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**Barriers to Girls' Secondary School Participation: Retention and
Completion in Jinja District- Eastern Uganda**

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Dedication

To my family, mother, brothers and sisters.

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List of Acronyms

CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EFA	Education for All
EFAGMR	Education for All Global Monitoring Report
EPDC	Education policy and Data Center
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FAWE-U	Forum for African Women Educationalists Uganda Chapter
GEM	Girl's Education Movement
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoU	Government of Uganda
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NWASEA	National Women's Association for Social and Educational Advancement
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
SFG	School Facilities Grant
UACE	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USE	Universal Secondary Education

Abstract

The importance of female education is well acknowledged in development studies and practice. While attainment of basic education formed the initial concerns culminating into many developing country governments' putting in place programs of compulsory and free primary schooling, policy focus has now shifted to; the completion of primary schooling, transition into secondary schooling, retention in these secondary schools and its subsequent completion for girls to be able to make meaningful economic contributions in their societies. This study uses Jinja district in Uganda as a case study to deduce the factors that all together work towards the barring of girls from participating in secondary schooling. The methodology of the study uses Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme as a base to select schools which have been targeted with this free schooling, to show other factors other than lack of tuition fees that affect girls' retention and completion of secondary schooling and how these factors interact while affecting girls schooling. Methods used to collect data are one-to-one interviews with teachers, education officials, girls and boys in and out of school and reviewed secondary data sources. The study uses the intersectionality theory borrowed from feminist literature to analyse the intersections of factors which affects girls schooling. Results of the study show an interlocking of factors of gender, rural residence and economic class as all together disempowering to girls education in secondary schooling. While the study is based on an analysis that looks at the intricate difference of girls as a social category, it does not aim to show which type of girls are more disadvantaged, but how an interlocking of these barriers happens, so as to give a better sense of information that can be used to formulate policies aimed at ensuring more girls have secondary schooling.

Relevance to Development Studies

The multifarious benefits of female education attainment are well understood in development work such as; improvement in women's own health outcomes and life expectancy, lowering of child and infant mortality and reduced fertility rates. In many sub-Saharan African countries, the gender gap in schooling is wide, and gets even wider the higher the school level. For girls to be able to access enough education that can make an impact that enables the break away from the cycle of poverty there is increasing need to focus not only on enrolment, but also on retention and the completion of secondary schooling.

Keywords

Secondary Education, Girls' Retention, Completion, Gender Inequality, Intersectionality, Participation.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Worldwide, education attainment of a given population is acknowledged as a crucial factor needed for the development of nations. This is evident in its inclusion in major efforts aimed at bridging the global wealth inequalities such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG); where goal 2 is to ‘achieve universal primary education’. There is indeed reported progress made towards this goal globally and in sub-Saharan Africa where total enrolments have increased by 15% since the year 2000 even though girls education attainment continues to lag behind (United Nations 2009: 14-15). Education achievement for everyone is also considered a fundamental human right. According to a ‘Education For All Global Monitoring Report,’ it is estimated that out of the 862 million adults who are illiterate, two thirds are women, and that out of over 100 million school going age children are out of school, 56% of them are girls, while another 130 million start school but dropout before completing four years (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation 2006). While a focus on primary education achievement continues to be relevant, the focus has now shifted to the transition into secondary school, retention and completion especially for girl children who are more likely to drop out of school as they progress into adulthood.

Millennium Development Goal 3 is to ‘Promote gender equality and empower women’ whose main target is the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary schools. Gender disparities in education attainment in sub-Saharan Africa are wide, but with variations at different levels of education (United Nations 2009: 18). According to a report, Uganda’s case is not any different. While great strides have been made in primary school enrolments which shot up after the policy on free and compulsory primary schooling was started in 1997 allowing up to 4 children per family to attend government aided schools, gender disparity and transition rates into secondary schooling are still low. Female enrolment in primary schools is 47% of the total student population, 32% in secondary schools, 35% in universities and 13% in polytechnics. Notwithstanding, in 1997, out of the 211,749 candidates who sat for the primary leaving certificate, on 87, 231 or 43% went on to join secondary schools (Kirungi 2000). The focus for governments and those interested in education policy making with an interest in lowering gender disparities at higher levels of schooling such as secondary level should therefore focus on both the factors affecting transition into secondary school, enrolment into secondary schools especially for girls and the retention in these institutions all the way to completion.

The supply side of school attendance affects the prospects for attending schools which is determined by the availability of schools. Rural livelihoods are therefore closely associated with lower rates of education attainment especially in many parts of the rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa. Girls who come from poor households and rural areas have more barriers in accessing education, especially secondary education due to lack of schools as well as traditional

cultural attitudes which encourage early marriages and discourage the investment in girls though offering them an education (United Nations 2009: 20). In Uganda, rural vs. urban disparities in educational attainment are also well pronounced. According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey of 2006, out of all males interviewed, 26.5% living in urban reported they had at least some secondary schooling as opposed to 24.6% that were rural dwellers. For females, 10.6% of those living in urban areas had had some secondary schooling, while only 6.7% of their rural counterparts reported to ever joining secondary school (Uganda Bureau of Statistics and Macro International 2007). Historically, the rural poor in Uganda have always had challenges in accessing education. This can be partly attributed to the fact that the first schools which were set up by missionaries were in urban areas and those areas with rich soils and favorable climates (Syngellakis et al. 2006 & Nakabugo et al. 2008).

Uganda's education system of schooling follows a system where between the ages of 6-12 years, a child attends primary school for 7 years culminating in the primary leaving education certificate national exam. It is this level that has been targeted for free and compulsory schooling under the (Universal Primary Education) UPE programme by the Ugandan Government. After primary school are O-levels, comprised of four years of secondary schooling for pupils between the ages 13-16years old progressively senior one to four. After this level one can opt for A-levels of 2 more years of secondary schooling and then another four years of university or college schooling depending on ability and interest. Alternatively, there are tertiary colleges where one can also enrol in (Syngellakis et al. 2006).

While there are plan to universalise secondary schooling in Uganda, the current situation is that the project is at a pilot stage. The Ugandan Ministry of Education gives a recognizable support to the education of the girl child. According to the reports of a policy review newsletter from the Education department, the government from the 1990s, for example, implemented the Universal Primary Education (UPE). Following the implementation of UPE, 87% of children between ages of 6-12 were enrolled in primary school. Out of this 86.9% were girls. The government of Uganda further implemented the USE scheme in 2007 as a boost to the UPE scheme implemented in 1997. Under the USE scheme children who would have successfully completed the primary level are admitted and do not need to meet the tuition fees like their counterparts enrolled in non USE schools but are supposed to meet the non tuition costs like books, school uniforms, other scholastic materials. This implies that children, who could have hitherto dropped out of school due to inability to pay the user fees, will be enrolled and retained. This came as a result of having realized that tuition was one of the major obstacles to enrolment and retention in secondary education for girls. According to an Education Sector Performance Report, there has been remarkable increase in enrolment of students, including girls, into secondary education in USE's first year of implementation; most schools under the USE programme have doubled enrolment rates even though with financial constraints, it is yet too early to tell how sustainable this project will be (Alowo 2007).

Rihani (2006) brings to focus the various benefits of girls' secondary schooling which are inextricably connected to primary schooling. First, is that the availability of a secondary school improves enrollment and completion of primary schooling as it raises prospects for future use of the basic schooling. Secondly, is that when girls attain secondary education, they go beyond just being able to read and write and become change agents by participating in civic matter. Thirdly are the health benefits associated with girls' secondary schooling which lead to decreased infant mortality, delayed age at first marriage, reduced teen and overall fertility rates and improved child care. Fourth is the mitigation of the impacts of HIV/AIDS in their communities and last but not least is the use of education as a tool for poverty alleviation by increasing female labor force participation. While this study uses the USE programme as a starting point in its analysis, it may be too early to call it an evaluation of the programme. However this study can be used to make a case into the examination of the various factors that hinder girls from joining, staying in and eventually completing secondary education.

1.1 The research problem

Several studies have been carried out showing the various well known barriers in different regions that stop girls from accessing primary schooling. While these studies have been carried out among primary schools, in the case of day secondary schools, the factors are the same (World Bank 2005). A study done by Nakabugo in Uganda among communities with a fishing economy near Lake Albert had low rates of school enrolment with only 49% of pupils of school going age reporting to be enrolled in a school in 2004. Further, there was high absenteeism of up to 64.2% reported being attributed to various forms of child labour. Other factors were such as lack of teachers and classrooms as well as staff rooms (Nakabugo et al. 2008).

While there are many studies which enlist a set of barriers which affect girl's enrolment in schools, mainly primary schools, there are not many that focus on retention and completion of secondary schooling in Uganda. According to the World Bank:

Despite recent reforms, especially in primary education, little is known about post primary education in Uganda, and this shortage of information has in turn affected the amount and quality of research available (Xiaoyan 2002).

Most of the studies in the line of girls' secondary schooling go on to give an exhaustive list of factors that bar girls from attending school: primary or secondary. What is lacking is an analysis of how these various factors interact as lived realities of different girls as they attempt to get an education in Uganda and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa. The mere categorisation of groups of 'vulnerable girls' living in rural areas, poor, infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, orphaned, disabled or engaged in various forms of child labour bars policy makers and other actors in educational development work from seeing beyond these categories to acknowledging their various interactions which may be

necessary in coming up with strategies to improve female education attainment.

1.2 Objectives and Research Questions

This study is aimed at analyzing different barriers which girls in Uganda face in accessing secondary education. The research is interested in the transition from primary school, enrollment into secondary school and the retention in secondary schools for girls in Uganda upto completion level.

This study uses selected schools in Uganda which have been targeted by the Universal Secondary School policy to find out what are the various barriers of girls secondary school attainment. This will help to explain the gender disparities that exist in secondary school enrolment rates among boys and girls in Uganda. Secondly, it aims to show through analysis how these various factors interact and affect different forms of girls in varying ways as they join and proceed through secondary school levels of education.

