to develop as a result of her development and social environment.

Conceptual Perspective

This study considered social participation as an individual variable (IV). Community involvement means that the girl reports the abuse to someone and that someone in the community reports the matter to the police and gets others involved (principals, teachers, parents/guardians, community leaders, opinion leaders). , make sure the ad channel is working

properly. Additionally, the Community-Based Child Protection Mechanism (CBCPM) defines community participation as a partnership or group of individuals in the community working together to achieve common goals, such as protecting children. Communities can provide important ways to prevent and respond to child protection risks (CBCPM, 2017).

When girls are primary school learners aged 6-16 understanding of the process and practice against the problems of child abuse (form, perpetrator and location). Laws and regulations that protect girls from abuse. However, UNICEF (2017) defines the protection of girls from sexual violence as the process of protecting children who are found to be suffering or at risk of disaster.

Then According to an article written by a lawyer for the Legal Aid Network (LASPNET) and published in the Daily Guardian on January 14, 2021, “Children in Mbarara City are subjected to abuse by their parents and elderly caregivers. Community, peers and teachers They are the main perpetrators of violence against children behavior such as physical abuse against girls in primary school, child labor, child abuse, child marriage, child trafficking, neglect and prostitution (Namubiru, 2021) In 2018, Uganda Child Helpline (“Sauti”) in Mbarara Received and handled more than 3,000 cases of child abuse, neglect and violence, of which 2,878 calls were serious cases of abuse, sometimes putting children’s lives at risk.

Statement of the Problem

According to OVC Policy (2014), the government of Uganda through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) has put in practices, efforts and formulated plans to improve the wellbeing and advocate for the safety of the girl child. Some of these efforts include; introduction of the programs to increase girl child enrolment in villages (Muhwezi, 2003), launching of UPE (1997) and USE (2007) programs; revising the education curriculum to make it gender responsive (Amanda, 2020); launching the National Strategy for Girls aimed at fostering gender parity.

However, a report (November-December 2021) by Rise News Uganda in conjunction with ULTIMATE media Consult (U) Ltd shows that the girls, believed to be bartenders, were sleeping with men and risking their lives for only Ugx 5,000 and a girl misses her Future, especially in the areas of Kiyanja, Ruti, Kizungu among other slums around Mbarara City. Moreover, 47% of girls in Mbarara are believed to be involved in child labor and early marriage, affecting their vocational training (Save the Children, 2018).

While the government of Uganda seeks to support girls through the first education in the world and enforce the law that every child has the right to education (MoES, 2018), parents and other partners must provide school and tuition fees to private schools (UNICEF, 2019). However, the average school dropout rate is 45%, the majority of which are girls. This is partly due to inequalities in preventing and responding to violence and abuse against girls (UNICEF Annual Report, 2019). More importantly, social participation has no impact on success in stopping high rates of pregnancy, early pregnancy, child labor and sexual violence, especially during the Covid 19 pandemic (Tondeur, 2021). Therefore, while society should play an important role in protecting children from abuse, unfortunately it is society that is vulnerable to abuse! (Tug, 2021).

This study aimed at investigating whether community engagement strategies can improve the protection of girls from sexual violence. A case study of selected primary schools in the north of Mbarara city.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the role of community involvement towards the protection of young girls in Mbarara City South against abuse.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish the different forms of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South.

- ii. To assess the different ways of Community Involvement in the protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south.
- iii. To investigate the relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south.

Research Questions

- i. What are the different forms of school girl child abuse in Mbarara city south?
- ii. What are the different ways of community involvement in the protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There was no significant relationship between community involvement and girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara city south?

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study covered the content, geographical, and time scope as discussed below:

Content Scope

The study focused on how community involvement, in terms of identification, reporting, follow-up, awareness, and guidance of child abuse cases, led to the protection of the primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South. Protection of the school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse was measured in terms of protection mechanisms, laws, and policies, holding other factors like pandemics, political stability, and natural disasters constant. This was aimed at delivering suggestions to respond to low levels of community involvement in the protection of the school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South.

Geographical Scope

The study was conducted from Mbarara city south, Mbarara city, western Uganda. Mbarara city south is composed of three divisions; Kakoba, Nyamitanga and Nyakayojo. The study was conducted from Kakoba division, Mbarara city south, western Uganda.

Time Scope

The study considered information ranging from 2012 to 2022. This period provided adequate information to evaluate community involvement and protection of school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Kakoba division, Mbarara city south.

Justification of the Study

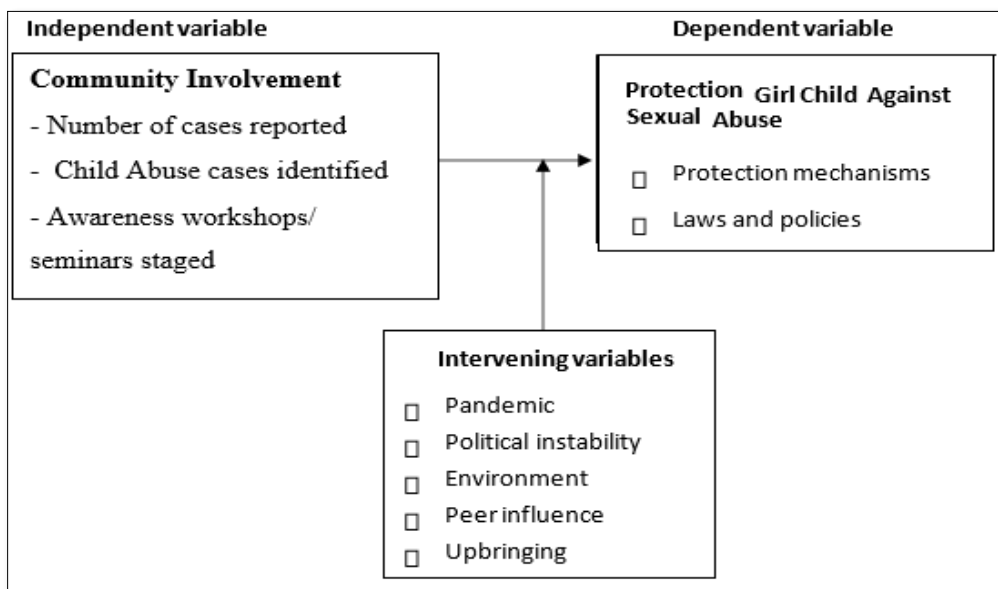
These findings may provide insight to all policy makers and stakeholders in the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development; Children's non-governmental organizations (NGOs), schools, child protection authorities and the wider community support the results. Community engagement and protection from sexual exploitation of primary school girls in Mbarara City South.

For society at large, the findings will most likely provide recommendations on taking necessary measures to solve the problems caused by community engagement to protect girls in primary school from sexual abuse.

These findings will most likely add valuable information to the body of knowledge of future researchers examining issues related to community participation and the protection of girls at home.

Conceptual frame work

The conceptual frame work presents independent and Dependent variables, analyzing factors that influence protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South.



Adapted from Philip et al. (2008) and modified by the researcher

Figure 1: Conceptualization of the study on relationship between community involvement and protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south.

As shown in Figure 1 above, social participation (as distinct from freedom) will be in the areas of detection, reporting, tracking, information and guidance, and identification of abuse problems, perpetrators, and locations. Community involvement in analysis can be demonstrated by understanding the different types of child abuse in the community, their perpetrators, and the places where the abuse occurs. The report will introduce community engagement by understanding the various ways and consequences of reporting child abuse cases in the community. In the second case, social participation will be measured by understanding the level of social interest in the events and the evidence and statements demanded by the various canons of creators. In order to increase awareness and guidance, community engagement will be provided by reviewing what information is provided to staff about child abuse, its prevalence in their communities, and issues affecting and preventing child abuse. Authorities also provided guidance on how to deal with various forms of child abuse.

The protection of primary school girls from sexual abuse (dependent variable) will be provided by the prevention process, laws and policies. However, the impact of change has also been influenced by other factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, religious leadership, environment, peer influence, and cognitive development. This study is unclear whether there is a relationship between community participation and the protection of primary school girls from sexual violence in the southern part of Mbarara City.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This highlighted the viewpoints of various academics in relation to the study's objectives, which are to identify various community involvement strategies for protecting girls from abuse and establish a link between community involvement and protecting girls from abuse. The study's objectives were to discover various forms of girl child abuse.

Different Forms of Girl Child Abuse

Physical assault

The infliction of a non-accidental physical injury on a child is sometimes referred to as physical abuse. The harm may not have been intentional on the part of the parent or caregiver and is not necessarily the result of accident, but instead of excessive or unjustified corporal punishment for the child at that age.

Physical assault is a type of abuse that frequently takes place in educational settings, particularly when it takes the shape of correction or physical punishment. For the sake of correction or control, Straus (2014) defines corporal punishment as the application of physical force with the goal of inflicting pain on the body but not injury. The use of corporal punishment has been outlawed in numerous American schools. This is not the case in Nigeria, where using physical punishment to correct and discipline young children is highly valued. Despite the fact that spanking is a culturally acceptable method of teaching children a lesson, most teachers use it out of rage, which often results in bodily harm to the child in the form of bruises and pains.

Young children are subject to harsh punishment from their teachers when they fail to live up to their high expectations. For minor infractions like tardiness or not turning in

homework, as well as for more serious ones like fighting and insulting others, children are subjected to the flogging. According to Straus (2014), most teachers and school administrators believe that kids are intransigent, disobedient, and stupid and that the only way to get rid of their “foolishness” is to use the rod so as not to spoil them.

Most of the time, teachers don’t pay attention when their parents appear to be acting inappropriately. They are unwilling to listen to the parents because they hold their opinions and values with such a strong conviction. The kids become terrified and reluctant to attend class as a result of the corporal punishment they administer at the least infraction. Nevertheless, Agnew (2013) cautioned against the use of physical punishment because it could encourage kids to engage in criminal behavior, including skipping class.

There are many different types of neglect that may be seen in schools, all of which can harm a child’s ability to learn. Some schools might not offer enough supervision, safety, or hygiene for their parents, which could lead to physical neglect. Teachers sometimes find it difficult to handle a big number of young parents at once while still giving them the necessary attention in this day and age when children younger than two are sent to school. While others are left with wet diapers unattended for hours, children in certain daycare centers are left to play and ruin their clothes (Straus 2014).

Emotional Abuse

Verbal, mental, and psychological maltreatment are other terms used to describe emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is defined by the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (2016) as “acts or omissions by the parents or other caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional or mental disorders.” Therefore, emotional abuse can be defined as any attitude, behavior, or inaction on the part of a caregiver that affects a child’s mental health, social development, or feeling of self-worth. Even though it is the most frequent, cruelest, and devastating sort of abuse, it is

arguably the least understood. It undermines a child's sense of self, leading him or her to believe they are unworthy, useless, and unable. A youngster suffers more when they are repeatedly humiliated, shamed, scared, or rejected than if they had been physically abused. As a result, most kids frequently isolate themselves, which can contribute to sadness and a lack of focus in class (Khartri, 2014).

The few teachers who do have the time to address the emotional needs of the parents in their classroom are few and far between. Sometimes a child arrives late for school, snoozes through class, or pays no attention in the classroom, and yet the teacher does not express any compassion or love for such children. It's possible that these kids are those whose parents have rejected them and who now believe that school is the greatest place for them to go. The pupil is treated like less of a person at school. An alienated child of this nature might stop attending school in 2014 (Khartri).

According to Gaudin (2016), psychologically neglected children perform the worst on intelligence quotient tests while having the worst language comprehension and expression deficits. As a result, it is important for teachers and the school administration to consider the needs of each and every pupil in the classroom in order to promote learning. Additionally, parents get sick in class and go untreated until the end of the day. Consequently, they don't get anything from those days in the classroom. Because of this, every school needs to have a sick bay where parents can get care until their parents pick them up. Additionally, the sick bays should have plenty of the necessary medications.

Sexual Assault

By employing, using persuasion, inducing, enticing, or coercing any child to engage in, or assist another person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct, CAPTA (Khartri, 2014) defines sexual assault as taking place. It includes rape, molestation, prostitution, or

other types of sexual exploitation of minors or incest with children whether it occurs in caretaker or interfamilial relationships. The most frequently unreported type of child abuse is sexual abuse because of the secrecy that surrounds these situations. Children who have been sexually molested experience emotional issues as a result of guilt and humiliation (Corwin & Olafson, 2017).

Sexual abuse occurs frequently and interferes with a child's natural, healthy growth in households, schools, and throughout society. There is a propensity for instructors to take advantage of the young, innocent, harmless, and naive schoolgirls, particularly in schools with young male teachers. Some educators entice these parents, who occasionally receive parental attention in return, into having extramarital affairs and relationships. Other times, professors deprive parents of their rights and grades in order to satisfy their sexual needs (Corwin & Olafson, 2017).

In addition to the interaction between male professors and female parents, there is also one between male teachers and male parents, particularly in the boys' school. These male instructors may coerce the parents into playing with their own genitalia and engaging in gay behaviors in addition to fondling and playing with their own. The same is true of the connection between female parents and teachers, particularly in girls' schools. Lesbianism is prevalent, and the parents can find it challenging to report these occurrences (Corwin & Olafson, 2017).

