

Running head: THE GATEWAY TO EVERYTHING

‘The Gateway to Everything’:
The Relationship between Gender Safety, Gender Violence and Learning Processes in Two
Primary Schools in Kirinyaga County, Kenya

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Abstract

The ways in which gender violence in schools (GVS) relate to teaching and learning processes and the extent to which aspects of gender safety in school (GSS) create an empowering, protective learning environment form this study's central topics of investigation. Using a multiple qualitative case study of two primary schools in Kirinyaga County, Kenya, this dissertation explores the elements of gender safety and gender violence that exist within each school and relate to student learning. The following qualitative methods were used over seven months in 2015: participant observation, individual teacher interviews, individual art-based student interviews and member-check interviews with teachers and students. GSS is promoted within the national policy framework and through teacher and student actions but is prevented from flourishing by a prioritization of discipline, authority, and examinations that reinforce traditional hierarchies, power discrepancies and competition. These practices define a school culture that enables GVS to continue and undermine efforts to promote GSS. Findings show that efforts to eradicate GVS cannot be designed in isolation from broader teaching and learning processes. Ensuring school safety and equality requires collaboration between education and child protection systems and reflection on current and historical power structures that shape school cultures. Efforts to eradicate GVS should build on existing opportunities for enhancing GSS and thus learning for girls and boys and address the systemic constraints that limit teachers' ability to promote protection and equality for their students.

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Acronyms

Board of Management (BoM)
Department of Children Services (DCS)
Deputy Head Teacher (DHT)
Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)
Gender Safety in Schools (GSS)
Gender Violence in Schools (GVS)
Head Teacher (HT)
Human Infection Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)
International Non-Government Organization (INGO)
Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE)
Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE)
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
Ministry of Education (MoE)
National Education Sector Plan (NESP)
Net Enrolment Rate (NER)
Teachers Service Commission (TSC)
Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ)
School Management Committee (SMC)
School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV)
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

‘Going to school’ is a phrase that is endowed with endless possibility and potential; it is framed as the key to unlocking opportunities for growth and empowerment for individuals and for societies. It has been a priority of the international development community for decades to enroll all children in school, particularly girls who often experience greater barriers accessing education at all levels. These efforts have seen significant results to date, but there is still a long way to go to reach the goal of universal primary school completion for girls and boys, and significantly longer for universal secondary school completion. Still further out of reach is the goal of ensuring universal access to quality primary school learning environments that are safe and empowering for both boys and girls. The benefits of attending primary school have been widely recognized, including increases in individual income and nation-wide GDP, individual health and wellbeing and - especially for girls - social benefits that extend beyond the individual to her children (Education Commission, 2016; UNESCO, 2016). School is also lauded for its empowering effects as a tool to advance gender equality and empower youth – again, for girls and young women in particular. This case for education led to the establishment of Millennium Development Goal 2 on Universal Primary Education in the year 2000, seeking to enroll all children in primary school by 2015. While 2015 passed without reaching this goal, dramatic progress was made in the interim, leading to an increase in gross primary enrolment rates in developing countries from 80% in 2000 to 93% in 2015 (United Nations, 2015).

Increasingly, however, claims about the inherent benefits of education are being challenged, as the global education community recognizes that simply going to school is not

automatically or inherently beneficial. Benefits are dependent on the quality and nature of the educational process that occurs in school. This points to a distinction between schooling – the act of attending school – and education, which is the learning process. Schools are places charged with fostering education, but each have other mandates that, in some cases, can obscure or influence the educational method (Osborne, 2008). Education quality is thus prominent in the more holistic 2015 Sustainable Development Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.” Many students in low-income countries leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills due to poor conditions such as overcrowded classrooms and untrained or under-trained teachers (Mugo, Ruto, Nakabugo, & Mgalla, 2015; Pritchett, 2013). It is increasingly recognized in the literature on education in international development that school can have a negative effect on children by reinforcing harmful social norms such as gender inequality or other forms of discrimination and providing an environment where these values and behaviours are ‘taught’ to boys and girls as they become normalized by respected authority figures in the name of learning (Bhana, Nzimakwe, & Nzimakwe, 2011; George, 2014; Leach, 2003).

The past ten years have brought a proliferation of research illustrating the widespread prevalence of gender violence in schools (GVS) in a variety of country and cultural contexts (Parkes, Heslop, Johnson Ross, Westerveld, & Unterhalter, 2016). This research has been most widespread across Sub-Saharan Africa and North America (Leach, 2015). The emerging literature from Sub-Saharan Africa shows that both girls and boys in primary and secondary school are often subject to sexual violence and harassment, corporal punishment, and physical and psychological victimization from their teachers and their peers. These forms of GVS are

usually accompanied by a reinforcement of traditional gender expectations with the projection of sex-specific roles and behaviour for girls and boys within the overt and hidden curriculum (Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2006). In seeking to eradicate GVS, it is also important to consider the objective: what does gender *safety* in schools look like? The questions of how gender violence in school relates to and undermines teaching and learning processes and what elements of gender safety exist in school to provide an empowering and protective environment form the primary topics of investigation for this study. Based on a multiple qualitative case study of two nearby primary schools in Kirinyaga County, this dissertation highlights the extent to which each school contains elements of both gender safety and gender violence that influence students' motivation and ability to achieve their learning goals in and through education. Gender safety in schools (GSS) is promoted within the national policy framework and through actions of both teachers and students. Ultimately, however, GSS is constrained by school cultures that prioritize discipline, authority and examination results, reinforcing traditional hierarchical and patriarchal norms over student well-being and development. These priorities are rooted in the educational value system installed through the establishment of formal education during British colonialism and continuously shaped by neocolonial influences including international development assistance.

I designed an in-depth qualitative analysis of two case study schools to maximize understanding of how gender safety and gender violence manifest themselves at the school level and relate to student learning processes. The selected schools include a nearby rural school and a semi-urban school in Kirinyaga County, where the population is almost exclusively Kikuyu and Christian. The term 'learning outcomes' is often associated strictly with students' demonstrated

quantitative performance on test scores, despite the widespread acknowledgement that standardized tests are often poor measurements of learning and education quality for a variety of reasons (Popham, 1999; Skiba, Knesting & Bush, 2002; Wasanga & Somerset, 2013). Instead, I focus on learning processes, i.e. the practices, behaviour and support systems that students felt help them to learn and do well in their education and to succeed as a result of their education. My conception of learning processes uses a broad understanding of the teacher and student practices, behaviour and support systems that facilitate curriculum delivery, knowledge acquisition and the development of academic skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and social skills including collaboration and respect. This dissertation examines the ways these learning processes influence and are influenced by gender safe and gender violent behaviours in school. As expected, results demonstrated that gender safety practices appear to enhance students' engagement, attendance and perceptions of their ability to learn, while GVS can push them out of class or school and distract from learning. A more unanticipated result is that learning practices such as the examination orientation and the school culture that emphasizes order and discipline validate and perpetuate GVS and minimize the effects of efforts to enhance gender safety within the school environment.

Examinations were described by a teacher in the rural school as 'the gateway to everything', because all future academic and professional success is determined by students' marks on their final Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations that they take at the end of Standard 8. The pressure on teachers and students created by the examination orientation shapes all aspects of school life. Success on examinations is believed to be acquired through discipline, obedience, and long days of study. Teachers move as quickly as possible

through the curriculum so as to spend the entire third term of the school year on revision and reduce time spent on extracurricular activities and non-examinable subjects such as life skills to spend more time on lessons. This examination orientation is a reflection of a school culture that values competition, ranking and order. When combined with the hierarchical power structures that characterize the education and school administrative system and the patriarchal norms that characterize gender relations in communities, schools and families, the exam-oriented school culture creates opportunities for GVS to flourish by deprioritizing the existing teacher-initiated efforts to address gender inequality and child protection. Achieving success on KCPE is necessary for students to proceed to a quality secondary school, which is in turn important for gaining access to tertiary education and many forms of secure employment. The lack of a balanced school culture that attends to student well-being, gender equality and child protection, however, leaves the gateway open for GVS to flourish, ironically undermining the very learning and academic achievement that the exams are designed to measure. While examinations and gender equality are not necessarily at odds with each other, school culture that privileges exam results, discipline and authority over student well-being, learning and development was shown in this study to undermine efforts to enhance gender equality and child protection in schools.

Defining Gender Safety and Gender Violence

The term ‘gender violence’ is defined as “physical, verbal, psychological and emotional as well as sexual violence; it also includes the *fear* of violence, both *between* females and males and *among* females or *among* males” (Leach & Humphreys, 2007, p. 53, emphasis in original). In professional international development circles, GVS is now usually referred to as School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV). I use the term ‘Gender violence in schools’ because

‘gender-based violence’ implies that some forms of violence are based in gender norms while others are not, whereas ‘gender violence’ acknowledges that all violence is gendered, as even non-sexual violence such as bullying and corporal punishment are infused with and reproduce traditional expectations of masculinity and femininity (Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2006). Unlike many research on GVS to date, this study extends beyond an analysis of GVS to also examine the positive elements that already exist in schools in relation to gender equality and child protection, underlining practices of GSS as a starting point for the eradication of GVS. It does so by identifying practices that actively react to and resist GVS and instead promote safety, security and equality for students and teachers. Understanding processes that promote GSS is important for understanding context-specific frameworks and the formulation of strategic solutions that build upon existing school systems to enhance their practicality and relevance to the educational policymakers, teachers and administrators who are responsible for implementing them. School safety should not be seen as a static end goal but rather as a process that responds to social norms influencing the school, including gender expectations. A gender safe school is defined by Stein, Tolman, Porche and Spencer (2002) as a place where girls and boys:

...have freedom to learn, explore and develop skills in all academic and extracurricular offerings to be psychologically, socially and physically safe from threats, harassment or harm in all parts of the school... [Acknowledging and challenging] how conventional beliefs about masculinity and femininity constrain and undermine learning, participation and movement (pp. 41-42).

The concept of GSS reaches beyond teacher and student practices of safety or violence to incorporate school culture, which refers to the values and beliefs of the school and the individuals within the school. Both GSS and GVS also relate to the concept of school climate, which is more narrowly related to behaviour and perceptions of behaviour (Hoy, 1990; Houtte,

2005; Macneil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). While this definition is drawn from a Western (American) context, it reflects the principles of a gender-responsive school also espoused in African gender and education practical and analytical frameworks, most notably the Forum for African Women Educationalists' (FAWE) *Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Teacher Handbook* (Mlama et al., 2005). FAWE defines a gender-responsive school as "one in which the academic, social and physical environment and its surrounding community take into account the specific needs of both girls and boys" (Mlama et al., 2005, p. 4). The handbook lists gender-responsive components of a safe school, including the empowerment of teachers and students to challenge oppressive gender norms and implement standards to support and respond to the specific needs of girls and boys in relation to the academic, physical and social environment. I consider the handbook sufficiently reflective of the Stein et al. definition of a gender safe school to demonstrate the alignment of values between the Euro-American and African-produced frameworks, both designed to foster safe, supportive and empowering school environments for girls and boys.

Research Objectives

There are currently several concurrent movements in educational scholarly literature and international development practice: there is a growing recognition of GVS, particularly in Sub-Saharan African, and efforts to eradicate it; there is also a growing devotion to improving learning outcomes. It is important to highlight the potential relationship between the separate movements to eradicate GVS and to enhance student learning outcomes. School culture as it relates to values of protection, equality and inclusion can be treated as supplementary concerns, outside of the core business of literacy and numeracy proficiency as demonstrated by

examination results. This research seeks to identify the impact that gender safety and gender violence have on learning processes to demonstrate that they are in fact core considerations that impact not only student well-being but also student learning. Furthermore, it explores the influence that learning processes can have on the perpetuation of GVS, as the examination drive is so intense that it utilizes corporal punishment and public humiliation of low performers as motivational tools. The emphasis on examination success also prevents a more substantive prioritization of gender equality and school safety by diverting time and human resources that could be spent addressing child protection and equality issues to extended school days with ever more time for revision. Beyond the academic community, this research is geared toward two audiences: 1) the Kenyan government from the Ministry of Education (MoE), Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Department of Children Services (DCS) and 2) international development stakeholders supporting education and child protection from within multilateral and bilateral donors and non-government organizations. This research critically reflects on the postcolonial and neocolonial processes that are perpetuating GVS and identifies opportunities for stakeholders from both groups to contribute to restructuring primary school learning environments through cross-sectoral development programming that provides increased space for GSS to take hold.

The research and writing process for this dissertation has been intensely personal. Feminist research in postcolonial contexts has the potential to challenge power inequalities, but also to reproduce them. The latter is an especially strong risk for Western researchers, who represent a physical and historical embodiment of colonialism and neocolonialism. I have grappled with the privilege that accompanies my social location as a white, upper class,

Canadian, academic woman and the prospect that, despite my good intentions, my efforts to study and support education in the Kenyan postcolonial context risk being patronizing, insulting, threatening, imperialist and re-colonizing. Throughout the research process, I have had many moments of doubt about how to do this work appropriately and questioned whether I should be doing it at all. I have tried not to simply push through these moments of discomfort but to use them to reflect and return to the question: am I doing more harm than good? On the occasions when I thought that there was a risk that this was possible, I shifted my methodology and adapted my approach to reduce possibilities of harm. I tried to always be prepared to walk away from the project if I felt that it was in the best interests of my participants.

I came to my research topic through my professional work in international development. I became engaged in the topic of gender safety and gender violence in primary schools when I was working for a bilateral donor in 2011, providing technical support to Canadian Official Development Assistance to support education in low-income countries. After learning about the emerging research depicting the high prevalence of bullying, sexual violence and corporal punishment in schools and realizing that promoting increased access to education could be bringing children into violent spaces, I started contributing to a business case to address school safety within our education programs. In doing so, I often encountered the call for more research and evidence highlighting the effect of school violence on learning outcomes and decided to analyze this relationship through my doctoral dissertation. Five years later, the evidence base depicting the prominence of GVS, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, has expanded enormously, but there are still many elements that are unknown about the relationship between gender violence and learning. I no longer work for a bilateral donor but now support education programs

through an International Non-Government Organization (INGO), continuing to participate in the field of international development. This dissertation responds primarily to the demand for increased knowledge around the relationship between GVS and student learning processes that originated from myself and like-minded colleagues in international development. It also raises questions about the historical and present influence of colonial and neocolonial individuals, organizations and systems on Kenyan primary school children, drawing attention to historical legacies of harm and current practices that risk perpetuating violent and counterproductive educational practices in Kenya and other aid recipient countries.

An Experience of Powerlessness

My data collection took place over a period of seven months. During this time, I interacted with hundreds of teachers, students, parents and community members in two schools and communities. I was fortunate to encounter a diversity of perspectives and was touched to my core by the generosity, ideas and friendship of so many people. That said, much of my conceptual framework and analysis is rooted in the story of one individual girl and the process through which I struggled to support her and to make sense of her story. Near the end of my data collection, a male teacher in the rural school informed me that there was a Standard 6 girl in the school named Rebecca (not an interview participant),¹ who was being regularly raped by her stepfather. The teacher informed me that Rebecca had reported the same thing to another teacher and that the other teacher had informed the Head Teacher (HT), who instructed him to do nothing. The HT threatened the teacher that, if he discussed the case further, the HT would publicly accuse the teacher who reported it of having raped the girl. I discussed the case many

¹ All research subjects are referred to by pseudonyms, including those who did not participate in interviews.

times with the teacher who informed me; it later unfolded that the stepfather was rumoured to be HIV positive and Rebecca was sexually active with other boys. At this point the teacher raised it with the HT again, who responded by holding a guidance and counseling session for students on the importance of abstinence. The teacher was unwilling to report the incident to the DCS responsible for dealing with these issues for fear of dangerous repercussions, but he continued to feed me information and asked for my advice on how to proceed. I worked with my research assistant, Mary Nyambura Kimani,² and with my supervisors in Ottawa and Nairobi to determine a solution whereby we could report the case so that the girl would be removed from the abusive situation without revealing the identity of the teacher. After months of pursuing the case through various avenues, drawing upon all of the networks Mary and I had available to us, ultimately Rebecca's case was reported to the DCS, the father was arrested and Rebecca was taken to the hospital for a medical exam. Mary learned after the fact that Rebecca reported the same story to the police that she had to the teacher, but the next day the doctors proclaimed her to be a virgin with a mental illness that caused her to make up the story. Both the girl and her father were released and returned home. Mary and I had concerns about the veracity of the medical report and the potential that it had been altered due to corruption. The individuals who had helped take the case to the DCS did not share these concerns and refused to discuss the matter with us further. My data collection had come to a close and I had already returned to Ottawa when the arrest and then release took place.

In my new position as a Consultant and subsequently as an Education Advisor with an INGO, I continued to pursue the case through my new organization and affiliated local Kenyan

² Mary has consented to have her name used in this dissertation.

children's rights organizations. Eventually a local NGO did follow up on the case in May 2016, approximately a year after it had initially been reported to me. They spoke with Rebecca's mother and found out that Rebecca, who would then be approximately fourteen years old, had been married to a man who lived in a different county. Her mother insisted that it was what was best for her daughter and refused to give more information about her whereabouts. I encouraged the organization to continue to follow the case but they said it was too difficult with so little information. My last connection to Rebecca disintegrated. I often think about Rebecca, wondering where she is, how and what she is doing, and what else I could have done to help her. I firmly believe I had to ensure this case was reported to the authorities; this belief was supported and reinforced by the many local and international child protection advisors I consulted. Still, the possibility that more harm may have come to her if the system did indeed fall through and inappropriately release her and her stepfather haunts me. It also serves to motivate me. While I am out of options as to how to help Rebecca, I am driven by her story to draw attention to an education system where an administrator can pick and choose the child protection cases that he wants to pursue, where teachers might care and want to protect a child from abuse but are powerless to do so despite policies that require them to, and a corrupt system of protection that empowers men over the women and girls they abuse. All of the students, teachers, government personnel and community members whom I interacted with throughout my seven months in Kirinyaga have stories that are woven through the results, narrative and discussion of this dissertation. But Rebecca's story has had by far the most profound impact on the conceptual framework and resulting analysis. Even though I never directly interacted with Rebecca on an individual level, her situation and the helplessness that I faced alongside a collection of

influential people trying to support her illustrates the position of a Kenyan girl where factors at multiple layers compound to condemn her to a childhood of continuous violence, and school, community and government systems that first neglect and then abandon her.

Organization of the Dissertation

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 explains my conceptual framework, drawing from postcolonial and feminist analysis to apply Foucault's analyses of power (1975; 1980) and Noddings' (1984) caring pedagogy concept within the context of gender safety and violence in Kenyan primary schools. Chapter 3 delves into the existing literature on themes related GSS, including school culture and gender regimes, and connects teacher efforts to enhance GSS with Noddings' concept of caring pedagogy. I summarize different forms of violence in schools and their gendered nature and impact, reviewing the literature on corporal punishment, sexual violence and harassment and peer victimization in Kenya and other Sub-Saharan African countries. I then turn to a review of literature on school factors influencing student learning, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and high stakes testing environments. In Chapter 4, I describe the Kenyan education system, focusing specifically on the policy context related to gender safety and violence in Kenyan primary schools and the colonial and neocolonial influences that shape the Kenyan primary school system. Chapter 5 explains the study's research design and methodology, which entailed participant observation, art-based open-ended individual student interviews and semi-structured individual teacher interviews, including member check interviews. The chapter also describes my use of situated ethics (Simon & Usher, 2000) to guide ethical decision-making and constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; 2014) as the analytical framework.

Chapters 6 and 7 are the main results chapters, providing the results of data collection related to gender safety and GVS and their relationships with teaching and learning processes. Chapter 6 presents my findings on GSS where the over-arching theme of ‘caring about safety and equality’ is sub-categorized into themes ‘expecting equality,’ ‘staying close’ and ‘being here for the children.’ Teachers describe the main efforts they undertake to protect their students in two ways: staying close to children to provide a barrier against violence simply by their presence and acting in a capacity beyond their immediate responsibilities of teaching the curriculum to protect students from a variety of threats including poverty, illness and abuse. Together these elements contribute to one of the central themes of the thesis: teacher agency to enhance GSSs. Alongside these positive efforts, the chapter also highlights the barriers teachers and students encounter, and the structural factors that prevent their efforts from creating truly safe or equal schools. One such example of the ways that structural and systemic gender barriers complicate teachers’ efforts to enhance GSS is through their negotiation and expression of equal gender expectations for their male and female students. They do so primarily by denying the difference between them, an approach that is a positive step to reduce discriminatory treatment toward girls but also limits the ability of teachers to respond to the differentiated needs of male and female students.

Chapter 7 presents the findings on GVS where the dominant theme of ‘showing strength’ is broken down by category, showing the inter-related factors driving experiences of corporal punishment, sexual violence and harassment, and bullying and peer victimization. These physical, sexual and psychological incidences of violence are supported by systemic and symbolic acts of ‘showing strength’ on the part of teachers, students, administrators and more

broadly by the education system. These behaviours largely overpower teachers' efforts to enhance gender safety by prioritizing and validating discipline, hierarchy and examination performance in a context of pervasive and normalized patriarchy. Sub-categorized into themes dealing with each of the three main types of GVS, this chapter shows how each type of school violence is distinctly gendered and how it is either propagated and/or efforts to reduce it are undermined by other educational priorities.

In Chapter 8, I analyze the findings of my fieldwork using Foucauldian concepts of power, truth regimes, discourse and resistance. The analysis indicates that the efforts to enhance GSS driven by individual teacher agency and behaviour are valued by students and strongly reflect Noddings' concepts of caring pedagogy and an ethics of care. Despite these efforts, the structures of power inside and outside the education system that prioritize hierarchy, competition and order and reinforce patriarchal social norms perpetuate GVS and undermine teacher efforts to enhance gender safety. These forces constitute what Galtung (1969) refers to as structural violence. The elements that are prioritized and valued by the education system contribute to a regime of truth that enables the continued operation of existing power structures, protect traditional and oppressive forms of masculinity and prevent meaningful gender transformation and child protection in and through schools.

