CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING THE RIGHT OF A GIRL CHILD TO BASIC EDUCATION IN SOROTI DISTRICT OF EASTERN UGANDA.

BY

KUTUI ESTHER MWALYE

MAHRD/8680/51/DU

A THESIS SUBMITTED INPARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF KAMPALA INTERNATION UNIVERSITY

SEPTEMBER 2007

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is a result of my own effort and has never been submitted for any award in any other university or institution of higher learning.

Signed: ----------

KITUI ESTHER MWALYE

Date: 26th/10/2007

Approval

This work has been done under my supervision as a University Supervisor, and submitted with my approval.

Signed: M. Mawa (MMA)
Dr Michael Mawa

Date: 26/10/2007

DEDICATION

To Arlena, Alvin, Hazel and Dr. Wakamuke Elijah who have multiple assignments of best friends, and the love of my life. Appreciation also goes to the Wandwasi family to which I owe my greatest debt.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to express my appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to my Supervisor Dr. Michael Mawa for his continued guidance from the very time I embarked on this task.

I am indebted to my colleagues and classmates for their inspiration and guidance. They were there for me all the time for which I am grateful. To all my colleagues at work, I salute and thank God for them. I can not forget Aduba Imelda, the Office Secretary for her commitment and consistent support working her fingers to the bone to what must have appeared an un ending task . Her skills, patience and devotion to this effort is unparalleled in my experience.

Many thanks go to the leadership and children of Katine, Tubur and Asuret sub-counties who trusted me with their stories, shared their challenges and dreams.
To Steven Elilu and Genus Esatu I can say may God bless you abundantly for your time and commitment.

My sincere appreciation goes to my key informants and officials from the Education Department for their invaluable contribution.

Finally to my family that I owe my greatest debt, to my husband Elijah and children Arlena, Alvin and Hazel I appreciate your time and prayers throughout the entire course. You stood by me through the thick and thin of this struggle.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page	
Declaration	ii
Approval	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
Appendices	vii
Abstract	viii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Purpose of the Study	7
1.4 Objectives	8
1.5 Research Questions	8
1.6 Scope of the Study	9
1.7 Significance of the Study	9
1.8 Definition of Key Concepts	10

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction	12
2.1 Political Factors	15
2.2 Socio – Cultural Factors	17
2.3 Economic Factors	19
2.4 Institutional Factors	21
2.5 Conceptual Frame Work	23

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Research Design ---------- 28

3.1 Area of Study---------- 28

3.2 Study Population---------- 29

3.3 Sample Size, Selection and Composition ---------- 30

3.4 Research Procedure---------- 31

3.5 Methods of Data Collection---------- 32

3.6 Data Analysis ---------- 33

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Major factors that account for Girl Child drop rate ---------- 34

Effectiveness of the strategies of intervention in place that Facilitate retention of girls in school. ---------- 47

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Discussion ---------- 53

Conclusion ---------- 59

Recommendations ---------- 62

Issues for Further Study ---------- 65

REFERENCES ---------- 66

APPENDICES

Appendix A Map of Uganda showing where Soroti is located---------- 74

Appendix B Map of Soroti showing sub counties where the study was undertaken---------- 75

ABSTRACT

This study undertook to identify the challenges in promoting the right of a girl child to basic education in Soroti District of Eastern Uganda.

A cross sectional survey focusing primarily on sampled children who had dropped out and those in school, community leaders and government officials directly involved in the implementation of programmes was used. The area of study was Soroti District in the Sub Counties of Tubur, Katine and Asuret. The major methods used were; in-depth interview, focus group discussions and document analysis. Two hundred and fourty respondents were interviewed and three focus group discussions held. Although the District Local Government and development partners are making a difference to ensure access, retention and completion of the primary school cycle for girls, the study revealed that access to education opportunities alone did not guarantee survival an enabling family, community and school environment is more paramount. Another finding was correlation between age of entry and length of stay of the girl child in the educational system. Late school enrolment is likely to affect a child's ability to complete the cycle, leaving a child over aged for the teaching and learning activities being undertaken by the school. The physiological changes that come with adolescence require learning environments that are more responsive to girls needs. It was evident that a girl child needed an enabling environment to be a positive change agent in the community .This study has clearly shown that ensuring girls and boys benefit equally from the school system requires nothing less than the integration of gender equality concerns in the design and implementation of educational strategies. Based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations have been made. It is the researchers hope that this information will be useful to the relevant Ministries, Non Governmental Organizations, Soroti District Local Government and to the community to promote the right of the girl child to basic education.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The human right to education can be categorized as an empowerment right. Such rights provide the individual with more control over the course of his/her life, and in particular, control over the effect of the state's actions on an individual. In other words, exercising an empowerment right enables a person to experience the benefits of other rights.

The right to education can be looked at in two ways that is to say; every person is entitled to education as a basic human right; and an educated person is in a better position to understand, appreciate, exercise and protect his/her own rights and the rights of others. The constitution of Uganda and the UN legal documents that apply to Uganda all agree on the right to education.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995, article 30 states that; "All persons have a right to education". However the main concern is with basic education, which in our case means primary education. Article 34(2) of the Constitution states that; "A child is entitled to basic education". Article 13(2) of the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECSR) states that; "primary education shall be compulsory and available to all". The ideal situation is to provide this education free so that even the poor, orphans and other disadvantaged children can get basic education without discrimination of any kind. True to this our government is on the implementation track.

The enjoyment of many civil and political rights, such as: the freedom of information, the freedom of expression, the right to vote and to be elected can be enjoyed through attaining a certain level of education .

Similarly a number of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights such as the right to choose work, to receive equal pay for equal work, to enjoy the benefits of scientific and technological progress and to receive higher education on the basis of capacity can only be exercised in a meaningful way after a minimum level of education has been achieved. The same holds true for the right to take part in one's cultural life. The right to education is particularly important to preserve and strengthen the cultural identity of ethnic and linguistic minorities.

Education can also promote (although does not guarantee) understanding, tolerance, respect and friendship among nations, ethnic or religious groups and can help create a universal human rights culture. The Right to education has been stressed in various international Human Rights instruments among others, Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26 (2), provides; "Every one has the right to education". Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms", International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Article 13, Convention against Discrimination in Education and its Optional Protocols, Declaration on the Elimination Discrimination against Women Article 9, The Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the UN General Assembly. The Government of Uganda has summarized the provision of the right

to education in its supreme law, the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, article 30 and the Children's Act, 2003.

Education is a fundamental right for all, including girls yet, as in many other areas of their lives, girls' prospects for education are diminished because of gender discrimination. The statistics say it all. 65 million of the 121 million children in the world who are not in school are girls. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone 24 million girls were out of school in 2002.

In recent years the plight of children at risk has continued to attract a lot of international attention. Despite wide acknowledgement of the value of female education, the bulk of African women and girls continue to be excluded from the education systems of their countries. They either have never enrolled or dropped out of school before completion of the specified cycle. (The Forum for African Women Educationalist (FAWE) work shop 1994). Gender equality is not a matter of social justice, alone but equally of good economics. It is good for the society and the economy (The World Bank Report 1995). The high rate of dropping out in the African education system especially for girls and apparent lack of appropriate attention to this serious problem calls for scrutiny. By dropping out; girls remain entrapped in a vicious cycle of poverty, losing out on the transformative and liberative aspects of education.

Education for All (EFA) is a goal that has yet to be achieved in many countries in our developing world. The high dropout rate, especially of girls, is a persisting constraint to the achievement of EFA vision in Africa and Uganda in particular. Education is a critical ingredient in the empowerment process 0f the 900 million illiterate adults in the world, two thirds are female. Women make up two thirds of world's poorest people and are nearly twice as likely as

men to be illiterate. They receive less food and less education and have fewer rights. (Nation 11 July, 1998).

In Africa for example, girl's primary school enrollment accounts for only 57% of the school age population compared to 75% for boys (UNICEF 1991). It is estimated that over 26 million African girls most of whom live in rural areas are out of school. They either never enrolled or found themselves pushed out. Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE) says this figure has increased to 36 million.

In Uganda, females make up 51.1% of the population and 65% of them are illiterate. This compares un favourably with the males of whom 45% are illiterate.

With the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE), total enrolments increased by over 70%, with a higher rate for females with 74 percent compared to 72 percent for males. The female to male ratio also improved from 0.86 in 1996 to 0.87 in 1997. Since 1997, the enrollment into primary education has been nearly equal for girls and boys. A benefit incidence analysis conducted in 2004 concluded that the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was not only pro poor but also pro-girls, which offers an optimistic tone.

Key issues of concern at the primary level are low retention and completion rates, and poor levels of learning achievement even for those who complete the primary school cycle. The high initial enrollment in primary school suggests that a demand for education for both girls and boys exist within the population. However parents do not see the value of sending their girl children to school at the recommended age of six years. Late school enrollment affects retention and completion, especially if the child is not well prepared for school.

Several surveys indicate that the cost of schooling is a major reason for children dropping out of primary school. Given that public schools do not charge tuition fees at the primary level, the costs of educational materials and uniforms and opportunity cost of school attendance affects girls completion of the primary school cycle.

Female survival in schooling or an organized educational programme is hampered by unique problems caused by a complex interplay of socio-cultural and biological factors.

In developing countries where states have failed to deliver services to the poor foreign assistance has been seen as a ray of hope to deliver development to the grassroots particularly to the girl child. For instance the 35% enrollment of the Soroti girls looks on this beacon of hope to propel their numbers

Education is the right of all children, as well as a crucial factor facilitating the sustainable development of a nation. Girls education has a direct impact on reducing gender discrimination and inequality in society, and has a powerful influence on child and maternal survival. The constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 explicitly recognizes the right of all citizens to basic education. Subsequent policy positions such as vision 2025, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2004-2015 and the Poverty Eradication Action plan (PEAP) 2004/2005-2007/8 recognizes education as a core element of any attempt to fight poverty. The education components of national plans are consistent with the education for all (EFA) goals, the World Fit for children targets and the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (MDDG).

With the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme in Uganda, primary school enrolment increased from 3 million in 1997 to 7.3 million in 2004, doubling of enrolment in a span of just seven years.

Despite the progress made, many challenges relating to access, equity and quality of education remain. The latest National Census data clearly shows the problem of access to primary education.
Out of a total population 5.3 million children aged 6-12 years, over 700,000 (13%) have never attended school (UBOS,2005 Uganda Population and Housing Census 2002-2003).

The challenges are also manifest in the disparities of children in terms of educational access, retention, progression and achievement. The quality and relevance of education remains poor. 73% of the girls and 70% of the boys drop out without completing the primary school cycle. Only 20% of children who complete six years of schooling attain defined competency levels in literacy and numeracy. The pressure placed on girls to leave school is progressive increase in pressure as a girl gets older. Gender biases within cultural practices, along with poverty and conflict compound this problem.

The failure to reduce the high rate of drop out of school children especially the girl child from the educational system, exerts an immense development cost for all parties concerned.
For these strategies to be effective there is need for more information on the major factors underlying this phenomenon.

