Problems associated with Girls as a result of the Boy Child not being empowered: A

Case study of Kawempe Division, Kampala District

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Declaration

This dissertation is original work and has not been presented for a degree or other award in any other University before.

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I confirm that the work presented in this dissertation was carried out by the candidate under my supervision.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to our parents, guardians, facilitators, friends & relatives who heartedly supported its compilation financially and throughout our academic journey. We thank the Almighty God for enabling us to endure and succeed in our education path. It is through His grace that our efforts were rewarded.

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List of Acronyms

CDO	Community Development Officer
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
NRM	National Resistance Movement
UN	United Nations
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USE	Universal Secondary Education
WHO	World Health Organization
UCHL	Uganda children help line
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse & Neglect

Abstract

This study employed a qualitative research design and 10 in-depth interviews with key informants were conducted. Participants were purposively selected. Selection was focused respondents considered to have relevant information and knowledge about child empowerment. Data collected was analysed through thematic data analysis. The study results show that the participants understood child empowerment differently, because of COVID-19 pandemic. The study established several dangers that result from failure to empower the boy child such as alcoholism, drug abuse, burglary, robbery, suicide, rape, defilement, school dropouts, early marriages, teenage pregnancies, single motherhood, separation, and divorce. Children that are not empowered experience emotional difficulties, have suicidal thoughts, nightmares, think of revenging, and experience moments of denial. Lessons from the study points at the need for strong community wide campaigns aimed at addressing various local meanings on empowering the boy child and reconciling these meanings with global definitions. Such campaigns should be intentional at explaining the various risk factors for the boy child not being empowered so that parents and other community stakeholders address them.

Chapter One

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study and significance of the study, and operational definitions.

Background

Child empowerment is one of the policy agenda of countries around the world. Equipping children with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions for their own health and well-being is important for child outcomes, and in enabling them to be agents of change, and positively impact their surroundings in the future. In recent decades, child rights and empowerment have made their way onto policy agendas around the world. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations Assembly (1989), underlines the importance and expectation of children as actors concerning matters that affect them, suggesting that adults should engage in dialogue and respond to the views of children when making decisions concerning them. Alongside this evolving landscape, views of children have shifted from being dependent, and innocent to knowledgeable, active, and social participants in society (Prout, 2005).

This shift in perception challenges the notion that children are vulnerable and unable to make decisions for themselves in their own best interests (Bradbury et al, 2018). When children, and young people are included in processes such as producing knowledge that can impact decision making in their communities, it can foster a stronger sense of responsibility to others, and has the potential to promote both community, and individual health while also potentially increasing the relevance of research, policy and practice for children and young people (Wong et al, 2010).

Education systems play a key role in empowering students in becoming responsible, informed, and engaged citizens, allowing them to actively participate in societal conversations and to make decisions for the good of themselves and their communities. However, most gender equality campaigns focus on protecting girls while forgetting that boys too grapple with

insecurities. This makes the need to realize gender parity biased and difficult to achieve. The exclusion of boy child begins right at the grassroots to the highest levels. Society has given more importance to the plight of the girl-child, who is considered as weak and vulnerable, to the detriment of the boy child who is considered strong hence needs no attention.

There are numerous initiatives worldwide seeking to empower the girl child and women as a whole. Some of these initiatives in Uganda include; Girl Child Education Support Initiative, Girl's, and Women's Education Initiative, Girl Child Art Foundation Campus Initiative, Girls Foundation and many more. Most of them seek to support orphaned girl child. More opportunities are prioritized to women even in circumstances where both sexes are vulnerable regardless of gender. This is even displayed in the Kenyan constitution of 2010 on representation especially in the senate for the position of Women Representative whereas there is no man representative position (Juma, 2009). Similar organizations are missing for the boy child. (GlobalGiving https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/girl-child-right-to-education/, 2010)

In recent studies, it was suggested that a neglected boy child 'made invisible' grows up to be a bigger danger to society than girls, and so his needs ought to be taken care of by being mentored and made conscious of the patriarchy and how better progress is achieved through hard work and motivation and get involved in activities that will channel aggression and anger. (Monitor, feb 28th 2020)

We have seen globally through the United Nations program or legislations from different countries that favour gender imbalance in support of girl-child. Last 10 years, the focus has primarily shifted to the girl child-talk of the empowering and all sorts of support dished out to support this paradigm movement, and the boy child is now in danger of losing value or space on the table. From slums and streets of Kampala, we have seen so many boys neglected, roaming the streets and forced to fend for themselves. (nyangena emily moraa, 2018)

The Ministry of Labor, Gender and Social Development has not empowered boys. The children's department has failed to monitor the implementation of the policy. Most young boys within the age of compulsory education are found doing informal jobs because of there is no strict enforcement of the policy. Darlock in 2013 observed an explosion of singlehood in Uganda as many well educated and financially independent women were opting for parenthood without marriage (Dalrock, 2013). This trend apparently streams from the changes brought about by modernity, formal education and financial empowerment among women while neglecting to empower the boy child, the one whom society looks unto to take the role of a bread winner in the house. Usually, the boy child is left not empowered as he grows up while all attention is given to the girl child. The society therefore misses out on preparing future husbands, heads of houses and hence fathers. Therefore, due to neglect of the boy child, many marriages do not last, leading to a lot of separations and divorce. Some men also decide just to remain unmarried due to lack of empowerment (Kimathi, 1994).

