

GILDA AYEBARE

**THE EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AND THE PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF
EDUCATION AND SCHOOL OF RURAL CHILDREN IN UGANDA. A CASE OF
BUSHENYI DISTRICT, SOUTH WESTERN UGANDA.**

Thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Childhood Studies

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Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management

Norwegian Center for Child Research

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Gilda Ayebare, declare that except for the references used in this work which have been acknowledged, this research is my own work.

Gilda Ayebare

NTNU, Trondheim, Norway

May, 2014

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved mother Gudlar Kushemererwa and the entire family, thank you for your love and support.

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ABSTRACT

Education in Uganda is perceived to be the instrument of development. Uganda was one of the first developing countries to introduce universal primary education (UPE). It is one of the millennium development goals to be achieved by 2015. This research focuses on everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda. This explores, the daily activities children engage in, how daily activities, poverty and other challenges affect their school life as well as what children think about their own future.

The main theory in this study is the social studies of childhood. Rural children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right. Children are active in the construction and determination of their own social lives. The paradigm seeks to understand children as agents through involving them in research by share their experiences. Therefore, In order to understand children experiences. I took children as my informants and their views were taken seriously. My study took children's as active participants as opposed to human becoming.

Results of my study show that poverty and gender are major factors affecting boys and girls education together with other factors like early marriages, poor health, lack of enough food, orphan hood and its implications, large families, heavy punishments, disability, teacher-child relationship and age. The study has found that work is part of rural children's life in Bushenyi. Children participate in house hold production as part of their socialization. Children in rural Bushenyi are expected to contribute to family income and at the same time learn the necessary skills that enable them to be active members of society. Children's participation is vital in ensuring their stay in school and completion of their studies. This study determined that domestic work is part of their everyday life.

I recommend policy makers like government of Uganda and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to provide scholastic materials to school going children. To also expand on poverty eradication programs like National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and poverty eradication Action Program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
List of a table.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 Introduction and background to the study.....	1
1.2 Problem statement.....	2
1.3 Objectives and research questions to the study.....	4
1.4 What is a child.....	4
1.5 Purpose and significance of the study.....	5
1.6 Outline of the thesis.....	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONCEPTS	7
2.1 Theoretical perspectives and concepts	7
2.1.1 The sociology of childhood: conceptual liberation of children.....	8
2.1.2 Conceptualizing Agency and children’s voice	10
2.1.3. Socially constructed children.....	12
2.1.4 The child as a competent social actor.....	14
2.2 Resilience	15
2.3 United Nations convention on the rights of the child.....	16
2.4 socialist feminism.....	18
2.5 Childhood theories: a critique	18
CHAPTER THREE.....	20
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES	20

3.1 Introduction	20
3.2 Ethnography Research.....	20
3.3 My Position as a researcher.....	21
3.4 Choosing study area	23
3.5 Access to the field	23
3.6 Sample and duration of fieldwork.....	24
3.7 Methods and materials used	24
3.7.1 Participant Observation and informal dialogues	25
3.7.2 Drawing	26
3.7.3 Story writing.....	27
3.7.4 Focus group discussion with children	27
Focused group discussion with adults	28
3.7.5 Key informants interviews with children	30
Key informants interviews with adults (KIIs)	30
Table 1: The following table, shows an over view of the data collected	31
3.8 Ethical considerations	32
3.8.1 Informed consent	32
3.8.2 Privacy and confidentiality.....	33
3.8.3 Importance of power differentials	34
3.9 Challenges and solutions.....	34
3.9.1 School fees.....	34
3.9.2 Gate keepers	35
3.9.3 Donations.....	35
3.10 Protection tool	35
Figure 1: Protection tool 13 years old, drawings.....	36
3.11 Transcription and Categorization	36
3.12 Analysis and write up.....	37

3.13 Validity and reliability of the data.....	37
CHAPTER FOUR.....	39
COUNTRY PROFILE	39
4.1 Introduction	39
4.2 Geographical position of Uganda.....	39
4.3 Governance and history.....	39
4.4 Economy.....	40
4.5 The people	41
4.5.1 Marriage.....	42
4.5.2 Religion and Languages	42
4.6 Rural settlement.....	43
4.6.1 Rural poverty in Uganda.....	44
4.7 Culture, family and gender roles	45
4.7.1 Socialization	46
4.8 Overview of the education System in Uganda	46
4.8.1 Structure of the education system.....	47
Pre- school	47
Primary Education	47
Post primary education	47
Higher education.....	48
4.8.2 Rural children and education in Uganda	48
4.9 The study area: Bushenyi District	49
Figure 2: Map of Uganda showing the study area.....	50
4.9.1 Bushenyi District	50
4.9.2 Location	50
4.9.3 Population.....	51
4.9.5 Economic activities.....	51

CHAPTER 5.....	52
THE BENEFITS AND EFFECT OF DAILY ACTIVITIES ON RURAL SCHOOL CHILDREN.....	52
5.1 Introduction	52
5.2 Daily activities.....	53
5.3 Maria’s day.....	53
5.4 Gender	55
Figure 3: Clare 12 years, drawings	57
Figure 4: Jacob 13 years, drawings	58
5.5 Helping the elderly and young siblings.....	59
5.6 Farming	60
5.7 Positive side of the daily work children engage in.....	61
5.8 Dignity of life	65
CHAPTER SIX:	67
HOW POVERTY AND OTHER CHALLENGES AFFECT CHILDREN’S SCHOOL LIFE	67
6.1 Introduction	67
6.2 Poverty	67
6.2.1 Early marriages for girls	68
6.2.2 Poor health and Lack of enough food at home.....	71
6.2.3 Alcoholism.....	72
6.2.4 Orphan hood and its implications.....	74
6.2.5 Large families	75
6.2.6 Age specific challenge.....	76
6.3 Other challenges that effect children school life.....	77
6.3.1 Heavy punishments.....	77
6.3.2 Teacher- child relationship	78
6.3.3 Disability	79

CHAPTER SEVEN.....	81
HOW CHILDREN PERCEIVE EDUCATION, SCHOOL AND WHAT CHILDREN THINK ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURE	81
7.1 Introduction	81
7.2 Enlightenment	81
7.3 society progress	82
7.4 Gender inequality	83
7.5 lack of interest	84
7.6 School as a social meeting place	85
7.7 What children think about their own future	85
7.7.1 Future Profession.....	85
Marcie 13 years, story	86
7.7.2 Involved in Decision making.....	87
7.7.3 God to be the only hope.....	87
7.7.4 Key to better future.....	88
CHAPTER EIGHT.....	89
SUMMARY, MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	89
8.1 Introduction	89
8.2 Summary	89
8.2.1 Limitations of the theories and concepts used.....	89
8.2.2 Reflection of rural children’s agency	90
8.2.3 Children are a structural category.....	90
8.2.4 Children’s participation	90
8.3 Main findings	91
8.3.1 Poverty.....	91
8.3.2 Gender and age	92
8.4 Resilience	92
8.5 Concluding remarks	93

8.6 Recommendations	94
8.6.1 Childhood theories.....	94
8.6.2 Funding for education.....	94
8.6.3 Alcoholism awareness	95
8.6.4 Poverty eradicating strategies	95
8.6.5 Sensitization about gender relations	95
9.1 REFERENCES.....	96
Appendices.....	106

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACPF - African Child policy Forum

ANPPCAN - Africa Network for the Prevention against child abuse and neglect.

NAADS- National Agricultural Advisory Services

UPE - Universal Primary Education

UBOS - Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UNICEF - United Nations children's Fund

UNATU-Uganda National Teachers Union

UCE- Uganda Certificate in Education

UACE- Uganda advanced Certificate in Education

UNDP-United Nation Development

NGO's -Non Governmental Organization

UNCFC-Uganda national Council for Children

KIIs- Key Informants Interviews with Adults

FGD- Focused group discussion with adults

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Protection tool 13 years old, drawings	36
Figure 2: Map of Uganda showing the study area	50
Figure 3: Clare 12 years, drawings.....	57
Figure 4: Jacob 13 years, drawings	58

List of a table

Table 1: The following table, shows an over view of the data collected	31
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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

This thesis explores how children perceive education¹ and the daily activities they engage in, by drawing examples from rural Uganda. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2002), children of 18 years and below constitute more than fifty percent of the population.

It was important to carry out this study to assess the daily activities children do and how it affects their school life. The study has further analyzed how children think about their future plans with all these problems that make them not enjoy their school life. It is because of that background that I choose the study topic.

children were asked manageable questions to get more information on the problem children are facing for example, what they do from morning up to evening both at school and after reaching home. How often children go to school, who pays their school fees and stationary materials they use at school, how they evaluate the school, what they like /dislike about school, their future plans. All these questions were planned to get more on in depth information on the school children's everyday life. Therefore this research will add more additional knowledge about children rural lives in Uganda.

Education in Uganda is perceived to be the instrument to development. Uganda was one of the first developing countries to introduce universal primary education which is one of millennium development goal. Universal primary education was launched in 1997 as a national Programme aimed at providing free education to all young Ugandan children though school enrolment has grown to 1997 to 70%, only 32% of children complete primary seven (UNICEF, 2011b).

Article 29 constitution of Uganda states that all persons have a right to education. Every child in Uganda has a right to free primary education. Four children per family are supposed to get free education where marginalized groups like girls and disabled children are supposed to be in this figure. Due to universal primary education, enrolment in schools has increased from 2.9 million to 5.6 million, most of them from urban areas compared to rural children. Article

¹ I understand education to be a process of gaining knowledge, learning forms of proper conduct and acquiring technical competency in a specific field.

28 of the UNCRC states parties recognize to education with basis on equal opportunity, free education, and secondary education as well as general and vocational education, take measures to encourage regular attendance at school and the reduction of drop-out rate

Universal primary education plan, parents were asked to provide uniforms for pupils, scholastic materials and food at school; however the rural poor parents in Uganda cannot pay for these materials that they are supposed to pay for. The government did not provide sufficient extra resources to address the needs of all children in schools, therefore this forced most of rural government schools to start setting the additional fees called contribution fees. Most parents cannot afford to pay for their children this fee, where some times children are illegally sent out of school so that they can pay contribution fees. Researchers like Ritchie say that most parents are unable to pay the fees and this compels school administration to send home the children to bring the fees (Rithie, 2012). When children are sent home every other time, those that remain at school study and this is not fair to the poor children at the end of it all.

According to Survey (2000-2001), approximately 96 percent of people are poor and most of them are women and children who live in rural area. 62% of children live under absolute poverty which is one the reasons why rural children are forced to do a lot of domestic work at home and even go further to work for money to contribute to their schools necessities.

1.2 Problem statement

Rural based children experience a lot of challenges compared to urban based children, they face a challenge of long distances they to access services, and they also have to apportion time for attending school and participating in tedious domestic chores. The situation is often worse for children coming from resource poor families (UNCFC, 2003). Children aged 8-18 years in rural Uganda are trained in their social gender responsibilities and gender roles, as result children from poor families resort to child work as a coping strategy. Money earned is used to meet needs like scholastic materials, clothing and health care. Over all, girls are more disadvantaged than boys despite universal primary education in the rural Uganda. For example boy child was given the first priority to attend school while a girl child was always left to help her mother at home with domestic work. The trend is changing and girls now attend schools but still drop out much earlier than boys because of many challenges they face like early forced marriages. A lot of domestic work they do at home compared to boys.

According to Abebe (2007) most children in Global South have not enjoyed their childhood they live their lives far from care free, playful, work free, dependent and care giving childhood lived by most children in global North. In my research I found out that children in south western Uganda have not enjoyed their childhood because they lack enough shelter, clothing, health facilities, good post primary education and food to eat most of the times. They also lack enough time for playing, because most of the time is used to fend for their families and carry out other household chores. The children in rural Uganda are in schools but with a lot of difficulties and challenges.

In my study I found that most parents involve children in these activities to equip them with the basic life skills for their future use. Some children engage in these activities at home and outside their home to get money for their school fees. Many children have been deprived their right to education since they are always tired and their right to grow healthy.

There is little in their lives apart from domestic work. The way they spend their day is the same from generation to generation. The work they do in the morning and evening makes them go late. This is also coupled with less hours of sleep since they go to bed past 10 o'clock in the night. In my view, it would be better to have a heavy breakfast. It is unfortunate that most families cannot afford this. They do not get enough food at lunch neither at supper time. Most children stated confessed that their day starts with prayer at 5.00 am, go to collect water from the bore holes or wells far from their homes, clean up the compound at home and then start their long journeys to school. They do have school assembly every morning and it is opened by Bible study and a gospel song. They work in school gardens, clean their class rooms every day, compound and their latrines. They start walking back to their homes at 05.30 pm. They quickly change uniforms after reaching home and start on domestic work again, where most of them fetch water, collect fire wood, animals and if time allows go to dig in the family gardens. Some pupils do their homework, others are so tired and some lack light to read, they have supper, wash the dishes and then go bed.

Universal primary education schools in rural Uganda do not perform well. Few pupils who manage to finish primary seven end up in schools that are not good. Despite free primary education in Uganda only 32% of children complete primary seven. Children are forced to do a lot of excessive domestic work which affect them in many ways; childhood is constrained by structural factors of poverty. According to WorldBank (2000), poverty is the major problem in Uganda it is passed on from generation to generation. Absenteeism in schools because of school contribution because children go to markets on thursdays and even Fridays.

Children are involved in small businesses like fetching water for small restaurants in the market place.

Girls aged 12 years and above mostly miss school 3-6 days a week because of monthly periods. These girls miss school because they lack sanitary pads to use which makes them uncomfortable to go to school, forced early marriages for girls.

Despite universal primary education, parents are supposed to contribute some money for their children at school; however parents who are illiterate do not want to pay a single coin at school. Parents think that education is government work where some of parents never mind at all to encourage their children to read. Children are not inspired to complete schools because they are always hungry, they lack enough food at home and at schools, children walk long distances to schools which discourage them. The absolute poverty in rural areas makes most of parents and children think that education is only for rich people. This has affected children's school life and education to be a dream for most of rural children.

1.3 Objectives and research questions to the study

The overall aim of my study is to understand the everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda. A Case of Bushenyi District, South Western Uganda. My hope is that, the study may improve on children's conditions, change community and parent's perceptions about daily activities, education and improve awareness of education right to rural children. I am focusing on children living in rural Uganda. Specifically the research addresses the following questions:

- How is education perceived by the rural children in Bushenyi District?
- What daily activities do boys and girls children in Bushenyi District engage in?
- How do daily activities affect school life of boys and girls?
- How does poverty affect rural children school life?
- What other challenges do affect rural children's school life?
- What do they think about their own future?

1.4 What is a child

According to article one of the UNCRC a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. Article 257(1) Uganda constitution states that, a child is a person under the age of eighteen years. The sociology of childhood portrays child childhood as asocial and

cultural Phenomenon (Alanen, 2001). A child may be defined differently in different societies. J. Boyden and Gibbs (1997), argue that in many developing countries, especially in rural areas a person is regarded an adult after he or she have gone through culturally ceremony to become a fully a man or a girl. Ennew cited in Montgomery (2009), discussions of the child that do not take gender into consideration can quickly become meaningless.

Some cultures in Uganda like kalenjin ethnic group which includes the Sabiny in the districts of kapchorwa, kween as well Karamoja region before circumcision initiation ceremony one is still regarded as a child. In many parts of Uganda like western Uganda they differentiate childhood from adult hood basing on biological changes like menstruation periods for girls. If a girl starts her periods she is no longer a child and for boys they consider voice change. Rural children face a lot of problems because of the rigid culture after these changes have happened in their lives. They are considered mature enough to engage in a lot of domestic work arguing that they are grown-ups. Yet my study defines a child as a person less than 18 years of age.

1.5 Purpose and significance of the study

The study is intended to contribute to the debates on children everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda. The study recognizes childhood as a social and cultural Phenomenon and children as social actors. The study is theoretically anchored in the interdisciplinary perspectives on social studies of children and childhood, taking children as individual rights bearers and competent social actors and childhood as a social and cultural phenomenon varying from time and place see James, A, Jenks, and Prout (1998). In my study, childhood is not a universal feature of human groups, but a specific structural and cultural component of many societies worthy enough to be studied independent of adult perspectives.

Therefore it was important to conduct research with rural children to get their views since few studies in Uganda have included children in research. My expectation is that authorities and institutions that are in charge of rural children education may read and benefit from this study where children shared their views. NGO's like Save the Children, UNICEF and other organizations may use this thesis to understand more about rural children's life. I hope is that, they may help these children by improving their way of life in rural Uganda. The government of Uganda may benefit of this study that there is need to promote the quality education and see how these children can reduce on the daily activities and other problems they face in the

education system to full fill their goal of universal primary education. The outcome of the study could inform Ugandans that children are active citizens and not becoming as they are seen in many cultures.

Therefore a child who is capable of forming his or her own views should be given a right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. Article 12 of (UNCRC), the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration as Article 3 of (UNCRC) states.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

In chapter two I present *concepts and theories*. I discuss conceptual and theoretical perspectives mostly in line with interdisciplinary of social studies of childhood in general and I use other concepts related to rural children. *Part three: Methodology describes the* Position of researcher and respondents, access to the field, selection of the area, Choosing the sample and sample size determination, methods and materials used, ethical issues, challenges in research process, solutions and lessons learnt, transcription and categorization, analysis and write up. *In chapter four: Background of the study*. I present the profile of Uganda. *Chapter five, six and seven* I present the results of the study and analyses of the data and finally. *Part eight* I present the summary, main findings, concluding remarks, give recommendations and suggest ideas for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONCEPTS

2.1 Theoretical perspectives and concepts

In this chapter I discuss how I approached my study theoretically and how I used theoretical perspectives during the research process.

According to Kvale (1996), theories help us to understand the development of a conceptual and theoretical phenomenon to be analyzed. It establishes the basis in which the new knowledge will be added and incorporated. Theories help us to ask good questions, see possibilities, connections and make choices and sharpen our senses. Mayall and Berry (2002), argue that theories are so important in research. Back in 20th century developmental Psychology was much dominant in the study of childhood and children were seen as human becoming and not complete. It was until theories about children in ability began to be questioned that research then began to be funded and conducted. This took further theories of children as real people like sociology of childhood; it resulted in equally respectful ethical relationship in research with children. It is from this time that the sociology of childhood began to portray children as complete beings as opposed to becoming (ibid)

I have used theoretical approach which helps me to place children as active participants. I did my field work in rural Bushenyi area where children are theoretically taken as becoming, incompetent, immature and their views are not valued. In my experience in rural western Uganda, I found out that children are active participants. Childhood theories helped me to listen to children's views knowing that children are masters of their own lives.

Nilsen (2005), suggests that theoretical concepts can sometimes be of help to lift the empirical experiences in serving the important task of giving insight and clear understanding. In the same way these theoretical perspectives helped me to understand children as human being not becoming as they are taken in Uganda. My main focus in this chapter will be mainly on theoretical perspectives, approaches and discussions related to my study. I used sociology of child: conceptual liberation of children, conceptualizing agency and children's voice, socially constructed children, the child as a competent social actor, resilience and United Nations convention on Rights of the child and socialist feminism.

2.1.1 The sociology of childhood: conceptual liberation of children

According to Alanen (2001) the new social studies recognize that childhood is a social and cultural phenomenon.

The theoretical perspectives that have prejudiced my position as a researcher, enlightening my research aim, research questions, concepts and approaches used in the whole process of analyses are attached to the social studies of childhood. According to Kj rholt. (2004), sociologists and anthropologists have been the most active actors in developing this field, other researchers from different disciplines for-example psychology, geography, pedagogy, history and philosophy have been involved. The approaches and perspectives developed within this interdisciplinary field represent a significant tradition in international research on children and childhood. Kj rholt. (2004), further writes that sociology of childhood is a research field that was developed by a group of international researchers (Jenks 1982, 1996, Corsaro, 1997, James and Prout 1998, Alanen 1992 and Qvortrup 1995) it was developed back in last 15-25 years

Children should be studied in their own right and their own perspective for fulfilling the value of children as components, children should be studied straight. According to Prout, James, and Allison (1990), research with children should focus on their present life than future. Children as participants in their own social world. Qvortrup (1994), write that Childhood constitutes structural category in the succession of generation. In their article Allison James and Alan Prout (1990) childhood is understood as social construction, which provides an interpretive frame for contextualizing the early years of human life, childhood as distinct from biological immaturity. It is neither a universal feature of human groups, but childhood appears as a specific structural and cultural component of some of many societies. Childhood as variable of social analysis never is divorced from other variables of gender, class or ethnicity. Cross culture and comparative analysis can reveal the variety of childhood rather than calling it a single or universal phenomenon. Children cultures in rural Bushenyi are worthy enough to be studied in their own rights and independent of adult perspectives. Children in rural Bushenyi were taken as active in the construction and even determination of their own social lives. Children in rural Bushenyi are not passive subjects of social structures and processes as it is also noted in James et al, (1990), children being active subjects.

According to James et al. (1998), socialization is a concept that has been much used by sociologists to describe the process through which children, and in the same cases adults,

learn to conform to social norms. The theory helps me to view childhood in rural Bushenyi as socialization. Children were viewed as individually being who are capable to participate in adult world. This helped me to get more on how children perceive education.

