

**SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS AND SCHOOL DROPOUT OF GIRLS IN SELECTED  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ARAPI SUB COUNTY SOROTI DISTRICT**

**BY**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION OPEN,  
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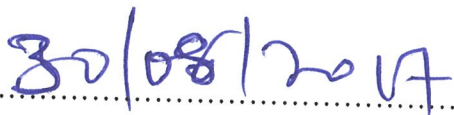
**AUGUST 2017**

### DECLARATION

I Oriokot Nicholas, declare that this research report is entirely my own original work, except where acknowledged, and that it has not been presented or submitted before to any other university or institution of higher learning for any award.

Signed  .....

**ORIOKOT NICHOLAS**

Date  .....

### APPROVAL

This research report has been under my supervision and now it is ready to be submitted to the internal examiners.

SIGNED.....

MR. LAAKI SAMSON

DATE.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research report to my beloved parents Ocung Francis and Apolot Rose, and my all Uncles, Aunts, Sisters and Brothers. Thank you for the invaluable support you have given to me during my education period at the University.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Almighty **God**, he was guider throughout my struggle and my Uncles and aunts for the services they managed to render to me for the successful completion of the study. I swear owe them a lot.

I would like to extend my special thanks to my MUM, Miss **Apolot Rose** who gave me a lot of support, may God bless you.

Great thanks to my University supervisor **Mr. Laaki Samson** for his guidance in writing this research report. Thanks goes to sub-country chief, sub-county Accountant, NAADS coordinator, communality Development officer of Arapai sub-county for their assistance. May the Lord reward you all for the valuable service you rendered Above all I thank the Almighty God for his guidance, wisdom and protection in the entire research period.

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Teachers .....	13
Table 2: Students .....	14
Table 3: Parents .....	14
Table 4 : Summary of the educational level of the respondents .....	16
Table 5: Head teacher and teacher's responses on the total number of students per school. ....	17
Table 6 : Students' responses on what they do at home .....	18
Table 7 : Female teachers per school .....	19
Table 8 : Female students' predominance .....	20
Table 9 : Students' responses on the occupation of their guardians .....	22
Table 10 : Parents' responses on which sex should be taken to school .....	23
Table 11 : School's sanitation .....	24

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Respondents categorized by age .....	15
Figure 2: Educational level of the respondents.....	16

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HIV:	Human Immune Virus
NAADS:	National Agricultural Advisory Services
OVCs:	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
UBOS:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UDHS:	Uganda Demographic Health Survey
UNICEF:	United National International Children's Emergency Fund



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	i
APPROVAL .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	v
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE;.....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the study area .....	1
1.2 Problem statement.....	2
1.3 Purpose.....	2
1.4 Objectives of the study .....	2
1.5 Research questions.....	3
1.6 Scope of the study.....	3
1.7 Significance of the study.....	4
CHAPTER TWO:.....	5
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	5
2.0 Introduction.....	5
2.1 Social factors and girls dropout in secondary schools.....	5
2.2 Economic factors and school dropout of girls. ....	7

2.3 The relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools. ....	8
<b>CHAPTER THREE:.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.0 Introduction.....	10
3.1 Research design .....	10
3.2 Population of the study .....	10
3.3 Sample selection method and size .....	10
3.4 Selection of respondents .....	11
3.5 Research instruments .....	11
3.6 Written documents .....	11
3.7 Questionnaires .....	11
3.8 Interview guide .....	11
3.9 Procedure .....	12
3.10 Data analysis method .....	12
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA.....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	13
4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents .....	13
4.2 Social factors leading female dropouts from secondary schools .....	16
4.3 Number of female students per school .....	17
4.4 Work roles performed at home .....	18
4.5 Number of female teachers per school .....	19
4.6 Girls' performance in class .....	19
4.7 Culture as a contributing factor to female dropping out of school .....	20

4.8 Economic factors leading to females dropouts in secondary schools.....	21
4.9 Prevalence of financial constraints and female dropouts.....	21
4.10 Financial status of families where big numbers of female dropouts come from.....	21
4.11 Financial constraints and school dropout of girls.....	22
4.12 The relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropouts of girls in secondary schools .....	23
4.13 Sanitation condition .....	23
4.14 Nature of the relationship between the school environment and female dropouts in secondary schools. ....	25
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>26</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	26
5.1 Discussion.....	26
5.2 Conclusions.....	30
5.3 Recommendations.....	30
5.4 Areas for further research .....	31
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE .....</b>	<b>42</b>

## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed at establishing the social-economic status and school dropouts of girls in secondary education. The study was conducted from five selected secondary schools in Arapai Sub County in Soroti district.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design on which both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The study consisted of ninety respondents, composed of five head teachers, twenty-five teachers' fifty students and ten parents.

The study used self-administered questionnaire and an interview guide as the data collection instruments. A review of the relevant written documents was also made to supplement the secondary data. The data collected was presented in counts, a bar graph, a pie chart and score tables. Interpretations and conclusions were made according to the frequency of responses. The findings revealed that there were varying socio-economic factors as well as environmental that compelled girls to drop out of school at an early age.

The major socio-economic factor accounting for the school dropout of girls in secondary schools was poverty manifested by; the parents' inability to pay fees and to provide scholastic materials to their children and early marriages. This is worsened by the preference of boys to girls. The main environmental factors were poor school sanitation and lack of privacy.

It was recommended from the study findings that; the government should provide scholastic materials to children from very poor families and set laws against parents who are reluctant to educate their children. The government together with the school administrations should also ensure a safe and clean environment at schools and sensitize the masses about the need to educate the girl child.

Finally, areas for further research were suggested as; causes of high rates of female school drop outs, the parents attitudes towards the girl child education and the possible policy alternative that can improve on girls' education in Arapai sub County Soroti District

## **CHAPTER ONE;**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, and purpose of the study, specific objectives, significance and scope of the study. The research study will aim at investigating social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary education in Arapai sub county Soroti District.

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes; education is as old as human race. It was there since time immemorial though it was informal before colonists and the learning institutions came up.

#### **1.1 Background of the study area**

Arapai sub-county is located in Soroti County boarded by Atirtir Sub County, Soroti senior secondary school, Soroti Town council, Ayoja sub-county of Soroti district. The area has poor infrastructure in terms of roads and health centers with a few secondary and secondary schools.