Many organizations go by the adage that girls are more vulnerable than boys; hence, they empower girls more. The empowering of women has led to men being left feeling ignored since they were viewed as less vulnerable compared to the girl. This neglect is noticed in his bid to find his bearing; the boy child has now turned to vices such as drugs and substance abuse, sexual abuse and dropping out of school. (Harolyn M. E. Belcher, MD; Harold E. Shinitzky, PsyD, oct 1998) Therefore, most studies centering on girl-child empowerment while leaving out boy-child not being empowered, results into problems associated with girls. This study seeks to explore problems faced by girls as a result of the boy-child not being empowered.

Problem Statement

Over the years, emphasis has been laid on empowering the girl-child and in the process shunning the boy-child. The issues of the boy-child vis-a-vis the girl-child in our society have largely been ignored. This is to ascertain that while emphasis should be put on empowering the girl-child, the boy-child issues are ignored. These emphases, however important and appropriate

they may be, have led to the negligence of issues facing the boy-child. Unfortunately, when the term boy-child is brought to the fore in any forum, many people make limited mental reference to a male-child and his access to education or lack of it, or to the lower standards of education available to him when compared to the girl-child.

The boy-child, despite how society chooses to treat him, is still vulnerable. He is a child just like the girl-child, and therefore, should be handled with care.

Despite the strides society and education systems have made in terms of child empowerment, persistent inequalities continue to challenge and undermine these efforts especially for the boy-child. Therefore, this study will focus on problems associated with girls due to boy-child not being empowered especially in the areas of Kawempe Division in Kampala district.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the problems associated with girls because of boy-child not being empowered in Kawempe Division in Kampala district.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine what is involved in empowerment among children as part of parenting
2. To identify the outcomes of empowerment among children as part of parenting

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following questions

1. What are the common problems associated with girls as a result of boy-child not being empowered in Kawempe Division in Kampala district?
2. What does child empowerment entail in Kawempe Division in Kampala District?
3. What are the outcomes of child empowerment in parenting?

Significance

The study could be a learning paradigm to local leaders which can enhance their knowledge and hence developing insights in their slow responses towards boy-child empowerment. The goals of the study are designed to help boost the status and well-being of the boy-child in the area.

The study could help parents develop insights in their deeds that are related to child empowerment. It provides information to a range of stake holders like policy makers, researchers, local leaders and community members especially on the causes of child abuse hence a basis for setting up policies that will protect children from abuse and related practices and may act as a source of literature to those who will be making research in child abuse. This research could generate information to be used as basis for further research about child empowerment, public awareness about the causes and probably finding possible lasting solutions to the problem.

Scope

This study sought to understand the problems associated with girls because of boy child not being empowered in Kawempe Division in Kampala district, examine aspects of empowerment among children as part of parenting, and identify the outcomes of empowerment as part of parenting in Kawempe Division in Kampala District. Affirmative action refers to a body of policies and procedures designed to eliminate discrimination against marginalized groups including ethnic minorities, and women. Its main objective is to redress the effects of past discrimination (Wanyande, 2003).

Contextual scope

The topic of the study focused on problems associated with girls because of boy-child not being empowered in Kawempe Division in Kampala district.

Empowerment can be defined as the attempt to establish power in another person

Child empowerment is on the policy agenda of countries around the world. Equipping children

with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions for their own health and well-being.
(Holly Martinez, may 24th 2022)

Geographical scope

Geographically, the study was carried out in Kawempe Division, which is one of the five divisions that comprise the city of Kampala. The main reason for the selection of Kawempe Division was based on the grounds that it is one of the areas in Kampala with bigger numbers of boys being empowered. Kawempe Division is located in the Northern part of Kampala city Centre ‒Kampala. The economic activity mainly carried out is trade, small industries, retail shops and a thriving farmers market.

Time Scope

The period under study was from July to September 2022. This period was chosen because we noticed problems associated with girls as a result of the boy child being neglected having risen within the past year. The study was carried out for two (2) months in Kawempe Division. In conclusion, this introduction gave us all the momentum we needed and key findings to go forth with our research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This section presents the review of the existing literature and theoretical underpinning on the subject basing on the objectives of the study. The study acknowledges the work done by other scholars and also identifies the gaps that exist on their studies and also shows how these gaps will be filled by the current study.