The study therefore has two research questions. First, what are the barriers to girl's enrolment in secondary school education in Uganda? Secondly, in what ways does the barriers to secondary school educations for girls in Uganda interact to affect their enrolment, retention and completion of secondary schooling?

1.3 Justification

The 1995 Ugandan constitution recognizes that the state shall promote free and compulsory education to all its citizens. Gender disparity however, is still a salient feature in the Ugandan education system especially at secondary and tertiary levels. The Uganda Gender Policy was established to enable government to take actions that will bring about more equal gender relations; ensure that all government policies and programs in all areas and at all levels are consistent with the long term plan of eliminating gender inequalities (Minister of Gender Labour and Social Development 2007).

The enrolment gap between the girls and boys is wider than at primary school level (Kasente 2003). The gap appears to get constantly wider from the secondary to the tertiary levels. In order to fill the gap of enrolment between boys and girls beginning from the 1990s, an affirmative action of 1.5 bonus points was put in place for girls. This mechanism is directed to help females qualify for tertiary institutions.

In 1999, the Government of Uganda adopted the National Action Plan for Women. Its aim is to achieve equal opportunities for women by empowering them to participate and benefit from economic, social and political development. The girl child, education, poverty, and economic empowerment are among the four specific areas covered in advancing women's position. Keeping girls in school is one way to break into the vicious circles of underdevelopment. Girls' retention in school serves the national development goals of creating educated, healthy, and economically active and secured population (Cartley-Carlson 1994).

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) Uganda's comprehensive development framework highlights education as a major instrument for enhancing the quality of life of the poor. Secondary education, especially for girls, is perceived to benefit not only them but the nation at large.

The Ministry of Education in Uganda gives a recognizable support to the education of the girl child. The government from the 1990s, for example, implemented the Universal Primary Education (UPE). Following the implementation of UPE, 87% of children between ages of 6-12 were enrolled in primary school. Out of this 86.9% were girls. It is estimated however; that girls' enrolment lags consistently behind that of boys by about 20 percent.

USE inception was a government initiative to fulfil its commitment to the Dakar Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) aimed at having both girls and boys' parity in enrolment at the primary and secondary levels by 2005 and gender equality at all levels of education by 2015. According to MoES Sector Performance Report 2006, Uganda Educational Statistics Abstract 2006 and 2007 and A Report on the USE Head Count 2008 there has been remarkable increase in enrolment of students, including girls, into secondary education.

Despite all this effort, preliminary research has shown that in the rural areas of Jinja, 3 out of 5 girls' dropout of before completing secondary school. According to the MoES USE Report 2007, disparities between girls and boys, between rural and urban areas and regional imbalances in the provision of educational facilities still exist. The situation in Jinja shows that there is a retention problem for girls. First there are more boys than girls completing S4.

Although previous studies like that done by the world bank in (2002) identify poverty as the root cause of girls non attainment of school; and that the Ugandan government undertook deliberate action to overcome this by providing USE, more are the boys who stay in school at secondary level than the girls. These suggest that they are other challenges still existing that hinder girls retention and completion of secondary school even in this USE scheme.

1.4 Organization of the Paper

This paper comprises five distinct parts. This chapter has given an introduction into the thematic concern of this paper: an insight into the current situation in terms of gender disparities in female education attainment in Uganda. The subsequent parts described the research questions and justification of the study. The next Chapter, which is the second one, will be a review of literature on barriers to girls' education at both primary level and secondary schools level with a bias on the latter. Chapter three is on methodology and it will discuss the theoretical framework which is, intersectionality theory, which has been used in the study. The findings of the study are in Chapter four and a discussion of them as well as a synthesis on how they have answered the research questions, aims and objectives can be found in this final chapter.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Experiences of Girls Schooling Opportunities

According to the gender analysis policies and plans, the Uganda education sector statistics stand at 39% percent of women aged between 15 and 59 who cannot read, compared to 16% of men in the same category, girls' dropout rate for 2009 stands at 48% (FAWE 2009). A study by (Wells 2008:40) shows that historically females have continued to lag behind males in Uganda with regard to secondary school enrollment.

This shows that gender disparities have continued to persist over a period of time despite deliberate government efforts and policies in place. The persistence of gender disparities can further be explained with regard to a study by the MoES 2005 which shows that;

The education of women in Uganda still lags behind that of men although the policy on education provides for equal educational opportunities for both sexes. Historically few girls schools especially at secondary level were established. This was followed by a lack of expansion of schools during the early 1980s and 1990s, the high school dropout rate, early marriages among girls and cultural and social prejudices against girls' education and a lack of carrier guidance and counseling limited girls' access to educational opportunities. The low educational status of girls in turn limited women's acquisition of knowledge, skills and technology to compete equally with men for available opportunities, facilities and services in all sectors (MoES 2005: 15).

Not any one factor can be convincing enough to present the challenges that girls face in their struggle to attain secondary education. It is well known that girls spend more time in domestic labour than boys. Girls' work includes fetching water, firewood, cooking, looking after children and working in gardens among others. Attending school takes time away from household work, creating a high opportunity cost for the family. Sutton (1998) explains that opportunity cost is the labour and income that are lost to the household when a child attends school and says that because of the important contribution which girls make to the well being of their families and because of the greater expected earnings of males, parents will prefer to educate boys to girls. Economic demands and socio cultural factors intersect with geographical location and school environment to deny girls access to education. Schools that are far away from girls' homes can be seen as a threat to the security of their daughters. Moreover schools with poor standards record tend not to attract students and if it is the only one in the area, then parents will see it as a waste of time for their daughters to go to school.

(FAWE, 2004), in *Scaling up Good Practices in Girls' Education*, notes that in the absence of the necessary provisions, the most common option

taken by girls who suffer menstrual accidents at school is to return home and stay there for the duration. Poor management of sexual maturation leads to high levels of absenteeism since affected girls get discouraged when they don't cop up and drop out. Girls are distressed and uncomfortable because of wearing poor protective material during menstruation and this distracts them.

From the discussion, it is evident that the problem at stake with regards to girls' education in Uganda and in the context specific case of Jinja is not caused only by lack of material and nonmaterial resources, but also by gender and socio-cultural factors that discriminate investment in girls' education.

The existence of dire poverty and gross inequalities limits the potential for economical growth and societal development. Kakuru (2006) argues that an intersectional approach helps give a better understanding of the differences among females and males, and the ways in which these differences intersect to exacerbate marginalization. The approach considers subordination not solely as an issue of gender or any other identity, but as a location where there are often simultaneous and compounding relationships of subordination. It is a tool that helps us understand and respond to the various ways in which different identities intersect as well as how these intersections facilitate oppression and privilege. It is believed that systems of discrimination such as gender, socio-cultural, socio-economic status, create inequalities that structure individuals' relative position.

Girls' school dropout is compounded by many factors. Uneducated parents will not know the value of education and they may not find reason to support their daughters in school. The community, likewise, also composed of members who know little about the value of education, will wonder why a certain father's daughter has overgrown in the name of schooling. Some of them will start concocting stories that such girls will never marry or are cursed. Men on the other hand see girls as an object for marriage and will lay strategies to trap such girls' that will eventually lead to girls' dropping out of school.

Girls face more problems of dropout in Ugandan schools than boys but it is a problem of both sexes leading to dropping out of school at every level. Girls in Ugandan primary and secondary schools do not receive adequate advice and counseling and are forced to make their own decisions or consult members of their peer group who may be ill informed. It is also not worthy that female teachers are not usually promoted to higher managerial level, especially if they are not married (Brown 1996:3).

This may imply that girls drop out could be partly attributed to limited guidance and counseling as a result of limited number of role models. It is also important to question what the aims and objectives of secondary education have to offer in relation to retention and completion of school.

The aims and objectives of secondary education in Uganda are largely devoted to obtaining civic achievements like national unity, economic development and appreciating cultural heritage. The current curriculum and national education aims and objectives make no mention of any efforts to correct the gender disparities in secondary education (Kakuru 2003:17).

2.2 Cultural factors

According to MGLSD (1999) addressing of gender concerns in national policies plans and programmes are culturally determined. The cultural practices of considering sex as sacred hinders openness to sex education in schools. These deny the girls vital information during puberty and hence affect their concentration and at worse may drop out of school in the absence of adequate counseling. Therefore such influences may be partly held responsible for children's early sexual behavior.

Another area to look at is the early girls' maturity compared to boys'. At school, this has a direct relationship with their patience and seriousness with homework. Also girls compared to boys have less disciplinary and attention problems. Ultimately, this behavior for girls implies reduced indirect costs in terms of time and effort for households. Additionally, it is likely that the changes in the marriage market could have contributed to reducing the pro-male education gender gap in Bangladesh since the educated girls fetch more returns upon marriage than the uneducated. This explains why parents now educate their daughters because this is valued in the marriage market, and its achievement makes girls assured of wellbeing (Shafiq, 2009; 140).

2.3 Economic factors

A study by Shafiq shows that a pro-male educational gender gap still exists in Bangladesh, despite its level of economic development and cultural change. One reason for the phenomenon is that household returns to investing in girls' education are less than the returns of investing in boys' education (2009:138).

In this regard it is likely that poor households may uphold this gender gap in relation to monetary returns to education and respond by spending less on girls' education compared to that of boys. It is argued that girls' future earnings are enjoyed by their husband's family when they get married compared to boys who provide financial support to their parents during their old age.

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2.4 Socio-economic factors

Effects of poverty have a heavy toll on girls' retention in secondary school and many factors influence their attitudes which hinder interest in education. 'When children see parents stressing, they lose interest and opt to drop out', (Graham Brown, 1991; Njeuma, 1993). 'High costs of education make parents

divert vision of girls to domestic tasks', (Lloyd and Gaze-Brandon, 1992; Prouty and Summare, 1994).