Teachers need to understand that their job is to safeguard and protect the children in their charge, and as a result, they should work to create a learning atmosphere free from obstacles to their parents' full involvement in class. Teenage parents and their teachers engaging in sexual activity can have negative effects, such as unintended pregnancies, STIs like gonorrhea, and AIDS, which could eventually cause the child to stop attending school (Straus, 2014).

Negligence

This is a failure to give the child with the bare minimum of care, including shelter, food, clothes, education, supervision, medical attention, and other essentials for the child's physical, mental, and emotional growth. In this case, the child's health and safety are at risk because the guardians or parents failed to carry out duties that were essential for the child's wellbeing. Even though this tragic situation is really depressing, it occurs frequently. The ethics of the profession are violated and teachers' self-worth and dignity are diminished when they permit themselves to fall so low in enticing and occasionally coercing parents into affairs (Gelles, 2019).

Child Exploitation

The practice of using a child for labor or other purposes for the gain of others is known as child exploitation, sometimes known as child labor or child trafficking. Child exploitation is the systematic practice of using children for labor without adequate pay and without taking into account their health and safety (Newton, 2015). These kids are forced to perform laborious tasks in farms that are beyond their years, and some are obliged to hawk goods for extended periods of time while going without nourishment. Such kids will eventually leave school and rarely gain anything from their schooling. These kids are wounded on a physical, emotional, moral, and intellectual level by the time they reach adulthood.

In addition to what parents do at home, schools are also a location where children are exploited. Some educators employ parents to work on their farms. At times when they should be learning, teachers also send the kids out to get water, cook, and wash clothes. Some of the children are unfamiliar with these types of works, which presents difficulties and may have an impact on their health. The valuable time that could have been spent studying is wasted on activities that are unrelated to academic pursuits, which can seriously impair parents'

ability to pay attention in class. Teachers should be warned from engaging in this tendency and significant investigation should be done into it.

Different ways of community involvement on the protection of school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse.

Involvement in the community is described as “a social process whereby specific groups with shared needs often living in defined geographic area pursue identification of their needs, make decisions, and establish mechanism to meet their needs” by USAID/CSPP (2008). The link between the locals and the full-time school staff that helps to raise pupil achievement is known as community participation.

The degree to which the community engages in decisions, management, activities, or the operation of schools is referred to in this study as community engagement in education. The problem of child abuse and neglect has become very serious in many countries around the world over time. Children are maltreated on a physical and mental level, raped, exploited, tortured, dismembered, and mutilated.

The community can take part in school programs through committees like the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), School Education and Training Board (SETB), School Management Committee (SMC), School Improvement Committee, etc., according to USAID/CSPP (2019). These groups could serve in administrative and leadership roles as well as serve as a bridge between the community and the school. During parent-teacher conferences, community members can actively engage in the decision-making and evaluation of the school's programs. Members of the community can also contribute directly by serving as tutors, financial supporters (through fundraisers), and advisors for teachers. Therefore, raising pupil achievement is the primary goal of community involvement in educational systems.

In addition, the World Bank (2016) noted that communities can take part in school fundraising through initiatives like cost sharing. Cost sharing is implemented in Ethiopia beginning in grades 11 and upwards. The goal of providing basic education to everyone justifies not asking parents to contribute to the costs of their children's education in the lower

grades. Lower grade levels of basic education are regarded as a human right. All of the country's citizens are encouraged by this, including those from low-income areas who are unable to contribute anything at all, to send their school-age children to a basic education program. Parents may continue to attend their classes in higher grades when cost sharing is required by using loans provided by the government to cover the cost sharing payment. However, when the parents get employment, they will be required to pay back the money they borrowed. These government loans assist parents from underprivileged backgrounds who are unable to make direct contributions to the cost-sharing program.

Three paradigms of education and community, according to Williams (2015), exist. The first is conventional community-based education, in which localities give younger generations of children the education required to pass on regional customs and economic knowledge. This strategy places a strong emphasis on community involvement and close ties between the local social networks and education. The government plays a small part and offers limited support for political integration at the national level because it is of little value in addressing the specialized training demands of industrialized economies. The second paradigm is government-provided education, where the role of the government is to both supply and regulate education. Governments have weakened the role of the community while standardizing much of the educational material both within and between nations. But it has been demonstrated that governments are unable to offer the community appropriate educational delivery, fully furnished school facilities, a full variety of grades, teachers, and instructional materials.

Similar to this, Golola (2013) highlighted that many local government employees, including councilors, have continued to serve on a voluntary basis without payment due to a lack of financial autonomy and inadequate funding. As a result, there is more corruption on the part of these authorities, who try to make up for it by misusing funds and extorting money from the public. Furthermore, a concept paper on the Children Act by the Uganda Law

Reform Commission argues that, among other things, insufficient human and financial resources in the established institutions and negative societal attitudes toward issues of children's rights undermine the Act's implementation (Lubandi, 2016).

At the district level, community-based activities fall more under the purview of DCDOs and Assistants than statutory child protection activities, argues UNICEF (2020). The latter are in charge of a variety of other community development issues, making them frequently overworked and unable to concentrate properly on child protection (UNICEF 2020). As a result, there is a sparse allocation of resources to programs at the district and sub-county levels, and child safety is rarely prioritized in district plans of operation.

The LC courts are still the court of first instance for the majority of child-related matters, according to UCRNN 2017, but many of them have a poor understanding of juvenile justice principles and frequently handle cases outside of their purview. The majority of lower LCs, according to UCRNN (2017), were unaware of the Children Statute of 1996 despite hearing about it. The impact of interventions is only clearly seen in the districts where child-focused NGOs operate, and almost often at the county or sub county level.

Despite the Children Act's strong protections, Laura (2017) contends that local governments have fallen short of their expectations due to factors including a lack of knowledge about the law and an inability to carry out its progressive changes. According to the Human Rights Commission Report (2017), the biggest excuse used by those who violate human rights is a lack of awareness and knowledge of children's rights.

Although people are aware of the idea of children's rights, according to the National Council for Children (2020), many are unaware that a law, known as the "children statute," which is now known as the Children Act, exists that declares such rights. This conclusion was regrettable in light of the fact that the Children Act, formerly known as the Children's Statute, specifies the duties of numerous parties in the protection of children's rights.

In the child protection baseline study in western Uganda, Kato Nkimba (2018) found that there were differences in the knowledge bases of the child protection structures in the target districts, as well as in the accessibility and actual use of the existing legal and policy documents as reference materials. Little evidence of real application of child laws and policies by child protection structures throughout implementation, according to the study, was found. Similar findings were made in a study conducted in Lira by Kassiano (2018), who discovered that local council leaders had a limited understanding of the terms of the children's act. On the other hand, the Probation Officer was more knowledgeable with the act's provisions than certain court officers, police officers, prosecutors, and probation officers who had studied the statute.

Although local governments are required to generate revenue and receive 90% of their funding from the central government, Laura Skoda (2017) found that these resources have been insufficient and have been distributed in a timely, disorganized, and inefficient manner. She made this observation while analyzing local government and the delivery of social services in Uganda. Therefore, the local governments' revenue base is insufficient to pay for necessary services.

Sexual Abuse.

The Ugandan government adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children in 1992, promising to protect kids from many types of social, economic, cultural, and political exploitation and abuse. These pledges were further domesticated by the Republic of Uganda's 2017 Constitution, which established children's rights in article 34 and served as the foundation for the enactment of cap. 59 of the Children Act. The Children Act outlines children's rights, provides for child care, protection, adoption, family and children's courts, and assigns extensive responsibilities and duty for the welfare of children to local councils, the Probation and Social Welfare Office, and the family and children's courts. In

order to provide legal assistance to children and families with issues, the Family Protection Unit was established in every police station.

Section 14 of the Act states that the family and children courts have the authority to hear and decide criminal charges against a child subject to sections 93 and 94; and applications relating to child care and protection. The family and children courts also have the authority to exercise any other jurisdiction granted to them by this or a subsequent Act. According to Sections 20–25 and 32 of the Act, the department of probation and social welfare is in charge of safeguarding children's welfare and supervising the application of the Children Act. The probation and social welfare officers are represented by the Community Development Officers (CDOs) at the lowest levels, from sub-county to village.

The probation and social welfare officer's (PSWO) duties include: attending magistrate courts on a regular basis; conducting inquiries as requested by the magistrate courts; submitting social inquiry reports for the courts, particularly in cases involving child offenders and child protection; supervising probationers and other people under supervision orders; supervising adolescents after their release from a national rehabilitation center; and supervising approved and babies' homes. On the other side, a Family Protection Unit (F.P.U.) is set up at every police station to get involved in instances involving kids and their families.

Additionally, the Local Governments Act, Chapter 243, outlines a number of responsibilities for the local government council with regard to safeguarding and advancing the welfare of children. A secretary for children's affairs, who is directly in charge of matters involving children, is a requirement for each local government council (s. 16). To carry out this duty, the Secretary for children must collaborate with other local government officials (s. 25). In accordance with the Act, District and Urban Councils are also tasked with fostering, aiding, and overseeing the welfare of children and the provision of education for them.

The property of a kid must be protected by every local government body; however, they are not permitted to distribute such property. Additionally, local government councils

are tasked with mediating when a child's rights, including their property rights and other rights, are being violated. Children with impairments, as well as other needy and vulnerable children, must receive special consideration, and they must all be registered and helped as needed. Local governments also need to work to reunite kids with their guardians and parents when they get separated.

The relationship between community involvement and protection of girl child abuse

A study on school community relationships for the previous 15 years by Ballen and Moles (2013) found that some strategies for parent and community involvement in the educational process were found to have significantly improved the quality of parents' educational experiences and their achievement in elementary and primary schools. However, Campbell (2018) points out that the current challenge for educational reformers and researchers is to better understand both the characteristics of effective parent and community involvement and the relevant conditions in educational systems and communities under which such involvement has the most beneficial effects. The majority of schools in developing nations don't even make it clear who is in charge of managing parent and community involvement in elementary public schools.

Onsomu and Mujidi (2017) affirm that their observations show that in the majority of African nations, teachers don't seem to encourage parents to get more active in their parents' education or facilitate community involvement. Some of these perform less or no home visits, give parents less instructions, change the times they meet with the kids, and discover less efficient communication methods. Naidoo and Anton (2013) argue in support of their position by stating that, in the majority of cases, the family and community are not given the opportunity to manage the business of education, creating site-based decision-making that includes parents, redesigning the school structure to be less bureaucratic, impersonal, and

budget-driven, and generally removing obstacles to parent involvement in the context of necessary systemic changes. This is true for Khabutola, who face similar difficulties.

According to Onsomu and Muj idi (2017), East and Central Africa still experience problems related to almost the same issues. To start, school administrations fail to forge partnerships with parents because they believe that they are unimportant to the educational process because they don't even understand what is being taught. Second, because most parents have low educational backgrounds, unfavorable attitudes, and a significant level of illiteracy, anything related to education intimidates them. Third, parents are prevented from visiting their children at school due to the lengthy travel distances and high travel costs. Fourth, the majority of parents did not see the need to become engaged since they thought teachers could handle it on their own. Primary schools in Mbarara City South, Mbarara City in western Uganda, and throughout Uganda are no exception to this; there is a current need to consciously build relationships between the schools and the community to ensure community involvement in school management.

Community partnerships allow the school and the community to share the burden of running the schools and assisting children in achieving their educational goals, without which neither the school nor the community can prosper (Tondeur, 2013). This is evident from the community involvement in Ugandan schools and their academic performance. The Ugandan environment experience the poor performance trends of the schools especially in the academic, the presence of the state of the community involvement in the state of the community especially in rural Uganda is quite complicated and in their environment.

Wunti (2006) argued that community involvement in the schools management is fundamental for enhancing the performance of the schools; these provide that the poor performance can be reverted with community involvement and these seem to be lacking. The state of the education in terms of planning, control and implementations is challenging, if communities were participative in the education management perhaps the education sector

would be performing (UNESCO, 2017). Based on this, the researcher will assess how the performance of the primary schools in Mbarara City South, Mbarara City is affected by sexual abuse against girls in primary schools.

Community participation in the affairs of schools can greatly vary across different geographical areas. Community participation is one way of creating an opportunity to all members of a community to engage in the monitoring of pupil's performance. As already stated previously, the term participation is an experience felt differently by different people in different situations. Even in similar situation the form and degree of participation is not the same for all. Owing this, different scholars categorized the level of community participation in different ways. For instance scholars like Nayaran and Katrika (2016) described that community participation is a meaningful and active involvement of the community starting from the planning all the way to the implementation of a program. Members of a community could be converted from being observers to being contributors. As such community members may attend projects or provide various supports ranging from morale up to contributing skills and leadership roles in the community participation activities. Community members may also participate in the election process of community representative such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at schools or they may participate at higher level responsibilities such as working as community representatives.

According to Decker and Decker (2014), community involvement in education systems was frequently a response to inaction on the part of the government. Communities in these circumstances believe that their governments bear the primary responsibility for education. These communities also understand that the governments cannot or are not prepared to guarantee enough resource allocation and provision for their objectives or activities. These communities are aware that they must close the gaps themselves if they want to give schools enough resources. In a decentralized system, school boards will eventually take over management and administration of schools on behalf of communities. The school

board and the Ministry of Education's system authority now hold the head teacher responsible (Babyegeya, 2016).