It is against this background that the research will examine the challenges of promoting the right of a girl child to basic education in Soroti District.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The dropping out of children from the support system is perplexing, especially with the fact that government has availed equal opportunities and support for all children in primary schools, let alone the efforts being made by development partners and the families. The reasons for dropping out seem to be economic, social, cultural and political and these have differently impact on the children, their families and communities. Studies on factors that influence drop out of girls are inadequate, (Fleurant 1992, Gitaru 1992, Njau 1993, Namuddu 1991, Agarwal 1995). Moreover, most of the studies were undertaken outside sub-saharan Africa and as such did not adequately answer the question of the girl child's dropping out because of cultural differences. While these studies have given some useful clues to the possible factors which lead to dropout, they do not offer sufficient explanation as to why it is the case. This is despite the genuine effort by government and all the stake holders to increase female access to schools by providing equal opportunities to all children.

This study therefore, attempted to explore the challenges of promoting the right of the girl child to education in Soroti District Eastern Uganda.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify challenges in promoting the right of a girl child to basic education in soroti district and to find out the effectiveness of support system used to ensure retention of girls in school.

1.4 Research Objective

The overall objective of the study is to identify challenges in promoting the right of a girl child to education in Soroti District.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives include:

a) To identify factors that account for girl child dropout.
b) To find out the effectiveness of the strategies used to reduce girl child drop out.
c) To suggest policy recommendations based on research findings

From the above objectives the following research questions are formulated.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the challenges in promoting the right of a girl child to basic education in Soroti district?
2. How effective are the interventions and strategies used to retain children in school?
3. How do early marriages and pregnancies lead to girl child drop out rate?
4. Are there school re-entry policies for girls who get pregnant? If yes, what are they? If no, why?
5. What problems at home affect performance of girls in school?
6. What should be done to girls who get pregnant while at school?
7. What should be done to ensure retention of girls in school?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on girls and boys who have dropped out and those in school. The factors were analyzed under political, socio-economic and socio-cultural factors and their effects on the girl child dropout from school. The study was conducted in the sub counties of Asuret, Katine and Tubur in Soroti district. To get a clear picture and trend of drop out the sample included both boys and girls.

1.7 Significance of the Study

It is evident that enrolled girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys in Soroti district, and their academic achievement is poorer than that of the boys. Poverty has led to drop out of girls from school than boys and this is more pronounced because a good number of girls drop out due to early pregnancies or marriage and more so poverty. These findings will enable us to determine the available entry and any other interventions to reverse the trend. While the multiple interrelated school, socio-economic, cultural and political factors that refrain female education are well documented, a lot of work remains to be done to design and implement programmes to improve female education in Uganda.

By identifying and analyzing factors that hinder girl child education, government and development agencies will use this information to improve their planning and programming. This will enable these agencies to be more relevant to the needs of their targeted beneficiaries. With the launching of Universal Secondary Education to offer a subsidized education to all children, these findings and recommendations will contribute to the effectiveness of the curriculum for the development of human resource in our country.

In summary, the study will generate information that could be utilized by government NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, LCs and give insights for further research.

1.8 Definition of Key Concepts

Girl child: This is a female child. A child is a person under the age of 18 years (Children's Act sec. 2, 2003). The girl child living in urban and remote areas falls in the category of vulnerable children. The girl child is also a victim of gender based discrimination and oppression.

Drop-out: Drop out is the discontinuation from school and it occurs when a child for one reason or another leaves school.

Political factors: These include factors that are determined by government policies and ideologies. Fore example the education policy, gender ideology and structural adjustment programmes.

Social- cultural factors: These include parental attitudes to female education, expected role of women, initiation ceremonies and early marriages.

Economic factors: Includes the opportunity cost of educating a girl child, economic value of girls, the parental education and income and labour market prospects.

Institutional factors: These refer to organizational interventions. Are they based on local needs, practical and strategic, or gender needs? What is the level of involvement of all stakeholders?

Gender: This refers to socially and culturally defined roles, attributes, and privileges of females and males. There exist biological differences between women and men but different

societies in the world interpret and engineer the innate differences into a set of social expectations about behavior, activities, rights power and resources they have.

Gender equality: It may be understood in three dimensions; equality before and under the law; equality of opportunity in economic, political, social and other fields; and equality in dignity of the person between women and men.

Human Rights: These are rights possessed by all persons, by virtue of their common humanity. They give all people moral claims on the behavior of individuals and on the design of social arrangements to live a life of freedom and dignity.

Child Rights Programming: This is a framework for analysis, planning implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of all relief and development work with children.

Children's Rights: These are the natural entitlements that accrue to all children by virtue of their being human.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter an attempt is made to review previous studies which have contributed to knowledge of issues which impinge on girl's full and equal participation in education. Studies reveal that failure to invest in women is costly on one hand while in the other eliminating gender inequalities leads to significant productivity gains ,and provides larger societal benefits which enhances the poverty reduction effort.

It is indisputable that Women play the greatest role and make the greatest contribution at the early stage of the human person. Thus the review reveals immensely that there has been an increasing interest and activity in girl's education at both global and local levels. These include; the World Conference on Education for All – EFA (Jomtien, 1990), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the African Conference on the Empowerment of Women through Functional Literacy and Education of the African Child (Kampala 1996). These are some of the many international events that have stimulated numerous country initiatives and activities to support girl's education. Several studies have also been done that pointed interventions to accelerate girls education in the region.

However, as reflected in the findings by various researchers reviewed in the literature, most of the studies have been conducted in Asia and very few done in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is very limited research carried out in this area in Uganda. The

commitment of Government of Uganda and the other development partners to redress the disparities that affect the girl child's education has been equally demonstrated. Some key policies have been formulated and gender responsive programmes set up. Despite these achievements female education in Soroti falsl short of the typical indicators of gender parity in education. Even if the Universal Primary Education recently created a massive increase in gross enrollment from 2.6 million to 5.2 Million and government deliberately encouraged equal registration of boys and girls, the gender gap remained wide, 16.6% more boys than girls were enrolled (Ministry of Education (MOE) Education Statistical (Abstract 1997).

Due to limited research in this area alongside the intensive searching in various known and accessible libraries and resource centers, it is revealed that very limited research has been made in this area in Uganda. To this effect, the review is heavily drawn from past research carried out in other countries and these have a social setting different from Uganda.

Available reviewed literature focuses on factors at macro and micro levels. These factors are categorized under, political, social, cultural and economic.

Armed conflict affects basic education. During the 2003 Lords Resistance Army rebel incursions in Teso over 40 primary schools and 4 secondary ones were displaced. The students were pushed to Internally Displaced Peoples camps and teachers sought refugee in the municipality. This led to the creation of learning centres in Soroti Municipality to accommodate the swelling population of these displaced from the neighboring districts of Katakwi and Kaberamaido. The consequence was serious erosion in the quality of education with huge disparities between rural and urban areas,

as well as regional imbalances in the provision of educational facilities. The enrolment rate declined while the drop out rate increased, particularly for girls.

The right to education for a girl child does not begin and end with attending school, but strongly related to how well the progresses in school. The poor levels of learning achievement in Ugandan schools are a serious cause for concern. a few studies have been conducted on students achievement in the core areas of numeracy and literacy, including the National Assessment for Primary Education,2003.In 1999 and 2003, and the monitoring of learning achievement at lower primary study 2003.

According to a study conducted by UNICEF (2005) on the situation of children and women, it was revealed that while inequality in educational provision perpetuates power imbalances between women and men, The structural inequality that characterizes relationships between the genders in Ugandan society affects educational opportunities. Inequality based on gender differentials is reflected not only in the division of labour within the home and the community, but also in values and practices such as bride price payment, early marriage, and girl-child pregnancies both in and outside marriage.

Within the school environment, gender inequality translates into discrimination which some times are very subtle. Evidence of gender discrimination may be found in the teacher-pupil and peer group interactions as well as in gender stereotyped text books and learning materials. The cumulative effect of gender biases in the home and the school is to lower the educational career aspirations of many girls, thereby provoking their premature exit from the education system and or/ undermining their achievement levels. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy are major impediments to retaining girls in the education system. Teenage pregnancy is

widespread. The Ugandan school system does not accommodate pregnant girls so they are forced to drop out of school.

The Local Government Act (1997) transferred power and responsibilities to the Local Council at various levels to take care of the welfare of children, including their right to education. The Local Government Planning Cycle provides for participatory processes with communities to plan different educational activities at various levels. In most cases joint planning with communities is not carried out in a pro active and systematic manner .This could be due to a combination of factors including lack of awareness of the right of the community to participate in educational decision making, limited financial resources and restricted capacity to execute such planning processes at the district level.

2.1 Political Factors

The political factors examined included education policy and gender ideology. Each government has the responsibility to provide free and equal basic education so that no child will be denied access because of inability to pay.

Fourteen years ago (1993) governments made an important promise. Meeting at the World Conference on Education For All, they pledged to ensure that all the world's children and adults would have the opportunity for good quality basic education by the year 2000. That promise has been broken. Over 40 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa alone are denied their right to basic education. According to Oxfam and Action Aid (2000), in the absence of concerted national and international efforts to resolve the crisis in education, the human foundation for Africa's recovery in the 21st century will not exist. Colclough and Lewin (1993) observe that African governments have not intentionally inhibited girl education. The political will and recognition of the importance of

attaining education for all girls remain important in boosting female enrollments. According to the World Bank (1995), the introduction of compulsory education laws in China was complemented by policies intended to reduce poverty and increase gender equality. The main decision was to develop responsibility for primary education to local communities, which were expected to devise measures to increase primary enrolment especially for girls. Taking this into account , specific local problems measures by government included; awareness campaigns to motivate parents to enroll all children, flexible work schedules, evening classes, siblings care and special schools for girls. This programme succeeded in raising enrolment among boys and girls, even in some of the poorest and remotest regions. Whereas this Chinese model appears to be a good intervention, the study does not indicate the level of development of the community. Implementing this model in Uganda requires further investigation on the above mentioned factors in order to contextualize it.

According to the World Bank (1997), out of 146 developing countries rated on the Gender Human Development Index (GHID) , Uganda is 132nd compared to Kenya which is 112th and Tanzania took the 123rd position. Its female adult literacy rate is 48% while Kenya is 68%. This shows that Uganda's achievements in advancing female education still fall short of the typical indicator of gender parity in education. Nor has its performance yet caught up with that of its neighbours. This is puzzling given the fact that Uganda has continued receiving international and local support and has a well acclaimed political good will. This situation calls for further investigation to establish the factors influencing this trend. Indeed as Kabiru Kinyanjul (1993) observes African governments invest close to 30% of the recurrent expenditure in education. He further argued that with this enormous investment, one would hope

that they would be interested in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness' and efficiency of the outcomes of their investment.

Even with the introduction of Universal Primary Education(UPE) programmes in Uganda, primary school enrollment increased from 3 million in 1997 to 7.3 million in 2004,a doubling enrollment in a span of just seven years .The dramatic increase in enrollment has been a very positive development and provides the basis for carrying forward other improvements in primary education. Though the government deliberately encouraged equal registration of boys and girls, the gender gap remained at 17%.

The above studies highlight the barriers influenced by the political factors. However, it does not clearly indicate the specific relevant interventions needed to reduce the high rate of girl child drop out from pursuing education in the Ugandan context. This study will attempt to address and focus on the possible interventions and necessary building blocks in addressing this problem.

2.2. Socio –Cultural Factors

The Socio – cultural factors included parental attitude to female education, society's expected role of women, and initiation ceremonies.

Children's education outcomes are a direct result of how much resource and priority parents and families attach to each child. To a large extent the decision of which child to invest in is governed by prevailing gender ideologies. These may be described as socio-cultural attitudes, behaviors and expectation the society has of women and men. Socio –cultural expectations of girls and the priority given to their role as mothers is likely to have a strong negative bearing on girl's rights to education opportunities.