The Bristol study defines child poverty as severe deprivation of basic human needs such as education, information and access to services (schools, medical facilities) (UN, 1995). This definition seems to visualize poverty as deprivation of both household resources (material) and nonmaterial resources (knowledge) that makes life subsistent or unbearable. In this sense, it is implied 'poverty is a product of multiple conditions. (Stromquist, 1999: 3). Apart from the independent variables whose lack leads to poverty, exogenous forces, such as socio-cultural factors, which encourage gender inequality in the distribution of material and nonmaterial resources, may be more influential in causing poverty to the girl child. Poverty may therefore be said to be the lasting product of social relations that have been established on the basis of profound inequalities, (Stromquist, 1999: 3).

In Bangladesh several initiatives have been put in place that have reduced the direct cost of educating girls in rural areas, leading to increased school enrolments and achieving literacy. These include food for education, free primary education, female secondary school assistance program and several NGO initiatives. Households have positively responded to these cost reductions. These interventions, however, have helped more of girls than boys. The school construction initiatives have provided households with safe education and a conducive environment for socialization and reduced transportation costs for their daughters, (Shafiq, 1009;139).

Stromquist noted that there has been a marked expansion of education more than any other social good in Latin America, but this achievement does not match with the opportunities available to the educated population in terms of access to income and participation in power. However, much as this research holds truth, Latin America still lags behind in as far as the achievement of the years of schooling is concerned. In comparison with other countries, for example, Koreans have 12 years spent at school as opposed to only four of their Brazilian counterparts, (1999: 5).

2.5 Training of manpower

In this regard governments of member countries struggle to fulfil the above goals as a condition and also to reap the benefits. Secondary education plays a role in stimulating UPE by increasing demand for higher education which enhances primary school completion and consequently stimulates government to expand facilities. For instance constructing more schools within a reasonable distance reduces transport cost and increases parental commitment to educate their children especially girls. In addition secondary education completion provides manpower needed to run primary schools such as teachers, head teachers and other support staff. Availability of well trained staff has an impact on retention at all levels of education especially the female staff act as role models.

Having considered skilled staff in educational attainment, similarly girls' secondary education yields benefits that are enjoyed by the whole society. In Uganda there is a local saying that:

“when you educate a woman you educate the nation and when you educate a man, you educate an individual”.

Education empowers women to think critically, increases their democratic participation which may bring about positive changes through instilling positive values and character.

For instance girls with secondary education and above are less likely to fall victim of crimes, are less vulnerable to exploitation and will instil the same values in their children. In addition girls’ empowerment may also enable them to say no to male teachers’ advances and other men who aim at exploiting them sexually through giving gifts or asking them to take books to their staff quarters for marking. Also women are less likely to be corrupt compared to their male counterparts. I can further argue this with reference to female heads of department and institution in Uganda which have depicted a high level of transparency and accountability.

Furthermore it may become easy for the governments to implement its policies when a large percentage of the population can think critically under the influence of education to embrace them. For instance given the health challenges that countries face, girls secondary education can be an effective way of addressing them. As well given the average secondary school age of 13 years and above, children are more sexually active than at the primary level. Accordingly measures to mitigate HIV/AIDS can be more effective. May 2006 argues that;

“Girls’ secondary education reduces infant mortality, increases childhood immunization and nutrition, reduces children’s stunting and lowers fertility rates and unwanted pregnancies. Secondary education offers a valuable opportunity to catch girls when they are most vulnerable, when they can and must learn healthy behaviours. Consequently this can mitigate HIV/AIDS given that over half of the 40 million people affected are girls and women” (May 2006, 2). It can further be argued that the longer girls stay in school the lower their fertility becomes and also get more qualifications to enable them compete in the labour market.

2.6 Poverty alleviation

Having considered health outcomes accruing from secondary education, there exists a relationship between quality education attainment for girls and poverty reduction. For instance education empowers girls and women socially and economically hence providing a key to poverty alleviation through provision of high returns with regard to wage growth. May 2006 argues that;

Family health problems are largely alleviated through secondary education which drains the economy of a family and a nation. To compensate for higher infant mortality rates, women deliver eight or nine children in the hope that five will survive. This lowers the economic productivity of mothers, in

addition increases complications from child birth besides further straining a poor family” (May 2006.59)

Besides as discussed earlier a combination of secondary education benefits strengthens them in a sense that the training of manpower strengthens enrolment and retention in schools. This further empowers students to attain critical thinking skills which when combined with embracing of useful health outcomes saves on national and family resources on treatment besides the wage growth of individual’s hence enhancing poverty reduction. Also Watkins argues that

As an empowerment right, education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities. Education has a vital role in empowering women, safeguarding children from exploitative and hazardous labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment and controlling population growth. Increasingly, education is recognised as one of the best financial investments States can make (Watkins 1999).

It is of paramount importance to view secondary education beyond primary years of schooling. The intersection of these multiple benefits strengthens their operation and the impact they yield contributing to fast growth and development of countries.

“First secondary and tertiary education is part of the EFA goals and Millennium development goals of gender parity and equality” (EFA Global monitoring report 2007.41)

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Theoretical framework

Historically, social science studies that seek to underlie factors that hinder social groups from accessing social services such as health care or education are quantitative studies which deduce the factors and go further to carry a multivariate level analysis in order to see which factors are more significant than others. This was the basis for policies of affirmative action which used categories of excluded social groups to make an argument for their inclusion such as race or gender (Hurtado 2005). The study of gender disparities in education attainment for the developing world has followed this trend too. This can help to explain why the literature reviewed for this study ends at the listing of the factors which hinder girls from enrolling and attending secondary schooling in Uganda. This categorization lists factors such as rural place of residence, distance to schools, child labor, disabled girls, gender and cultural factors as well as lack of money.

As an attempt at creating new knowledge in the area of gender disparities in female secondary school attainment, this study will utilize intersectionality theory borrowed from feminist literature. The growth of intersectionality theory can be traced to the idea of affirmative action, also associated with feminist thought which was aimed at the efforts to argue for the inclusion of certain marginalized groups into social services with early theorists working in areas associated with race, sexuality, class, gender and ethnicity. According to (Hancock 2007), the intersectionality theory aimed to move away from studies of sole categories of marginalization such as considering only race, or class or gender in analysis to the intersectional diversity of these factors. In doing this, the aim of the intersectional theory is not to come up with multiplicative identities or enlist the most vulnerable among other vulnerable groups in such a study, but to show the link between the factors of hindrance and how each can be significant at one time or another. While arguing that ‘intersections of the categories is more than the sum of its parts’ such a study can be used to show the causal complexity and offer some form of ‘thick description’ in the words of anthropologist Clifford Geertz as we interrogate the various interactions between persons and institutions.

McCall (2005) on types of intersectionality complexities discusses three main methods namely: *anticategorical*, which is a rejection of categorization, *intracategorical*, an analysis of differences between different categories, and *intercategorical* which looks for qualitative difference within a category. For this study, at the level of intercategorical analysis, data is presented while strategically using existing social groups as a basis for comparison. This is mainly with the quantitative information on information such as enrollment of girls comparing those living in rural areas as a category versus those living in urban areas showing the disparities. Gender as a category is also used to show

that females in Uganda generally receive less schooling at both primary and secondary levels. Wealth status is another category which is commonly used in data used such as the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey that has a wealth quintile by which respondents can be categorized.

This study goes further than merely showing comparative data of girls who face barriers in accessing and completing secondary schooling in Uganda because they are females, or because they live in rural areas or because they are from poor families. The qualitative analysis uses an intracategorical approach by doing analysis at an in-depth level as an attempt to reveal the complex nature of different experiences of girls especially when faced with multiple barriers. In this way, intersectionality as an analytical framework accepts the traditional categories (in this study of rural/urban, wealth status and male/female) albeit critically, and uses them to identify and study their finer points of intersectionality. Anticategorical and intracategorical approaches argue against fixed, stable and homogenized social groups and see these as changing, unstable and heterogeneous (McCall 2005). This means that even when a group of girls are labeled as poor, there could be significant differences amongst them. This may be such as those who have both parents alive versus those who are orphaned, both may rate in the same economic poverty group, but their familial love and ability to help them with enrollment differs.

The study selects the intracategorical approach as it allows for an in-depth look at selected case studies as unique such as the Jinja case. It reveals diversity in girls' experiences shows variation and heterogeneity and generally gives a more real picture on the ground about girls' enrollment, schooling and completion at secondary level in Jinja, Uganda.

Kakuru (2006) argues that an intersectional approach helps give a better understanding of the differences among females and males, and the ways in which these differences intersect to exacerbate marginalization. The approach considers subordination not solely as an issue of gender or any other identity, but as a location where there are often simultaneous and compounding relationships of subordination. It is a tool that helps us understand and respond to the various ways in which different identities intersect as well as how these intersections facilitate oppression and privilege. It is believed that systems of discrimination such as gender, socio-cultural, socio-economic status, create inequalities that structure individuals' relative position.

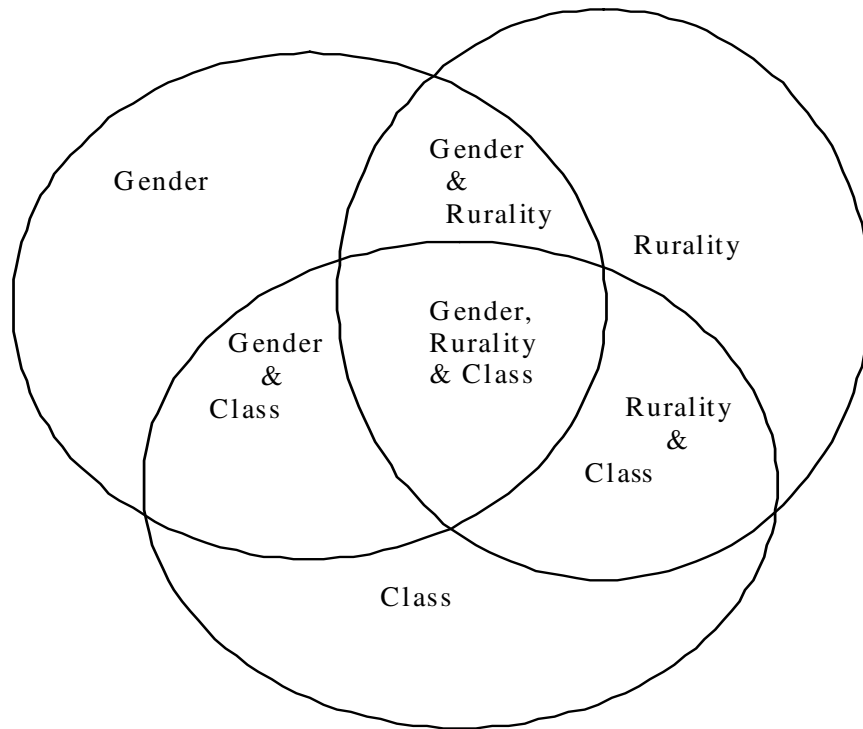
3.2 Analytical Framework

The analytical framework below has been derived from the theoretical framework of intersectionality theory. To enable an intracategorical analysis, the following broad categories will be analyzed: Gender, rurality and class and their relationships to each other.