The population and housing census (2002) indicated that Arapai sub-county had a total population of 48,160 people. According to 2007 statistical abstract from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), the proportion of literacy in Arapai sub-county was 66.9% of male and female 50.4% this shows that fewer women are educated

According to Soroti District Population and Housing Census analytical report Feb 2007 revealed 10.5% are orphans, 10.6 % venerable children(OVC) and that they are not able to attend schools due lack of financial and material support. According to Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS), 2006 in the sub-county indicate that the factors and root causes of the increasing number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children and female school dropouts in the sub county include; death of parents due to HIV/AIDS, poverty, domestic violence among others. In the sub-county subsistence agriculture is the major activity employing almost 90% of the population. Coffee is the main cash crop grown but due to the coffee wilt, its production has decreased leading to inadequate finances with in households. Therefore the sub county mainly engages in crop farming.

Records from Arapai sub-county (2009) indicated that young people aged between 12-30 years constituted around 50% of the total resident and non-resident and a significant number of them are female secondary school dropouts, teenage mothers, unemployed and drug addicts. This has led them into being violent and criminal characters. Reports from the sub-county (2009) indicated that on average 2-5 crimes committed by women are by those who dropped out of secondary schools.

The 2009 Soroti District report indicated that female dropout in secondary schools in Arapai sub-county is still very high whereby there are 350 males and 500 female this means that girls dropout from secondary schools than boys' this has necessitated an investigation into the social-economic status and school dropout of girls from formal education in Arapai Sub-County-Soroti district.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

There is usually a great need for equal opportunity in educational institutions in order to enable girls and boys compete favorably. This presupposes that parents have to be supportive; however, despite the support of parents and attempts by government and non-governmental organizations to increase girl's chances of education, the level of female dropouts from secondary schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district remains high.

This is an enormous challenge that needs urgent redress if girl's education is to be accorded due to attention. Besides there is little documentation about the factors leading to girls from secondary schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district. This study therefore focuses on the causes of female dropouts such that alternatives can be made to address the problem.

## **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this research study is to investigate on how the social-economic status causes school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district.

## **1.4 Objectives of the study**

To find out the if social factors causes school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai Sub County in Soroti district.

To examine how economic factors contribute to school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai Sub County in Soroti district.

To identify the relationship between school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai sub county in Soroti district.

### **1.5 Research questions**

This research study will be guided by the following research questions;

What are the social factors causing school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai Sub County, Soroti district?

What economic factors contribute to school dropouts of girls from secondary schools in Arapai Sub County, Soroti district?

Is there a relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai Sub-County, Soroti district?

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The research study will be focusing on...

The research study will focus on social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai sub county, Soroti district, conducted in five selected secondary schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district. with a descriptive survey research design on which both qualitative and quantitative methods will be used and conducted in a period of three months between the months of June, July and august 2017. Using a case study of Arapai Sub County, Random sampling will be used to select the respondents in order to get depth information. The respondents include various stakeholders amongst are students, parents and teachers. The data will be collected using interviews and questionnaires. The studies specifically seek to find out the social, economic factors and the relationship between school environment and social economic status and school dropout of girls from secondary schools in Arapai Sub County, Soroti district.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study findings are expected to contribute a body of knowledge to the stakeholders of education especially those ones interested in the development of female education.

The study findings are expected to provide up-to-date literature to academicians who may wish to carry out further studies on the factors leading to female dropouts from secondary schools.

The study is expected to put more emphasis on parents, school administrators, non-governmental organizations and communities to propose more strategies of reducing the prevalence of female's dropouts from schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district.

The study is expected to provide a wide insight on the state of female education because it will involve the policy makers especially the ministry of education and sports in designing proper policy, guidelines that can help to reduce the element of female dropping out from secondary schools.

The study findings are expected to show that investing in girl's education is the single most important investment that rural sub-counties like Arapai can make in order to improve the quality of life of their people.



## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, an attempt was made to review the existed relative literature to the case study. It was reviewed along themes of the case study, parents' attitudes and girl's dropout, social, economic factors and girls dropouts and relationship between the school environment and girls dropouts in secondary schools.

#### **2.1 Social factors and girls dropout in secondary schools**

Read (1995), in her study believed that the rate at which females students drop out of schools in sub Saharan Africa is entrenched in the annals of the traditional African education. She portrayed the fact that before that advent of formal education in Africa, traditionalism had been deep rooted and believing that upholding that culture is natural, and has to survive, makes the whole subject an issue of a logic of sentiments rather than rationality, reads winds up by saying that African had their own standards of education acceptable required by society.

This has, therefore, lead to biased minds about the western / formal education. Thus, when they get to know how to read and write the issue of girls dropping out of school becomes rather an acceptable idea. What remains a challenge to Read's argument, however, that she fails to consider that the world is turbulent and dynamic.

The dynamics of the world will always make society change from one belief to another, or advance from one stage to another. Considering the dynamics of the present world, the static elements can no longer hold. It is out of such an unclear scenario that this study opted to find out what hinders females' high level of school dropouts in secondary school, focusing on Arapai Sub County, Soroti district as a case study.

Coombs (1995), in his study portrayed that male children are seen as future bread winners and old age insurance for the parents. Female children play a role in catering for their young sibling and performing other household duties that prepares them for their eventual roles as wives. Comb's argument however has much of the traditional explanation to explain why girls drop out of secondary schools. Besides attaining education does not deter girls from performing their role of petitions as wives and what remains a challenge to Coombs is that few female participation

rates did not assess all factors affecting female education in general. It is out of such a challenge that this study opted to find out what leads females high level of school dropouts in secondary school, focusing on Arapai Sub County, Soroti district as area of study.

Holmes, (2003), in his study observed that the impact differs by gender, the education of the father increases the expected level of retention of boys, and that of the mothers enhances the educational attainment of girls. Similarly other studies by Berhman (1999) and Lokshin (2001) reported a constituency positive and significant coefficient of father's and mother's education at all levels of education except at secondary school level.

United Nations International Children Fund (UNICEF, 1999), MOES, (1995); government of Uganda (Gov, 1999) Horn (1992), all demonstrated that parental decisions do affect children retention. Students whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of schools.

(Astone and Mclanalan, 1991, Remberge 1990; Ayo 1993; Rumber 1995, Odaga and Heneveld 1995 and Rusel 2001). Taking into account of the gender dimension of dropouts, UNICEF, (2005) notes that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys and that students whose mother's have not attained any level of education will most likely dropout of school. Therefore the explanation which lacked here is what was researched upon in Arapai Sub County.