In their book *Theorizing Childhood*; James et al. (1998) categorize mechanisms with in social studies of childhood into four theoretical discussions of this field that is *socially constructed child, tribal child, minority group child and the social structural child*; James et al. (1998) further argue that the social structural approach takes a child as universal and global rather than in local terms and the differences characterizes a child have is because of structural differentials in different societies. The social structural approach view childhood from a structural point of view taking example of Qvortrup (2002), argues that the idea of childhood as a constitutive part and distinct form of any society's social structure is central in order to capture the sociological meaning of childhood.

Qvortrup (2002), further argue that a sociological understanding of childhood is influenced in a particular way by societal forces. It important to locate structural features that are general to all children and as well those factors that distinguish childhood from other social groups, for example from adult hood, structural approach aims to understand childhood as a part of a given social group and it is important to compare childhood with other groups in a given society as well as with childhoods in different nations and historical period Qvortrup (1994), states that childhood is apartment form that never changes or disappears in the structure of any society, childhood is structural in other forms like age group, social classes, childhood is seen as a group and it changes according to social structure in all societies. Childhood may vary from society to society, but is important to note with in these societies childhood is uniform in each of these particular society. Qvortrup (2002), states that childhood constitutes a particular structural form which is defined neither by individual structural form, which is defined neither by individual characteristics of the child.

According to James et al. (1998) *the minority group child*; the minority group child approach is universal. Children are marginalized in all societies. Globally all children at different degree are exploited and their human rights are under expressed and in appropriately exercised. This is marked by degree of liberation, manifested by differences in gender and ethnicity (ibid).

According to James et al cited in Punch (2003), the minority group approach is the adult child approach which sees children as essentially indistinguishable from adults. Children are seen as active subjects, but the world they inhabit is adult- centered forcing children to be marginalized in a similar way to other minority groups in society like disabled, women or ethnic groups. Punch further argues that is associated with status of adulthood in terms of work. Children of majority world tend to be studied from the perspective of the minority group child because childhood is located to work and the *tribal child*: It sees children as different from adults focusing on the otherness of childhood that is the approach takes children to be essentially different from adult. Children have agency and they are social competent. Children act autonomously with their own rituals and rules.

Punch (2003), further argues that a perspective which encompasses multiple and overlapping arenas of childhood could be more appropriate for understanding children's childhoods; a more holistic view can lead to a greater understanding of children's lives, showing how they integrate contexts of their child-hoods at school, work and home. According to Kjørholt. (2004) every reality is socially constructed. She argues that other three discourses cannot logically be seen as equal to a socially constructed child but as subordinates, but even other discourses like tribal and minority group are also socially constructed since both of discourses are embedded in discourses on children and their participation (ibid). Therefore my study mainly base on minority group approach and socially constructed childhood perspectives for understanding the lives of rural children in Uganda.

2.1.2 Conceptualizing Agency and children's voice

Robson et al. (2007), define agency as an individual's own capacities, competencies and activities through which they direct the contexts and positions of their life world, fulfilling many social, economic and culture expectations. According to James et al. (1998) society is regarded as structures manufactured through the actions of people and these individuals are active agents of their own subjectivity meaningful courses of action and thus develop their interrelations through this agency.

In my study I draw on childhood literature, which helps to position children are social actors. Abebe (2007), argues that positioning children as social actors is so important in research because children's ideas are important in research and policy making. Abebe further writes that, there is need to extend debates on contemporary childhoods with the frame works of post- development and post-structural theories. Children's livelihood strategies and their

living conditions are not the same because childhood in the North is different from that of south. In the North, it is basically characterized of school and play as opposed of child work.

Despite hard ships in global south children are still active participants. Punch (2003), writes that despite the absolute poverty, domestic activities children do in Bolivia they still fight for their right to play and most of them combine play and work which shows children's agency. In the same way children in Uganda know their experiences and suggested solutions to their daily activities and how education system in Uganda should work to fight their needs, but their life chances are narrow since poverty is mainly the main cause why children engage in daily activities and many structural factors.

According to Robson et al. (2007) agents, young people negotiate the institutions and rural spaces they encounter while creating their own experiences. Conceptualizing young people as agents in terms of competent social beings refers them as doers and thinkers rather than human becoming or incompetent human beings. The discovery of children as agents is relatively recent. The sociology of childhood has emphases that children are social actors shaping as well as shaped by their circumstances. According to Leyshon (2002) many new scholars across diverse disciplines have increasingly focused on how rural children negotiate social relations actively create in their own cultures and societies. They construct understandings of their environments.

Robson et al. (2007), argue that children are conceptualized as social actors in their own right and active research subjects. Their views and actions in any research are meaningfully. Parallel shifts have occurred in policy making arenas. Where children participation in decision making about matters that affect their own lives is being advocated and legislated for. Robson further argues that children as agents of their own live; children are not merely figures as many people take them to be in some rural spaces where they experience a lot of obligations and restrictions by adults, but they actively define, produce and reclaim space as well like adults do. The concept of agency helps me to place rural children in Bushenyi as powerful and active empowered young people that can bring change in their society.

There are many conceptual approaches to children's agency reflecting on various theoretical traditions. Conceptualizations of children's action, resistance and innovations in terms of situated agency. According to Katz (2004) cited in Robson et al. (2007) we see that materialist approaches and Marxist theory argue that rural children agency is seen in the work

they do, that is the role of children as workers in both productive and reproductive spheres. Rural children in Bushenyi are engaged in growing crops, cooking, looking after animals, taking care of their young siblings. Most of them are engaged in these activities to bring change in their families.

Rural children commonly get involved in the creation of safe spaces with in which they act (Bell, Punch, Costello, Panelli, & Ruth, 2007). Punch gives an example of rural children in Bolivian school where children were meeting girlfriends and their boyfriends in secretly at the middle of banana plantations. Rural children in Bushenyi have adapted to adults expectations, in terms of working to earn money for contribution fess, pocket money and money to support the entire family.

According to Mayall and Berry (2002) it is important to recognize the difference with in the generations because groups of young people may have different degree of agency in regard to their peers, friends, age, ethnicity, class, birth, order, gender and all aspects of social differentiation. Young people everywhere are constrained by the amount of structural limitations from adults such as being forced to do a lot of domestic work. This shows power relations between children and adults. Children in rural Bushenyi their agency to some extent has been limited by adults. This has prevented children from being agents of change in some ways.

Children might be regarded as having agency by adults who may raise questions about what kind of agency that might be and how much freedom children might be allowed to exercise (Allison James, 2009). My study takes children as gents of their lives. In my research children showed their contribution to families. Despite power relations between adults and children in rural Bushenyi, children still manage to negotiate their positions in the society they are live in.

The theory helps me understand children's agency which places importance on the historical dimension of social life and importance for child-adult relations, hierarchical and generational relationship that always offers both chances and limitations for the children's agency.

2.1.3. Socially constructed children

Childhood as asocial phenomenon can be seen back in Philippe Aries, centuries of childhood.

“In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist; this is not to suggest that childhood is not to be confused with affection for children. It corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult, therefore in medieval society this awareness was lacking”(Corsaro, 2011, p. 67).

Childhood was discovered as early as sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a result of particular social changes, such as the growth of the bourgeoisie in Europe (Aries 1962 cited in Kjørholt. (2004). Corsaro (2011) argues that although a number of elements of Aries’s position are now considered unsound or being criticized. His overall work is still of major importance for the history of child-hood, that is Aries argued that childhood was a social construction and that historians should take children and their lives seriously or so important. Aries work has compelled many historians to take child’s perspectives and voices in their studies of children and childhood as important.

Childhood is socially constructed; children belong to social structures (James et al., 1998). Within this discourse, time is a critical dimension that permits the very understanding of childhood to be seen as historically contingent (ibid). Rural children in Bushenyi are socially constructed. I take children informants as local rather than global phenomenon. They face different challenges in their school life due to social structures.

According to Corsaro (2011), the theory focuses on the diversities of childhoods that are contextualized in social setting of children’s daily life. In here, children are seen as well as cultural phenomenon. According to James et al. (1998) it is important for researchers to fight against what has been taken for granted. This includes taking children’s views and to listen to children carefully while doing research. Honwana and De Boeck (2005), argue that in order to understand childhood as a social construct we need to consider cultural setting and the way the social structure is formed. Childhood depends on cross cultural and diverge social roles, age, time, social expectations and responsibilities.

According to Kjørholt. (2004), there are still different approaches to the study of childhood as a social phenomenon. She argues that, they range from macro structural approaches to radical social constructionism. Childhood in rural Uganda is no universal. Childhood is built up through constructive practices and the different social realities in which children grow up.

According to Kjørholt. (2004), childhood as socially constructed implies diversity and particularities of childhoods, knowing that childhoods are constituted and practiced in different social and cultural settings. Kjørholt further argues that in order to understand and obtain enough knowledge on this discourse of social constructed childhood, it is important for us to contextualize the analyses, returning to the phenomenon under investigation to get an insight into how it is constituted and established in various ways in children everyday life. My study takes children as individuals with different lives, childhood vary with in the social structure they find their lives, gendered roles, and the cultures they develop as they grow up. In my research, I found out that daily activities are socially constructed, as I will explain more in chapter five.

Achan (2009), argues that children and childhood in Africa with focus on Uganda is diverse basing on the social beliefs, practices and norms of a given society and not necessarily on biological age or a country's level of security. Interpreting childhood in rural Bushenyi from a narrow angle may risk in misplaced assumptions and conceptions for Uganda children. I went to the field with open minds to disapprove and know more about rural children's everyday lives. I found that a lot was taken for granted about children's everyday lives in rural area. I agree to the theory that childhood is social as well as cultural phenomenon, knowing that childhood varies from one place to another considering age, culture, class, ethnicity and religion.

2.1.4 The child as a competent social actor

Allison James and Prout (1997), write that children are competent human beings. The theory challenges developmental, cognitive development and socialization theories that takes children as human becoming, passive, dependent, incompetent, unskilled. According to Robson et al. (2007), social studies of childhood values children as human being, as active members, as competent social actors or masters of their own lives. According to Kjørholt. (2004) social studies of childhood has positioned or taken childhood as a new paradigm where it partly criticizes pre-sociological perspectives on children and childhood. Kjørholt further argue that these discourses have been criticized for constructing the child within a developmental paradigm, where children are taken as immature, vulnerable, dependent being that always needs care from adults. The actors from psychology, pedagogy and health science have been heavily criticized for taking children as human being and incomplete human being compared to mature people who are adults.

My study takes children as a human being, competent social actors. In my research in south western Uganda, children portrayed to be active citizens by discussing not only on the planned topic but also contributed to the discussion about their lives and how they want to be represented in the country. I see children as social actors where they were discussing politics and experiences about their society. Adults should take children views seriously, but this is only done if they listen to children in all affairs. Leaving children's behind in matters that affect their lives is a big problem. During my data collection children proved to be masters of their own lives, they knew what they wanted and how the government should help them regarding their right to education.

2.2 Resilience

According to Boyden and Mann (2005), resilience is ability to resist the negative effects of hard circumstances and maintain biological, physical and psychological integrity. Werner and Smith (1998), point out that hardship come in many ways, as to a result of political, social conflict and poverty. Due to their youthfulness and specifically or definitely children lack social power. Boyden and Mann (2005), further argue that children and adolescents are often affected by these adverse circumstances.

According to Rousseau et al. (1998) children face problems like poverty, environmental degradation, family problems and expectations. Research has identified several processes at the individual, family and wider environmental levels that have been shown to have a significant influence on risk and resilience in children. Take an example of gender. Gender has been found to have much effect on way in which most children respond to coping strategies. According to Bernard (1998) cited in Boyden and Mann (2005), age, sense of humor, sense of purpose, bright future and spirituality are seen as significant impact on resilience

Boyden and Mann (2005), further argue that children, who are able to remain hopeful about the future, are flexible and adaptable, possess problem solving skills and actively try to assume control over their lives are likely to be less vulnerable compared to those children who passively accept the adversity they face. Children capable of lateral thinking and problem solving can easily enhance their coping by identifying alternatives to their problems and look for solutions (ibid). More research is needed especially in majority world context where children lives have been ignored. Vulnerable children like rural children have much to teach

the researchers in terms of broadening our understanding of wellbeing and coping extremely difficult situations (ibid).

Resilience is an important theory to my study. It shows how people especially children gain hope or create a positive thinking in life after all these hardships like poverty and other structural factors like inequality in societies, a lot of domestic work and gender. The theory helped me to understand how my informants cope up with poverty hardship and how children cope with a lot of domestic work in regard to their schoolings.

2.3 United Nations convention on the rights of the child

According to Fottrell and Deidre (2000) the united nation convention on the rights of children is the first binding universal treaty dedicated solely to the protection and promotion of children's rights; it was passed by General Assembly in 1989. CRC was initially delayed by along and different drafting process, but the resulting document is nonetheless both ambitious and far reaching and the potential exists within the CRC to advance considerably the right of children all over the globe.

According to UNICEF (1989) Universal Declaration of Human and in the international covenants on human rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedom set forth there in without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour sex, language, religion, political, national or social origin, property, birth or other status considering that children should be fully prepared to live an individual life in the society and brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, freedom, tolerance, equality and solidarity. The need to extend particular care to the child has is stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the child of 1924 as well as Declaration of the Rights of the child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November (1955). It also recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the international Covent on Civil and Political in the international Covenant on economic, social and cultural Rights and statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organization concerned with the welfare of children.

Fottrell and Deidre (2000), maintains that the CRC applies to all children who are under the age of 18. The approach of the CRC bearing in mind the range of children rights protected is that as a child progresses from infant to late adolescence, different classes of rights assume greater significance like protective and provisory rights are overtaken in importance by the Participatory rights as children move towards adulthood. In addition the CRC has pinned by

five main principles which all actions of states are to be measured that is as follows: *The first article* is under article 3, the best interest of the child which is a primary consideration in all matters concerning the child. It is widely accepted in domestic law but is introduced by this provision into the international law for the first time. *Second* is Article 5 which says that account is to be had of the evolving capacities of the child, thus children can be accorded greater autonomy and responsibility as they grow older. *Third*, Article 12 very radically requires that state ensure that due weight be given to the views of the child, and that children who are capable of expressing views be heard in all matters concerning them. *Fourth*, Article 2 says that all the rights in the CRC be accorded to all children without discrimination and *Article 6* protects the right to life, survival and the development.

According to Cantwell (1993) participation is most important and is one of three P's on which the UNCRC is based the other two being provision and protection. Thus as article 12, 13, 14 and 15 provide children and young people with the right to participate actively in society and to always take part in decision making in the community, family and the school. Therefore UNCRC is the first human right treaty to recognize children rights but however but CRC does not extend some rights to children like the right political rights.

However I agree that there is a need to teach children their rights and they should practice their citizenship in schools and their homes, and these three Ps need more clarification, because most children in Africa focusing on Uganda. Some children are not informed about their rights, which make them not to enjoy their rights as citizens; Children should be seen as social and political actors. I agree with Kjørholt (2008) in her article the best interest of children. She argues that children being called full citizens may give children responsibilities. It should be seen in two way argument, that is the benefits to children and the bad side it can bring to children, when they are seen are full citizens.

In the line with Robson et al. (2007) children are active citizens. Children's citizenship is a dynamic and continuous learning process. It demands both participation and involvement. It involves identity, which places children in a position as contributing social actors. Children are individual's with own capacities, competencies and they can fulfill many social, economic and culture expectations.

It has been discussed that even children's rights to participation are limited in UNCRC since they deny children political rights for example the right to vote hence becoming not yet full citizens (Freeman & M.D., 1992). A person deprived of his or her rights is in position and he

calls this a slave, considered as a tool at the disposal of others and children fall in this group. He calls them 'boys' as a name given in the Southern States of the USA or in South Africa to a person with no rights (ibid). Most of Uganda children fall in this group.

Despite the UNCRC critiques, I still believe that children's participation rights as stated in the convention are guiding tool to my study. UNCR has been used as a reference in policy making. Therefore the study takes children participation seriously to get more on how children perceive education and the challenges they face in their schooling life and education.

2.4 socialist feminism

According to Stromquist (1990) there is interconnection between ideological and economic forces. Patriarchy and capitalism reinforce each other. Education holds the school as a site for the reproduction of women and girls oppression as workers and as women. As workers women and girls are needed for the maintenance of an inexpensive labor force. According to Yates (1986), socialist feminist argue that gender inequalities in education are not a function of merely lacking powers and resources needed for education success, but primary the expression of conflicting economic interests in many societies.

The low-income is generally taken by domestic and poorly remunerated work. Girls are not available for schooling especially in societies where the economy relies heavily on subsistence production. The labor market conditions that bid women and their daughters fewer and weaker rewards than those offered to men and their sons in schools. This has many parents to invest in boys than girls in schools.

In rural Bushenyi girls are involved in a lot of daily activities compared to boys because of masculinity hierarchy and patriarchal practices. Due to poverty and gender hierarchy in rural Bushenyi girls have unequal chances in education.

2.5 Childhood theories: a critique

According to Aitken (2004) the sociology of childhood studies has focused more on the western notions of childhood. Punch (2003), write that research with children in the global south shows that these approaches inline of understanding childhood have been mostly focused and influenced by western ideas on childhood. According to Kjørholt. (2004) discourse like tribal child, which sees children's competence and agency as being part of their difference from adults, as well as their own autonomous communities and childhoods that

they themselves have constructed is a normative discourse grounded in particular normative and western –oriented values associated with romantic and idyllic notions of harmonious children and autonomous communities of children (ibid).

Social constructed approach opens up a possibility for the inclusion of discourses related to the broader cultural and socio-economic context and the wider society see Kjørholt. (2004). Despite the critiques, I still believe that theories are relevant to my study and data analysis. Theories help me to understand the conceptual and theoretical phenomena to better understand children’s views about their schooling life.

In the following chapters of analysis I draw on the theoretical perspectives presented in this chapter by taking children as active actors and involve them in my research process. I am hoping to better understand their views.

In the next chapter I present methodology of my research

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology I used in the study. Multiple methods that are mainly qualitative were used. According to Boyden, J, and Ennew (1997), qualitative research is aimed at gaining a deep understanding. It allowed children to participate and participants were grouped in small groups to make them confident enough to participate. Taking Kitchin, R., and N.J (2000), methodology is a coherent set of rules and producers and these rules can be used to investigate phenomena. This chapter is arranged in subsections, I will first describe research design, my position as a researcher, access to the field, selection of the area, choosing the sample, methods and materials used, ethical issues, the challenges I encountered, solutions and lessons learnt. I will also describe on the transcription, analysis and writing up as well as validity of the data.

To understand the finding from the study on everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda, I have structured the complex interview material for analysis. I have also interpreted the interviews and brought the subjects understanding into light and provided new perspectives from the researcher on the phenomena. I have also distinguished between the essential and the non-essential as Kvale (1996) writes. I also follow Nilsen (2005), giving a voice to children as informants serves to illustrate the necessity of reflexivity in the analytical process.

3.2 Ethnography Research

According to Davies (1999) doing research of any kind, is an implicit assumption that we are investigating something outside ourselves that the knowledge we seek cannot be gained solely through introspection. This works both in social and natural sciences. Davies further argues that, we cannot research something with which we have no contact, from which we are completely isolated. All good researchers to some degree are connected to a part of the object of their research.

I considered reflexivity in all forms of my research. Davies (1999), writes that reflexivity as a turning back on one self, a process of self-reference, reflectivity in social research is not a single phenomenon but assumes a variety of forms and affects the research process mostly through all the stages. According to Prout et al. (1990) it is important to use ethnography

research why doing research with children since it gives children power to actively participate in research. According to William (2009) ethnographic method examines behavior that takes place with in specific situations. Such behaviors are shaped and constrained by these situations and people's understanding and interpretation of their experiences. A full appreciation of ethnography' contribution to social science would entail a critical examination of its methodology within both the context of discovery and the context of validation (ibid).

According to Prout et al. (1990) ethnography research is important or useful methodology for the study of children's lives, for it gives children a more direct voice and participation. I used are multiple methods to collect information about children's lives and how they perceive education. Ethnography is a useful methodology to my study since it gives direct voice to the informants.

3.3 My Position as a researcher

According to Tingstad (2007) it is not only the methods used, but rather the ontology and epistemology that are the determinants of a good social science; therefore researcher's position is vital in the entire research process. I started by formulating topic, setting my aim and research questions, with the aim of listening carefully to my informants, understand and interpret information got from participants. I went with open mind to the field to find out more from rural children, taking them to be masters of their lives.

According to Kjørholt. (2004) researchers should fight against what has been taken for granted. In the same line I fought this by taking children's views into consideration and participatory methods were used. According to Alderson and Morrow (2011) participatory methods might be visual techniques used in research to increase participation. According to Haugen (2007), participatory tools help participants to give views of their social worlds. In the same way, methods like drawing, story writing and focused group discussion were used to get more from participants. The research was conducted in the area where I was born and lived for many years. This helped me as a researcher because I had knowledge about the culture as Ennew et al. (2009) suggest that, researchers must always respect and adhere to local codes and behavior of the community they are going to. I knew how people greet, how they talk to one another, respecting their local customs like food and their dress code. I acted like moderator during focused group discussions and tape recorded all the interviews and I acted as an interviewer, putting all ethics consideration.