While it is fairly straightforward to engage with the clear areas of simply a gender analysis as concerns girls schooling, such as making frequency tables of girls versus boys schooling rates, this points at which gender and rurality interstice is the point of interest for this study. This is the same of the demarcation of experiences between rural versus urban girls, poor versus rich ones, and becomes complex as all these three factors affect a particular type of

girls who can be located at the very centre of the diagram named figure 1. which is used to illustrate the point further.

Figure1: Intersections of Gender, Rurality and Class



Source: Own Construction

Gender

While sex refers to the differences in human beings based on their biological nature as male or female, gender refers to the process of social construction that happens to us in order to be seen as masculine or feminine (Lorber 1995). This study uses gender as a social category in both the sense of the biological while grouping data on female and male experiences of secondary schooling in Uganda, but goes further to interrogate how the process of gendering girls as females acts as a barrier to accessing education.

Rurality

Rurality simply refers to being a resident of a place that is not urbanised. Such areas are marked by characteristics such as long distances to schools, heavy reproductive roles such as fetching water from far off sources such as the river, use of pit latrines and generally more prone to cultures that undermine women.

Class

Class refers to the wealth status of women which varies with different studies based on the criteria used to group various women.

3.3 The Data

This data used for this study is both from primary and secondary sources. The secondary data is mainly quantitative while the data collected was qualitative.

In gathering primary data the study made use of the following; data collection was conducted in Jinja district between 10th of July to 7th August 2009 in the education department, Busedde College Bugaya, Buyengo Secondary school.

I used the interview method because I wanted to explore students' in depth experiences, using a fairly small number and to enable them express themselves freely in groups. I used structured interview because it made it easy for me to analyze results and as well I used semi-structured interviews because I needed to get some qualitative and quantitative information regarding girls' retention and completion of secondary school.

The study purposely selected interviewees for the in depth interviews using question guides set the research focus.. Furthermore I was able to choose the two schools with typical secondary school retention problems. I chose a total number of 20 informants (policy makers and implementers, school administrators, community leaders, parents, teachers and; in school and out of school girls and boys) were identified for detailed individual interviews. Further interviews were held with parents of girls in and out of school, as well as some key informants.

Four group interviews using discussion guide were also held with secondary school girls and boys in each of the two schools which enabled me to get in depth information concerning their views about girls retention and completion, how they perceived the situation at hand and why they held the views that they had.

For the girls, the questions in a way directly related to their experiences, while the boys, the interview mainly sought their thoughts about girls' Education. Through this, it became easier to select two girls and one boy in each school for in-depth interviews.

Secondary data was collated from the MOES, FAWE, MGLSD, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) as well other government publications were used.

The data was analyzed according to the content of the interviews and responses were grouped in reference to the major themes which reoccurred. In addition, individual interpretations, judgments, opinions and conclusions have been made and drawn. Some of these are complementary with quotations from the qualitative primary data in order to give more meaning.

This study having used more than one method, triangulation was made possible as a result of the data being used originating from primary and secondary sources. For details of the above please refer to Appendix 1.

3.4 Limitations of the study

The study was conducted in two schools due to financial constraints and time limitation. Also given the fact that USE is only three years since its inception in addition to its limited coverage countrywide, this was a bit problematic for me to establish satisfactory retention and completion results. Furthermore though the findings of this study should not automatically be generalised for the entire country and region, it can offer insights and reflections for other USE schools in Jinja district.

The Study was carried out at a time when schools were conducting end of term two examinations and had only two weeks to end of term holidays. Consequently some respondents were not easily got for detailed interviews including head teachers, teachers and officials of Jinja district education office.

Both schools covered under this study were day schools and had inconsistencies in students' attendance more so on days when examinations in optional subjects were conducted. Therefore I had to make fresh appointments with the students through their class teachers who knew where the particular students lived.

The Jinja district education department did not have current statistical data particularly concerning USE enrolment, dropout rate and performance results for the Uganda Certificate of education (UCE). This was a challenge to my study since I needed this data to compare the trend before and after USE program. Also alternative sources were too expensive though I later managed to get some data from the Uganda human resource department of which still was not exhaustive.

According to a study by the global monitoring report 2006.51 "the achievement of education for all depends on the progress in secondary and tertiary education". When transitions to higher levels of education become certain, more children may be encouraged to enroll and continue schooling. Furthermore it can be argued that secondary education provides a link between primary and tertiary levels.

Secondary education can therefore serve as the standard base for educational attainment give for as long as education provision takes note off the learners' local needs and there is mastery of what is taught. In addition maternal and infant mortality rates reduce while educated mothers can value education and take their children to school compared to mothers with low education attainment.

A report by FAWE-Uganda 2006 shows that educated women can become income earners and business entrepreneurs, which improves the livelihood of families. Children born to teenage mothers tend to be underfed, are unlikely to be fully immunized. Also such children are likely to die before the age of five (FAWE 2006).

Chapter 4

Findings: Points of Intersection for Barriers to Girls Education in Jinja

Gender Roles, Rural Livelihoods and Girls' Secondary Schooling

Through the process of socialization men and women acquire attitudes and values. Boys are believed to remain in their lineage and immortalize their male parents while girls leave after marriage. This means that whatever financial investment is made on the girls' education is alienated from the father's family. As a result, more importance is given to boys' formal education than that of girls. This discrimination against girls seems even more pronounced in poor households, as a girl interviewed explains below:

“Some parents pay school fees of their sons first and for their daughters later. Normally, after a month in school, the number of girls sent home to collect school fees and other school requirements is more than that of boys. These might be some of the reasons why boys persistently perform better than girls”. S.2 Student Buyengo S.S (secondary school) 15/7/09.

The point of families paying fees for sons first is also explained by an official of the local leadership, who also shows that men make decisions about their education:

When funds are limited, parents pay their son's fees first. There is limited parental love for girls, often girls are withdrawn from school and promised to resume later. Sometimes fathers say that the mothers should pay for the girls. Many times fathers refuse to pay fees for girls, when the girls do not respect them. This condition has led women to start small businesses in order to raise money to pay for their daughters. Many changes are now taking place in our society. Mothers have started paying for their daughters' education and it has become difficult for fathers to marry off the daughters, even when they get pregnant. Parents now consider giving girls a second chance (Secretary for women affairs Kaliro 18/7/09).

The study revealed that girls experience more discrimination in families giving preference treatment to boys on gender basis. They live under a gender stereotype ideology. Women and girls are often portrayed as subjects of marriage and domestic helpers. Furthermore the poverty crisis in homes makes it difficult for parents to meet girls' requirements. This forces girls to look for alternatives to sustain themselves. Girls often get problems when they reach puberty age and some parents always find reasons to end their schooling. Peer groups and lack of role models lead girls to difficult situations, which sometimes lead them into marriage. Sometimes, marriage is chosen for girls by their parents. When families are overwhelmed by the big numbers of children, the only way is to end their education and arrange marriage for them. For instance some education experiences by respondents below can help give light to girls' dilemma:

Peer groups influence girls a lot. When members of these groups never completed schooling or never went to school, they discourage girls from continuing with school. There is lack of role models for girls in villages. If the mother of a girl divorced, the step mother will do everything possible to make sure that the girl she found in the home does not continue schooling. (Student Buyengo S.S 17/7/09).

Long distance from home increases girls' exposure to being lured or raped by men. Girls are faced with sexual harassment, rape or, abduction, and can get exposure to HIV/AIDS. The pathways and roads in most cases are not safe when girls are alone. Girls are harassed by male students, teachers and the community in which they live and on their way to and from school they are sexually abused by men in their communities. (Headgirl Busedde College 16/7/09)

Some parents produce children without planning and before they know it; they are overwhelmed by the big numbers of children. Running away from family problems is common with men, who leave the burden to the women. This is dangerous because some families may not be able to educate all their children. (Student Busedde college 17/07/09)

According to (MGLSD, 1999) addressing of gender concerns in national policies plans and programmes are culturally determined. The cultural practices of considering sex as sacred hinders openness to sex education in schools. These deny the girls vital information during puberty and hence affect their concentration and at worse may drop out of school in the absence of adequate counseling. Therefore such influences may be partly held responsible for children's early sexual behavior.

Early marriage sanctioned under both customary law and Islamic practice has been a widespread problem that keeps girls out of school. Women have been primarily associated, and viewed in terms of their reproductive roles. Women are seen as a source of bride wealth to the family and the clan and girls are married off when they should be at school. There is need to advocate for measures aimed at campaigning against such practices which may have a hand in children's drop out from school.

Some families view their daughters as a source of wealth, thus send them to school to pass time until they are old enough to be married off for dowry or use their labour at home. In addition early marriage and parenthood also prevents girls from going to school. Traditionally, in rural Jinja, girls' formal education is not considered important, (UNICEF, 2005).