Wamahiu (1992) found out that girls for whom bride price had been paid often undergo attitudinal changes and reject formal education, perceiving themselves to be adults and school institutions are meant for "Children". It is believed that they spoil other children when they go back to school. Given the onslaught on traditional structures brought about by the combined forces of colonialism, evangelism, capitalism and modernization. This research seeks to further investigate the influence of these factors on our Ugandan contemporary life.

Njau (1992) and Wamahiu's (1994) identified sexual harassment as a factor in school – girl drop out. The World Bank (1989) noted that in Northern Nigeria and Gambia, religious traditions demand gender segregation in education especially for adolescents in education, particularly for girls. This is because parents worry about the possible impregnation of their daughters in schools where male teachers dominate.

Chege and Okumu (1993) also observed that for girls entering the school system beyond the officially prescribed age, early maturity brings its own problems, making them susceptible to sexual exploitation. Davison and Kanyuka (1990) emphasized that in contemporary times the traditional division of labour stipulates that girls and boys perform certain tasks. Their research indicates that girls are generally expected to continue playing the designated traditional roles, even as they attend school. Boy's roles are limited. The girls labour is not only a cultural demand, but in many cases it may be absolutely imperative for family survival.

Namuddu (1991) emphasized that poor performance of children, particularly the girl child, is related to the greater demand on their time to perform household chores. However she further observed that the age of children in question, lack of interest on the part of

the children and school based factors must be given credence,(though her study did not further investigate these factors outlined).

Further more a survey of 237 drop outs in Uganda by Fluerent (1992) suggests "lack of money" as a reason for not educating children may be a cover up for other priorities where money is not an issue.

Their findings revealed that social cultural factors come into play. However, these factors were not specifically mentioned. Their study emphasizes the social cultural factors as the primary causes. However, as Summers (1992) argues in his findings, culture ties up with economics but this goes beyond economics as the policy environment interacts with a multiplicity of out of school and in school factors to lure the girl child away from formal education. The researcher's intention to investigate what these out or in school factors may be in this study.

As emphasized by Mamphela in the FAWE workshop, (1994)" culture is like an umbrella under which some people like to hide from rain and also to shade themselves from the sun. But you need to fold it sometimes". Culture is not static, it evolves and therefore some of the above beliefs have changed with time. It is in this vein that the study investigates further this area.

2.3. Economic Factors

The economic factors reviewed include the opportunity cost of educating the girl child, economic value of girls and labour market prospects. Sending a girl to school entails direct and indirect opportunity costs which are prohibitive to families, particularly the poor rural families.

Research conducted in various parts of Africa suggest that even where schools do not charge fees, other levies and expenses

makes schooling out of reach for a significant number of children. In Malawi for example a study by the World Bank (1990) found out that school uniform alone costs ten times the fees charged at Primary level. Kinyajul (1993) and Namuddu (1994) contended that the trend to shift educational costs to parents in the name of cost sharing is likely to work against girl's education. However, the reasons why it would so happen were not investigated.

Wamahiu (1992) stressed the mistaken view that educating boys is more crucial given their ultimate role as family heads and bread winners as the reasons. The other was the myth that boys are brighter than girls. Currently ,these reasons are debatable since there are many female headed households and girls compete equally with boys in academics. Ramahobo and Mmolai (1992) emphasized that boys are given preference because of the belief that girls are less success orientated than boys. Since the above studies were conducted fifteen years ago the validity of these beliefs needed to be further investigated in the Ugandan context.

Fanta (1991) and Lange (1994) observed that the rapid rate of growth in urbanization has led to an increased demand for domestic labour. The poor rural house holds have responded by sending their daughters to this domestic market in exchange for regular income. This therefore draws girls from school.

Davison and Kanyuka (1990) contended that the girls labour was not only a cultural demand, but in many cases an imperative for family survival.

Dorsey (1989) summed this with a Zimbabwean proverb that aptly represents the economic value of girls "he is poor who has no daughters". Due to the continuing importance of the institutions such as bride price, polygamy and defilement fines the economic values of the girl child remains high. They remain an important

source of income to their families .According to Oakley (1972) as cited in Wallace and March (1991), Murdock G, had surveyed the data for 224 societies (mostly preliterate) and showed that the tendency to segregate economic activities in one way or another but according to sex is strong. Indeed gender not only varies from one culture to another but also varies within cultures, overtime Culture is not static it evolves as societies become more complex ,the roles played by men and women are not only determined by culture but by socio-political and economic factors.

The above studies stress the interplay between the economic factors and cultural biases. However an investigation was not yet done in a situation of post conflict where humanitarian and relief agencies made an attempt to provide equal access of the girl child to education and other opportunities. There is need to know what happens in such a situation.

2.4 Institutional Factors

Institutional factors refer to interventions by other organizations to narrow the gender gap. An attempt was made to establish whether the programme design and implementation was based on local needs, was practical and strategic to gender needs, and involved all stakeholders. Pincus (1973) argues that the first pre-requisites for the solution of any social problem are its formulation and documentation. The education of girls remains a major challenge despite the international attention that it received.

Tietjen (1991) carried out a study on the experience on equal access of women and girls education project in Burkina Faso. The results initially were illuminating. Various labour- saving technologies such as water wells and carts were introduced with the aim of reducing the women work load. It was rationalized that

this reduced work load would facilitate a greater female participation in education.

However, the project did not have the expected impact. It was found that instead of using the saved time in school attendance or other school related activities, girls utilized it on other domestic activities that improved their welfare. This study drew attention to a need to examine whether there were strategies of intervention drawn by organizations like UNICEF, CCF and World Vision that facilitated enrolment, attainment and achievement of girls in the education system.

Agarwal (1995) studied the experience of Child Scope Project of UNICEF in Ghana. This project focused on empowering communities, teachers, pupils, community members in identifying projects aimed at improving relevance and efficiency in primary schools, in order to attract and keep more children in school ,especially girls. The findings showed that the participatory approach used helped them to improve their lives. The schools were identified as the primary source for changing people's behaviour. However, the study didn't examine gender sensitivity in the empowerment of the overall community. It is possible that with this intervention boys benefited more than girls, since the impact was generalized. The lesson learnt from this approach is useful but cannot be blanketed or stereotyped. Further investigations of similar interventions from a gender perspective were found necessary.

The review of the literature above demonstrated the variation, complexity and interplay of factors that hinder the girl child from completing her education. Despite efforts to increase female access to learning opportunities, little has been done to improve the hostile learning environment.

This review demonstrates that there is knowledge existing on targeted Interventions to accelerate the girl's education in the region.

However, it is worth noting that despite noticeable progress made in improving girls right to education in Africa in the last decade, gender imbalances still persist. Most of the reviewed studies have focused on the situation where girls have limited access to the educational opportunities. This research looked at a different scenario where some efforts have been made to reduce the gender gap in access to education yet the situation did not appear much different.

The research was therefore necessary to analyze the issue in our context and provide policy makers and planners with timely and accurate information, and suggest how these could be reversed. Most examples cited in the literature about success stories were from Asia and very few are from Sub-Saharan Africa. The replicability of some of these initiatives in our Ugandan situation needed to be examined with a gender perspective, given the fact that our society has strong patriarchal values.

2.5 Conceptual Analysis/Framework

According to this framework, the survival or drop out of girls in the education system is influenced by a complex interplay between policies, beliefs and practices. The policy environments whether at national or international level are influenced by the educational policy, gender ideology, political, economic and religious ideologies. The countries commitment to educating the girl child derives largely from this and it can influence availability and allocation of resources at all levels.

While sex differences are physical, gender differences are socially construed.

According to Oakley 1972, as cited in Hess and Ferree (1987) page 34, ''concepts of gender are cultural interpretations of sex differences but not necessarily to the physiological differences as we see them in our society''. Gender is related to sex differences but not necessarily to the physiological differences as we see them in our society. Gender depends on how society views the relationship of male to man and female to woman. Every culture has prevailing images of what men and women ought to be like.
What does maleness mean? What does femaleness involve? How are women and men supposed to relate to each other? The cultural factors are equally limiting once families have a negative attitude towards educating girls. Even where there is free education, they will not allow the girl to take this opportunity. The attitude of the house hold will determine their feelings towards educating their daughters. Costs in the frame work refers not only to what parents are expected to spend on educating girls, but also to the opportunity costs involved in sending their female off spring to school. This discrimination begins right from birth.

According to Mosse (1993) societies the world over greet the birth of boys and girls differently. Among the Turkana people of Northern Kenya, women gather together for a birth of a child. If the baby is a girl, a knife is used to cut the cord but only one goat is slaughtered, and there is no banqueting. If it's a baby boy, the cord may be cut with a spear, four goats slaughtered for women to feast. The question is why do societies welcome boys and girls differently? The answer to this question is to do with gender and the role that baby girls and baby boys are born into. On the glimpse of a naked

new born baby two paths go through life as determined by the Turkana, in this contrasting poem:

When you grow
May you have a rich and good husband
And remember all of us here at home
And continue to help us!
Turkana song for a girl

When you grow
You will take care of the home, the property
And protect your mother and sisters.
Turkana song for a boy.

This framework illustrates that the socio-cultural and economic factors that constrain the girl's education at household and community levesl are interwoven. The low income of families is another factor. Where resources are scarce and choices have to be made boys are likely to be sent to school because of the socio-cultural factors. The general conception according to Summers (1992) is that the girls drop out is a result of cultural and economic ties. He sums it up in the following words: "Under-investment in girls is an economic problem that results from a vicious cycle caused by distorted incentives". The expectation that girls will grow to serve their husbands reduces the parent's incentive to invest in their daughter's education. Uneducated women then have few alternatives and so the expectation becomes self-fulfilling, trapping women in a continuous cycle of neglect.

According to Mosse (1993), our gender determines the different life experiences we will be exposed to. It may determine our access to education, to work, to the tools and resources needed for industry, and craft. It may determine our health, our life expectancy and our freedom of movement. It will almost certainly determine our sexuality, our

relationships and our ability to make decisions, and act autonomously. Our gender is perhaps the single most factor in shaping who we become.