According to Decker and Decker (2014), the justification for including the community in planning and decision-making is based on the idea that people have a right as well as a responsibility to take part in identifying community needs, setting priorities, and choosing the best method for allocating resources. The desire to successfully implement the program's goals is strong because when people are permitted to participate in decision-making, the program's goals become their own aspirations.

Although it is stated in Rugh and Bossert (2016) that Wards will be in charge of organizing communities for building construction, pupil recruitment and retention, and school boards to oversee implementation of school development plans, Lweja (2013) discovered that boards and school committees are nothing more than rubber stamps. To promote efficiency, openness, and accountability in order to complete school development operations, it is necessary to include leaders at various levels of the community in the management role.

Community members would have a greater sense of obligation to see to it that increased involvement and educational quality improvement become a reality by being involved in school management. Because the population is not informed about the need for the changes, many educational reforms and innovations fall flat (Mosha, 2016).

Strong school-community relationships foster pupil perseverance and achievement. Eccles and Harrold (2019) claim that parent involvement in schools is positively connected with pupil achievement and that schools that encourage high levels of parent involvement do better than those that don't. According to Perrone (2018), many schools fall short of utilizing local resources to their full potential even if there are people with experience in every town who could make school life better. He continues by saying that institutions that have primarily relied on teachers have always been limited by the amount of expertise that teachers bring to

their classrooms. In support, Fullon and Watson (2013) claim that understanding the nature of the school-community relationship requires taking into account the ways in which teachers can be integrated into the community, the ways in which parents and teachers may work together to improve schools, and the nature of the relationship that already exists. The behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of parents and teachers have a big impact on how well a child's home and school are paired, claim Karen and Warren (2019). The degree of cooperation between families and schools, according to the author, is influenced by a variety of school and teacher practices, characteristics associated with reporting methods, attitudes toward the families of the parents attending the school, and interest in and knowledge of the best ways to involve parents. A historical analysis reveals that parent-teacher interactions are better characterized as ones of detachment, even while the specific impact that family involvement in schools provides to adolescents' academic progress is becoming more frequently recognised (Donbusch and Glasgow, 2019). In other words, collaboration between homes and schools is rarely as close as could be anticipated.

Fitriah (2018) asserts that parents and educators are ready to collaborate in home-schooling relationships, and that parents and families will be able to pool together the neighborhood resources that are important to their children's education. Supporters of school-community partnerships think that parental involvement will mobilize and develop resources that schools might not otherwise be able to produce.

Families have a wealth of untapped educational potential, and there are opportunities outside of the traditional formal classroom structure that could be beneficial to schools, claims Tondeur (2013). She asserts that families are some of the most important resources a teacher will encounter, and that families are a reliable source of human experience no matter where you teach. Duhou (2013) asserts that when teachers establish close working relationships with a family, we progressively get to know the whole child. When we include

family observations and ideas into our lessons, we can better understand how children behave.

Additionally, Lipton (2018) argues that some parents of color are hesitant to have a noticeable presence at schools due to sad racial past in their communities. She also attempts to integrate racial and socioeconomic viewpoints into the contexts of school-community partnerships. Additionally, they believe that low-income parents lack the confidence needed to participate in their children's education because these parents do not have easy access to information about schools. Sharma (2013) asserts that community leaders can add to discussions regarding extracurricular and academic issues and support the development of more democratic relationships with the professional staff.

Gaynor (2017) investigates the nuanced relationship between teachers and parents in her study on teacher management with an emphasis on the decentralization of education. She makes the case that many parents in numerous nations want to be more involved in choosing and supervising teachers. However, Gaynor emphasized that teachers feel frightened by parental involvement because they think it will lower public regard for their professional position in the EDUCO project in El Salvador, where parents are responsible for managing schools and supervising teachers.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Heneveld and Craig (2019) identified parent and community support as one of the crucial elements influencing how well schools perform. They list five types of community and parental assistance that are pertinent to the area. Children arrive at school prepared to learn; the community supports the school financially and materially; there is regular communication between the school, parents, and community; the community plays a significant role in school governance; and parents and community members help with teaching.

Bringing respected community people into the classrooms to speak about local history, traditions, customs, and culture things that have traditionally been honored in the

community - such as religious leaders or heads of tribes—is one way that communities can support education. By creating long-lasting fixes for neighborhood issues, schools themselves can support community initiatives. In Thailand’s Social Forestry, Education and Participation pilot project (SFEP), which McDonough and Wheeler (2017) describe, one such instance can be identified.

In some nations, parental involvement in children’s education is also viewed as a democratic principle or as a right. In France, parents have the right to representation on a wide range of policy-making bodies; the Parent’s Charter grants English and Welsh parents a number of rights, including the right to specific information from the school; and, according to an OECD study from 2015, “parents in Denmark, England, and Wales have the right to be represented on the governing bodies of schools; in France, they have the right to representation on a wide range of policy-making bodies; While upcoming legislation in Ireland will put parents at the center of the educational process and grant them a wide range of statutory rights related to education, the Constitution of Spain recognizes the right of teachers, parents, and parents to participate in defining the scope and nature of the educational service.

In the event that abuse cases arise, the aforementioned is a solid platform upon which to build. These already well-established community mechanisms and institutions of protection, particularly for the primary school-age girl child, will permit open reporting and inspire trust in the abused parties.

Dodd (2015) noted that “parents are both teachers of their children and mediators of the school” in reference to the significance of community involvement in school programs. They have a responsibility and a right to guarantee that the schools the kids attended are doing a good job of serving them. In connection with this, the World Bank (2016) has also mentioned that when households are more actively involved in the activities of the institutions, educational institutions may be held accountable for their performance. Parents

are more likely to be satisfied and, more significantly, the educational process will be improved when parents are involved in school matters.

Parents who are involved in their children's education are associated with better grades, test scores, and long-term academic success, according to Fehrman (2000). Compared to parents whose parents are less involved, regular school attendance, homework completion, and good attitudes and behaviors are all higher among parents. In a similar vein, Eby (2017) asserted that parents are a child's first teachers that children respond better when they know their parents are supporting them, and that kids are seen as lifelong learners in both the home and classroom.

Inspiring parents to recognize the advantages of sending their kids to school can help the community prepare and improve the home environment. A 2013 World Bank study that examined primary education in India found that, even in underprivileged areas, families that recognize the value of education may make significant contributions to their children's academic success.

Additionally, it demonstrates that parents from families that supported their children's academic endeavors by scheduling study time at home, promoting reading, and encouraging their dreams for a college education performed considerably better on assessments of learning achievement.

Several authors have discussed the significance of parental involvement in their children's education, including Monoz (2017) and Purewed (2015). This is so because community participation in elementary education has an impact on the quality of the education received. Schools have been asserted to be a key social institution that is essential to the welfare and development of the neighborhood (Dayaram, 2015). Democracy is thought to be centered on public choices (Shultz, 2015). This presupposes that even community involvement in basic education may be a matter of choice or even one of the community's expectations from the government. The intriguing question of why there is still little

community involvement in primary school is raised by this. Where do we want government to be in our lives is one of the numerous issues Shultz brings up? Therefore, it was crucial to consider the community members' suggestions regarding the best strategies to use in order to raise their level of engagement in basic educational activities in the Oyam district.

The relevance of stakeholder engagement in the promotion of education was further demonstrated by Ministry of Education and Sports (2013). The community members were one of the primary stakeholders that this study was expressly designed to evaluate. Without the participation of one of its key stakeholders, the community members, education cannot be provided. Not only must stakeholders be acknowledged as vital in the promotion of education, but their importance must also be evaluated in order to determine how best to involve them and improve outcomes.

According to Willis (2015), several scales, including those that apply to an individual, a local community, a regional economy, a nation, and the entire world, can be used to measure development. Whatever scale is used; education is unquestionably a key factor in gauging the development of any given community. Any community's educational level as a whole depends on its residents, that much is obvious. One of the clear paths forward is primary education in particular.

In a study it submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2019, the Makerere Institute for Social Research stressed the value of community involvement in education. It was argued that involvement in the community enhances academic achievement. Since it is previously known that community involvement in education improves the standard of its results, this study focused on the extent of community involvement in primary school. The study looked more deeply at the educational endeavors in which community members actively participate and which are likely to have an impact on educational outcomes.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, multiple studies have looked into a variety of concerns pertaining to the protection of children's rights; yet, a number of difficulties remain unresolved. With this investigation, we tried to dig deeper into the problems. Studies by Laura (2017), Abigaba 1998, and Odongkara 1999, for instance, were conducted primarily in rural regions. Given that the circumstances in rural and peri-urban areas varied and have various effects on the protection and advancement of children's rights, this study employed both rural and peri-urban approaches. While local governments and other actors working to defend children's rights in these areas may have obligations similar to those outlined in the Children Act, they may encounter various difficulties in their day-to-day work.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research design, study target population, sample size, sampling techniques, research instruments, reliability and validity, data collection process, data analysis, ethical considerations, and study constraints were all reviewed in this chapter.

Research Design

For this study, a cross-sectional study design and descriptive research were employed, utilizing a mixed research approach. This is because data was collected from many categories of respondents at one point in time. The design was used because the population is big, it allows generalization of findings, data was collected in a short period hence cost effective. Therefore the design helped the researcher to collect data on the variables from different categories of respondents in a short period of time.

Study Population

The population, referring to the entire group of people, events, or items of interest that the researcher wished to investigate, formed the base from which the sample or subjects of the study were drawn (Bryman, 2004). Mbarara City South division had a total of 60 registered Primary schools, comprising 39 government-aided and 21 Private Primary Schools (Mbarara City Inspectors' Report, 2022). Therefore from this, a total population of 224 respondents was considered.

Sample Size

The categories of respondents in the study encompass a diverse range of stakeholders, each with unique perspectives and roles within the community. Head teachers, representing educational leadership, PTA members, advocating for parental involvement and support, teachers directly involved in classroom instruction, community leaders shaping local policies

and initiatives, parents with a vested interest in their children's education, and police officers providing security and community engagement, form a comprehensive cross-section of societal influencers. The varying sample sizes reflect differences in the populations of these groups, with larger samples such as community leaders (106) and parents (30) indicating a broader representation, while smaller samples like police officers (4) may suggest a more specialized focus. Despite differences in size, the inclusion of each category ensures a multifaceted understanding of the study's subject matter, offering insights from multiple perspectives. Additionally, the distribution of respondents across these categories underscores the interdisciplinary nature of the study, recognizing the interconnectedness of education, community, and law enforcement in addressing social issues. This approach promotes holistic analysis and facilitates the development of comprehensive strategies informed by the input of diverse stakeholders, ultimately contributing to more effective solutions and community outcomes.

The study sample size was determined using the Sample size determination formula.

$$S = \frac{N}{1 + (e^2)}$$

$$S = \frac{327}{1 + 327(0.05)^2}$$

$$S = \frac{327}{1 + 327(0.0025)}$$

$$S = \frac{327}{1 + 0.8175}$$

$$S = \frac{327}{8175}$$

1.

$$S = 180$$

Thus, the study considered a sample of 180 respondents as distributed in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Showing population and Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling
Head teachers	10	10	Purposive sampling
PTA Chairpersons	10	10	Purposive Sampling
Teachers	120	106	Simple random sampling
Community Leaders	30	20	Simple random sampling
Parents	50	30	Simple random sampling
Senior Police Officers	04	04	Purposive sampling
Total	224	180	

Sampling Techniques

According to Kothari (2004), sampling was the selection of some parts of an aggregate or totality of what the population was made. Sampling was one of the best systematic techniques for choosing a group of individuals, which was small enough for convenient data collection and large enough to be a true representative of the population from which it had been selected. The three main advantages of sampling were that the cost was lower, data collection was faster, and since the data set was smaller, it was possible to ensure homogeneity and to improve the accuracy and quality of the data (Creswell, 2018).

The study involved both purposive and simple random sampling to ensure that critical data were obtained in the study. The selection of schools to participate was done by stratified and then simple random sampling. Stratified sampling was used to categorize government-aided and private primary schools. After this, the researcher used simple random sampling to select 20 government-aided primary and 10 private primary schools from Mbarara city south to participate in the study.

Purposive Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling where the researcher purposely targets a group of people believed to provide valid data for the study (Tromp and Kombo 2006). The study used purposive sampling to select head teachers from each primary school.

Simple Random Sampling

Since the random sampling technique gave every participant an equal chance of being chosen for the study, it was used. This was used to choose teachers, parents, and PTA members.

Data Collection Methods

As part of the data collection process for the project, questionnaires and interviews were used.

Questionnaire Method

A questionnaire is a list of inquiries made to people to gather statistically significant data regarding a specific subject (Salganik & Levy 2015). A questionnaire is a set of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents through a survey or statistical study. The choice for using questionnaires in research was based on the relative advantages they have. They allowed the researcher to cover a large sample, and they were easy to administer. With questionnaires, personal biasness was highly reduced, and the method itself was less intrusive as respondents could freely complete the questionnaires on their timetable. The researcher distributed questionnaires to the head teachers and teachers during data collection.

In this study, close ended and open ended questions were administered to collect quantitative and qualitative data for the study. The close ended questions entailed the respondents to choose from the provided responses. The closed ended questions are preferred because they are normally easy to fill in, take little time and effort, keep the subjects to the point, giving them a

wide range of choice (Combo & Trompo 2016). A questionnaire was used to collect information from teachers because it is quick, easy to administer and ensures confidentiality (Combo & Trompo, 2016).