Chapter 9 concludes my dissertation by underscoring the implications of the findings for the Kenyan MoE and DCS and international development actors supporting education and child protection systems in Kenya and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. The past five years have seen a dramatic rise in the efforts of international actors to eradicate GVS, particularly in projects by INGOs (Brookings Institute, 2016). These efforts have concentrated on initiatives including the

development of national level policies, strengthening of reporting structures and extracurricular activities and in-service teacher training to strengthen students and teachers' understanding of gender equality and children's rights. They have not substantially incorporated in these efforts consideration of the teaching and learning processes such as the examination orientation and teach-to-the-test approach that is rooted in the British colonial education system and orients so many formerly colonized countries around the world, including Kenya. They also often omit consideration of the systemic issues of hierarchy and culture that obstruct child-centered communication, teacher agency in reporting, and discussions of sexual consent, power and equality. This dissertation analyzes the examination orientation and school culture centered on discipline and order that characterizes the school climate in the two case study schools and emphasizes the necessity of considering the broader school culture, including the examination orientation, in efforts to understand or shift practices of gender safety and gender violence in schools.

Chapter 2: Power Structures and Caring Pedagogy in a Postcolonial Context³

All research processes are infused with power. This research applies a Foucauldian understanding of power as exercised and productive, dispersed through social interactions, operating at the micro level, and best analyzed by examining strategies, tactics and procedures (Elaber-Idemedia, 2002; Foucault, 1980). Strategies, tactics and procedures that characterize power dynamics in research include participant selection, privacy, disclosure, interviews, observation, analysis, and the (re)presentation of research participants and their communities. Researchers require permission from participants and various organizations, but the researcher is the primary decision-maker and thereby the dominant figure in the research process.⁴ Power discrepancies exist in all research, and acutely so for research with vulnerable populations. Due to the legacy of colonialism and ongoing neocolonial relations that characterize postcolonial locations, all research subjects living in postcolonial contexts are considered vulnerable, although to varying degrees (Shamim & Quereshi, 2013). Patriarchal structures combined with colonial/neocolonial systems make postcolonial women and girls particularly disempowered (Spivak, 1988).

The conceptual framework that shapes my analysis is characterized by a reflexive approach that involves analysis of my perspective, bias and influence on the research process and analysis and draws themes from data collection, as opposed to imposing a predetermined theory onto the data. Recognizing the serious ethical implications of this research, I have tried to

³ Parts of the conceptual framework and methodology chapters have appeared in an article published in the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*.

⁴ Participatory mechanisms provide the possibility of sharing research decision-making more equally with research participants so that the researcher is not the primary decision-maker. This approach requires group reflection and discussion that was not possible here due to the inability of guaranteeing confidentiality when discussing child protection issues among groups of participants.

continuously reflect on my methodological and analytical decision-making and question the extent to which my decisions recognize and reflect my own privileged position. Nyamnjoh writes, “[Within] an epistemology that claims the status of a solution, there is little room for introspection or self-scrutiny” (2012, p.131). There is no neutral or apolitical research (Lather, 1991; Mohanty, 1988). My opinions, values, beliefs and social background accompany me through the research process, shaping each methodological and analytical decision that I make. Always political, positionality and identity are especially so for Western researchers in postcolonial contexts. For this paper, the term ‘postcolonial’ refers to a previously colonized space that is now technically independent. It can describe a nation-state or an area, group of people, texts or ideas within a nation-state that may or may not be postcolonial itself. These spaces are officially independent but are usually characterized by a new imperialism (Harvey, 2003; Tikly, 2004) shaped by the economic, political, military and cultural hegemony of the West within the context of globalization (Tikly & Bond, 2013). Therefore, the Western researcher represents not only a colonial past but also a neocolonial present. I am a Canadian feminist and children’s rights advocate. I believe that quality education can provide a positive space to enhance individual and social outcomes and opportunities, but I have sought to question these assumptions and undertake participatory and emancipatory research to understand, from the perspective of students and teachers, what their vision of quality education is and how gender equality and child protection fit within this framework. Although my social position is a detriment to this research in some ways, I can use my position to leverage less powerful voices to speak back to the powerful about their understanding of what education in the postcolonial is and should be. This work responds to what was described by Said (1985) as a need for greater cross-

disciplinary activity characterized by an awareness of the political, methodological, social and historical situation in which intellectual work is undertaken, a commitment to dismantling systems of domination and a heightened sense of the intellectual's role in both defining a given context and in changing it.

My analytical framework draws from a postcolonial and neocolonial lens to examine the role of colonial and neocolonial structures in contributing to gender safety and gender violence in schools, including influences within the international development arena where I have worked for most of my professional career. In doing so, I consider the ways that foreign aid influence is exercised and its potential adverse effects on the 'beneficiaries' of international development programming in aid recipient countries such as Kenya. The main goal is to offer new critical perspectives on the factors which are contributing to GVS and subverting both Kenyan and international stakeholders' efforts to eradicate it. In offering these suggestions, I try to continuously probe my own positionality and contributions to the perpetuation of neocolonial systems of dependence and consider alternative practices through which international actors can promote GSS while strengthening local education systems to respond to the issue themselves.

The conceptual framework (see Figure 1) for this dissertation emerged from the results of my research and analysis. The theoretical approach proposed at the outset shifted during and following data collection, based on the use of the constructivist grounded theory practice of continuous memoing and coding throughout data collection to identify a theory rooted in participants' voices and the researcher's subjective analysis. The resulting conceptual framework examines the layers of influence that shape the school space: 1) the historical legacy and ongoing influence of colonial and neocolonial powers; 2) power regimes and structures that shape norms

and practices of gender and violence as well as the education system itself; 3) the school culture, environment and organization; 4) individual teacher agency to enhance GSS and resist norms that contribute to gender violence; and 5) the daily personal and interpersonal experiences and gradual social, psychological and scholastic development of the student. Each outer layer has a significant impact on the layers within. In some cases, the inner layers influence those surrounding them, but in general the direction of power and influence moves from the outside in. These relations of influence are analyzed using Foucauldian analyses of power and a feminist examination of patriarchal systems. The following explains each of these layers and their relevance for the concepts of gender safety and gender violence in schools. The concept of the layered influences shaping the school environment and the teacher and student experience reflects multi-layered analytical models of GVS developed by Parkes (2015) and Parkes et al. (2013), but is adapted to focus on the themes and theories that emerged from the two case study schools and analyzed through my own subjective lens.

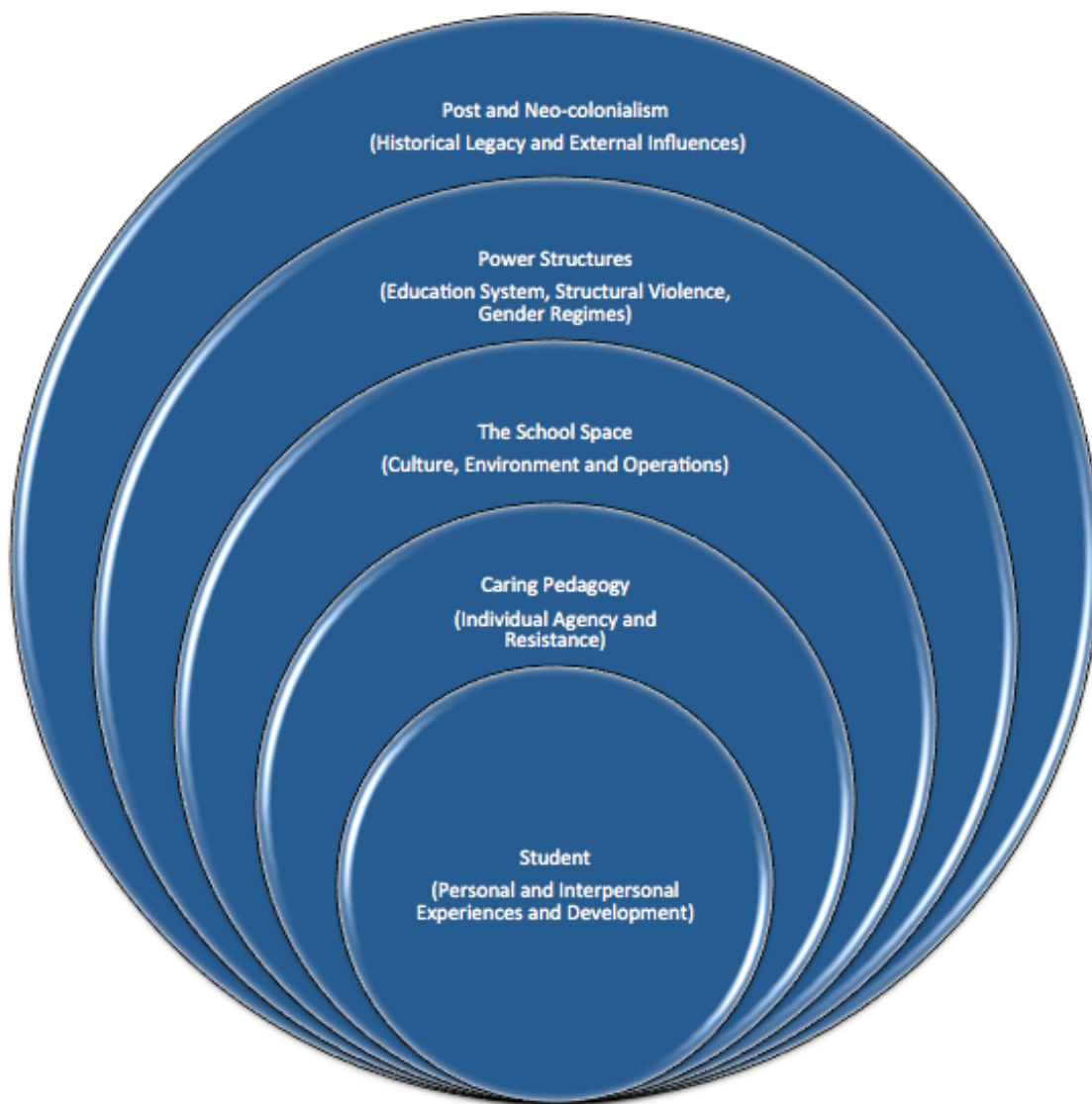


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework. This visual illustrates the multiple layers of influence on gender safety, gender violence and learning processes.

Postcolonial Feminism

Feminism is a form of advocacy and analysis that puts the social construction of gender at the center of inquiry and appeals “to the power of agency and subjectivity as necessary components of socially transformative struggle” (Lather, 1991, p. 28). A feminist theory positions gender analysis as the basis for critique of social and political relations and systems and

seeks to shift structures to become more equitable (Marshall & Young, 2006). A gender analysis in education examines how constructions of masculinity and femininity are reproduced, maintained and challenged in educational spaces and how the behaviour and experiences of girls, boys, men and women are influenced by expectations created out of these constructions (Paechter, 2006). The gendered experiences of students and teachers are situated within the social space of the school or classroom, where norms and behaviours can be regulated and normalized, or challenged, resisted and transformed (Renold, 2006). Feminist research's emancipatory objective seeks to challenge and ultimately change power structures to become more equitable, in part by illuminating the voices and experiences of the less powerful and enabling the expression of 'subjugated knowledge' using ethical research that does not cause harm to those being researched (Collins, 2000; McCormick, 2012). Emancipation and empowerment should characterize both feminist analysis and the research process itself, occurring through obvious or subtle shifts in opposition to oppressive social structures or through a process of individual and collective self-reflection, the deepening of social knowledge and the development of critical problem-solving skills and resources (Reid, 2004).

While feminism is often associated with the Global North, some scholars root feminism in historical African traditions of resistance to oppressive gender relations (e.g. Matela 1993; Mahlses, 1994, as cited in Mannathoko, 1999). Mannothoko (1999) asserts that feminism in the modern sense emerged out of the intersection of indigenous cultures and colonialism and imperialism, rather than having been located or informed primarily in either Western or non-Western cultures. She writes that, "feminism has its roots in the [Eastern and Southern African] region and [she] dismisses arguments which consider feminism as alien" to Africa (p. 457). She

refers to educational research studies that illustrate the women's oppression in Southern African states as continuous, although changing in forms, and having existed in pre-colonial African society, in the colonial state and in the neo-colonial nature and patriarchal ideologies of current Southern African nations. African feminisms are often distinguished from Western feminism by their focus on community, the power of collective organization among women and common humanity shared by women and men (Mikell, 1995; Ngunjiri, 2010). One way this is expressed is through the concept of *ubuntu*, which encapsulates the values of solidarity, mutuality, generosity and community wellbeing, adding the collective identity to the individual identity (Ngunjiri, 2010). This philosophy is reflected in the work of Kenyan feminist and environmental activist Wangari Maathai, who conceptualized empowerment as situated at both the individual and community level and promoted it community solidarity and engagement to lead to collective mobilization. She further emphasized the importance of self-knowledge, or *kwimenya* in Kikuyu, and used critical pedagogical processes to highlight the importance and effectiveness of traditional ecological knowledge to challenge the status quo (Presbey, 2013). Maathai advocated for and used civic education based in a rediscovery of traditional cultures to encourage critical self-awareness and communal identity that enabled individual activism and resistance. *Kwimenyi* is linked to Freire's concept of conscientization, which asserts that when people have an in-depth understanding of their situation they will be empowered to take action, but is further anchored in an understanding of a people's cultural roots as well as their current situation (Presbey, 2013; Mungai, 2012). Many African feminisms also emphasize the centrality of motherhood in households and communities as a source of agency, power and solidarity for women (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Mungai, 2012), as opposed to Western feminism which can be critical of an

association of women with motherhood as an essentialist view of women's experience and identity (Diquinzio, 1993; Snitow, 1992).

While recognizing that feminisms in the plural emerge from many different cultural and geographic contexts, feminism has historically been the banner under which many white women researchers have recolonized research participants in postcolonial contexts by portraying them as a singular oppressed group, ignoring their agency and heterogeneity as well as the effects of racism, colonialism and imperialism in formulating oppressive gender and racial norms (Jhappan, 1996; Mohanty, 1988). In reshaping feminist qualitative research to respond to these critiques and address the intersectionality between race, gender, class and sexuality and other forms of oppression in international and local contexts, a dominant question is *whose* knowledge is being privileged in the research in a specific context, how is it obtained and for what purposes (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Creese & Stasiulis, 1996; Olesen, 2005). These critiques of white Western women's research and analysis influenced my methodological and analytical decisions prior to the research, leading me to design an analytical process that I hoped would enable a theoretical framework to emerge from the research instead of trying to get the research results to fit within a pre-determined framework. I sought to develop a methodology that privileges the perspectives of female and male teachers and students as much as possible, while still acknowledging the subjectivity of my privilege and its inevitable influence on the research process and analysis.

The postcolonial lens that informs my analysis draws from scholars including Mohanty (1988, 2003), Rizvi (2007) and Tikly and Bond (2013) to problematize the ways that power and language address the nature of cultural identity, gender, race, social class, ethnicity and

nationality in the Kenyan postcolonial school context. Gender issues in sub-Saharan Africa should be analyzed through a combination of historical and contemporary lenses, indicating that the present cannot be separated from the past, nor the local from the global (Mama, 1997). It is necessary to problematize and interrogate the role of the colonial and neo-colonial in shaping the present research context, including the research process itself as well as the content of the analysis (Smith, 2012). Jankie (2004) writes that decolonizing research need not necessarily reject Western approaches but must deconstruct “Western research traditions and essentialist perspectives through collaboration... [that] makes problematic the relations between knowledge and power, researchers and researched, in postcolonial contexts” (pp. 150-151). To deconstruct the power embedded in traditional approaches to feminist research, I strive to recognize the local forms of knowledge through a process of inter-cultural collaboration that brings Kenyan perspectives and arguments from a plurality of African feminisms (for example (Akin-Aina, 2011; Nnaemeka, 2004; Salo, 2001). I acknowledge, however, that bicultural research collaboration is an inherently political undertaking (Teariki & Spoonley, 1992 as cited in Smith 2012), and that these efforts do not remove me from my position as a Western researcher and the central decision-maker on the project. The postcolonial lens draws attention to the power dynamics inherent in all exchanges and to the cultural bias that influences my analysis. This perspective encourages me to dissect my own positionality, influence and perspective but also to deconstruct structures that privilege Western knowledge systems, including the Kenyan school system itself. Mohanty (2003) espouses a ‘feminist solidarity’ or ‘comparative feminist studies’ model of international feminism based on foregrounding the links and relationships between the global and the local. My analysis includes the extent to which the historical legacy of colonialism

shapes the current context of gender safety and gender violence in schools and the extent to which current power regimes and structures characterized by neocolonial relationships and dependency influence the school and systems level. Cannella and Manulito propose an ‘anticolonialist’ social science that “recognize[s] the intersection of new oppressive forms of power created even within attempts to decolonize” (2008, p. 47). For my research, this provokes questions about the historical legacy of colonialism on the education system in which gender violence and gender safety in schools is situated, as well as questions about the ongoing neocolonial influences that shape Kenya’s educational priorities based on its relationship with external donors. Analysis of the observations of daily school life and the narratives reported by teachers and students at the local level of the school are situated within the global context of colonial and neocolonial influence through British imperialism and post-independence modern-day international development financing mechanisms.

Power Regimes

The school is an institution which channels power through disciplinary regimes. Obedience and respect for regulations are highly privileged and through these regulations order and a hierarchy of power is maintained. Power, according to Foucault, is not tangible and cannot be possessed, but nonetheless it infuses behaviours and processes that govern any social institution including the school. “[P]ower is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised and ... only exists in action” (Foucault, 1980, p. 89). While power is not something that anybody ‘has’ it nonetheless governs different behaviours and responses, infusing the system by which individuals’ behaviours are influenced and manipulated. “The individual is an effect of power and at the same time... it is the element of its articulation” (Foucault, 1980, p.

98). In the school, a hierarchy or ranking system governs the daily practices of the school and discipline is the function by which this hierarchy is established and maintained. Foucault writes that the educational space functions “like a learning machine, but also a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding... the classroom would form a single great table, with many different entries, under the scrupulously ‘classifactory’ eye of the master...” (1975, p. 147). Foucault’s explanatory framework explicitly problematizes the school environment and the hierarchical structure and expectations of discipline that entrench the authority to rank students against each other. The power to assign value to children based on their ability to produce the desired results becomes privileged, prioritized and accepted through the school’s daily operations and administration.

The centre of Foucault’s analysis are power structures that control the practices of individuals through the twin conditions of discipline and normalisation constituted by a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980). Foucault writes,

Each society has its regime of truth... the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (p. 131).

Discourses are infused with different statuses; those that are accepted as true become more powerful than those that are considered subversive, marginalized or problematic. But the relative status of discourses is always in flux, competing for dominance and acceptance as truth (Heller, 1996). Foucault identifies numerous techniques of ‘disciplinary power,’ many of which are enacted in schools, that collectively create a form of control, manipulating people to act in line with the values and authorities established by the regime of truth in a given society that is

composed of multiple dominant discourses (Hoskin, 1979). These new techniques were primarily established in Europe during the era of colonial expansion and many of them, including those infused in European education systems, were then exported to European colonies around the world (Morrow & Singh, 2015). The examination controls students by standardizing narrow expectations for academic success, regulating educational opportunities determined by examination performance and providing a mechanism to easily categorize students and establish a hierarchy of superiority and inferiority among them. Foucault writes that the examination is a mechanism that “combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment... a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish” (1975, p. 184). As examination performance usually corresponds to socioeconomic status (Popham, 1999), the hierarchical categories established through the examination system reflect and reproduces the hierarchy established by economic structures of poverty and wealth. It is a measure to understand learning, but when it operates as the sole system of measurement, it can prohibit the demonstration and assessment of knowledge, capability and progress in other forms. The use of the examination as the exclusive evaluation of student learning reinforces the power of knowledge that can be measured through the written examination and diminishes the value and power of knowledge in other forms, including many indigenous knowledge systems such as Kikuyu oral traditions. The numerical score serves to classify students according to their ability, a process that is considered to motivate students to try to study and succeed to defeat each other, distorting the primary stated objective of education: to learn. Foucault observes that the school is “...a sort of apparatus of uninterrupted examination that duplicated along its entire length the operation of teaching. It became less and less a question of jousts in which pupils pitch their

forces against one another and increasingly a perpetual comparison of each and all that made it possible to measure and to judge” (1975, p. 186). Examinations, particularly high stakes ones where the marks are made public and determine entrance into the next level of education, foster a form of extrinsic motivation in which teachers and students assess individual worth in comparison to other students. Examinations are identified as a technique of the larger disciplinary power that controls individuals by determining what is valued, who has authority and the type of behaviour that is expected and rewarded.

Foucault observes that discipline characterizes individuals to strive to achieve the goals that the structure espouses as desirable while simultaneously decreasing their ability and motivation to oppose that structure. “Discipline increases the force of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in terms of political obedience)” (1995, p. 138 as cited in Pitsoe & Letseka 2014). Individual agency in the face of disciplinary power becomes minimized as desirable behaviour in line with established structures and expectations is rewarded and undesirable behaviour that counters these expectations is punished. Individuals are primarily manipulated not through direct domination but rather through the discourses of truth that permeate our society, influencing our behaviour in relation to what is the ‘right’ and valued behaviour, values and norms (Foucault, 1980). Schools and other social institutions then train individuals, including teachers and students, to behave in the ways that are valued and promoted by the regime of truth that dictates societal norms and values. Students and teachers become what Foucault refers to as ‘docile bodies’ that are “a relation of strict subjection” (1975, p. 138). These docile bodies are trained and conditioned to become productive and efficient through the exercise of power relations: “...they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out

tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination” (p.136).

Individuals’ internalization of expectations through a system of rewards and punishment causes the self-regulation of behaviour in line with the desired behaviour of the institution.

One of the means by which docile bodies are controlled, according to Foucault, is through the repression of sexuality. He writes that the discourse on sexuality changed dramatically in the Victorian era, where sexuality became prohibited and forbidden, limited to the conjugal family and to reproduction purposes (Foucault, 1978). Sexuality discourse at this time, Foucault explains, was particularly strong in relation to children’s sexuality, where educational institutions and other forms of authority became involved in shifting discourse to talk about the new regulations of control around children’s sexuality, together creating an “intensification of the interventions of power that led to a multiplication of discourses” (p. 30). While Foucault focuses on the European context, discourses on sexuality were exported as a means of controlling bodies and minds in European colonies. Simultaneously, European sexuality discourses that reflected the notion of self-mastery as civilized drew upon the concept of the ‘racially erotic counterpart,’ using colonial subjects as a point of contrast to construct the identity and whiteness and European superiority (Stoler, 1995). Said’s (1979/2004) concept of ‘Orientalism’ describes how the West’s description of the racialized ‘Other’ uses constructs of positional superiority to establish a hegemonic relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The positional superiority – in this case through the construction of European sexuality as controlled and African sexuality as promiscuous – is a discourse that is “produced

and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power” (Said, 1979/2004, p.12) that through its transmission becomes a “cultural and political fact” (Ibid, p.13). The moralistic and controlling views of sexuality reinforced constructs of European superiority, with profound and long-term effects on sexuality in the colonized populations, including the criminalization of sexual experimentation, same sex desire and other expressions of sexuality (Bhana, Morrell, Hearn & Moletsane, 2007). The repression of sexuality through Christian discourse became reproduced through the education system and curriculum originally established by missionaries and then formalized by the colonial government in colonial Kenya (Albergh, 1994). It continues to be apparent in Kenyan schools and curriculum today through abstinence-only curriculum, Christian religious education and the lack of teacher training and comfort in teaching about sexuality (Njue, Nzokia, Ahlberg, & Voeten, 2009).