MOES (2001), in his study rates that female dropout in all government aided schools for girls and boys are almost equal. The total number of male dropout for 2001 was 164,986 (50.6%), while that of females was 160,932 (49.4%) giving a national total of 325,918. In an account for the gender disparity in secondary school dropout, Nyanzi (2001) put forward that marriage, pregnancy and sickness are major causes of dropout among girl children while amongst the boys, and they included jobs, lack of interest dismissal and fees.

A survey carried out by UNICEF on the causes of female dropout in Uganda revealed that 28.7% of the female students left schools pre-maturely to be married. This is quite common in the rural settings where parents marry off their daughter for bride wealth. They see as a source of wealth, on the other hand, early marriages makes girls vulnerable to sex harassment which

according to the government white paper (1992), leads to early pregnancies among girls, hence their rejection, and expulsion from schools.

Nalukwago (1995), in her study observed that boys are favored to study than girls in most African societies and Black more (1981) supports this when he puts it that if a family is to send two out of five children to school, boys will always come first. Therefore, both Nalukwago and Black more did not explain why girls dropout of schools than boys when they have already exploited the chances of joining school. The explanation that lacks here is what intended to find out focusing in Arapai, secondary school a case study.

Namirembe Bitamazire Ministry of Education and Sports argued that in Uganda year (2001) the persistent dropping out of girls from secondary schools and ultimately limited access to education has for long been because of traditional division of labour, both famine work responsibilities at home occupy the girls most of the time; this constrains them from revising their books. This consequently leads to poor academic performance and finally dropping out school. However, social factors lead to female school dropout.

## **2.2 Economic factors and school dropout of girls.**

According to Odaga and Heneveld (1995), in their studies observed that parents worry about wasting money on the education of girls because they are most likely to get pregnant or married before completing their schooling and part of another family and the parental investment in them is lost this therefore perpetuates parents discouraging the girl child from continuing with school. What remains a challenge to Odaga and Heneveld and it's what my study focusing to find out is that the impact of parent's education on schooling of children show that the children of more educated parents are more likely to be enrolled and more likely to progress further through school.

Janoz (1994) argues that low income may be a good predictor of female's dropping from schools, but the mechanisms may be that the poor drop accompanying low incomes is what leads female person's to dropout from schools.

Russel, (2001) Bickel and Pagainnis (1988), Clark (1992) and Rumberger (1983) in their studies demonstrated that communities can influence dropout rates by improving employment opportunities during school. While some researchers have found that work can contribute to a

student's dropping out, others have showed that student employment behind to correlate with dropping out when the students regularly workers over 14 hours per week (Mann 1986, 1989) other research place the critical level for employment higher, at 20 hours per week (Winters 1986), with the likelihood of dropping out increasing with the number of hours worked.

Sheldon (1963) revealed that due to the structure of Uganda's education system and its pyramidal nature, many students are compelled to leave the system not because they want to or unable but because they do not have enough finance to cater for their educational requirements.

Nalukwago (1995) observed that parents who are well off ensure that their children are educated due to possessed wealth. Wealth allows them reduce demands for labor of their children in the home by employing house maids who are from poor families to involve in doing domestic work and reduce on their attendance rate to female children at school and revising books at home.

This subsequently results into poor performance and subsequently dropping out of school.

### **2.3 The relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools.**

Federick W. Juuko and Constance Kabonesa (2007) revealed that the republic of Uganda (1989) puts it that scarcity of personnel trained in gender screening mechanisms and storage of relevant alternatives to quality education opportunities and facilities, girls either remain at home or dropout of schools at the lower levels of education.

Kamya (2006) argues that environmental sanitation remains poor and little progress has been registered. There are low house hold demands and the importance of sanitation for household health and productivity. Despite the existing memorandum of understanding, sector funding and lack of best practice is as result of environmental thus leading to female dropout.

The government white paper (1992) states that natural and psychological chance that occurs in girls deters them from competing affectively with boys in academic issues. For example many girls dropout of secondary school due to lack of sufficiency of sanitation facilities especially when they start their menstruation periods.

The environment one studies from greatly determines his or her chances to continue studying. The type of school, its location and availability of learning materials, schools in rural areas have

insufficient text books and unqualified teachers and all this have greatly led to female dropouts from secondary schools. This occurs with the republic of Uganda (2000) which portrays that inadequate school facilities especially sanitation and accommodation for girls in boarding schools led to high frequencies of female dropouts therefore this study focuses on identifying a number of female dropouts.

Marc Posner (1990) argues that teachers and other school staff both consciously and unconsciously often expect more from boys and teach in ways that turn those expectations into fulfilling prophecies through explicit and able behaviors, they often reinforce the myth that women do not do well in mathematics and science, reinforcing math and science anxiety among their female students and contributing to failure in these subject. When internalized by girl students, those expectations lower self-esteem and create a sense of “learned helplessness” that can contribute to academic failure and dropout. The explanation which lacks here is what is intended to be investigated in secondary schools of Arapai Sub County.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter highlights on the research design that was used in the case study proposed data analysis methods, procedure for data collection, research instruments, sample size and population of the study.

#### **3.1 Research design**

The study used a descriptive survey research in which both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. The characteristics of the respondents which were studied included: attitudes, beliefs, opinions and perceptions. A descriptive survey research design was used because; it easily describes every phenomenon under the study and also the study findings were reported in descriptive statement form supplemented by tables and figures. Frequencies and percentages for each response and will be calculated.

#### **3.2 Population of the study**

The study population consisted of both female and male respondent's .A total population of 90 people was used and these included: 50students, 25 teachers, 5 head teachers and 10 parents, in Arapai sub-county. For the case of schools, only females from upper secondary were selected for the study.

This was because such categories of people were knowledgeable about the causes of high female dropouts from secondary schools and provided the researcher with reliable data.

#### **3.3 Sample selection method and size**

Simple random sampling method was used; five secondary schools were selected in Arapai Sub County- Soroti district for the study. All the secondary school names in Arapai Sub-County were written on small pieces of paper, folded, and put in a container and mixed up; five papers were selected at random without replacement. The picked papers were the schools from which the study was conducted from.