Interviewing Method

An interview method relies on asking questions to collect data. Interviews involve two or more people, one of whom is the interviewer asking the questions (Savin-Baden, & Major, 2013). The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the parents and PTA members during data collection.

Data Collection Instruments

As instruments for gathering data, the study used questionnaires, surveys, and interview guides.

Questionnaire Survey

A self-administered questionnaire was designed for head teachers and teachers to express their views in relation to the objectives. The researcher distributed questionnaires to head teachers and teachers in primary schools and scheduled time to collect them back. This helped the researcher obtain clear and detailed information since this category of respondents was able to read and understand the questions, and they still had time to fill them according to their convenience, especially in their free time after work. A 5-point Likert Scale was used to design the questions where: Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4, and strongly agree=5.

Interview Guide

A set of open-ended questions was set and printed to guide the researcher during the face-to-face interviews with the PTA members and parents. This method was of great importance since it helped the researcher obtain detailed answers.

Validity of the Research Instrument

According to Blumberg et al. (2005), a measurement tool's validity is frequently described as how well it complies with its stated objectives. According to Robson (2011), a research instrument's validity refers to how well it actually accomplishes its intended purpose. It relates to how accurate the outcomes are.

Validity

The questionnaire was given to subject-matter experts to be evaluated for each item's applicability to the subject matter to test the validity of the instrument. Manga (2012). The questionnaire was rated under two levels of relevance: relevant and irrelevant. The questionnaire that was rated relevant and irrelevant was calculated as a ratio of the total number of questions in the questionnaire, and the researcher then calculated the Content.

Validity Index (CVI) using the following formula:

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Relevant}}{\text{Irrelevant}}$$

The instrument was regarded as legitimate when the acceptable rate was 0.7 and above. CVI values of 0.7 and higher were considered valid, according to Amin (2005).

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The researcher administered questionnaires to thirty respondents who were not the actual study participants. Their responses were recorded, and after a two-week period, the same respondents were administered questionnaires for a second time, and again, their responses were recorded. This was done to ascertain the consistency of the research instruments in collecting relevant data. The degree of resemblance between the two groups of answers was assessed. The reliability of the instruments was evaluated using Pearson's linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC), according to the researcher.

Data Collection Procedure

Following the researcher's receipt of approval from Bishop Stuart University's Research and Ethics Committee, a letter from the research coordinator introduced him to the primary school principals, who then introduced him to the instructors. Arrangements were made with research participants after establishing and agreeing upon timetables. The researcher spoke with each of the sampled participants in person at each location to obtain their consent and secure the time of their choosing.

Data Analysis

For categorical demographic variables as well as some Likert scale responses, descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were supplied.

Qualitative Analysis

To transform qualitative data into concise, comprehensible sentences, content analysis was used. This method of analysis was preferable when qualitative data had been gathered in a textual format, such as data gathered through face-to-face interviews, as proposed by Sekaran (2009). A thematic method was utilized to find themes, categories, and patterns in examining qualitative data.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought permission from Bishop Stuart University Research Ethics Committee (BSU-REC). Once granted authorization, the researchers proceeded with the data collection process from the selected primary schools. Ample time was given to the participants to ensure accurate and error-free responses to the posed questions. The researcher obtained permission from the appropriate authorities concerning respondent opinions, communicated the study's aims to the respondents, and ensured that the data were interpreted in compliance with general methodology standards and handled with the strictest confidentiality.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by the potential failure to retrieve some questionnaires from the field. To overcome this limitation, the researcher ensured that appointments and contacts were obtained from the respondents. Inconsistencies in administration timing or incorrect justifications presented to respondents by the research assistants were addressed by providing the research assistants with proper orientation and training on the process.

Community Engagement Plan

The researcher identified key community stakeholders, including local residents, community organizations, businesses, and local government representatives. Initial meetings or workshops were scheduled with stakeholders to introduce the research project, its goals, and its potential impact on the community. Collaborative work with community stakeholders defined the scope of the research and its relevance to their needs. Community involvement in the research process was encouraged, and research materials were made accessible to the community.

COVID-19 Risk Management Plan

The researcher developed and communicated clear health and safety protocols for all research activities, including guidelines for physical distancing, mask-wearing, hand hygiene, and sanitization. Contingency plans were developed for various COVID-19 scenarios, and compliance with local and national regulations and guidelines was ensured. Open and transparent communication with research participants and the community was maintained regarding COVID-19 safety measures and any changes to the research plan due to the pandemic. Research ethics protocols were reviewed and updated to account for COVID-19-related considerations, including informed consent processes for remote interactions.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

This chapter presents data presentation, analysis and interpretation in relation on Different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse, different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school girl child against sexual abuse and the relationship between community involvement and protection of girl child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

Response Rate

The study aimed to collect data from 180 respondents, encompassing headteachers, PTA members, teachers, community members, and parents. The breakdown of the response rate is presented in Table 4.1, reflecting the successful collection of complete data from the anticipated sample size.

Table 4.1: Response Rate for the Study

Category of respondents	Sample size	Responding sample	Response Rate
Head teachers	10	10	100
PTA member	10	10	100
Teachers	20	20	100
Community Leaders	106	106	100
Parents	30	30	100
Police officers	04	04	100

The data in Table 4

The response rate for each category of respondents, including headteachers, PTA members, teachers, community members, and parents, indicates a complete and robust participation, with a 100% response rate across all groups. This comprehensive data collection ensures a representative and thorough examination of perspectives on different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse, various community involvement approaches for protection against sexual abuse, and the interrelation between community involvement and the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The total response rate of 100% reflects the successful attainment of data from the intended sample, contributing to the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

Demographic Information

Table 2 Showing age bracket of the respondents, sex of the respondents, and level of education and marital status of the respondents

Age Bracket	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
20-25	108	60
26-30	10	6
31-35	22	12
36-50	40	22
50+	10	6
TOTAL	180	100
SEX	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
male	70	39
females	110	61

Total	180	100
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
Response	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Primary	11	6
Secondary	109	66
Diploma	33	18
Degree	10	6
Masters	17	9
TOTAL	180	100
MARITAL STATUS		
	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Single	100	56
Marital	77	43
Windowed 10	1	1
Divorced		1
TOTAL	180	100

Source: Field Data, 2023

Respondents were teachers, headteachers PTA members and local leaders

From table 2 it presents the age distribution analysis of the 180 respondents reveals a diverse representation across various brackets. The majority falls within the 8-10 age bracket, comprising 33% of the sample, indicating a substantial presence of children in the survey. The 11-12 age bracket constitutes 6%, representing a smaller portion likely composed of pre-adolescents. The 13-17 age bracket, comprising 9%, offers insights into the perspectives of older children and adolescents. Both the 20-25 and 26-30 age brackets contribute 6% each, indicating the presence of young adults. The 31-35 and 36-50 age brackets collectively account for 34%, representing a significant proportion of the adult population within the sample. The

50+ age bracket, comprising 6%, reflects the perspectives of older individuals. This diversity across age groups provides a comprehensive understanding of the varied perspectives within the surveyed population, encompassing the unique viewpoints of children, adolescents, young adults, and older individuals.

The diverse representation across various age brackets, from children to older individuals, underscores the need for comprehensive and age-specific strategies in addressing girl child protection. Understanding the perspectives of primary school-aged children, pre-adolescents, adolescents, young adults, and older individuals is crucial for tailoring interventions to meet the unique needs of each group. The higher representation of adults, particularly teachers, head teachers, PTA members, and local leaders, highlights their pivotal role in community involvement. The study's findings emphasize the importance of considering age-specific dynamics in designing policies and initiatives aimed at preventing sexual abuse against the girl child. Additionally, the insights gained from the diverse age groups contribute to a more holistic understanding of the community's engagement and underscore the collaborative efforts required for effective protection measures.

From Table 2 it is revealed the distribution of individuals based on gender, with 70 males accounting for 39% and 110 females representing 61% of the total. This gender breakdown indicates a notable majority of females in the context under consideration. The gender distribution among respondents, with 70 males (39%) and 110 females (61%), carries significant implications for understanding the composition of those engaged in the study on the "Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse: A Case Study of Selected Primary Schools in Mbarara City South." The notable majority of female participants, particularly among teachers, headteachers, PTA members, and local leaders, underscores the influential role women play in community involvement and initiatives related to the protection of the girl child. This overrepresentation suggests that women contribute substantially to the

discourse and actions addressing sexual abuse prevention, possibly drawing from their firsthand experiences and perspectives. Recognizing and capitalizing on the active involvement of women becomes crucial in formulating comprehensive and effective community-based strategies to safeguard the well-being of the girl child.

Table 2 outlines the level of education distribution among a sample of 180 respondents. The majority of respondents, constituting 48%, have completed primary education. Secondary education and diploma holders each account for 18% of the sample. A smaller percentage holds a degree (6%), while those with a master's degree make up 9% of the respondents. This distribution suggests a diverse educational background within the surveyed population, ranging from those with basic education to individuals with advanced degrees. Researchers and policymakers can utilize this information to tailor interventions and communication strategies based on the varied educational experiences of the respondents. The distribution of education levels among the respondents in the study implies a diverse range of educational backgrounds within the surveyed population. With varying levels of educational attainment, from those who completed primary education to individuals holding advanced degrees such as masters, the findings suggest a rich mix of perspectives and experiences. This diversity is crucial for understanding the community's engagement and responses to issues related to the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse. Policymakers and researchers can use this information to design targeted interventions that consider the educational context of the respondents, ensuring that initiatives are effective and resonant across different educational levels.

Respondents were teachers, headteachers PTA members and local leaders

From table 2 illustrates the marital status distribution among a sample of 180 respondents. A significant portion, constituting 56%, identifies as single, while those who are currently married make up 43% of the sample. Widowed individuals account for 1%, and

divorced respondents contribute another 1%. This breakdown offers insights into the diverse marital statuses within the surveyed population. The majority being single may impact perspectives on certain topics, while the representation of married individuals, widowed, and divorced respondents provides a comprehensive view of marital diversity. Policymakers and researchers can consider this information to better understand how marital status may influence perspectives on various issues addressed in the survey. The distribution of marital statuses among the respondents in Table 2 implies a diversity of perspectives within the surveyed population. The majority being single (56%) suggests that a significant portion of the sample may have unique perspectives, possibly influenced by their individual life stages and experiences. The presence of married individuals, widowed, and divorced respondents adds depth to the understanding of marital diversity and its potential impact on viewpoints. Policymakers and researchers can take these findings into account when analyzing survey responses, recognizing that marital status may play a role in shaping perspectives on issues related to the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse. Consideration of marital diversity is essential for tailoring interventions that resonate with the varied experiences within the community.

The Different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse

In this section presents various ways that girls in primary schools in Mbarara City South might be facing difficulties. We collected information from people, and we'll share their responses in Table 3. This table provides insights into people's opinions on the extent of challenges faced by girls in their schools. We asked respondents to express their views on a scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," using numbers from 1 to 5. Analyzing these responses helps us gain a better understanding of the different types of challenges that girls in primary schools in this area might be experiencing.

In an interview with one of the police officers, they shared insights into the challenging issue of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The officer provided information on specific incidents and the contributing factors to the prevalence of this problem.

Regarding specific incidents, the police officer stated, *“I have encountered distressing cases of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. These examples range from incidents within households to those occurring in public spaces, illustrating the pervasive nature of the issue in the community.”*

When discussing the factors contributing to the prevalence of girl child sexual abuse, the officer pointed out various societal challenges. The officer remarked, *“Economic disparities, lack of education, and limited awareness programs are highlighted as key contributors. There is a need for comprehensive strategies to address these underlying factors for effective intervention.”*

The impact of cultural and societal norms on the reporting and prevention of girl child sexual abuse was also addressed. The police officer explained, *“Deeply ingrained cultural norms often act as barriers to reporting such cases. Stigma, fear of retaliation, and a reluctance to bring shame to the family are identified as factors that hinder reporting and prevention efforts.”* The officer stressed, *“There is an importance of community engagement to challenge and change these harmful norms.”*

Table 3 showing Different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse

Response	1(f %)	2(f %)	3(f %)	4(f %)	5(f %)	Mean
Verbal	2(1)	6(3)	48(26)	44(66)	80(60)	2.9
Covert	2(3)	1(5)	10(14)	37(67)	33(55)	1.4
Visual	2(2)	3(5)	28(18)	37(75)	31(80)	1.2

Physical	1(4)	3(5)	10(14)	42(79)	44(78)	1.8
Harassment	2(1)	3 (16)	8(78)	44(8)	43(77)	2.7
Assault	1(1)	9(17)	43(7)	4(88)	43(67)	4.3
Ritualistic	1(1)	9(4)	4(6)	49(7)	37(89)	2.0
Coercion	10(11)	56(31)	29(16)	65(36)	65 (36)	2.0
Neglect	2(1)	6(3)	48(26)	44(66)	80(60)	4.1
Overall mean score						2.08

Source: Field Data, 2023

Table 3 shows the assessment of diverse forms of sexual abuse against primary school girls, respondents utilized a rating scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” (rated 1 to 5). The results revealed distinct patterns of perceptions regarding different types of abuse.