Discourses of sexuality and discipline interact closely with gender norms and expectations. Within the structure of the school, it is important to examine the discourse around expected behaviour for girls and boys and the ways in which different self-expressions, behaviours and performances are validated and measured through punishments and rewards. Norms and values that may be privileged within a school with prominent gender violence discourses includes differentiated behaviour toward boys and girls, acceptance of sexual touching and harassment as natural or inconsequential, the expectation that teachers are entitled to use corporal punishment in the name of enhancing discipline and academic motivation, and an unwillingness to acknowledge and challenge unequal gender expectations. Butler applies Foucault’s idea that juridical systems of power produce the subjects they then come to represent to analyze the construction of the gender expectations associated with femininity and masculinity

that get applied to women and girls and men and boys. She writes, “when the relevant ‘culture’ that ‘constructs’ gender is understood in terms of a law or set of laws, then it seems that gender is as determined and fixed as it was under the biology-as-destiny formulation. In such a case, not biology, but culture, becomes destiny” (1990, p. 8). Disciplinary power similarly dictates the level of agency encouraged and expressed by teachers and students. The extent to which student and teachers are permitted to question, challenge and critique expected behaviours and values established by the education administration, the school system and even their peers indicates the strength of disciplinary power within the school culture.

Foucault has been criticized for providing insufficient space in his analysis for resistance to power (Jones & Ball, 1995), but he clearly identifies that in order to challenge and change power structures, individuals and organizations must seek to challenge the regime of truth by advancing counter discourses. “It’s not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power... but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time” (Foucault, 1980, p. 133). Although power is not something that is possessed but rather something that is exercised, different groups and individuals are situated in positions where power is more readily accessible to them. Heller points out that because power is infused in relations, “no group, no matter how socially, politically or economically hegemonic, can ever control all of the mechanisms of power that constitute a social formation’s power-diagram... No group, therefore, is ever completely powerless” (1996, p.100). Resistance is the exercise of counter-hegemonic power by an individual or group in a position of lesser power against a dominant group. Because a single group can never control all the power, “as soon as there is a power relation, there is the

possibility of resistance” (Foucault, 1989, p. 139). Resistance of violent and discriminatory gender norms could be expressed through the promotion of discourses of equality and the importance of child protection, particularly when this is contradictory to the desires of the discourse prioritized by the school on a daily basis. Open conversations with students about consent require acknowledgement of children’s sexuality, thus could constitute resistance as it goes against the expectations of children’s asexuality. Foucault points to discussions of sexuality as a fertile ground for resistance through the creation of reactive discourses: “...we are conscious of defying established power, our tone of voice shows that we know we are being subversive and we ardently conjure away the present and appeal to the future whose day will be hastened by the contributions we believe we are making.” (Foucault, 1978, p. 6). Resistance to established discourses is portrayed as intentional and purposeful, with the knowledge that acts of conversation pave the way for a shifting of power and control. This research also considers space for resistance that is not always conceived of as a political struggle. Resistance can manifest itself as action based on an individual belief in morality and the provision of assistance to marginalized individuals, in this case students facing abuse or discrimination. Care can become an act of resistance when it diverts energy from an individual’s central responsibilities, as by doing so, even on a small scale, it can challenge the power discourse and gender regimes that determine social and institutional systems.

Caring Pedagogy

Positioning schools as ‘nodes of support’ enhancing child protection for students (Skovdal & Campbell, 2015) reflects the concept of Nodding’s (1984) ethics of care, where teachers’ pedagogy is characterized by reciprocal caring between students and teachers.

According to Noddings, the caring school still “trains the intelligence” (1984, p.172) but does not do so at the expense of morality and well-being. Noddings identifies the main components of a caring pedagogy that focus on the maintenance of a caring relationship between the *carer* (teacher) and the *cared-for* (student): attention with the objective of understanding what the cared-for is experiencing, listening to the ideas of students and prioritizing the expressed needs of the students above the assumed needs, and thinking in a way that strives for empathetic accuracy and exercises professional and moral judgment to respond to students’ expressed needs (Noddings, 2012). This sometimes requires that teachers temporarily set aside the assumed (curricular) needs of the institution, Noddings explains, but the resulting strength of the teacher-pupil relationship will in the long run benefit students’ emotional *and* intellectual development and learning. Noddings (2015) argues that the aim of education should be the creation of ‘better adults’ through the rejection of the concept that intellectual knowledge can be defined by specific content alone and instead that curiosity, morality and creativity are required for the creation of a greater civilization. In Noddings’ description of caring pedagogy, “The primary aim of every educational institution and of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring... It functions as end, means, and criterion for judging suggested means. It establishes the climate, a first approximation to the range of acceptable practices and a lens through which all practices and possible practices are established” (1984, pp. 172-173). It is based on ethical relationships of trust between teachers and students, involving listening, dialogue, critical thinking, reflection and connections between the teaching process and life outside of school (Noddings, 2012). Intellectual knowledge by this definition cannot be achieved by standardization and testing without support for teacher and student creativity and relationships

(Noddings, 2013). Bhana writes that, “caring teachers are personally involved, listen, reflect, act and respond to children’s suffering with concern and compassion” (2015, p. 264). Caring pedagogy encompasses the capacity to ensure that children are protected and supported, especially within the school environment.

Globally, teaching and caring work is often intertwined even when no formal recognition of support for teachers’ care work is provided, but it is less effective when unsupported (Noddings, 1984). While the importance of the ‘caring teacher’ is widely acknowledged, it is rarely emphasized or prioritized from a policy perspective (Webb, 1995). The ability of teachers to care and advocate on behalf of their students is situated within the individual school climate and culture, as well as a broader cultural context of expectations for gender, education, child protection and the social positions and responsibilities of teachers and students (Bhana, 2015). The practice and potential of caring pedagogy should be analyzed within the wider context of competing discourses, narratives and power structures, considering the status of caring within the educational curriculum and social system at large. Noddings does not position caring pedagogy as an inherently feminine practice or one especially suited to female teachers or girl students, but rather as a process responding to a universal concern for schools and teachers to support students through acts of caring that engage and protect their body, mind and spirit (Thompson, 2003). Despite this call for universality, acts of caring in terms of listening, supporting and protecting students may be an undervalued element of teacher pedagogy precisely because they are associated with femininity, maternity and un-remunerated forms of domestic labour (Chisamya, DeJaeghere, Kendall, & Marufa, 2012). For example, Bhana’s (2015) study of female primary school teachers’ role in addressing gender violence in South African primary schools illustrates

that caring practices among teachers reflected dominant norms of masculinity and femininity. Provider masculinity is emphasized for fathers and a more nurturing or mothering role is normalized and naturalized for mothers and female teachers. This shows how gender norms and expectations are interwoven throughout the power systems that govern educational practice. Expectations of teaching practice and care are differentiated for female and male teachers as parenting expectations are differentiated for mothers and fathers. Traditionally masculine concepts such as competition, discipline and authority, form a more powerful and influential discourse in the education system - one that reifies educational practices that are simultaneously shaped by and reinforcing broader patriarchal power structures.

Conclusion

The multiple layers of analysis outlined above draw from a combination of theoretical perspective to provide an explanatory framework based on the emergent data from the case study schools. The theoretical framework was developed after data collection and initial analysis so as to best align with the student and teacher narratives and the emergent themes, and to avoid trying to get the data to fit within a pre-determined conceptual framework. It seeks to highlight the connections between multiple layers of influence, moving from broad global and historical factors to power structures and governing processes to school-level systems and individual relationships. The objective of the conceptual framework is to enable an effective examination of the ways in which the factors at each level inter-relate with each other, contributing to practices of gender safety and gender violence in school and influencing learning processes at the innermost level of the student.

Chapter 3: Gender, Safety, Violence and Learning: Intersecting Norms, Behaviours and Effects

In the late 20th century, international development discourse on education centered on getting children into school, with the assumption that access would enhance students' learning outcomes in a safe, equal and empowering way. This belief was captured in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which had a singular education goal: universal primary education. While this access-oriented discourse is still sometimes articulated, it is countered by overwhelming evidence demonstrating that school spaces can contain and reproduce inequality, discrimination and violence as much as any other space. This chapter provides an overview of the foundational literature on GVS that has emerged over the past fifteen years and introduces the idea of analyzing school climate and culture from a gender safety lens. GSS is not a widely used concept but is useful for reformulating the lens by which child protection in schools is used so as to take a more positive approach that goes beyond highlighting negative experiences of violence and identifies positive elements of the school climate that are empowering for teachers and students. These positive and empowering factors align with Nodding's concept of caring pedagogy, as this positions schools and teachers as caring for students in mutually reciprocal relationships based on respect. The extensive literature that has recently emerged on GVS highlights several main forms of violence and illustrates how forms of violence that may not immediately appear to be gendered are still rooted in gender norms and behavioural expectations. The literature review surveys evidence showing that GVS leads to increased dropout, decreased retention and lower academic performance and casts this evidence in light of motivational theories that consider what promotes and harms effective learning processes.

School Safety: Climate and Culture

Cornell and Mayer (2010) note that there has been a dramatic proliferation in the research devoted to school violence in the past three decades but call for research to focus on necessary elements of school *safety* rather than simply reiterating and confirming the prevalence of violence in different schools, communities and countries. Most of the existing research and literature that does exist on school safety emerges from the United States. A safe school climate is the ever-evolving product of a series of interactions and decisions taken by school stakeholders including administration, teachers and students (Noonan, 2004). School safety is multi-faceted, described by Merrow (2004) as composing three kinds of safety: physical, emotional and intellectual. While many schools focus on physical safety at the exclusion of emotional and intellectual safety, the three kinds of safety are interlinked and all are necessary to provide a supportive learning environment.

In its multi-faceted dimensions, school safety can be examined from many angles, considering how it is influenced by social norms that characterize the broader community and incorporating the linked concepts of school culture and school climate. School climate and school culture have been described as overlapping terms and both are considered useful to describe the character of a school (Houtte, 2005; Miner, 1995). School climate has a narrower focus on patterns and perceptions of behaviour, and can be a way of viewing the school from a more psychological perspective, including considerations of factors that motivate and engage students and teachers. School climate is a set of characteristics or attributes that describe a particular organization including its individual members' needs and the organizational pressure they experience, although different definitions position climate as influencing the behaviour of

the members of the organization, being induced from the way that the organization deals with its members, or as a personal characteristic of its members (Houtte, 2005). Thus, it is debatable whether climate produces its members' behaviour, is produced by that behaviour, or both as part of a cyclical and mutually reinforcing process. By contrast, school culture is defined as the social context of schooling, understood as reflecting the wider culture of a society and resulting from multiple interpretations, negotiations and interactions by active agents (Lui, 2006). It comprises the values, beliefs, understandings and systems of meanings of a school, which are shared by members to varying degrees (Houtte, 2005). School culture can be a way of viewing a school from a more anthropological perspective (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991), and school climate has been considered a manifestation of school culture (Schein, 1985; 1996). Hoy and Feldman (1999) consider school climate to be the most useful concept for measuring the organizational health of a school as it is more descriptive, less symbolic term and thus easier to measure. Some qualitative studies of gender equality in education, however, use the concept of school culture more prominently (Pomerantz & Raby, 2011; Stromquist, 2007), possibly because these studies tend to be more focused on understanding gender equality in education holistically rather than measuring it.

Positive school climate and school culture that concentrate on building students' internal motivation to learn – which will be addressed more directly later in this chapter - and supporting their overall well-being are linked to increased academic achievement (Macneil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). Specific criteria of what constitutes school climate are debated, but researchers agree there are four major areas that shape school climate: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the external environment (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009). The

elements of GSS contained in Stein et al.'s definition fit with each of these categories, showing that GSS is an issue that spans all areas of school climate. Across studies, one of the key factors in fostering student motivation is the establishment of supportive relationships and the sense that teachers care about their students as individuals (Brophy, 2001; McCaslin & Hickey, 2001; Wentzel, 1997; 2002). Substantive evidence demonstrates that positive school climates enhance students' academic motivation and achievement, including on standardized tests and particularly among marginalized students (Milner & Khoza, 2009; Macneil, Prater, & Busch, 2009; Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997). In a study of over 50 countries' 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) results in Grade 8 mathematics, Scherer & Nilsen (2016) observe that the quality of school climate and teacher-student relationships directly influences students' extrinsic motivation factors in terms of self-belief and future orientation, which in turn enhances their academic performance. Prioritizing supportive environments is thus critical not only for students' safety and equality but also for their learning and academic results.

Gender Safety in Schools: Caring Ideals & Obstacles

As Dunne, Humphreys and Leach (2006) conceptualize all school violence as gendered either implicitly or explicitly, ideas of school safety should also be gendered in order to ensure a physically, emotionally and intellectually safe school for all girls and boys. In order to achieve school safety from a gender perspective, it is necessary to first understand what the objective – a gender safe school – is composed of. The elements of a gender safe school, according to Stein et al. (2002), consist of: a) freedom to learn, explore and develop skills in all academic and extracurricular offerings; b) to be psychologically, socially and physically safe from threats, harassment or harm in all parts of the school; c) acknowledging and challenging conventional

beliefs about masculinity and femininity that constrain and undermine learning participation and movement (pp. 41-42). Aikman, Halai, & Rubagiza (2011) further attach the idea of gender equal education to not only school safety but also to education quality, asserting that “education in low-income countries can only be of quality when it explicitly recognises and helps to realise the rights and capabilities of all women and girls, and all men and boys” (p. 45). A gender safe school encompasses not only the protection of children on school premises but the infusion of equality into pedagogical practices and school curriculum. Few schools in any country fully meet those criteria, as most school environments are composed of a combination of gender safety and gender violence that are contradicting and resisting each other. This study is driven by the understanding that identifying, supporting and empowering the existing mechanisms fostering gender safety will lead to a more sustainable reduction in GVS. Emphasizing school safety enables a clear definition of the ideal school climate, in terms of the behaviour of staff and students to address incidences and risks of violence and discrimination and explicitly promote gender equality and the importance of girls’ and boys’ safety. This safe school climate would necessarily reflect a broader school culture with values, norms and beliefs of equality and protection. Stein’s et al.’s 2002 definition of gender safety in school includes an absence of violence and discrimination as well as a challenging of discriminatory stereotypes that constrict girls’ and boys’ behaviour based on gender norms. Studies on gender equality in education often show that, in many different cultural contexts, both the explicit and the implicit or hidden curricula demonstrate a privileging or favouring one sex over the other (e.g. Hernández, González, & Sánchez, 2013; Quezada-reyes, 2000; Stromquist & Brock-Utne, 1998; Subrahmanian, 2007).

In Sub-Saharan African educational contexts, gender preferences have traditionally privileged boys over girls (Gordon, 1998; Mule, 2008), although in some cases academic preferences for girls have been observed (Chege, Likoye, Nyambura, & Guantai, 2013). Gender preferences are communicated in the hidden curriculum through verbal comments insinuating superiority or inferiority as well as more subtle illustrations such as calling on boys more than girls, having lower academic expectations of girls, especially in math and science, or portraying women and girls and men and boys only in conventionally feminine and masculine roles (Milligan, 2014). They are also communicated outside of the formal curriculum through the distribution of chores and students' engagement in extracurricular activities such as sports. Mills (2015) asserts that the gendered division of labour can be analyzed through several different lenses: "the symbolic or ideological meanings they make produce and reproduce, the normative (or transgressive) social roles and relationships they rely on and make possible, and the diverse lived experience of individual identity and self-motivation that they mobilize" (p. 285). The gendered division of labour applies to the chores children are assigned at school, with girls often designated to undertake cleaning tasks within the school and boys given tasks that send them outside of the school such as fetching water (Aikman, Unterhalter, & Challender, 2005). Sports are another element of the school experience named by Connell (1996) as a site where masculinizing practices are enacted. It is a space where teachers reinforce masculine dominance and privilege and boys "take up the offer of gender privilege" (Connell, 1996, p. 206). This outcome is consistent with findings from other countries such as Liberia, Yemen and Guinea where students often self-sex segregate when given the choice of playing or sitting in same-sex groupings in the classroom and on the school compound (Stromquist, 2007). It is thus important

when examining the gender safety of the school environment to look beyond the presence of direct violence and consider the ways in which the expectations of feminine and masculine are being reinforced through students' and teachers' behaviour. Practices that reproduce and strengthen harmful gender norms enable gender violence. By contrast, a gender safe school is characterized not only by an absence of gender violence but also by actions that challenge harmful gender norms and explicitly promote gender equality.

Each school culture is particular and unique, shaped by a 'gender regime' that reflects gender relations in the broader society and influences every aspect of school life, including organizational management, curriculum, discipline, interactions and relationships (Connell 1996; 2000). A gender regime is "the pattern of practices that constructs various kinds of masculinity and femininity among staff and students, orders them in terms of prestige and power, and constructs a sexual division of labour within the institution" (Kessler, Ashenden, Connell, & Dowsett, 1985, p. 42); it is not a permanent condition but rather fluctuates and transforms based on interactions within or outside of the school, including through acts of resistance. The gender regime in a gender safe school promotes equality of opportunity including through challenging and transforming limitations based on gender and is characterized by the complete absence of all forms of violence and discrimination among and between students, teachers and administration.

The safety and equality of the school space is influenced by external as well as internal factors, as safety and child protection in the school, home and community are mutually influencing and affecting each other. This means teachers have a major role in ensuring child protection in school, but they are also well placed to identify risks to students' safety occurring outside of the school. The expectation that schools and teachers will provide support and, in

some cases, intervene in instances of child abuse or neglect is reflected in the concept of thinking of schools as ‘nodes of support’ (Skovdal & Campbell, 2015). McLaughlin, Campbell, Pungello and Skinner (2007) assert that school support for children’s wellbeing is increasingly necessary, especially when, for various reasons, children lack other forms of familial or community support and protection. Hoadley (2007) asserts that schools in contexts of high vulnerability cannot operate solely as centres of learning, but rather need new approaches that incorporate components of care and support for children to evolve within the education system. Schools’ – and teachers’ – capacity to take on these caring roles are related to the level of investment and support provided to them. Hoadley’s study of South African primary schools revealed that schools and teachers were generally under-resourced, ill-equipped, poorly supported and unsuitable to perform the protective roles that are identified as necessary. These findings are supported by Kendall and O’Gara’s (2007) study of primary schools in Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe, which indicated that the schools with the fewest capacities were those with the highest number of vulnerable children.

Similarly, Bhana’s (2015) study of teacher care in South African primary schools in a context of sexual violence calls teachers ‘the foot soldiers of care,’ indicating that they respond to girls’ vulnerability to sexual violence based on their moral concern for human dignity without concern for themselves or whether their actions whether falls within the scope of their job description. She concludes, however, that structural forces of patriarchy and poverty impede teachers’ caring work and that multi-sectoral approaches with high levels of political commitment are required to address gender power inequality in education. In a study of a program to reduce girls’ vulnerability to HIV in Botswana, Mozambique and Malawi, Schwandt

and Underwood (2016) assert that changes in school personnel's behavior to bring positive change to learning environments was influenced by the degree of systemic and structural support they received. Studies from the United States also showed that stronger investment in teachers' knowledge about learner-centered pedagogy (teaching and learning processes that seek to support all learners, give time for critical reflection, and allow students to share responsibilities for selecting learning activities) resulted in teachers demonstrating stronger care for how their teaching practices affected students (Dunn & Rakes, 2010a; 2010b). While teacher care is rooted in the individual morality and impetus of teachers to care for its students, the effectiveness with which it is exercised is tied to the level of training, support and accountability provided to teachers by the education system, as well as the pervading discourses related to care and safety in the school.

The ability of teachers to engage in child protection is also sometimes compromised by discourses and social norms surrounding sexuality. Providing comprehensive guidance around the prevention of sexual harassment should entail discussion of safe and healthy sexual relationships, but these discussions are often curtailed by strict expectations of abstinence that prohibit teachers from engaging openly in discussions of sexuality with their students. Porter (2015) makes this observation in her review of schools, sexual identity and sexual violence in northern Uganda. While she describes teachers acting in some instances as the sole source of guidance about sexual relations to students, she states that this role and the ability to positively influence students are compromised by the physical punishment of students found to be having sexual relations: "In an environment where students know they are likely to be physically punished for engaging in sex, teachers' potential pastoral role is compromised" (p.279). The

ability to protect students is dependent upon students' ability to turn to teachers as a source of support. When teachers use violence to punish students for 'bad behaviour' it limits their ability to care for and protect students by circumscribing discussions of sexuality, including harassment and abuse, before they can start.

Gender Violence in Schools

Gender violence is increasingly recognized as a prevalent characteristic of schools around the world in many different national and cultural contexts. It is now drawing the attention of international donors and INGOs working in sub-Saharan African countries such as Kenya, leading to a proliferation of projects and tools seeking to reduce its prevalence. While more implicitly gendered than sexual violence, physical and psychological violence are gendered forms of violence because they reinforce gender regimes in schools by influencing what are acceptable norms of behaviour for boys and girls and determining how teachers and students perform gender roles and exercise power and authority (Connell, 2002). GVS can be perpetrated by and against a range of individuals. Female teachers, and male and female students can all be both victims and perpetrators (Leach & Humphreys, 2007; Owusu, Hart, Oliver, & Kang, 2011; Saito, 2013; Tafa, 2002), demonstrating that these categories are not mutually exclusive. While certain forms of gender violence, such as sexual violence, target primarily girls and are most frequently perpetrated by male teachers and students (Bisika et al. 2009), other forms of violence, such as corporal punishment, are more frequently and severely inflicted upon boys by both male and female teachers (Dunne, 2007). This complexity illustrates the necessity of addressing the various external factors and gender norms that shape experiences of male and female students and prohibits the examination of the school as an isolated structure.