### **3.4 Selection of respondents**

Five head teachers, corresponding to the number of schools were purposely selected for the study. 25 teachers and 10 students from each school especially in secondary seven, who could fill the questionnaire adequately and systematic random sampling was used in the study where the rates of female dropouts seemed to be high. 10 parents were selected in the study using simple random sampling too for the parents from each respective school thus giving a total of 90 respondents in the study.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

The study used three categories of research instruments, self administered questionnaires, interviewing guide and a review of written documents.

### **3.6 Written documents**

Throughout the study, the researcher reviewed the relevant written documents about the subject (causes of female dropouts in secondary schools) the written documents consisted of school records, text books, publication journals, reports presented at conferences, internet, government documents and microfilm. This technique was preferred because of its ability to provide supplementary information and flexibility helped in producing descriptive information. As explained by Kayemba Benon (2000).

### **3.7 Questionnaires**

Three sets of self-administered questionnaires were constructed; one was filled by the girls who are studying, others by girls who dropped out of schools and some by teachers, head teachers and parents. The questionnaire had four sections that is the background information, the relationships between the school environment and girls' dropping out of schools, knowledge concerning social factors and economic factors. The questionnaires were preferred in the study because they gave respondents complete freedom of response and were applicable even to the uneducated as explained by Mwesigwa H. (1993).

### **3.8 Interview guide**

Interviews were administered to the parents using an interview guide. The case study used an interview guide because it contained a general plan that the inter viewer followed. As explained

by Leotic (2008) in students military and University of management. Here face-to-face questions were asked and comments made to meet the objectives of the study.

### **3.9 Procedure**

The researcher was given an introduction letter from the college of education distance open and e-learning, department of education, Kampala international University; which was presented to the sub-county chief and letter also was prepared by the sub-county chief head teachers of the selected schools requesting for permission to carry out research in their schools. He then proceeded to the other respondents to make appointments to start distributing questionnaire and conducting interviews immediately. Appointments were made with the selected respondents to allow them select their own convenient time of participating in the study exercise.

### **3.10 Data analysis method**

The responses of the subjects were categorized in frequency counts and score tables, pie chart, bar graph with varying percentages calculated interpretations and drawing conclusions was done in accordance with number of each item.

For the case of qualitative data, field notes was written and work edited at the end of each working day to ensure accuracy in recording consistency information given from the respondents.



## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the analysis of findings and their interpretations. The analysis was presented in accordance with the objectives of the study and research hypotheses as integral parts of themes in the literature review.

### 4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The researcher saw that, it was important to highlight on the back ground information of the respondents and these included age, sex and level of education.

#### Gender of respondents

**Table 1: Teachers**

**NO =30**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	18	60
Female	12	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Source: Primary Source

Table 1 above the researcher observed that there 60% male teacher whereas females had responses of only 40%. This was because the numbers of male teachers who are educated were more than that of female teachers and those few that were present were got busy teaching students.

### Gender of respondents

**Table 2: Students**

**NO=50**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	-	-
Female	50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

### Source; Primary Source

Table 2 above indicates that there were responses 100% of females and there no male responses because this was specifically for females due to the fact that they are well versed with social, economic and environmental leading to their dropping out from secondary schools.

### Gender of respondents

**Table 3: Parents**

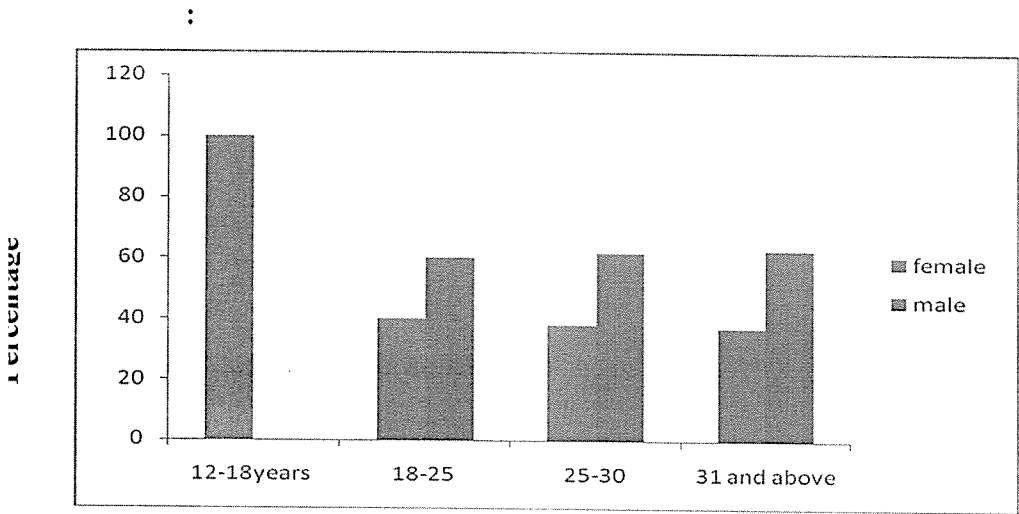
**NO=10**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	8	80
Female	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

### Source; Secondary Source

Table 3 show that 80% of parents were male and females, 20%.This was because majority of women were founding doing domestic work while men were got resting.

**Figure 1: Respondents categorized by age**

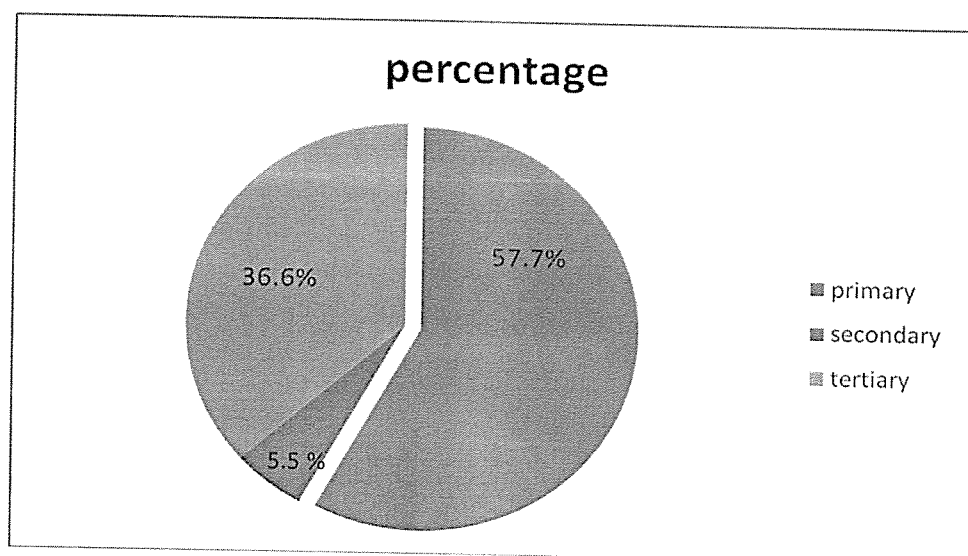


**Age bracket**

The bar graph above indicates that respondents between the age brackets of 12-18 were 100% and they were all females. Those in the age bracket of 18-25 (40%) were females and males 60%, whereas those in the age bracket of 25-30, had female responses of 38%, and 62% of male. Those in the age bracket of 31 and above (37%) were females whereas males (63%). The age bracket between 12-18 has the biggest number of respondents because the study mainly targeted them.