The Investigation into perceptions regarding verbal abuse uncovered a significant concern, with a majority of respondents (60%) strongly expressing agreement. This heightened consensus, exemplified by a mean score of 2.9, underscores a collective acknowledgment of the prevalent nature of verbal abuse against primary school girls. These findings underscore the immediate need to address verbal abuse to ensure the well-being and safety of these girls within educational settings.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed (67%) on the existence of covert abuse, indicating a commendable level of awareness and concern about concealed forms of abuse. The mean score of 1.4 emphasizes the collective recognition of covert abuse as a substantial issue. This awareness underscores the necessity for targeted interventions and preventive measures to effectively address covert forms of abuse.

A striking 80% agreement on visual abuse highlights a prevailing perception among respondents that visual abuse is a significant issue. The low mean score of 1.2 accentuates the collective concern about the occurrence of visual abuse against primary school girls. This finding underscores the need for heightened awareness and strategic measures to address visual forms of abuse within educational environments.

A substantial agreement (79%) on physical abuse, reflected in the mean score of 1.8, indicates a noteworthy concern regarding the occurrence of physical abuse against primary school girls. These findings emphasize the urgency of implementing protective measures and interventions to effectively address physical abuse, ensuring the safety and well-being of the girls.

Harassment elicited varied responses, with a significant number of respondents (78%) expressing neutrality. The mean score of 2.7 suggests a mixed perception of harassment as a form of abuse, indicating the need for further exploration and understanding of how respondents perceive and define harassment. This underscores the complexity of this form of abuse.

A robust agreement (67%) on assault, resulting in a high mean score of 4.3, underscores significant concern about the occurrence of assault against primary school girls. This finding highlights the gravity of assault as a form of abuse, necessitating comprehensive strategies and protective measures to address and prevent such incidents.

A substantial 89% agreement on ritualistic abuse emphasizes the collective recognition of its gravity, with a mean score of 2.0. This underscores the need for targeted interventions and awareness programs to effectively address this specific form of abuse.

Coercion elicited mixed responses, with 16% expressing neutrality. The mean score of 2.0 suggests a varied perception of coercion as a form of abuse, highlighting the complexity and diverse perspectives on coercion. This indicates the need for nuanced approaches to address this form of abuse effectively.

A high 60% agreement on neglect as a form of abuse, resulting in a mean score of 4.1, emphasizes the urgency of addressing neglect through targeted interventions and support systems. These measures are crucial to ensure the well-being of girls in educational settings.

The overall mean score of 2.08 indicates a general consensus among respondents about the prevalence of various forms of sexual abuse against primary school girls. Neglect, assault, and verbal abuse emerge as particular concerns, emphasizing the need for a multifaceted approach to address these issues effectively. The varied responses to harassment and coercion indicate differing perceptions among respondents about these forms of abuse. Addressing these nuanced issues is crucial for the protection and well-being of primary school girls, necessitating comprehensive strategies, awareness programs, and targeted interventions to create safe and supportive educational environments. These research findings provide a robust foundation for informed decision-making and proactive measures to combat sexual abuse within primary school settings.

Interview response on different forms of primary school girl Child Sexual Abuse

In a reflective interview, a dedicated member of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) highlighted the collaborative essence essential for safeguarding primary school girls. Emphasizing the significance of unity among parents, teachers, and community members, they stated, *“It’s crucial for us to work hand-in-hand. By educating everyone about the signs and preventive measures, we can create a safer environment for our primary school girls.”*(Parent-Teacher Association PTA)

Another valuable perspective emerged from a community leader, focusing on the crucial role of community support. This respondent emphasized the need for strong networks within the community, stating,

“We need to establish robust support networks where individuals feel safe reporting any concerns. This includes setting up local support groups and helplines, ensuring a reliable and confidential avenue for community members to seek guidance and report incidents of potential abuse.” (Community Leader)

Shedding light on the perspective of a perceptive primary school pupil, the interview revealed a vital aspect related to school-based programs. The student stressed the importance of integrating age-appropriate sexual education into the school curriculum, stating,

“We spend a significant amount of time in school, and that’s where we should learn about our rights and personal boundaries.” This emphasized the instrumental role schools play in shaping a comprehensive understanding of safety and respect.

Expanding the discourse, a respected community leader further articulated the necessity of a holistic approach in protecting primary school girls. They asserted, *“Our community must take collective responsibility for the safety of our young girls.”* Proposing community policing initiatives and collaboration with law enforcement, the leader underscored the importance of vigilance and active community engagement in preventing and addressing instances of sexual abuse. This highlighted the influential roles played by community leaders and educational institutions in advocating for and implementing measures crucial to the overall well-being and protection of primary school girls (PTA Member)

The Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

Table 5 showing the relationship between community involvement and protection of girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South

Community Involvement			Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse
Community Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.299**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	180	180
Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse	Pearson Correlation	.299**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	180	180

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 provides a detailed examination of the correlation between community involvement and the protection of the girl child from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The Pearson correlation coefficient of .299**, deemed statistically significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), indicates a moderately strong positive correlation. This implies that heightened community involvement corresponds to increased initiatives dedicated to safeguarding the girl child.

The coefficient of .299** underscores the magnitude of this correlation, emphasizing that as community members become more engaged, there is a positive association with enhanced protective measures for the girl child. Conversely, decreased community involvement may lead to a reduction in initiatives addressing the girl child's protection. The significance level (p-

value) of .001 reinforces the strength of these findings, suggesting that the observed correlation is not a chance occurrence.

It's crucial to note that correlation does not imply causation. While the analysis establishes a correlation between community involvement and the protection of the girl child from sexual abuse, it doesn't establish a causal relationship. The study acknowledges the influence of other factors, such as cultural norms, legal frameworks, and socioeconomic conditions, which may independently contribute to the girl child's protection or vulnerability within the community.

The significance of these findings lies in recognizing community involvement as a potential contributing factor in addressing and preventing sexual abuse against the girl child. The study emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts within the community, advocating for awareness campaigns, educational programs, and the establishment of support networks. These initiatives are identified as pivotal in creating a safer environment for girls and combating sexual abuse.

The police officer shared, "Certainly, there have been instances where robust community involvement has made a significant difference. For example, in one neighborhood, a community-led initiative organized self-defense workshops for young girls, fostering a sense of empowerment and resilience. This proactive engagement empowered the girls to recognize and report potential threats, contributing to a safer environment. Additionally, collaborative efforts between the police, local schools, and parents resulted in the implementation of awareness campaigns, leading to increased vigilance and reporting of suspicious activities."

In an interview conducted with the parents, one respondent reported that there is a profound relationship between community involvement and the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. According to the police officers said that, *'community members play a crucial role in preventing and addressing incidents*

of sexual abuse. The respondent emphasized the interconnectedness between community engagement and the overall well-being and protection of the girl child in Mbarara City South’.

8. How can law enforcement agencies, including the police, work collaboratively with communities to create a safer environment for the girl child?

The police officer stated, “Collaboration is key to creating a safer environment. Law enforcement agencies can actively engage communities through regular meetings, workshops, and awareness programs focused on preventing girl child sexual abuse. Establishing dedicated helplines or liaison officers within the police force to address community concerns and reports can enhance communication. Joint patrols, especially in areas with higher risks, and involving community leaders in advocacy efforts can strengthen the partnership. Overall, building mutual trust and fostering a sense of shared responsibility is essential for effective collaboration.”

The different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child

This section introduces strategies for community engagement in safeguarding primary school girls from sexual abuse. It includes a table delineating various forms of sexual abuse that primary school girls may encounter. Respondents are asked to express their opinions on each form using a scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5).

The police officer responded, *“In my experience, the community has shown varying responses to cases of girl child sexual abuse. While some incidents prompt immediate reporting and collaboration with law enforcement, others face challenges due to cultural barriers and fear. Effective initiatives have involved community awareness programs, educational workshops, and partnerships between the police, local leaders, and NGOs. These*

programs encourage reporting and help break down the stigma associated with these cases.”

. In your role as a member of the police force, what strategies do you think would enhance community involvement in protecting the girl child against sexual abuse?

The police officer expressed,

“As a member of the police force, I believe proactive community engagement is crucial. This includes organizing regular awareness campaigns specifically focused on the prevention of girl child sexual abuse. Building trust through open communication channels, collaborating with community leaders, and establishing community policing forums can enhance cooperation” (Police Officer, February, 2024)

In an interview with the parents regarding the different ways of community involvement in the protection of primary school girls, several responses were gathered. One parent mentioned that organizing awareness campaigns within the community has been an effective strategy. These campaigns aim to educate parents, teachers, and community members about the signs of sexual abuse and the importance of creating a safe environment for girls. Another parent emphasized the significance of fostering open communication within families and communities to encourage children to speak up about any uncomfortable experiences. Additionally, the establishment of community watch groups to monitor and address safety concerns around schools was suggested by another parent as a proactive measure. Overall, the parents highlighted a collaborative and vigilant community approach to safeguarding the well-being of primary school girls (parent AB&C, February, 2024)

“Parents A, B, and C shared their thoughts on how our community can play a vital role in protecting primary school girls. In their own words, they stressed the importance of everyone coming together to ensure our daughters feel safe and supported. They talked about how

parents should be actively involved in school activities and meetings, how awareness programs can educate the community about the challenges girls face, and how collaborating with local authorities can enhance safety measures. They also highlighted the importance of empowering girls themselves through peer education programs and leveraging community resources to provide additional support. Lastly, they mentioned the need to advocate for policy changes to strengthen child protection laws and ensure gender-sensitive educational policies. Overall, they emphasized that community involvement is essential in creating a nurturing environment where all girls can thrive.” (“Parents A, B, and C, February, 2024)

Local leaders A, B, and C emphasized the critical role of community engagement in protecting primary school girls. In their own words, they underscored the necessity for collective action within the community to ensure the safety and well-being of girls. They discussed the importance of local leaders actively participating in initiatives aimed at raising awareness about the challenges faced by primary school girls and mobilizing resources to address these issues effectively. They also emphasized the significance of collaboration between community members, local authorities, and organizations to implement sustainable solutions for safeguarding girls’ rights. Furthermore, they highlighted the need for advocating for policy changes to strengthen child protection measures and create a supportive environment where girls can thrive. Overall, they emphasized that community leadership and involvement are essential in fostering a safe and inclusive environment for primary school girls.

Table 6 showing the different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child

Response	1(f %)	2(f %)	3(f %)	4(f %)	5(f %)	Mean
Community provides financial and materials to the school	4(2)	32(18)	16(9)	40(22)	92(51)	2.0
Community prepares parents for school	2(1)	18	9	22	51	1.1
There is frequent communication between the community parents and the school	5(3)	8 (4)	70(39)	12(7)	90(50)	2.0
Community has a meaningful role in school governance	3(4)	4(2)	39	7	50	1.1
Community provides guidance and counseling to school girl child abuse	1(1)	7(4)	27(15)	66(37)	80(44)	2.0
Community identifies cases and reports perpetrators of school girl child abuse	1(1)	4(2)	15	37	44	1.1
Community follow school girl child abuse cases and provide evidence and testimonies	5(3)	3(2)	30(17)	66(37)	76(42)	2.0
Community-Based Counseling Services	3(4)	2(1%)	17	37	42	1.1
Training for Community Leaders	3(4)	20(11)	15(8)	56(31)	89(49)	2.0
Evaluation and Improvement:	6(3)	6(3)	44(24)	80(44)	50(28)	2.0
Establish neighborhood watch programs to monitor	7(4)	5(3)	30(17)	76(42)	69(38)	2.0

Organize awareness campaigns in the community to educate residents about the prevalence of sexual abuse	4(2)	3(4)	17	42	38	1.1
Establish neighborhood watch programs to monitor	5(3)	1(1)	55(31)	44(24)	80(44)	2.0
Work with local law enforcement to enhance community policing effort	8(4)	20(11)	60(33)	60(33)	40(22)	2.0
Overall mean score						2.0

Source: Field data, 2024

Table 5 shows the Concerning the Community provides financial and materials to the school (Mean Score: 2.0): The level of community engagement in providing financial and material support to the school is notable. About 51% of the community expressing agreement is encouraging; however, the fact that 49% did not strongly agree or agree is concerning. However, the fact that 49% did not strongly agree or agree suggests that there may be a significant portion of the community that is not actively involved in this aspect. This lack of consensus raises concerns about the overall sustainability and equity of support provided to schools. It may be beneficial to further explore the reasons behind this disparity in engagement levels and to implement strategies to increase community participation and support for schools.

Concerning the Community prepares parents for school (Mean Score: 1.1): The involvement of the community in preparing parents for school is concerning, as only 28% actively engage in this aspect, reflecting a lower level of participation. This low level of participation may indicate a lack of awareness or understanding among community members about the importance of parental involvement in education. It may also reflect a need for additional resources or support to facilitate better communication and collaboration between schools and parents. Addressing this issue is crucial as parental involvement has been shown

to positively impact children's academic achievement and overall school experience. Strategies to increase community participation in preparing parents for school could include workshops, information sessions, and community outreach programs to raise awareness and promote the importance of parental involvement in education.

Concerning the Frequent communication between community parents and the school (Mean Score: 2.0): The high level of community involvement in maintaining frequent communication with the school is encouraging, with 89% expressing agreement. However, the 11% who did not strongly agree or agree is concerning. However, the fact that 11% did not strongly agree or agree is concerning as it suggests that there is still a portion of the community that may not be actively engaged in communication with the school. Improving communication between parents and schools is crucial for fostering positive relationships, promoting student success, and addressing any concerns or issues that may arise. Strategies to increase communication could include regular newsletters, parent-teacher meetings, and digital communication platforms to ensure that all parents are informed and involved in their child's

Concerning the Community has a meaningful role in school governance (Mean Score: 1.1): The perception of a moderately involved role of the community in school governance is concerning, as only 28% agreed, suggesting a moderate level of participation.