Parkes (2007) recommends viewing violence as a continuum, with ‘extreme’ forms of violence such as rape at one end and ‘everyday’ forms of violence such as playground disputes and physical punishment at the other. More recently, she highlights the complex intersectionality between gender, violence, inequality and poverty, pointing out that gender violence is reproduced and enabled by various structural, systemic and everyday influences (Parkes, 2015). Subtle forms of gender discrimination, such as exclusion or reinforcement of limited gender expectations, provide an environment which permits more severe forms of gender violence and discrimination to take place. Poverty is another structural factor that interacts with gender norms to perpetuate violence and inequality. For example, teacher shortages caused by resource scarcity can lead teachers to place a stronger reliance on corporal punishment as a mechanism for maintaining respect and discipline in overcrowded classrooms (Tao, 2015). Poverty also makes girls more vulnerable to coerced sex, including in exchange for money to cover the informal costs of attending school such as transportation, sanitary napkins and other school materials such as uniforms (Parkes et al., 2013). ‘Structural violence,’ defined by Galtung (1969) as violence that is “built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (p. 171), is a subtle but powerful form of violence that acts through an institution, system or a space. Structural violence is distinct from direct or personal violence, which has a clear author, subject and action. Structural violence does not cause direct physical harm, but rather serves to diminish human potential and constraining human action through ongoing, compounded threats or barriers (Galtung & Hoivik, 1971). Decades after introducing the concept of structural violence, Galtung extended his definitions of violence to include the concept of cultural violence as the aspects of culture that serve to legitimize both structural and direct

violence (Galtung, 1990). GVS is a phenomenon that cannot be understood without examining how the direct violence that occurs at the school level is made possible through structural social and cultural forces including poverty and gender. Drawing on a wide range of theorists used to analyze gender violence in poverty contexts, Parkes (2015) creates a model to illustrate how violence is produced and reinforced at multiple levels – structural inequalities, norms and institutions, and interpersonal/personal - and how countering it must similarly tackle the multiple levels.⁵ This model situates the school at the institutional level, simultaneously shaped by structural norms from the outside and the interpersonal/personal interactions from within. In considering the ways in which violence can be manifested in a certain space, such as the space of a school, the space becomes an actor in its own right, one that is constituted through social relations and practices (Massey, 1994). Tyner (2012) describes how the concept of ‘spatial practice’ is informed by the routines and practices of everyday life in that space and how, over time, we “internalize socio-spatial lessons and learn appropriate behaviour; through repetitive actions these representations of space become naturalized and normalized” (p.16). The actors operating in a space are subconsciously affected by the practices of that space while contributing to the reproduction and normalization of those practices.

Gender norms and expectations are socially constructed and learned. Acknowledging schools as sites where different and interrelated forms of violence can take place and even flourish, it is then necessary to consider the influence of school violence on children’s socialization. Leach (2003) writes that schools are key sites where boys and girls “are learning about and adopting what they see as conventional male and female behaviour. Boys may learn

⁵ See Appendix 2 for Parkes’ models of the production and perpetuation of violence and mediators and mechanisms for countering it.

that the violence they witness in the wider world is acceptable within institutions, even in those where they are supposed to acquire social responsibility, tolerance and respect for others, and girls may learn to accept it” (p. 389). Students may internalize violence as normal or even expected, particularly when they see teachers participating in, condoning or ignoring instances of violence in school. Social expectations or acceptance of violence also interacts with broader structural norms of masculinity and femininity and forms of systemic violence such as poverty, which may constrain students’ ability to respond effectively and appropriately to violence they experience. For example, Kenway and Fitzclarence (2006) assert that for marginalized boys living in poverty, risky and violent behaviour often provides one of the only ways of obtaining status and cultural resources, particularly in contexts where aggressive and violent acts are often used to gain and maintain status, reputations and resources, such as through practices that include corporal punishment. As learned and practiced behaviours, constructs and expectations of femininity and masculinity are fluid, susceptible to change and fluctuation based on external influences, social trends and individual agency.

Connell (1996) posits that multiple masculinities exist within any given social setting. Hegemonic masculinity is the dominant male role normally associated with the term ‘masculinity,’ where a man’s strength is equated with power, control and superiority. She also identifies the following forms of masculinity that can co-exist with hegemonic masculinity: subordinated masculinity such as queer manifestations of masculinity; marginalized masculinity where gender norms are produced in exploited or oppressed groups; and complicit masculinity, which is organized around the acceptance of patriarchy but is not militant in its defence of the patriarchal system. Hegemonic masculinity often exercises power and dominance over the other

forms of masculinity, in addition to different forms of femininity. Masculinity is yet another means of exercising power relations that, as Foucault indicates, operate at the micro levels of society and by so doing make possible more global power structures such as patriarchy (Sawicki, 1991). While hegemonic masculinity may not be inherently violent, the emphasis on dominance and superiority legitimizes violence by giving the boy or man the authority – at least in his mind and often socially supported - to act however he wants (Jakobsen, 2014). Physical aggression exercised in response to a minor insult or disturbance enables boys to maintain and reinforce their expression and position of hegemonic masculinity in the school in relation to other boys and girls. In contrast, as Leach and Humphreys write, girls' exercise of violence is often unrecognized "because girls are generally perceived as victims, and dominant understandings of femininity do not associate girls with violence" (2007, p. 56). Different forms of femininity also interact with violence, perhaps most obviously through relational aggression and peer victimization, where girls establish dominance and power among themselves through the creation and perpetuation of hierarchies among peer groups within the school system.

The first national survey of violence against female and male children in Kenya concluded violence against children is a serious problem (UNICEF, 2012). It was reported that, among respondents 13 to 17 years old, 11% of females and 4% of males experienced sexual violence and 49% of females and 48% of males experienced physical violence in the 12 months prior to the survey. Among females and males who reported being physically assaulted by an authority figure prior to age 18, teachers were the most common perpetrators of physical violence by a public authority figure. Friends/classmates comprised 20% of perpetrators of sexual violence reported by females and 35% of sexual violence reported by males (Ibid.). These

findings are supported by other reports of violence in Kenyan schools that have appeared during the past decade (Chege, 2006; Parkes et al., 2013; Saito, 2013). In the literature, GVS is often classified into three different types: corporal punishment, sexual violence and harassment and peer victimization and bullying (Leach, Dunne, & Salvi, 2014; RTI International, 2016). Many recent studies in Kenya have concentrated on documenting the widespread sexual violence and harassment in schools (Abuya et al., 2012; Ruto, 2009; Wane, 2009). While other forms of violence in schools in Kenya have not received as much attention, a baseline study of 45 Kenyan schools by Parkes et al. (2013) found that 86% of girls surveyed had experienced some form of violence in the past year and that physical and psychological violence were more prominently reported than sexual violence, particularly as forms of punishment.

Corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is defined as “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control of the child’s behavior” (Strauss, 2000, p. 1110). Corporal punishment can be shaped and reinforced by gender norms in multiple ways, depending on the sex of the person delivering it and the person upon whom it is inflicted, and through the differentiated treatment of girls and boys when using corporal punishment. As Humphreys (2008) explains:

...corporal punishment is integrally bound up with performances of masculine authority, enacted by both female and male teachers in relation to differing student masculinities and femininities... a gender perspective is vital to an understanding of corporal punishment, which in turn is a prerequisite for devising effective strategies to regulate its practice (p. 529).

Corporal punishment is usually more commonly and harshly meted out by male teachers and against male students (Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2006; Leach & Humphreys, 2007). It is also gendered in its use and intent. It is used as both a demonstration of masculinity and to

encourage conventional forms of masculinity in boys, illustrating expectations for boys and men to be harsher and acting as a rite of passage to toughen boys up (Humphreys, 2006). Finally, because it is often inflicted on children's behinds, it has also been interpreted to have sexual connotations (Green, 2002). It is legally prohibited in Kenya under the Children Act (2001/2014) and the Basic Education Act (2013). Despite these regulations, the prevalence of corporal punishment in Kenyan schools is indicated in many recent studies. For example, Kimani, Kara & Ogetange's (2012) study that surveyed 250 pupils, 60 teachers and HTs in Nairobi County found that while 50% of HTs admitted that corporal punishment took place in schools, 91% of pupils reported being caned in schools. A major factor contributing to the ongoing use of corporal punishment is the lack of effective classroom management alternatives in contexts where corporal punishment is culturally accepted and even expected and teachers are not supported to develop and apply alternative positive discipline techniques. Mweru (2010) found in her study interviewing 42 in-service Kenyan primary school teachers about their use of corporal punishment following its ban that teachers reported using corporal punishment largely because of their belief in its effectiveness as a disciplinary method. "The teachers were of the opinion that the use of corporal punishment was the most effective way of disciplining pupils and they argued that since corporal punishment inflicts pain, pupils avoided breaking school rules and displaying bad behaviour to avoid the punishment" (p. 251). Tao (2015) took this analysis further in her study of primary teachers' capabilities and constraints influencing their use of corporal punishment in Tanzania, showing how resource shortages, over-crowded classrooms and the imperatives to follow protocol and instill discipline in students created school environments

where corporal punishment, although technically prohibited, continued to be used and sanctioned by teachers and administrators.

Sexual violence. Sexual violence is defined as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work” (World Health Organisation, 2002, p. 149). Studies of GVS show that sexual violence is a common experience among primary school students, especially girls, in many schools in diverse cultural contexts across the world. Substantial literature has documented the prominence of this phenomenon in sub-Saharan Africa (Leach, 2015). In Kenya, the National Survey of Violence Against Children found that sexual harassment at schools was so prevalent that most young people who experienced unwanted sexual touching reported that the first incident occurred at school (UNICEF, 2012). Students most frequently experience sexual violence and harassment inflicted by other children (Ruto, 2009; UNICEF, 2010). Abuya, Onsomu, Moore & Sagwe’s (2012) phenomenological study of sexual violence in two secondary schools in Nairobi’s urban slums found that boys frequently engaged in sexually touching of girls even while in the classroom:

All [n = 10] of the in-school girls in Kamu School reported that boys were the key perpetrators of the violence. They carried this out in the classroom by leaving their respective seating places and moving to sit closer to girls. When no one seemed to be watching, they embarked on touching the respective girls (p. 331).

Multiple studies have also documented teacher-student sexual violence in Kenya (Chege, 2006; Ruto, 2009; Saito, 2013; Wane, 2009). While the Kenyan Teachers Service Commission (TSC) asserts that it has now started cracking down on this issue (Ochieng, 2015), in many cases teachers’ sexual relations with students remain unaddressed. For example, in a policy assessment

conducted for Plan International in Kenya in 2015, girls and boys in Standards 4 and 7 widely acknowledged both orally and in art-based focus group discussions that sexual relationships between teachers and students were an ongoing characteristic of school life (Vanner, 2015). In many countries where children, especially girls, walk unaccompanied to school, sexual violence and harassment on the way to school is also a concern (Plan International Canada, 2012; UNICEF, 2006). Describing a case study of a primary school in Freetown, Sierra Leone, Sharkey writes, “walking on the streets to and from school was a dangerous and fearful daily experience for girls. Girls feared the route to and from school as it was fraught with the danger of the possibility of sexual harassment and assault by men on the streets” (2008, pp. 572-573). This literature clearly demonstrates that sexual violence and harassment are common occurrences, especially for girls, at school and on the way to and from school, and that perpetrators include students, teachers and men outside of school.

Peer victimization. Bullying – also known as peer victimization - is increasingly recognized in the literature as a severe and prevalent form of GVS in low-income countries, but is still often dismissed by teachers (Dunne, et al., 2005; Dunne, Sabates, Bosumtwi-Sam, & Owusu, 2013). Bullying is defined as repeated verbal or physical acts whose purpose is to inflict suffering (Greene, Robles, Stout, & Suvilaakso, 2012). While noting that definitions and understandings of bullying often differ between researchers and children/young adults, bullying researchers typically provide three definitional criteria: intentionality, repetition and power imbalance (Vaillancourt et al., 2008). There is a vast body of literature documenting peer victimization and relational bullying among girls in North American contexts (Besag, 2006; Crick & Nelson, 2002; Crothers, Field, & Kolbert, 2005; Radliff & Joseph, 2011), but the

phenomenon of bullying has been much less examined in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere in the world. Existing studies nonetheless suggest that it is prominent outside North America and follows patterns not unlike those observed in Canada and the United States but, as it is less overt than physical or sexual violence, it is often harder to recognize (Leach & Humphreys, 2007).

The term 'relational aggression' refers to the intent to damage a relationship between two or more individuals through subtle means such as group exclusion or gossip, especially for one's own advantage (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crothers et al., 2007). Consistently in studies from multiple cultural contexts, boys are more likely to experience physical aggression whereas girls are more likely to experience relational aggression (Crick, Bigbee, & Howes, 1996; Hoglund, 2007; Owusu-Banahene & Amedahe, 2008). Relational aggression is considered more prominent among girls than boys because girls may be socialized through their experiences with parents, teachers, peers and the media to subconsciously believe that girls and women should release feelings of anger through nonphysical confrontation and manipulate relationships to establish and maintain their status and control (Bowie, 2007). While this form of aggression is often perceived as less harmful than more physical forms, it can have significant negative effects on an individual's psychosocial, social and academic development (Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Schwartz, Gorman, Nakamoto, & Toblin, 2005; Yoon, Barton, & Taiariol, 2004) and can escalate to physical aggression (Talbot, Celinska, Simpson, & Coe, 2002). There are few studies of GVS in Kenya that look specifically at bullying or peer victimization, but one study that distributed a questionnaire to students in 17 public secondary schools in Nairobi showed that between 63.2% and 81.8% of students had experienced bullying in the previous six months (Ndeti, et al., 2007). High rates of bullying were similarly reported among secondary students in

Ghana, where one study that surveyed 7137 secondary school students found that 41% of boys and 39% of girls bullied at least once over previous 20 days (Dunne, Sabates, Bosumtwi-Sam, & Owusu, 2013). The aforementioned study of Nairobi secondary schools also found that boys were more likely to report being directly bullied (for example, being verbally harassed) whereas girls were more likely to report being indirectly bullied (for example, having lies told about oneself) (Ndeti, et al., 2007), indicating that the patterns of peer victimization in terms of relational aggression among girls may be relevant in Kenyan schools.

Learning with Gender Violence in Schools

Globally, there is significant evidence from a variety of contexts that school violence is negatively correlated with students' learning outcomes at both primary and secondary levels, among other detrimental social and developmental implications for affected students. Studies of mathematics performance on TIMSS data in over 47 different countries found that, while the extent to which school violence relates to achievement varies in different educational systems, it is consistent that school violence is associated with poor student achievement (Engel, Rutkowski, & Rutkowski, 2009; Rutkowski, Rutkowski, & Engel, 2013). Similarly, in Sub-Saharan Africa, literacy and numeracy scores from 2007 Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) data found that schools with higher rates of reported violence were correlated with lower test scores across eight SACMEQ education systems. The SACMEQ study included an analysis of Kenyan schools, where performance in both mathematics and reading was lower among girls and boys in high violence schools than their peers in low violence schools (Saito, 2013).

Country-specific studies from Kenya, Ghana and Malawi demonstrate that GVS leads to

increased student disengagement, absenteeism and risk of dropout. Among 1496 girls and young women surveyed in Malawi, 60.9% reported that incidences of sexual violence and harassment had led to school performance problems (Bisika, Ntata, & Konyani, 2009). In a phenomenological study in Kenya, teachers and female students interviewed in secondary schools in Nairobi slums agreed that sexual violence and harassment in school hampers students' concentration and interest in learning (Abuya, Onsomu, & Moore, 2012). In Ghana, a study of factors contributing to dropout in primary school showed that 65% of dropouts consulted cited corporal punishment as what they most disliked about school, suggesting that corporal punishment was possibly a factor contributing to their dropout (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009). These findings are supported by another study from Tanzania that showed that truancy and dropout were linked to excessive corporal punishment (Kuleana Children's Rights Centre, 1999). Also in Ghana, the study of bullying in secondary schools that showed that 41% of boys and 39% of girls had been bullied at least once during the 20 days prior to being interviewed and demonstrated that this had resulted increased absenteeism. Girls who had been physically abused or experienced physical aggression had odds of absenteeism twice as high as their peers who had not been victimized in these ways. For boys who had been physically abused, there were 1.9 times higher odds of absenteeism and 2.5 times higher odds for boys who had been psychologically abused. By contrast, supportive friends at school reduced the probability of absenteeism, especially for girls (Dunne, Sabates, Bosumtwi-sam, & Owusu, 2013). School attendance is an essential factor in enhancing learning outcomes, as it is necessary to be physically present in class to learn the lesson being taught (Gottfried, 2010; Lewin, 2009; Ready, 2010). GVS is demonstrably not only problematic because of its negative effect on students'

well-being and development, but also because it hampers academic learning and performance and increases rates of absenteeism and dropout.

Motivation to Learn

Motivation is a necessary element of the student learning process (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). The most traditional approach to understanding motivation is behaviourism, which asserts that positive reinforcement is the primary method for establishing and maintaining desirable behaviour and punishment should be the primary method for eradicating undesirable behaviour (Thorndike, 1913; Brophy, 2004). Behaviourism concentrates on the use of positive and negative forms of extrinsic motivation stimulants to trigger the desired learning behaviour in students. Stimulants based on reward and punishment can play a role in encouraging motivation to learn but they are now generally considered insufficient to explain student motivation to learn without also considering the role of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is based on cognitive theoretical models that take into account the degree to which the activity holds interest and meaning to the learner (Perry, Turner, & Meyer, 2006). Cognitive theories also consider how personal, behavioural and environmental factors combine to drive student motivation and academic outcomes through students' concept of their own competency and the type of goals and values that drive their academic work.

Self-efficacy, students' intrinsic and extrinsic goals and value of the task at hand are all motivational factors that influence students' self-regulation in how they approach their academic studies in and out of class. Students' academic goals can be categorized into mastery-oriented and performance-oriented goals. Students work toward mastery-oriented goals mainly driven primarily by intrinsic motivation and a desire for self-improvement. With performance-oriented

goals, a student seeks to demonstrate his or her ability at a given task in comparison to other students. Performance goal seeking behaviour is broken down further into two approaches: performance-approach goals, where the student is driven to outperform others, and performance-avoidance goals, where students seek to avoid appearing incompetent in relation to their peers (Anderman & Wolters, 2006). Studies have shown that performance-avoidance approaches are generally ineffective and usually lead to lower results. “Although there is much debate concerning the effects of performance-approach goals, there is general consensus that performance avoidance goals are maladaptive and relate negatively to many valued educational outcomes” (Ibid., p. 371). By contrast, students’ belief in their own self-efficacy is a strong predictor of future grades, illustrating that students’ confidence in their ability is important both for motivation and for ultimate achievement (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). For students who struggle, social comparison to their higher performing peers “can lower beliefs about competence, depress expectations for success and decrease valuing of school-related tasks and their approaches to and engagement in learning” (Perry, Turner, & Meyer, 2006, p. 331). Thus, intrinsic motivation through enhancing students’ self-efficacy and nurturing a positive relationship to tasks and learning that is based primarily on their own performance and achievement is important for enhancing learning. Creating a high-pressure environment that tries to motivate students through comparison that reinforces their failures and deficiencies leads to student disengagement and lower performance, achieving the opposite result of what is intended through these forms of extrinsic motivation.

High-stakes testing. ‘High-stakes testing’ is a term used to describe standardized tests that determine students’ options to proceed to higher levels of education. The practice of high

stakes testing contains a paradox; the purpose is to provide a measurement that can be used to assess and enhance learning and that serious consequences will provide motivation for teachers and students, but the process can lead to “activities that are educationally unproductive and may actually undermine the integrity of the system” (Braun, Kanjee, Bettinger & Kremer, 2006, p. 3). As test anxiety has been shown to have a negative effect on achievement, pressure for increased examination results can lead to reduced educational outcomes (Ocak & Yamac, 2013). A core component of the Kenyan education system and a determinant of school climate and learning processes is the emphasis on examinations as the main mechanism for measuring learning and determining student advancement from one level of education to the next (Buchmann, 1999; Mwaka, Kegode, & Kyalo, 2010). They have been the central mechanism for understanding learning outcomes and achievement in Kenya since the Kenya Africa Secondary Examinations were first introduced by the British in 1940. High stakes examinations operate on the basis of social comparison and competition that, as noted above, can negatively effect intrinsic motivation, particularly in students who are struggling academically.

There is an extensive literature on the negative effects of high stakes testing, much of it emerging from the United States in response to the *No Child Left Behind* policy (Tanner, 2013; Von der Embse, Schultz, & Draughn, 2015). The practice is increasingly being critically examined in Sub-Saharan African contexts as well, where its use is commonplace and found to often have a negative effect on teaching and learning processes. Roberts (2015) analyzed the relationship between the new curricular emphasis on learner-centered pedagogy in rural Tanzania in two schools with consistently high examination scores. The research demonstrated that teachers consistently used teacher-centered pedagogical approaches in contradiction to the

government policy promoting learner-centered pedagogy. Lesson plans revolved around preparing students for national examinations and mock examinations with publicly posted results. Teachers finished covering the curriculum content early so that the entire final month of the school year could be used exclusively for preparations for final exams. These methods were in place in response to pressure from government inspectors, who mainly relied on examination results to monitor educational quality. In spite of the emphasis on high performance, there were high rates of teacher absenteeism. Teacher absenteeism and neglect of the learner-centered pedagogical approach were overlooked as measurements of quality education by the school community and government inspectors as the value of examination scores outweighed opposition to the teaching practices. When teachers are pressured to produce strong examination performance and students' educational outcomes rely upon their score, they often concentrate their teaching practice on preparing students to succeed on the examination. Depending on the examination, this preparation does not necessarily mean they are effectively teaching the required material, and can result in scores that falsely represent students' knowledge and ability (Chapman & Snyder, 2000). As Goldstein states, "... any rise in test scores should not be confused with a rise in learning achievement as opposed to test-taking performance" (2004, p. 10). The practice of 'teaching to the test' often involves a focus on memorization, repetition and excessive time used on practice tests, leading to student disengagement (Mora, 2011). Despite this evidence from a range of socio-economic and cultural contexts, there is concern that the use of high-stakes testing may increase with the introduction of learning measurement as a part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) established in 2000 concentrated on access to education and were widely criticized for ignoring

quality and equality in education (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2005). The move toward measuring learning outcomes within the SDGs seeks to rectify this gap, but it could have a negative effect of tying international assistance more directly to performance on national examinations if learning measurement and the discourse surrounding it is not carefully managed to avoid propagating and promoting cultures of high stakes testing (Barrett, 2011; Goldstein, 2004).