**Figure 2: Educational level of the respondents**

:



The pie chart above shows that most of respondents had secondary and tertiary education whereas few of them had secondary education. These were all summarized figures as shown in the table below.

**Table 4 : Summary of the educational level of the respondents**

NO=90

Level	Frequency	Percentage
secondary	52	57.7
Secondary	5	5.5
Tertiary	33	36.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Secondary Data**

#### **4.2 Social factors leading female dropouts from secondary schools**

This variable of the study was guided by the research questions which stated that; what are the social factors causing female dropouts in secondary schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district?

In order to generate data on this variable, several questions were posed before the respondents.

The elicited data was organized and presented under the following sub-themes.

Number of female students per school, work role performed at homes, number of female teachers per school, girls performance and culture as a contributory factor to female dropping out of secondary school.

#### **4.3 Number of female students per school**

The head teacher and teacher's respondents were requested to state the number of students the respective schools had. This aimed at establishing the number of female students relative to their boy counterparts. The elicited responses on this issue were presented in the table below;

**Table 5: Head teacher and teacher's responses on the total number of students per school.**

<b>Schools</b>	<b>Total number of students</b>	<b>Total number of girls</b>	<b>Percentage of girls</b>
Soroti Secondary school	982	475	48.3
Light secondary School	962	320	33.2
Soroti central S.S	1174	545	46.4
Olila sec school	500	236	47.2
Community S.S	610	225	36.8

Table 5 above indicates that in all the schools the researcher visited, the total number of female students was below average (48.3%). The study tried to find out why there were fewer girls than their boy counterparts. Head teacher and teacher respondents pointed out that parents usually pull girl children out of school to help in domestic work.

It was also observed from the parent's views that girls were not accorded great value in education because their daughters are expected to get married at an early age therefore, girls had to get used to family chores that prepare them for the future.

#### 4.4 Work roles performed at home

The study labored to establish what female students do at home. It was aimed at finding out whether what they do enables them to concentrate on their studies. It should be noted that all the schools visited were day schools thus students returned to their homes late in the evening. Such an element together with the daily chores therefore, greatly affects their academic performance. The responses on this aspect were presented in the table below;

**Table 6 : Students' responses on what they do at home**

NO=50

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Revising / reading	10	20
Resting	02	04
Doing domestic work	38	76
Total	50	100

#### Source: Primary Data

Table 6 shows that majority of the female students respondents (76%) revealed that they did domestic work after school, only 10% revealed that they did some revision while 04% just rested and did revision from school. The most done activities at home according to the finding were; cooking, fetching water and firewood, digging among others.

It was also observed that female students do not have sufficient time to do enough revision, something that leads to poor academic performance. The persistent failures lead to despair, hate for studies and subsequently dropping out of school at an early age.

#### 4.5 Number of female teachers per school

The study also tried to establish the number of female teachers per school visited. This was done out of the conception that the presence of female teachers in a school would encourage female students to concentrate in their studies. This is because female teachers would provide counseling and guidance services and also act as role models to them.

**Table 7 : Female teachers per school**

Schools	Total number of teachers	Total number of female teachers	Percentage of female teachers
Soroti sec school	10	3	30
Light sec school	10	5	50
Soroti central s.s	17	08	47
Olila sec school	18	5	33.3
Community s.s	10	2	20

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 7 shows that in all the five schools visited the number of female teachers was relatively lower than that of their male counterparts with an average percentage of 36%.

This led the study to an observation that girls, lack feminine guidance and encouragement hence failing to exploit opportunities for further studies. It was further revealed to be connected to the fact that girls' problems at school are not properly attended to however much complex they could be. Girls therefore, lack adequate counseling especially in relation to sex education, and, thus, end up getting pregnant and consequently dropping out of school.

#### 4.6 Girls' performance in class

The head teacher and teachers' respondents were further requested to rate female students' academic performance. The elicited responses were presented in the table below;

**Table 8 : Female students' predominance**

**NO=30**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of girls' performance
Excellent	02	6.6
Very good	04	13.3
Good	08	26.6
Poor	16	53.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 8 shows that 6.6% of head teacher and teacher respondents rated girls' performance as excellent, 13.3% rated it as good, 26.6% rated it as very good, while the majority (53.3%) rated it as poor.

It was found that the reason for girls' poor performance was not gender-based, but rather individual weaknesses, family background, family financial status and the entire teaching and learning environment, all this in one way or the other curtailing the education of young girls.

**4.7 Culture as a contributing factor to female dropping out of school**

The data on this aspect was established after parents were requested to state what they wished their daughters to do and become after secondary school education. The generated responses revealed that majority (60%) of the parents were looking forward to seeing their daughters get married after secondary school. Only 40% had a positive futuristic attitude towards their daughter's education. The 60% of parents who wished their daughters to get married had a strong attachment to the value accorded to bride wealth. This therefore, pointed to the fact that culture still plays a strong role in determining the education of girls in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district.



#### **4.8 Economic factors leading to females dropouts in secondary schools**

This variable of the study was guided by the research question which stated that what economic factors contributed to female dropouts in secondary schools in Arapai Sub-County?

The gathered data was presented under the following sub-themes: prevalence of female dropouts, financial status of families where big numbers of female dropouts come from, financial constraints and early dropouts.

#### **4.9 Prevalence of financial constraints and female dropouts**

The study tried to find out whether there were financial constraints hindering girls' education in secondary schools. In the bid to do this, parents were requested to tell whether they were facing financial constraints in their attempts to educate their daughters. All the parents involved in the study (100%) revealed that they were facing significant constraints while trying to educate their daughters. However, what was unclear on this situation was lack of an explanation why the constraint came out in the case of girls as opposed to their boy counterparts. The explanation was entrenched in cultural and traditional beliefs that parents had towards girls' education. Some parents (50%) pointed out that; it was wastage of resources to invest in girl's education since

They would later go to other families. This therefore explains the high female dropouts in upper secondary classes.