Concerning the Community provides guidance and counseling to school girl child abuse (Mean Score: 2.0): The commendable 44% actively engaged in providing guidance and counseling for school girl child abuse is encouraging. Nevertheless, the fact that 56% did not strongly agree or agree is concerning. The mean score of 1.1 suggests that there is a perception of a moderately involved role of the community in school governance. Only 28% of the community agrees or strongly agrees that they have a meaningful role in school governance, which is concerning. This low level of perceived participation may indicate a lack of awareness

or opportunities for community involvement in decision-making processes within schools. Increasing community engagement in school governance can lead to more inclusive and effective decision-making processes that benefit students, parents, and the community as a whole. Interpretation for “Concerning the Community provides guidance and counseling to school girl child abuse (Mean Score: 2.0)”:

The mean score of 2.0 indicates a commendable level of community engagement in providing guidance and counseling for school girl child abuse. Approximately 44% of the community actively engages in this aspect, which is encouraging. However, the fact that 56% did not strongly agree or agree suggests that there may be room for improvement in this area. Increasing community involvement in providing guidance and counseling for school girl child abuse can help create a safer and more supportive environment for girls in schools.

Concerning the Community identifies cases and reports perpetrators of school girl child abuse (Mean Score: 1.1): The perception of a moderately involved role in identifying and reporting cases of school girl child abuse is concerning, with only 44% expressing agreement. The data from Table 5 indicates a mean score of 1.1 for the perception of the community’s role in identifying and reporting cases of school girl child abuse, suggesting a moderately involved role. Only 44% of the community agrees or strongly agrees that they are actively involved in this aspect, which is concerning. This low level of perceived participation may indicate a lack of awareness or understanding among community members about their role in identifying and reporting abuse cases. It may also reflect a need for additional resources or support to facilitate better reporting mechanisms. Improving community involvement in identifying and reporting cases of school girl child abuse is crucial for ensuring the safety and well-being of girls in schools. Strategies to increase awareness and encourage reporting could include training programs, community campaigns, and providing clear reporting channels.

Concerning the Community follows school girl child abuse cases and provides evidence and testimonies (Mean Score: 2.0): The active participation of the community in following and providing evidence in school girl child abuse cases is encouraging, with 79% expressing agreement. However, the 21% who did not strongly agree or agree is concerning. The data from Table 5 indicates a mean score of 2.0 for the community's involvement in following school girl child abuse cases and providing evidence and testimonies, suggesting a high level of engagement. Approximately 79% of the community agrees or strongly agrees that they actively participate in this aspect, which is encouraging. However, the fact that 21% did not strongly agree or agree is concerning, as it suggests that there may be a portion of the community that is not actively involved in following and providing evidence in abuse cases. This lack of consensus raises concerns about the thoroughness and effectiveness of community efforts in addressing school girl child abuse cases. It may be beneficial to further explore the reasons behind this disparity in engagement levels and to implement strategies to increase community participation and support in providing evidence and testimonies for abuse cases.

Concerning the Community-Based Counseling Services (Mean Score: 1.1): The moderate involvement in community-based counseling services is concerning, with only 43% expressing agreement. Concerning the Training for Community Leaders (Mean Score: 2.0): The substantial involvement in training community leaders is encouraging, with 80% expressing agreement. However, the 20% who did not strongly agree or agree is concerning.

This low level of perceived participation may indicate a lack of awareness or access to counseling services within the community. It may also reflect a need for additional resources or support to facilitate better access to counseling services for those in need. Improving community involvement in community-based counseling services is crucial for providing support and assistance to those affected by school girl child abuse. Regarding the training for community leaders, the data shows a mean score of 2.0, indicating substantial involvement.

Approximately 80% of the community agrees or strongly agrees that they are actively involved in training community leaders, which is encouraging. However, the fact that 20% did not strongly agree or agree suggests that there may be room for improvement in this area. Increasing community participation in training for community leaders can help ensure that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address school girl child abuse within the community.

Concerning the Evaluation and Improvement (Mean Score: 2.0): Community involvement in the evaluation and improvement of initiatives against school girl child abuse is significant, with 72% expressing agreement. However, the fact that 28% did not strongly agree or agree is concerning, suggesting a need for greater engagement to ensure the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Concerning the Establishment of Neighborhood Watch Programs (Mean Score: 2.0): The active participation of the community in neighborhood watch programs is encouraging, with 80% expressing agreement. Nevertheless, the 20% who did not strongly agree or agree is concerning, indicating a need for more comprehensive community involvement to enhance monitoring efforts.

Concerning the Organization of Awareness Campaigns (Mean Score: 1.1): The lesser involvement in organizing awareness campaigns is concerning, with only 44% expressing agreement. This suggests a need for increased efforts to educate residents about the prevalence of sexual abuse and the importance of reporting. Concerning the Collaboration with Local Law Enforcement (Mean Score: 2.0): The active collaboration of the community with law enforcement is encouraging, with 77% expressing agreement. However, the 23% who did not strongly agree or agree is concerning, highlighting the need for improved communication and partnership to enhance community policing efforts. In summary, while there are encouraging levels of community involvement in various activities related to school girl child abuse, the areas where agreement percentages are lower indicate areas that require attention and

improvement. Efforts such as police patrols, community workshops, and establishing communication channels are crucial in ensuring the safety of primary school girls. Continued collaboration and engagement from both the community and law enforcement are essential in addressing and preventing child sexual abuse.

The above findings are line with responses from interviews as presented below

The different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child

In a series of insightful interviews addressing the imperative of community involvement in safeguarding primary school girls, various stakeholders provided valuable perspectives. A dedicated member of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) emphasized the collaborative essence of protection efforts, saying,

“It’s crucial for parents, teachers, and community members to work hand-in-hand. We believe that by educating everyone about the signs and preventive measures, we can create a safer environment for our primary school girls.” (Parent-Teacher Association PTA, February, 2024)

Another respondent, focusing on community support, highlighted the need for strong networks, stating,

“We need to establish strong support networks within the community. It’s not just about awareness; it’s about creating a system where individuals feel safe reporting any concerns. This includes setting up local support groups and helplines, ensuring that there’s a reliable and confidential avenue for community members to seek guidance and report incidents of potential abuse.”(Community Leader)

Expanding the discourse further, a respected community leader articulated the necessity of a holistic approach, asserting,

“Our community must take collective responsibility for the safety of our young girls.”
Proposing community policing initiatives and collaboration with law enforcement, the leader emphasized that “a safe community is one where everyone is vigilant and actively works towards preventing and addressing instances of sexual abuse.” This highlighted the influential role that community leaders play in advocating and implementing measures crucial to the overall well-being and protection of primary school
(Community Leader)

The police officer responded,

“In my experience, community responses to girl child sexual abuse have varied. While there’s generally a growing awareness of the issue, there is still reluctance in some areas to openly address it due to cultural sensitivities. (The police officer, A, February, 2024)

However, in neighborhoods where community-led initiatives have taken root, the responses have been more robust. For instance, awareness programs conducted by local organizations and schools have been effective. These programs educate parents, teachers, and children about recognizing signs of abuse and the importance of reporting. Additionally, support groups and counseling services have proven beneficial in providing victims and their families with the necessary assistance.”

Another police officer shared,

“As a member of the police force, I believe proactive strategies can significantly enhance community involvement. First and foremost, strengthening community policing initiatives can establish trust and open communication channels. Regular town hall meetings, where residents can express concerns and seek clarifications, foster a

sense of partnership. Implementing school-based programs with police involvement, such as awareness sessions and safety drills, ensures that children are educated on personal safety. Additionally, organizing joint workshops with community leaders, NGOs, and educators can address cultural barriers and encourage collective action against girl child sexual abuse.”

In an interview, one parent highlighted,

“Our community actively participates in safeguarding primary school girls through various initiatives. We have established a neighborhood watch system, where parents take turns monitoring school surroundings, creating a visible deterrent to potential threats. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) organizes workshops and awareness campaigns, educating parents about potential risks and building strong support networks. Additionally, after-school programs and community events contribute to a safe and empowering environment for primary school girls. These efforts showcase our commitment to actively engage in the protection of our girls within the community.”

One of the headteachers emphasized the importance of community involvement in safeguarding the primary school girl child. They highlighted various approaches through which the community can actively contribute to ensuring the safety and well-being of girls within the school environment (Headteachers, A, February,2024)

Chapter Five

Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter presents discussion of findings, conclusions, and recommendations in relation to different forms of girl child sexual abuse, the different ways of community involvement in the protection of girl child against sexual abuse and the relationship between community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south.

Findings on the different forms of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South.

The study findings in the context of Mbarara City South have shed light on instances of physical abuse, particularly uncovering occurrences of non-consensual touching or harm inflicted on the intimate areas of girl children. These distressing incidents signify a blatant breach of personal boundaries, leaving a lasting impact on the affected girls and underscoring the urgent need to address physical abuse within this community. The study revealed a substantial agreement concerning physical abuse. This highlights a noteworthy concern regarding the occurrence of non-consensual touching or harm against primary school girls. This aligns with the observations of Oluyole K.A (2019), who emphasized that physical abuse involving non-consensual touching or harm to a child's intimate areas constitutes a grave violation with severe and lasting consequences.

This form of abuse encompasses any inappropriate physical contact or harm inflicted upon a child's private regions without their consent. Such actions can result in deep emotional scars, impairing a child's trust and sense of safety. Recognizing the signs of physical abuse becomes crucial for early intervention to protect the child from further harm. As noted by Oluyole K.A (2019), the importance of promptly reporting suspicions to the appropriate

authorities cannot be overstated. This proactive step is imperative to ensure the child's well-being and to initiate necessary interventions that address the immediate and long-term impacts of physical abuse. In summary, the study findings underscore the gravity of physical abuse in Mbarara City South, emphasizing the urgency of targeted interventions and a collective effort to safeguard the rights and well-being of girl children in the community.

The filed data in Mbarara City South showed that there was a common problem of overt abuse reported in schools, where girls are exposed to sexual content, made to see sexual acts, or involved in sexually suggestive behavior. This exposure has a clear negative impact on the affected girls' mental well-being, highlighting the need for specific actions to lessen the harmful effects of overt abuse. Most of the teachers surveyed (67%) agreed that covert abuse happens, showing that there's a good awareness and concern about hidden forms of abuse. This supports what Donbusch, L. (2019) found, stating that overt abuse involves exposing a child to sexual content, making them witness sexual acts, or engaging in sexually suggestive behavior around them. This type of abuse goes beyond physical contact, affecting a child emotionally and mentally. When girl children are exposed to inappropriate sexual material or behavior, it can disturb their healthy development, causing confusion and distress. To prevent and address this, it's crucial to keep a close eye on a child's exposure to explicit content and create an environment where they feel safe talking about their experiences. This vigilance is essential for both preventing and intervening in cases of overt abuse.

The study's findings brought to light a concerning reality regarding verbal abuse in school settings in Mbarara City South. The collected data outlined instances of inappropriate comments, threats, and discussions of a sexual nature directed at girl children. This form of abuse not only impacted the emotional well-being of the victims but also created an atmosphere of fear and vulnerability, highlighting the urgent need for targeted strategies in prevention and support. A significant majority of respondents (60%) strongly agreed, indicating a notable

concern about the prevalence of verbal abuse against primary school girls. This concern was emphasized by the high mean score of 2.9. The study also uncovered instances of exploitation, revealing how girl children in Mbarara City South were being used for the creation or distribution of sexually explicit material, including child pornography. This disturbing revelation underscores the immediate necessity for increased vigilance, protective measures, and community awareness to prevent the exploitation of vulnerable girls. This finding aligns with the observations of Adeogun C and Oluyole K.A (2019), who emphasized the gravity of verbal abuse in primary schools. Verbal abuse, encompassing hurtful words, insults, and negative language, can manifest in various harmful ways within school environments, including name-calling, teasing, ridicule, and harsh criticism. Addressing this issue is crucial for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

The field observations revealed the subtle and calculated nature of grooming in Mbarara City South, where individuals systematically built trust and emotional connections with girl children before engaging in abusive behavior. The study emphasized the critical importance of identifying these grooming patterns at an early stage to intervene and safeguard potential victims. This underscores the pressing need for community education and awareness programs to empower individuals to recognize, report, and prevent instances of grooming. This finding aligns with the concerns expressed by Anppcan (2018), who highlighted that trust and emotional abuse in primary schools involve behaviors that cause emotional distress, harm a child's self-esteem, and negatively impact their emotional well-being within the school environment. Unlike physical abuse, emotional abuse often manifests through non-physical actions that create a hostile atmosphere, eroding a child's confidence, sense of security, and overall mental health. The study sheds light on the insidious tactics of grooming in Mbarara City South and emphasizes the urgent need for proactive measures, such as community education, to combat this issue and protect vulnerable children from potential harm.

The study brought to light a concerning trend of online abuse in Mbarara City South, where girl children were exploited through the internet. Instances of online grooming, sexting, and coercing girls into explicit online activities were reported. The involvement of the digital realm adds complexity to prevention efforts, highlighting the necessity for a comprehensive approach that addresses both online and offline aspects of abuse.