Empowerment among Children

The term empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process, and it helps people gain control over their own lives. Further, it can be called as a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they think as important. "Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, or economic strength of individuals and communities…." (Mark Burton and Carolyn Kagan, 1996) The term empowerment has different meanings in different socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts. An exploration of local terms associated with empowerment around the world always encompasses a wide variety of definitions. These terms include self-strength, self-control, self-power, self-reliance, personal choice, capability of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision-making power, freedom etc. These definitions are embedded in local value systems and beliefs. Empowerment has both intrinsic as well as instrumental value. "The most common use of the term "empowerment" refers to increasing the power of the low-power group, so that it more nearly equals the power of the high-power group" (Bhadra, 2001, p. 61).

Empowerment among children entails programmes and trainings like child rights, sexuality and reproductive health education, communication and negotiation skills, and gender equity. Children should also be allowed access to media – radio, television, books and social media (Observer.ug/news/headlines/58768-how-empowerment-of-children-benefits-society-John Musinguzi).

Past studies vindicate that; children should also be supported through the media to highlight issues that concern them and their social environments. That way, children may influence the media to popularize existing prevention, reporting, tracking, referral and response services and mechanisms. (Elena Bozzola,, august 12th 2022)

A case in point is one important empowerment mechanisms which is the establishment of the Uganda Child Helpline such as Sauti 116 through which children can use SMS or voice call to immediately report violence incidents. Using any mobile phone number, one can send a free-of- cost SMS or voice call to number 116. Clients can also walk in to the offices of the helpline. The helpline also tracks stories of child violence in the local media for follow-up. Several cases, including serious ones of life and death nature have been reported and addressed thanks to the helpline. Another helpful tool is the Uganda Children's Portal, a resource center with a variety of information managed by Makerere University's Economic Policy Research Centre. It can also be accessed online, at www.eprcug.org/ children/.

Easy access to the media and participation in peer programs, trainings and organizations can help children learn about existing and policies, guidelines, research reports and training materials for their benefit. Above all, formal education and general exposure help children understand and fit in their environment with ease. Provide citations. (Claire O'Kane,, 2020)

Children empowerment hinges on two main messages: children possess useful views and voices that need to be heard and supported, and adults in their lives – parents, religious leaders, teachers and community leaders – have responsibility to enable their empowerment. (Shanon Phelan, Ashley Mckillop, 2022 published 10th july 2020). The adults ought to permit broad child participation in family and school decisions and giving them definite responsibilities; this improves the children's wellbeing and makes children part of the processes of protecting their rights.

What Empowerment Involves

Uganda has institutionalized affirmative action since the National Resistance Movement (NRM) took over the government in 1986. The new Constitution of Uganda, promulgated in October 1995, makes various provisions for gender balance and fair representation of men and women in all public sectors. Article 32:1 provides for affirmative action in favor of marginalized groups (Republic of Uganda Constitution, 1995). The government has instituted a number of mechanisms to ensure respect for human rights and equal participation of men and women. A separate ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development has been established. One of its functions is to 'empower communities, particularly marginalized groups to realize and harness their potential for sustainable and gender responsive development' (Republic of Uganda, 1996, Ministry of Gender and Community Development Plan, 2). Government commitments to gender equality in public policy have thus had a longer history in Uganda compared to Kenya.

Affirmative action has been practiced in all three countries since the early 1990s, but there has been no comparative analysis of its effects. Country level studies have been done for Uganda (Kwesiga 2002; Businge 2005; Morley et al. 2006), Tanzania (FAWE, 2001; Lihamba et al. 2006; Morley et al. 2006) and Kenya (Nyamu 2004; Nungu 1994; Onsongo, 2007).

In Uganda, affirmative action for the admission of women students has a long history. Makerere University was established in 1922 as a men's technical college. Women were first admitted in 1945. In order to increase the number of female students enrolled, the university introduced the 1.5 points scheme in 1990. Female university entrants were awarded a bonus of 1.5 points on top of their individual examination scores. The 1.5 scheme has been associated with an increase in the percentage of female students enrolled at Makerere university from (Geoffrey Odaga, 2020).

Affirmative action is perceived as 'reverse discrimination' (Jordaan 1995, 53, cited in Morley 2004, 11) and a means of legitimizing reverse discrimination, against men and boys. Some students see it as a form of unfairness. One student from Nigeria said: The thing is that if I were to suggest that university should do certain things for females, I would not want it… getting special treatment… that because we are female that we should be getting extra lessons or special treatment, it would not be fair. In that they can easily associate it with the common grievances which have commonly been sexual exploitation and end up disregarding it even when it was something else (Jenny Parkes, 2022), (Cited in Morley, 2004). From a pure lack of government support to society losing focus through a diminishing perspective about boys, the boy-child is becoming invisible, the future man is out of the picture. The adoption of affirmative action measures that address gender equality is constitutionally guaranteed and aimed at addressing centuries of inequality between men and women. While some argue that affirmative action is discriminatory, it serves the ends of justice as it helps to redress inequality in society.