Girls' survival at school is endangered through lowered performance because of frequent absenteeism. Absenteeism is compounded by many factors like long distances from home, which sometime over tax the girls and opt to miss school some days. Some of the girls', who persevere, are delayed by rains or the demands of house duties required of them before they can go to school. In such cases, the girls will arrive late at school and will face other problems as a result, as recorded below by one girl during the interview:

My secondary school is about four kilometers from home. I walk every day to and from school. Since I am in a candidate class and preparing for the national examinations, classes start at 6.30am and end at 8.00am for the morning session. I usually arrive late and I am not allowed to enter class. I am always given punishment to dig in the garden up to break time. When I enter class after break, I am often tired and hungry and it is difficult to concentrate. We also have evening lessons up to 6.00pm before going back home. Since I do

not eat lunch at school, I get home very tired and hungry too. Sometimes I miss school when I see that I will not make it to school in time (S.4 student Busede College, 19/7/09).

The experience above is common with students in rural schools. Students in urban schools do not walk long distances to school and the parents provide them with the school requirements. That is the difference between educated and uneducated, poor and working parents.

Creating more schools closer to communities where girls live reduces the indirect opportunity costs and ensures safety than the situation experienced during long commuting. As a student above has testified, girls' participation in education drops in areas where schools are far away from girls' homes, compared to schools nearby. Girls' walking long distances from home to school has other fatal problems, as evidenced by a student below;

If a girl lives far away from school, she will meet many problems on the way and sometimes at school as well. Men wait for girls on the way and pester them for love by speaking immoral words and offering the girls money and if the parents cannot afford to provide lunch for the girls, the girls can give in to their demands. When that happens, girls will miss school some days, when their men suggest that they go and enjoy somewhere. Since it is far from home, parents will not know what is happening. If girls persist and don't give in, some of them will still meet similar problems at school from male teachers who may be interested in them. Also when a girl refuses a teacher, he revenges by punishing her whenever there is an opportunity. So when a girl comes to school late, it will be a chance for that teacher to punish that girl severely, and this will make her give in, or change school or give up schooling. (Headgirl Biryengo S.S 20/7/09).

Gendered Poverty and Girls Secondary Schooling

No one factors can be convincing enough to present the challenges that girls face in their struggle to attain secondary education. Here, I analyze out of school and in school factors that inter relate to affect girls' education.

It is well known that girls spend more time in domestic labour than boys. Girls' work includes fetching water, firewood, cooking, looking after children and working in gardens among others. Attending school takes time away from household work, creating a high opportunity cost for the family. Sutton M. explains that opportunity cost is the labour and income that are lost to the household when a child attends school and says that because of the important contribution that girls make to the well being of their families and because of the greater expected earnings of males, parents will prefer to educate boys to girls.

Economic demands and socio cultural factors intersect with geographical location and school environment to deny girls access to education. Schools that are far away from girls' homes can be seen as a threat to the security of their daughters. Moreover schools with poor standards record tend not to attract students and if it is the only one in the area, then parents will see it as a waste of time for their daughters to go to school.

Rural Livelihoods, Class and Girls Secondary Schooling in Uganda

In rural schools it is also common to find girls being used by fellow male students as sexual friends and indiscriminately by teachers as 'little wives'. Odaga and Heneveld (1995) in their study came across the same evidence. 'Teachers prey on their female students, threatening to fail them or publicly humiliate them.' Teachers are supposed to prepare and guide students socially, morally and emotionally but the moment they turn their students into wives at school, then they will have put the students' future in jeopardy.

Also girls' living in rural areas lack role models to emulate, yet the parents are uneducated and the community is hostile to girls' education. After school, the girls have to help with household chores like fetching water collecting firewood and cooking. By the time they are through with all that, they are too tired to revise their books or do homework. And even if they could, sometimes there may not be fuel in the candles to light at night. Most rural schools are so poorly structured that both girl and boy students use the same toilets. There are no sanitary facilities and girls especially facing humiliation and embarrassment when they have to deal with menstruation accidents in the face of lack of neither sanitary pads nor water.

According to Carasco (1996) girls place high priority on the problem of privacy and cleanliness, and thus lack of latrines and water causes them to drop out of school. The RUWASA news letter, 1998 observes that if there was to be retention of girls in schools, there had to be sufficient and separate toilet facilities. School dropout is an intersectional problem emerging from various sources and this study will help to visualize the convergence of different types of discrimination that prohibit girls from enjoying their right to education.

Dropout rates get higher in the rural schools and as girls grow. The puberty stage disturbs them a lot and many of them end up with pregnancies. Girls in rural areas are bought lunch at school by boys and men for sex, because parents cannot afford to give them. Girls resort to getting what they want from boys or men. This situation turns out bad for girls as they end up pregnant. They then turn up for cheap labor to support themselves after dropping out of school.

Jinja is both rural and urban and girls in rural areas are more disadvantaged than those in urban areas, where there is electricity, running water and students do not walk long distances. The other risks rural girls face on the long way to and from school is unheard of in urban areas. Parents in urban areas work in different places, while parents in rural areas are very poor. They cannot afford to provide their children with lunch at school, nor uniform, books and examination fee (Inspector of Schools, Jinja District)

Appropriate facilities should be built at school and government should look for more funds to put up more USE schools in rural poor areas, to deal with the problem of long distance from home that increases girls' exposure to being lured or raped by men. Distance from home pose more personal risks: sexual harassment, rape, abduction, assault and exposure to HIV/AIDS for girls than boys. The pathways and roads in most cases are narrow and dangerous, especially very early in the morning and late in the evening. Girls

are more vulnerable to sexual harassment by male students, teachers and community in which they live and on their way to and from school. Sexual abuse and harassment can be verbal, directly expressed or disguised, whistling in a sexually suggestive manner, making obscene gestures making unnecessary brushing and touching. These lead to higher dropout rate and increasing cases of teenage pregnancy, which also deters them from acquiring education. Those still at school cannot perform as well as the boys.

If finances are not enough, parents prefer giving boys fees. There is no parental love for girls, because the girls are withdrawn from school and made to work in gardens to generate fees for boys. The girls are promised to go back to school later. Sometimes a man will say that the woman should pay for the girls, well knowing the woman has no money. Many times men refuse to pay fees for girls, when the girls do not respect them. This condition has led women to start small businesses in order to raise money to pay for their daughters. Some men resort to drinking. Many changes are now taking place in our society. Many women are paying for their daughters' education and it has become too hard for men to marry off the daughters, even when they get pregnant. After delivering, the girls are always going back to school, (secretary for women).

Women are also being seen as having their primary role of being mothers. Furthermore, the free secondary education is not really free; it caters for only tuition fees implying that the other user costs, uniform, books, exam fees, etc have to be met by the poor parents. This is an uphill task because household resources are limited. The NWASEA (1997), discusses causes of early marriage and drop out. The research sites loss of control and lack of care and proper guidance by parents to the girl adolescents, many of whom incidentally, no longer listen to their parents, yet fathers are increasingly feeling irresponsible over the proper upbringing of children, casting the burden and blame in the case of mistakes to mothers. Parents' divorce leads to mistreatment of children, especially girls, by step mothers.

Also poverty is said to be the underlying factor for girls' poor performance and school dropout. It is estimated that about 35% of households in Uganda live below the poverty line. Because of this parents are not able to financially meet indirect costs of education, including text books, uniform and lunch at school. Considering the situation in Jinja, poverty is both a rural and an urban problem. In the rural area the population consists of 90% peasant farmers and poverty is caused by lack of reliable source of income (Ssekiboobo, D. et al 2003.12). On a general note, the poverty situation in Jinja can be explained by lack of social networks, lack of consistent earning, exploitation, and high cost of living, lack of markets, unreliable civic leadership and socio-emotional complications. Although there have been programs to emancipate women, they have been highly marginalized (Ssekiboobo, D. et al 2003, 13).

Girls are still taken as source of income. Parents cannot afford amenities needed by girls, hence resorting to boyfriends as an alternative source of income. Furthermore with the rising cost of living and education, girls are going to be locked out of education, given the fact that the new policy of USE emphasizes cost sharing where it comes to basic requirements. Government

pays for tuition only while parents are expected to provide students with books, pens lunch at school, uniform and examination fee.

Many girls are forced to withdraw from school when family finances are limited. Sometimes the girls are told to work and raise money to support their brothers to continue schooling (Student respondent Busedde College 20/7/09).

Sexuality and Girls' Secondary Schooling

FAWE (2004) in *Scaling up Good Practices in Girls' Education* notes that in the absence of the necessary provisions, the most common option taken by girls who suffer menstrual accidents at school is to return home and stay there for the duration. Poor management of sexual maturation leads to high levels of absenteeism since affected girls get discouraged when they don't cope up and drop out. Girls are distressed and uncomfortable because of wearing poor protective material during menstruation and this distracts them.

From the discussion, it is evident that the problem at stake with regards to girls' education in Uganda and in the context specific case of Jinja is not caused only by lack of material and nonmaterial resources, but also by gender and socio-cultural factors that discriminate investment in girls' education.

The existence of dire poverty and gross inequalities limits the potential for economical growth and societal development. Girls' school dropout is compounded by many factors. Uneducated parents will not know the value of education and they may not find reason to support their daughters in school. The community, likewise, also composed of members who know little about the value of education, will wonder why a certain father's daughter has overgrown in the name of schooling. Some of them will start concocting stories that such girls will never marry or are cursed. Men on the other hand see girls as an object for marriage and will lay strategies to trap such girls' that will eventually lead to girls' dropping out of school.

According to Carasco (1996) girls place high priority on the problem of privacy and cleanliness, and thus lack of latrines and water causes them to drop out of school. The RUWASA news letter, 1998 observes that if there was to be retention of girls in schools, there had to be sufficient and separate toilet facilities. School dropout is an intersectional problem emerging from various sources and this study will help to visualize the convergence of different types of discrimination that prohibit girls from enjoying their right to education.

Chapter 5

Discussion: Intersections of Class, Gender and Rural Livelihoods as they affect secondary schooling in Uganda

Based on the objective of the study, this chapter presents the findings of the study which sought to find out barriers to girls' secondary school education based on both in school and out of school factors.