#### **4.10 Financial status of families where big numbers of female dropouts come from**

To fully ascertain the extent to which financial constraints contributed to early female dropouts, head teachers and teachers were requested to state where most cases of female dropouts commonly came from. All the head teacher and teacher respondents (100%) pointed out those high cases of female dropouts were due to a combination of different factors among which was the financial status of parents.

Further attempts to justifiably establish whether parents' financial status had a relationship with the level of female dropouts were made by requesting students state their guardians' occupation.

The findings were compared with students' views about their expectations to study beyond the secondary school level. The results were presented in the table below;

**Table 9 : Students' responses on the occupation of their guardians**

**NO=50**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage of guardians occupations
Peasants	38	76
Civil servants	05	10
Self-employed	07	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 9 shows that majority of the female pupil respondents (76%) revealed that their guardians were peasants, (14%) were self-employed while on (10%) were civil servants in the bid to establish how this affected students' education

The findings also revealed that population of 76% of girls were not sure of whether they would continue with their education, reason being that they were not certain of getting school fees. This therefore, pointed to the fact there was a relationship between guardians occupation and sufficiency of funds for school fees and other scholastic facilities.

#### **4.11 Financial constraints and school dropout of girls**

In order to link financial constraints to early female dropouts, parents were requested to state whom they would give opportunity to go to school in case they were faced with significant financial constraints.

The distinction was put on boys and girls in secondary school. Parent's views on their preferences were presented in the table below.

**Table 10 : Parents' responses on which sex should be taken to school**

**NO=10**

Response	Frequency	Percentage of girls or boys
Would prefer a boy	08	80
Would prefer a girl	02	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 10 shows that 80% of the parent respondents revealed that they would prefer sending a boy to school in case of financial constraints to a girl, while only 20% would prefer sending a girl to a boy. In the bid to explain this scenario parents pointed out that girls would after all get married and join a different family. These, therefore, led a study to realization that the factors for females' dropping out of school are inter-linked and are usually overlapping. The social factors in this case determine and foster the economic considerations.

#### **4.12 The relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropouts of girls in secondary schools**

This objective of the study was guided by the research question, which stated that is there a relationship between the school environment and early female dropouts in secondary schools in Arapai sub-county? The elicited responses were presented following the sub-themes sanitation conditions, presence of separate and sufficiency latrines and nature of the relationship between the school environment and early female dropouts in secondary schools.

#### **4.13 Sanitation condition**

The head teacher, teacher and student respondents were requested to rate the issue of sanitation at their respective schools. Sanitation conditions like enough and accommodative classrooms, latrines, enough library and the general surrounding that may allow for a conducive teaching and learning environment. The elicited responses were presented in the table below

**Table 11 : School's sanitation**

Reponses	Frequency	Percentage of the Reponses
<b>Head teachers'</b>		
Better	1	20
Good	2	40
Poor	3	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Teachers</b>		
Better	5	20
Good	5	20
Poor	15	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Students</b>		
Better	4	8
Good	5	10
Poor	41	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Secondary Source**

It can be observed from table 11 that majority among all the three categories of respondents (60%), and 82% for the head teachers, teachers and students respectively, rated their schools sanitation facilities as poor. It was revealed that there were no sufficient separate latrines stances and few which are present are in bad conditions. This resulted into sharing latrines between boys and girls. As a matter of urgency, it ought to be noted that when girls grow up, they need a lot of privacy especially when they begin their monthly periods. In this, lack of separate latrines may

propel the concerned girls to miss going to school for some days. This results into poor academic performance and subsequently dropping out of school.

#### **4.14 Nature of the relationship between the school environment and female dropouts in secondary schools.**

Responses from the head teachers further revealed that not only does the school environment force girls out of school, but also the home environment. It was pointed out that the home environment greatly shapes and affects students' academic performance. They noted that, there is a lot of domestic violence in families which greatly affects the girl child education.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In chapter, the findings were discussed, conclusions and recommendations made. This was done in accordance with the objectives and research questions that guided the study. Finally areas for further research were suggested.

#### **5.1 Discussion**

##### **Social factors leading school dropout of girls in secondary school**

The study findings revealed that there are significant social factors that are responsible for early female dropouts in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district.

A look at table 1 shows that in all the schools visited number of female students was below average, (48.3%) compared to their boy counterparts(51.7%). It was also observed from, the parent's views that Parents expected their daughters to get married at an early age. To parents, therefore, girls were expected to get used to family chores that prepare them for future motherhood.

The study findings also revealed that majority of the female secondary students do domestic work after school, instead of revising their books (table 6). It was pointed out that parents require their female students to do some work at home, especially cooking, fetching water and firewood, and digging among others. It was observed that female students do not have sufficient time to make revision. .

The persistent failures lead to despair, hate for studies and subsequently dropping out of school at an early age. The above observation agrees with several scholars who had earlier put down literature about female dropout in secondary schools for example Coombs (1985) put it that male children are seen as future bread winners and an old age insurance for the parents. Female children play a role in catering for their young siblings and performing other household duties that will prepare them for their eventual roles as wives and mothers,

The study findings also agree with the observation made by Namirembe Bitamazire, minister of Education of Republic of Uganda (2001) that the persistent dropping out of girls in secondary schools and ultimately limited access to education has for long been because of traditional

division of labor, both at home and school. The explanation given here is that the family work roles occupies the girls most of their time and hinders them from reading their books. This consequently leads to poor academic Performance, despair and finally dropping out of school.

The whole social explanation about the factors leading to early school dropouts is greatly related to the cultural and traditional beliefs about the girl child (70%), on this issue parents look forward to seeing their daughters get married after secondary education. Only 20% had a positive futuristic attitude towards their daughters' education. This finds support in the findings of the survey carried out by UNICEF, (1988) on the causes of female dropouts in formal education in secondary schools in Uganda which revealed that 30% of the female students leave schools prematurely to be married. This is quite common in the rural settings where parents marry off their daughters to get bride wealth. On the other hand, early marriages make girls vulnerable to sex harassment, which according to the Government, White paper (1992) leads to early pregnancies among girls, hence their rejection, and expulsion from schools.