Having grown and lived in a rural area I thought I knew a lot about children's lives in a rural setting, however after discussing with children I came to know that children had a lot of information that I could not have known if I did not discuss with them. This made me open and I allowed my participants to be the guides in the research but not forgetting my role as a researcher.

According to Mandall (1998) the researchers should take a least adult role to reduce power relations. As an adult researcher I did not take or assume the role of children. I acted as an adult who was interested in children's lives where I tried to be with them all the time, they used to call me "*Omukuru*" meaning a teacher. To overcome this I tried to help them on their work like home works, go with them to the swamps where they were supposed to collect grass to make mats, flower gardens and these flowers are taken to church when they mature. They were giving me the big hoe in the garden, which showed that they were still taking me as their elder. But I kept on reminding them that I am a student like them but at different level. I cracked jokes and tried to behave in a friendly way. I was always telling them to call me my name. Since I was not going to the staffroom they started to believe in me where some of my participants said that "*yes she is not a teacher because she doesn't even go to staffroom at break time*" Teachers go to staff room on break time to take tea.

The school where I did my research, the head teacher gave me a chance to talk to children. I encouraged pupils to study hard and gave them my experience that I also went through difficulties while a pupil at school with a similar setting and this is my village. This statement worked for me because during the process of data collection most girls started asking me a lot of good questions Like *how did you make it to degree "yakabiri and who took you to Buraya"* meaning second degree "*Buraya*" means Europe. I used to answer them that they will as well make it if they study hard. They were always willing to know more about Buraya. This strengthened my relationship with children and it was easy to make dialogue with them on my planned topic and I did not forget my role and aim of being in the field. It is good in research with children to fight against power differences (Morrow & Richards., 1996). In the same it was good that I tried to reduce power difference and I gained trust from participants and they started calling me by first name.

As I collected data, one of my informants (a girl) suggested "*Gilda why don't you come back and contest to be the youth Member of Parliament so that we can always tell you our*

problems. We really felt that your part of us and it is easy to talk to you, no one has ever asked me about my daily activities and how I perceive education and I am 14 years old now. I am so happy that at least there is going to be ekitabo about our lives, “ekitabo” meaning master’s thesis. This quotation shows how I tried to reduce the power differences and ended up being so friendly to children. According to Punch (2001) friendly atmosphere enables researchers to discuss with participates, in the same way this friendly atmosphere helped me to discuss my planned research questions with participates. This helped me to get rich data from participates.

3.4 Choosing study area

The selection of the study area was based on many factors like being a Ugandan by nationality, and Bushenyi being my home district made me choose Uganda as my study area. I carried out the field work in western Uganda where I was born, and having only two months of field work, I needed the area where I had knowledge about the culture. As Ennew et al. (2009), argue researchers must always respect and adhere to behavior respect norms and values of the community. Communicating to informants was easy, since we speak the same local language, speaking the same language made my access easy and creating rapport somehow easy.

I went to the field with open mind, despite being an insider. I have taken long time without going back to my rural village for many years and being in another continent here in Norway Europe made me not being close to my informants, so there was still a distance between my informants. This helped me not to take children’s everyday life for granted. Childhoods depend on social roles, age, time, social expectations and responsibilities. I found out that my child hood experience was different from other; a lot has changed in the community. This in way helped me to be more open.

3.5 Access to the field

I started my fieldwork in June- August 2013. The process of gaining entry always involves developing relationships in order to facilitate data collection (Schensul, S.L., Schensul, J.J., & Le compte, 1999). I introduced myself and my research objective to officials at the District where I was given official permission to start my fieldwork. Chief administrative officer gave me the copies to take to different offices where they were supposed to confirm my access to the school; I got permission from all the stakeholders and gate keepers. Stake holders include

the following: Resident District Commissioner, District Chairperson, District Education Officer, Chairperson Lc111, Chairperson Lc1 and Head teacher. It was easy for me to access these officials since I grew up and lived in that area.

Despite getting warm welcome it was hard for most gate keepers to believe that my research involved children. Hammersley, M., and Atkinson (2007), argue that gatekeepers may change a researcher in one direction or another and sometimes block some lines of inquiry. In the same way gatekeepers were advising me to talk to parents than talking to children themselves. In same line with Robson et al. (2007), I explained to them how children are Human being, active members, competent social actors and masters of their own lives and they gave me go head. Informants were so involved in research but most of them expected some help inform of funds in return. I overcame this by explaining my research aim.

3.6 Sample and duration of fieldwork

Data collection took two months June to August 2013. Strategic sampling was used. Children aged 12 and older that live in the rural area and go to school were targeted. The main reason of choosing children aged 12 and older was because I wanted children who have been in school for more than four years. These would make the fieldwork process faster because I had only two months of data collection. Other informants were parents to the children living in rural area Bushenyi District, teachers and one of the local councils. One teacher helped me to mobilize children at school; the children were from primary five, six and seven, primary. In Uganda's education system basic level education takes seven years. After basic level, we then have to undergo through three different levels. Of these include ordinary level that takes four years, advanced level takes two years and then institutional level depends on the program one is pursuing. The interviewed children, some parents, teachers and head teachers were found at school.

3.7 Methods and materials used

I used qualitative methods to collect data. Clark (2005), argues that multiple methods help to gain a deep understanding. The methods used were mostly participatory methods. Boyden et al. (1997), stress that using three or more tools facilitates triangulation process therefore more than three methods were used and these include participant observation, drawing, story writing, focused group discussion and key informants interviews. I will discuss each of these methods below.

3.7.1 Participant Observation and informal dialogues

According to Ennew et al. (2009) unstructured observation is the basis of all good research. It is vital for understanding the context of data, as well as for writing an interesting and believable research. Punch (2002), writes that there are likely to be some differences between what informants say do and what they actually may be doing in practice. That is why it is good to include observation tool among the research tools rather than only relying solely on task-based activities.

The study took observation as a method. I started observing informants observation on the first day I reached at school. I observed children especially at school, at their homes and markets. Using this method I took notes. I documented my facts as precise as possible on what I saw and my experience in the field, including children's daily activities. I observed children's everyday life, teachers, parents and key informants were also observed.

I tried to observe the selected informants at school especially children, but even teachers were observed. It was somehow hard to only focus on only informants who were taking part in research. Informant's behavior and body language were also observed. Participates were observed at break time, lunch time. I moved around the school, and observed children do handwork (baskets and mats), and then I also escorted them to the swamp where hand work materials are picked. I managed to move with them on two different occasions. Handwork is an activity done in most rural schools. In all this process I was observing and during this work my rapport with children was becoming bigger. I observed, interacted with the children who are in this case my informants. They trusted me and were very confident to share all that I asked them to talk about. Being with the children most of the time helped me to ask my planned research questions. I observed the relationship between children and teachers and I came to conclude that teachers are highly respected at school to the extent that whenever the pupils see the teachers they really run fast. To me this was not actually respect but fear.

During observation process I also informal dialogues with informants. Children asked me whether I also did such activities in Norway. How children are treated in Norway. I answered all their queries by letting the children know that each and every society has children but the activities vary from country to country, place to place since cultures are different, then the activities would also be different from what rural children are engaged in. This made them really happy and started comparing themselves with children in Norway.

I also visited children and parents who consented to take part in research at their homes. I visited at around 5. 30 pm and my intention was to observe how children live with parents, the relationship between them. The domestic work they engage in. Also observing whether they got some time to revise and do homework. I chose to go at 5.30 because that is when both parents and children are at home preparing for supper and other domestic chores.

Participant observation worked fine since all most what my participants were telling me in other methods was observed. I confirmed them right while I was observing. I also observed that children fear their elders so much. Participant observation was helpful to be part of research where I actively took part in the research. According to A. Kjørholt, Moss, and Clark (2005), observation and participation is important in research with children it helps to get deeper insight into the unspoken words, in the same line with her argument participant observation helped me a lot to study children's emotions and their everyday lives.

3.7.2 Drawing

I understand drawing in terms of drawing pictures. This method was used to best bring out children's ideas in form of drawing. It was used as an individual setting. Informants were asked to draw their daily activities. I gave children time and opportunity to think about what they wanted to draw and they were given a chance to control their drawings. This showed up to be a very helpful tool that captured details about daily activities rural children engaged in. It was in-form of diagrams. According to Shaver, Francis, and L.Barnett (1993), drawing method is creative and fun and in the same way I found out that children liked using different colours to decorate their drawings and they found it to be fun which made them actively involved. I provided informants with stationary materials.

This tool was liked by most informants especially those children who were shy to express themselves in group setting. I got a lot of information from their drawings that I was not even expecting. Most informants went ahead and drew their parent's fights because of school fees, how they are not happy with their fathers because of taking a lot of alcohol. During interpretation I tried to ask informants why they have drawn pictures for example parent's fights then I had to ask why do they fight, and how often do they fight so that I get detailed information from them.

According to Punch (2002), it should not be taken for granted that drawings are simple. In the same way, I encountered some challenges with this method where some of informants were not used to drawing. They lacked drawing practice which made the tool hard for some them. In the same way I found out that children are not used to drawings. Apart from science drawings in the text books, these children do not watch television and other mass media that could help them to see more drawings. I solved this by encouraging them that there was no need to draw nice pictures as long as they interpret what they have drawn and this solution worked where those few participants that were not willing to participate ended up liking it.

3.7.3 Story writing

Story writing is a method that exploits children's particular talents giving this method, children greater control over the process (Ansell., 2001). Children were given atopic to write about. Story writing was useful in controlling the ethical dilemmas like power hierarchies and ensuring privacy since informants were writing their stories privately. Children were offered topics where they expressed their opinions and thoughts in form of stories and they answered the questions about their future plans, how poverty affects their school life and other challenges that affect their school life. Stationary materials were proved for example pens, papers and books. At first I thought this method was going to be hard for rural children, but I was surprised most children informants liked this method. Those who could not write stories in English were allowed to write the stories in *Runyankore* that is their mother language and stories were interpreted by children.

But on the other hand informants took a lot of time writing stories. Despite dealing with children who go to school. Some informants could neither write in English nor the local the local language. It was difficult to read some of stories. The tool was rather a challenge to the rural school goers but I overcame this by probing more from the informants to explain to me what they were trying to write in the local language. This made my work easy because I understand the local language. We could discuss about their interpretation.

3.7.4 Focus group discussion with children

Focused group discussion is a formal, facilitated discussion on a specific focused topic. It is useful for identifying the knowledge, ideas, values, beliefs and attitudes of group (Boyden et al., 1997). Different writers' suggest a different number but according Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), it should be six to ten people with the, the same characteristics like gender, Age, work

and education. In the same way children were set in group of seven and I had three group discussions with children and most of them were able to express themselves in a group setting.

As I formed my groups, I considered gender and age group. I felt girls would be comfortable and free to tell their experiences if interviewed separate from the boys. A group of seven was also manageable. I managed to interview one group of girls separate from one group of boys. The third group was composed of girls and boys. I mixed boys and girls to find out how freely they can discuss when mixed. This would help me to understand how they interact while at school. The children were not of the same age but they at least belonged to the same age group as Solberg (1996) writes that , sometimes researchers need to ignore the age as long as children can give their views.

Using focused group discussions was helpful to get rich information from participants especially those who were arranged in the same sex than a group which was mixed. Participants were arranged in one circle and I was able to observe them as we discuss. I was using guiding questions which helped to more on the planned topic. It answered most of the research questions. I paid attention to get all informants views. Informants were lively and they were able to give more classification on other comments. Children were happy to be involved in my research and to learn that their views were crucial to my study. Actually some of the children asked if I would keep on coming to discuss with them.

The few challenges I faced with this method is that some informants at first supporting the ideas of few children who were dominating the discussion without giving their own views. I solved this by encouraging others to give their views reminding them that all answers were correct and encouraging the shy informants to feel free in giving their views.

Focused group discussion with adults

I carried out focus group discussions with parents and teachers. Both men and women were mixed. I gathered information that related to the research questions. It was not easy to find parents in a group setting but I was advised by the head teacher to make appointments with parents and discuss with them after the parents school meeting and most of them honored the appointment. We discussed after the school meeting. Four parents did not turn up but they requested me to find them at their homes and discuss from there which I did. Kvale and

Brinkmann (2009), state out that focus group discussion bring forth different viewpoints than solutions to the issues discussed. In the same way I introduced the Topic of my study to members in the group and gave them time to discuss but I still took the role of moderator where I took some notes as was recording their voices. I tried to ask more to get rich information for example about the activities children do. I continued to probe where, what time and for how long so that I can get more on the planned research questions and on issues that were unclear.

I faced challenge when I was discussing with teachers because four teachers were so active and they almost did not want to give chance to other teachers to discuss, but I managed this challenge by encouraging others to speak and after 20 minutes they also started discussing. I encountered the challenge of reciprocity. According to J Ennew, Plateau, and D.P (2004) it is not good to give money to the participants. It can lead to expectations. It creates divisions and perpetuates power differences. Mikkelsen (1995), argues that it is seen as buying information and participants may reply what they think the researchers want to hear. Parents were expecting immediate help to their children. Most of them were asking me to go and tell the people in charge and that I should give some donations to their children and pay for pay for the time used to answer my questions.

I kept explaining my position as researcher that I am a student like your children, but at different level and at my level, I need to write a master's thesis and to bring that I needed their ideas. I am interested to hear children's views because they capable of expressing their views. I explained to the parents that my research would not bring immediate solution to problems of their children and that I did not have capacity to fund their children to join better schools.

But on the other hand I agree with Abebe (2008), researchers should always give short- term reciprocity for those who can. According to McDowell (2001) cited in Abebe (2009), Short-term reciprocity means compensating the researched with service and material or monetary payments to offset their time and labour. Research should benefit both the researcher and the informants. For example while doing my field work, I realized informants were really sacrificing to give me their time because they were always busy with domestic work. Rural people's time means a lot to them so researchers should not just benefit from them and leave them empty handed.

According to Nilsen and Rogers (2005), there are always difficulties to do interviews in some spaces like family houses where all family members may always want to be involved, in the same way the four interviews I did with parents at their homes I faced interruptions from their village friends coming to visit them, then we first stop, interruption from children which took a lot of time than I had planned for.

3.7.5 Key informants interviews with children

According to Mikkelsen (1995) Interviews are usually conducted with specific individuals or target groups. I understand key informants to be people who have knowledge about the area of the study. In this case I interviewed five children, who were 12-15 years and have been to school for more than five years and those that were able to discuss narratively. The questions were open ended to allow informants express themselves. The way I set the first questions allowed participants to express themselves. Questions were related to my topic but despite the guiding questions. I was allowing informants to say what they want, not only on the asked question. This made the discussion lively. I used the same tool for FGDs, but the only difference is that this was used on individuals

Key informants interviews with adults (KIIs)

I interviewed local council (Lc) one chairman of that area, in Uganda administrative system, hierarchy is arranged from bottom to top that is from village- parish- Sub County then county and to the head offices which is a district. So Lc one is that one at the village level, five parents on school committee were interviewed and one head teacher. I choose them as my key informants because they had knowledge about the subject since they are leaders. I spent much time using this tool. The informants were so willing to discuss everything they knew about the topic. Most of informants were willing to participate. I thought it was going to be hard for me to discuss with adults because of being a student. Back home if you are a student, adults tend not to take our views seriously, but informants were willing to participate and trusted me to keep their information confidential.

I faced challenge with privacy while conducting interviews with adults. Many researchers have highlighted the same problem in conducting a private interview in home setting. Where other family members may always want to intervene and there is also a problem of limited space see Abebe (2008), Valentine, Butler, and Skelton (2001). It was difficult for me to do interviews in family homes where people are living in extended families. I was always finding

a lot of people in homes and explaining that I needed privacy was hard. Where one old woman said *but young girl, you me as well because I have been living in this area for the last 78 years and the son you are going to interview is just born yesterday*. In this quotation the old lady met that her son was young. Therefore it was important to include her. I partly allowed the interview to be informal talk because it was even hard to find a place outside since it was rainy season and the space they share is not all that big.

Table 1: The following table, shows an over view of the data collected

Research tools	Children participants	Adults participants
Drawing	24 children participated	-
Story writing	23 children participated	-
Focused group discussion	I had 3 groups with children 21 informants participated in the discussion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group 1- 7girls, • group 2 -7 boys • group 3- 4 girls and 3 boys 	Two focused group discussions with Adults. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group 4- 8 teachers • group 5- 10 parents
Key group informants	5 children participated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of local council • 5 parents on the school committee • one head teacher
Individual interview	-	4 parents participated
Observation	Mostly at school, home and markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For parents I observed during interview process, homes and market. • Teachers were observed mostly at school.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The study was approved by department of childhood studies, Norwegian University of science and Technology and Data protection official for research Norwegian social science data services before heading to the field.

According to Boyden et al. (1997), ethics are defined as a set of moral principles and roles of conduct. The research process and results should not cause harm to participants mostly in research. This involves human beings and intervention of people's lives. Boyden and Ennew further argue that taking children as informants may come up with additional ethical issues. I sought for informed consent; privacy and confidentiality. Importance of the power differences was reduced, and ethics of reciprocity and many other ethical issues were followed as discussed below.

3.8.1 Informed consent

According to Alderson and Morrow (2011), informed consent means that informants have agreed or consented to take part in research. The study sought for informed consent to all informants who participated in research process. Ennew et al. (2009), recommend that researchers should explain the whole process of the research and informants should give consent, in the same way I first explained my aim of my research and gained the participants consent and I also explained what data was going to be used for. Informants that wanted to withdraw from research were allowed to do that. It was a continuous process to inform my participants the aim of my research. I was so clear that I am a student researcher and my findings may not necessarily change their lives as soon as possible because many of them were expecting donation.

I verbally repeated the information in the consent form on each tool used that their participation was voluntary and they may withdraw their consent as long as the project was in progress, without stating the reason. I provided Stationary materials to children informants, when I asked them to draw some pictures and to write some stories. I explained that I was going to interview some of them individually and also interview them in groups; according to their age and gender that is boys alone and girls alone.

The informed consent form had all the necessary information that informants needed to know before any tool was used. During the process of the research I tried to visit all homes for

informants. This was done so that their parents would know the person who was dealing with their children and to observe more on my planned topic. I did not stop explaining my aim and purpose of my study to every home I visited. The informed consent I refer to is attached to appendices.

3.8.2 Privacy and confidentiality

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) confidentiality is all about the good storage of data. Privacy and confidentiality was taken into consideration. According to Ennew et al. (2009), it is important to protect the identity of research informants by changing their names or using numbers. The study did not use participants' real names; neither did I collect personal ID information. All the informants allowed me to record their voices and therefore I used tape recorder during the interview, however I transcribed the interviews and deleted the records. Informant's discussions were taken seriously. Alderson and Morrow (2011), argue that researchers are not supposed to force respondents to participate in interview. In line with this, the study did not force any one to participate. For example some children that refused to take part in FGD's were not forced.

However privacy was a challenge as some teachers kept on interfering with my discussions with the children. This also shows some level of power relations between adults and children. The teachers in these rural schools still view children as becoming as opposed to being.

According Nilsen and Rogers (2005), it is always difficult to find convenient space in homes because other family members are always willing to hear what you are discussing, in the same way parents wanted to listen to their children and most few interviews I did with children at their homes were not lively as the interviews I did at school. Following Boyden et al. (1997), research process and results should not cause harm to participants. I therefore decided to only deal with children that I found at school so that my research would not cause harm to children since they told me their problem of finding them at home.

This compelled me to ask children whether they were comfortable with the level of interruption from their teachers and they proved to me that they were not fine about it. I overcame this by asking the teachers if it was fine to give time with children alone. Teachers allowed to give privacy and I ensured them, that children were safe in the class room. That where most children felt comfortable. When I asked children where they felt safe.

3.8.3 Importance of power differentials

Importance of power differentials between a researcher and child was also considered. According to Punch (2001) Importance of the power differences between children and adults is the relationship that may occur while in research process. I controlled power differences by taking the least adult role. I treated my informants with respect and spent much time with children to learn more from them about what they were doing and why they did it. I used the local language and this helped me to reduce the power differences with children because it was easy for them to talk and discuss with me.

I faced the challenge of power differences after introducing myself to children what I do, where I study from and my aim of the research. Children fear their elders at first they took me to be like their teacher. Irwin (2006), argues that power difference is a central aspect of ethical research with children. In a country like Uganda and in the rural area it was hard for me at first to create rapport with children because they are taught to respect and fear elders.

I managed this by taking least adult role as Punch (2001) writes. I made sure I spent a lot of time with them and join them in break time, go with them whenever it was time for handwork, stopping them to call me Madam. In few days they realized I was so friendly and kept on reminding them that I am also a student like them but at different level. Using participatory tools also helped me a lot to reduce the powers imbalances where children were taking active role. I tried to help them on their home works. I treated with them with respect, I tried not to be with school staff most of the times because then children were going to consider me like one of new teachers in school. These techniques helped me to reduce the power imbalances.

3.9 Challenges and solutions

The following are challenges I faced and how I solved the challenges

3.9.1 School fees

I faced a problem were some of informants were sent home for school fees. On fridays most children used to go to the market with their mothers. Some children were supposed to carry what they were going to sale. It was hard to find all informants on fridays since it is a market day. That is why the number of participants differ in different tools I used. I managed to solve this by visiting some of children at their homes. They were willing to take part. Though some of the children it was not easy to discuss with them from home. They proved to be busy with

domestic work. Most of children could not talk in front of their elders fearing to be beaten. In case they discuss what their parents were not willing to discuss.