Article 26 of The (UDHR) states that, 'Education is a basic right'. Uganda is a signatory to the UN Convention on Human Rights. The findings have shown that different players in this field of supporting the girl child to attain secondary education have gone out all the way to put this in reality. In this same effort, Hon Betty Okwir, Minister in the Office of the Vice-President, in a paper presentation on the topic, Advocacy on Promotion of female Education by the Media, (FAWE 1998) stated that benefits of educating girls provide positive values and skills, and employment to bring necessary changes like small family size, positive culture to enable girls cope with modernization in time keeping and assertiveness.

According to (FAWE -U, 2009), although secondary school enrolment figures for girls have risen in recent years, completion rates are dropping. FAWE's research identified early marriage, pregnancy, sexual abuse from boys and male teachers, poor sanitation facilities at school, and heavy workloads at home as some of the factors responsible for the high dropout rates. Dropout rates are also the highest in rural areas. Consequently with the increase in enrollment under this program, more attention should now be placed on retention, completion and performance. To support this argument, the findings have indicated that there are various barriers that intersect to block secondary schoolgirls from schooling. When weighed against government and other stakeholders' efforts to provide free education, these other challenges if not faced squarely, are likely to hinder many more girls from benefiting from the government education programs.

Many research exploits have under scored the role of discrimination and lack of opportunities for girls play in hindering them from attending secondary school, the following factors, the research has found out, are equally paramount: girls miss school due to menstruation, sexual harassment, adolescent hormonal upheavals, peer pressure and sex advances among others.

This research, which covered rural Jinja district, found out that gender inequalities have persisted in Uganda's secondary education despite government's deliberate and specific interventions such as the implementation of USE. Also this research was carried out in order to establish the extent to which the persistence of these inequalities is as a result of the interface between gender, rurality, and poverty, cross-cultural and socio-cultural factors. The study looked at other factors that are now central in inhibiting girls from attending secondary education and these include; parents' poverty and

illiteracy, socio-cultural attitudes, sexual harassment, long distance from home, lack of proper latrines, and poor sanitation conditions among others.

While we focus on education as our starting point in this study, it is important to link it to different barriers that intersect to create the present imbalances in gender. This chapter, therefore, presents the research findings as a way of answering the first research question. In the sections below, a discussion of the barriers to girls' educational participation in Jinja district is done first. An intersectional analysis then follows.

Opportunities for girls' schooling seem to correlate with the economic strength or weakness of parents in households. In the context-specific situation of Jinja, there are a number of household and socio-cultural reasons that seem to entrench the pro-male gender educational gender gaps. From the household perspective, poverty, low monetary returns from girls' education, safety concerns may be some of the reasons for the persistence of educational gender gaps. Further, negative social image, 'against educating girls based on culture exacerbates educational gender gaps', (Stromquist, 2005: Lewis and Lockheed, 2006: Shafiq 2009: 137)

The FAWE abhors sexual harassment which involves the use of abusive language and gestures, sexual advances, touching and groping because it harms girls physically, psychologically and emotionally. Also it embarrasses, humiliates and shameful to the victim. Yet because of negative attitudes and practices in culture like forced marriage, and considering females as sexual objects, sexual harassment is widely tolerated and culprits are not apprehended', (FAWE, 2005)

Peer groups influences girls a lot. When members of these groups never completed schooling or never went to school at all, they will discourage a girl from continuing with school. There are no role models for girls in villages. All they see are rich people who trade in sugar cane and these never went to school. If the mother of a girl divorced, the step mother will do everything possible to make sure that the girl she found in the home does not succeed in school. (Student Buyengo S.S)

Long distance from home increases girls' exposure to being lured or raped by men. Girls are faced with sexual harassment, rape or, abduction, and can get exposure to HIV/AIDS. The pathways and roads in most cases are not safe when girls are alone. Girls are harassed by male students, teachers and the community in which they live and on their way to and from school they are sexually abused by men in their communities. (Headgirl Busedde College).

Some secondary mixed schools have other challenges. The public has come up with fake hostels and parents and teachers have no control over their children. On weekends girls end up in wrong hands as they try to get social materials. These are normally schools with poor standards, which normally attract rejects from the so called good schools and therefore unattractive to students. Girls are likely to fail in such schools. (Mr. Kiirya, Jinja District Inspector of Schools)

FAWE plans to lobby for a policy that will enable pregnant girls to go back to school after delivery. FAWE-U supports needy girls in secondary education by provision of bursaries up to grade four (Prof Mary Okwakol, Vice-Chancellor, Busitema University and Chairperson FAWE-U, FAWE, 2009). The policy Mary Okwal is talking about above is actually in use in secondary schools. Girls are allowed in school after they give birth.

The different factors that play against girls in their pursuit of education result in low performances, compared to boys. The table below opens up to this picture.

Table 1: Students who sat national examinations in 2007

Gender	S4	S6	Total
Male	41,838	17,577	234,129
Female	30,956	10,032	179,353
Total	72,794	27,609	413,482

Source: Uganda Educational Statistics Abstract, 2007

The table above shows the level of performance for both boys and girls. It also shows the difference in sitting between those in S4 and S6.

Lawrence Summers, (1994) asserts that educating girls offers the best hope of cutting into the cycle of female deprivation. When one takes into account all its benefits, educating girls yield a higher rate of return than any other investment available in the development world. Educating girls raises their productivity, reduces child mortality, reduces fertility, reduce maternal mortality, and help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, enable sustainability of environmental management. Therefore this leads to enhancement of quality life, greater participation in the democratic processes in society and in decision making. (FAWE and AAS, African Academy of Scientists) stated that each additional year of schooling for women is associated with a decline in infant mortality of between 5-10 percent. The Uganda Demographic and Health Surveys confirm these positive developments. Educational level is strongly associated with reproductive behavior, contraceptive use, fertility, and infant and child mortality.

Reflections

The study aimed at finding reasons for the continued gender disparities in secondary education. It has highlighted measures that were taken by the government of Uganda and partners in development in promoting retention of girl child education. The research centered on the central point that poverty, socio-cultural, geographical and economical realities, gender, with specific attention to rural areas, and others have prohibited girls from continuing with secondary education. The research highlights the many suggestions as gathered from different respondents, and textual materials, leading to an emphasis in making free secondary education for S5 and S6 as well. The Policy of re-entry into the secondary school system for school girls who become pregnant is a welcome decision because it has given a second chance to girls who were previously cast out once they became pregnant.

The study revealed that poverty is a major hindrance to students', especially girls' secondary education, the effects being more evident in rural areas where the majority of the population is peasant farmers. In addition to

poverty, the study revealed that there are other factors that hinder secondary school girls to continue with their education, such as traditional beliefs, values, cultural practices and influence from the cross-border cultures. These have continued to maintain a status-quo of a gendered division of labor where by the girls child continues to be looked at as work force for domestic household, leaving boys redundant and free to do whatever they want. This has also led to the indiscipline of boys since they spend most of their time in discos. Girls work in morning before going to school and in the evening when they come back from school, making them always to feel tired and unable to homework let alone perform well in class.

The study shows that the geographical location of a place matters a lot in providing an enabling environment for students, especially girls, to concentrate on their studies. Schools in rural areas are usually far away from each other and girls meet a lot of risks on the way to and from school. Students in candidate classes often miss the early morning lessons as they ca not get to school in time. From many views gathered from respondents in the rural areas, communities discourage instead encouraging girls to study. Since lazy men spend time in rumor mongering and doing unproductive work, they turn their interests in trying to seduce the big girls for sex. Most people in rural areas have low education and it is rare to find role models whom children can emulate.

On the issue of socio-cultural factors cultural norms still seem to affect girls' education in school. In most cases when family incomes are limited parents in case will let boys continue with their education, and sometimes make girls work to get fees to educate their brothers. Men still hold the idea that females should be groomed for marriage and should not waste time and overgrow in school. However, the study has also revealed that many women movements for the emancipation of women and the girl child are fighting a victorious war.

The government policies of affirmative action, for example reserving women seats at the local and district councils and in parliament have encouraged more girls to aspire higher. The many ministerial positions in the government of Uganda have also raised the status of women. It has been shown in this study that women are seriously engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In the service sector, several women are heading many institutions, like head teachers or deputies. The case for Jinja district is an example in point: The District Chief Education Officer and Chief Inspector of Schools are women. These are fight hard to eliminate such evils like the thinking that when girls study and succeed, the benefits will go to the husband's family.

In light of the above specifically fee free education can only effectively meet its purpose when direct and indirect costs of education are taken care of which helps to eliminate exclusion of many children including new enrollees from education of an acceptable quality. Essentially much as Uganda has embarked on the policy of automatic promotion, for successful implementation, there is need for an increase in the budget allocation to secondary education to cater for both direct and indirect costs for increased retention and completion to prevail since government has the sole obligation

of promoting the right to education as the main duty bearer. Also the Uganda situation is still disadvantaged because private schools outnumber government schools. Though a few private schools have been incorporated in USE, on ground the reality is that private schools are continuing to expand at a faster rate.

At school level, the government's grants to construct classrooms, teachers' houses, funding tuition, extra-curriculum activities and equipping laboratories and libraries with needed materials and books is a big lift in the parents' aspirations of seeing their girls complete their education.

Lack of parental guidance—some parents don't care about what they say and do for their children, don't care about what time their children get home, the kind of friends they associate with, parents who are reluctant to provide basic needs to their children have led girls to seek for love elsewhere. Protect girls from abuse, exploitation and violence, people who commit crimes against girls should not be allowed to escape justice and punishment they receive should be made widely known. Stop using children in work that exposes them to danger and risks to their health, education, and girls should move in groups composed of responsible people who should take care of one another. Girls should take it upon themselves to avoid situations that can lead to danger. Redistribution of domestic work, boys, too, should be encouraged to participate in house chores. End the traditional way of early marriage. Provide life skills to girls to enable them fight for themselves.

Misconception that girls and women are a weaker sex, needing to be protected, thus excluding them from education, depending on child labor. The cost of education is expensive; schools chase away children who don't contribute to other school budgets. Those who don't pay lunch don't eat. Pregnancies among girls cause their expulsion. Schools in rural and urban poor areas are less appealing and less effective in retaining students. There has been a negative attitude towards technical education towards girls; those who don't have a future at courses at university will not have aspirations to continue.