#### **Economic factors leading to early female dropouts in secondary**

The study findings revealed that there are financial constraints hindering girls' education in secondary schools. Thorough explanation was entrenched in the cultural and traditional beliefs that parents hold towards girls education as some parents (80%) pointed out, that they are convinced that it is wastage of resources to invest in girls' education since girls would later go to other families.

The above agree with Sheldon's (1963) observation that due to the structure of Uganda's education system and its pyramidal nature, many students are compelled to leave the system not because they want to, or are unable but because they have no enough finances to cater for their educational requirements.

High cases of female dropouts were revealed to be a concern of combination of different factors among which were the financial statuses of parents and a relationship with the levels of female dropouts as revealed by pupil respondents. It was found out that (80%) of female students were not sure of whether they would continue, with their studies reason being that they were not certain of getting school fees.

This coincides with Nalukwago's (1995) observation that rich parents who have enough resources ensure that their children are educated due to the possessed wealth. Wealth allows them reduce the demands for labor of their children at home by employing house maids. On the other hand, children from the poor families get too much involved in doing domestic work at home which reduces on their attendance rate to schools and making revision at home. This therefore subsequently leads to poor performance and dropping out of schools.

Further majority of the parents respondents (80%) revealed that they would prefer sending a boy to school in case of financial constraints to a girl, while only 20% would prefer sending a girl to a boy, reason being that parents expected girls to get married and join different families. This, therefore, leads a study to a realization that the factors for females' dropping out of secondary schools are inter-linked and are usually overlapping. This is supported in Nalukwago's (1995) observation that it is only the deep rooted traditional sex biases and discriminatory living practices. According to Nalukwago (1995), boys are favored to study than girls in African societies. Black More (1981) supports this when he puts it that a family to send two out of five children to school, boys will always come first.

#### **The relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools.**

The study findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between the school environment and students' levels of school dropouts. This was revealed to be related to issues like sanitation conditions, presence of separate and sufficiency latrines, enough and accommodative class rooms, latrines stances, enough libraries, and the general surroundings that may create a conducive teaching learning environment. As a matter of fact, a look at table 11 points out put that majority among all the three categories of respondents (60%) and 82% for the head teachers, teachers, and students respectively, related their schools' sanitation facilities poor. It was revealed that there were no sufficient separate latrine stances for girls.

This resulted into sharing latrines between boys and girls. As a matter of urgency, it ought to be noted here that when girls grow up, they need a lot of privacy, especially when they begin their monthly periods. Thus, lack of separate latrines may propel the concerned (girls) to miss going to



school for some days. This in turn results in to poor academic performance subsequently dropping out of school.

The above agrees with the government White Paper's (1992) observation that natural, psychological and physiological changes that occur in girls from competing effectively with boys in academic issues, reason being that the changes makes them dropout schools than their counterpart boys.

This equally coincides with the New Vision news paper January, 28<sup>th</sup> 2009 which reported that many girls drop out of secondary schools due to lack of sufficiency of sanitation facilities especially when they start their menstrual periods and therefore, need privacy that lacks at school especially when the school is mixed. This is further confirmed by Ayo (1993 who puts it that Uganda women have accepted that women ought to leave all that is good to men probably including education.

Similarly, the above findings are supported in Coombs, (1981) observation that the environment one studies from greatly determines his or her chances to continue studying. The type of school, its location, and availability of learning materials, on top to the curriculum provided and staffing; have a big role to play on students' desire to wards education. In developing countries, schools in rural areas have insufficient text books and other training materials on top of unqualified teachers such schools often have high teacher pupil ratio and absentee rates.

The study findings also revealed that there were no trained personnel especially women to help girls overcome their feminine problems during their stages of growth and development. This agrees with the observation made by the Government of Uganda (1989) that scarcity of personnel trained in gender screening mechanisms have made girls either remain at school or drop out of schools at the lower levels of education. This occurs with the Government of Uganda (2000) which portrays that inadequate school facilities especially sanitation and accommodation for girls in boarding schools lead to high frequencies of females dropouts.

Responses from the head teachers further revealed that not only does the school environment force girls out of school, but also the home environment. It was pointed out that the home environment greatly shapes and affects students' academic performance. Thus the environment one grows in was found out to be a vital factor towards one's academic achievement.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

There are significant social factors that account for school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai sub-county Soroti district. Such include early marriages, early pregnancies, lack of guidance and counseling, lack of proper facilities to be used, and loss of parents. Those with disabilities are neglected by fellow friends, bad behaviors, poor feeding at school, negative attitudes towards education, domestic violence, doing domestic work, sickness, peer influences.

Some students refuse to go to school, poor education, girls' feel they are inferior as compared to boys and the community influence where education is disregarded.

The financial factors constrain parents' ability to pay school fees for their children, when they are combined with the social factors, female children become the disadvantaged group and end up dropping out of schools.

The school environment greatly determines how female students will perform and develop a positive attitude towards their studies. On the other hand, unconducive environment such as poor sanitation may not favor some students such as girls, thereby forcing them to drop out of schools. This was actually the case with the visited schools in Arapai sub-county, Soroti district.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

In view of the study findings, the following recommendations were suggested.

Secondary school head teacher and teachers should ensure that the sanitary conditions at school are better and that there should be enough and separate for example latrines for both boys and girls.

There should be rules put in place to guard against those who drop out<sup>1</sup> of school and parents who force their daughters get out of school before they complete.

There is need to sensitize the masses about the need to educate the girl child. This is hoped to overcome the attitude of preferring boys' education to girls'.

The study recommends that sex education should be part of secondary school curriculum so that girls get to know all to do with their sexual and physical developments so that they can be able to survive the disruptive elements of getting pregnant at an early age.

Secondary school should be manned with trained and qualified senior women teachers to help provide guidance and counseling services to girls especially during their development stages, lack of which greatly contributes to high dropout rates.

The government should try to make some of those schools to have boarding facilities so as to make education easy for those who come from very long distances and also should recruit and train more female teachers to act as an example. The parents need to provide children with enough scholastic materials and lunch at school.

Secondary schools should start practicing piracy programmers regularly.

#### **5.4 Areas for further research**

In view of the study findings, the following areas for further research were suggested.

A research can be done to find out the causes of high rates of female dropouts in a different geographical location apart from Arapai Sub-County for comparative purpose.

A study can be done to evaluate parents' attitudes towards the girl child education.

A study can be done to find out the possible policy alternatives that can improve on the education of girls in Arapai sub-county.