3.9.2 Gate keepers

The staff thought I was going to take advantage of children to get their views and their problems since I was from Norway. Research may worry participants and gate keepers (Fraser, Lewis, Doing, Kellett, & Robinson, 2004). In my study the gatekeepers thought that I wanted to use children to get donation and do my own staff. They insisted on hearing what I was discussing with children. I continued explaining that I need children to be alone with children I solved this by showing them all the documents about me from the letter I got from NOSEB introducing whom I am. The letter from the District officials and since I was from that area they believed and I started research with children.

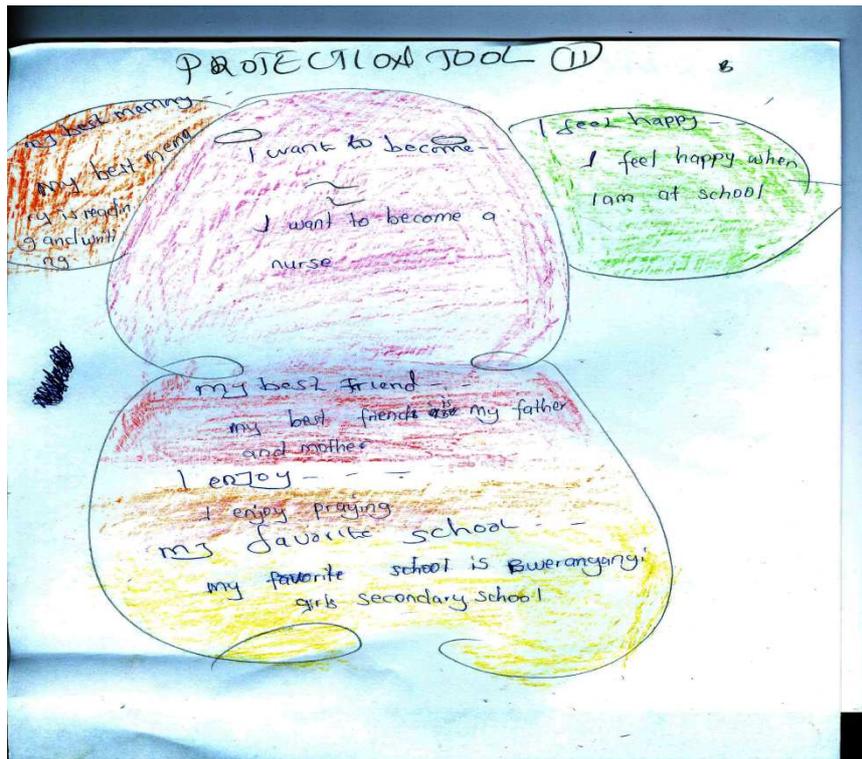
3.9.3 Donations

One friday I decided to go to the market and observe what really children were doing, many people came to me since some of parents who consented told them about my research. They were asking for donation and they were wondering why I was not married at my age and my culture most girls get married as early as 15 years. They emphasized that I was going to tell girl not to get married. Where they were wondering how the parents consented for their children to take part in the research process. However I solved this by informing them that my research is not all about girl marriage. I explained my position as researcher and my aim of the research, they gave me go ahead.

3.10 Protection tool

Protection tool is a final ethical tool used at the end of data collection with all children informants, to encourage positive thoughts. This tool is easy and most children like it. It is commonly used in rights –based research Ennew et al. (2009) Children were given a picture to decorate with six sentences to complete that included the positive thoughts of their lives. For example *my best memory---I want to become ---, I feel happy....my best friend--- I enjoy...and my favorite school---* this encouraged positive thinking and the questions were set in relation to research questions that led positive thinking to participants and they were happy. Informants liked this tool because they found it fun, easy to fill and decorate.

Figure 1: Protection tool 13 years old, drawings



Source: Field Work, 2013

3.11 Transcription and Categorization

The data from all tools used was transcribed from the local language and typed in English in a computer package called Microsoft Word. According to Kvale (1996) transcribing is a process of translation that is from oral language to written language. This data gave me the picture of how children perceive education and their everyday activities; I got rich data from the tools used. The transcription process started immediately with the first tool I used, it was an ongoing process. At first I thought it was really too much to transcribe but as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) write that some of the researchers who take time and transcribe their findings may benefit from this transcription process. I was motivated by that where I transcribed my data from Runyankore to English myself and this helped me to gain more and remember children's stories.

This gave me a deeper understanding of what was discussed in all the tools used. By listening to what was tape-recorded, it made me to master my data. I categorized my data by in main subtopics considering what was mainly said and I also made the column of other information that was not commonly said but seemed important to me. I continuously read the stories looking for similarities and differences not forgetting the research aim and research questions.

3.12 Analysis and write up

According to Silverman (2005) data analysis is interpreting the meaning and understanding from a set of data collected. The interpretation of material got from the informants was concurrently grouped in the same style. I used key expressions from the findings, and I write the uniformity and other interesting materials from the study. The related stories and discussions found in relation to my objectives and research questions. I coded the data in regard to research questions and wrote up the summary of each. I reread the data and field notes for better interpretation and my field notes. Listen to the tapes again and again to get more on informants used phrases and how I was probing informants to understand what they were meaning in regard to their answers. I tried to find interpretation of general information and interesting situations to gain more from qualitative data.

3.13 Validity and reliability of the data

According to Hay (2000) validity refers to accuracy of data collected and producing the desired results. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), reliability is consistency and trustworthiness of a research account.

I discussed my research questions with the right participants. The methods I used like participatory tools proved to be child friendly and this provided valid data. Different tools were designed for different informants. I used more than one tool and well-designed to fit the different informants. Fore-example drawing, story writing for children and focused group discussion for both children and adults. The study took ethics into considerations where I explained my aim of my research and all the questions from my participants about the research questions were answered. I tried to simplify my questions where the informants did not understand. Following the discussions I had with participants, information answered all my research questions asked in depth. All research questions were actively answered by children, teachers in depth.

I have discussed the qualitative methods used in my study. The combination of multiple methods produced rich data. Tools like informal dialogues with informants helped me to get rich data and rapport was built. Participant observation confirmed the similar stories told by informants, Drawings was highly enjoyed by informants which helped me to get more on the planned topic. Story writing so helpful to get more on what children think without interruptions. Being with informants most of the time helped to be seen as a student but at

different level. The study had some changes and adjustments as explained above. Ethics were followed and helped me to solve the ethical dilemmas faced in the field. In the following chapter.

I present the discussion and analysis of the information got from the informants.

CHAPTER FOUR

COUNTRY PROFILE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I give a brief background of Uganda which is the study area; it presents the social- economic and social –cultural history of Uganda. I also elaborate on the South Western part of Uganda where I carried out my field work. The chapter also highlights Uganda’s geographical location, political history and governance, economy, the people, rural settlement, culture, education structure and the study area. I present them in the following sub- topics.

4.2 Geographical position of Uganda

Uganda is a country in East Africa. It is a landlocked country and it lies astride the Equator, bounded by Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo. Uganda’s area is 91.134 square miles. Most areas in Uganda consist of a plateau, some 3,000 to 5,000 feet (900 to 1,500 m) high and rimmed by mountains, volcanic peaks and lakes. Along the Western boarder runs part of Africa’s Great Rift Valley, containing Lakes Albert, Edward and George. Uganda has a modified tropical climate with lower temperatures and less humidity than parts found in tropical lowlands. Average monthly temperatures at Kampala the capital city of Uganda, near Lake Victoria are mostly around 70° F. (21°C). Rain falls during all months of the year, but it is heaviest during March, May, August and November. The total amount varies from roughly 40 to 60 inches depending on the location. Savannas and other grasslands cover most of Uganda (Geography of Uganda 2014)ⁱ

4.3 Governance and history

Uganda’s government consists of three arms; the executive, the Judiciary, and the legislature. The president heads the executive branch, and other principal officials are the vice president, the prime minister, and cabinet ministers, much of the country’s executive powers are vested in the president who has the power to appoint or remove the vice-president, the prime minister, and cabinet ministers (Otiso, 2006).

Besides these national government level organs in Uganda, there are various units of local government at the district and sub county level, urban local governments are organized

according to urban rank, that is, city, municipality, and town. Cities are governed by city councils whose constituent parts are the city division councils while municipal councils are responsible for towns and in the rural areas of Uganda local government consists of the country, parish and the village (ibid).

According to the 1995 constitution, there is one elected president and one house legislature. Uganda consists of a number of small kingdoms. Buganda region became a British protectorate in 1894, and after two years later British authority was extended to cover most of the rest of the region. Great Britain retained control of this territory until 1962, when Uganda became an independent nation within the British Commonwealth. In early 1966 the Prime Minister, Milton Obote, detained the presidency. In 1971 Obote was deposed in a military coup led by General Idi Amin. Amin established an extremely brutal dictatorship still fresh in the minds of Ugandan's. Tens of thousands of Ugandans were set to death. This political history has an effect on Ugandan's up to now. Many of Ugandan's did not manage to attend schools due to dictatorship regimes leading to illiteracy. And this has affected children's school life since some of the parents in rural Bushenyi do not value children's education. In 1972 he deported all residents of East Indian descent. These Indians were mostly the owners of the country's businesses in Uganda and their departure from the country, led the economy to deteriorate. According to the UNICEF (2005b), national Resistance Movement (NRM) took over power and in 1986; it embarked on the economic recovery Programme (ERP) to re-establish financial stability and initiate the rehabilitation of the country's productive and social infrastructure, to set up a base for stable economy.

Since Uganda got its independence from the Great Britain in 1962, the country has been facing political turmoil and wars that are combined with the HIV/AIDS epidemic that has decreased its population and seriously affected disrupted its social economic life. Many other factors have contributed to the country's social political instability, including its internal affairs. This has also affected education since it affected people's economy hence leading to poverty which has affected schooling life of many children in Uganda.

4.4 Economy

Uganda is one of the poorest countries in the world; the people live mainly by subsistence farming, growing a variety of foods for example millet, plantains, corn, sweet potatoes and cassava. Coffee is the one of the leading cash and export crop in Uganda, fishing activities are

carried on in all major waters, most common on lakes Victoria and Kyoga. Uganda's currency unit is the Ugandan shilling. Uganda has a lot of numerous resources which are known, but they have not virtually unexploited. Gold, tin, phosphates, tungsten and salt are normally produced in small amounts. Industrialization has been slow, with industries generally limited to the processing of agricultural products and the manufacturing of fertilizers animal feeds and consumer goods. Uganda has railways which connect most Uganda's principal cities and provide access to the Kenyan port which is Mombasa (Geography of Uganda 2014)ⁱⁱ

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics revised uphill estimate for 2012/2013 GDP growth is 5.1 per cent. This rose from 4.3 per cent. Actual economic growth in 2012/2013 is thought to be primarily driven by growth in exports and public investment and to a lesser extent by growth in private investment and general government consumption. Household consumption is expected to make a negative contribution to GDP growth, declining by 1.4 per cent in 2012/2013. According to Bank of Uganda (2013), this is expected to make only a marginal contribution in 2013/2014 as nominal and real disposable income, leading wages and salaries, remain low, public real wages are expected to decline by 1-2 per cent in 2014. Many children have been affected by economy since most of the parents cannot afford to pay for their children in schools.

4.5 The people

Nearly all the people in Uganda are Africans; most people belong to Bantu groups. The Baganda form the largest group in the country. There are few thousand non-Africans in the country mainly Asians and Europeans. English is the official language, but indigenous languages are spoken in different parts of the country: Bantu tongues predominate; Swahili is widely understood in most parts of the country. According to Otiso (2006) Uganda infant mortality rate is at 68 deaths per thousand live births, and the average span is 52 years, all these death are brought by poverty, civil wars, and the diseases like HIV/AIDs and malaria. There are 19 major ethnic groups and these native ethnic groups fall into four major categories, in general these groups live in different parts of the country and they have different culture differences, for example Bantu commonly known as agriculturists, Nilo-Hamitic groups, Karimojong people are nomadic pastoralists that depend on cattle and goats. Daily activities children do are socially constructed according ethnic group they follow in. therefore daily activities children engage in vary from culture to culture.

4.5.1 Marriage

Marriage in Uganda is traditionally one of the most important social customs across all the cultures, marriage is seen as central means of uniting the families, lineages and the clans and most commonly it not allowed to marry a girl of the same tribe and not relatives. Divorce is not common in Uganda. Traditionally a man is supposed to pay the bride price to the family of the girl and this is based on a number of factors for example based on virginity, divorcee, education and where the girl comes from. If the girl is a virgin, educated or from a well- off family a lot of cows are supposed to be paid. If girl has divorced before then somehow she loses value then few cows are paid.

Most girls in rural Uganda are forced into early marriages where by most parents are after bride price. In Uganda marriage traditions begin with courtship where this is a time where the couples are supposed to study each ones behavior, then after that dowry is paid to the girl's family and the families agree on the wedding date, the girls aunt is supposed to teach the girl how to look after the man and his family members. Traditionally girls who got pregnancy before marriage are heavily punished and this protects many girls from playing sex before marriage. Many men in Uganda fear to marry from the family where the history shows that most people from there are lazy, drunkenness, witchcraft, barrenness and many other factors. Early marriages have serious affected girls schooling in Uganda since some of parents take girls to be property in terms of getting income from them. Hence making them vulnerable and miss their right to education.

4.5.2 Religion and Languages

Uganda is generally a God fearing country. It's Moto: For God and my country. A big number of Ugandan's belongs to a religious sect, with almost 84% of Ugandan's population being Christians. Roman Catholic (41.9%), Anglican Church of Uganda (35.9%), Evangelical and Pentecostal churches (6.2%) and Islam with the Muslims representing 12%. A small number still follow the traditional religion (1%) and non-Christian faiths are few totaling to (0.7%) (Uganda. Com 2004)ⁱⁱⁱ

Uganda like many African countries is generally very religious country. Most people believe that God is only the solution to their situation. They believe God helper and powerful. They follow teachings of different religions more commonly African traditional religions that is Christianity and Islam. Unlike most people in western countries most Ugandans believe and see spiritual and physical life as a continuum. Most Ugandans believe that whenever they are

engaged in conversation and while sleeping God and gods are readily invoked more especially among the more traditional ones.

Religion is prominently in all aspects of Ugandan life, both private and public spheres. That's why most social events are opened by prayers for example weddings, graduations, public events like hero's day, independence celebrations. Most schools open up with morning prayers and closing prayer and incorporate religious performances are usually done that is gospel music and where possible the church leaders lead the prayers. Ugandans believe that it is hard to succeed in life without God.

The traditional religion like Buganda believe in existence of a spiritual hierarchy, that is the supreme (*Katonda*) being the creator and father of all gods, guardian saints (*Balubaale*) and (*Mizimu*) these are lesser believed to departed ancestors. There is also god of rain, harvest and among others.

According Otiso (2006), the British colonial authorities set out to promote English through the school system and massive adult literacy programs. These programs were fully supported and often initiated by the Christians churches make Bible study more widely accessible to the locals. Although Idi Amin declared Kiswahili as Uganda's national language in the year 1970's, this did not substantially change the place of the language in the Uganda because the policy was never implemented. Therefore English remained the official language in Uganda. Despite English being the national language in Uganda, few Ugandans can express themselves in English. Despite hard situations children go through in Uganda, they still believe that God will help them through their education. Religion is seen as coping strategy by many children in Uganda.

4.6 Rural settlement

According Shibeshi (2006), rural settlement comprises human settlements with a small population that is people agriculture dominated. Ugandans have traditionally lived in rural villages whose size mostly varies by region, occupation, ethnicity and land availability, for example in the south they have larger populations and more permanent villages, and it is larger because they are good at farming. Taking example of Baganda culture in the pre-colonial era often consists of 50 homesteads that normally are governed by the chiefs answerable or under the head chief who is called *Kabaka*. Other settlement in Uganda like all Bantu settlements have not been all that different in the way of settlement compared to

Baganda but only in terms of local environment and security. Among the Nilo-Hamitic groups such as the Karimojongo who are known to be pastoralist, they settle in homestead clusters enclosing cattle pens commonly known as (Kraals), they live in such homesteads simply because they want to protect their cattle from raiders, insects and wild animals at night. Almost all Ugandan ethnic groups, settlement are organized according to their origin clans. This is important to my study since carried my research in a rural area.

4.6.1 Rural poverty in Uganda

According to Rural poverty in Uganda (2010)^{iv} Uganda has made enormous progress in reducing poverty levels, reducing the countrywide incidence from 56 per cent of the population in 1992 to 24.5 per cent in 2009. The reduction of poverty in urban areas has been especially noticeable. Notwithstanding these gains, however, the absolute number of poor people has increased due to the population growth. Poverty in Uganda remains high in rural areas, which is reported to home of 84 per cent of Ugandans.

Approximately 27 per cent of rural people still live below the national rural poverty line. Uganda's poorest people comprise small holder farmers living in remote areas scattered throughout the country. Remoteness in Uganda makes people poorer since it stops them from benefiting from Uganda's economic growth and dynamic modernization. In most remote areas of Uganda, smaller holder farmers do not have access to the roads and vehicles to transport their produce and market linkages are non-existent. Most farmers in the rural Uganda lack inputs and technology to help them increase their production and reduce pests and diseases that destroy their crops. They lack financial services which would have enabled them to expand their incomes (Rural poverty in Uganda 2010)^v.

Health and social issues mostly affect rural poverty in Uganda as well. The population of approximately 36 million Ugandans is growing at annual rate of 3.4 per cent. Despite the country dramatically reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS since the 1990's, prevalence rates have again began rising in recent years. The pandemic has caused a big number of deaths of young people and orphaned up to 1.2 million children in Uganda (ibid).

The poorest areas are northern Uganda, where poverty levels are consistently above 40 percent and exceed 60 percent in many districts. Health and social issues significantly affect rural people in Uganda as well. Population of about 36 million people is growing at an annual rate of 3.4 per cent. Uganda has reduced the incidence of HIV/AIDS since the 1990's but

prevalence rates have begun rising again in recent years. The disease has caused the death of large numbers of young people and orphaned up to 1.2 million children. In 2012, Uganda ranked 161st among the 187 countries on the United Nations Development program's Human Development Index, in the Low Development category (ibid). Poverty has led to a lot of challenges in rural Uganda where most people cannot afford health services hence increase in death rates. This has made many children to be orphans at a young age. This makes the children psychologically tortured and in the long run, it has affected their school life where some end up dropping out because they are unable to pay school contribution fees.

4.7 Culture, family and gender roles

Ugandan society is very multiethnic, with a rich mixture of cultures. Gender inequality is rooted in patriarchal beliefs. Men are more respected than women. This has brought gender inequality in male and female relations. Ugandan society is patrilineal and women remain subject to their fathers and then later to their husbands after getting married.

Ugandan society has strong cultural rules that determine the gender identity, people's expression and role of its members. To understand Uganda's culture one must understand the role that gender plays in determining one's place in society as females and males have specific roles that contribute to the Uganda's culture.

Ugandan families and societies still follow the traditional way where they had distinct roles. In common, women and their daughters are responsible for the domestic chores such as cleaning, cooking food, food production, fetching water, firewood, care for the sick, child rearing and make sure their husbands eat in time. In the areas of trading still most women engage in domestic activities related to the domestic chores like sweeping the market place. Most of Ugandan men act as breadwinners and owners of the most of the country's productive resources. They are mostly employed in high positions compared to women. Men own land, make social and economic decisions of their families and are seen as main providers of shelter in most homes.

In most Ugandan societies, men enjoy more leisure than women. Many rural women in Uganda enjoy leisure in simple activities like washing clothes, dishes while men enjoy their leisure time to the maximum. Men who try to engage in domestic activities and always engage their wives in decision are seen as weak and witched by their wives. This subservience is accepted by most men and women themselves. For example, the marriage

contract where men are supposed to pay bride price for the girl before marrying her. The bride price has caused harm than good in Uganda where women are forced to pay back in doing all domestic chores. Children are introduced to such domestic activities at the young age where girl child do a lot of domestic chores than a boy child. This has helped children to acquire skills they may need in future and socially being part of the families. But on the other hand culture and gender roles have affected children's school life since they are involved in a lot of activities especially a girl child leading to absenteeism in schools hence poor performances and on the worse case it leads to permanent dropouts from schools.

4.7.1 Socialization

Ugandan societies have traditionally aspired to socialize their children into functional members of society. The principal elements of traditional socialization were cultural values for example discipline and respect for elders, morality, honesty, cooperation, spirituality, hard work, cultural taboos and totems, clan relations and boundaries in order to avoid incestuous marriage relations.

The grandparents in traditional society played an important role in socializing their grandchildren. This was done in form of stories at evening fireside where personal experiences as elders were shared. Most children liked these stories. Since colonialism, there has been a big change in social economic and population movements in the country that have caused traditional way of living difficult and socialization different. Many rural societies have failed to cope with these changes. Today in Uganda the role of socialization has mostly been most taken over by schools where most children spend most of their time away from their parents. They start school at 8.00 am up to 5.30 pm. Many children who are school goers and living in towns speaks English and their grandparents are limited by this. Some of grandparents cannot express themselves in English. It is due to such socialization that is still common in rural areas that lead to power differences between adults and children. Since children are trained to be honest to their elders at an early age. Children are always taken to be different from adults and in such ways children end up not being involved in decision making, forced to engage in a lot of domestic work hence affecting their school life.