Outcomes of Empowerment among Children as part of Parenting

Most gender equality campaigns focus on empowering girls while forgetting that boys too grapple with insecurities. Parents will be more concerned about the whereabouts of their daughters in the evening than their sons. The exclusion of boys led to several problems facing girls, which remains a global concern. The exclusion of the boy child manifests itself in increased conflicts with the law, an illiterate population, increased crime and low self-esteem. This has led to violence, truancy and drug abuse. It is the alternative way the boy child has resorted to as payback to society. (Alina Dixon, 2021)**.** This is based on the assumption that boys can take care of themselves, which has led to boys getting involved in drug abuse and joining gangs. This violence has further led to failed marriages, dysfunctional families and gender-based violence, with girls' rights being abused no matter what the government does to fight for them. Depraetere, J., Vandeviver, C., Beken, T. V., & Keygnaert, I. (2020). Big Boys

Don't Cry: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis of Male Sexual Victimization. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 21(5), 991–1010. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018816979 (Joke Depraetere, , 2018)

Statistics show most people would rather adopt girls than boys. This denies little boys a chance to grow up in homes where they enjoy the warmth of a family. Most of them end up in the streets and survive through criminal activities hence a danger to security. The emotional needs of boys in today's younger generations are being ignored. Studies from the past two decades confirm that focus on girls can leave boys behind in regard to education and well-being. The truth is, boys actually need more emotional support than girls but we are in collective denial.

The marginalization of boys leaves a vacuum in its wake that needs to be filled with better teaching for self-worth for boys. (Shrewsberry, Alexander R. , 2021). The vacuum is currently empty and the chances for toxic masculinity to pour inside are high. The choices being made today about boys will either perpetuate a culture of toxic masculinity or disrupt it. There is need to empower boys to find strength in vulnerability. To empathise with others, articulate their emotions without fear or repression. A neglected boy child will grow up to be a bigger danger to society than girls.

If we continue to push only girl empowerment campaigns as a way to teach boys that they need to respect and appreciate girls, and then the boy child will only feel neglected, ignored and, not actually get the message as intended. (United Nations publication, 2011). Ignoring the boy child will only create a breeding ground for the exact behaviors and ideologies we say we want to prevent.

A boy child who has experienced abuse of some form is more likely to get involved in delinquent and dangerous activities than his female counterpart who has experienced almost the same kind of abuse. An ignored boy child is more dangerous to society than an ignored girl

child. When the boy child is marginalized, he becomes dangerous not only to girls but to his fellow boys/men as well. By not empowering boys, it brings about problems for girls for instance defilement, rape, and murder, early pregnancies. (Amélie Gauthier-Duchesne, Martine Hébert and Martin Blais, 2021)

The challenges that the boy child faces in today's world, especially in the emerging world, do not receive as much attention and focus as is necessary to resolve their plight. It's the stories and voices on the ground that are lamenting about society's disregard of the situation and the over-focus on girl-child while ignoring boy child inequalities. This common statement normally means that when you educate a girl you educate an entire society to imply that the same is not true of educating the boy child. (David k Evans, Maryam Arkmal and Pamela Jakeila, 2021 jan) With all the Women empowerment going on, there is need to spare a moment for the boy child. We may end up having an empowered girl and a very disadvantaged boy.

In Uganda, some effects of this are already being felt. There are very young men engaging in questionable behaviour such as overindulgence in alcohol and hence are alcoholics whose future is bleak to say the least. Young men are also involved in numerous cases of robbery.(curley et al 2016)

Furthermore, we are experiencing an increase in the number of boy child dropping out of school thus making the female figure to be ahead as far as development agenda is concerned (Nishmura et al.2008) There is increase in singlehood due to one's own choice, separation and divorce because boy child does not feel empowered to take up their roles as heads of families later in life. In school, girls are provided with sanitary towels and encouraged to take education seriously. On the career front; the girl child is given an upper hand. Today's society vilifies boys and protects girls. For instance, where there is domestic violence and the woman suffers, the man is taken to task. But if it is the man who suffers, little is done for him to get justice (Austin, K., et al.2020). We are all focusing on girls while boys are suffering. Little or no

campaign has been done to help the boy child.

Conclusion of Literature

In summary, Parents and other adults need to support and guide the young in their daily escapades and celebrate their achievements whenever made. Above all, empowerment goes well in an environment of peace building – measures aimed at reducing conflict in the wider society and strengthening conflict management. Stakeholders like community members, technocrats, children and leaders ought to know that if child empowerment is not addressed, the problems facing girls will remain an unspoken taboo in society and in urban areas like Kawempe Division.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter describes and justifies the research design, study area, sample selection, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and the challenges, which were faced.

Research Design

The study considered a qualitative approach, which is defined by Berg (2007) as meaning, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of Phenomena. A descriptive design is an empirical inquiry that investigates what child abuse phenomenon in- depth wise and within its real-world context. Therefore, to ensure that detailed information is gathered in our topic, identifying the causes of failure to empower the boy child in Kawempe Division, we chose a descriptive design for it enabled him find information that would describe and explore the analysis of different stake holders.