The framework can be illustrated in figure 2.1

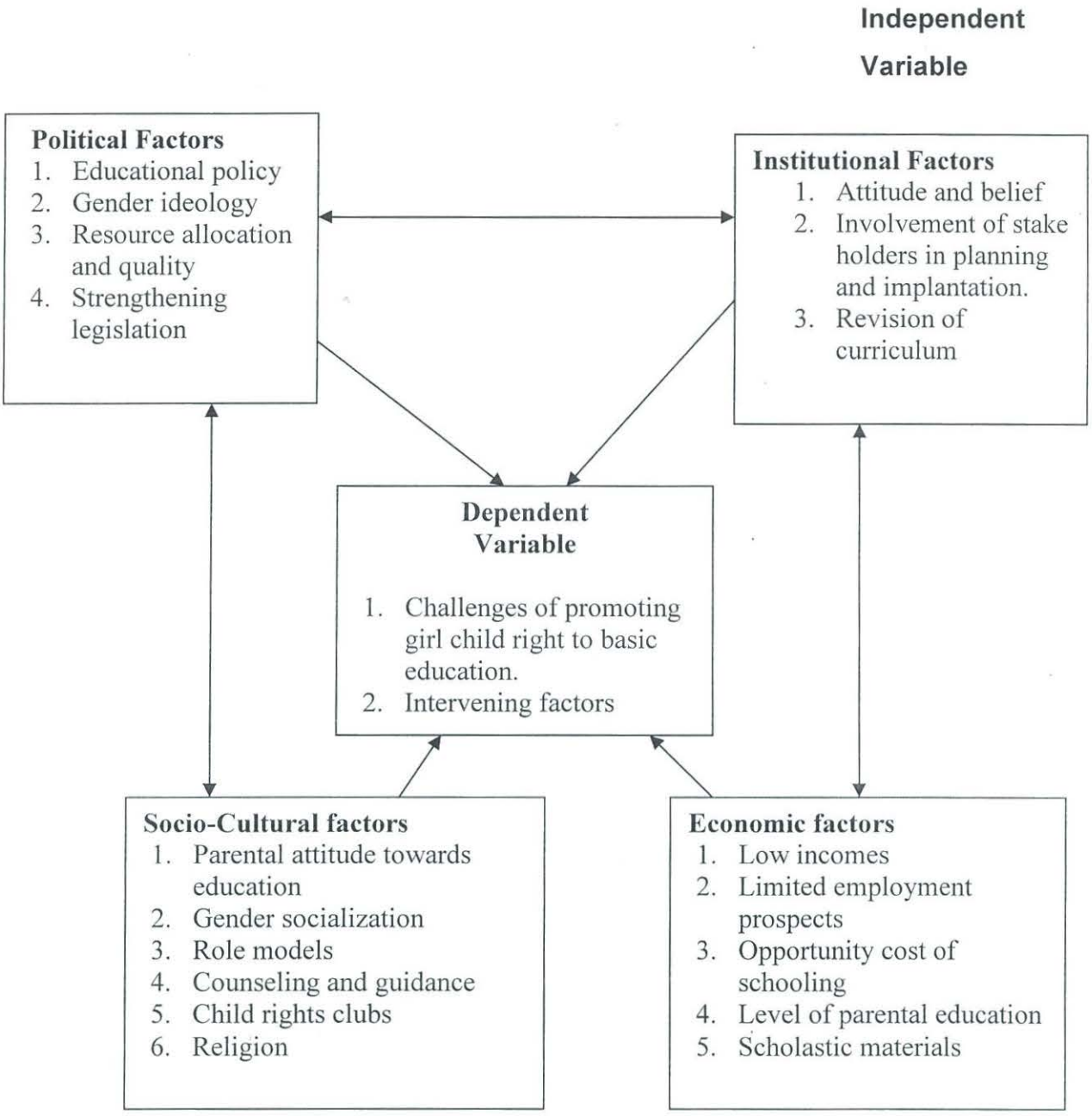


Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Model of the Girl Child Drop out Rate

In this framework the author observes that discrimination according to gender goes beyond cultural and economic factors. The policy environment interacts with a multiplicity of factors to hide the girl child away from formal education and any other organized learning programmes.

The policy environment whether at international or national level is influenced by the dominant gender, political, economic and religious ideologies. Any initiative to bridge the gender gap must be treated with utmost care and its effectiveness tested. Its interventions should be specific and adapted to suit their local needs. The level of involvement of key stakeholders in resolving these problems makes a significant impact.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Research Design

The research design employed is a cross sectional survey focusing primarily on sampled children who had dropped out and those in school, community leaders and government officials directly involved in the implementation of school programmes. The study basically is qualitative although some findings are tabulated; a qualitative method was preferred because of the need to interact with the people so as to elicit information from past experiences.

3.1 Area of Study

The study was carried out in Soroti District. Soroti has three counties and one municipality also having administrative set up of a county. Soroti district is located in Eastern Uganda. Formerly, it was part of the mother Teso District covering Kumi, Soroti and Katakwi. Physically the district lies approximately on latitudes 1%33 and 2%23 North of the equator 30.01 and 34.18 degrees East of the Prime Meridian and is over 2500 feet above with dotted rocks throughout most of it. Soroti borders Kamuli, Lake Kyoga, Kumi and Palisa in the South, Kaberamaido in the West and Katakwi in the North East. The district covers approximately a total land area of 2,662.5. Km is land and 406 km is water.

Soroti District was purposely selected because it has a very high child drop out rate from the education system due to cultural barriers and the insecurity caused by Lords Resistance Army rebels and Karimojong warriors.

It was therefore felt that the required respondents for the study e.g. boys and girls could easily be got.

Having come out of insurgency, government structures like girl education movement and protection structures have been very strong. In addition members of the Girl Child Education Movement (GEM) would provide a reliable source of information.

There was also need to select a study area in which the researcher could easily speak the local language so as to eliminate the problems of interpreters and translation.

The study was carried out in Soroti County due to the fact that it was affected by armed conflict and the child drop out rate is very high.

Out of the seven sub-counties in Soroti County, 3 sub-counties of Tubur, Katine, and Asuret were selected. The district has 14 sub counties the 3 mentioned are indicated in the map as shown in appendix B.

3.2 Study Population

The target population included, school drop outs, children in school, teachers and District Leaders. Special preference was given to these authorities because the researcher felt that they are directly involved in ensuring children stay in school or are the victims. It was also thought that District Officers and leaders by virtue of their interaction with children already have some in built knowledge about them. So this was purposely done to elicit reasonable responses.

3.3 Sample Size, Selection and Composition

Sample selection procedure

In sample selection the first step included the construction of a sampling frame composed of a list of all sub counties in Soroti County .Three sub counties were selected from the sample using a random sampling lottery method. These sub counties were Tubur, Katine, Asuret. The lists of children who were in school and those who had dropped out in various schools where the survey was to be conducted was got from the school records.

From these records two lists were constructed, one for girls and another for boys .There were two categories of respondents namely; those who had dropped out and those who were still in school. The selection of the respondents who were still in school was randomly selected. In all there were 90 respondents in the three sub counties for children who were in school as shown in table 3.1.

The selection of school drop outs was not an easy task .The researcher had to employ a snow ball method .First the researcher identified primary contacts who were the local council chairpersons. They were interviewed to establish if they knew the where about's of the children who had dropped out of school. The local council chairpersons were the first level of contact. This worked well especially in the village where the researcher was able to interview 74 respondents who were subjected to a quantitative (using a questionnaire of 24 items) and selective qualitative analysis. The later included interviews at the school, centres and homes.

A content analysis was done, using a quantitative method. The quantitative data was also analysed using the SPSS computer programme.

The sample composition is shown in table 3.1

Table 3.1: Showing sample composition

Sn.	Status of respondents	Asuret	Tubur	Katine
	In school children	30	30	30
	out of school teachers	27	23	24
	District Leaders	25	17	25
	District leaders/councilors	4	3	2
	Total:	***86***	***73***	***81***

Source: Field Work

Table 3.2: Shows composition of focus group discussions

Sn.	Sub-county	No. of respondents
1.	Asuret	5
2.	Katine	8
3.	Tubur	9

Source: Field Work

3.4 Research Procedure

An authority letter from the District Education Officer – Soroti had already been sought and obtained; these were supplied to the Research Assistants. This was mainly done to save the research assistants from unnecessary questioning from the local authorities and respondents.

With the help of the local council three chairpersons and Head teachers the research assistants were able to enter communities and schools to conduct focus groups discussions and in-depth interviews. In depth interviews took between 20 – 30 minutes, where as focus group discussions took between 40-60 minutes in the communities in which they were conducted.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

Two categories of data were collected that is primary and secondary data. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used in data collection. Quantitative data was collected through personal interviews with 240 respondents in a period of three weeks, using semi structured questionnaires. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions .Two technical officers, three head teachers and three councilors were purposively selected and constituted a focus group in each sub county. 22 key informants were interviewed

Document analysis was another source of data. The existing written materials both published and un published on the subject matter, was consulted. Before the field work started, much work was done on finding out as much as possible about the research and materials like text books, magazines, journals and research papers were consulted. These helped to build a mental picture of the subject to be studied and also develop avenues of investigation.

Focus group discussions were one of the main methods of data collection for this study. Three focus group discussions (one (1) per sub-county) were conducted in the study population. Focus Group Discussions composed of between 5 – 10 respondents of homogenous characteristics with different income levels. Adult males and females were invited to discuss issues in the subject matter of study.

This method of focus groups is a flexible and adopted way of finding things out as observed by Robinson (1999). It is a short cut method of seeking answers to research questions. It provides an opportunity to modify one's role of inquiry. And indeed this method helped to reinforce the information that had been obtained in the in-depth

interviews. During the data collection process most of the movements were on foot and at some occasions, bicycles and motorcycles were used to reach far off places. The LCI chairpersons were very instrumental in locating informants and at times making their accessibility easy. During interviews, questions were posed in vernacular (Ateso) but responses were recorded in English.

3.6 Data Analysis

After collection of data, editing, the researcher undertook coding .Data was tabulated using frequencies and percentages. Content analysis was employed, guided by the themes of the study to analyse data generated by PRA and in-depth interviews.

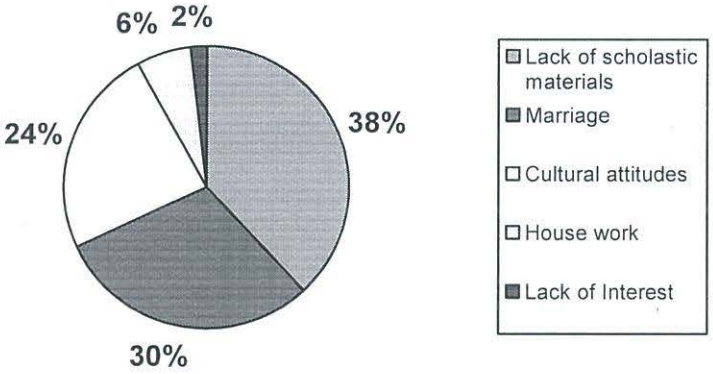
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the findings of the study and their subsequent interpretations. The major purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges of promoting the right of a girl child to basic education in Soroti District. The area of study was Soroti District, in the county of Soroti and specifically sub-counties of Asuret, Katine and Tubur.

These findings are discussed in comparison with the literature earlier reviewed. This chapter is divided into 2 broad sections; Factors that account for the girl child drop out and strategies that can be utilized to retain children in school. These have been presented in form of figures and tables for ease of understanding, using both univariate and bivariate methods of presentation.

Figure 4.1: Showing major Factors for Girls Dropping out of School.



Source: Field Work

The identified major factors were lack of scholastic materials reflecting 38%, marriage 30%, cultural attitudes 24%, house work 6%, lack of interest 2% shown in the pie chart above. This was based on the research findings.

Table 4.1: Showing Major Reasons for Drop out by Gender

The respondents were asked the reasons for drop out of girls from school; the findings are as presented in Table 4.1

Reason	Female No.	%	Male No.	%
Marriage	68	39.1	15	14.1
Cultural attitudes	23	13.2	17	16.
House work	10	5.7	14	13.2
Lack of Interest	8	4.6	35	33.
Lack of scholastic material	30	17.2	25	23.6
Pregnancy	35	20.1	-	-
Total:	174		106	

Source: Field Work

The findings indicate that children 39.1% who left as a result of marriage were females .35% of children who left because of lack of interest were boys.

This can be interpreted that there is a significant association between reasons for drop out and gender.

In summary figure 4.1 indicates that lack of scholastic materials affected both boys 23.6% and girls 17.2 % equally .this can be interpreted that cost of schooling is a major reason for children dropping out of primary school. Given that public schools do not

charge tuition fees at primary school level, the costs mentioned by the respondents relate to non-fee costs (such as educational materials and uniforms) and the opportunity cost of school attendance.