Girls make decisions based on external demands; peer groups, society. Respect and listen to others and use them as reference points about rightness or wrongness of their acts. Loyalty and conformity to peer groups are of greatest importance to acceptance and approval to self esteem. Morals are standards of behavior expected of a person by religion, cultural traditions. Girls should be encouraged to learn about what is acceptable and what is not from information and advice they hear from parents, community leaders, counselors and through books and straight talk, as well as observing other good people's behavior. Through the clubs like GEM, the girls should identify why other children go wrong and end up dropping out of school. The study also noted that if parents are divided or divorced, they will not be able to work as joint force in finding means to support their children.

Many researchers have shown that men with polygamous families often, neglect their children. They find themselves unable to support the numerous children they have produced and ask each of their women to look after their children, as an escape from the burden. The research also revealed that some families live in bad housing structures, where by members share limited space and drunken men will not get ashamed to play sex with their wives in the

hearing or looking of their children. Such parents are known to neglect their children and won't listen to their problems. Such parents won't hesitate to withdraw their girls from school in the name of finding the correct, stable path for them before they (parents) die.

Conclusion

Since education time immemorial is the key to national development and personal emancipation, government and other stake holders should step up their efforts in fighting inequality. As shown by this study, there is all the will from different plays to reduce and completely eliminate discrimination. All factors at all levels are known, which will make it easy to follow up decision implementation. There is good sign that many more women are engaging in small scale economic businesses and this will go a long way in supporting government programs. Sustainable incomes will spearhead not only development but also raise people's standards of living, lower infant mortality and maternal mortality as a result of more females becoming literate. Government's plan to focus more resources at secondary school level will give the necessary springboard to the girls to gain entry into institutions, which the government has planned as an outlet for students who complete secondary schooling. Emphasis has been put on vocational schools which will provide self employment, meaning that the question of unemployment for graduating girls will not arise. Families will also uplift themselves in their standards of being.

Therefore this study has shown that there are several other factors that lead students from not attending school. These factors appear to be unique in different situations and should be looked at and given attention, too, since they will affect girls' attendance in school.

All all various studies conclude that the female gender is the one oppressed and marginalized and in many countries efforts are being focused to that end. The government of Uganda should continue with the all gender inclusive programs of giving equal opportunities to all the disadvantaged.

With reference to the persistence various intersections forming the background of discrimination and hindering girls from continuing with their education, this study has recommended that government introduces free education in S5 and S6. As it has been shown, beneficiaries of UPE and USE, have expressed fear as they do not know what to do next after senior four, because USE presently ends with senior four. This nightmare forms part of the intersectional challenge in the children's school life. The study has clearly shown that even when there is a bumper enrolment in senior ones, the dropout rates are so high that this negates all government efforts in reducing illiteracy through. If girls continue to be overwhelmed by the different forces that intersect to block their advances in secondary education, and if they are faced with the realization that USE ends with o' level and that after that they will not have money to continue with education, they will automatically dropout of school. Why bother at all anyway studying anyway!

The study revealed that rural girls face the challenge of not having support in acquiring sanitation facilities. The village schools are so poor that they cannot afford to stock sanitation supplies for the girls in case of menstruation accidents. Such accidents as the research shows have turned out to embarrass and humiliate the affected girls, causing them to stay away from school for sometime in order to recover. And when the laughter and humiliation was so unbearable, the affected girls opt to drop out of school. The good intentions of the USE program will have suffered greatly with many girls absenting themselves or dropping out prematurely at this early stage. The study also identifies a way out for such girls who have dropped out of school, anyway, by suggesting that out-of-school education programs be constituted to engage them in education at a different convenient level.

The study also revealed that for successful implementation of education for all, both direct and indirect costs should be covered to enable all girls to enroll and be retained in school. USE may not necessarily be universal because first of all it does not cover all secondary schools. Secondly the most marginalized may not be taken care of since in Uganda it is mainly children of the rich and middle income who enroll and continue with secondary education. Furthermore even among the marginalized children, there are those who face more marginalization like those who have lost either one or both parents due to HIV/AIDS. In this case only one measure to increase retention may not be fruitful. In addition USE is not universal given the fact that it is not compulsory and does not take into consideration quality outcomes like certificates, mastery of learning besides developing of uniform skills for all school children.

Therefore this study recommends that for successful implementation of the USE program, multiple measures should be put in place rather than meeting only tuition costs of education. This is to ensure that a combination of factors can be more effective to take care of all the different impediments to girls' retention and completion of school. This can also be seen from the results of this study which revealed that much as cost is still the major barrier, there are other factors that cannot be underestimated.

Following the findings from the case study of USE in Uganda, the country may introduce policies for promoting education like other countries. The cases of Zimbabwe, Brazil, Latin America, and Bangladesh may suggest approaches that can help policy debate in Uganda on education sector reform.

Zimbabwe's low unit cost in education was supported by an increase in female teachers who serve as role models for students. Besides there was high external efficiency to promote rapid economic growth, lowering of indirect costs which was an incentive to learners and also there was particular attention given to the media of instruction. In my view teacher training and the increase in the number of teacher's especially female teachers can be taken as one of the most important government interventions to improve school quality. Consequently this has an impact on increased enrollment, retention and completion of secondary school.

Having considered government's role in covering all costs involved and its impact on education promotion, essentially in providing education for all, it is important to include policies which are transformative as well as protective in

order to reinforce household copying strategies. For instance conditional cash transfers in Latin America and cash grants in South America, Bangladesh have increased participation in education and reduced child labour.

Furthermore cash transfer programs were fundamental in Brazil where a monthly stipend was given per child attending school up to a maximum of three children per family to poor families. This stipend was given to the female head of each household using citizen debit cards and covered 24% of the population consequently increasing participation in primary education (EPDC 2008). In my view in order to attain successful education for all, policies need to cover both direct and indirect costs including paying for the opportunity cost of the loss of children's labor to their families while at school. However borrowing a leaf from Brazil, females especially mothers and grandmothers are better placed in entrusting them with education funds than fathers. Accordingly this can be vital in increasing retention and completion of school.

Furthermore it is important for governments to recognize that there is a possibility for factors affecting school participation on the part of students to have a similar impact on the side of the teachers' particularly low incentives to teachers in terms of low salaries and poor working conditions. For instance in Brazil, the government in 2007 proposed an education plan to double teachers' salaries per month. In addition local government as well made a proposal to further increase salaries as a move to attract and keep qualified teachers. Indeed this worked for Uganda when government increased teachers' salaries first at secondary level and then primary level for government teachers on the pay roll making government schools more attractive and competitive because apart from a few private schools, government school teachers are better paid. But still this is too low as compared to a teachers' pay in other developing and developed countries and besides head teachers earn three times more than an ordinary teacher who are involved in doing more work on the ground. Therefore to ensure successful USE, government needs to ensure similar favorable conditions for both learners and teachers in all schools.

As well Brazil enacted a national fund for compulsory primary and lower secondary development as a way of valuing and strengthening the teaching profession in 1997. This was realized through creating a fund that solicited for funds and accordingly distributed them basing on enrollment figures to municipal and state primary schools. Accordingly this had an impact on increasing enrollments and teachers salaries because this fund was responsible for increasing funds given to states and municipalities that had a rise in enrollment rates (EPDC 2008)

Furthermore it is essential to have compulsory uniform conditions/check measures attached to EFA in the hidden curriculum. For instance this can be a useful tool in determining who goes to school, who teaches and what is taught besides how well children are taught and how child friendly schools are. For instance in Bangladesh the female stipend program was put in place to reduce the direct cost of girls' education and increase literacy. This was aimed at increasing, help girls to pass the secondary school certificate examinations as a requirement to qualify for employment besides retention improvement to safe guard them from marriage. Therefore as a requirement of this program, girls were supposed to at least meet 75% of the school days, a minimum

examination performance academic standard and to refrain from marriage till higher secondary certificate completion. That is as an initiative, the program covered direct and indirect costs including tuition and examination fees, and subsidies for purchasing books. Consequently this program doubled enrollment which later on was expanded to cover the whole country. Also at the primary level, a food for education program was put in place targeting poor households to ensure that all primary children up to the age of ten attend at least 85% of the required school time. These interventions, however, have helped more of girls than boys. The school construction initiatives have provided households with safe education and a conducive environment for socialization and reduced transportation costs for their daughters, (Shafiq, 2009;139,EPDC 2008).

Another area to look at is the early girls' maturity compared to boys'. At school, this has a direct relationship with their patience and seriousness with homework. Also girls compared to boys have less disciplinary and attention problems. Ultimately, this behavior for girls implies reduced indirect costs in terms of time and effort for households. Additionally, it is likely that the changes in the marriage market could have contributed to reducing the pro-male education gender gap in Bangladesh since the educated girls fetch more returns upon marriage than the uneducated. This explains why parents now educate their daughters because this is valued in the marriage market, and its achievement makes girls assured of wellbeing, (Shafiq, 2009; 140).Consequently this implies that girls need to be taken to school early by promoting early childhood development programs which produces children who are eager to learn from an early stage and therefore this cultivated interest is likely to promotes retention in school.

In rural Latin America the picture is different. The low number of enrolment in schools is not only attributed to limitations within the family in terms of recognizing and making use of what the schools can offer but also to inadequate school facilities. Therefore there is a direct relationship between school attainment levels and the income of a certain group of people in a given population since most of the poor families in the rural areas have parents who have not gone nine years of schooling. Low income families meet a lot of expenditure challenges on their children's education. Even though they recognize the need for their children to stay in school for several years, there is a tendency to withdraw them out of school early. These poor children also attend low quality schools and therefore fail to attain literacy and progress in reading and writing. The poor people always make a choice either to keep their children in school or use their labor to contribute to household livelihood, (Stromquist, 1999, 7).