The study was carried out in Kawempe Division which is located in Kampala District. The study area is one of the five divisions that comprise the city of Kampala. It consists of citizens of various tribes of Uganda but mainly dominated by the Baganda. The major economic activity carried out is trade where by most of the citizens own retail shops. There are also some small-scale industries and agriculture though it is so much compromised with the increasing urbanization. Kawempe was convenient for us because it is a centre for children who have been neglected according to reports from the Community Development Officer. The study focused on Kawempe not necessarily as representative of other Centres in the City, however, the conclusions drawn could be relevant to other centres and organizations for curbing problems associated with girls due the neglect of the boy child.

Sample Design

The study used a random sampling technique to select the participants in this study. The study participants were both girls and boys between 10-17 years in Kawempe division . Selection focused respondents considered to have relevant information and knowledge about

child as we expected these people to be having abundant knowledge about child abuse issues from an experience point of view. The major emphasis put on children because we intend to acquire first-hand information. We interviewed parents of both children who are empowered and those who aren't empowered. For example, the probation officer at Kawempe Division, the Officer in Charge of the office of Child and Family Protection Unit of Kawempe Police Station, parents and children. (police report 2021)

Methods of Data Collection; in depth interview and key informant's interview

The following methods were used in collecting data for our study; in-depth interview and key informant's interview.

Key informant interviews are the interviews that were conducted to people who we think are more knowledgeable and have experience about the subject matter and therefore can provide rich information. These will include the semi structured interview questions designed to capture the information of the key informants. (Paul J. Lavraka2008) The key informants' interviews will be conducted with an Officer in Charge of Child and Family Protection Unit at the police and a Community Development Officer who is in charge of probation in Kawempe Division. We learnt that these can provide relevant information about child abuse because it is at the centre of their work. We used different research tools which included an interview guide. These were accompanied with a skill of observation to gain information in its natural context.

Key informant interviews helped us because information came directly from knowledgeable people, its data and insight that cannot be obtained with other methods. It also provided us with flexibility. One is able to explore new ideas and issues that have not been anticipated in planning the study. The Key informant interviews are among the least expensive of the social science research methods. We were able to spend lesser money.

An in-depth interview is a prolonged discussion between a researcher and his respondents aimed at getting a deep and a clear understanding of the situation. These were

face to face interviews with parents and children. We were able to get first-hand information of how parents define a child abuse experience. We were able to converse with Parents. These are what transcribed later into conceptual texts that were further analysed for a deeper understanding of child abuse and how it's in play with boy child empowerment. We used open ended questions and tried to let the interview flow like a natural conversation. They were used with a help of an interview guide. We were able to use recorders, pens books among others with an aim of keeping records. The interviewee gave the needed information verbally in a face-to-face relationship. It was relatively a more flexible tool than any written inquiry form and permits explanation, adjustment and variation according to the situation. The interviewing method was aimed at looking for first-hand information and it mainly targeting children and parents

An interview involves the oral questioning technique or discussion. We verbally questioned the respondents and sought answers to a set of questions through interview. It allowed a deep explanation and exploration into the causes of child abuse.

Ethical Considerations and Procedure

For the sake of respect and protection of the integrity of the participants, there was high level of confidentiality during data collection. Some aspects of confidentiality which we observed include; the identities of the participants were kept anonymous, instead pseudonyms were used. Sharing information about the participants with other purposes other than research was unethical, therefore in this aspect, we ensured that the information participants provided was kept anonymous, furthermore after the information was collected, we also ensured that its source could not be identified and, in a situation, where there was need to interact with the participants repeatedly, we were extra careful that others could not have access to the information collected before because the respondents are informed about the non-disclosure principle.

We avoided bias in the field as there was no bias while interviewing participants and reporting the findings. This means that we reported the findings as they truly exist and no information was hidden.

Verbal consent was also obtained from the stakeholders prior to engaging them in key informant interviews. The respondents assured that the information provided was only used for the purpose of this study and treated with the utmost confidentiality as in the presentation of the results their real names were not revealed.

A letter from the School of Phycology to permit the carrying out of research as well as introducing us to where the study was to be acquired for easy access to the respondents.

Data Management

We used our interview guide to collect data and also had full on conversations with our participants. We recorded all these conversations and listened to them again while compiling our research and writing our findings. We also did not expose the identity of our participants for confidentiality purposes

Data Analysis

Data was analysed using the thematic analysis method. Thematic method of data analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke 2006). The data was closely examined and we came up with common topics and ideas that came up repeatedly. We used thematic method of analysis because it was simple to use and allowed flexibility in his choice of theoretical framework

Challenges in the Study

Financial constraints. We faced a challenge of finances such as insufficient money during data collection but this was resolved by soliciting for funds from our parents. Limited time was another challenge, as data collection goes through many processes and this required a lot of time compared to the limited time scheduled on university academic calendar and final exams that were in play. This, however, was dealt with by scheduling

interviews in our free time and dividing activities amongst group members.