Reasons for dropping out according to age by gender.

The following table presents the reasons of drop out from school by age for males and females separately. The assumption is that the reasons for drop out differ for the different sexes at the various groups.

TABLE 4.2: Shows reasons for drop out according to age by gender

Sex	Age group	Reason													
		Marriage		Pregnancy		Culture		Lack of scholastic materials		Lack of interest		House work		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Female	10 Years	0	0	0	0	2	40	2	40	0	0	1	20	5	100
	11-14	1	4.3	3	13	3	13	7	30	5	22	4	17	23	100
	15-17	5	15	6	19	5	15	8	25	4	13	4	13	32	100
	18 - 21	9	26.4	7	20.5	1	3	9	26	4	12	4	12	34	100
	22^{+} Yrs	10	40	6	24	4	16	3	12	1	4	1	4	2 5	100
Male	10 Years	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0	1	100
	11-4	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	81	3	14	1	5	21	100
	15-17	3	23	0	0	0	0	7	54	3	23	0	0	13	100
	18 - 21	2	14	0	0	0	0	5	36	7	50	0	0	14	100
	22^{+} Yrs	1	8.3	0	0	0	0	7	58.3	4	33.3	0	0	12	100

Source: Field Work

According to the findings in table 4.2, it is apparent that for boys who left at the age of (18 -21 years) the main reason that led or contributed to their dropping out was lack of interest (50%). The same reason affected (50 %) of boys aged (18-21) and (33.3%) of boys aged (22^{+}).

Overall, no significant association existed between age and the reason of dropout. In case of girls however, a strong relationship was found to exist between their ages of drop out and the reason. Thus different reasons affected girls of various ages differently. The results show most girls in the age groups of 15-17 (15 %), 18 – 21 (26.4%) and 22^{+} (40%) departed from school due to marriage.

It can be interpreted from the findings that, Marriage therefore, is seen greatly to influence the dropping out of girls at the ages of 15 and above, and the reasons for drop out are strongly associated with the age of the girl child. The results show that girls get married as early as between the ages 11-14 years (4.3%). This can be interpreted that young girls get involved in early sexual activities.

Relationship between children's age of enrollment and current situation

The relationship between the children's age of enrolment and current status was examined.

Table 4.2: Showing age of entry and status of child by Gender.

Age of Entry	Male				Female			
	Drop outs		In school		Drop outs		In school	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
8	0	0	22	34	1	3.2	45	33.1
9-10	5	17	25	39	5	16.1	56	41.2
11^{+}	25	83	17	27	25	80.7	35	25.7

Source: Field Work

On associating the age of entry and current status in school, it was realized that more drop outs (80.7%) had enrolled at 11 years and

above, as compared to only 3.2% of those who had joined at an early age of 8 years and less.

The rate of drop out of girls as shown in Table 4.3 above greatly depended on the age of enrolment .This dropping out of mature girls is probably attributed to early marriages or early pregnancies, as earlier indicated. These results concur with findings undertaken by Chege and Okumu (1993), that early maturity brings its own problem, making girls susceptible to sexual exploitation.

Headship of home and retention of child in school.

The effect of headship of the home on the child's retention in school is indicated in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Head of the household by status of child

Head of household	Status of child			
	Female		**Male**	
	Dropped		School	
	No.	%	No.	%
Father	3	16	55	51
Mother	5	26	38	35
Brother	0	-	1	1
Grand parents	5	26	5	5
Both parents	1	5	2	2
Auntie	4	21	1	1
Other relatives	0	-	1	1
Child Headed	1	5	4	4
Total	19		107	

Source: Field Work

The results indicate that headship of the home significantly affected the status of the children in school. The fact that (16 %) of the girls who had dropped out were staying in male headed family emphasizes lack of parental care and guidance being one of the major causes of their dropping out of school. A significant number (26 %) also dropped out while living with grand parents. The children living with other relatives were mostly those who were orphaned. These observed that they were staying in hostile environment, where they were discriminated against and often subjected to mistreatment and hard labour.

The findings also indicate that 4 % of boys who dropped out were now heading homes. It can be interpreted that some of these children were from orphaned families headed by children and others had just got into early marriages.

Who should be given the opportunity to study between a girl and a boy?

An attempt was made to find out what self-image the girls had. Their aspirations as girls are likely to affect their rate of retention in school. They were asked whom they would recommend given a choice between a boy or girl child. The results are indicated below.

Table 4.5: Who should be given opportunity to study according to girls?

Who	Drop outs		In school	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sisters	3	13.6	15	44
Brothers	15	16.1	14	41
Both	3	13.6	5	15
No response	1	4.5	0	
Total	22		34	

Source: Field Work

When asked whom they would recommend for education given the chance, most girls 16.1% who had dropped out preferred a boy while girls in school were indifferent. this can be interpreted that The drop out's had a perception that other girls won't progress far in education compared to boys . This negative self image is an issue of concern, as it is likely to adversely affect their self image, performance, retention in school and career aspirations.

It can also be interpreted that having low esteem contributed to these girls dropping from school.

4.5% of the girls out of school did not respond to this question. They were probably not sure of what to say. This low self esteem by the girl child remains a challenge. These findings confirm what one lady writer, Theadora Komugisha once noted: "*As a woman, I think it's high time some one provided assurance to young girls about the advantages of being a woman*". (The Monitor, June 28th 1997, page 27). We need women out there who will strongly express how they feel advantaged to be women.Indeed women need to grow up having models, to make them polish their dreams and work hard to achieve their aspirations through maturity.

Table 4.6: shows Problems faced by children while at school by children who dropped out by gender

Problems	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	No	%	No	%
Lack of scholastic materials	15	20	25	30.5
Poverty	10	13	07	8.5
House work	7	09	22	26.8
Mistreatment	3	04	3	3.7
Sexual harassment	0	0	7	8.5
Lack of interest	17	22	3	3.7
Digging/grazing	25	32	15	18.3
Total	77		82	

Source: Field Work

The findings in table 4.6 Shows that problems that affected child education while at school were lack of money and scholastic materials which ranked high for both boys and girls drop outs. Many girls (30.5 %) were affected compared to boys (20%).

The most amazing thing about the table is that boys have a wide range of reasons for dropping out than girls. There are three main reasons for boys dropping out; digging/ grazing (32%), Lack of interest (22 %), Lack of money (13%), on the other hand there is one major reason for girls drop out, lack of scholastic materials 30.0% and house work (26.8%).

According to children respondents digging and cattle keeping are the other problems the drop outs experienced while at school. The argument can be interpreted to mean that since most of the parents were peasants, the children were expected to cultivate what they would feed on. Failure to do so meant going to school hungry.

Poverty was yet another problem that affected girl's stay in school. This affected 13% boys and 8.5% girls. Mistreatment (8.7%) and sexual harassment (8.5%) are other challenges the girls who dropped out of school experienced.

Table 4.7: Shows problems at home that affected performance at school.

Children were asked problems at home that affected their stay in school.

Problem	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	No	%	No	%
House work	2	6	15	24
Grazing	8	23	2	3
Lack of food	4	11	5	8
Lack of paraffin	5	14	6	10
Mistreatment by care givers.	5	14	12	20
Digging	10	29	15	24
Attending to the sick	1	3	6	10
Total	35		61	

Source: Field Work

The findings in table 4.7 reveal that 24% of the females stated that house work and digging affected their performance in school.

Where as 29% of boys stated that digging affected their participation in school. The interpretation to these findings is that children have knowledge of the problems at home that greatly interfered with their educational achievement and parents need to be talked to reschedule their programmes not to interfere with the children's education.

This can also be interpreted that families have shortage of labour and hence children are forced into child labour that has greatly interfered with their education.

The findings also reveal that because of the problem of food insecurity, children are supposed to cultivate what they would feed on.

Marriage and female participation in school.

Respondents were asked whether marriage and pregnancy affect girl child education

Table 4.8: showing whether marriage affects performance in school

Status of respondent	Yes	%	Yes	%
Boys	58	48	40	57
Girls	63	52	30	43
Total	121		70	

Source: Field Work

It can be seen in Table 4.8 that 52% of the girls interviewed acknowledged the fact that marriage and pregnancy greatly affected girl child participation in school. Where as 57% stated that marriage does not affect girls participation in school. It can be interpreted that girls opt for marriage due to peer pressure or when they make personal decisions that they are big enough and ready for marriage. One possible explanation to this dropping out of the girl children is due to the belief that girls are less success oriented than boys .This concurs with what Ramahobo and Mmolai,(1992) emphasized that girls are less success oriented than boys.

Adequacy of policies on re entry for girl children.

Respondents were asked whether the policy on re entry was adequate and their responses can be shown in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Shows the responses on the adequacy of policy s on girl child re entry.

Status of respondents	Yes	%	No	%
In school girls	4	13	14	18
In school boys	5	16	8	10
Out of school girls	10	32	20	25
Local councils	10	30	30	37
District leaders	2	7	8	10
Total	31		80	

Source: Field Work

In summary the finding is that a bigger percentage (37%) of respondents acknowledged that the policies in schools are un fair to girls especially the automatic dismissal of girls from the educational system without re entry after delivery .7% of the respondents asserted that the policies are adequate.

This can be interpreted that the ministry of education has not sought ways of enacting policies on pregnant school girls. Hence school authorities have taken decisions to have these girls eliminated with the view that they set a bad precedent. This finding matches with what one Kenyan parliamentarian remarked during a parliamentary debate that "you cannot mix rotten potatoes with good ones (Daily Nation March 10th, 1983)

Is there any policy on pregnant school girls?

Key respondents were asked whether there was any policy on pregnant school girls

Table 4.10: Shows whether there was any policy on pregnant school girls

Status of respondent	No	%	Yes	%
Teachers	15	45.5	3	75
District officials and leaders	18	54.5	1	25
Total	33		4	

Source: Field Work

The findings reveal that 54.5 of the respondents from the education department revealed that there was no educational policy on pregnant girls and to instill discipline in the children those who get pregnant must be automatically be discontinued. This can be interpreted that though early pregnancy does affect girls participation there is no government policy on how best the problem can be addressed to ensure attainment of this fundamental right.

This can finding also confirms that even if children are not discontinued the harsh community and school environments discriminate against child mothers.

What should be done to ensure retention of girl children in school?

Table 4.11: Shows what should be done to ensure retention of girl children in school

Opinion	No	%
Sensitization on girl child education	15	27.3
Formulation of school re-entry policies	7	12.7
Provision of scholastic materials	25	45
Counseling and guidance	5	9
Provision of sanitary ware	3	5
Total	55	

Source: Field Work

45% suggested that provision of scholastic materials to girl children should be given priority.27.3% suggested that the sensitization of all persons involved in child upbringing on the value of education can change the negative cultural attitude that affect education for girls

This can be interpreted to mean that although government introduced Universal Primary Education for all children, the cost of schooling is a major reason for children dropping out of primary school. The costs that relate to the non-fee costs such as educational materials and uniforms make access, retention and completion of the primary school cycle for girl children a nightmare. Provision of sanitary ware (5%) can also give a big boost to girl children to enable they compete favorably with boys.

What should be done to girls children who get pregnant?

Table 4.12: Shows the respondents views on pregnant school girls.