4.8 Overview of the education System in Uganda

The objectives of the my study mainly focuses on school, therefore I find it important to write about the education system in Uganda for the readers to understand what I mean by primary

school, government school and what universal primary education is all about in Uganda. The term school I refer to an institution which is designed for the teaching of pupils or students under the direction or help of teachers in terms of formal education, schooling can also include the time spent at school, attending extra private classes and working on homework given by teachers at school.

The ministry of Education and sports mission is to provide for the support, guide, coordinate, regulate and promote quality education and sports for all persons in Uganda for national integration, individual and national development UNICEF (2005b), Uganda's educational system is patterned after that of Britain, the former colonial power. The education mainly consists of seven years of primary education, four years of secondary education, two years of advanced secondary school, and three to five years of the university or college education. Initially UPE covered four children per family but recently it has been expanded to cover all children, this has increased the number of pupils in primary schools to 98 percent.

4.8.1 Structure of the education system

The following sub titles explains the structure of education system in Uganda

Pre- school

Education outside home in Uganda at this level is basically in the hands of private agencies and individuals. Most of the kindergartens and schools are in urban areas and many children join primary school with little preparation for the intellectual tasks it needs (UNICEF, 2005b)

Primary Education

The primary seven-year education provides the basic education leading to the primary leaving examination (PLE) Certificate in four Core Subjects, which include English, Mathematics, Science and Social studies.

Post primary education

This level includes secondary and tertiary education. Secondary education contains of two levels that is four years of lower secondary education leading to the Uganda Certificate in Education (UCE) and two years of upper secondary leading to the Uganda advanced Certificate in Education (UACE). There are technical schools and technical institutes, which take a proportion of primary school leavers who are taught various crafts and special skills for period of two to three years, there are teachers training college which produce primary school teachers and other different colleges (Ministry of Education & UNICEF, 2005b).

Higher education

There are public and private universities which award different degrees. Students who pass their higher level may choose to continue to universities. The Uganda government gives scholarship to number of students each year, and other sponsors thousands of other students in other tertiary institutions of learning. Students who do not manage to get the competitive government scholarships depend on their parents and guardians to pay university tuition and the everyday up-keep.

Uganda has achieved an enrolment rate in primary schools of over 96 per cent boys; 96.5 percent girls, since the introduction of universal primary education, this is looked at as a valuable achievement alongside other positive efforts for example the expansion learning opportunities for girls. Uganda is trying to achieve the MDGS for education. The achievement of MDG 2; ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary education (UNICEF, 2011a).

4.8.2 Rural children and education in Uganda

By the term rural children I refer to children who live in a geographically secluded community, children that live in a land that is typically dedicated to agriculture and a community which is not urbanized and not developed. In Uganda there are two categories of Primary schools that is government schools and private schools. Private schools are not under the management of government agencies and government aided schools. The ministry of Education and Sports is in control of primary education and other levels of education in Uganda, it prescribes a national curriculum and provides textbooks, administrators and inspectors. Since the early 1990s, government has pursued policies intended to expand access to all levels of the education system. The special emphasis is placed on primary education since it directs benefits of rural children. Since 1997 when the primary education was introduced in Uganda enrolment in primary schools has increased. At the end of 1996, there were only 3 million registered primary school children, but the statistics shows that a figure has more doubled and now stands at over 7.3 million Bitamezine (2005), since 1997, the rate of pupils dropping from school has been reducing until 2003, when it again started to increase. In 1997- 7.9%, 2002- 4.7% and 2003- 6.1 percent. The statistics show that, there has been a decline in the number of Pupils who drop out of schools; the numbers of girls who drop out from school are more than that of boys (ibid)

In 1997 the Ugandan government introduced universal primary education. that plan was that all children should be able to attend primary schools for free and in 2007 universal secondary education was introduced, but unfortunately the demand for free education in Uganda outstrips the availability of places at the free government schools. It is problematic or uncommon for primary classes to have more than a hundred students in a class. The government has lack enough fund to facility them.

Despite Uganda's official policy of Universal primary education, rural children in Bushenyi are still facing a lot of challenges to access school unless they can afford the contribution fees and the other school requirements, include uniform, supplies and cleaning supplies. There are many obstacles effect these children school life for example, illness with malaria, long distances to the schools, hunger, violence at home, a lot of domestic activities to mentioned but a few. Most universal schools are attended by poor children in rural areas. The private school in Uganda performs better than government schools at primary level. Paying the contribution fees in Uganda is beyond many families, especially to those who produce many children. These children are supposed to pay contribution fee. Children are always sent home because due to lack of the required necessities.

According to UNICEF (2011b), there are many roadblocks or challenges keeping many rural children from fulfilling their right to achieve the highest level of education of which children are capable and this has slowed Uganda's progress to achieve by 2015 MDG finish line. Approximately only one half of the pupils enrolled in primary schools complete their full course of primary education. Uganda struggles under the weight of drop out children who themselves face a lot of challenges to development and growth (ibid). I did my field work in a government school.

4.9 The study area: Bushenyi District

I find it important to write about Bushenyi District in this section since it was my study area. This part presents a brief picture of the study area, which is Bushenyi District in South Western Uganda. It includes sub-topics which include location, social services, population, economic activities as well as life in rural Bushenyi.

Figure 2: Map of Uganda showing the study area



Source: UN Cartographic Section

4.9.1 Bushenyi District

Bushenyi district is one of the oldest districts in Uganda. It was created in 1974 out of Mbarara District. In 2009, it was split into five districts, Buhweju, Mitooma, Sheema and Rubirizi district with one new municipal council of Bushenyi- Ishaka. This has drastically reduced the size of Bushenyi from five counties to one of Igara that includes the municipality. The district is made of one county (Igara). Nine Sub-counties, a municipal council, four town boards, three wards, 64 parishes and 565 villages (Aruho 2013)^{vi}.

4.9.2 Location

The district has a land area of 3,949 square kilometers and lying between 910 and 2,500 meters above the sea level. The main physical features include natural tropical forests of karinzu and Imaramagambo covering an area of 784km. These forests serve as a tourist attraction. Arable land covers 2,215 square kms; open water bodies cover 372 square kms and wetlands covering 183 square kms (Ibid).

4.9.3 Population

As projected in the national statistics by 2010, Bushenyi District has a population of 117.000 males and 124,000 female respectively totaling to 241,500 people in the district. The population distribution in rural and urban areas is projected to stand at 89 per cent rural and 11 per cent urban population is projected to be almost 1:1 male to female ratio. Population density stands at 282 people per square km with a house hold size of six (ibid).

4.9.5 Economic activities

The District is well known for the growing of bananas and dairy farming. Residents grow coffee and tea. Bushenyi people are also involved in the semi- intensive agriculture, trade and commerce, transport, stone quarrying, sand mining, fishing, mineral mining, construction, tourism and lumbering (Aruho, 2013)^{vii}

This background information about Uganda and Bushenyi district is so crucial in understanding the daily activities and how rural children in Bushenyi perceive education. The study area will help me to understand the results in next chapters.

CHAPTER 5

THE BENEFITS AND EFFECT OF DAILY ACTIVITIES ON RURAL SCHOOL CHILDREN

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the daily activities and how they affect school going children in Bumbeire sub-country. I discuss the domestic activities paid and un paid activities in which they take part as well as the affects they get from doing this work in regard to their schooling life.

I have used theoretical concepts to help me lift the empirical experiences in serving the important task of providing insight and understanding. Nilsen (2005), argues that analytical process is seen as fundamentally dialectical and the researcher should always move back and forth between empirical data. Therefore I keep on re-reading my informants information for better analysis.

The role of children in economic and social reproduction in the global south has been adequately explained. Most of the research done seems to focus on the difficulty work presents to schooling and attaining universal rights (Abebe, 2008). The economic role of children in households' survival strategies has long been known. The social meaning of their work and its geographical context has been researched less (Ibid).

As explained in chapter four children in Bushenyi are usually engaged in a lot of domestic activities that help them to get the basic skills for their better future or survival. The domestic work that children engage in rural Bushenyi is mainly in two categories; that is agricultural work like harvesting, marketing activities, weeding, ploughing mostly using their hands and domestic work which includes fetching water, looking after their younger siblings, preparation for food, firewood, cleaning, milking, feeding the animals, cleaning and looking after their elders like grandparents.

Children like adults, are resilient, knowledgeable and capable in some different ways, while being vulnerable and dependent human beings in others. Children are social actors whose relative abilities to exercise agency are rooted within structures that can be either enabling them or constraining them (Abebe, 2008). Children in rural Bushenyi are social actors and take part in their societies by actively involving in daily activities.

5.2 Daily activities.

Children told that the daily activities they engage in, affect their school attendance and they get few hours to revise. This is confirmed by Jimmy one of children informants (informal dialogue).

Jimmy; Compared to private schools where most children board at school they have better chances than us, who are always involved in domestic work. Here at school we normally pass with grade 3, 4 and U.

Researcher: is it because of daily activities you do?

Jimmy: yes because we do not get time to read and we are always tired

Researcher; how many times do you attend school in a week?

Jimmy: twice or three times a week and most pupils do attend not even attend thrice a week

Jimmy: here children pass with grade 2, 3 and 4. Rarely do we get grade ones. Last year most of pupils were in grade 4 and that was total disaster

The grading system in Uganda is grade 1,2,3,4 and U, where one is the best and U means failed

Interviews with parents showed that the daily activities affected children in their schooling since they had to perform some work before school and after school. These activities always make them late to school where one of the parents *said that may be the government should change time from 8.00 am to 10.00 am because children are supposed to help at home before they go to school. School does not mean good future because some of children cannot manage school therefore they need other skills despite always being late at school (key informant with a parent).*

5.3 Maria's day

Many children in rural Bushenyi are mostly involved in daily activities. Most of children perform more than one activity at home, they combine school and work. This is confirmed in the expressions below

I am called Maria and I am in primary six. I am thirteen years old and I stay with my mother we are eight children. Five girls and three boys, my mother is just a farmer. I am supposed to do domestic work before going to school. I wake up early in the morning pray and thank God for the day, then go to cultivate in our garden, do some cleaning here at home and then go to school at 8.00 am. After the school I am supposed to bring the goats and sheep back home from the field, take the harvests back to the store. I am supposed to look food for my mother's pigs, peel bananas, cassava or irish potatoes, and fetch water. If it is weekend I am is also supposed to collect fire wood to use for the next week and on Saturdays I cultivate both in the morning and evening and even some times at school we do some cleaning. I only get rest on Sunday. I am always feeling tired but I fear to tell my mother. Therefore I keep working despite being tired. When I reach school late, then I am punished (Maria 13 years old, key informant interview).

Discussions with girls, parents, boys and teachers in the rural area showed similarities of what Maria's does in relation to other rural children. According to (Ansell, 2005), childhood is seen as important part of life and children should be free from work. Article 32 of UNCRC states that parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the children's education, or be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. However this is different in rural Bushenyi where most children spend their days occupied with work.

Children do not get enough time to play because they spend most of their free time doing domestic work. Children are taken to be energetic and work is taken to be part of their lives. As noted in Boyden cited in James et al. (1998), her research in Bangalore showed that many parents thought that learning trade early was the best way to endow their children with the means for the future survival. In the same way parents in rural Uganda take domestic work to be socially important for the children and it is the responsibility of every child to help at home since it's culturally important for children.

Children fear adults and they are not involved of decision making. To some extent rural children in Bushenyi are denied their human rights. Globally all children are to some degree exploited and their human are under expressed and inappropriately exercised. This happens across a spectrum of degrees of liberation marked with differences in gender. Some informants followed the timetable set by their parents. Even if they get tired of that heavy work load they do not to tell the adults as sign of respect. Few children born to educated

parents do not do too much work that affects school. This class of children confirmed to me that they are always at school in time unlike those whose parents are totally illiterate

Most children informants said the domestic work has seriously affected their attendance and performance at school. When these children get late, they are punished in form of slashing compound, digging, cleaning toilets as well as corporal punishment. This has even scared away some children that end up dropping out of school. According to UNDP (2010), though there is an increase in enrolment rate to 97.1 percent at primary level in Uganda, 67.6 percent drop out before completing primary seven. It also explained in chapter four.

Some children were not motivated both at school and home. Where one of child said *that here at school, we are forced to do engage in work like making mats, drums, flower gardens and even at home our parents see us as helpers (David 12 years old, FGD)*. This has made the situation so difficult for most informants to manage school with all that domestic work. The children claim that the work that the do daily occupies most of their time and hardly do they get time to interact, play and rest.

As Prout et al. (1990) write that, culture and society determine a lot in child upbringing children. The study found that in rural Bushenyi, though children are actively involved in daily activities, adults take them as minors or becoming in terms of socialization. It is also seen in Article 31 of African charter (a) that to work for the cohesion of the family, respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and assist them in case of need; in the same way the study found that most informants were following what their parents tell them as a sign of obedience and successful socialization.

The daily activities children engage in have not only affected their school life but have affected them psychologically where they are always worried of going back home. Where one of girls said: *I hate mornings and evenings because we are occupied with a lot of work at home (Rita 14 years old, drawings)*. These daily activities make them miss their education and this will affect many children in future. In Uganda today it is very hard to get good life without education.

5.4 Gender

Most children get involved in gendered activities before and after school. Girls were involved mostly in work like cleaning, looking after the elderly, cooking, washing dishes, looking after their younger siblings, whereas boys engage in activities like looking after the animals,

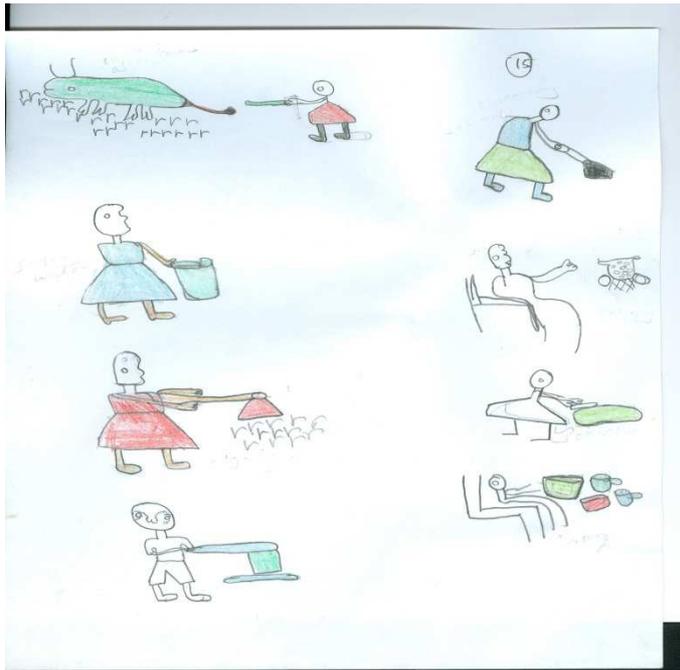
fishing, building stoles in markets mentioned but a few. In the same way these gender roles help children to learn according to what they are supposed to do in future. For example girls do that to be good wives in future. I found that girls do more work than boys and this affects their school life because they rarely get time to revise and also go to school late compared to the boys.

Discussions with my informants and my observations showed that rural children's daily activities mostly vary according to their gender. Thorne (1990), argues that social relations of children are primarily relying on the model of ground difference that is founded on the prevalence of gender separation in children's daily life. Societies have strong cultural rules that determine the gender identity, people's expression and role of its members.

According to Nalule (2008), social cultural aspects in terms of gender have played a big role in contributing to the increasing rate of children's work in rural Uganda. Alderman et al cited in Martina (2005), asserts that the striking and visible live examples of gender differences between girls and boys within households in developing countries is the prevalent gender bias in education. Due to low income, education of boys is prioritized to that of girls in most western Uganda. Gender differences are confirmed in expressions below.

I do a lot of work at home compared to my brothers. My father suggests that our brothers should complete school first since he is unable to pay for the 8 of us. I always miss school... but what keeps me going is that this kind of work is good for it prepares me for the future. I mean when I get married and make my own family then I will not fail to fend for my family (Clare 12 years, drawings).

Figure 3: Clare 12 years, drawings



Source: Field Work, 2013. This drawing shows Clare's daily activities

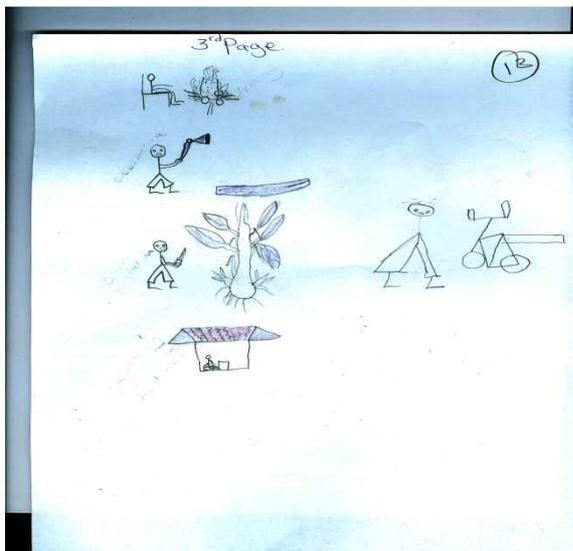
Most discussions with informants showed how a girl is affected by a lot of domestic work, because it is so important for girls to learn domestic work since they are mothers of tomorrow. Many parents I interviewed confirmed to me that girls should prepare for their future roles as wives. Some parents said that the work children do is normal and doesn't affect in any way. Where most parents in discussion group *were saying the activities children do, does not affect their school life, here in our village children are supposed to engage in work for their future use, they can not only depend on school!* (Focused Group discussion with parents)

Some girls' informants take work to be part of them despite affecting their school life as Clare said above. In Uganda girls and women are still taken to be property. Most parents still value boys more than girls because they think the girls will join another family and hence no need to waste money on their school. This also revealed from FGD with parents where one of them stated that boys can manage in future even if they do not engage in household chores. Girls have to be trained because they will join another family tomorrow. During my visits to some of my informants I realized that girls are always given a lot of work to do. In the end, they miss school on some days.

In most families in rural Western Uganda boys do not need to do much like girls, but still work little as illustrated below

We are five children at home and I am the only boy, I do activities like fetching water and sometimes help my sisters to sweep the compound in the evening. I also help my father in our banana plantation during weekends but generally compared to my sisters. I don't work a lot since I am the only boy at home my father always tells me to read hard so that I gain sufficient academic qualifications and become a doctor in future, earn good money and take care of our family (Jacob 13 years old, drawings)

Figure 4: Jacob 13 years, drawings



Source: Field Work, 2013: This drawing shows Jacob's daily activities

Several of the boys I interviewed engaged in productive work as it is seen in interview with Jacob above. These activities contribute to the family income. This is noted in Abebe (2008), study about working children in cash economy. Where boys and girls in Ethiopia were not simply common place individuals in markets but they were independently engaged in a variety of activities but men engaged in the selling of relatively expensive and specialized products like selling furniture and other productive activities compared to girls. In the same way this is not different from Uganda. According to my informants both boys and girls do daily activities but most male informants did productive activities compared to girls. This was also expressed by Alex (12 years old, informal dialogue) as follows

Researcher: what daily activities do you engage in Alex?

Alex: I do chores like helping my father who is a builder, fixing bikes at the trading center and help in the family shop sometimes and some days I fetch water and collect firewood. But mostly I am fix bicycles at the trading center

Researcher; do you find fixing bicycles interesting

Alex: sure, it is very interesting and in future I will learn to fix cars

Despite gender roles being stereotyped in rural Bushenyi some household activities are performed by both girls and boys. Gender is a social construct in rural Bushenyi that leads to different roles in regard and different practices. According to Bell et al. (2007) boys in certain areas of rural Uganda are most encouraged to build their own houses and gain independence from their parents than most girls, who are more closely controlled and observed by their parents. Interviews with most parents confirmed a girl child and a boy child to be treated differently with in households. Where gender bias were revealed in education for example one of the parents *stated that despite all these programs I listen on radio those girls are all important like boys when it comes to education. I still take boys to be useful than girls...* (Adult individual interview) This has affected girl's school life.

5.5 Helping the elderly and young siblings

Some of informants mentioned responsibility of looking after their grandparents and young siblings whenever they back home. It was also observed that whenever the parents are busy or a way, children stay at home to take care of their young siblings and the elderly. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

It is difficult to combine school and work at home. But somehow I am getting used to it because I do it every day when I get home. I walk long distances to get to school and in the morning I have to bath my young sister and brother too, this always makes me late to school. Combining school and morning activities is not easy at all but I have no option. Some days I don't go to school because I help my mother to take care of my grandparents two of them are old and sickly. I wake up early enough try to finish my chores at home in time and when I get to school. I use break time to complete my homework. (Mebo 14 years old, FGD).

I stay with my Uncle; I perform house chores like sweeping, looking after her young brother, fetching water, collecting fire wood and washing the whole family clothes on weekends (Matina 13 years old, Drawings).

When I asked Matina, how the work affected her school life, she changed her face and said it is really hard and that the brother doesn't help her with some of the work. Matina said that work affected her school life because she never gets time to revise and play like other children after school, but ended up saying that she normally reads hard in the summer holiday. According to Matina summer was not all that busy compared to school time.