Chapter Four

Study Findings and Discussions

The chapter presents findings, analysis and discussion of the data collected during the research. This study was set out to explore the problems associated with girls because of boy-child not being empowered in Kawempe Division in Kampala district.

The findings are organized basing on the main themes and sub-themes of research derived from the objectives stated in chapter one. The interview guide was an instrumental tool during data collection in the study.

Understanding of empowerment among Children

In 2019 ANPPCAN annual report identified a number of forms of child empowerment whereby the new Constitution of Uganda, promulgated in October 1995, makes various provisions for gender balance and fair representation of men and women in all public sectors. Article 32:1 provides for affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups (Republic of Uganda Constitution, 1995). The study established that children most especially boys in Kawempe Division had been abandoned by their parents, denied medical services and other basic needs. This study wanted to understand from the community members whether they actually understood what child empowerment meant and the different forms empowerment as defined in the Gender, Labour and Social development Policy and Child Protection Act.

The findings revealed that different individuals define child empowerment differently. What it constitutes varies from one person to another mainly due to experiences. This means that there is no objective definition.

> *"...okukulakulanya abaana sikwangu kunyonyola muntu era buli omu akitwala bubwe, omu kyayinza okuyita okusitula omulala ayinza obutakiyita kyo..."* (its not easy to fully define child empowement because every person has a different definition of the concept) (female parent, Kalerwe town market).

More parents also revealed that with the untimely lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, many boy-children were not empowered as the girls by either the parents of community members. Just like the ANPPCAN report, parents stated that the forms of empowerment in children differ in their community.

What empowerment Entails

Most children have at least been empowered, but the majority being girls, hence the boy child not being empowered, thus halting his holistic and positive development. According to the UNICEF Uganda Annual report of 2020, a bigger percentage of children empowered are girls, especially through affirmative action in schools, hence the boy child is left out of the picture. It was further reported that even the government empowers girls more than boys in almost all its sectors.

The study revealed that in Kawempe, parents tend to be more concerned about the whereabouts of their daughters in the evening than their sons during the lockdown brought about by the effects of the long COVID-19. According to the literature from the Community Based Records Book of Nabweru Town Council, the probation officer received thirty reported cases of boys getting involved in drug abuse and joining gangs in 2020 as opposed to the seven in the previous year.

> "*We could use this book for a full financial year which starts in the seventh month of the year, but now see we have used it for just three-months, but it has even gone past half way we are facing so many cases of boys abusing drugs because parents don't empower them.*"(Probation officer, Kawempe Division)

This showed that boy child is not being empowered. It stands to affirm the U.N report that showed that problems associated with girls are as a result of the boy child not being empowered globally. "UNICEF Thursday issued the largest collection of data detailing child empowerment globally. The report can only make you come away asking: What's wrong with us–everywhere?" (Wright, 2014).

It is important to sensitize parents about the need for child empowerment. Especially for the boy child in society as a guard against most problems associated with girls.

The research study went ahead to reveal that problems associated with girls are associated to the boy child not being empowered. A big percentage of the respondents feel it brings more danger to the society when the boy child is not empowered. This is because the exclusion of the boy child manifests itself in increased conflicts with the law, an illiterate population, increased crime and low self-esteem. This has led to violence, truancy and drug abuse in Kawempe Division, hence increasing problems associated with girls like rape and defilement

The study also portrays that child empowerment is when there is shared responsibility in responding to the needs of a child. Few respondents showed that the authorities were responsible for empowering children, yet many revealed that the authorities have done little to uplift children in their locality. This accounts for the many problems associated with girls with young boys engaging in alcoholism and robbery.

Furthermore, one male respondent mentioned that they are experiencing an increase in the number of boy child dropping out of school thus making the female figure to be ahead as far as development agenda is concerned. In turn, there is increase in singlehood because one's own choice, separation and divorce because boy child does not feel empowered to take up their roles as heads of families later in life.

> ―.... *Abazade bafudde nyo'kubawala nebasulila abalenzi kati obubbi, obutamivu, okukozesa ebilagala, okuva'musomerobye'yongeddekuludda lw'abalenzi. Kino kiviliddeko bamama abato, oku'kwasaelyanyiabawala abato, okusulilila amaka....''* (*Male respondent, Bwaise market*).
>
> (Parents have focused a lot on empowering girls at the expense of boys which has resulted into robbery, alcoholism, drug abuse, school dropouts, hence teenage

pregnancies, defilement, and family neglect.