Conclusion

Gender safety and gender violence are situated in schools that are shaped by the socio-economic status of the staff and students, by national policy structures and their implementation at the sub-county and school level and by the historical and current external influences that determine priorities, values and behaviour at a school level. This chapter has described the current literature surrounding GVS from theoretical and descriptive perspectives and advocated for the use of the term GSS as a perspective for analyzing child protection in education in sub-Saharan Africa. The literature provides the foundation upon which to explore the following research question: How does gender safety and gender violence in schools relate to primary students' learning processes? Evidence supporting a cognitive theoretical understanding of motivation indicates that the security and supportiveness of the school climate and culture enhances not only student wellbeing but also students' academic engagement and outcomes. This student-centered approach to education is captured in the concept of caring pedagogy that highlights the centrality of the reciprocal relationship of care between the 'carer' teacher and the 'cared-for' students. Unfortunately, in many Sub-Saharan African countries, structural constraints including poverty and gender norms and systemic constraints such as high stakes testing limit teachers' ability to fulfill their caring role.

Chapter 4: The Research Context: Kenya's Primary Education System

This chapter provides an overview of the current Kenyan education system as well as the historical and contemporary external influences that affect it. I begin with a description of the structure of the system, some descriptive statistics and the historical development of the education system prior to and since Kenya's independence. I then narrow my focus to provide a description of Kirinyaga County, where the case study schools are located. Following these contextual introductions, I delve deeper into the Kenyan policy framework as it relates to GSS and GVS, connecting policies including the *Basic Education Act* (2015), *Children Act* (2001), *Gender Policy in Education* (2007), *Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya* (2008), and the *TSC Teacher Code of Conduct and Ethics for Teachers* (2015) and *Positive Discipline Handbook* (in press). The weak implementation of these policies as they relate to GVS is then considered in light of the strong educational orientation toward examinations as the primary mechanism for measuring student learning and achievement and broader school quality. I then turn to the colonial and neocolonial influences that have influenced the priorities and systems that govern Kenya's current education system, and point to the potential risks that neocolonial influences hold in reinforcing similar priorities and systems in future.

Primary Education in Kenya

The Kenyan education system is an 8-4-4 system: eight years of primary school, four years of secondary school and four years of higher education.⁶ There are also two years of pre-primary education offered in many primary schools. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is the

⁶ 'Standard' is the term used to refer to grades or years in school; primary school spans from Standard 1 to Standard 8.

main governing body for the education system, but the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) is the governing body specifically responsible for managing teachers. The TSC's responsibilities include in-service and pre-service teacher training, performance management and disciplinary action for teachers, hiring and paying teacher salaries, and all other tasks related to teacher pedagogy and performance. All aspects of the education system's operation that do not deal directly with teachers, such as examinations, curriculum, school infrastructure, Boards of Management (BoMs), and education policies, fall under the mandate of the MoE. As of 2012, primary net enrolment rates (NER) were 86.6% for girls, 83.17% for boys and 84.87% total and the secondary NER for the same year were 66.62% for boys, 57.39% for girls and 56.51% total (UNESCO, 2012). Thus, participation of girls is higher than boys at the primary level but their school life expectancy is shorter as participation shifts in favour of boys at the secondary level.

Throughout its colonial and post-colonial history Kenya has struggled with constraints of access and cost, moving back and forth between free and fee-based primary education (Somerset, 2011). After two earlier attempts to provide universal access to free primary education in 1974 and 1979, in 2003 the National Rainbow Coalition government launched the third Free Primary Education (FPE-3) initiative, seeking to provide completely free and universal access to education. FPE-3 abolished formal and direct parental levies, leading to a massive increase in enrolment. Standard 1 intake increased by 35% and most other cohorts' enrolment also increased significantly following the policy's implementation, demonstrating the high number of children who had previously been prevented from attending primary school by the cost burden of school fees (Somerset, 2009). Unfortunately, the rapid expansion of educational access was not accompanied by increases in physical facilities or teachers, leading to overcrowded classrooms, a

lack of qualified teachers and a corresponding decline in learning conditions that continues to affect education quality (Sawamura & Sifuna, 2008; Somerset, 2011). Oketch and Somerset (2010) conducted a study looking at the influence of FPE at the school level in a series of case study primary schools, showing the impact varies significantly among schools. They highlight that in many schools FPE led to a severe ‘quality shock’ because of “impact acute shortages of teachers, physical facilities and learning materials brought about by massive enrolment increases” (p. vii) but others experienced low impacts because they protected themselves by establishing cost barriers that prevented students from less prosperous families from entering.

The expansion of FPE had a large effect on teachers, leading to higher workload, less ability to respond to the needs of individual students, and more difficulties in classroom management (Abuya, Admassu, Ngware, Onsomu & Oketch, 2015; Alubisia, 2005; Oketch & Somerset, 2010). These constraints build upon a history of traditionally low pay, social status and respect for the teaching profession and a confusing system of incentives and promotions, often culminating in demoralization among teachers and reduced ability to deliver quality education (Abuya, Admasu, Ngware, Onsomu & Oketch, 2015; Hyde, Muito & Muito, 2005). Kenya has very active teachers’ unions advocating for pay increases and other benefits for teachers and often organize nation-wide strikes. Two such strikes occurred during 2015, immediately preceding and following the period of my data collection. Resource constraints also affect students’ access to education. In practice, formal tuition fees have been abolished and all school fees are prohibited, however most public primary schools still charge students informal school fees for a range of costs including examinations, uniforms and extracurricular activities.

Kirinyaga County

Kirinyaga County is a predominantly rural area located within central Kenya to the north of Nairobi. Its capital is the town of Kerugoya. This study took place in two schools in the Kirinyaga East Sub-County in the Baragwi zone. With a low rate of urbanization at 15.9% (half that of the national average), its poverty rate is among the lowest in the country at 25.2% in 2006 (Open Data, 2014). Agriculture is the main economic activity, and over 70% of residents are small scale farmers (Kenya Information Guide, 2015). Its education indicators are generally higher than the national average, with nearly universal enrolment and literacy and numeracy learning levels that are approximately double that of the national average. Among its population, 28% of Kirinyaga County residents have secondary education or above, 59% have primary education only and 14% have no formal education. These indicators demonstrate relatively high educational attainment, compared to other counties such as Kwale County where 39% of the population have had no formal education, or Turkana County where 82% of the population have no formal education (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2013). The high education indicators are possibly connected to the higher than average socioeconomic status of the population, relatively lower rates of food insecurity, the close proximity of the county to the national capital and the fact that the vast majority of the population is from the Kikuyu tribe, a group that is often strongly represented in national political and bureaucratic positions. Despite this relative attainment, serious concerns remain about student learning and school quality in the county. A national study found that only 47% of Kirinyaga Standard 3 children tested can read a Standard 2 story and only 55% can conduct basic division (Mugo, Kaburu, & Kimutai, 2011). The same study found high rates of absenteeism in Kirinyaga among students and teachers, with 4 out of

10 enrolled children and 1 out of 10 teachers missing school on a daily basis. Few studies of school safety have focused on Kirinyaga but there have been a number of research projects examining primary and secondary school culture and management in the county (Kamanja, 2012; Muruga, 2013). Several of these studies find that positive school culture and management that engages student agency is, among other factors, clearly associated with strong academic performance based on national primary and secondary examinations (Wahjeru, 2011; Wakori, 2014). In other more poverty stricken areas of Kenya, it is common for Kenyan or INGOs to operate as complementary service providers. Numerous NGO projects specifically addressing the eradication of SRGBV are ongoing in other areas of the country. Due to its relatively high socio-economic status compared to other counties in Kenya, it is rare for NGOs to operate in Kirinyaga. State resources in offices like the Sub-County Education Office tend to be higher in Kirinyaga than they are in other parts of the country, where many offices are woefully understaffed (Vanner, 2015). Schools in Kirinyaga therefore have many advantages, but this also results in fewer alternative resources or sources of support in the form of NGOs than are available in lower income areas of the country.

Kenya's Educational Policy Context

In the past ten years, a series of policies have been developed by the MoE and TSC which collectively provide a supportive policy environment to address GSS. Following the 2007 – 2008 election violence, the Kenyan people voted in a new constitution, which was followed by the 2013 *Education Act* that reformed the education system to reflect the new constitution. The new Act includes guiding principles describing the promotion of peace, the elimination of hate speech and tribalism, ensuring human dignity and integrity and the elimination of gender discrimination

and corporal punishment (Republic of Kenya, 2012). The MoE's 2007 *Gender Policy in Education* policy document reflects a comprehensive understanding of gender equality in education, recognizing that the following factors inhibit girls' access to education and are not conducive to learning: negative socio-cultural practices and attitudes, sexual harassment and discrimination, stereotyping in learning materials and pedagogy (Wango, Mysomi, & Akinyi, 2012). While not maintaining the same gender focus, the MoE emphasizes the importance of school safety in its 2008 *Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya*. Specifically, the manual states that "safe and secure school environments foster quality teaching and learning" (p. 2), that insecure school environments lead to delinquency, truancy and absenteeism, especially among girls, and that the government's commitment to improving access, equity, participation, retention, completion and quality will be compromised if school safety is not fully addressed (p.3). It recognizes that school safety is a community-wide initiative, requiring the active participation of the community in school programmes, strong bonds between the school and community, and the creation of a sub-committee within the School Management Committee (SMC)⁷ dedicated to dealing with school safety. Furthermore, it clearly states that teachers should report suspected cases of abuse to the police, DCS or other appropriate authorities. Finally, the manual acknowledges that school safety cannot be achieved without addressing school violence, which it states can take multiple forms such as teacher-on-learner and learner-on-learner corporal punishment, sexual assault, and emotional and verbal abuse, all of which are prohibited (p. 6).

⁷ The term 'School Management Committee' was replaced with 'Board of Management' in the 2013 *Education Act*.

From a child protection perspective, the *Children Act*, established in 2001 and amended in 2014, is a highly influential piece of legislation that is designed to strengthen Kenya's child welfare and protection services, policies and practices. It prohibits all forms of discrimination, torture, cruel treatment, sexual exploitation and physical punishment against children, and highlights children's right to protection from physical and psychological abuse, neglect and all forms of violence. While it also establishes the right of all children to free, compulsory basic education, beyond this it does not speak to the educational domain. In practice, the systems established through the *Children Act* and the *Basic Education Act* often operate in silos without significant interaction or interlinkages that provide a space to practically address GVS (Vanner, 2015). A recent positive initiative has been the attempt to operationalize the prohibition of corporal punishment through the joint TSC and MoE (in press) *Positive Discipline Handbook*, which offers guidance for teachers on how to use non-violent disciplinary practices. This builds upon the TSC's *Code of Conduct and Ethics* (2015), which expressly prohibits sexual activity between teachers and students and requires teachers to report a breach of the code to the proper authorities.

Even though the *Gender Policy in Education* provides some provisions for school safety, a gender analysis is not prominently reflected in the *Safety in Schools Manual for Schools in Kenya* or the *Basic Education Act*. Unterhalter and North's (2011b) study examining the discourse of Kenyan government officials in relation to gender and education rights in the MDGs government stakeholders revealed a common tendency to deny the prominence of gender inequality, adhering instead to a rhetoric of 'sameness' that was clearly gender blind. For example, one government official stated, "I think we treat everybody the same so we don't think

that issues of gender have an impact on what is to be done” (p. 507). Gender issues are thus treated as a set of separate policy discourses, outside of the realm of teaching and learning. When taken collectively, the emphasis on peace education and nondiscrimination in the *Basic Education Act*, the attention to socio-cultural gender practices and attitudes in education in the *Gender Policy in Education*, and the framework for promoting school safety in the *Safety in Schools Manual* create a policy context that does recognize the importance of safe schools in Kenya and accordingly challenges discriminatory gender norms and promotes empowering spaces for girls and boys. Yet the formulation of progressive policy does not signal changes in structures and practices. In Kenya, despite the policy initiatives aiming to enhance gender safety, the lack of a cohesive and effective reporting structure, the low priority assigned to eradicating GVS and a disconnect between education and child welfare systems prevent the implementation of these policies. Many of them are unfamiliar to or even unheard of by teachers and administrators at the school level (Vanner, 2015) and thus rarely have significant influence over schools and education stakeholders.

The establishment of policies to address GVS are a necessary starting point, but policies are insufficient to influence real change without a clear, prioritized and costed plan for their implementation and operationalization. Most national level government policies that seek to address GVS suffer from a lack of coordinated design for implementation and monitoring and take a single stakeholder approach that ignores the multi-dimensional nature of violence and the relationship between violence in school and in the home and community (Jones, Moore, Villar-Marquez, & Broadbent, 2008). In South Africa, for example, the robust collection of policy initiatives to address gender equality in education since apartheid have suffered from a

substantial disconnect between policy intent and implementation. Numerous factors contribute to this disconnect, including a narrow concept of gender equality as parity in access to education, systemic challenges such as a lack of repercussions for teachers who commit abuse, and a morality discourse that frames girls' sexuality as the problem (Moletsane, Mitchell, & Lewin, 2015).

The literature on policy implementation in this area shows that efforts to address GVS are usually initiated by NGOs at the school and community level and do not address the gap between policies at the national level and their implementation through the government system, although the most promising initiatives operate within multiple systems and levels of governance (Parkes, Heslop, Johnson Ross, Westerveld, & Unterhalter, 2016). A literature review on the potential of interventions to expand and improve girls' education and gender equality in education found that, while some success has been achieved with gender mainstreaming approaches, "All [reviews of gender and education policy initiatives] find that translating policy on gender and education into practice that enacts gender equality requires considerable resources in terms of money, time, skill, support and opportunities for critical reflection and communication, way beyond that planned for or provided" (Unterhalter et al., 2014, p. 41). In practice, from the perspective of policymakers and even many NGOs, gender equality is often seen as an element that is compartmentalized, addressed in policy discourse or rhetoric but not seen as necessary for infusing and affecting education systems and practice (Unterhalter & North, 2011a). This appears to be the case in Kenya. Across the different policies and legislation governing the MoE and the DCS, most elements of GVS are covered to some degree. Despite this broad coverage and strong policy discourse, almost none of the policies have detailed implementation

frameworks or operational plans that extend below the national level. None of those that address gender equality and child protection specifically in or around schools take a multi-sectoral approach that implicates more than one ministry or department. The *National Education Sector Plan* (NESP) articulates commitments to enhancing the child-friendliness of schools, but these activities are not raised or budgeted in its accompanying operational plan. As a result, the policies related to gender violence and GSS in Kenya have limited reach and impact on the operation of the education system at the county, local or school level.

Instead, education quality and school culture are mainly influenced by the Kenya Certificate for Primary Education (KCPE) examination, which is necessary to pass in order to proceed to secondary school and determining the type and quality of secondary school the student can attend. KCPE creates enormous pressure on students and teachers, often at the expense of other considerations such as the development of critical thinking, morality, problem-solving and mutual respect (Boit, Njoki, & Chang'ach, 2012). Buchmann (1999) writes that the Kenyan state's inability to manage education supply and demand has led to a highly competitive education system moderated by 'contests' in the form of KCPE and the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education (KCSE) to filter access to higher education. The stakes are so high that parents select the schools their children will attend based on the schools' test scores, although the emphasis on testing often reduces and narrows the curriculum content that is taught to only that which is measurable and reflected on the tests (Mwaka, Kegode, & Kyalo, 2010). Stress and anxiety resulting from exam pressure has led to spikes in school-based arson preceding final exams and mock exams (Cooper, 2014). The pressure to perform well has also led to rampant cheating on examinations; in 2015, 5101 cases of cheating were uncovered in KCSE and 2709 in

KCPE (Wanzala, 2015; 2016). Notwithstanding the existence of numerous policies addressing various aspects of gender safety in Kenyan schools, on a daily basis the priority of the education system and daily school life is biased toward the expansion of educational access and success on examinations, which could contribute to the marginalization of concerns related to GSS.

Colonial Influences on Education in Kenya

The current structure and system of public education in Kenya are rooted in the British colonial establishment of formal schools, first through missionaries and then by colonial government. There were three phases to the development of formal education in colonial Kenya: 1) prior to British occupation from 1846 – 1890, 2) from the start of British occupation in 1891 to the establishment of the Education Department in 1911, and 3) from 1911 until independence. In the first two phases, Christian missionaries were the only educational operators, whereas colonial government became increasingly involved in education throughout the third phase (Mwiria, 1991). Christian missionary schools continued in the third phase and varied greatly in the nature and quality of education provided; the Loreto Primary school outside of Nairobi is one example of a missionary school which was by all accounts empowering to its female students, educating many of Kenya's female political leaders, including Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai. The following concentrates mainly on colonial government education in the third phase identified above.

According to Somerset, "In no policy area was the influence of the settlers stronger than in the field of education" (2011, p. 484). Current physical school set up and divisions, curricular expectations, forms of assessment and administrative hierarchies, all reflect the tiered education system set up by British colonizers (White, 1996). While both formal and informal educational

systems and practices existed long before colonization, the current system of formal education was established and continues to be directly shaped by its colonial history. Anderson observes, “The Europeans did not bring the idea of formal education to Africa... Yet through such practices as grouping children in classrooms for regular daily lessons, emphasizing the importance of reading and writing and sharing particular concern over examination results and certificates, Europeans have done much to shape Africa’s most recent understanding of schools” (1970, p. 1). Many of these practices, including written examinations and Christian religious education, were originally imposed or imported by British missionaries and are now firmly a part of the formal modern Kenyan education system.

The practice of sitting examinations was initiated by the colonial government in 1940 with the introduction of the Kenya Africa Secondary Examinations for form four students (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). Examinations were used in colonial rule to prevent the disorderly expansion of educational access amid growing demand for formal education among the Kenyan population. Examinations were set and marked in Britain and then used to control and scrutinize access to higher education among the African Kenyan population, implanting European standards as the means of social mobility within the colonial system (Eisemon, 1990). Mwiria (1991) names the use of examinations to determine access to higher education as one of three strategies the colonial government used to maintain a racialized division of labour, along with unequal allocation of educational resources to schools for Europeans, Asians and Africans, and the encouragement of skills and ideology that reflected the colonial social structure. In 1949, the Beecher Report recommended the truncation of basic education for Africans to four years because “...the shorter a boy’s stay in primary school, the more easily will he be absorbed into

the agricultural and pastoral life of the country. Six years, it was suggested, was too long for the attainment of bare literacy; four years was suggested as a more suitable period for ‘real’ primary education” (Paragraph 17, quoted in Somerset, 2011, p. 485). Access to upper primary and to secondary school was then limited on the basis of performance in the Common Entrance Examination at the end of Grade 4 and the Kenya African Preliminary Examination at the end of Grade 8. All schools wrote identical examinations, despite the dramatic disparities in educational resources allocated to European, Asian and African schools, effectively eliminating the ability of most of the African population to proceed to secondary school (Mwiria, 1991). Other components of these early school systems included a deplorable lack of all educational resources in African schools, an emphasis on discipline and sometimes brutal corporal punishment as the central means of instilling in students order, respect and motivation toward academic achievement (Ibid.).

Kenya transitioned to independence in the 1960s following a decade-long violent struggle between the British and the Mau Mau uprising emerging from Central Kenya, including the area that is now Kirinyaga County, where this study took place. The colonial suppression of the Mau Mau uprising was characterized by extreme violence, detention camps and forced resettlement targeting the Kikuyu population, as well as the use of African home guards to police the detention and resettlement camps, creating hostility and division among the local population (Elkins, 2005). One of the leaders of the Mau Mau uprising was Jomo Kenyatta, who eventually became the first president of Kenya following independence. During this transition period, the education system established by the British was largely adopted by postcolonial elite who internalized the values of stratification and competition associated with the British school system

(Nyamnjoh, 2012). Like in most African countries post-independence, the education system remained dominated by colonial curriculum, language, structure and resource distribution (Abdi, 2011). One practice that remained was the propagation of the system of examinations to determine access to education. To expand access to secondary education, *harambee* (community-funded) secondary schools were introduced, however their quality was much lower than government schools, to which access was determined by performance on secondary school examinations. The government later transitioned to five categories of secondary schools using the same selection system but, even then, limited access created involuntary dropouts, pushed out because there was no room, and sorted into various educational opportunities based on their KCPE scores (Buchmann, 1999).

The colonial heritage of the current education system is evident in factors including the examination orientation as the primary measurement of learning and educational achievement, the use of corporal punishment, the emphasis on discipline, and the underpinning and streamlining of Christian morality and religious education. While public and domestic violence were present in pre-colonial communities, colonial administration introduced new forms and uses of violence and expanded upon those already in place. Corporal punishment, for example, is officially prohibited in schools today yet remains prominent and is used most frequently and harshly against boys. This custom directly reflects colonial practices in education, in which corporal punishment was used in European, Asian and African school systems during the colonial era to instill discipline (Ocobock, 2012). The colonial school system was described by an early senior education official in post-independence Kenya as “chain of tyranny from the top down and the kid was always the one on the receiving end - physically and psychologically”,

asserting that children were often pushed out of schools by the extreme violence they experienced there (Mwiria, 1991, p.267). Prior to colonization, physical punishment was a common form of discipline by fathers and elders against boys and young men as a means of reinforcing age and generational authority. Colonial rule expanded this practice to institutionalize it within many sectors and by many authority figures, including teachers. This expansion “connected an ever-expanding network of African and non-African adult actors and institutions wielding physical violence, in competing yet contradictory ways, all in an effort to exert authority over young African men” (Ocobock, 2012, p. 31). The establishment of corporal punishment by the colonial state was strongly gendered and racialized, as state-sanctioned corporal punishment for petty crimes was imposed at far greater rates for African men and boys than for Asian and Arab men and boys. Its most extreme application was directed specifically at Kikuyu men accused of being part of the Mau Mau rebellion in Central Kenya from 1952 - 1960; it is estimated that between 160,000 and 320,000 Kikuyu were kept in detention camps where they were brutally tortured as punishment for their suspected participation in the uprising (Elkins, 2005). It was extremely rare for young European men to face corporal punishment as a result of a crime, although they did experience it at high rates within private schools (Ocobock, 2012). Morrell (2001a) similarly observes the establishment of corporal punishment in British private schools in South Africa and the subsequent emulation of this practice in both white English-speaking and African schools during Apartheid.