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## APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

For the topic: social-economic and school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai sub county Soroti district

To be filled by Head teacher and teachers

Dear respondent,

You have been selected to participate in this case study without prior knowledge of your existence.

You are requested to be honest and tell the truth

The purpose of this study is purely academic

The information you give will be treated with utmost confidence

You may respond either filling in the blank spaces provided or indicating with a tick where applicable.

### Section A: Background information

Name of the school .....

Position held            a) Head teacher    ☐                      b) Teacher    ☐

Age of respondent.....

Sex of respondent      a) Male    ☐                      b) female    ☐

Level of education attained

Graduate            ☐

Grade V             ☐

Grade III            ☐

Any other (please specify).....

Time spent in the teaching profession (state in years) .....

### Section B: Knowledge on the social factors leading to school dropout of girls in secondary schools

How many students are in this school?.....

How many are girls?.....

If the number of girls is less than boys, what do you think brings about this?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

How many female teachers are in this school?

.....

Do you think that lack of female teacher on the staff has any effect on female’s dropping out of school? a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, what relationship?

.....

Rate the performance of girls in this school

Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any other (Specify).....

If the performance is poor, what social factors do you think causes this?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Section C: Knowledge about the economic factors leading to school dropout of girls in secondary school**

Do you have female students who drop out of school?

Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, how common is the issue?

Very common ☐

Common ☐

Rare ☐

From which families do you experience high rates of female dropouts?

a) Rich families ☐ b) Poor families ☐

c) Both a and b ☐

Do you have female students who have financial problems in this school?

Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, what problems are usually faced?

i).....☐.....☐.....

ii).....

iii).....

Does this school have any provision for girls who fail to raise school fees?

Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, what provision is in place?

i).....

ii).....

lii).....



**Section D: Knowledge about the relationship between the school environment and social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools**

Rate the problem of sanitation facilities in your school

Good ☐

Better ☐

Poor ☐

Any other (specify).....

Do you have toilets for specific sex?

a)Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Do you think that the school environment has any effect on the level of female dropouts in this school?

a)Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, what relationship?.....

Suggest how the levels of female dropouts in secondary schools can be reduced in Arapai sub-country Soroti district.

i).....

ii).....

iii).....

*Thank you for the response and co-operation.*

**Questionnaire for the topic: social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai Sub-County, Soroti District**

To be filed by students (Girls)

Dear Respondent,

You have been selected to participate in this study without knowledge of your existence.

You are requested to be honest and tell the truth.

The purpose of this study is purely academic

The information you give will be treated with utmost confidence

You may respond by either filling in the blank spaces or indicating with a tick where applicable.

**SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Name of the school.....

Status of the pupil;    a) In school    ☐                      b) School dropout    ☐

Age of respondent.....

Sex of respondent    a) Male    ☐                                      b) Female    ☐

Class of respondent or the one you dropped out in.....

**Section B: knowledge on the social factors leading to school dropout of girls in secondary schools**

How many children are you in the family?.....

How many are girls?.....

How many are boys?.....

What do you do in the morning before going to school?

i) Fetch water    ☐

ii) Digging    ☐

iii) Prepare food    ☐

iv) Nothing    ☐

What do you do at home after school?

i) Resting ☐

ii) Reading / revising ☐

iii) Doing domestic work ☐

Have you ever seen a female pupil that dropped out of school?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, what was the reason behind the dropping out of school?

i).....

ii).....

iii).....

iv).....

**Section C: Knowledge about the economic factors leading to female dropouts in secondary schools**

What is your fathers' / guardian's occupation?

.....

If you had a brother and your father runs shortage of school fees, would you like your father to pay for the brother first?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

For either answer in question 2, state why?

.....

Do you think you will go beyond senior four?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If no, state why.....

Do your parents provide with the necessary scholastic materials?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If no, how do you meet the scholastic requirements?

.....

**Section D: Knowledge about the relationship between the school environment and social-economic and school dropout of girls in secondary schools**

Are you a boarder?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

How far is your school from home?

i) Very near ☐

ii) Near ☐

iii) Far ☐

iv) Very far ☐

Do the school authorities require you to do some activities on gender differences?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

If yes, state those activities

For girls.....

For boys .....

Do you have enough sanitation facilities at school?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Do you get sex education at school?

a)Yes ☐ b)No ☐

Do you get severe punishments at schools?

Yes ☐ b)No ☐

If yes, do you think such punishments contribute to female dropping out of school?

a)Yes ☐ b)No ☐

If yes, state how

- i).....
- ii).....
- iii).....

Suggest how the levels of female dropouts in secondary schools can be reduced in Arapai Sub-county, Soroti district.

- i).....
- ii).....
- iii).....

*Thank you for the response.*

## APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

### An interview guide for topic: social-economic status and school dropout of girls in secondary schools in Arapai, Soroti District

To be administered to parents

Dear Parent,

I am Oriokot Nicholas, a student of Kampala international University and currently carrying out research as part of the requirements for the award of a Degree of education with arts. The data obtained will hopefully improve the status of girls' education in secondary schools in Arapai Sub county- Soroti District.

You have been identified as the best source of information since you are well versed with the employment procedure of teachers. The information you give will be kept confidential.

#### Section A: Background information

Age of respondent .....

Sex of respondent    a) Male ☐                      b) Female ☐

Level of education attained .....

Occupation .....

#### Section B: Text questions

1. How many children do you have?.....

2. How many are in school?.....

3. Of these who are in school, how many are girls and how many are boys?.....

4. What can you comment on the belief that "Educating girls is investing in another family?"

.....

5. What would you like your daughter to do after secondary seven?  
.....
6. At what age would you like your daughter to get married?  
.....
7. If your daughter become pregnant in school, would you continue paying her school fees if she preferred going back to school after delivery?  
.....
8. What are your daughters’ duties before going and after school?  
.....
9. Suppose you run short of school fees, whom would you, send to school (probe to find out whether the parent would send a boy or a girl).  
.....
- 10.Do you provide your children with scholastic facilities?  
.....
- 11.Comment on the amount of school fees you pay for students every term (probe to find out whether money is little or much)  
.....
- 12.Which factor would you attribute to girls’ dropping out of school in secondary school in Arapai, sub –country Soroti district? (Probe to find out the nature of the factor  
.....
- 13.Suggest what can be done to reduce the rates of early female dropout of secondary schools in Arapai, Soroti district  
.....  
.....

*Thank you.*