Responses	No	%
They should be expelled	5	17
They should be allowed in school until they give birth	15	50
They should re enter after delivery	10	33
Total	30	

Source: Field Work

50% of the respondents suggested that girls who get pregnant while at school should be allowed in school until they give birth whereas 33% were of the view that they should re enter after delivery. These findings can be interpreted that the communities understand the vulnerability of girl children and government should

expeditiously come out with policies on this common social problem.

The district inspector of schools noted that "*society encouraged boys to excel more than girls. Therefore, parents find it easier to buy books for boys than girls*". Focus group discussions emphasized the mistreatment of the orphaned girl than the boy. There was generally in equality in treatment of children by guardians.

Effectiveness of Strategies of intervention in place that facilitate retention of girls in school

Several attempts have been made by the District Local Government and development partners like UNICEF, World vision and Christian Children's Fund to retain children in school.

Most of the group participants acknowledged that some of their girl children have remained in school because of the support in form of fees contribution and scholastic materials. Through World Vision children were benefiting spiritually from the school` and as a result there was overall behavioral change and, children were coping with the school environment.

The UN legal documents and the constitution of Uganda provide that the state and parents should have a duty to ensure that basic education is given to every child. The government of Uganda has introduced Universal Primary Education (U.P.E) which has led to a tremendous increase in the number of children attending primary education.

However, there are still some issues that need to be addressed to ensure that all children attend school and to improve the quality of primary education, measures which should be taken to achieve these goals include; Lower local governments should enact bye

laws making it compulsory for every child of primary school going age to attend school, girls inclusive; catering for special needs of girls with disability such as the blind ,the deaf and the mentally sick who need special teaching and learning aid s and devices; giving assistance to disadvantaged children such as the orphaned girls and those from very poor families to get extra requirements not covered by Universal Primary Education (U.P.E) such as uniforms, scholastic materials and meals ;increasing the number of teachers so that each one of them can teach a manageable number of pupils.

In reality the UNESCO ideal has proved very difficult to realize. In Uganda even the provision relating to higher education is in the national objectives but cannot be enforced. Moreover, the constitutional provision states that "*the state shall take appropriate measures to afford every citizen equal opportunity to attain the highest education standards possible".* In Uganda and Soroti in particular, at least, the right to education appears not to be enforceable. It is however something which can inspire the state and people towards the goal of providing affordable education for all Ugandans.

The Girl Child Education Movement (GEM) initiated by UNICEF advocates for access, retention and completion of primary school cycle for girls. Girl Education Movement (GEM) advocates for friendly school environment for girls by ensuring effective teaching, learning and friendly interaction between boys and girls, their teachers and the peers. The programme also advocates for provision of good facilities for girls, for example separate latrines for boys and girls, dressing or changing rooms for girls during their menstruation period.

Advocacy is also in the area of provision of mid day meals for children. Since the launch of the programme in Katine, June 2007, 80 girls who had dropped out of school have re entered the schools.

Girls drop out of school because of lack of scholastic materials. The Girl Education Movement (GEM) clubs advocate for provision of scholastic materials by parents and schools in addition to provision of a friendly atmosphere at school, and home for girls.

Beside that, the Girl Education Movement (GEM) clubs advocate that boys and girls be equally treated at school level.

The Ministry of education and sports under the supper project, has through the National Curriculum Development Centre, revised the primary school curriculum to give a gender perspective. Currently, in all schools girls have the same basic curriculum and the same choice of any options as boys (The Education Strategic Investment Plan 1997 – 2003) states that in order to ensure good quality education for girls, the Government has initiated strategies to remove all gender biases from all aspects of the curriculum and all the processes within the education system. The plan highlights plans to provide vocational skills and training opportunities for primary school leavers or drop outs by establishing community polytechnics in sub-counties.

According to the Deputy District Education Officer Soroti, the chart for enrollment, retention and drop out is a pyramid. This he said that in early classes' enrollment is very high but as girls reach P 5 - P 7 the drop out rate equally becomes high. As a result of the above, the ministry of education came up with a policy that for every school there must be a senior woman teacher to guide the children. Counseling and guidance is basically for girls from P 5 to P.7 on the contrary as noted by the group discussions participants,

the senior women teachers' only offer guidance and counseling sessions to girls who have problems. This means that girls with no reported problems are only encouraged to live as good persons.

Another attempt made by development partners is to instill discipline in the children. According to teachers and parents interviewed, this was done by sharing with them the word of God and sensitization about their rights and responsibilities. Teachers noted in Tubur Primary and Secondary School under the World Vision Project that children have received spiritual nourishment through the programme and has led to moral rehabilitation.

PIASCY (Presidential Initiative on AIDS strategy, Communication for the Youth) carries some messages on HIV/AIDS. This programmes has enabled both boys and girls to be assertive and avoid being infected by HIV/AIDs and other diseases. This has enabled girls to be assertive through the messages thus enabling survival in school.

PHASE (Personal Hygiene and Sanitation Education) focuses on personal hygiene and education by children both at home and school. Girl children have special needs that have made them shy to go to school. It was noted by one discussant that *"girls fear going to school during menstruation days because they lack panties and sanitary towels and hence fear being laughed at while at school"*. Senior women teachers do urge girls to impress upon their parents to provide for them such facilities. With the introduction of Personal Hygiene and Sanitation Education (PHASE) programmes parents and guardians are supporting girls with sanitary ware. This boost has made the girls now begin competing with the boys.

Forum for African women educationists, has been implementing programmes in Soroti district. This has been a national programme that emphasizes science subject curriculum. It can be noted that girls drop out because of the belief that science subjects are for men. The programme is handling it through introduction of role models where girls who have excelled in science based subjects encourage young girls to take on science subjects.

Teachers and pupils interviewed in all sub-counties were of the view that although pregnancy does not lead to the automatic departing of girls, this has not worked out well because of the society's response and educational policy. If the girl is left in the same school, she will most likely depart from the stigma of being called a "mother" by her peers and teachers.

The challenge however, lies in the education policy, and practice in the Ugandan schools. Most of the schools insist on the pregnant school girls discontinuing with their education. There is no clear policy on re-entry in school. According to the staff interviewed, few parents and head teachers are willing to give the girl child a second chance at school. The re-entry of child mothers into education system is still debatable. In most of the existing schools, their policy is based on the assumption that the problem of pre- school pregnancy is caused by the victims themselves.

Further discussion with the District Inspector of schools Soroti revealed that there was no clear policy on re-entry into school when a girl drops out due to pregnancy. The injustice is that boys who father babies can continue with their studies.

The Ministry of Education has formulated a new Educational strategic plan. This is a positive attempt to revitalize the quality of education services. Among the five broad policy priorities is equity.

The ministry is aware of the gender gap in education and has set up programmes to bridge it. But the implementation of such programmes has been difficult. This challenge remains because in the key strategic policy objective the issue of re-entry in school of drop outs has not been clearly addressed.

The study further shows that little is done in imparting life skills at school, centers and even at children's homes. According to the educational officials interviewed in 1995 the Government of Uganda and UNICEF embarked on life skills education to empower young people. This programme consisted of basic education, child care and adolescent development.

However, when the assisted children were interviewed it was evident that these skills were not taught to them either at school or at the centre. Some of the teachers interviewed thought that their parents and guardians taught these skills at home. It was also evident that a significant number of them did not understand well what the life skills were. These children, especially the girl child, needed to be equipped with these life skills to boost their self esteem.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter therefore presents the discussion of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations for promotion of girl education.

Discussion

Soroti District with support from Development partners like UNICEF, CCF, WORLD VISION, LINK, BESP and others promotes Programmes to ensure child development as a deliberate process to enable children to grow to their full potential. These partners have initiated programmes that promote Girl child education through retention in the school system. These programmes include; Girl Education Movement, Remain in School/ go back to school and Scope.

In this respect the vulnerable boys and girls are encouraged to remain in school through support with scholastic materials, mid day meals, knickers and sanitary towels.

However, it was established that a reasonable number of children , especially girls, were dropping out of the school programmes despite efforts made by partners . According to the research carried out there were 10 reasons as to why girl children were dropping out of school. However the researcher focused on 5 major ones.

Marriage and early pregnancy were the major reasons for drop out of girl children from school. These factors affected more girls (40%) than the boys (8%) aged 22+ years; the decision to get married was either personal or influenced by parents and peers. It was reported that most of the girls because of pregnancy left school and got

married and it is now a common practice that when a girl is pregnant, she has to drop out of school.

One Kenyan Parliamentarian in a Parliamentary debate in 1983 maintained that allowing pregnant girls to remain in school was like contaminating good potatoes with rotten ones. This aptly sums up these attitudes! ("Daily Nation" March 10th and 11th 1983, "Weekly Review" March 18th 1983).

Though this is a second overall reason the above analysis shows that most girls not interested in school opted for marriage.

Focus group discussions in Asuret sub-county revealed that those children who left school their parents or guardians were neither concerned about their future nor cared about whether they went to school or not.

In the same way a child is made to believe that she may not succeed in studies. The labeling of the girl child as a weak student by their parents and guardians affects their self esteem and performance. As noted by one discussant, "*once they see breasts developing they begin feeling they are mature, as many of them are also under pressure by their parents to marry*". Most of the discussants emphasized that it is the parents who make the girl children drop out of school. "They encourage girls to visit various relatives and escorting those who are supposed to be married off traditionally, and in due course the girls find a suitable suitor". On the other hand some of the participants observed that boys easily convince the girls into sexual relationships which results in pregnancies. Therefore the only option is to leave school. But this was attributed to poor counseling and guidance by either the school authorities or the relatives at home.

Focus group discussions in Asuret, Katine and Tubur further revealed that most girls come from poor families and lack some

basic necessities like sanitary towels, panties and half-slips, which are not some times offered to them. When boys and sugar daddies offer such items, they are lured into sex, which results in pregnancy and finally end up into marriage. Also as a cultural value, girls are encouraged to marry before they see their first menstruation. This encourages girls to drop out early from school.

The young girls end up in early marriages yet their bodies are not fully developed to be sexually involved with men and let alone conceive and care for babies. Article 2 of the Convention on Consent to Marriage stipulates *"that state parties to the present convention shall take legislative action to specify a minimum age of marriage"*. Uganda has set up a minimum age 5 of consent at 18. This means that marriage should be legally entered into by any person above this age this then calls upon for enactment of legislation and institution of appropriate penal sanctions for persons engaging in sexual activity with these minors.

This practice, though children are forced into, is illegal. This there fore calls for enforcement of the law through prosecution of perpetrators. Enactment of byelaws by local council courts to incarcerate those parents who knowingly do not bother about their girl children going to school should be enforced.

However, as expressed by most of the participants the parents were more to blame. As remarked by one of them "*parents see girls as a source of wealth and many prefer to coerce them into marriage in order to get cows for their sons' wives or keep boys in school*".

According to one of the discussants "*some times girls are forced out of school because they have perform some "rituals" that are very crucial to the survival of the family*, as *per their belief* . When asked to identify these "rituals" he mentioned bearing children, burials and other society roles performed by only married women.

However, some discussants observed that some girls opt for marriage to escape from oppression and persecution at home. The survey respondents reported that most orphaned girls were being mistreated by their step mothers and guardian's .These girls were the ones doing most of the domestic chores like fetching water for domestic use and waking up early for digging before leaving for school. Some girls noted that they were being beaten all the time by the relatives they lived with. This compelled them to leave home by getting married.