The education system established by the British was also highly segregated and unequal. In 1947, the majority of European children went to primary schools with an academic curriculum that largely reflected the education provided in Europe. By contrast, African children almost

universally attended schools where “the primary curriculum was non-academic: beyond basic literacy and numeracy, the focus was on manual and practical activities, together with religious and moral instruction” (Somerset, 2011, p. 485). Local languages, religions and cultures were suppressed through punishment including tactics of humiliation, for example equating use of local languages with stupidity and visibly marking students caught speaking their mother tongue (Maathai, 2006). Thus, as it was associated with the European school model, corporal punishment was established as a component of an academic and superior form of education. The prominence of school violence today is infused with a history of colonial legitimization of violence as the primary means of establishing power, authority, masculinity, racial superiority and classroom management.

The impact of colonialism was also reflected in gender expectations that position women as modest, dependent and domestic. Colonial administration strove to impose the imperial doctrine of female domesticity upon African ‘subjects,’ including efforts such as training women in the type of work and social graces common among considered respectable among European women and establishing regulations that denied women the opportunity to work for paid employment (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). These limitations contrasted to their previously widespread engagement in occupations including farming, trading and manufacturing (Ibid.; Mama, 1997). Public humiliation and forced repatriation of African women suspected to be prostitutes was a common practice to restrict urban citizenship to Europeans, using ‘prostitution’ as “a blanket term to describe independent women who operated outside the control of patriarchal rural authority” (Carotenuto, 2012, p. 18). As colonial education systems were established and gradually expanded, girls and women were largely kept out of schools. Not until

1952 did the colonial government start to advocate for increasing girls' education, but even then, the curriculum for girls and women's schools was not ambitious and their education was positioned as valuable only in terms of their social contributions as wives and mothers (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). An explicit curriculum that undervalued girls' intelligence was formalized in the establishment and operation of the colonial education system.

The Christian moral and religious value systems that infused the education system included an encouragement of total abstinence from any sort of sexual relationships and highly valued female chastity in particular. The missionary project that began in early colonial Kenya continues in the twenty-first century through the reach of American evangelical NGOs; in 2002, there were 1,300 American Protestant missionaries operational in Kenya – the largest number in Africa (Hearn, 2002). While this has led Kenya to be called the 'Mecca' for missionaries, their geographical concentration shifted away from Central Province (including what is now Kirinyaga County), where missionaries were more prominent in the early twentieth century, to other parts of Kenya such as the Rift Valley (Ibid.). The emphasis on chastity remains strong in today's Kenyan school system and is considered by some to undermine efforts to address GVS by limiting discussion about consensual and non-consensual sex and by re-inscribing expectations of femininity in which women and girls' sexual pleasure is something that can and should be contained and controlled. The sexuality discourse that currently governs is in many ways contrasted to pre-colonial Kikuyu sexuality practices. Traditionally, sex and reproduction were strongly socially controlled and premarital sex was prohibited, but regulated through rites of initiation where young men and women were educated on issues of sexuality and reproduction and were subsequently allowed to engage in forms of incomplete sexual play known as *ngwiko*,

which provided a degree of sexual satisfaction and peer regulation that minimized the likelihood of full sexual intercourse (Ahlberg, 1991; 1994; Davison, 1996). These practices were derived from a social organization described as the age-group system, whereby men and women grouped together by age and organized socially and politically within these groups (Ahlberg, 1991; LeVine & Sangree, 1962). In pre-colonial Kikuyu society, women exerted pressure through collective action, community mobilization and peer support within their age group. Kikuyu customs such as these which defined and governed male/female relations were largely dismantled by missionary and colonial government (Ahlberg, 1991).

Heslop et al. (2015) observe that the current abstinence discourses and the concept of girls as non-sexual being continues to be reinforced through international development assistance programs in an analysis of an INGO project on the promotion of girls' rights in violence-free education in Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique. In their study, participants conveyed expectations that sex and schooling are incompatible, shutting down possibilities of discussion of sexuality issues between teachers and students. They also described the practices by which schools reinforced dominant discourses of female chastity, focusing on girls' modesty and sexual restraint while largely ignoring boys' sexual behaviour. In a study of the implementation of the HIV/AIDS curriculum in primary and secondary schools, teachers reported that they had been explicitly instructed by MoE officials to avoid "sensitive" discussions about contraceptives and condoms (Njue, Nzioka, Ahlberg & Voeten, 2009). Students interviewed expressed frustration with the simplistic abstinence-only guidance they receive from teachers and note that raising sexuality issues can have negative repercussions for students. The reluctance to talk about sexuality is related to the widespread belief that talking about contraceptives condones and

encourages sexual activity among students (Ibid; McLaughlin, Swartz, Cobbett, & Kiragu, 2015). Chilisa (2006) notes that the invisibility of desire and pleasure in most contemporary sex educational programs' contrasts with traditional sex education in many African communities, including the Kikuyu in Kenya, where pleasure and desire were acknowledged and celebrated, signalling that the current concentration on abstinence is a product of colonial influence and not traditional Kikuyu values.

Neocolonial Influences on Emerging Education Policy in Kenya

Approximately 4% of Kenya's education system is funded by foreign assistance, which is relatively small in comparison to some other sub-Saharan African countries (UNESCO, 2012). Nonetheless, international donors have had considerable influence on the development and operationalization of policies and programs in the Kenyan education sector since Kenya's independence (King, 2007). These external interests led to the imposition of structural adjustment programs and the removal of free primary education in the 1980s, resulting in cost-sharing measures such as school fees that dramatically increased educational inequality by making school inaccessible to low-income families (Buchmann, 1999; Rono, 2002). This policy was then reversed with the reintroduction of free primary education in the early 2000s, as Kenyan and international priorities converged on the importance of increasing access to primary education (King, 2007). While the high stakes testing in East Africa originated from British colonialism, influential stakeholders at the global level continue to prioritize the mass measurement and assessment of learning outcomes. The international development community in education is currently at a crossroads; after several decades of advancing increases in access to education, particularly in the ten years following the launch of the MDGs, enrolment rates have

skyrocketed in many developing countries. Kenya experienced an increase in net primary enrolment rates from 75.42% (75.73% female and 75.12% male) in 2005 to 84.87% (86.6% female and 83.17% male) in 2012 (UNESCO, 2014).

There is now a widespread recognition, however, that access to education does not guarantee learning, and that many of the school systems that have radically expanded their enrolments are failing to provide students with even basic literacy and numeracy skills. This trend has been reflected in Kenya and other parts of East Africa, where recent studies show that despite the fact that over 90% of children in the region attend primary school at some point, the majority of children of primary school age remain functionally illiterate and innumerate (Jones, Schipper, Ruto, & Rajav, 2014). With the launch of the MDGs' successor, the SDGs, there is an education focus on improving learning outcomes. SDG 4 is to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" and five of its seven indicators focus on learning outcomes (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016a, p. 4). While this goal is laudable, there is significant debate and discussion regarding its measurement and the potential for further increasing pressure to perform on standardized tests such as the KCPE (Barrett, 2011; Goldstein, 2004).

The SDGs contain a clear focus on education quality and learning outcomes, particularly in relation to SDG 4.1: "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes". As the international community debates how to measure the indicators established in SDG 4, concern around the use of standardized tests as a measurement of learning outcomes has emerged. Accumulating data that is comparable across countries presents a remarkable challenge

that will need to be met by one or a combination of large-scale assessments, such as a school-based national or cross-country assessment, public examination or household-based assessment, even while noting the extensive critiques of assessments to cause ‘teaching to the test’, ‘paying for performance’ and other means of subverting the value of learning processes (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016b). The current strategy for monitoring learning in the SDGs references the development of a global platform that will align and map different national and cross-national assessments to enable their cross-country comparison and does not preclude the possibility of drawing directly from national primary exit examinations (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016a). Assessment of learning is an indisputably important part of the educational process and critical for enhancing education quality in sub-Saharan African countries including Kenya. The danger of enhancing the focus on measuring learning lies in the possibility of attaching financing mechanisms to national learning assessments, which could further enhance examination pressure in countries where examination anxiety linked to high stakes testing as the sole measurement of student learning and education quality is already a prominent feature of the educational climate.

In recent years, the international development community has also been influential in fostering an agenda with a focus on girls. The ‘girls’ education’ discourse has roots in the ‘women in development’ (WID) conceptual framework that emerged in the 1970s but remains prominent in many international development initiatives today. The WID framework’s agenda was to increase women’s rate of participation in education and in productive labour, but largely equating ‘gender’ with ‘women and girls’, using a human capital approach that argues for girls’ access to education as a means of boosting the economy within a capitalist framework (Presbey,

2013). It does not see gender as a political concept and minimizes the role of men and the power relations between men and women (Razavi & Miller, 1995; Unterhalter, 2005). The global focus on girls' education similarly concentrates on promoting girls' equal access to participate in education, focusing on girls' disadvantage and often portraying them as vulnerable, excluded and victimized (Wells, 2015). The concentration on girls' exclusion has resulted in increasing equitable access to education between girls and boys in many places where girls are excluded at higher rates than boys and experience extreme forms of violence and discrimination more frequently than boys. For example, in South Asia, the gender parity index for gross enrollment in primary school increased from 0.74 in 1990 to 0.98 in 2011 (United Nations, 2014). Progress was less pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa but approaching parity at 0.93 in 2014 (UNESCO, 2016). While increased access for girls is undoubtedly an essential step, there remains a problematic focus on getting girls into schools, which does not necessarily problematize the kind of schooling that girls receive and consider the extent to which gender equality characterizes the broader education system that girls and boys experience once in the classroom (Presbey, 2013).

The focus on girls instead of gender can be problematic as it often leads to a parity approach that counts numbers of boys and girls and considers equality to have been achieved when the numbers become even, ignoring the more subtle ways that gender discrimination and power structures can negatively affect girls even when they have equal access to institutions and services such as education (Monkman & Hoffman, 2013; Switzer, Bent, & Endsley, 2016). The girls' education agenda is easily measurable, but difficult to link to broader agendas of women's empowerment and gender equality, especially in a practical way that goes beyond rhetoric and discourse (Unterhalter & North, 2011a). The phenomenon of 'turning to girls' or "girl(ing) of

development” (Hayhurst, 2011, p. 532) has been criticized for using girls’ bodies to increase investment in education and development programming without substantively challenging the broader power structures that limit girls’ ability to become empowered through education (Switzer, Bent, & Endsley, 2016). Furthermore, it prevents an examination of the ways that boys’ behaviour, experiences and opportunities are also influenced by gender norms and expectations. In a discourse analysis of reports on education for children in the Global South written by two INGOs, Wells (2015) writes that girls are positioned by INGOs as “the ideal subject of development... blank slates who accept the new inscription of gender relations that NGOs instruct them in” (p. 178) whereas discussions of boys are strikingly absent from the education discourse. In a wider study of 300 policy documents produced by 14 major international development organizations between 1995 and 2008, Monkman and Hoffman (2013) also found a prominent focus on girls, with little or no attention to boys or to the issue of gender. They note that this discursive lens influences reality, driving girls-focused education initiatives and missing the critical point that “gender as a social process reproduces – or has the potential to challenge – social inequities” (p. 63). INGOs, bilateral and multilateral donors have significant influence over the policy and programming decisions of the governments of low-income countries that remain financially dependent on these actors primarily located in the Global North. The girls’ education focus was institutionalized in the MDGs and saw significant growth in gender parity in the first decade of the new millennium. Gender equality in education has not yet received the same attention and priority that is required to foster gender-responsive education systems, often resulting in gender blind schools that are framed as empowering yet can reinforce and perpetuate discrimination and harmful gendered practices.

Conclusion

Current Kenyan education policy and programming is inextricably linked to its colonial history and continues to be influenced by external neocolonial stakeholders. These modern external influences are often supportive of a gender equality agenda and are increasingly devoted to the eradication of GVS. That said, much of the delivery of that agenda comes through programs that concentrate heavily on girls as needing protection that tinker around the edges of the education system with short-term teacher training and extracurricular activities but without addressing the systemic influences placing them at risk. International development discourse and priorities are shifting to embrace a broader understanding of gender equality in education, but the mainstream focus often remains on counting girls in schools. Furthermore, there is limited acknowledgement of how these external actors' own educational priorities – such as a drive toward quantitative measures of learning outcomes that may contribute to an examination orientation – may be enhancing the risks students face in schools as well as ignoring the gender dynamics influencing boys' access, experience and development in education. A caring and supportive learning environment is difficult to foster in light of a lack of sufficient resources and education systems that prioritize examination scores and discipline and are fused with stereotypical and repressive norms of masculinity and femininity. The potential caring role of the teacher is curtailed by the lack of implementation of the policy framework that could support school safety and a system that pressures students and teachers to focus almost exclusively on examination performance. Given the evidence indicating the prevalence of GVS in Kenyan primary and secondary schools, it is important to consider the relationship between this violence and students' learning processes and the role that enhancing gender safety could play in relation

to students' academic experiences and outcomes. With the high premium placed on examination scores as the key to future academic and ultimately professional and material success in Kenya, analyses of gender safety and gender violence in Kenya have to be contextualized within education systems and school climates that center on examinations as drivers of teaching, learning and administrative decisions in primary schools.

Chapter 5: A Multiple Case Study Approach

A multiple case study approach (Stake, 2006) was used to study the relationships between gender safety and violence and the learning processes in two schools.⁸ Case study research is appropriate in the following circumstances: “a) when the research questions are ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions; b) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study; c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and the context” (Yin, 2003, as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). Case studies allow the researcher to draw from and triangulate multiple data sources, each of which provide a piece of the puzzle that contributes to understanding the phenomenon as a whole (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Using a multiple case study approach facilitates the understanding of commonalities and contrasts across two similar yet different contexts to understand how a phenomenon operates and manifests itself in various situations. The triangulation of data sources from researcher observations and participants’ voices is important to create an intimate, accurate and holistic portrayal of the phenomenon. Drawing a deep analysis of multiple sources strengthens the rigour of the analysis by examining the phenomenon in multiple contexts, however each case is still not meant to be necessarily representative of other cases. Stake (2006, p. 8) writes: “[T]he power of a case study is its attention to the local situation.” In this research the two cases were nearby public primary schools, both of the same approximate size but with slightly different levels of remoteness and community demographic. The approach to case study research used here draws mainly on Stake’s description of qualitative case study research (1995; 2006), which is framed within a

⁸ See Appendix 3 for the Research Permit from the Government of Kenya.

constructivist epistemological perspective and employs a flexible design that uses simultaneous data collection and multiple types of triangulation as the main method of ensuring validity.

During the period of data collection, I was affiliated with the University of Nairobi Department of Sociology and Social Work as a Research Associate. This connection greatly enhanced my ability to gain government approval to conduct research in Kenyan public primary schools. The main school selection criteria was to identify two nearby rural or semi-urban area Standards 1-8 primary schools that are not in areas with a recent history of conflict and have a HT and SMC who support the research project. My local supervisor at the University of Nairobi, Professor Octavian Gakuru,⁹ assisted in school selection with his professional contacts with the local Sub-County Education Office, who identified the two schools where data collection took place based on the selection criteria we provided them.¹⁰ The two schools selected included a town school situated in close proximity to the Sub-County Education Office and a rural school approximately a 30 minute motorbike drive away from the town school. Throughout this dissertation, the rural school is referred to as ‘rural’ when quoting participants from that school and the town school is referred to as ‘town’. There was a relatively higher socioeconomic status observed in the town school and surrounding community as compared to the rural school community, however viable statistics documenting these differences were not available. Anecdotally, my interactions with parents and community members in the town school showed slightly higher English comprehension and access to economic opportunities than in the rural

⁹ Professor Gakuru is a friend and colleague of my supervisor and an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Nairobi, studying the sociology of education. He is on the board of directors of a number of educational institutions and organizations in the Kirinyaga East and Central constituencies, including a girls’ secondary school, and has conducted research in this area for over 8 years.

¹⁰ See recruitment and introduction letters in Appendices 4 and 5.

school, where the community was almost exclusively dependent on agricultural day labour. Another factor that shaped the town school context was the presence of a Children's Home (orphanage) beside the town school, resulting in a high proportion of the student population – approximately one tenth although in continuous fluctuation – that lived in and were cared for by the Children's Home. During the seven months of data collection, I lived in the town school community, participating in social activities such as attending church, teacher union meetings, shopping in the market, visiting with teachers and community members after school hours, greeting students in the streets, and learning to cook local dishes. As I did not live in the rural school community, I did not achieve the same level of comfort and familiarity with the local community, potentially influencing my analysis of the context and the openness of participants. While I initially thought this was a limitation, the student participants at the rural school were ultimately more open in their discussions of school violence than the student participants at the town school were, possibly due to the comparatively lower level of familiarity they had with me.

Data collection was divided in two distinct phases lasting from January – July 2015. Phase 1 consisted strictly of participant observation and lasted for one school term, from January - April. Phase 2 (April – July) consisted of individual interviews with students and teachers. The methods described here as Phase 2 of the research changed substantially from those initially proposed based on discussions and observations with school staff and community members and the recommendations and requirements of the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board (REB). Due to the sensitive nature of the research and the involvement of child participants, the REB required that a two-stage ethical approval process be undertaken, aligning with the two phases of the research project. Approval was initially obtained for Phase 1, three months of

participant observation, prior to commencement of the research project. Midway through Phase 1 I resubmitted and was granted approval for Phase 2 of individual interviews.¹¹ This multi-step approval process enabled me to acquire a better understanding of the research context, obtain feedback from participants and community members on the most appropriate research methods and ethical processes, and to establish connections and mechanisms for psychosocial support to participants if necessary.

To obtain feedback on research methods and ethical protocol, I held meetings with school administrators in February 2016 in both schools to gain their feedback. In the rural school I held the consultation meeting with all teachers in the school after classes. The group consultation appeared not to be an effective approach, as teachers appeared highly uninterested during my explanation of the planned research methods, including one who put her head down on the desk and slept through the meeting. Only one teacher provided feedback. I subsequently used a more informal approach where I would speak to teachers about my proposed research and engage those who expressed interest and offered their opinions on an individual basis. This proved much more successful and in a number of cases teachers sought me out afterward to follow up on the suggestions they had provided. Adapting from my previous experience, in the town school I formally consulted only the school administration – the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher (DHT) and Senior Teacher – for feedback on the proposed interview methods and used an informal approach with the other teachers, which again proved successful in soliciting strong input and guidance that influenced my process. Some of the major changes recommended by the teachers and administration included: conducting all teacher interviews in English, soliciting the

¹¹ See Appendices 6 and 7 for Ethics Certificates for Phase 1 and 2.

a local church pastor to provide psychosocial support to children who became upset during or after the interview, interviewing Standard 7 instead of Standard 8 students in the town school, and contacting parents to obtain consent by phone instead of in person to avoid drawing attention in the community to the student and their family. The administration also helped me identify a space to conduct the teacher and student interviews and to arrange times to conduct the classroom consultations and student interviews.¹²

Participant Observation

Participant observation in the schools continued throughout the entire data collection period, although was particularly concentrated during the first three months where it was the sole data collection method. Participant observation is a popular method of data collection because it allows the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge of an environment (Uldam & McCurdy, 2013). In reference to its application to gain an understanding of social movements, Litcherman (1998, p. 402, as cited in Uldam & McCurdy, 2013) indicated that participant observation is particularly relevant for social movements that are made up of micro-actions, take place everyday or are taken for granted. Similarly, participant observation was deemed an important element of the research methodology because it enabled me to understand the school context including the daily minutia that participants would not necessarily think to discuss in an interview. As Adler and Adler write (1998, p. 99), observational researchers are often interested in “processes that are below the surface of conscious awareness, at the taken-for-granted level”. This initial stage of participant observation provided me with a strong understanding of daily school life, enhanced my relationships with teachers and students and strengthened my position in the community.

¹² See Appendix 8 for School Introduction Script.

Observation methods in recent years have shifted toward an integrated membership role in the community being studied. Adler and Adler (1998) identify three main types of community membership during observation: peripheral membership, active membership and complete membership. My role in the school community is classified as active membership, in which researchers become highly involved in central activities and assume responsibilities that advance the group but without fully and permanently committing to members' values and goals. My change in status as I became integrated into the community was evident as people living in the town school gradually shifted from calling out "*Mzungu!*" (white person) upon seeing me to "Teacher Catherine!" Similarly, within the town school after several months, when a visiting teacher asked a teacher from the town school who her guest was, referring to me, the teacher told her, "You are the guest! Catherine is a teacher in this school." I believe that these shifts in how I was seen and referred occurred as a result of efforts I made to become known and familiar in the schools and communities. I worked to get to know and visit teachers, students and their parents, my neighbours and other community members. Additionally, I shopped locally, took local transportation, attended church and community events such as the prize giving ceremony at the local secondary school, and learned and used basic Kikuyu greetings.

I attempted to observe and participate in all parts of school life. I observed 52 classroom lessons in English, Social Sciences, Science, Mathematics, Kiswahili, Physical Education, and Christian Religious Education in Standards 4 - 8.¹³ Of the 52 classes observed, 30 were taught by female teachers and 22 were taught by male teachers. The following tables show a breakdown of the number of classes observed in each subject and Standard:

¹³ See Appendix 9 for Teacher Consent Form (Participant Observation).

Table 1

Classes Observed by Standard

Standard	# of classes observed
4	9
5	7
6	12
7	14
8	8

Table 2

Classes Observed by Subject

Subject	# of classes observed
English	11
Mathematics	11
Kiswahili	5
Social Studies	7
Science	6
Christian Religious Education	7
Physical Education	2
Special Needs	2

I also observed classroom assemblies and teacher staff meetings, spent time with teachers during their school breaks and lunch time in the staff room, played with students on the playground and accompanied them while they completed school chores. Furthermore, I attended extracurricular school trips such as athletic competitions, sports matches, music festivals, a fieldtrip and a teachers' union meeting. During this time, I engaged in informal interviews with students and teachers, taking detailed journal notes to record my observations on a daily basis. Informal

observation was also conducted outside of school hours based on my interactions with community members, however no formal data collection took place outside of the school.

In each school, I volunteered as a means of giving back to the school community as well as providing me with a membership role in the school (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011). After volunteering to work in whatever capacity they most needed, both schools assigned me several classes to teach. I said I was able to teach any class except Kiswahili, and was assigned a Standard 7 English and Standard 5 Science class in the town school and Standard 8 English and Standard 7 Social Studies in the rural school. My classes in the rural school were more infrequent and I taught each class only twice a week, whereas in the town school I taught the same Standard 7 English class every day and Standard 5 Science class 4 days per week. All classes I shared with another teacher, however the experience of teaching in the schools gave me much stronger insight into teachers' perspectives, challenges and concerns than I otherwise would have been able to grasp. I also helped marking examinations and occasionally filled in and acted as a substitute teacher when a teacher was absent, on different occasions teaching English classes, a Physical Education class, and Christian Religious Education classes for Standards 4 – 8. Finally, I taught interested teachers basic computer classes, as both schools had recently received computers that few teachers were able to use.