Factors that lead to Boy child not being empowered in Kawempe Division

Globally, COVID-19 lockdown measures have exposed that parents do not empower the boy child. The situation has been made worse with the challenges affecting the parents like alcoholism, domestic violence, poverty and others. In addition to lack of social support, many boys have been faced with challenges like lack of basic needs, food, health care and other needs that have had a direct impact on their social welfare. In Kawempe Division, the main challenges have been;

Frequent Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is an abuse pattern that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. According to Uganda child help line (UCHL 2014 run by the organization used to receive an average of 100 calls from all over the country per day before the 2019 however this number significantly increased shortly after the lockdown measure was put in place and then they started receiving up to around 21904 calls at an average of 1369 calls per day. With the psychosocial effects so many parents became stressed with the Covid lockdown measures, and some turned aggressive since they were longer working and they and lack of basic needs. UCHL 2014)

Just like before the Covid-19 lockdown measures were in place, the increase in violence directly correlated with the violence against boys. Domestic violence was sighted as a key underlying factor for the boy child not being empowered in Kawempe Division. Domestic violence has been fuelled by alcoholism, stress and poverty and in the end; the parents tend not to empower the boy child

In this, boys end up becoming a nuisance in society. The research indicates that domestic violence is responsible for the boy child not being empowered. In an interview with a key informant, he said,

"*where there is domestic violence, a boy child cannot get access to basic needs, he misses parental love and care.*" He also added that, "*the decline in extended families partly explains fights in homes. Gender emancipation that points at equality gives women false confidence*"(CDO, Nabweru T/c)

"…nolwekyo abalenzi *ba'bamalirako obusungu"* that is *"for that case boys of families that have domestic violence resort to beating their fellows and girls"* (Community leader, Nabweru T/C)

Drugs and Alcohol by Parents and other Adults in the homes and Communities

Alcoholism and drug abuse is a key factor in the boy child not being empowered. Many boys are either directly or indirectly affected by the effects of substance abuse in their community. Parental alcohol misuse is a major risk factor for the boy child not being empowered (Laslett ET AL., 2012). According to School of Public Health, Georgia State University and Uganda development Link, children with alcohol abusing parents or caregivers are at a risk of not being empowered, the study further revealed that the children are at a risk of being side-lined by their caregivers.

Most of the children who grow up seeing parents and care givers abuse alcohol are likely to also start abuse alcohol or drug at a tender age.

> *"Children learn to do drugs when they are still very young. Last time I found a very young boy of 14 years trying to drink alcohol and I reported the case to the father."*
> *(Male parent, Bwaise)*

Most of the children grow up in families where they are exposed to drugs and alcohol. The findings put it clear that the families whose members abuse on alcohol have more victims of child abuse. This is in line with some of the existing literature because alcohol abuse leads to the boy child not being empowered (Wisdom, 1993).

> "*taata buli lwatamira ankuba"* (Every time my father drinks, he beat me) (*male respondent, Nabweru T/c)*

─...*omwenge guzaala obusungu*....‖ (Alcohol and drug abuse translates to anger) (CFPU, Kawempe Police Station).

Misconception about children's empowerment.

The research findings revealed that the definition of what child empowerment constitutes is a common cause. The research findings indicate that many parents still had a perception of equating provision of basic needs with child empowerment. They do not draw clear lines between fulfilling responsibilities and parenting.

The findings showed that most parents feel that children's empowerment is not part of parenting.

> *"omwana muwa byeyetaga ewaka kati ebyo'kumubulila byabo abalimubuyinza ssi'mulimu gwange ngo'muzadde." (I provide everything for my child at home but empowering him is a task for those in authority and not my task as a parent."*

Which means that the parent does not see the need to empower a boy child in this context. We then highlight the misconceptions and need to sensitize masses about child empowerment.

Outcomes of child empowerment in parenting

The third objective was to identify the outcomes of empowerment among children as part of parenting.

Isolation

Isolation as a psychological impact on the individual wellbeing involves and being alone, finding a problem in making friends, failure to associate with others among others. The findings show that as a result of the boy child not being empowered, many feel isolated because they do not fit in the population of their age mates who are not stressed.

> ‒*Boys who are not empowered feel they are not as good as their friends. They feel they are not liked by the community. So, they end up living a lonely life with a feeling of not disturbing others." (Community leader, Kawempe Division).*

Suicidal Thoughts by Children

On asking on the relationship between child empowerment and suicidal thoughts, the study findings showed that all the respondents have never thought of committing suicide. This is attributed to the sense of belonging rooted in both the social norms and religions. Socially a person who commits suicide, his body is isolated.

> *"ffe eyetuze tetumusabira mu kkanisa ate tazikwa nga bulijjo" (for us we don't pray for someone who commits suicide and is not even buried normally) (Religious leader, Nabweru C.O.U).*

Revenge Thoughts

Revenge thoughts involve thinking of inflicting injury in return for a similar action. The study findings indicated that most respondents noted that they sometimes think of revenging because of not being empowered. This is attributed to the feeling and pain inflicted on them. This is widened by the fact that most boys are not empowered, thus feel the only way to find justice is to inflict pain on the rest in society, especially girls.