The respondents further, noted that these orphaned girls lived in poor conditions. Their foster parents always come back drank, yet they lived in tiny rooms which are congested. This made reading at night a problem. If allowed, some use a candle where they are allowed to read for a short time in a fear of depleting the little paraffin they bought. In addition to this it was established that some of the children went to school hungry and had only one meal a day. Thus instead of continuing to suffer under such circumstances the girls opted for marriage to gain freedom and lead independent lives.

The survey findings revealed that lack of books, pens, uniforms and school fees affected girls and boys equally. And where choices are to be made, boys would be given first priority compared to girls due to the perception that girls are generally weak. Sending a girl child to school is seen as wastage of time and resources since most of them end up being pregnanted. Even where school fees is not charged, as it is with the Universal Primary and Secondary Education , other levies and expenses make schooling out of reach for a significant number of children. Those who suffer the

predicaments is the girl child. This contravenes article 30 of the constitution of Uganda that states that "all persons have a right to education".

The United Nations, Scientific and Cultural Organizations-UNESCO –convention against discrimination in education- does not allow any discrimination in education on 'economic conditions and birth". More over the convention defines education to mea all types and levels of education, and includes access to education, the standard and quality of education, and conditions under which it is given.
According to the UNESCO convention, therefore ,every person, without financial or other considerations has a right to all types and levels of education .This means that affirmative action should be taken in favour of those who lack financial resources, to enable them access all types and levels of education.

One of the discussants in Asuret was asked as why parents do not bother about sending their girl children to school. He asserted that "*educating boys is more paramount given their ultimate role of being the heads of households*". This concurs with Wamahiu et a (1992) that the reason for not educating girls is that the boys are more intelligent than girls and educating girls is a wastage of time since they do not have any family responsibility other than bearing children and looking after a man who is believed to be a head of household. This skewed attitude calls for affirmative action in support of girls education as provided for in the constitution of Uganda, stated in the national objectives part xviii, " *the state shall promote free and compulsory education"*
As emphasized by most group discussants most families in the villages were poor making the parents experience constraints to cater for all family members. Hence girls were encouraged to get married. Focus group discussions noted that if parents were given

financial support through Income Generating Activities, they would be in position to top up the school fees.

The findings Indicated that lack of interest in school and academic programmes affected more male than the females. As emphasized by the key informants the option to drop out was influenced either by the school environment, the home environment or as a personal decision. For the sake of girls, personal decisions are made when a girl feels that she is of age and therefore ready for marriage. This is apathy reflected in table 4.1, where the majority of these who left school because of lack of interest were 15 years and above. This was revealed by the Focus group Discussion in Tubur.

The focus group discussions revealed that girls made personal decisions based on peer pressure and saw no benefit of being retained in school. On the contrary, most of the key informants noted that in most cases children are too young to take a personal decision. Most of them are forced by their parents to leave schools so that they get married and parents benefit by getting bride wealth. Results in table 4.1 reveal that 16 % of girls are getting married between the ages of 15 – 17 and 4.3% are getting married at a very early age of between 11-14 years.

The discussions also revealed that poor performance of schools especially in rural areas were a contributory factor for dropping out of the girl children. There were very few role models in their community who had successfully completed, education and gained meaningful employment.

Whereas, most boys who loose interest in school opt to engage in other activities such as boda – boda riding, charcoal burning and farming, most girls drop out to get married. This calls for women and men of distinction who have excelled in various disciplines to

talk to the children, to enable them appreciate the value of education.

Socio –cultural factors does affect girl child participation in school. The group discussions in Tubur revealed that where choices are to be made in education, parents opted to invest in boys other than girls, due to the belief that girls are generally weak academically and are meant to look after home and do other household chores. This matches with Mamphela R in the Forum African Women Educationists (FAWE) workshop, (1994) "culture is like an umbrella under which some people like to hide from rain and also shade themselves from the sun. But sometimes you need to fold it" .culture is not static, it evolves and therefore some of the above beliefs have changed with time.

One of the discussants revealed that" *the Iteso culture does not allow girls to excel academically because it's assumed that it is a wastage of resources, in case of pregnancy the man's side benefits hence the girls are prepared for marriage other than jobs.* The constitution of Uganda and the African charter on the welfare of the child states that children have the right to be protected from cultural practices that may be harmful to their health, education and development.

Conclusions

On the basis of the study, there are a number of different explanations for limited access to education for girls. the phenomenon of school drop out for the girls reflects many factors external to the school, such as effects of poverty, work obligations or the opportunity cost of attending school, early marriage. the poor quality of education is likely to be a significant additional factor since it hinders students achievement and it reduces the attraction

of school compared to perceived benefits of work or other demands on children's time.

- The study indicated that most girls dropped out of school because of marriage. A rational assessment of the situation demonstrated that it's the societal response to pregnancy rather than pregnancy in a person that pushes these girls out of school for marriage.

- Another observation made is that the problem of pre-natal school pregnancy and early marriage is caused by peer influence, followed by socio-economic status and to a large extent, by their parents and guardians.

- The study revealed that girls were getting married as early as 14 years. This early involvement in sex by the girls is dangerous both to their physical health and overall development. The consequences for these young girls include not only dropping out of the school but their lives also being endangered. This is because these minors get involved in early sexual activities yet physiologically their bodies are not yet developed for these acts, let alone the conception and care for the babies.

- Whereas getting pregnant does not lead to automatic dropping out of school by girls, government policies in practice has been a leading factor. The schools policies ensure pregnant girls are expelled from the education system with little or no chances of re-entry after delivery. On the other hand the community norms are even harsher as these girls are seen as failures. This dominant moralistic perspective of society induces one to forget that school – girl pregnancy is a symptom rather than a cause of female drop out.

- In the Ugandan culture, child bearing is traditionally associated with adult status. Thus pregnant girls, irrespective of age, are viewed as adults who have no business being involved in activities targeting "children" and therefore should be expelled. The school curriculum is not designed to cater for such eventualities.

- Cultural beliefs, values and practices generate a skewed gender division of labour in favour of boys against girls. The heavy burden of household chores undertaken by the girls affects their school performance and influences their drop out from school.

- The study also showed that poverty contributes significantly to the girls dropping out of school. A part from being mistreated by doing all the domestic chores, the girls were not given opportunity to read at night because of poor lighting system and lack of financial resources to obtain better lighting.

- Cultural traditions such as the bride price combined with contemporally commerce transforms these girls into "*commodities for exchange, auctioned to the highest bidders*", so that the brothers continue with their formal education.

- This study revealed that girls who registered in school at a young age stayed longer in school than those registered at an older age. The age of entry in school is a critical factor to consider as it influences the drop out from school by the girl child. It was observed that when girls enter the school system beyond the officially prescribed age, early maturity brings its own problems, making them more susceptible to sexual exploitation in primary school.

- The guidance and counseling services offered by school, though helpful, mostly targets the already known problem cases. This reactionary approach at times is employed when the situation is too late for intervention.

- The study revealed that while boys and girls are affected by high drop out rate, female's survival in school is hampered by unique problems caused by a complex interplay of socio- cultural and biological factors.

- In final conclusion, the study revealed that access to learning alone does not guarantee survival. The curriculum should define to a great extent the self image of the girl child, there by influencing her achievements and level of educational attainment. An enabling environment is also paramount if the girl child is to be enabled to develop her potential to become a change agent in her community.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the conclusions.

- An empowerment programme to enable the girl child cope with the pressures of life early enough is needed. Life skills such as self awareness, having self esteem, assertiveness, peer resistance and decision making should be incorporated in the school curriculum right from the beginning .In case of schools, these skills should be introduced right from primary level.

- Massive gender sensitization programmes on the benefits of female education should be embarked on targeting all key stakeholders who are involved in child rearing and nurture

especially at grassroots level. Community mobilization programmes are absolutetly essential. More involvement of women in the leadership roles will significantly enhance this.

- The parent's positive participation in child upbringing and education would be enhanced through their economic empowerment. Provision of credit and their involvement in income generating activities would compliment the efforts to provide a meaningful life to the welfare of children.

- The education system should give some specific attention to the girl child, as they are more vulnerable to dropping out of school. It should also encourage parents; guardians to have a free discussion about sex in their homes as this boost the girls' confidence that makes them vulnerable. Parent- child relationship should be another area to be emphasized for these parents who are strict and resort to punishment must be helped to understand that punishment does not transform a person. As talking to the youths and understanding their problems makes a better person out of them.

- The Ministry of Education should develop programmes for girls who drop out of school particularly due to pregnancy or child bearing. They need functional skills. This training should also aim at instilling in them moral values. Introducing moral up bringing in the curriculum would probably discourage girls from becoming pregnant.

- Government needs to develop and support school re-entry policies and programmes for girls who drop out of school. There is need for a clear policy of school girl absorption after child delivery. This will

help to ensure that the pregnant girls are not just expelled from the education system with little or no chances of re-entry after delivery of babies. The girl child does not only need education but also guidance as she makes choices.

- The need of a role model in her life can not be over emphasized. Government institutions need to provide opportunities where young girls regularly interact with women who have excelled in different fields. These women of distinction will influence the other women and the community at large to play a crucial role in the education of their girl children.

- The government should introduce affirmative action for girls to benefit from the USE programme such that more girls are offered free secondary education; in addition to that parents should be sensitized on the importance of registering and keeping girls in school.

- The Ministry of Education should take a leading role in mobilizing other partners, including parents, NGOs, opinion leaders and the Media in the resolving the problem of school drop outs especially of the girl child. The criminal justice system should also prosecute persons who commit sexual offences against the girl child. The case at present is defilement and indecent assault. Most of the suspects are not apprehended and their cases are not forwarded to courts of law with reasons that there is lack of "sufficient" evidence. I can safely say this would act as a deterrence to would be perpetrators/offenders.

- A rights based approach to programming should be adopted. Rights based programmes support the civil and political rights-

holders. The approach has the potential to increase impact and strengthen sustainability by addressing the underlying causes of violations of rights, bringing about policy and practice changes to make a sustained difference to the lives of individuals, both now and in the future. This is the best way in which partners and government can "do" development.

The obligation to provide equal rights and opportunities to all children is expressed in the non-discrimination clause in article 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child rights programming requires a particular focus on the most marginalized.

In view of the above findings, ensuring that girls and boys equally benefit from education requires nothing less than intergration of gender equality concerns into the design and implementation of sector policies and strategies. Achieving education for all should be pursued with the seriousness it deserves.

Issues for further Study

On the basis of the study, it was concluded that 5 major factors influenced girls drop out were the following; early marriage and pregnancy, poverty, lack of scholastic materials and cultural attitudes .However, the gaps in the quantitative data especially those relating to the various aspects of influencing drop out are still yawning

There is need for an in-depth study to establish the extent to which the girl child drop out due to each identified factors with a bigger sample. A study to investigate further the unique requirements of boys and girls in school

A study to establish the extent to which culture affects the girl child's education in school in soroti district needs to be under taken.

Finally, the role of the family and school in perpetuating gender discriminative stereotypes also needs further investigation.

REFERENCES

Agarwal, S. (1995). *Case Evidence from Rural Ghana*: CHILD SCOPE project, Accra: UNICEF.

Amanda, H. (2003*). Alliance CRP Hand Book* 143.05 draft 3.

Brock, P., and Cammish, N. (1991*). Factors affecting female participation in education in six developing countries*: London, ODA.

Archer, J., and Hoyed, B. (1988). *Sex and Gender*: Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Chege, I. and Okumu, M. (1993). *Female Adolescent health and Sexuality Study in Kenyan secondary schools. An interim report* AMREF

Colclough, C. and Lewin, K.(1993). *Educating all children:strategies for child schooling in the south:* Oxford, Clarndon Press.