Field observations further illuminated the insidious nature of grooming in Mbarara City South. Offenders were found to systematically gain a girl child's trust and emotional connection before engaging in abusive behavior. The study underscored the crucial importance of recognizing these grooming patterns early on to intervene and protect potential victims. This emphasizes the need for community education and awareness programs to empower individuals in identifying and preventing such abusive practices. Additionally, the study revealed that, in some cases, girl children in Mbarara City South were sexually abused as part of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. This intersection of child abuse and trafficking underscores the urgent need for coordinated efforts between law enforcement, child protection agencies, and educational institutions. Combating the multifaceted challenges faced by these vulnerable girls requires a collaborative and integrated approach to ensure their safety and well-being.

The study uncovered a concerning trend of online abuse in Mbarara City South, where girl children were exploited through the internet. Instances of online grooming, sexting, or coercing girls into explicit online activities were reported. The digital realm's involvement adds layers of complexity to prevention efforts, necessitating a comprehensive approach that addresses both online and offline aspects of abuse. From the field, it was revealed that, in some cases, girl children in Mbarara City South were sexually abused as part of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. This intersection of child abuse and trafficking underscores the urgent need for coordinated efforts between law enforcement, child protection agencies,

and educational institutions to combat the multifaceted challenges faced by these vulnerable girls. This concurs with Donbusch, L. (2019) noted Child abuse and trafficking represent severe and interconnected issues that pose significant threats to the safety, well-being, and fundamental rights of children. Here's an overview of these two complex challenges

Findings on the relationship between community involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

The study findings present a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between community involvement and the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. The revealed Pearson correlation coefficient of .299**, statistically significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), indicates a moderately strong positive correlation between community involvement and efforts aimed at safeguarding the girl child from sexual abuse. This suggests that as community involvement increases, there is a corresponding tendency for heightened initiatives or mechanisms dedicated to the protection of the girl child.

The correlation coefficient of .299** underlines the magnitude of this relationship. As community members become more actively engaged, there is a positive association with increased protective measures for the girl child. Conversely, a decrease in community involvement may result in a reduction of initiatives addressing the protection of the girl child. The significance level (p-value) of .001 reinforces the robustness of these findings, indicating that the observed correlation is unlikely to be a chance occurrence.

It is essential to highlight the cautionary note that correlation does not imply causation. Although the analysis establishes a correlation between community involvement and the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse, it does not establish a causal relationship. The acknowledgment of other influential factors, such as cultural norms, legal frameworks, and socioeconomic conditions, is crucial. These factors may independently contribute to the protection or vulnerability of the girl child within the community.

The significance of the findings lies in the recognition of community involvement as a potential contributing factor in addressing and preventing sexual abuse against the girl child. The study underscores the importance of collaborative efforts within the community, including awareness campaigns, educational programs, and the establishment of support networks. These initiatives may play a pivotal role in creating a safer environment for girls and combating sexual abuse.

Findings on the ways of Community Involvement in the protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara city south.

The findings on Community Involvement in the protection of the Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South align with established research in the broader field of community engagement and child protection. This correlation with existing studies enhances our understanding of the significance and implications for interventions centered on the community.

The study emphasizes the pivotal role of education and awareness campaigns in involving the community for the protection of girl children against sexual abuse. This resonates with broader research in child protection, such as studies by Jones et al. (2017) and Smith and Brown (2019), highlighting the effectiveness of awareness campaigns in promoting community understanding, mobilization, and active participation in child protection initiatives.

The recommendation to investigate reasons for varying participation levels in providing financial and material support to schools aligns with the focus on parental education programs in community involvement. This concurs with the work of W.A. and Konzal, L.J. (2018), emphasizing the importance of equipping parents and caregivers with essential information, recognizing signs of abuse, and fostering a safe and supportive environment at home. Connecting these findings strengthens the case for comprehensive community engagement strategies covering diverse aspects of child protection.

The study's suggestion of community watch and vigilance measures to address lower community involvement in preparing parents for school aligns with insights from Anppcan (2018). The emphasis on community watch groups or committees focused on child protection, maintaining vigilance on suspicious activities, and collaborating with law enforcement corresponds with broader literature emphasizing the role of community-based initiatives in safeguarding children. Studies by Johnson et al. (2016) and Patel and Smith (2020) further support the idea that community vigilance and collaboration significantly contribute to child protection efforts.

These findings highlight the interconnectedness of community involvement strategies and their potential impact on safeguarding the well-being of the girl child. By aligning with established research, the study provides a foundation for comprehensive and effective community-based interventions in the prevention of sexual abuse against girl children.

The study findings reveal a critical need for guidance and counseling specifically tailored for teachers who engage in sexual abuse against girls in Mbarara City South. The data indicates that while 44% of the community actively participates in providing guidance and counseling for cases of school girl child abuse, the remaining 56% did not strongly agree or agree with this initiative. This discrepancy underscores the necessity for a thorough examination of the community's perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes concerning the issue of sexual abuse by teachers.

The identified gap in engagement suggests that there may be insufficient awareness or understanding within the community about the prevalence and impact of teacher-perpetrated sexual abuse. To address this, initiatives are required to enhance awareness, educate the community about the gravity of the issue, and encourage active involvement in supporting victims. This concurs with Barton, T., and Wamai, G., (2023) who pointed out that By

promoting a comprehensive understanding and fostering a united front against such abuses, the community can play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of girls in schools.

The study findings emphasize the importance of evaluation and improvement initiatives as crucial measures in the fight against sexual abuse in primary schools. The data reveals significant community involvement, with 72% expressing agreement in participating in the evaluation and improvement of initiatives against school girl child abuse. However, it is noteworthy that 28% did not strongly agree or agree, signaling areas that demand attention for enhanced community engagement. The 28% who did not strongly agree or agree suggests that there are segments of the community that may not be fully engaged in these evaluation and improvement initiatives. It underscores the need to identify and address barriers to participation, ensuring a more uniform and comprehensive community response. This concurs with Berger, E. (2017) who note that evaluation and improvement initiatives empower the community to take an active role in shaping solutions against school girl child abuse. By involving community members in the assessment and enhancement of existing strategies, a more effective and sustainable approach can be established.

The study shows that it's really important for the community to work together in neighborhood watch programs to keep schools safe from sexual abuse, with 80% of the community being actively involved. This is a good sign that people care about protecting school girls. But, it's also important to understand why the other 20% may not be as involved. To make sure everyone is on the same page, the study suggests doing things like talking more about the issue, addressing concerns or misunderstandings, and finding ways for everyone to work together better. This way, the neighborhood watch programs can be even more effective in keeping primary school children safe.

This concurs with Bronfenbrenner, U., (2018) who noted that the study shows that it's really important for the community to work together in neighborhood watch programs to keep schools safe from sexual abuse, with 80% of the community being actively involved. This is a

good sign that people care about protecting school girls. But, it's also important to understand why the other 20% may not be as involved. To make sure everyone is on the same page, the study suggests doing things like talking more about the issue, addressing concerns or misunderstandings, and finding ways for everyone to work together better. This way, the neighborhood watch programs can be even more effective in keeping primary school children safe. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner, U. (2018), who emphasized the significance of community collaboration. The study highlights the importance of collective efforts in neighborhood watch programs, where 80% of the community actively participates in keeping schools safe from sexual abuse—an encouraging indication of community concern for the well-being of school girls. However, understanding the reasons behind the 20% who may not be as involved is crucial.

From the field, it was revealed that the study's emphasis on a multifaceted approach for community involvement in protecting girl children against sexual abuse aligns with existing literature. Decker, V.A (2018) underscores the importance of Support Networks for Survivors, resonating with the study's findings that highlight the need for emotional support, counseling, and access to resources for a holistic rehabilitation process. Additionally, the study's recommendation to create Safe Spaces and Activities for Girls correlates with the preventive measures advocated by Donald, B., et al. (2018), as these spaces contribute to fostering self-expression, building self-esteem, and providing life skills for the overall protection of girl children.

The study's emphasis on Community Policing and Advocacy aligns with Barton, T., and Wamai, G., (2023), reflecting the importance of collaborative efforts with local law enforcement to increase responsiveness to child protection issues. Advocacy efforts highlighted in the study contribute to creating a safer community. Community-Based Counseling Services, as emphasized in the study, align with Adeogun C and Oluyole K.A

(2019), highlighting the significance of psychological support for victims and their families as part of community involvement.

The study findings suggested Strategies like Promoting Gender Equality, engaging Religious and Community Leaders, and Legal Literacy Programs revealed by the study correlate with existing literature, contributing to community involvement. The study's findings align with the broader literature, emphasizing that these strategies challenge harmful gender norms, shape community attitudes, and inform community members about legal aspects related to child protection. Collaboration with Schools, as suggested in the study, aligns with Donald, B., et al. (2018), emphasizing the importance of partnerships for comprehensive sex education programs within the community.

The study's emphasis on Media Engagement resonates with Barton, T., and Wamai, G., (2023), highlighting the powerful role of local media in spreading awareness and educating communities about child sexual abuse. The study underscores the importance of Community Accountability, aligning with the literature's idea of fostering responsibility for child safety and encouraging prompt reporting of any suspicious activities.

Networking with NGOs and Support Organizations, as revealed by the study, aligns with Adeogun C and Oluyole K.A (2019), emphasizing the collaborative efforts between communities and external organizations to create a more robust protection framework. In conclusion, the study's amalgamation of these strategies showcases a comprehensive approach to community involvement, contributing significantly to the safety, well-being, and development of girl children.

Conclusion

Conclusion on Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

In examining the various forms of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South, the study reveals alarming instances of physical abuse, overt exposure to sexual content in schools, verbal abuse, exploitation, grooming, and even cases of human trafficking. The gravity of these findings underscores the immediate need for targeted interventions, emphasizing the importance of early recognition, community vigilance, and comprehensive strategies to address both online and offline abuse.

Conclusion on assessing the relationship between community involvement and Protection against Sexual Abuse

The study establishes a moderately strong positive correlation between community involvement and the protection of the girl child from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South. As community engagement increases, there is a corresponding tendency for heightened initiatives or mechanisms dedicated to safeguarding girls. This underscores the pivotal role of community awareness, education, and mobilization in fostering a safer environment for girls, while acknowledging that correlation does not imply causation.

Conclusion on the exploring ways of community involvement in the protection of girl Children

The findings highlight crucial strategies for community involvement in protecting girl children against sexual abuse. Education and awareness campaigns, financial and material support to schools, community watch programs, guidance and counseling for teachers, and evaluation and improvement initiatives emerge as key components of an effective community-based approach. These strategies collectively contribute to creating a supportive environment, fostering awareness, and encouraging active participation in initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing girl child sexual abuse.

Recommendations

Recommendations on the Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City

South:

Tailored Prevention Programs: Develop targeted prevention programs addressing the specific forms of abuse identified in the study, such as verbal abuse, assault, and neglect. Collaborate with local schools, community leaders, and organizations to implement awareness campaigns and educational initiatives addressing these distinct forms of abuse.

Specialized Training for Stakeholders: Provide specialized training for teachers, community leaders, and parents to recognize and respond effectively to different forms of girl child sexual abuse. This training should emphasize early detection, reporting mechanisms, and supportive interventions.

Community Sensitization Workshops: Conduct community-wide sensitization workshops to raise awareness about the diverse nature of girl child sexual abuse. Emphasize the importance of community members actively participating in prevention efforts and supporting victims.

Recommendations on the Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

Community Engagement Enhancement: Develop strategies to enhance community engagement by addressing identified gaps. This may involve targeted communication campaigns, community forums, and incentives to encourage active participation in initiatives related to girl child protection.

Community Leadership Empowerment: Empower community leaders through capacity-building programs. Equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and support community-wide efforts against girl child sexual abuse.

Recommendations on the Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

Promotion of Safe Spaces: Support initiatives that create safe spaces for girls within the community. Encourage local organizations, schools, and community members to collaborate on providing environments where girls can express themselves, build self-esteem, and acquire life skills.

Legal Literacy Campaigns: Implement legal literacy campaigns to inform community members about the legal aspects of child protection. Ensure that individuals are aware of reporting procedures, legal consequences for perpetrators, and the rights of survivors.

Media Engagement for Awareness: Collaborate with local media to amplify awareness campaigns on girl child sexual abuse. Leverage different media channels to reach diverse audiences and disseminate crucial information about prevention and support services.

Continuous Monitoring and Feedback Mechanisms: Establish a system for continuous monitoring and evaluation of community involvement initiatives. Create feedback mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of ongoing programs and make informed adjustments based on community responses.

These recommendations are designed to address each objective specifically, fostering a comprehensive and targeted approach to protect the girl child against sexual abuse in Mbarara City South.

Areas for further research

This study focuses on addressing girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South, with objectives centered on understanding different forms of abuse, exploring the link between community involvement and girl child protection, and identifying effective community engagement strategies.

The recommendations are aligned with these objectives, emphasizing targeted approaches for safeguarding girls.

Furthermore, areas for further research are identified, including a deeper exploration of cultural and socio-economic factors influencing abuse and innovative strategies for community engagement. The study aims to contribute to creating a safer environment for the girl child, with future research expected to provide nuanced insights and recommendations for sustainable interventions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Consent Form

I Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza, writing to request your voluntary participation in this research study. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of community involvement in safeguarding the girl child against sexual abuse in specific primary schools in Mbarara City South. Your insights and experiences are invaluable to the success of this research.