> *−When we ask most victims of defilement about what they encountered they say the perpetuator who in most cases are boys are always intoxicated with drugs and alcohol. (CFPU, Kawempe Police Station).*

Denial thoughts and failure to accept and move on

The research findings showed most of the respondents indicated that sometimes they get denial thoughts about their status of not being empowered. These big numbers are attributed to a sense of these individuals failing to acknowledge that they missed out on child empowerment. The study findings, however, show that individual stakeholders avoid acknowledging the problem.

Chapter Five

Summary of key findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

The chapter presents a summary of key findings, conclusion and recommendations for further research. The conclusion of this research has been drawn basing on the research findings and in line with the study objectives.

Summary of key Findings

We answered the research questions with different findings and among those that emerged included these that are summarized in this section;

About People's understanding and experience of child abuse, it was found out that it is defined differently by different people. It does not have an objective definition.

Defined with in relation to Covid-19. COVID 19 had a positive impact on child empowerment because the cases of 2020 almost doubled those of the previous year.

Understood by the effects to the boy child who is not empowered. People feel child empowerment is when parents fulfil their responsibilities. Child empowerment is when there is shared responsibility of different stakeholders in upbringing the children.

The second objective of the study was to what is involved in empowerment among children as part of parenting. This involves children parents providing medical services and other basic needs. This study understood from the community members that there is different forms empowerment such as provision of basic needs, safeguarding against hardships and instilling of morals. Parents' misconception about children empowerment they see it as not part of their core mandates in parenting.

Lack of information about child empowerment leads to the boy child not being empowered hence problems associated with girls.

About the outcomes of child empowerment in parenting. Findings of the effects of empowerment on children, especially boys revealed that those not empowered feel isolated and do not fit in their age mates, have suicidal thoughts, revenge feelings and denial thoughts and

sometimes become dangerous in the society.

Recommendations

Authorities in Kawempe Division should increase sensitization campaigns to the locals with an aim of ensuring that they equip them with enough information that can guide them on how to go about and to view child empowerment. This helped find an objective definition to the problems associated with girls as a result of the boy child not being empowered. Objective definitions should be absorbed in the local setting. A standard definition of child empowerment in Uganda can make justice prevail and individuals be awarded accordingly

Rigorous evaluation should be carried out with an aim of coming out with the priority areas in empowering children as part of parenting. This should be accompanied with strengthening the existing strategies for boosting child empowerment in the area. Programs should also focus on helping the boy child who is not empowered in the society, with an aim of finding lasting solutions to the secondary problems that come with the girl child.

Other strategies targeting the psychological wellbeing should also be put in place to bring psychological equilibrium to the boy child whom is not empowered. Programs in form of ways that target individual wellbeing for example encouraging support groups where they can learn new skills.

We suggest that further research should be conducted on the parent's perceptions regarding child empowerment in parenting. This helped in creating awareness among parents about child empowerment. It will in turn motivate the government and other stakeholders to intervene.

Conclusion

The lack of knowledge of information of forms of child empowerment has led to the boy child not being empowered, thus problems associated with girls. This challenge has been fuelled by the extreme effects of the Covid-19 lockdown measures that increased stress in the community and poverty levels among the community members. On the other hand, however,

there is hope that child empowerment in Kawempe Division can improve in a bid to reduce the problems associate with girls significantly if the people in the community are extensively sensitized about the need to empower the boy child.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Respondents

Dear Respondent

We are students of Makerere University pursuing a bachelor's degree in Psychology. We are currently carrying out our undergraduate research on the project titled "Problems associated with girls as a result of the boy child not being empowered in Kawempe division." We kindly request you to participate and share your opinion on this matter. Your participation will be of tremendous help in informing interventions that address both girl and boy child empowerment. We assure you that this study is strictly academic and the information you share will be only used for the purposes stated in this study. The information given will be kept confidential.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Name…………

2. Age………………**15-20**☐ **20-25**☐ **25-30**☐ **30-35**☐ **35-40**☐

3. Sex**……………… Male** ☐ **Female** ☐

4. Education level**……………. Primary**☐ **Secondary**☐ **Tertiary**☐

5. Position in the community…………….

6. Occupation**…………….**

SECTION B: COMMON PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GIRLS AS A RESULT OF THE BOY CHILD NOT BEING EMPOWERED IN KAWEMPE DIVISION

1. In your view, what is child empowerment?

2. What are the outcomes of child empowerment in parenting?

3. Can you tell us about empowerment as part of parenting in your Ward? What are the most common forms of child empowerment?

4. What do you think are the factors that lead to the boy child not being empowered in your Ward?

5. Tell us whether you think the current responses are adequate or not and why you think so?

6. What are the challenges that are hinder you from addressing the problems associated with the boy child?

7. Describe what it will take for boy-child empowerment to become a priority issue in your area?

8. What support would you need and other parents to become champions of child empowerment?