It is seen in above discussions with children that some of them were not happy with the work they were doing, since it affected their school life. But some children' always looked for means of how to do their homework which also shows that they are trying to maneuver and in the end, the public sees these children as agents of change. Despite affecting their school life they have taken work to be part of their daily life.

Abebe (2007), children in Ethiopia have spent more time performing various jobs without thinking of it as work. Some children informants were not only cared for but they also had responsibility of caring for the young and the elderly. As it also seen in E. Robson (2004) children are currently recognized as care givers. This also shows children as active social actors in rural Bushenyi. Some children assumed the role of their parents where ever the parents were busy. This has occupied informants' time hence leading to lack of enough time to revise.

5.6 Farming

The discussion with some children showed that the domestic work they do at home was not all that much to affect their school life. Few children were not involved in a lot of domestic work especially those from middle families. I found that some informants do light work. They still had time to play and go school in time. This is revealed from the expressions below

I only do some farming with my father on weekends, the work I do, does not affect my schooling life. In the morning I do not do any work at all because my parents do not allow me to do so since it makes me tired before going to school (Ronald 13 years, Drawings).

I stay with both my parents and both of them are working; I only engages in revising my books, do some sweeping and iron my father's shirts (Peter 14 years, Drawings).

When Peter was asked how the work affected his school life. He said that the work he engage in, does not to affect his schooling, and he believed it was okay to do some work since it is good for him to learn how to work for the better future.

Just like Reardon (2011), income is strongly correlated with other social economic characteristics of the family. In my study I found that children come from different backgrounds, the middle class and the very poor ones.

Income levels have led to greater differentiation in school quality and schooling opportunities between children from poor families and rich families. According to Robert (2010) parents education levels in Uganda have a big effect on children education and the dropout rates. Educated parents normally support their children in most of school work than uneducated parents. The views from narratives revealed class to be one of the problems that affect children's school life. Where the children from middle and educated families were not involved in daily activities compared to children from poor families where most of their parents see them as helpers and their participation in daily activities is highly needed.

5.7 Positive side of the daily work children engage in

The everyday meaning of work is complicated. It can mean anything from household chores to formal sector employment. Work is widely understood a cross culture not only as the away of making a living, but also as a vehicle of socialization, independence and self- realization Many children regard work they do as unpleasant burden, but others defend it as helpful and rewarding and claim a right to engage in it if they wish (Judith Ennew, Myers, & Plateau, 2005).

The current dominant international discourse on children's work virtually ignores both children's views about work. They do and the research results have been ignored the benefits of work children engage in. The international discourse focuses on the dangers of work that children do and its costs. Both positive and negative effects of work children do need to be considered when properly analyzing the effects of different kinds of work on children (ibid)

Some of the children I interacted with were positive about work and that it is because of hard work and that they have managed to contribute to their school necessities and family income Interviews with some parents revealed that work is important for children because it is a way of getting skills and self-confidence. As Abebe and Bessell (2011), write that work is

important and it is integral part of our everyday life. In the same way some children were happily involved in the work they do, since it is their source of happiness. Therefore work is important in the country like Uganda where poverty levels are still alarming. Children have actively played a role in participating in daily activities.

We are poor and the only way for me to attend school is through my participation, I need to help my parents when they are busy looking for our school fees, sometimes I go with my mother to cultivate in our neighbor's garden in return for food. I pack this whenever I manage to go to school (Ruth 14 years old, FGD).

I enjoy fixing bicycles at trading centers, i have many customers are my good friends and if I was only confined in school, I would not have had such an opportunity. In short I am popular at the trading center and at school because of my good work. Other children call me "engineer". This has also helped me to pay my school fees. (Alex 12 years. key informant interview).

Basing on children's stories work is perceived to be part of their responsibility. The African charter on Rights and welfare of the child asserts that it is the responsibility of the child to serve his national community by placing his physical and intellectual abilities at its service

African charter strengthens cultural values in relation to society and it's a responsibility of every one to contribute in society. In the same way children informants in Bushenyi are encouraged to take part in daily activities where one of the parents *said that hear about children's rights that they should be left to go to school without work at home but this is not good because these children need life skills. If one doesn't not learn this work at an early age then most likely they will not be in position to work in future. Who knows what the future is like. Most of us are sick of HIV and AIDS so we are dying anytime. These children need to learn how to do manual work (female parent, FGD).*

In our village even in the whole country children must engage in work to get skills. Because even the educated ones do not have what to do, there are many youth on street. I normally hear on radio that youth have to create their own jobs by starting business. Therefore it is so important for children to get skills, when they are still young because our country is uncertain in terms of white color jobs (key informant interview with a parent).

I live with only my mother at home and she is always not feeling fine, but whenever she is fine she sells onions in the market. But the days she is not feeling fine I am forced to help her and I like that because without my help in that business, without my help we would starve and even lack money for school fees (Tina 12 years, key informant interview).

To me I think life without work is not good, it makes you depend on your parents as of now I work and go to school and always have pocket money. To me working doesn't affect my school life (Marvin 14 years old, FDG).

From the above excerpts by informants, I interpret work as part of rural children in Bushenyi and it is part of house hold production and socialization. It also a good symbol of competence that children have because they have come to fully understand their family situation and the only way to improve their standards is through being part of the work. Children are supposed to contribute to the family as well in the community as Admassie in Abebe (2007), writes that, children are expected to contribute while at the same time learn the necessary skills that enable them to be active members of society and children participation is vital to maintain subsistence economies and ensure some continuity of cultural skills. This is seen in Boyden (1991) cited in James et al. (1998), where he writes that in south the only way the poor can survive is putting as many members of the household as possible to work. Some of children said yes because they are recognized as part of their family by helping their parents and meet their expectations but on the other hand informants stated that if it becomes too much then it is not good for them due to lack of time for school

I found that out that work is a process of social reproduction that most children from rural Uganda undergo. The majority of the children I interviewed revealed that they took up paid work on top of house chores so as to earn some income. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

Researcher; what activities do you engage in?

David: I work in the market normally on Fridays. I fetch water for the small restaurants that prepare food. I also do some sort of marketing whereby I call customers and convince them to buy from particular sellers and in return I am given commission for that. I am paid small percentage for each buyer I convince.

Researcher: Do you get customers?

David: yes I do, on market a good day I make like 5000-6000 ug shillings (2 Usd's)

Researcher: do you find work interesting?

David: work is interesting because I have managed to contribute to my school fees and buy a few items that we use at home

Researcher; Do you think the work you do affects your school life?

David; yes, it does but on the other hand, I need to work to pay my school fees and help my father to buy food. So I think it is important to both work and go to school (David 14 years, Drawings)

Punch (2003), further argues that a perspective which encompasses multiple and overlapping arenas of childhood can lead to a greater understanding of children's lives, showing how they integrate contexts of their child-hoods at school, work and home. In the same way my study found out that rural children in Bushenyi still got time to play despite daily activities.

To understand more about resilience and coping mechanisms, I asked questions about play. I found out that children still maneuver alongside their tight schedule of work and get time to play with friends. This is interesting because play is a right though most children did not know that it was their right, as it was seen in the FGD with girls and boys. This is confirmed in expressions below

Researcher: Do you get time to play?

Maria; Me and my sisters normally play from the spring where we fetch water, because it's hard to play from home. My mother is always saying do this and that

Jimmy: oooo yeah.... We escape from home and join the evening football with our friends

Ruth: Yes, we do play when our parents are not at home and even when I am tired I just slow work to relax.

Tina; when I ever I go to collect firewood, I first play with my friends because we normally go together.

Researcher: Do you know anything about the right to play

Tina, we have not yet studied rights in class. May be when we go to the higher classes, we shall study them.

Rural children in Uganda have found the safe places where they fight for their right to play, despite the lot of domestic activities they engage in. They play with their peers. Rural children are actively participating in domestic activities to adapt to adults expectations, for example working to earn money for their school contribution and pocket money and sometimes money to support the entire family. Mayall and Berry (2002), write that it is important to recognize the difference within the generations. Rural children in Bushenyi have different degrees of agency in regard to their age peers, friends, ethnicity, class, order, gender and all other aspects of social differentiation. Children in rural Bushenyi are constrained by a mount of structural limitations. Since they are not yet full adults and this makes children to unequal adults. This has affected most children school life since they are forced to do a lot of work by adults' hence missing school.

According Robson et al. (2007) there are a range of different actors involved in these unequal power relations that shape social-cultural norms of young people's abilities to become agents in their own lives and communities. Adults in rural Bushenyi mostly determine what is good, bad and acceptable in society and how they are supposed to behavior. Rural children in Bushenyi are forced to do a lot of domestic work and there are a lot of power relations between adults and children, this affects children's school life.

5.8 Dignity of life

According to interviews with informants education is seen as dignity of life. Education was seen as the way forward. Most of informants valued education. Rural children in Bushenyi have negotiated social relations and understood their environment. Most of them are contributing to their school fees to achieve education and become better persons in future. The following questions were asked to get more on how children manage school and domestic work.

Researcher - Where do you get money for school fees?

Rita- I work in my neighbor's garden on weekends

Researcher- Do you get enough money for school fees from there?

Rita- no, no but at least it helps me to pay half my school fees and whenever we pay half of school fees then the head teacher take long time to send us back home.

Researcher: Do you find the work ok?

Rita: no I do not like it but I need to get money to pay at school because it is education that will make me stop cultivating in my neighbors garden. Without education my future will be incomplete (Rita 12 years, key informant interviews).

Several of the interviews with informants showed education to be valued, where most of informants were participating in paying their school fees. As Article 12 of UNCRC gives children right to participation, Article 13 of UNCRC gives the child the right to freedom of. Article 15 freedom of association, rights of child to peaceful assembly provide children and young people with the right to participate actively in society and talk part in decision making in school family and community. Rural children in Bushenyi have actively taken part in paying their school fees thought their decision making it still limited as explained in chapter four.

From the above interview with Rita, I see her as an agent of agent of change in her life. She has managed to contribute to her school fees. One of the children I interviewed stated that *education leads to good family in future, peace in the society because most educated people always find what to do. This has encouraged children to read hard to get better life in future (Addy 13 years, FGD).* Therefore I can interpret education to a positive contribution to the society in rural western Uganda.

This chapter has revealed how daily activities affect children's school life and how they have benefitted from the work they do. The activities children engage in are socially constructed as seen in the above excerpts, and the chapter also shows that some children fall in minority group. They exercise powers from their adults. Children are structurally differentiated with in societies and they experience the exercise of power differently. The analysis shows how children's gender and poverty have remained the main factors that have made some of Children unable to enjoy their school life.

In the proceeding chapter, I discuss and analyze how poverty has affected children school life in rural Bushenyi.

CHAPTER SIX:

HOW POVERTY AND OTHER CHALLENGES AFFECT CHILDREN'S SCHOOL LIFE

6.1 Introduction

Apart from daily activities, children claimed that there other factors affecting their school life. These ranged from poverty, age, early marriages, poor health, alcoholism, orphan hood, big families, age specific challenge, heavy punishments, teacher children relationship and disability. According to Qvortrup (2002) school is an institution for the socialization of children and that is important to demand for the quality education. Schooling and education are most important features of modern childhood. Children in rural Bushenyi have not received quality education and a lot of challenges have distracted their schooling life as discussed below

6.2 Poverty

As mentioned in chapter four. Poverty in Uganda limits children in a struggle to attain a level of education. According to Rural poverty report (2014)^{viii}, poverty remains high in rural areas. Children are extremely represented among the poor in Uganda as explained in chapter two. In addition to a large number of poor households in the country. Many rural children are affected by income poverty.

In discussions with the children informants, poverty remained a major factor affecting their school life. Most informants showed misery faces when we were discussing about the poverty situation in rural Bushenyi. Most children showed their participation in paying their contribution fees and buying their stationary, since their parents cannot afford. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

I come from a family of 9 children and I am the 5th born. I am 12 years old now. My parents cannot afford to pay for us school fees, because the money they get is used to buy food for us. Since we don't have a big land for cultivation. I started paying my school fees when I was in primary four and now I am in primary seven. But the money I get from cultivating in our neighbor's garden is still not enough; I am always chased out of school. But I have to keep on attending. Though the head teacher doesn't want defaulters to attend without clearing all school due (Clare 12 years, story).

It's hard to revise when I reach at home because we lack enough paraffin to light at home, and our house is grass thatched house where it leaks when it's a rainy season, in in April 2013, my books were affected by rain for it rained heavily and no one was at home...(Martha 13 years old, story).

Due to poverty the situation in rural Bushenyi, most of children's dreams and wishes are not fulfilled because of their inability to pay school contribution. Most stories portrayed poverty to be the main challenge that affects rural children's school life, because they are always chased out of school since they can't afford to pay. Children are taught to work at an early age to contribute to their future. This confirms that children are competent social actors.

The way Clare ended her story shows how rural children sometimes resist adult power by insisting to still attend classes even when the headmaster doesn't like it. Punch (2003), argues that children always find the way to combine work and school. Despite the absolute poverty, domestic activities children do in rural Bushenyi they still fight for their right to play and most of them combine play and work. This shows the agency that children have. In the same way children in rural Bushenyi are fighting to acquire their right to education despite the poverty situation they are going through.

Despite the hard work that children do in order to acquire education, their chances are of completing primary seven are narrow. Since poverty is alarming in Uganda as noted in chapter two. Most of pupils still drop out of school before they finish primary level. Children are still facing a lot of challenges to access school unless they can afford additional fees and the other school requirements which include uniform, supplies and cleaning supplies.

6.2.1 Early marriages for girls

All though I did not face this problem, I used to observe it in my village and up to now early marriages still exist. Children informants pointed it out to be one of the challenges that their school life. Taking UNICEF (2005a) definition, the term early marriage refers to both formal marriages and informal unions before the age of 18. Child marriages are not only affecting Ugandan girls but millions across the world. This is considered to be human right violation because it affects children's school life and leaves them vulnerable.

Uganda is one of the countries with the highest girl's percentage early marriages and forced marriages. 10% of girls in Uganda are married off before their 18th birth day and around 46% of all women are married by the age of 18 (Joy for children in Uganda)^{ix}

Taking narratives views in my study, most girls in rural Uganda are forced into early marriages where most poor parents are after bride price. According to Otiso (2006), many social conditions that disadvantage a girls child is culture based, for stance their lack of education and production. Most parents in Rural Bushenyi see a girl child as property that will bring wealth to the family. The FGD with girls confirmed this. As it is illustrated in the following quotations:

Ruth; my father is not all that supportive when it comes to paying my school fees and I heard him telling my mother that she should only focus on my brother if she thinks that education is important

Researcher: why do you think your brother and not you?

Ruth; it's because he wants me to get married such that he is given cows in return. My elder sister was forced to get married to a business man in Kampala because my father was hungry for money

Researcher; how did your sister react to that and how old was she?

Ruth: she was 16 years old and she was already tired of our situation at home she was always chased out of school, I guess she was happy with that...

Tina: Here in our village most people think that educating girls only benefits the man's side and they think that when a girl gets old, she will fail to get a good husband. Therefore that is why they force their daughters to get married at early age

Ruth: I guess I will also get married soon because I am struggling to get school fees and my father is always talking about it

Researcher: is it your wish or it's just because of the situation at home. That is forcing you to think of marriage?

Ruth: I lack a lot of things and I think when I get married my husband will provide everything.

Tina: Almost all my friends were forced to marriage by their parents because they couldn't manage to educate them and they just followed whatever their parents were telling them.

Researcher: How old were they?

Tina: one was 15 and another one 16 years old

Sylvia; my parents have never forced me to get married; my father is a head teacher at one of the secondary schools here in Bushenyi and my mother is a senior woman here at school. All they tell me is education.

Tina; yes, because Sylvia's parents are rich they can provide school fees and all she needs at school.

Focused group with girls (FDG's) highlighted early marriages to be the cause of their school dropout and why they have not enjoyed school, following the interviews above. Some girls are forced into early marriages simply because their parents want to accumulate wealth. Since the men have to pay the bride price for the girl. It also shows the difference in pupils who come from middle class families and poor families. Those from poor families take marriage to be source of income, thinking that when they get married, the husband will provide their needs. Children from rich families didn't think like children from poor families since their parents give them most of what they need.

Some of my children views above show that, their agency is limited in some way because they are obedient and royal to their parents. It's hard to resist in some situations since they have to respect their elders as Robson et al. (2007) write that, children are not merely figures as many people take them to be in some rural spaces. Rural children in western Uganda have experienced a lot of obligations and restrictions by adults, but they actively define and reclaim space just like adults do.

Some children refused to take part on their parent's wishes and demands. For example; *I can't allow to be married off early. I am lucky that I have support from my mother who insists that I have to complete school (Sarah 14 years, key informant interviews)*. Children in rural Bushenyi are marginalized in adult thinking and adult actions. Most girls have been victims of early marriages because of adult powers. As illustrated in my data rural children's agency is restricted by the families, many parents are forcing girls into this early marriage. This also put a lot of young girls at risk of even getting diseases like HIV/AIDS. This violates their right to education.

Taking children views, i interpret early marriages to be associated with parent's level of education and economic situation of girls. Early marriages affect children school life to continue with their schooling. This does not only affect schooling life for girls. The girls who

marry at young age often lack power in their marriages and these put them at risk of being sexually abused and experience other forms of domestic violence. Early marriages have hindered most children to complete school.

6.2.2 Poor health and Lack of enough food at home

According to Alice (2012) poor parents in Uganda do not mind about the nutrition and health of their children in schools. Most families lack enough land to cultivate food for their children in rural Bushenyi. According to Rural poverty report Uganda (2014)^x health and social issues mostly affect rural poor in Uganda. The population of approximately 36 million Ugandans is growing at annual rate of 3.4 per cent. Despite the country dramatically reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS and malaria since the 1990's, prevalence rates have again began rising in recent years.

One of the issues that commonly mentioned by informants was poor health and lack of enough food at home this is also a big challenge that has affected their education. They commonly lack enough food to pack and hard for most of the families to take, breakfast, lunch and dinner in rural Uganda. During interview with children informants said

We are encouraged to pack our own food here at school but me and my sister we are unable to get food to pack for break time. Our banana plantation was destroyed, therefore we need to buy or cultivate for rich people in return for the food. I am always dozing in class and sometimes feel headache. This makes it hard for me to concentrate... (Mabo 12 years, story)

According to Ansell (2005), food is vital source of energy, but lack of enough food to most children in many global south countries puts children at the risk of diseases and malnutrition. In the same way some of the children I interacted with mentioned poor health and lack of enough food as a factor affecting their school attendance and education. Discussions with most informants showed that some children are always sick due malaria. This has forced some children to drop out of school. Most rural children informants in Bushenyi have not enjoyed their childhood because they face a lot of challenges that cannot allow them to complete school. Article 24 of UNCRC, states that “parties recognizes the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and facilities for the illness and rehabilitation of health, state parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services”. Though it's their right, most children have not fully achieved education in rural Bushenyi.

6.2.3 Alcoholism

As many researchers and scholars found out alcoholism to be a big challenge in Uganda. My research has not differed from this finding because even up to today, taking informants views, I have confirmed that alcoholism is still a big challenge in rural Bushenyi District.

According to Ellis and Freeman (2005) alcohol consumption is not just of cheery beers on weekends in Uganda. I found that most rural Men in rural Bushenyi congregate in the trading centers from morning to evening to drink alcohol. Mostly they drink 'waragi' local gin made out raw and powerful rum distilled from cane juice or molasses. Women drink far less often than men, due to cultural norms. According to Uganda Youth Development (2008) Uganda is ranked to be the leading consumer of alcohol in the world. Per capita alcohol consumption in Uganda was 19.5 liters closely followed by Luxembourg at 17.54 liters. Alcohol is ranked in the 6th position in generating domestic revenue in the country. Approximately 10% of revenue comes from alcohol. This has been reported to be steadily increasing to high numbers because of the Ugandan culture alcoholism is seen okay (ibid).

Views from most of my informants confirmed alcoholism to be a big challenge that has seriously affected children's education. Since most of their parents are involved in drinking.

Lack of defined laws on alcoholism has given chance most adults to engage in the practice. For example in the FDG with parents, one mother lamented; *laws and rules must be set by the government and followed or else most children will never study up university level because most of their parents are drunkards (FGD with adults)*. This is still illustrated in the excerpt below (FGD with children)

Researcher: What other challenges do you face in schooling?

The informants in the background ooooo alcohol

Researcher: how does alcohol affect your school life?

Ruth: my father is always at home for few hours, most of his time is spent at the trading Centre boozing, he never minds what is happening at home

Sarah; my father has never bought even a book for me since I started schooling because his money is only for boozing

Tina: alcoholism is really a serious problem in general here in our village, my father always chases us from home. He fights everyone when he comes home drunk.

Alcohol drinking was frequently mentioned as an issue with immediate attention across all interviews and discussions. Most children informants said they were not happy with their parents especially their fathers since they take a lot of alcohol and they never mind about their school life. Male drinking was common compared to female drinking. As it seen in FGD with children below

Researcher; Do women join men to drink at the trading center?

Informants: All agree that most women do not drink and that those that drink do it from home and may be on weekends. It is just a few naughty women who go to the bars to drink whole night and day.