Please take the time to read the attached information sheet that provides detailed information about the study.

By signing this letter, you indicate that you have read the information sheet, had the opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily consent to participate in the research study. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without facing any consequences.

I have read the attached information sheet and understand the nature and purpose of the research study. I voluntarily agree to participate and understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your willingness to contribute to this research study.



Appendix II: Questionnaires for Teachers

Dear Respondent,

I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza a Masters pupil pursuing Masters of Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management of Bishop Stuart University” in order to fulfill the requirements for the mentioned award. I kindly request you to cooperate with me in this study by answering the following questions. The information you are going to provide is for academic purpose only and it will remain confidential.

Section A: General information

1. Respondents Gender

(i) Male ☐ (ii) Female ☐

2. Age of respondents

(i) 20-27 Years ☐ (ii) 28-36 Years ☐ (iii) 40 - 55 Years ☐ (iv) above 56 Years ☐

3. Level of education

(i) Diploma ☐ (ii) Degree ☐ (iii) Masters ☐

i) Less than 1 year ☐ ii) 2-3 years ☐ iii) 4 years and above ☐

5) What is the category of the school?

a. Private Primary School ☐ b. Public Primary School ☐

4). How long have you been teaching in the school?

1 year or less ☐

1-2 years ☐

3-5 years ☐

6-years and above ☐

6. Position/ Work.....

Section C: Different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse

Please fill in the spaces provided for each statement using the given scales.

Where: Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4 and strongly agree=5.

Using the indicators given, enter the correct number for each statement on Different forms Sexual abuse of primary school girl child abuse.

Question	5	4	3	2	1
Verbal					
Covert					
Visual					
Physical					
Ritualistic					
Harassment					
Assault					
Coercion					
Exploitation					
Neglect					

Section B: Identify different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse

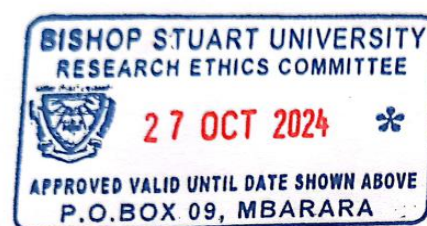
Please fill in the spaces provided for each statement using the given scales.

Where: Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4 and strongly agree=5.

The following questions are to identify different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse. Enter the appropriate number for each statement using the scales provided.

Question	5	4	3	2	1
Community provides financial and materials to the school					
Community prepares parents for school					
There is frequent communication between the community parents and the school					
Community has a meaningful role in school governance					
Community provides guidance and counseling to school girl child abuse					
Community identifies cases and reports perpetrators of school girl child ab					
Community follow school girl child abuse cases and provide evidence and testimonies					

Thanks for Cooperation



Appendix III: Questionnaires for Headteacher

Dear Respondent,

I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza a Masters pupil pursuing Masters of Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management of Bishop Stuart University” in order to fulfill the requirements for the mentioned award. I kindly request you to cooperate with me in this study by answering the following questions. The information you are going to provide is for academic purpose only and it will remain confidential.

Section A: General information

1. Respondents Gender

(i) Male ☐ (ii) Female ☐

2. Age of respondents

(i) 20-27 Years ☐ (ii) 28-36 Years ☐ (iii) 40 - 55 Years ☐ (iv) above 56 Years ☐

3. Level of education

(i) Diploma ☐ (ii) Degree ☐ (iii) Masters ☐

i) Less than 1 year ☐ ii) 2-3 years ☐ iii) 4 years and above ☐

5) What is the category of the school?

a. Private Primary School ☐ b. Public Primary School ☐

4). How long have you been serving in the school?

1 year or less ☐

1-2 years ☐

3-5 years ☐

6-years and above ☐

6. Position/ Work.....

Section C: Different forms of primary school girl child sexual abuse

Please fill in the spaces provided for each statement using the given scales.

Where: Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4 and strongly agree=5.

Using the indicators given, enter the correct number for each statement on Different forms

Sexual abuse of primary school girl child abuse.

Question	5	4	3	2	1
Verbal					
Covert					
Visual					
Physical					
Ritualistic					
Harassment					
Assault					
Coercion					
Exploitation					
Neglect					

Section B: Identify different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse

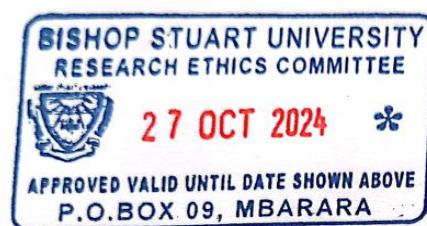
Please fill in the spaces provided for each statement using the given scales.

Where: Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4 and strongly agree=5.

The following questions are to identify different ways of community involvement on the protection of primary school Girl Child against Sexual Abuse. Enter the appropriate number for each statement using the scales provided.

Question	5	4	3	2	1
Community provides financial and materials to the school					
Community prepares parents for school					
There is frequent communication between the community parents and the school					
Community has a meaningful role in school governance					
Community provides guidance and counseling to school girl child abuse					
Community identifies cases and reports perpetrators of school girl child abuse					
Community follow school girl child abuse cases and provide evidence and testimonies					

Thanks for Cooperation



Appendix IV: Interview guide for PTA members

Dear Respondent

I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza a Master pupil pursuing Masters of Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management of Bishop Stuart University” in order to fulfill the requirements for the mentioned award. I kindly request you to cooperate with me in this study by answering the following questions. The information you are going to provide is for academic purpose only and it will remain confidential.

Questions

Section A: General information

1. Age of respondents
2. Level of education
3. How long have you served in this community?

Section B - Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

4. What specific forms of sexual abuse are you aware of that girls in Mbarara City South may face?
5. Could you describe how sexual abuse affects the physical and emotional well-being of girls?
6. How would you identify signs or indicators that a girl might be experiencing sexual abuse?
7. Why do you believe it’s important for teachers and the community to be familiar with different forms of sexual abuse? Please explain.
8. Are there any other forms of sexual abuse that you believe should be highlighted or discussed?

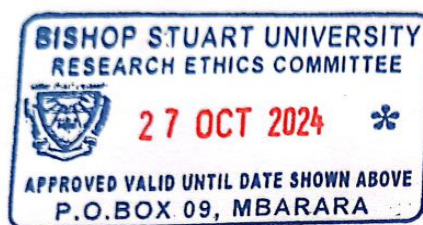
Section C - Different Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

9. From your perspective, what specific actions can the community take to protect girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?
10. How do you think individuals within the community can actively contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls?
11. What role can schools play in engaging the community to ensure the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
12. Can you suggest practical community-based initiatives or programs that might enhance the safety of girls in this context?
13. In your view, how important is collaboration between parents, teachers, and community leaders in creating a safer environment for girls?

Section D - The Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

14. Do you see a direct relationship between community involvement and the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
15. How, from your perspective, does a strong sense of community contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls?
16. Can you share any specific examples or instances where community involvement has effectively protected girls in Mbarara City South?
17. In your experience, what challenges does the community face in actively protecting girls, and what solutions would you recommend?
18. Why do you believe it is essential for teachers and community members to work together to ensure the safety of girl children in Mbarara City South?

Thanks for Your Cooperation



Appendix VI: Interview Guide for Community Leaders

Dear Respondent,

I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza, a Master's degree student pursuing a Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management at Bishop Stuart University. I kindly request your cooperation in this study. Your responses will be used for academic purposes only and will be kept confidential.

Section A: General Information

1. Age
2. What is your highest level of education?
3. How many years have you been actively involved in serving this community?

Section B: Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

4. Are you aware of the various forms of sexual abuse that girls in Mbarara City South may experience?
5. Can you describe specific forms of sexual abuse that you are familiar with in this community?
6. In your opinion, how does sexual abuse affect the physical and emotional well-being of the girls involved?
7. What signs or indicators might suggest that a girl is experiencing sexual abuse?
8. Why do you believe it's important for community leaders to understand and address these forms of sexual abuse?

Section C: Different Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

9. How do you think the community can actively contribute to protecting girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?

10. What role can individuals within the community play in preventing sexual abuse against girls?
11. From your perspective, how can schools engage the community to ensure the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
12. Could you suggest specific community-based initiatives or programs that might enhance the safety of girls in this context?
13. Why do you consider collaboration between parents, community leaders, and teachers essential for creating a safer environment for girls?

Section D: The Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

14. Do you observe a direct connection between community involvement and the protection of girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?
15. How does a strong sense of community contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls, in your perspective?
16. Can you share any instances where community involvement has effectively protected girls from sexual abuse in this community?
17. Based on your experience, what challenges does the community face in actively protecting girls, and what solutions would you recommend?
18. From your point of view, why is it essential for community leaders and members to work together with teachers to ensure the safety of girl children in Mbarara City South?

Appendix VII: Interview Guide for teachers

Dear Respondent,

I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza, a Master's degree candidate pursuing a Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management at Bishop Stuart University. As part of my academic requirements, I kindly request your cooperation in this study by answering the following questions. Your responses will be used for academic purposes only and will be kept confidential.

Section A: General Information

1. Age of respondents:
2. Level of education:
3. How long have you served in this community?



Section B - Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

4. What specific forms of sexual abuse are you aware of that girls in Mbarara City South may face?
5. Could you describe how sexual abuse affects the physical and emotional well-being of girls?
6. How would you identify signs or indicators that a girl might be experiencing sexual abuse?
7. Why do you believe it's important for teachers and the community to be familiar with different forms of sexual abuse? Please explain.
8. Are there any other forms of sexual abuse that you believe should be highlighted or discussed?

Section C - Different Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

9. From your perspective, what specific actions can the community take to protect girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?
10. How do you think individuals within the community can actively contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls?
11. What role can schools play in engaging the community to ensure the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
12. Can you suggest practical community-based initiatives or programs that might enhance the safety of girls in this context?
13. In your view, how important is collaboration between parents, teachers, and community leaders in creating a safer environment for girls?

Section D - The Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South:

14. Do you see a direct relationship between community involvement and the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
15. How, from your perspective, does a strong sense of community contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls?
16. Can you share any specific examples or instances where community involvement has effectively protected girls in Mbarara City South?
17. In your experience, what challenges does the community face in actively protecting girls, and what solutions would you recommend?
18. Why do you believe it is essential for teachers and community members to work together to ensure the safety of girl children in Mbarara City South?

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this study. Your insights are valuable and will contribute to a better understanding of the issues surrounding the protection of girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POLICE OFFICERS

- i. What is your rank in this police station?
- ii. How long have you been serving at this police station?
- iii. How old are you?

Section A: Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

1. Can you describe any specific incidents or examples of girl child sexual abuse that you have encountered or are aware of in Mbarara City South?
2. In your perspective, what factors contribute to the prevalence of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?
3. How do cultural or societal norms impact the reporting and prevention of girl child sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?

Section B: Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

4. From your experience, how has the community responded to cases of girl child sexual abuse, and what initiatives or programs have been effective?
5. In your role as a member of the police force, what strategies do you think would enhance community involvement in protecting the girl child against sexual abuse?

Section C: Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

6. Can you provide specific examples where strong community involvement has positively impacted the protection of the girl child against sexual abuse?
7. What obstacles or challenges do you perceive in establishing effective collaboration between the police and the community to combat girl child sexual abuse?
8. How can law enforcement agencies, including the police, work collaboratively with communities to create a safer environment for the girl child?

Appendix V: Interview Guide for parents

Dear Respondent, I am Karetwa Michael Kahigiriza a Masters pupil pursuing Masters of Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management of Bishop Stuart University” in order to fulfill the requirements for the mentioned award. I kindly request you to cooperate with me in this study by answering the following questions. The information you are going to provide is for academic purpose only and it will remain confidential.

Section A: General information

1. Age of respondents
2. Level of education
- 4). How long have you served in this community?

Section B: Different Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

19. Are you aware of the various forms of sexual abuse that girls in Mbarara City South may experience?
20. Can you describe specific forms of sexual abuse that you are familiar with in this community?
21. In your opinion, how does sexual abuse affect the physical and emotional well-being of the girls involved?
22. What signs or indicators might suggest that a girl is experiencing sexual abuse?
23. Why do you believe it’s important for community leaders to understand and address these forms of sexual abuse?

Section C: Different Ways of Community Involvement in the Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

24. How do you think the community can actively contribute to protecting girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?

25. What role can individuals within the community play in preventing sexual abuse against girls?
26. From your perspective, how can schools engage the community to ensure the protection of girls from sexual abuse?
27. Could you suggest specific community-based initiatives or programs that might enhance the safety of girls in this context?
28. Why do you consider collaboration between parents, community leaders, and teachers essential for creating a safer environment for girls?

Section D: The Relationship between Community Involvement and Protection of Girl Child against Sexual Abuse in Mbarara City South

29. Do you observe a direct connection between community involvement and the protection of girls from sexual abuse in Mbarara City South?
30. How does a strong sense of community contribute to preventing sexual abuse against girls, in your perspective?
31. Can you share any instances where community involvement has effectively protected girls from sexual abuse in this community?
32. Based on your experience, what challenges does the community face in actively protecting girls, and what solutions would you recommend?
33. From your point of view, why is it essential for community leaders and members to work together with teachers to ensure the safety of girl children in Mbarara City South?



Appendix VI: Sample size determination

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970