Segregated, some argue that single sex schooling may make an important contribution to improving access, retention and achievement of girls. Governments and donors have begun to initiate public campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of educating girls. These campaigns are predicated on the belief that parental attitudes are a primary constraint to girls' schooling. In South Asia, UNICEF declared 1992 the Year of the Girls Child. One of the many activities supported in this year was a media campaign, using a cartoon character named Meena, that demonstrated ways in which educating

girls was beneficial to themselves, their family and society. Since the late 1980s, USAID projects in Mali, Malawi, Bangladesh and Guatemala have adapted social marketing campaigns, to influence parental attitudes concerning girls' education, (Margaret Sutton,)

Some studies have shown that in the Third World countries as in the United States, girls in single sex schools appear to stay in school longer and achieve more highly than in co-ed schools, (Tiejen and Prather, 1991)

In its recommendations for addressing the problem of retention, (FAWE-U, 2009) recommends that laws should be put in place to hold parents accountable if they marry off their daughters or withdraw their children from school for domestic work. FAWE sees parents as contributor to the high dropout rates.

Providing sound education to girls contributes significantly towards smaller and healthier families will reduce future school dropout and pregnancy which give rise to waste of scarce resources.

Men's fear that educated women will be unmanageable can be mitigated by more education and an expanding economy which can give more opportunities to women without taking away from what men already have. Let there be availability of contraceptives and girls need to understand what their sexual role in society is and could be. They need to know as much as there is to know about their reproductive health and their sexual rights. They need to know how to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. They need to know how to avoid AIDS. It secondary level schools students will have the capacity to read, internalize and integrate knowledge. From the educated secondary school girls, it is expected that their acquired knowledge will influence their younger counterparts in primary schools and those out of school.

Early childhood education was a life-long investment that laid a strong foundation to build on, (New Vision, July 2009). Emphasis should be put on Early Childhood Education, to develop interest, vision and be able to influence girls' aspirations in education.

Girls' counseling used to enlighten girls' view about their body changes. This noble duty has now been left to peer groups and parents no longer have control over children. Children listen more to peers, films, and disco and cross-border culture. There is need to go back to our African family values, where parents will control children, and children will listen to them (NWASEA, 1997).

Parents and communities are involved in activities designed to increase understanding of why low enrollment and retention rates persist, and how to deal with the forces. NGOs and civic associations should be encouraged to come in to deliver educational programs to overcome obstacles to girls' education. Benefits of girls' education should be raised among parents and communities, because the value which each family attaches to school education determines the motivation with which children pursue such education, (Ezewu, 1984). This will also help to develop the concept that the attitude of a society towards the education of its children depends on the social philosophy of the time.

There is need to improve sexual safety for girls. Community codes of conduct should be enforced through local leadership to ensure safety of girls on the way to and from school.

There is also need to improve the welfare of girls, by providing privacy for adolescent girls in all schools. Sex education should be provided to both students and teachers, so that girls are not harassed by boy students and male teachers. The Head Teachers should endeavor to have more female teachers in their schools to have gender balances well as to manage girls' welfare. More female teachers can also be a motivation to schooling girls. Teachers in schools should go for refresher courses, to make classroom instruction more gender sensitive, and classroom material should be made appropriate for mixed gender environments.

Many schools now allow girls who have given birth to go back to school, but many other still frustrate this effort. A policy should be made which allows such girls to return to school without hindrance.

Girls should be availed with comfortable and appropriate clothing that will allow them to participate freely and actively in a variety of school activities. Government should avail relevant quality education to those girls who remain outside school. This will improve their literacy (MoES, 2005).

There is need to define to the girls what the African values are expected to be. There are misconceptions or misinterpretations of what it means today, due to exposure.

Harmful traditional practices and attitudes which inflict physical and psychological damage on girls, like early marriage, bride wealth payment and initiation ceremonies should be abolished (MoES, 2005).

Appendices

Appendix 1: In-depth Explanation of Research Methods

Participants interviewed

The Staff members of education department in Jinja district local government, teachers of Busedde College Bugaya, and Buyengo Secondary Schools and students in and out of school and parents were interviewed. Jinja district was chosen because of the poverty stricken condition its inhabitants suffer despite its previous industrial glory. According to Ssekiboobo and Nsubuga (2003:12-13) ‘previously Jinja was Uganda’s leading industrial town. The industrial base collapsed in the 1970/80s which has had a serious impact on the livelihoods of the poor.’ More over Jinja district is located in eastern region which is the ‘second poorest in the country’.

Also having worked in Jinja district, I was fairly knowledgeable and familiar with the district. The schools on the other hand were purposively selected for being located in the rural area and participating in the USE program. Specifically Busedde College Bugaya was selected for being a government aided school embracing the USE program(seed school), and Buyengo secondary school, for being a private School with a private Partnership understanding with government, allowing it to conduct the USE program.

As well the selection of participants was purposive. Six girls in each school were selected from senior three and four, where dropout is highest. They were able to explain their experiences having survived the lower classes of senior one and two. All of them took part in the group interviews, out of which only two were selected in each school for in-depth individual interviews. Three school boys were selected from senior three and four from each school for the group interview and only one boy from each class was selected for the individual interview. Seven key informants were selected for being knowledgeable about the subject, involvement in policy implementation and overseeing education standards in the district. Two parents were selected because they make decisions concerning education needs of their children while two community leaders were included because they are opinion leaders, they know the attitudes of the people they lead and they are in a better position to influence decisions in their localities. Two School dropout girls were also purposely chosen to give their experience pertaining to their dropping out and also because they could easily be reached. A detailed breakdown of the participants interviewed in this study is provided below.

Table 1: List of participants in the study

S/N	Participant Category	Number
01	In-school girls	4
02	In-school boys	1

03	Out of school boys	1
04	Out-of-school girls	2
05	Girl who completed	1
06	Parents	2
07	Local leaders	2
08	Key informants	7
	Total	20

Source: Author's own construct

From the table above, a big number of key informants were interviewed because their role played in implementing the USE program. As well in school girls for being able to explain factors pertaining to their survival in school and also reasons for colleagues who had dropped out.

Universal Secondary Education in Uganda

USE program was put in place to cater for successful UPE graduates to be able to access secondary education with an aim of ensuring that the majority of children access a full cycle of primary and secondary education short of meeting tuition costs (Nakabugo 2008). According to Chapman et al. (2009:77), this program was

Prompted by the convergence of rising parental demands, employers' need for a more highly educated workforce, and a national residential election in which the president again recognised that a promise of 'free' education could draw votes.

Being a politically motivated programme as Chapman states above, it was bound to face many challenges. Essentially you cannot talk about a full cycle of primary and secondary education when only a few selected government schools and a few private ones are incorporated to implement the program. As well it deserves questioning what happens to children studying in private secondary schools which outnumber government schools. Furthermore given the short time of planning and implementation the program was likely to face challenges and consequently there was need for lessons to be drawn from the pending challenges of UPE including higher teacher workloads, declining teacher qualifications and the challenge of maintaining morale with an increase in access amidst poor quality services offered (Chapman et al. 2009).

For successful implementation and also as a way to ensure retention and completion, there was need to take note of the differences in requirement provision for quality education at primary and secondary level given the fact that secondary education is more demanding and expensive. For instance unlike UPE, this program neither applied to all schools nor to all children (ibid). Also under USE, government was set to construct one secondary school

per Sub County countrywide to cater for the UPE influx. Yet from an estimated 1000 sub counties in the country still, approximately half of them lacked government aided secondary schools despite government's effort of incorporating private schools to be part of the program (Uganda Debt Network, 2007 and Nakabugo 2008). Besides, funding to this program was uncertain. For instance it was estimated that the program would need around 90,000 new teachers by 2010 after the start of USE representing a 15% higher annual growth rate as compared to the current system of teacher preparation (Chapman et al 2009).

However, a key observation from the Ministry of Education and Sports headcount is that while many girls enroll in senior one, and in some schools numbers being more than that of boys, the number drops significantly in senior two and three, making retention rates within the first 32 months of the inception of the program falling short of the enrollment figures realized at the beginning (MOES Abstract 2008). For years before 2007, the dropout rate of girls was very high in secondary school and the observations from the (MOES Abstract 2006) shows a recurrence of this problem.

In my view education for all can only be a very useful tool if its policies are gender sensitive to ensure equal opportunities and benefits without discrimination. Many studies have showed earlier and continue to show that girls still lag behind boys in education enrolment though the gap is reducing moreover the policy on education makes a provision for equal opportunities for all (Ryan 2009, MOES 2005). Furthermore one cannot talk about education for all when the target is not for all children and it is not compulsory besides providing and covering all the other costs and requirements that go with it. One therefore wonders whether the government really planned for USE or it was more of a political move. For instance why was there a ban on recruitment of Secondary school teachers since 1996? Was it because of lack of need for more or the ones on ground were sufficient enough.

Despite all these arguments, USE has now made three years down the road since its inception and the first senior four candidates will sit exams in 2010 implying that this is the right time for strategies aimed increased retention and completion of S.3 and S.4 students of next year should be instituted.

It is important to note that in a bid to realise education for all (EFA), UPE and USE have been earmarked to be of paramount importance considering elimination of compulsory fees(tuition cost). As already mentioned this program was aimed at targeting poor but capable children to access secondary education as studies show that cost constraint has been internationally recognized as a hindrance to developing countries pertaining children's enrolment in basic education (Chapman et al 2009).

Although it seems more of fulfilment of political promise and the fact that it has not yielded much in sustaining education for the very poor and girls, it has made some improvement in the lives of some school children from poor families. A lot however remains to be done in order to make for quality and as emphasised time and again, ensure that its beneficiaries complete the cycle.

Enrollment in Busedde College and Buyengo S.S 2009

According to their 2008 enrolment, Busedde College, a government aided school, has a total of 676 students from senior one to senior four, 278 females and 398 males. The school has a staff of 17 teachers, 6 females and 11 males. It falls short by 6 teachers to complete the required staff ceiling of 23 teachers. Buyengo Secondary School is a private school and has a total of 371 students from senior one to senior four, 191 females and 180 males. It has a staff of 25 teachers, 12 females and 13 males. It meets the required staff ceiling and therefore able to participate in the USE program on Private partnership agreement with government. These figures include the head teachers and their deputies.

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