Davison, and Kanyuka, M. (1992). "*Girls participation in Basic Education*": In Southern Malawi (FAWE). Workshop held from 15th – 18th Sept, 1994 in Mauritius.

Hess, B. and Ferree , M.(1987). A*nalyzing gender:* a hand book of social science research. London, Sage publications

Fluerent, A., Kalule, S., Mukasa, P., (1992). "*Girls persistence and teacher incentives in primary education in Uganda*" USAID .
Kinyanjui, K. (1993). "*Enhancing women's participation in science – Based Curriculum.* The case of Kenya.

Lange, M.F. (1994). *Quelles strategic pour promouvoir La Scola sation des filles, Dakar*

Mosse ,J.C.(1993). *Half the world, half the chance* .An introduction to gender and development. Oxford, Oxfam publications

Njau, P.W. (1997). *Traditional sex Education*. A case of Kenya. Centre for study of Adolescents, Nairobi.

Njau, P.W. (1993). *Factors associated with prenatal teenage pregnancies and child bearing.* PHD Thesis, University of Nairobi.

Namuddu, K. (1991). P*upils and their communities* .Report of the mind across Africa, Kampala.

Oakly, A. (1989). *Sex, Gender and Society*, Aldershot UK, Gower publishing company. Oxfam. Action Aid Proposal for an education for all, Dakar, Senegal 2000

Ramahoba, Lnyati (1992). *Girl Child study.* Gaborone, Botswana Education Research Association,

Rao, R . (1991). *Gender analysis in development*. West Hartford, Kumanan Press,

Soroti District, (2006).*Three year development plan*, Soroti.

Synder , J.& Tedesse, R. (1995) : *African Women and Development.* History of Johannesburg ,Witwatersrand University press.

Summers, H.L. (1992). *Investing in all the people*. Policy research working papers Institute of development economics Islamabad.

The Republic of Uganda. (2006). *Educational statistical abstract.* Ministry of education, planning department Kampala.

Tietjenk, (1991). *Educating girls. Strategies to increase access, persistence and achievements, USAID, Washington DC.*

Uganda Government: (1995). *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda,* Kampala – Uganda.

UNICEF. (2000). *The state of the world's children.* oxford University Press.

United Nations. (2002). *Human Rights.* A compilation of international instruments. New York and Geneva.

Wamahiu, S.P, & Opondo. (1992). "*Education Situation of the Kenyan girl child*", : child UNICEF NAIROBI.

Wamahiu, S.P. (1994). *Making the classroom Gender friendly to the girls child in Anglophone Africa.*

Williams, S.J, & Mwau. (1994). *Oxfam Gender training manual*, Oxfam Publication UK and Ireland.

World Bank (1993). *Measuring gap. Female education in Sub-Sarahan Africa*, Washington DC

World Bank (1997). *Human elopement Report,* Washington DC

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS.

1. Is there an education policy regarding girl child? Yes/No.
   If yes,

   i) What specific policies exist that encourage female participation in education?
   .....
   .....

   ii) Do these policies apply in all levels of education?
   .....
   .....

   iii) How often are they evaluated to ensure they change according to need?
   .....
   .....

2. Are there any specific policies that hinder female participation in education?
   .....
   .....

   i) What happens when girls get pregnant at school?
   .....
   .....

   ii) Is there any education policy on pregnant schools girls?
   .....
   .....
   .....

3. Are there any special programmes that encourage female participation in school?
   .....
   .....
   .....

   What should be done to ensure retention of children in school.....
   .....

   Are there special facilities for girl children and those with disabilities?
   .....
   .....

   What are the challenges of promoting the right of a girl child to education

   in your district.
   .....

END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

APPENDIX 11

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL

1.0 RESPONDENTS BACKGROUND.

1.1 Name of the Respondent: .....

1.2 Age (in Years):.....

1.3 Sex Male..... Female.....

1.4 What is your religious affiliation.
(i) Anglican (ii) Catholic (iii) Pentecostal (iv) Islam (v) Others
Specify .....

1.5 What is your current level of education?
(i) Primary (ii) Secondary (iii) Tertiary .....

1.6 What is the status of your household?
1) Male headed
2) Female headed
3) Female headed husband away
4) Female headed without husband

2.0 EDUCATION.

2.1 How many children are in school?
a) ..... i) Day ..... ii) Boarding .....

2.2 Are there children who are not going to school in your home?

i) Yes ii) No
a) If yes, how many? b) What are their sexes (Male ..... /Female.....)

2.3 What are the reasons for children not attending school?
.....
.....

2.4 Was your school displaced when rebels invaded the region?
.....

b) If yes, which school did your join .....
c) If No, why didn't you go to school .....

2.5 After relative calm was restored, did all, children come back to school in your class? Boys .....
Girls.....

If No, why did they not come back .....
.....

3.0 SOCIO – CULTURAL.

3.1 What problems do you find at home that affect your performance?

.....

.....

3.2 How do you overcome these problems?

.....

.....

3.3 What interesting things do you feel you miss at home while at school?

.....

.....

3.4 What things do you miss at school while at home?

.....

.....

4.0 Do you have friends (girls) where you stay? Yes/No

4.1 Do they go to school? Yes/No

4.2 If they are not in school, why

.....

.....

4.3 What activities do you do at home?

Morning	Afternoon

4.4 When you perform well at school what do your parents/guardians do for you?

.....

.....

4.5 When you perform poorly what is done.

.....

.....

4.6 Which cultural practices disrupt school attendance for girls?

.....

.....

4.7 What should be done to children who get pregnant while at school?

.....

.....

4.8 Does marriage affect female participation in schooling in your area? If so please explain how

.....

END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

APPENDIX 111
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

1.0 RESPONDENTS BACK GROUND.

1.1 Name of Respondent .....
1.2 Age .....
1.3 Sex 1. Male ..... 2. Female.....
1.4 Marital status
1. Married 2 Single 3. Divorced 4. Widowed
1.5 What is your religion ?
Catholic 2. Anglican 3. Pentecostal 4. Moslem 5) others (Specify).....
1.6 What do you do to earn a living? I. Business/trader 2. casual labourer 3. Mechanic 4 .Peasant 5. Others Specify .....
1.7 What is the highest level of education you have attained?
i) None ii) Primary iii) Secondary iv) Tertiary
1.8 How many people live in your household?
.....
.....
.....

2.0 EDUCATION.

2.1 How many children are in school at your home? .....
i) Day ..... ii) Boarding .....
2.2 Are there some children who are not in school?
a) Yes b) No
If Yes, how many ..... and what are their sexes F/M
2.2.1 What are the reasons for the children not going to school?
.....
.....
.....
In what class did you drop out of school? .....
.....

2.2.2 Which year? .....
2.2.3 What were the reasons? .....

3.0 SOCIAL – CULTURAL

3.1 What problems did you find at home that affected your performance at school?
.....
.....
3.2 What problems did you find at school that affected your performance ?
.....
.....

3.3 What were your future plans?

.....

.....

.

3.4 What stopped you from achieving them?

.....

.....

3.5 When you would perform well at school what would your parent/guardian do for you?

.....

.....

3.6 When you performed poorly what was done?

.....

.....

3.7 What cultural factors affect school at attendance for girls?

.....

3.8 What should be done to girls who get pregnant while at school?

.....

.....

3.9 Does marriage affect girl's child participation in your area?

.....

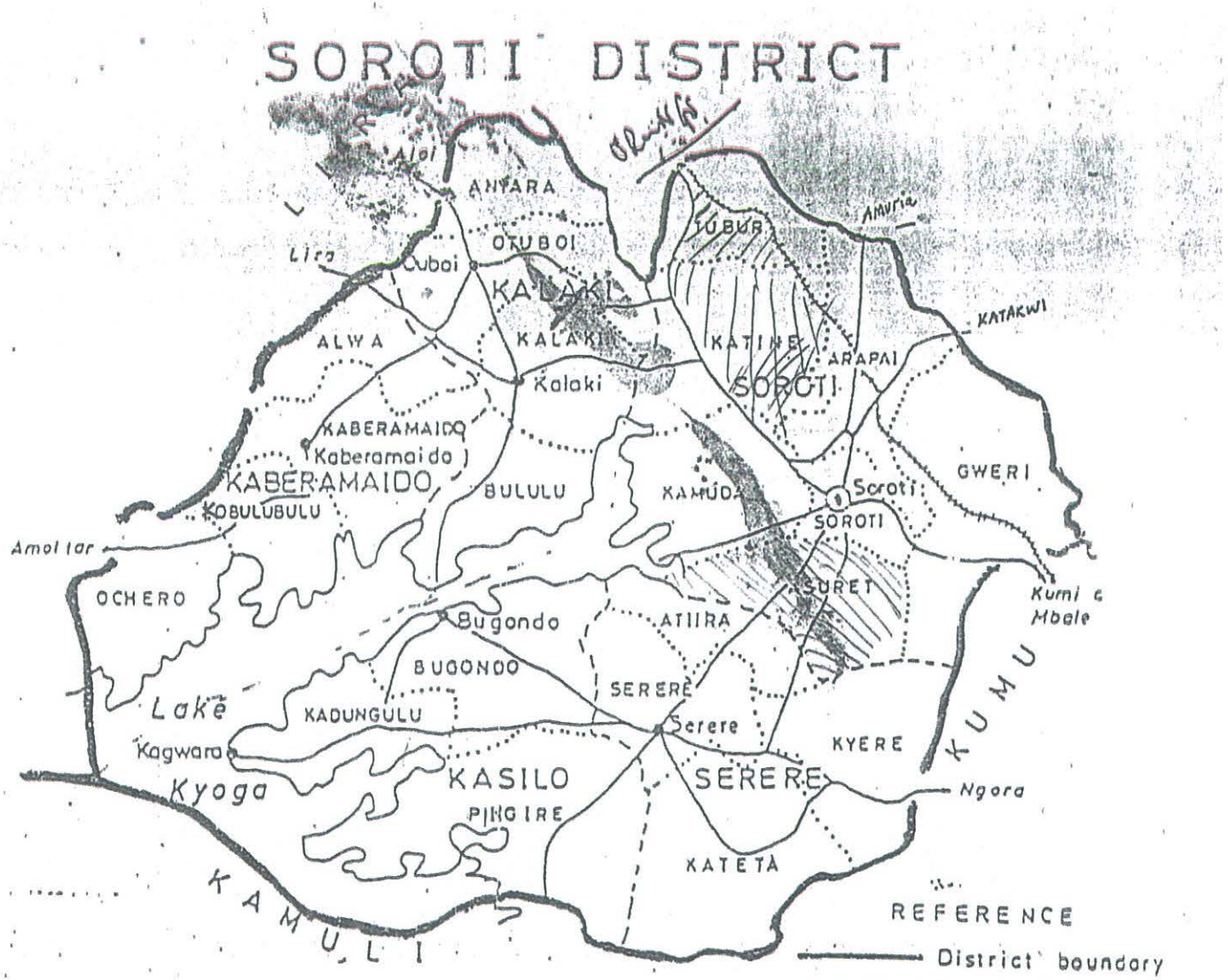
4.0 If yes, what do you think should be done .....

END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING WHERE SOROTI IS LOCATED

SOROTI DISTRICT



6 Counties
25 Sub-Counties
17 Parishes