I did not take detailed notes during my class observations in the school in order to minimize the feeling that teachers were being evaluated by me during classroom observation. I carried a notebook and would sometimes make a quick observation or note down the number of girls and boys called upon or the number of students in the class, but teachers often noticed me doing so and became distracted so I tried to limit this. Instead I tried to remain engaged in class

and notice various different aspects of the class including the language, expression, attitudes and behaviors of the teacher and the students, the setup of the classroom, distribution of girls and boys, the availability and use of teaching and learning materials etc. I strived to make the same level of observations following an interaction with teachers during a staff meeting, playing with children in the school yard, or an informal conversation with a student or teacher that revealed much. As soon as possible following the class or interaction I took point form notes detailing what had taken place.¹⁴ My observations and informal interviewing complement the individual and focus group interviews that provide students and other members of the school community the opportunity to describe the school environment and its effects from their perspectives.

Student Interviews

Open-ended art-based individual interviews were conducted with 31 students (18f/13m). To enable the students to speak in the language of their choice, I hired Mary as a research assistant to conduct translation during the interviews and to subsequently transcribe and translate interviews into English. Mary also contributed significantly to data analysis and helped me understand much of the cultural background that shapes and influences the data. Mary is a Kenyan Social Scientist who has worked on many research projects in education and other sectors. She brought a familiarity and intimate knowledge of Kikuyu and Kenyan culture and languages as well as extensive experience conducting interviews in Kenya that was critical for adapting the interview process to respond to the local context. The individual interviews with children used the Draw-Write-Narrate method (Ogina & Nieuwenhuis, 2010) that enables students to express themselves through drawing and set the direction for the subsequent

¹⁴ See Appendix 10 for example of initial notes and corresponding fuller field notes.

conversation. This method, developed to examine the experiences and needs of orphaned learners in South Africa (Ogina, 2008), is identified as appropriate for discussing children's lived experience in sensitive situations (Ogina & Nieuwenhuis, 2010). The method follows a process whereby children are given the opportunity to draw their own personal narrative and write a description about the drawing.¹⁵ When the researcher speaks individually with the children willing to talk about their drawings, the child describes to the researcher what is going on in the picture, narrating their

experience orally. As they do so, the researcher asks them to elaborate and probe for greater clarity and depth in certain areas.

The method makes the process more relaxing and fun and allows the child to set the

parameters of what he or she wishes to discuss, engaging in

the research process using their talents (Backett-Milburn & McKie, 1999).

The method was considered an appropriate mechanism for handling the sensitivity of the subject of gender safety and violence in Kenyan primary schools and situating the research within children's perspectives by exploring what is most prominent for them in their educational experiences. Our research question and subject were narrower in scope than Ogina and

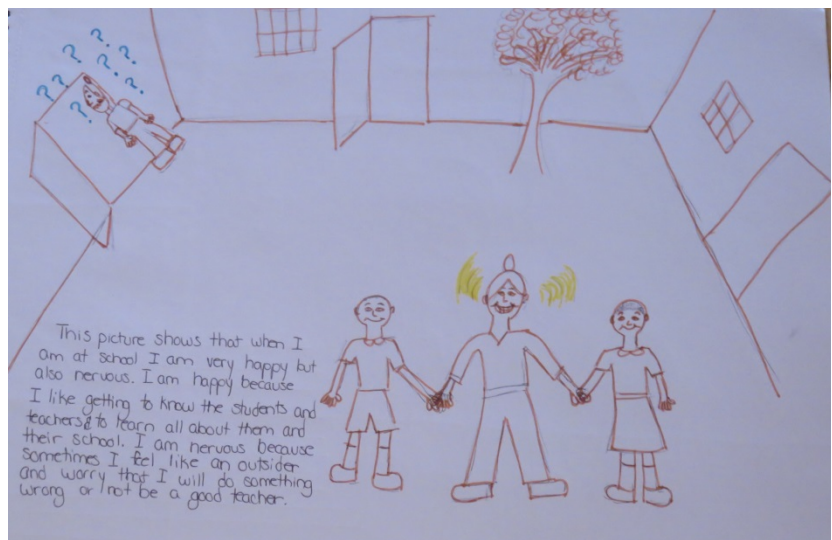


Figure 2: Example drawing. I drew and explained this to participating students to illustrate the draw-write-narrate process.

¹⁵ Prior to beginning the individual interviews, the researcher demonstrates the process to the group of participants by drawing, writing and narrating their own experiences.

Nieuwenhuis', who simply asked children to draw a picture about their lives to provide insight into the life of orphan and vulnerable children in South Africa. I modified the method to encourage a focus on issues of gender safety and violence, while still maintaining a breadth and flexibility that enabled students to explore issues of importance within that scope or to deviate entirely if the issues were not of significant importance to them. To strike this balance, instead of asking them to draw a picture describing their lives broadly, we (Mary and I) asked them to draw a picture showing how they feel when they are at school and encouraged them to illustrate what they like and do not like about school (see Figure 2 for my example drawing). We began our student consultations by having an introductory session with the whole class from which student participants were to be recruited: a Standard 8 class in the rural school and the Standard 7 class in the town school.¹⁶ The entire class participated in the drawing so as to minimize feelings of exclusion among students not recruited for participation in interviews. The preference had been for Standard 8 students due to the sensitive subject matter, however in the town school the administration advised that the Standard 7 students be consulted instead because the Standard 8 students should not lose class time and have distractions that could impact their results on their final examinations. During the introductory sessions we explained the objective of the research project, consent and participation, and the process. We provided definitions in child-friendly language for the words 'research' and 'safety.' I described everything in English and Mary continuously translated into Kiswahili, responding to students' questions as they were posed. We explained that we would ask children to draw a picture responding to the question, "How do you feel when you are at school?" We encouraged them to draw both things that they like and do not

¹⁶ See Appendix 11 for Student Introduction Script.

like about school. We showed them two examples of our own drawings in response to this question. Both of our drawings had positive and negative elements in them to encourage students to reflect upon positive and negative elements of their own school experience.

After completing the explanation and providing an opportunity for students to ask questions, we passed around coloured markers, pencils and crayons and large pieces of white paper. In both classes a teacher was present throughout the explanation but then left when the students started drawing. We stayed and observed the process, encouraging students and answering questions. Students were very engaged in the drawing process and demonstrated high levels of devotion to completing the best possible version of their drawing. Once they finished, we asked them to write their names on slips of paper and, if they wanted to do an interview, to write 'Yes' and the contact information for their parent or guardian parent or 'don't know' if their family did not have a mobile phone or they did not know the number. If they did not want to do an interview, we told them to write down their name and the word 'No' without any contact information. This provided a confidential first step of the consent process where children self-selected to participate in the interviews by allowing them to quietly opt out and required them to actively opt-in to participate. Regardless of their decision, it would not be made known to their peers or teachers. Adult-child power dynamics are often seen as compelling children to participate even when they are given the choice not to (Leach, 2006; Backett-Millburn & McKie, 1999), therefore this approach was used to provide an easy and confidential means of declining involvement.

Our goal was to interview approximately 7 boys and 7 girls in each school, and we tried to balance flexibility to respond to the level of interest expressed by students with time

limitations and the need to work around the schools' schedules of academic and extracurricular activities. In the rural school (where we started our consultations), we initially did not have enough students volunteer to participate, particularly lacking male students. Therefore all students who volunteered were recruited and we had to return to the other students to ask again if anybody else wanted to participate. More students volunteered to participate once the interviews began and word spread among the students about what the interviews were like. We realized upon reflection that the concept of an interview had not been sufficiently explained in the introductory session and adapted the introductory session in the town school to be clearer on this point. In the town school we had more students volunteer than we could accommodate and so we had to randomly draw names to select students without demonstrating bias. In both schools more girls volunteered to participate than boys. We ultimately conducted student interviews with 9 girls and 6 boys in the rural school and 9 girls and 5 boys in the town school, including member check interviews with 2 girls and 2 boys in the rural school and 1 girl and 1 boy in the rural school, where initial emergent themes and analysis were validated with students to ensure they accurately reflected students' school experiences. Member check interviews will be addressed in more depth later in this chapter.¹⁷

Students were reminded that they could conduct the interview in their choice of English, Kiswahili or Kikuyu but were encouraged to use Kikuyu. Most students opted to speak in a mix of all three languages. Mary provided immediate translation, occasionally delaying translation so that she could ask follow up questions and maintain the flow of conversation on a topic. Each interview began by asking the student to describe what was going on in her/his drawing.¹⁸ After

¹⁷ The full list of student and teacher participants (using pseudonyms) is found in Appendix 12.

¹⁸ See Appendix 13 for Individual Guide for Interviews with Students.

they had finished describing the drawing we would ask follow up questions about the drawing and use this to broach other subjects of gender safety and violence in schools. Once all of the interviews were completed we photographed the drawings and gave the originals back to the students. At this point we presented the results of the research in child-friendly language and asked the students to work in small groups to identify how they could address the results of the research to make the schools safer places to learn. We also invited them to elaborate on any of the issues raised and provide feedback on those missed, misunderstood or over or under-represented. The students discussed in small groups and then read their ideas aloud and we discussed them as a class. Participatory analysis processes can facilitate a disruption or silence around a topic while creating imaginative spaces for change through dialogue and empowerment of participants (Mitchell, Walsh, & Moletsane, 2006). With only one participatory feedback session per school, however, I do not want to overestimate the extent of the effect this would have had. A limitation to this participatory analysis element was that we did not raise any elements of teacher misconduct. This choice was made in the interest of child protection as there were teachers present when we shared the findings at each school. We also stressed to the students that the results were gathered from both schools, did not reflect the actions and beliefs of all students, and were not necessarily a reflection of any of the students that had participated at their school. These messages were perceived to be important to avoid giving teachers a reason to punish the students for bad behaviour – such as bullying – that emerged from the study.

The art-based open-ended approach enabled us to provide a more exciting, child-friendly interview process. Particularly given the sensitive nature of our research topic, it was important to establish an atmosphere and activity where students were comfortable, engaged and interested.

The drawings provided a good opening for participants to explain themselves and their views about school at the outset of the interviews. Beginning the interviews with the explanation of the drawing enabled students who were shy and reluctant to respond to interview questions to generate a narrative and spark a discussion. It also enabled us to provide a point of clarification to return to if either we were unsure or the participant seemed unsure of the meaning of a statement or question. We did not press students to discuss violence if they were not willing to, but the inclusion of violent images or descriptions in some drawings provided a counterpoint to indicate that students who stated orally that no violence existed in the school were likely reflecting their discomfort talking openly about these issues rather than a total absence of violence in the schools. Providing and combining the oral discussion with the drawing created different avenues for sharing viewpoints on these difficult subjects and enabled children to express themselves differently through different media.

We wanted to be open to exploring our topic in ways that made sense to the student and to allow the student to bring up other issues that may have been more important to them than the issues we were focusing on, acting as a form of bias check. By providing students with the open-ended request to draw how they feel when they are at school, suggesting that they include things they do and do not like, we got a range of answers, some of which did depict issues of safety and violence and led directly into these conversations. They also pointed to many other elements of school that were valued by students that may not have arisen had we used a standard structured or semi-structured interview guide that focused specifically on the topics we were directly investigating. These elements arose because students had the opportunity to provide their own narrative about their school experience. While we still maintained a research agenda, using the

open-ended and student-centered Draw-Write-Narrate approach enabled us to begin the interview with the perspective of what the child valued and wanted to share with us. This experience reflected Ogina & Nieuwenhuis' (2010) finding that the process enhanced the understanding of diverse children's perspectives by enabling the participants to take the subject matter in different directions before the interview even begins.

Students' verbosity in describing their drawings and answering questions about them varied substantially. Interview duration ranged from 12 to 48 minutes. With students who were less forthcoming and needed more prompting to provide detailed descriptions regarding their school experience, we informally developed a standard set of backup interview questions that we posed, depending on the student's comfort level and the direction of the interview up to that point. These also proved useful to change the tone of the interview if students appeared to be getting uncomfortable talking about negative issues, as a common ethical concern is that children will feel undue pressure to disclose information they do not want to on sensitive subjects. On several occasions participants discussing dangerous elements of school appeared to be uncomfortable doing so. While it would have been beneficial for our research to continue probing these points, we followed our previously agreed upon protocol to shift direction if students seemed nervous and uncomfortable. This protocol was established in order to prioritize concern for individual participants above concern for the research process and its potential social benefits (Bell, 2008). It is important for researchers to use their own judgment to assess students' comfort level, as even with the stated option to refuse to participate or answer a question without negative consequences, children and young people may still find it difficult to refuse, given stark power differentials between researchers and participants (Cree, Kay, & Tisdall, 2002).

Teacher Interviews

Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven teachers (6m/1f) in the rural school and six teachers (2m/4f) in the town school.¹⁹ Additional member check interviews were conducted with one male and one female teacher in the rural school and one female teacher in the town school. Teachers were introduced to the research process in a group setting, where the voluntary and non-obligatory nature of the interviews were clearly explained along with the objectives of the research and the type of questions that would take place in an interview. The administration helped to identify a space for the teacher interviews to occur in both schools: in the town school they took place in an empty classroom used for after school tuition and in the rural school they took place in the Senior Teacher's office. Teachers were recruited by passing around pieces of papers and asking teachers to provide their name and contact information if they were interested in participating in an interview and just their name and the word 'no' if they did not want to participate. I then contacted them on an individual basis to set up a time for the interview to take place. During recruitment, I tried to be sensitive to the fact that teachers may have felt pressure to indicate their interest in participating in an interview even if they did not actually want to do one. Therefore, if I was twice unable to schedule an interview with them due to their unavailability and they did not suggest another time that they would be available, I took this as a sign that they were not actually interested in participating and stopped following up with them unless they subsequently approached me to express their interest in proceeding. I used a similar process for classroom observation to judge if the teacher was comfortable having me in the class.

¹⁹ See Appendices 14 and 15 for the Introduction Script and Interview Guide for Individual Interviews with Teachers.

The teacher interviews lasted between 25 and 55 minutes in duration and took place in English without a translator, following the firm recommendation of the teachers during the Phase 1 consultations. Most interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed, with the exception of three interviews in the rural school, where teachers did not want to be recorded so I took hand-written notes instead which I typed immediately afterward. The interviews were characterized by the relationships and knowledge that I had acquired of the teacher's practices and approaches during the previous months of participant observation. This made it possible to refer to an experience or practice I had observed as an example and ask them to elaborate on their understanding or intention during that exercise. For example, when interviewing a teacher in the rural school about her classroom practices in promoting gender equality, I said that I had noticed when observing one of her classes that she intentionally alternated between calling on girls and boys. She agreed and expanded upon this to say she also alternated between calling on high and low performing students, and those with and without their hands up to answer, so that all students had equal opportunity to participate and were equally encouraged to succeed. Particularly in cross-cultural interviews, "the importance of rapport cannot be overstated" (Ryen, 2003, p. 431) in fostering sufficient confidence among participants to pass over information about themselves to the researcher.

Member Check Interviews

Following the completion of the teacher and student interviews, we conducted follow up or member check interviews with three teachers (1f/1m at the rural school and 1f at the town school) and six students (2f/2m at the rural school and 1f/1m at the town school). In preparation for these interviews, I conducted initial coding of completed teacher and student interviews and

created a list of emerging themes. For students these began with a list of the major things that students ‘liked’ and ‘did not like’ about school. During the member check interviews, we shared the emergent themes, asked the participant whether they agreed or disagreed with the themes and asked questions to contextualize and probe for more detail.²⁰ These interviews held a dual purpose. First, they sought to affirm the accuracy of the emergent themes and their relevance for students and teachers in the school. The goal was not to affirm the validity of the themes and descriptions as an objective social reality but rather ensure a coherent understanding of participants’ perceptions and experiences of reality (Koelsch, 2013). The second objective was to practice theoretical sampling, which is the process of “seeking and collecting pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories in your emergent theory” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 96), a key tenant of constructivist grounded theory analysis. In practice, the students and teachers generally affirmed the relevance of the emergent themes, and expanded to clarify concepts, practices and provide more detail as to their importance and context. For the teachers and students at the town school, the member check interviews took place with participants who had not already been interviewed, due to the high amount of interested participants that exceeded the number I had had time to select for the initial interviews. For the student interviews at the rural school, we did not have more interested participants so we conducted the member check interviews with students who had already participated in an individual interview. We selected the students to participate in a second interview based on our perception of those that seemed most comfortable and open to talking in the initial interview and yet were also relatively representative of the ‘typical’ student in their grade level (i.e. not the student president or a significantly over-age student). We also

²⁰ See Appendices 16 and 17 for the Member Check Interview Guides with Teachers and Students.

included in the member check interviews students who had explicitly and independently asked if they could do a second interview.

Situated Ethics

In addition to ethical approval from the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, and the MoE, I engaged in a practice of continuous negotiated ethics to ensure the comfort and security of my research participants. The adaptation of research processes and continuous ethical negotiation is particularly important when working with children, a vulnerable group whose needs differ from adults' and vary based on a range of factors including cultural context, age, gender and socioeconomic status (Bell, 2008; Morrow, 2008). I used Simons and Usher's (2000) concept of a 'situated ethics' that is locally and continuously negotiated in relation to particular practices within the research community: "...making ethical decisions, in whatever situated context, is a process of creating, maintaining and justifying an ethical integrity that is more dependent on sensitivity to politics and people than it is on ethical principles and codes" (Simons & Usher, 2000, p. 11). A critical preliminary step is the establishment of ethical protocol for the research process with key stakeholders (Minkler, 2004). While it is rarely possible to take into account all possible issues in advance, thinking through possible consequences using tactics such as 'moral imagination' (Hay, 1998) can help to anticipate potential ethical concerns and develop an action plan to deal with them accordingly (Kiragu & Warrington, 2012; Reamer, 2003). I established an ethical protocol in collaboration with the headteacher, the head of the SMC and teachers during the Phase 1 consultations prior to submission for Phase 2 to the REB. The protocol covered procedures for conducting the individual interviews, including location, recording, consent,

confidentiality, anonymity, procedures to address issues of harm, participant selection, support systems in the school and community for participants disturbed by memories discussed during the research process, sharing the research findings and repercussions for individuals within the school (staff or students) found to be harming children.

Consent

Securing the consent of research participants is a critical ethical component in any research project involving human participants. Reflecting Shamim and Qureshi's (2013) claim that obtaining consent at the outset of the project is inadequate and that continuous negotiation and reaffirmation of participants' comfort and commitment throughout the research process is more appropriate, I followed a multi-step process to ensure participants' consent. Prior to beginning school observation, I explained the objectives of the project and gave an overview of the research plan to all students and teachers that may be subject to observation. Each member of the school community was provided the opportunity to select to not be observed, in which case I would avoid the individual and his or her class. Each interview and focus group began with an explanation of the rights of the research participant, including the voluntary nature of their participation and stressing that at any point they may decide not to participate and all of the information they have provided will no longer be considered in the data analysis and any records of it will be destroyed. I followed ethical practices established by other researchers that the consent forms are read aloud and discussed, using explanation and examples to ensure understanding (Brody & Waldron, 2000; Logan, Walker, & Cole, 2008). All participants were explicitly reminded throughout the process that they can withdraw if they wish and that withdrawing would not affect them negatively in any way. At the completion of each interview,

this opportunity was presented again so that participants have multiple opportunities to qualify and negotiate their involvement (Halse & Honey, 2005). All explanations of this process with children and parents were explained orally in Kikuyu. Participants were given the option to provide consent in writing or verbally. Written consent forms were also provided in all cases, in English for teachers and in English and Kikuyu for student participants and their parents.²¹ Pseudonyms are used to refer to all student and teacher interviews; the student participants picked their own pseudonyms but teacher participants were not interested in doing so.

We obtained parental consent for student interviews by contacting parents orally by mobile phone instead of sending home consent forms with students because of high levels of illiteracy and the prominence of Kikuyu, which is primarily an oral language. Mary called each parent individually and explained all of the components within the parental consent forms over the phone. Once we obtained their consent we sent the parents a small amount of funds for their phones to enable them to call us back if they had any questions. Interviews took place in a spare room in each school. We discussed consent with students individually at the outset of each interview, covering the information included in the children's consent forms, confirming their interest in participating and asking them to think about what they would say to stop the interview if they chose to. We also paid attention to their comfort level during the interview and, if a student appeared uncomfortable, we offered them the opportunity to stop the interview, reassuring them that there would be no negative consequences for doing so. In the handful of cases where we did this, several participants took the option to stop while others stated they were

²¹ See Appendices 18, 19 and 20 for Parental, Student and Teacher Consent Forms.

comfortable with continuing. This multi-step process integrated the continuous negotiation of consent throughout recruitment and each individual interview (Tisdall, 2003).

School Context

A significant challenge in maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of student participants was conducting the student consultations in their school. The explanations of the methodology and the provision of feedback on initial results to students took place with their teachers present in both schools, although the teachers opted to leave when the drawing portions commenced. Having teachers present could have curbed students' willingness to ask questions and provide input on the methods and results. The individual interviews took place in an empty classroom in each school. While we tried to invite the students to participate without their teachers' knowledge, teachers could have observed students walking into and leaving the classroom and identified that they had participated in an interview. Similarly, we often had to ask their fellow students for the scheduled student's whereabouts, revealing to their peers that the student was going to participate in an interview. Distrust in the anonymity and confidentiality of the process may have caused some students to avoid discussing negative elements of their school experiences. Despite these challenges, it was necessary to hold the interviews in the school to minimize the time and resources spent by the participants in travelling to and from the interview, to group the students together at once to be able to conduct the introduction to the methodology, the drawings and the feedback all at once and because parents indicated significant trust in the research process so long as the interviews were happening at the school with the permission of the administration.