This alcoholism is associated with domestic fights in many rural homes, where almost all informant discussions portrayed this. Men fight their families whenever they come home and most children informants said it's hard to spend sleepless nights and go to school the next morning. Most women and their children in rural Bushenyi have suffered years of persistent and severe beatings. This is done to reduce on family breakdown that is divorce and separation. As it was stated by one of the teachers; *women and their children have really suffered because most men are drunkards, but women never give up because of culture setting. Alcoholism in this village is a serious problem (teacher FGD)*. Informants explained how alcoholism has made many children not to attend schools in rural Bushenyi; children are beaten by their fathers and ever worried about their fathers that come home drunk. All these have affected rural children's school life because they don't have even time to construct and revise at home. One of the key informants stated *that rural means alcohol, it is hard to explain this point because here people whether old, youth or young are drinking alcohol. It is a serious problem that has led most of children here in our village to see education as a dream. Parents can't manage to pay school fees and even mind about their children. All they do is taking alcohol. Yes it is a big challenge to children's education and our society (adult key informant)*.

Taking informants views, alcohol drinking has affected families economically and children's social life. Most men consume heavily and they never have money to pay for their children's school fees and stationary materials needed at school. This affects schooling since they lack

what to use at school. Their parents do not have time to talk to them and encourage them to read. Since most of their time is spent in the trading centers.

Waragi is the cheapest local brew in rural Bushenyi and many people know how to brew it. This makes the situation worse since it's easy to make. In rural Bushenyi parents have taken alcoholism to be the everyday activity and this has affected many children to in a way that their right to education is abused. Most Children in I discussed with have not enjoyed their childhood enough time to play.

Alcoholism in rural Bushenyi has left many informants in misery life because; the families are full of domestic violence. According to informants most men have taken alcoholism more important than their children's education. One of teachers stated *if parents in rural Bushenyi do not reduce the alcohol consumption, it is likely that they will not prioritize education (FGD with teachers)* From the above discussion, I argue that alcoholism has affected children's schooling in different ways as discussed by different informants above.

6.2.4 Orphan hood and its implications

Nearly 80% of Ugandans are affected by HIV are between the ages of 15 to 45 years. In Uganda, about 2 million children under the age of 18 years are orphans, not only by HIV but even other diseases like malaria.(Benjamin Atwiine, Cantor-, Graae, & Bajunirwe, 2005). According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2000/2001), one in every five children is an orphan in Uganda. The results show that central region has the highest number of orphans followed by western Uganda. Many children have been affected by the death of their parents at a young age where parental guidance and care is needed.

Orphans find difficulty in enjoying a normal childhood just like other children. They are heads of households who take on adult roles like fending for their families and paying for school necessities. One orphan shared her story as follows

I am 15 years old now and I am in primary seven. We lost our father two years ago but since that time our lives have never been the same. My mother has a lot of things to spend money on. Therefore I am forced to engage in a lot of work to help my mother since I am the eldest born. I have no time to revise and play with other children... (Jane 15 years old, story)

Most discussions with parents, teachers and key informants showed how orphan hood has affected children. Children become responsible with lots of domestic work at a young age. In

the situation where children have lost their two parents it was hard for them to attend school every day. Most of them after the death of their parents they turn to live with other relatives who are not all that rich too. And this has affected children in terms of getting used to the new families; they are forced to engage in a lot of domestic work since they have to pay school fees for themselves.

In harvesting seasons rural children said that they never attend school because they are forced to go for harvesting. They have not enjoyed like other children with both parents, where one of the children informants said that “*my relatives are always throwing bad words at me like you will not finish school even if you attend, stop wasting your time*” (Tinny 14 years old, *informal dialogue*). These bad words make her think of joining street kids in Kampala and drop out from school. Many of these orphan children are forced to live on the street by their relatives in way of chasing them from their homes. Some families do not have enough food to give these children.

Children have turned to be slaves following the death of their parents. They are forced to engage in a lot of work. They rarely attend school which lead to poor performances and end up dropping out of school. According to Nalule (2008) slavery in Uganda is not an old phenomenon that only existed in the past traditional Uganda societies. It still exists up to today in Uganda. Slavery has affected many rural children in Bushenyi where they suffer silently since these children have no one to talk to. This has led most orphans in Uganda not to enjoy their rights as it is stated in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude, slavery and slave trade shall be prohibited in all forms where by a person under 18 of age is delivered by parent or guardians. This is seen in UNICEF Uganda statistics, (2009), children in Uganda comprise up to 56% of Uganda’s population and in 2009 approximately 2.7 million children were orphans in Uganda. Many orphaned children are abused in different ways (ibid). This has made them miss their right to education and vulnerable.

6.2.5 Large families

Big families have also affected children in many ways especially those children from polygamous families. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2006) polygamy is slightly more seen in rural areas with 29 percent among rural women and 23 percent among urban women. Taking children informants from such families, where their fathers had more than two wives were affected in their schooling. I observed that children who were coming from

large families of more than 10 children had lots of work to do and this affected their education. It would also be hard for one man to pay for all the children. In most families where men are heads, they are expected by their women to pay contribution fees. The role of women there is to take care of the children at home. This is still illustrated in the excerpt below

My father has three wives and we are 12 children in total, it's hard to meet our father in the course of the week. It's only my mother that cares about us and our family is full of fights among my father's wives. Sometimes we have to help my mother on the work because she needs our help (Angel 13 years, story).

My interview with the Parents showed that, polygamy has contributed to the school drop outs where she said that *parents give birth to many children without thinking about their tomorrow... It is hard to pay for 10 children in school* (FGD with parents). These have affected children from enjoying their right to education and affected their school life.

While article 2 of the universal Declaration of Human Rights states that children are entitled to all rights set forth in the declaration unlike many children informants in rural Bushenyi who see this as a dream because of strong gender stereotypes and large families.

6.2.6 Age specific challenge

Some female and male children are affected by age in their schooling life. Girls who have started their menstruation periods have not enjoyed their school life. Barinzi (2014), writes that menstruation period is one the bloody barriers that affect girl's education. All most the discussions with my key informants, teachers and parents mentioned that have started menstruating end up dropping out of school because they lack pads and fear to be embarrassed in case of any leaks. This has made many young girls to always miss school or play with peers and some of them feel weak in that period. Some of their parents never mind about the situation. Most girls are always shy to tell their parents about the situation. This is because most children in rural Bushenyi are not free with their parents. They cannot sit on the same table and discuss. Children are seen as incompetent by their parents.

Due to poverty in Uganda most parents confirmed that they cannot manage to buy sanitary wear for their children because they are expensive and these have to be bought every month. *One male parent said that their mothers lived without using pads therefore their daughters can manage school without pads* (FGD with parents). Most discussion with boys portrayed

age as the one of the factors leading to absenteeism at school. Most of young boys aged 12 and above were forced to help their parents to construct stalls on the market days and forced to join fishing with their fathers. This is seen in (Admassie, 2003), participation of children in domestic and farming activities go hand in hand with their rise in age. One of the key informants views below shows how girls are affected by body changes

The first time I went to menstruation period I was at school and I was 12, now I am 14 years, it was strange thing to me because I did not know what to do, most of pupils in my class took fun of me and the pain was too much. I felt bad and shy to go back to school for the whole of month (Nelly 14 years, story)

6.3 Other challenges that effect children school life

6.3.1 Heavy punishments

According to UNICEF (2010), a ministerial circular (2006) and the guidelines for Universal primary education 1998, article (3.4 iii) state that corporal punishment should not be used in schools but there is no explicit prohibition in law. Caning pupils violets their rights to protection against in human and degrading treatment. I according to ACPF (2001-2007), it is clearly discussed that most of African countries and Uganda inclusive still use corporal punishments on pupils.

Though there is law against heavy punishments in universal primary schools, this research has found that teachers in rural Bushenyi still give heavy punishments like slashing the compound and pupils with a stick. In the study ANPPCAN (2011)^{xi}, corporal punishment is still practiced in Ugandan primary schools. The study notes that 81 percent of school children are still caned and given heavy punishments irrespective of the directive from government of Uganda banning such practices in schools. In my study with children in rural Bushenyi, I found out that some children drop out of school because of such heavy punishments. When some children get late, they end up not going to school. This is illustrated in the following quotation

The government is now so strict on beating us here at school, because we are supposed to report to the police in case of our teachers beat us, but some of our teachers have totally refused to hear from police they still beat us. This punishment makes me always fear to attend school (John 12 years, story).

In my discussions with parents, I got mixed views where by parents supported punishment in schools and they claim that it is good because children become serious with their students after such punishments. Punishments are seen as an eye opener to life. However some of parents were totally against punishments and believed that a child can be trained without heavy punishments since they make them hate school. One parent in one of the FGDs gave an example that *“she has never punished her four girls and they still behave well. That she only talks to them and teaches them what is good and bad”*. Children stressed heavy punishments as challenge that effect their school life though some parents view punishments as one way of upbringing children to be better citizens. Punishments have remained prevalent in rural Bushenyi. Heavy punishments given by some of teachers at school have made some of children hate school and on the worse case dropout from schools.

6.3.2 Teacher- child relationship

Interviews with parents, children and key informants showed that most children are not motivated because of some teachers at school. *One of the adult key informants said that most teachers are not motivated at all because they are paid little salary, they do not mind about children as teachers should be doing, I guess they not happy and they spend a lot of time at school. Therefore some teachers put their problems to our children. Some children end up not liking school because the teachers are not good to them (key informant interview with adult).*

According to Uganda National teachers union (UNATU), Uganda primary teachers are among the worst people paid in Uganda. Primary teachers earn an average of 250.000 shilling (\$ 97.16) a month and their secondary school counterparts take home 450.000 shilling. This money is not enough as teachers themselves said so during the focused group discussion. Four of them said that they going to school to teach because they have no option, the situation is not good at all and sometimes they find it hard to teach and encourage children as teachers are supposed to do. Primary teachers are not motivated by the little pay to interact with the pupils in a friendly manner. This explains the gap between pupils and teachers in most rural schools in Uganda. A teacher is seen as a “king”.

In my discussions with parents, children and key informants, I understand that most children respect their teachers but the respect goes beyond is instead interpreted as fear. Most teachers are rude and still see children as becoming as opposed to beings. The children told me that teachers are never wrong and they have to go by what they say all the time. There is nothing like discussion between a teacher and a pupil. That whatever teachers decide is final. A child

voice is nothing in this case. This is confirmed below. *Andrew, we respect our teachers so we do whatever we are told to do without questioning. For example, if a teacher tells us to dig the whole day, then we go by that and we can't ask why (Andrew 15 years old).* This has affected children's school life in way that, they never discuss with their teachers on what they want. As result they just end up not attending school.

6.3.3 Disability

Another issue that children pointed out was the problem of disability. According to Nalule (2008), disabled children in Uganda are considered to be a marginalized group in many societies. Most times they are denied their right to education and few parents that manage to take them to schools may not afford to provide them with all special needs. The schools they go to lack the special facilities friendly to the group.

According to ACPF (2011)^{xii} disability among children is a prevalent problem in Africa. It is seldom recognized and often deliberately hidden. Children with disability are likely to face social, political and economic barriers that affect children on their physical and mental development. Many of these children with disability problem never receive education. Disabled children are invisible on the school data and even national policy agenda. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2003) disability is defined as a condition which denies a person a normal economic and social life. Two of my informants were disabled children. However, their disability affected them differently. This is indicated in except below

Dina narrates her story as follows; I have a problem with my eyes which are not properly shaped like for other children. This has made my life hard. At home they tell me that there is no need to go to school because no one will employ me in future. When I get at school, some children laugh at me. I feel rejected both at school and home. (Dina 15 years, story)

I have a problem with my legs, which makes my life hard since it's difficult to walk to school because I get tired so easily. I like school but it's hard to support myself without help of mother due to the my weakness of legs (Stella 13 years, story)

Article 23 of UNCRC states that, a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community. But how ever taking the views of two children who were disabled they have not enjoyed their school life as stated in their stories above. In Uganda people with disability are still seen as a curse, even in the families they come from,

they are discriminated thinking that they will never make it in life. During my visits to different homes, I revealed that children with serious disabilities never even get out of their homes and one of the parents did not want her daughter to be seen at all. She kept on chasing her to go back inside the house. Two disabled children were unhappy with what they were going through for their situation made schooling a nightmare

This chapter has addressed poverty and other factors that affect children's schooling and education in Uganda. Discussion with informants revealed that poverty remains a big challenge to children's education in Uganda.

In the next chapter I discuss and analyze how children perceive education and school and what they think about their own future.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HOW CHILDREN PERCEIVE EDUCATION, SCHOOL AND WHAT CHILDREN THINK ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURE

I am born to uneducated parents who are poor. They cannot read or discuss public and that makes me feel bad always. The only hope to our family's condition is only through education. I will try my level best to become someone in future (Jacob 14 year old, story).

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the main findings in line with my set objectives and main theories used in the study. I discuss and analyze how children perceive education and what they think about their own future.

In this chapter I narrate participant's stories where necessary. The chapter is arranged in subsections showing how children perceive education; most informants portrayed an understanding of education. Education is seen as the only solution to overcome the challenges that their mothers are facing because they lacked education. Education is seen as solution to development that can change their way of living which is full of difficulties. Children are struggling to pay for their school fees in order to acquire education. Most children showed how great it is to perceive education. They had a lot of good stories of people who have succeed in life because of education. Parents are willing to educate their children but most of them face a lot challenges that make them unable to pay for their children in schools. The above mentioned factors show how children perceive education in rural Uganda.

7.2 Enlightenment

According to Qvortrup (2002) schooling is important for part of child's life since it is dedicated for specific and well defined purpose and clock regulated discipline. Discussion with teachers, parents and children showed education as equally important to one of the three basic human needs. For the enrichment of society in general not only children, education was perceived to be important weapon. Most informants in the study took education to be an important weapon to development as illustrated in following section

Sarah's story

I am 14 years old. I live with both parents. My father is a poor man who drinks a lot of alcohol. He spends the little he earns on booze. He never cares about me but he is only waiting to hear of when I am marrying. I am now in primary seven but so worried about secondary school fees because it is expensive for me. But I do still perform well at school and I think education is the only solution to my future happiness. In God i trust, that I will complete my studies one day (Sarah 14 years old).

Education is perceived to be important and a solution to development. Education is the source of knowledge and a future investment. Children portrayed their agency as active participants who think about their future positively. They want to have a bright future. In doing, they have resorted to hard work in school and outside school. They engage in both casual and paid work so as to earn some money to keep them in school. This confirms that children understand the perceived importance of education at a tender age. They perceived education to be useful and it is the only way to overcome poverty and ignorance. Most children want to construct good houses and even speak good English.

During my observations most of the children I met told the similar stories. As Robson et al. (2007) write, rural children have agency in every day actions. Children found way to maneuver despite lots of work at home. They created time to revise for better grades in school since education is believed as a key to success.

7.3 society progress

Discussions with children revealed that most of them perceived education to be one form of society progress. This is confirmed in the following informal dialogue with children.

Ruth; Education has done a lot of change to some families here in our village... our neighbor suffered a lot, indeed a lot to educate her two girls to complete university. People at our village laughed at them because they did not have what to dress, all their money was to educate their girls. Ruth said God is great she repeated the statement God is great!!. When their girls completed university they all got scholarships to 'Buraya' meaning Europe they got nice jobs when they came back to Uganda, they educated their younger siblings; they bought their parents a car and built a good big house. And last year they took their parents to South Africa. All people who used to laugh at them have learned a good lesson of educating children. That is why my mother is doing what she can to educate us. Ruth ended her story

saying education is good I wish I can also complete my studies, despite our relatives who are not supporting my mother to educate us, we shall not give up (Ruth 14 years, story)

In one of my FGDs, a 12 year old boy stated that: *education is one way to be empowered in the society, where he emphasized that educated people are respected in society. Most people believe in what they say (Charles 12 years, FGD)*

Jimmy stated that: *education is good and it even changes peoples thinking and behavior, where he gave live examples of few educated people in his society that have changed to civilized people who even encourage our parents to educate us (Jimmy 14 years, FGD).*

Views from children portray how education is perceived by most rural children in Uganda. Most informants gave live examples of parents who have educated their children to be with smile on their faces today, where they emphasized that parents who struggle to educate their children benefit in the future when children complete school. Education is also perceived in terms of development to society. Some of informants' views reveal the self-empowerment in terms of educated being respected in the society. Allison James and Prout (1997), write that children are able to resist and respond to external forces that affect their lives. In the same way discussions with most children shows how they are struggling to bring change in their families. It shows how children are active citizens (human beings) as opposed to human becoming in rural Uganda.

7.4 Gender inequality

As showed in chapters a four and five gender is important. Here I show other aspects of the gender inequality. The interviews with girls, parents and key informants showed that most women are suffering because of lack of education and this has forced mostly girl children to take education seriously. Therefore most girls are fighting this by attending school. According to Ellis (2000), gender and cultural factors can lead to education inequality. In Uganda most women have missed their right of education because of their gender. The FGD with girls showed that most children perceived education to one way of fighting for gender inequality their mothers are facing.

In order to get more on the above sub topic, a number of questions were asked for example in focused group discussion with girls the following questions were asked

Researcher: what are some of challenges that your mothers face?

Children: our mothers are really suffering

Researcher: how are they suffering?

Angel- my mother is always complaining of back pains because she is doing a lot of domestic work at home and again cultivate in other people's gardens to get my school fees. She can only rest late night, because she did not to go school it is hard to for her to get a good job anywhere.

Women in rural Uganda are facing hard life mostly because of culture norms and gender where most of them did not attend schools because of being women. Most women I encountered in my research perceived education to be the only solution for their children to get better in life. Following the informant's excerpts, most of them perceived education in terms of getting rich, educated husbands in future. Most girls take education to be the way out of cheap labour as well as being property to their future husbands. Most of them said that educated women do not normally face the above problems.

7.5 lack of interest

Educated but unemployed has led children think that being at school is wastage of time, many examples were given. Educated ones are struggling just like the uneducated ones. This creates a feeling that education may not be a key to success. There is nothing that comes on a silver plate. It is a combination luck and hard work. Youth employment in Uganda is alarming. This can be seen in the FGD with boys below

John: I come to school because my parents are forcing me to come here

Tonny: yes me too, I come here because I have no option

Researcher: why don't you like coming to school on your own will?

John: we are struggling a lot to be educated because my two brothers completed university 3 years ago but they don't have jobs. This always discourages me to keep in school

Mark: my father told me that 20 years ago it was easy to get jobs that even before completing university, but today things have changed. I suggest that my father should start for me a business instead of paying my school fees.

Tonny: There is no need of going to school because even those who went to good schools and finished university don't have jobs, then why not going for fishing with my father.

Taking discussions above, I see some children are discouraged by their parents which have led them to perceive school as wastage of time. Some of parents who are not educated in rural Uganda perceive education to be good but without meaning it, saying that we are living and we did not attend school. Brown and Park (2002), write that poorly educated parents may value education less, may have low scholastic aptitude that they may pass on to their children. The effect of family educational decisions matters because parents do not prefer education in long run and this affects children's perception about education.

7.6 School as a social meeting place

School was perceived as an institution for meeting their fellow peers and relaxing from domestic activities, since they start school at 8.00-17.00. Children find school to be a meeting space and a learning place where most of them said that home is bores with a lot of work. But children from medium families like home because they do not engage in a lot of domestic activities like children from poor families. As Robson et al. (2007) argue young people's agency is seen within their leisure activities and forming social groups. Rural in Bushenyi children have formed social groups that are actively occupying their leisure time with activities like playing football.

7.7 What children think about their own future

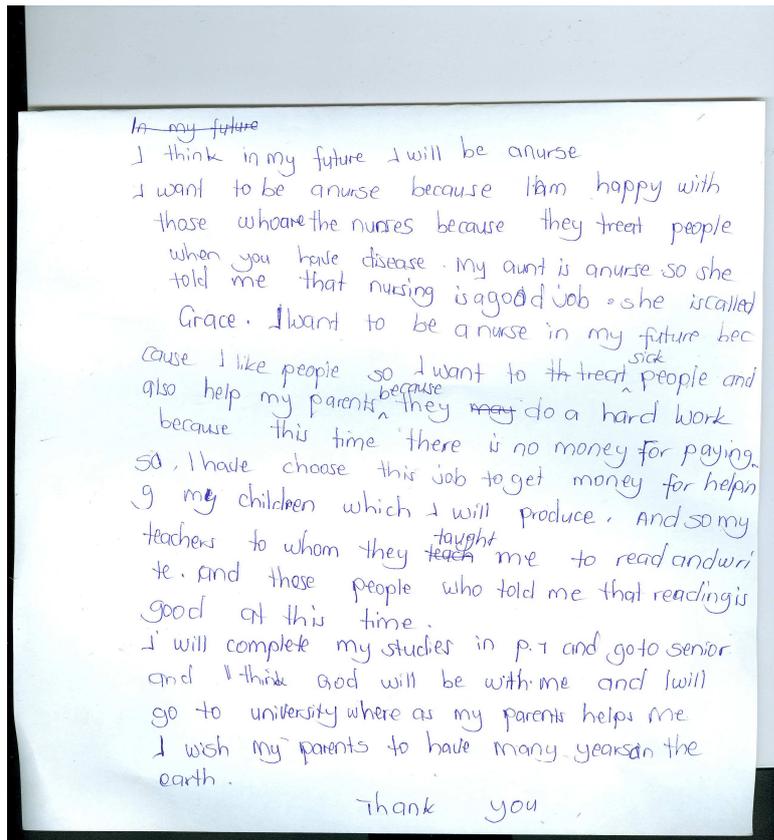
Children thought of the following

7.7.1 Future Profession

Children in my study showed competence in answering all the questions and most of them knew what they want in future. The quotation below confirms their competence.

I am what to become a doctor in future, I like doctors and that is the profession i was introduced to since I was young. Medicine is a nice course because it saves people's lives and it is easy to get a job here in Uganda (John 12 years, story)

Marcie 13 years, story



Source: Field Work, 2013. The story shows what Marcie thinks about her own future.

From the above Informant's stories I see that childhood is socially constructed as Honwana and De Boeck (2005), stresses that in order to understand childhood as a social construct we need to consider cultural setting and the way the social structure is formed. In the same way some of informants want to become mostly doctors or teachers because it's a profession they hear from people in that society. This has socially made them think to be doctors in future. As Robson et al. (2007) writes that children are as agents, they negotiate the institutions and rural spaces they encounter while creating their own experiences. Children are agents in terms of competent social beings, that is, they are as doers and thinkers rather than human becoming or incompetent human beings. In the same way rural children in Bushenyi are not only thinkers but still act by contributing to their own future by paying school fees.

Most pupils' stories showed that most children wanted to have professional titles in future, of these include, teachers, nurses, pilots, lawyers, etc. All stories from children associated completing university with getting a job, living a good life and helping their parents in future.

7.7.2 Involved in Decision making

Most children said that in future they should be allowed to take part in decision making especially at school and home. As Cantwell (1993) argues that children Participation should be recognized. Rural children in Bushenyi also stressed on this point where they said that the government should help them with being excluded from decision making such as choosing schools they want to join and what subjects to study as well as when to have a break from studies.

As article 12, 13, 14 and 15 UNCRC provide children and young people with the right to participate actively in society and to always take part in decision making in the community, family and school. According to Boyden et al. (1997), children should always lead and their parents should always consult children or come in when children need their help. In the same way rural children in Bushenyi want this to be improved in future, where most children informants said that they are never included in decision making.

In some line with Allison James and Prout (1997), argument about children being competent human beings. I see children as competent and social actors of their own lives in rural Bushenyi where the children informants showed their agency through discussing how their lives should be represented in all matters that affect them. Where they said that adults should listen to them because they know what they want. So society should always listen to them.

7.7.3 God to be the only hope

According Otiso (2006), generally Uganda is very religious country as also noted in chapter four. Most people believe that God is only the solution to their situation. When children where asked about their own future, most of their stories showed God to be the only one to help them the situation they are in to be better people in future. Based on Judith's view below, I see a good future can only happen when God is involved.

It's only God that knows our situation, he knows how our future will be and hopefully I will become someone in future, because with God everything is possible. He is one that created us and he knows how our tomorrow will be. It is written in the Bible. But God helps those who help themselves. Therefore I need to read hard to get good grades for the better future (Judith 15 years old, story).

It is hard to predict the future here in our society because things keep on changing. But God will make away and I become a doctor in future (Charles 12 year, key informant interview).

As noted in chapter in chapter two of this thesis, children who are able to remain hopeful about the future possess problem solving skills Boyden and Mann (2005). Rural children have passively accepted the adversity of problems they face. They believe that God will help them in their situation. Children are coping by identifying alternatives to their problems and look for solutions by studying hard. Children lives have been ignored in rural Bushenyi, they are vulnerable but they have tried to cope with extremely difficult situations through prayers of faith.

7.7.4 Key to better future

Education was seen as vital tool to bring mostly positive change in society. It contributes to development and responsible individuals in future. It is one of way of pursuing future goals. This excerpt below illustrates it.

I like educated people because they talk facts (FDG with parents)

Education opens doors to good jobs in future, ability to commutate with people globally (Matina13 years, story).

Taking stories above, education in rural Uganda is perceived to be one of important thing in life that can change their lives forever; it opens the doors to new opportunities. But on the other hand the stories show that a lot is still to be done in Uganda for children to acquire education since most of them proved to be poor and most children do not complete school despite perceiving it to be the only way to change their lives and bring light to their families. Many parents I discussed with claimed to understand the values of educating children. Most of them said that educating children means wealth in the country and family, educated children normally help their parents in old age. Therefore education gives a sense of personal fulfillment and educating a child was taken as educating the nation.

This chapter has analyzed how children perceive education and school and what children think about their own future. According to informants in my study those were their views of how education is perceived and how they want their future to be

The chapter below summarizes my findings and gives recommendation for the future research and plans.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Introduction

In summary, I discuss the main findings that emerged from the informants, in relation to my research questions and objectives set out. The main objective of this thesis was to explore or to understand the everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda. I will present the summary my study, main findings, conclude and then suggest recommendation for the future studies.

8.2 Summary

In this section I discuss the summary of the results

8.2.1 Limitations of the theories and concepts used

Main finding relate to the sociology of childhood. The use of concepts from sociology of childhood has guided me to understand my informants' views in relation to my research objectives and research questions. But on the other hand the theory had some limitations as it seen in different literature. For example as Stephen's cited in Abebe (2007, p. 77) "writes that childhood studies have focused more the westernization of global childhood. The current crisis in notions of childhood is related to profound changes in the new globalized modernity in which the child was previously located. The historical construction of the world's children suggests the complex globalization of once localized western construction of childhood". My findings show that to some extent, the theory is more related to childhood in western countries. The findings show that children participation in households activities is a ticket to acquire education since most parents proved to be poor. Some of informants heavily supported work since it makes them part of the family.

As UNCRC states that in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration. Looking at what I found out in my discussion with children, this just written on paper but the situation on ground is different. Most informants in my study were taken as becoming by adults. Children hardly had a say in decision making whether at school or homes. I found that children agency is still limited in rural Bushenyi. As Robson et al. (2007), there are a range of different actors

involved in these unequal power relations. Children views show how they are affected by power relations from the adults. Some informants views shows that they are powerless in many ways and these power relations have also affected rural children life in regard to school. They are forced to engage in a lot of different activities.

Despite the theory being more of western, it is still crucial and important theory that guided my study.

8.2.2 Reflection of rural children's agency

Wartofsky (1981) cited in James et al. (1998, p. 199), the child active in its own right, not simply imitatively, but as an agent in its own construction and as naturally an agent as any other adult. In regard to my study rural children showed their agency in different ways for example by looking for the means to play despite of heavy work they engage in. Rural children are social actors where they are actively involved in paying their contribution fees and doing activities where they are paid and support their families. Children have understood their situation in rural Bushenyi and most of them are looking for the way forward by reading hard to be better people In future, but their agency is limited by poverty since they still find it hard to complete their school.

8.2.3 Children are a structural category

According James et al. (1998, p. 209) children are a structural category, they are part of constitution of social life and should therefore be understood as an integral form within every day and any social system. James et al further point out that childhood diversity reflects the infinite variety of social setting in which children live. In the same way I found out that children in rural Bushenyi have various childhood experiences in regard to gender, class and age as discussed above. Children engage in different chores depending on the families they come from. Children are affected in society differently.

8.2.4 Children's participation

As noted in chapter two of this thesis, children participation should be taken serious as it is also one of the major principles discussed in CRC, it is a basic component of children's rights. Children should be heard and views taken views seriously because they are active members. Children's participation is a guiding and as such it should be part of every aspect of children's lives. It is important to extend them to all setting and all types of rights.

In my study I found that children participation is more about survival and meeting their basic needs in life and needs of their own families. Not participating in public affairs. They have

experienced great difficulty in making contributions to the community development because they are taken as human beings. Adults take these children as immature and therefore children are affected in their ability to participate by the relationship of adult powers that mostly adults exercise over them. Rural Children in Bushenyi have faced discrimination and suffer extreme violation of their rights and discrimination. Therefore social exclusion in rural Bushenyi limits children's opportunities and agency in their everyday life hence affecting their school life.

8.3 Main findings

The following are main findings that cut across all the discussions with the informants in relation to the challenges they face in schooling.

8.3.1 Poverty

According to the report education for rural people in Africa prepared by Shibeshi (2006), education for rural people is important to achieving both the education for all goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring universal primary education by 2015. The majority of the world's population lives in rural areas. Compared to other regions, many African countries have a high proportion of their population living in rural areas, and of these people, the common challenge is poverty (ibid). Poverty in rural areas remains predominantly a rural phenomenon that is pronounced among the crop farmers (Charles, Atingo, Opolot, & Okello, 2007).

The disproportionate contribution of rural areas to national poverty has remained unchanged at about 96%. Informants' views show that most children informants did not enjoy their school life due to poverty. This problem has affected both genders but mostly girls have suffered more than boys as analysis chapters show above. The way adults perceive children education and daily activities in rural Bushenyi is socially constructed, where daily activities are divided according to gender and boys' education is perceived to be more important according to some of the adult informants I discussed with. The analysis chapters clearly show how poverty has made most informants see education as a dream due to alarming poverty levels in Uganda. Children are always chased out of school due to school fees, lack of what to pack at school and poverty has forced them to engage in a lot of daily activities both paid and unpaid hence affecting their school life.

According to Shibeshi (2006), Uganda being one of the countries that are still poor, rural children in Bushenyi has suffered economically. Most of informants seemed to be informed about their right to education and how good education is but due to poverty they still dropout of school before completing the primary level. I may conclude that social and culture factors in rural Bushenyi have also affected children schooling life since they see work as day to day activity and this has affected children's school life despite some parents and children taking work it as less burden.

8.3.2 Gender and age

According to the both boys and girls are affected in their education due to their gender, but girls suffer most due to gender based constraints to education. This problem tends to be more pronounced in rural areas because the environment is normally more accommodating of such gender inequality. Most rural areas in Africa mostly adhere to traditional cultural values, attitudes and practices. According to Sarah and Ibrahim (2007/2008), Uganda implemented a number of programs to address disparities as well as overall inequalities to access social services. In primary education it was the Universal primary education policy which was implemented in 1997. The program started first with four children per household and a girl child to be among of them. Girls still drop out of school before completing their primary level than boys. Therefore the aspects UPE have not attained gender equality. According to the informants gender has affected most children's school life in rural Bushenyi were mostly girls are given a lot of work to engage in than boys and boys forced to engage in productive work to bring income to their families. These have affected their school attendance hence dropping out of schools.

8.4 Resilience

According to Boyden and Mann (2005), socially competent children, capable of lateral thinking and problem solving can easily enhance their coping by identifying alternative to their lives to their current circumstances and devising creative solutions. According to Abebe and Kjørholt (2009), children are not merely about to become adults, that is to undergo socialization to bear their responsibilities in their own future, but producers and carers. In the same way, rural children in Bushenyi have remained hopeful by taking education to be one of way to good life.

Some of Children informants in rural Bushenyi were combining school and work, due to poverty and cultural setting they engaged in both unpaid work and paid work. According to the interviews with informants a lot of domestic work affected children school life as the stories demonstrated above. Children are always tired, due to heavy workloads at home they are un able to attend school on regular basis and all absent mined but on the other hard children work have helped them to be preserved and strengthen their cultural values and act like independents, since they contribute to their school fees and scholastic materials they need at school. As Abebe (2007) writes, the activities rural children engage in tend to be one way of coping strategy. In the same way rural children in Bushenyi the daily activities they engage in is one way of their coping strategy to acquire education.

8.5 Concluding remarks

In conclusion, this thesis has sought to make a contribution to understand the everyday activities and the perceived importance of education and school of rural children in Uganda. Children's livelihood and living conditions in rural Bushenyi are a bit miserable due to poverty. Children in rural Bushenyi are agents of their lives and they highly participate in daily activities. But their agency is limited in many ways for example adult power relations.

Education is perceived to be a positive investment that leads to enlightenment, society progress and good future. Few children manage to complete primary seven as noted in chapter four due to high dropout levels in primary schools. Most children said that a lot of factors have forced them to drop out of school or not enjoy their school life as discussed in analyses chapters above.

The data got from my study show, rural children in Bushenyi are very informed about their situation. They had their views on finger tips. The study also shows that culture plays vital role in daily activities that children engage in. Therefore it is important for policy makers or children activists to put culture into considerations before policies are imposed.

The study has demonstrated that rural children in Bushenyi work as part of house hold production and socialization. This a good sign of their competence. Most children have come to fully understand their family situation and the only way to improve their standards and acquire education is through being part of the work. Children are supposed to contribute to the family as well in the community. Children are expected to contribute while at the same time learning the necessary skills that always enable them to be active members of society and

children participation is vital to maintain subsistence economies and ensure some continuity of cultural skills. But this has affected mostly children's school life. According to some informants the daily activities they engage in were a lot hence not attending school every day which leads to poor performances leading to high drop outs.

8.6 Recommendations

8.6.1 Childhood theories

By drawing inspiration from theories of childhood studies that recognize childhood is a social and cultural Phenomenon. Children to be studied in their own right and their own perspective for fulfilling the value of children as components; children to be studied straight or directly on their life environment, activities, relationships, knowledge and their experiences. My study is suggesting that future research in rural Uganda should put into account the views of children. I found them active informants. They know their own experiences and they can also suggest the way forward. Therefore it's high time for most researchers in Uganda to value children as being than becoming.

8.6.2 Funding for education

In 1997 the Ugandan government introduced universal primary education the plan was that all children should be able to attend primary schools for free. Informants confirmed that, children are still facing a lot of challenges to access school.

Most children Informants want the government to fully pay their school fees. Most children claimed that despite UPE being in place, a lot of money is still contributed to the school management. This has led to high drop outs rates, poor performances compared to private schools where the parents can afford to pay school.

One child said that, government should come in now to help than waiting for the future. Most discussions with children showed their concern with universal primary education to be improved for them to be educated citizens in future. This is confirmed by the fact that some teachers who are products of universal primary education (UPE) are unable to express themselves in English. Children mentioned that the government has failed to provide them with good class rooms, chairs, desks and modern latrines for boys and girls.

Most children said that, they are not motivated to stay at school because they walk long distances to get to schools. The government allocates more funds to UPE, then also monitors UPE and make sure that teachers teach.

Therefore I recommend policy makers like government of Uganda, non-governmental organizations to come in rescue of these children by providing scholastic materials like books, pens, uniforms, children latrines and all needed materials.

8.6.3 Alcoholism awareness

Public awareness of rural alcoholism policy matters should be strengthened and highly promoted using all available communication media especially local media for the easy understanding the negative effects of alcoholism. National law about the excessive drinking should be set and followed to reduce this problem since it has affected many children's education in rural Bushenyi. Effective programs mainly aimed at promoting the alcohol reduction in hazardous and harmful consumption in locations like trading centers, work places should be introduced.

8.6.4 Poverty eradicating strategies

Poverty eradication programs like NAADs, poverty Eradication Action were set by the government of Uganda to reduce poverty levels. I recommend that these programs should be followed more and be broadened. Since poverty levels are still high in the country and this was one of the main problems that affected children's school life. Reduced poverty will increase the enrolment numbers in schools for both girls and boys.

8.6.5 Sensitization about gender relations

Girls' education in rural Bushenyi is harassed with many limitations such as forced marriages, lack of good sanitation facilities in schools, a lot of domestic work, gender bias and stereotypes in society, school textbooks also portrayed gender differences where men pictures show that they are doctors and women as nurses for example in health. Teaching and learning processes, parents and teachers attitude towards girls have contributed to girl child drop outs compared to boys. Therefore I recommend for the change in institutions, societies the way gender is taken, men and women, girls and boys should be seen as human equals with in the society. This will be one way of promoting both girls and boys education. The results show gender bias to be one of the main reasons why girls did not enjoy school.

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Endnotes

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10.1 APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDICES

1: Information sheet and consent form for the children

Downloaded from http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/en/notification_duty/consent.html
01/05/2013

Ayebare Gilda, Norwegian Centre for Child Research,

Norwegian University of science and Technology,

Moholt HK 23-23,7050 Trondheim Norway,

E-mail: gildayeb@ymail.com:

Cellphone:+47 98429412.

I am called Gilda Ayebare a student of Mphil childhood studies in Norway. I am writing my thesis for my university studies in MPhil childhood studies. The aim of my project is to gain information about the everyday life in the school, with a particular focus on school activities; how you evaluate the school, how you feel about the schooling, information about what you do in your leisure time, school obligations and your future plans.

The participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your consent as long as the project is in progress, without stating the reason. I will provide you with stationary materials to use when I ask you to draw some pictures, and to write some stories. I will interview some of you individually, and I will also interview you in groups, according to your age and gender, that is boys alone and girls alone.

Sometimes I will be taking notes and use a tape recorder because then it's easy to remember whatever you have told me. I will delete the recordings after I have typed what you said. When I am writing my report I may use direct words you said but I will not mention your name anywhere or any other information that are not anonymized. Those who want to participate I will ask you to sign but still feel free you can always withdraw from participating even if you have signed. Thank you.

I have received written information and I am willing to participate in the project

Name: _____

2. Information sheet and consent form for the Adults

Downloaded from http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/en/notification_duty/consent.html
01/05/2013

Ayebare Gilda, Norwegian Centre for Child Research,
Norwegian University of science and Technology
Moholt HK 23-23,7050 Trondheim
Norway,

E-mail: gildayeb@ymail.com: Cellphone:+47 98429412.

I am called Gilda Ayebare a student of MPhil childhood studies in Norway. I am writing my thesis for my university studies in MPhil childhood studies. The aim of my project is to gain information about the children's everyday life in the school, with a particular focus on school activities; how children evaluate the school, how they feel about the schooling, information about what they do in their leisure time, school obligations and their future plans.

I will first talk to children and get their views then in the 4th week of July , I will have a focused group discussion with you, your suggestions and concerns are so important to my study feel free to share whatever you think.

The participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your consent as long as the project is in progress, without stating the reason, Sometimes I will be taking notes and use a tape recorder because then it's easy to remember whatever you have told me. I will delete the recordings after I have typed what you said. When I am writing my report I may use direct words you said but I will not mention your name anywhere or any other information that are not anonymized.

Those who want to participate I will ask you to sign but still feel free you can always withdraw from participating even if you have signed. Thank you.

I have received written information and I am willing to participate in the project

Name: _____

3. Question Guide for interviews and discussions

Background information (children)

1. (age, sex)
2. Where do you live and with whom?
3. Who is the head of the family?

About school and leisure time (Children)

1. What do you do from morning up to evening both at school and after reaching home?
2. Which class are you?
3. How often do go to school?
4. Who pays your school fees?
5. Who pays stationary materials you use here at school?
6. Do you have enough class rooms?
7. Do you have friends at school?
8. How do you evaluate the school?
9. What do you like /dislike about school?
10. What daily activities do you engage in?
11. How do the daily activities affect your school life?
12. What are girls and boys responsibilities in the family and everyday life?
13. When do you play? What and with whom do you play with at school?
14. What do you do in leisure time /break time?
15. Are you given food here at school?
16. Do you like teachers here at school?
17. Do you have school obligations like home work to do after the school?

Poverty and status of children

1. How many people are you in your family?
2. How many children are under eighteen years?
3. Do you stay with both of your parents?
4. How do you understand the word poverty?
5. Do you think poverty has positive or negative effects to regarding your schooling?

6. How does poverty affect girls and boys in school?
7. Do you think poverty can make you work harder in school?
8. Do you wish to get out of poverty life (probe: why)
9. What other challenges affect your education?

Focus group discussion with adults

1. What do you think about children's education?
2. Do you think education is important?
3. What are girls and boys responsibilities in the family?
4. What challenges do children face in regard to their schooling?
5. Do you think children's work affect their schooling life?
6. Do you think domestic work is good for the children?
7. How are your children coping with domestic work and attending school?
8. What do you think children drop out of schools?
9. How is low income affecting children's education?
10. What is other factors affecting children's education?
11. What do you think about your children's future?

Future plans (children)

1. . What are your future plans?
2. What do you what to do after school?
3. Who are your role models, who do look up to?

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS

NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Gry Mette Dalseng Haugen
Norsk senter for barneforskning
NTNU
Loholt Allé 87, Pavillion C
7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 31.05.2013

Vår ref:34550 / 3 / HIT

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 15.05.2013. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

34550

The daily Activities and Well-being of Refugee Children in Camps. A Case of Nakivale Refugee Camp South Western Uganda

Behandlingsansvarlig
Daglig ansvarlig
Student

NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Gry Mette Dalseng Haugen
Gilda Ayebare

Etter gjennomgang av opplysninger gitt i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon, finner vi at prosjektet ikke medfører meldeplikt eller konsesjonsplikt etter personopplysningslovens §§ 31 og 33.

Dersom prosjektopplegget endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for vår vurdering, skal prosjektet meldes på nytt. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>.

Vedlagt følger vår begrunnelse for hvorfor prosjektet ikke er meldepliktig.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdís Namtvedt Kvalheim
Vigdís Namtvedt Kvalheim

Hildur Thorarensen
Hildur Thorarensen

Kontaktperson: Hildur Thorarensen tlf: 55 58 26 54

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Kopi: Gilda Ayebare, Moholt Herman Krags veg 23-23, 7050 TRONDHEIM

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no

TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrr.svarva@svt.ntnu.no

TROMSØ: NSD, SVE, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uit.no