To avoid negative repercussions from participating, we took care when sharing the results to teachers and students to emphasize as many positive findings as negative ones and to exclude any reference to teacher malpractice, violence or harsh treatment of any kind. The exclusion of teacher malpractice was a difficult decision as it limited our ability to engage in participatory analysis with teachers and students. We decided that it was necessary to prioritize the protection of our participants over all other considerations, as highlighting teacher malpractice that had been disclosed by students was perceived to have a high risk of violent repercussions for the students after we left. All the drawings were handed back to the students at the completion of the research after sharing the initial results with them, as it is important that children retain ownership over their artwork (Barker & Weller, 2003). This potentially compromised students' ability to keep their drawings confidential, as students wanted to see each others' drawings. We decided to do it this way, however, because all students receiving their drawings at the same time prevented the identification of which students had conducted interviews about the drawings and which had not. For one student who had written something very sensitive on his drawing, indicating tendencies toward depression and thoughts of suicide, he accepted our offer to give him his drawing more privately so it would be easier for him to keep it hidden from the other students. The initial research design had involved a much higher level of participatory design and analysis, including group work and sharing findings with both the school and the community. Participatory design and analysis is often recommended for research with children as a means of shifting power dynamics from research *on* children to research *with* children or *by* children, stimulating a process of change, and further enhancing student voice as co-constructors of knowledge (Garton & Copland, 2010; Akerstrom & Brunnberg, 2012; Langhout & Thomas,

2010). Unfortunately, many of these elements had to be eliminated in order to prioritize the protection of participants, especially the child participants, through a focus on anonymity and confidentiality over group discussion and deliberation.

Disclosing and Reporting

A challenge we experienced interviewing students was many participants' reluctance to provide negative information about their schools and other issues. For instance, in one of the schools, a girl described how all of the Standard 7 and 8 students in the school had been beaten by a group of teachers for not attaining the pass mark set by the teachers. The student got emotional as she described being so hurt and explained she had even contemplated dropping out of school after the incident, although ultimately stayed in school due to her mother's encouragement. Despite her disclosure that all students had been beaten, many other students said they had never experienced or witnessed corporal punishment occur in the school. When we asked other students in the same class about the reported incident, some denied that it happened and the ones who confirmed it was true downplayed its severity, saying fewer teachers had been involved. It was thus difficult to determine the prominence of corporal punishment based on the students' contradictory assertions. More broadly, students' claims that other forms of violence such as bullying never occurred in the school was contradicted by the researchers' own observations witnessing bullying occurring on the playground, as well as by other students' claims that bullying did occur. Triangulation was a key practice in making sense of these differing reported experiences, as discussed in more depth below. We suspected that these students wanted to avoid talking about negative things because of fear of repercussions, possibly concerned that teachers would find out and they would get punished or their peers would exclude

them if they said negative things about their school. In our own description of confidentiality at the outset of the initial art-based activity, each interview and within the consent forms, we clarified to students that we would not reveal anything they said to anybody else, unless they revealed that a child was at ongoing risk of being severely harmed. We assured them that in this case we would talk to them about it before sharing the information with anyone else, however they may have been confused as to what level of harm would have necessitated a revision of this confidentiality agreement. We intentionally left this broad so that we could decide when breaking confidentiality may have been necessary on a case by case basis, knowing that this may lead to under-reporting but feeling it was more important from a child protection standpoint.

The issue of under-reporting school violence was much more common in one of the case study schools than the other. Students at the rural school were more forthcoming in their discussions of violence, particularly corporal punishment, than the town school. This possibly reflected that violence was more common in the rural school, however the degree to which violence was masked by under-reporting in the town school was unclear. We considered numerous possible explanations for why students would have denied the presence of school violence. One possibility was my association as a teacher in the school during the previous term, which may have contributed to their decision not share any negative information about the school with someone they considered their teacher. They could have thought that I would share the information with other teachers, even though we explained at the outset of all activities that the information discussed was confidential. In the rural school, where I had not had as much contact with the students, the students more frequently reported negative practices and criticized systems of violence within their school, possibly as a result of the relatively lower level of

interaction they had had with me prior to the interviews. While many studies stress the importance of establishing a strong and trusting relationship with participants in advance, the nature of that relationship and the position of the researcher could limit participants' willingness to reveal negative information. Evidence from other studies indicates that even being in the school will compel children to want to give researchers the 'right' answer, as they feel is expected from them from a teacher in class. Donaldson and Elliot wrote that the "...particular nature of classroom interaction may influence children's explanations, as teachers ask questions not because they want to extend their own knowledge but, usually, to see if pupils know the 'correct answer'" (Donaldson & Elliot, 1990, p. 47). The location of our interviews in the school, combined with my identity as a temporary teacher in the school, may have compelled students to try to give me the answer that they thought I wanted to hear.

Another factor that may have contributed to under-reporting was that I was considered a unique and interesting teacher as a foreigner and a white person in a rural area where many children do not often interact with foreigners. The students may have wanted to impress me by telling me how good their school is, an attitude mostly observed with female students. While I attracted a lot of attention in both schools, this effect may have combined with my stronger presence in the town school to lead to reduced negative reporting. I had taught classes to the students interviewed in both schools, but had taught fewer classes and on a less consistent basis in the rural school than the town school. The age of the students interviewed may have also been a factor. Students in the rural school were in Standard 8 and those in the town school were in Standard 7. Our preference had been to interview Standard 8 students in both schools, however the town school preferred that we interview Standard 7 students so as to not distract Standard 8

students from their focus on their upcoming exit examinations. It is possible that the older students interviewed in the rural school had stronger critical thinking skills and that their relative maturity made them more open to criticizing issues that they did not consider to be right as opposed to the younger students, who had a stronger sense of loyalty to the school and their teachers. We did not anticipate that one standard would make a significant difference, however some of the most outspoken and articulate students interviewed at the rural school were several years overage indicating age and maturity may have been a factor. Finally, we need to consider the possibility that students chose not to disclose this sensitive information because they simply did not want to and were using their agency to exercise a decision to not provide this valuable information to a researcher. Non-communication among participants may be a strategy rather than a deficit. Williamson and Butler observe that, “[increasingly, our research suggests, children and young people endeavour to conceal the problems of their social worlds from adults in order to avoid being ‘humiliated’ by misunderstanding, misrepresentation and misplaced responses” (1995, p. 305). Likely nondisclosure of school violence happens for a variety of the reasons listed above. Accepting and understanding the prevalence of nondisclosure and under-reporting then leads to the question of how to navigate these reported experiences and represent student voice as authentically as possible.

Diversity and Contradictions

Inviting insights from human participants will almost always lead to some questions of credibility and reliability. A child describing his or her personal sentiments and how they feel should always be taken at face value as feelings cannot be ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but at times we received such contradictory statements from students about the practices in their school that it

was difficult to accept both as accurate descriptions of the school. When faced with conflicting statements, we considered numerous factors in crafting analytical themes based on these statements. We thought about a) reasons students had to reveal or obscure events, b) depth of description provided, c) corroboration by other students, d) plausibility of the claim in light of our experiences within the schools being researched and others in Kenya, e) prevalence of the behaviour reported in existing literature on primary school culture in Kenya; and f) validation of emergent themes in member check interviews. In the example provided above, we accepted the girl's description of the incident where a group of students had been beaten for the poor exam performance, despite statements from some of her peers that it had not occurred. We made this decision considering a) the reasons described in the paragraphs above accounting for why students may be declining to discuss the negative elements of the school experience; b) the girl's very detailed description of the incident and her emotional reaction when describing it to us; c) confirmations received during member check interviews; d) the prevalence of corporal punishment in the researchers' experiences in Kenyan schools and the extensive literature documenting its ongoing practice (e.g. Archambault, 2009; Mweru, 2010) and e) identification of corporal punishment as an ongoing or occasional practice in at least one teacher interview in each school.

To produce a cohesive picture of school life and student experience drawn from student narratives, it was necessary to situate the findings from students' art-based interviews within the larger context of what we knew about the schools drawn from other data sources, the surrounding literature and our own experiences. This highlights the critical role of triangulation in clarifying, confirming and completing research findings, especially when dealing with

sensitive research with children. Carter et al. (2014) identify four different types of triangulation, that are recommended by Stake (1995) for use in qualitative case study research: method triangulation (multiple methods collecting data about the same phenomenon), investigator triangulation (multiple researchers providing observations and conclusions), theory triangulation (different theories to analyze and test data) and data source triangulation (data from different populations or types of people). We drew upon three sources of triangulation. Three months of participant observation in two different schools provided a stronger sense of school culture, including observing cases of corporal punishment first hand. Having two researchers allowed us to offer different explanations, theories and conclusions to contextualize student narratives. It was particularly useful to have the combination of an ‘outsider’ and an ‘insider’ perspectives to provide different lenses and familiarity with the context. Finally, interviewing teachers and school administrators as well as students fostered a sense of completeness and confirmation by obtaining multiple perspectives (Houghton & Keynes, 2013). Triangulation enables us to consider student perspectives while deepening our understanding of what the competing stories tell us about the prominence of GSS and GVS. Respecting the perspectives of all students compels us to create an over-arching narrative takes each student’s story at face value, considering their motivation for telling it to us and accepting them as equally valid and valuable. Thus, we simultaneously chose to trust the participants’ descriptions of GVS as well as other participants’ contradictory claims about the absence of violence. This diversity of views pointed to a significant range of student experiences with GVS and the intention to present a positive school image because students perceived their school in this way and/or desired that we retain that positive perception.

Data Analysis: Constructivist Grounded Theory

Constructivist grounded theory analysis was used to develop an emergent theory as to the relationship between GSS, GVS and student learning processes, namely that individual teacher agency enhances GSS but that it is undermined by systemic priorities of examinations, discipline and hierarchy that directly and indirectly perpetuate GVS. Grounded theory is an analytical method with which to determine the essential themes and theory that emerge from a research project. Its methods are defined by Charmaz (2005, p. 204) as “a set of flexible analytic guidelines that enable researchers to focus their data collection and to build inductive middle-range theories through successive levels of data analysis and conceptual development.” Its defining components include: simultaneous data collection and analysis; analytic codes constructed from the data; constant comparison across data sources; the development of theory at each stage of the research process; memo-writing; and theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). *Constructivist* grounded theory maintains most of these components, but rejects the idea that theory ‘emerges’ from the data independently, recognizing instead the role of the researcher in shaping the narrative by drawing on her own experiences and beliefs and through her interactions with participants and the data (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory is distinct from other forms of qualitative analysis in that it is focused on emerging theory and theory-driven data, rather than providing a thick description of a case that may include components outside of the theory, and using constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling to identify emerging theory throughout the data collection process (Hood, 2007). Grounded theory was designed “to demonstrate relations between conceptual categories and to specify the conditions under which theoretical relationships emerge, change, or are maintained” (Charmaz, 2003, p.

311). It is thus an ideal approach for understanding connections, interactions and influences that characterize cultures within case studies.

Based on Charmaz's (2006) description of constructing grounded theory, I employed multiple qualitative data collection methods and constant memoing and comparisons across data sources to develop an emergent theory based on the experiences of participants. Coding consisted of three main phases: 1) initial coding including naming each line or segment of data; 2) a focused, selective process to sort, synthesize, integrate and organize data based on the most frequent or significant initial codes; and 3) theoretical coding to identify possible relationships between the categories developed in the second stage (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978). I conducted initial coding of my field notes and transcribed teacher interviews on an ongoing basis throughout data collection. I coded using active terms usually selected from phrases used by the participants - such as 'having enemies,' 'taking you far' and 'being here for the children' - to link interview statements to key processes that were followed up on in subsequent data gathering (Charmaz, 2003). Initial coding of student interviews was somewhat delayed due to the need to first translate the interviews, however I was able to conduct an initial coding of some student interviews while the interviews were still ongoing. After completing initial coding of all my student and teacher interviews, my field notes and my memos, I had a total of 519 initial codes that described the content of each data segment. As I reviewed the codes and the corresponding data points I began to group them together into categories. I created 25 selective codes, which were then sorted into three theoretical categories: Caring about protection and equality, Perpetuating gender violence in schools, and Examinations: The gateway to everything. These three theoretical categories fit within a single core category: examination orientation undermines

teacher efforts to enhance gender safety while perpetuating practices of gender violence in and around schools. A table displaying the selective and theoretical codes is found below.²²

Table 3

Categories and Codes

Core Category	Examination orientation undermines teachers' efforts to enhance gender safety while perpetuating practices of gender violence in and around schools		
Theoretical Codes	Caring about protection and equality	Perpetuating gender violence in schools	Examinations: The gateway to everything
Selective Codes	Treating students equally	Having enemies	Being the best
	Challenging expectations	Caning hurts	Beating for success
	Staying close	Verbally abusing	Taking you far
	Turning to teachers	Descending on girls	Going nowhere
	Feeling safe	Showing strength	Gateway to everything
	Summoning parents	Anything can happen	
	Intervening	Knocking you down	
	Doing something	Forgetting about	
	Valuing friendship	boys	
	Reporting abuse	Disappearing	
		Starting at home	

²² See the more extensive table including the Theoretical, Selective and Initial codes in Appendix 21.

The process of simultaneous data collection and initial analysis enabled the use of participatory practices to engage the input of my research community in the construction of the analysis. This process was particularly prominent during member check interviews with students and teachers and feedback meetings where the initial results of the studies were shared with the teachers and the class of students who had participated in each school, followed by a period of group discussion and individual feedback initiated by some teachers. These processes also constituted theoretical sampling, where the emergent theories that began to be identified during the initial analysis were discussed and investigated for credibility and further depth during the subsequent student and teacher interviews. This occurred most explicitly during the member check interviews. Charmaz writes that theoretical sampling “builds a critical self-correcting step into the analytical process” (2003, p. 325). Theoretical sampling can occur through several different means; most often it is interpreted as purposeful sampling in which participants are specifically selected based on their experience or identity that contributes to an emergent theme. It can also involve asking participants targeted questions or supplement information about linkages between categories and using the resulting data to verify or modify the theory (Morse, 2014). In this case both of these approaches were used: some new and recurring participants were selected based on their expressions, demonstrations and experiences of child protection in education, and all participants in member check interviews were asked targeted questions with the objective of verifying and modifying the emergent theory.

Conclusion

This study draws together a collection of qualitative methods including participant observation, art-based open-ended student interviews, semi-structured teacher interviews and

open-ended member check interviews with students and teachers to form a multiple case study approach to analyzing GVS and GSS and their relationship with student learning processes in two primary schools. The process is guided by situated ethics that govern questions of consent, language, location, reflexivity, negotiation and participation. Data analysis was conducted using constructivist grounded theory which employs a process of continuous data collection, coding and theoretical sampling to hone in on connections between initial categories that form the basis of the study's emergent theory. Key to all of these processes is the understanding of the researcher's perspective and positionality in shaping the lens through which the research is understood, although efforts were taken to validate the initial results and analysis with student and teacher participants as well as broader community members. The methods are designed to reflect both the analytical perspective of the researcher as well as to bring forward the voices, knowledge, experiences, and values of the local child and adult participants.

Chapter 6: Caring about Safety and Equality

Teachers and students in both case study schools demonstrated and described efforts to enhance gender safety on school premises and extending into the home and the community. While some of these efforts were driven by education policies and systems, most arose out of the care and compassion of individual teachers. The individual nature of child protection and gender equality efforts indicates that teachers took the initiative to go to both ordinary and extraordinary lengths to ensure student safety. In the cases observed, child protection was not communicated to teachers or administrators as an expectation or a component of the job description of a teacher. Much of the extent to which gender safety was pursued was determined by the agency of individual teachers to work through and sometimes against the education system in which they were employed. While teachers' agency is constrained in many ways, primary school students' agency is much more so, limiting their ability to pursue the enhancement and assurance of school safety for themselves and their peers.

This chapter explores the efforts in both case study schools to provide girls and boys equal opportunities and encouragement to learn and develop academically and socially, including through the acknowledgement and challenging of conventional beliefs about masculinity and femininity. The chapter describes how teachers in the case study schools demonstrated equal academic expectations for girls and boys in classrooms, but simultaneously continued to reinforce gender unequal expectations through extracurricular activities and practices. It addresses the role of teachers in providing guidance, support and security to students and considers the reasons why students both were and were not comfortable turning to their teachers for support. I will describe teachers' measures to intervene in addressing child neglect and abuse

experienced by students in their homes and communities, identifying the opportunities and necessary structures required to enable or prevent these protective interventions from occurring. Finally, I examine students' efforts to participate in the enhancement and maintenance of school safety and gender equality, considering the ways in which students attempt to handle gender safety issues independently and/or turn to teachers for support. With each component of gender safety identified in the schools, challenges and limitations that obstruct a more complete realization of GSS are also described.

Expecting Equality

In observations and interviews, teachers at both schools demonstrated a range of practices that at different times both challenged and reinforced traditional gender expectations that favour boys and men over girls and women. Teachers demonstrated similar academic standards for girls and boys, expecting high academic performance from both sexes and encouraging girls and boys to pursue professional career paths, including in realms traditionally dominated by men. At the same time, I also observed practices that privilege boys outside of the academic realm in school chores and extracurricular activities. Describing their approaches to gender equality, teachers maintained a rhetoric of 'sameness' that denied differences between girls and boys, concentrating on their common status as 'students' but preventing the recognition of differentiated challenges faced by both. Students also expressed a sameness discourse that in some ways challenged conventional expectations of femininity and masculinity but also ignored the obstacles that arose from the ongoing presence of those expectations in the broader society.

Promoting gender equality. Field notes from 52 classroom observations indicated that the majority of teachers in the two schools throughout multiple grade levels called on boys and

girls fairly equally and held high academic and ultimately professional career expectations for both boys and girls across academic subjects. In some cases, teachers did this with conscious intention, as observed in the following excerpt from my field notes where I documented Teacher Sharon's efforts to avoid bias in the attention she gave to students. She demonstrated "pointed intent to call on equal numbers of girls and boys ... she commented explicitly on calling on this [practice], saying almost to herself, 'That was a boy...' and then calling on a girl next. She told me afterward that her students know that this is the way it works in her class... if she does call on too many girls in a row, the boys will get upset and complain." I did not observe other teachers demonstrating conscious selection of girls and boys in equal numbers to the extent that Teacher Sharon did, but in most of the classes I observed, boys and girls were called on in relatively even numbers. I did not observe teachers showing differentiated academic expectations of boys or girls in any subjects, including in Math and Sciences where teachers often hold lower expectations for girls.

Girls and boys both expressed ambitious career goals, most commonly identifying that they want to be surgeons, doctors, lawyers, engineers, judges, pilots and journalists. The table below depicts the frequency of aspired professions between school and gender.²³

Table 4

Desired Profession by School and Sex

Profession	#	School		Sex	
		Rural	Town	F	M
Nurse	1	1	0	1	0
Engineer	5	3	2	2	3

²³ Note that not all students were asked this question due to the open-ended non-structured nature of the interview questions. Aspired profession was a common follow up question but there was no interview guide with standardized questions across interviews, therefore some students were not asked this question.

Lawyer/Judge	6	4	2	4	2
Doctor/Surgeon	7	5	2	6	1
Accountant	1	1	0	0	1
Metereologist	1	0	1	0	1
Soldier	1	0	1	0	1
Police Officer	1	0	1	0	1
Pilot	1	0	1	1	0
Journalist	2	0	2	1	1
Not asked	5	1	4	3	2

There was no obvious gender differentiation between these professional aspirations. Girls did not shy away from traditionally masculine professions in math or science nor express the belief that they were less capable of reaching these goals than their male counterparts. Indeed these career objectives were strong driving forces in motivating them to study and stay in school, as stated in an interview with Faith (Standard 7, female, rural):

CV: What is it that makes you want to study so hard? Why do you study so hard?

Faith: When I go to university I want a good job not washing cars or feeding babies.

CV: I see, and what job do you want to do?

Faith: I would like to be an engineer.

Faith defined her career goal of engineering as a ‘good job’ in contrast to traditionally maternal and feminized domestic paid and unpaid work involving ‘feeding babies.’ I observed teachers supporting and encouraging girls in these career objectives without suspicion or dismissal of them as unrealistic, such as in this example from my field notes that describes a scene in the rural school staff room:

... a female teacher asked two girls what they wanted to be when they grow up. Both responded ‘a surgeon’ and the teacher seemed pleased. She asked if they would take care of her, cut her open and stitch her back up when she needed it. They said they would. Another teacher advised that they will need to be strong in math and science to be surgeons, suggesting they will need to stay particularly motivated in these subjects.

Academic expectations were more clearly expressed and articulated in the town school than the rural school, but in both schools there was no discernment between academic expectations expressed for girls and boys, and I never heard a teacher of either sex suggest that certain professions were less achievable or less appropriate for girls or boys.

Seeing pupils, not girls or boys. Several teachers explained their approach to equal treatment of girls and boys using a historical explanation that recognizes a traditional undermining of girls' value in Kenya and the need for correcting it today by emphasizing boys and girls as 'the same.' Mr. Ngugi suggested that the equal expectations held for girls and boys in school may be separated from the social expectations that existed for them outside of school, suggesting that a level playing field existed in the school grounds despite differentiated expectations and demands once they head home: "And we have our roles in society. But here in school we are the same." Mrs. Wangari, a teacher at the town school, described the need for teachers to correct for social preferences toward boys:

... Africans believe... they take the boy child with a lot of dignity in comparison to the girl child... when they come to school, you as the teacher, you should just try to make it balanced. Let the pupils in your class know that they are pupils and not girls or boys. So meaning as you deal with them... deal with a girl in the same way as you are dealing with a boy. OK back there at home, maybe it could be different, but in school, we tend to make it just be the same.

Mrs. Wangari deflected the differences between girls and boys by focusing on their common identity as pupils. In so doing she denied that there were any discrepancies in ability but also preventing any adaptation to the specific needs of each group. She recognized that they may be treated differently outside of the school but claims that they can 'make it balanced' in the school by simply treating children of each sex in the same way, implying that this will sufficiently compensate for the disadvantage girls experience outside of the school. Other teachers also

describe their attempts to provide gender equal education by emphasizing sameness and asserting that gender differences do not exist between girls and boys. Mr. Choge, a teacher at the rural school, described the way that sameness permeates their approach to rectifying gender imbalances, framing them as similar in that they are all pupils and human beings, and not differentiated as boys and girls:

... we should not think as boy and girl but think as pupils... There is no exam for boys and an exam for girls. The exam is the exam. We want them to work so that those stereotype jokes, that kind of bring bias, are not practiced amongst themselves... So in the end we end up seeing ourselves as human beings, the children will see themselves as human beings not as a boy and a girl...

Mr. Choge suggests that schools and teachers are combatting repressive stereotypes by pointing to the students' common humanity and identity as pupils and rejecting their identification and classification as boys and girls.

Negotiating traditional gender expectations. While teachers generally did not show gender bias inside the classroom, outside of the classroom boys were privileged in both formal and informal extracurricular activities on the school ground. Preferential treatment of boys was apparent in sports (especially football²⁴), chores, clubs such as girl guides and boy scouts, and student government. Boys played football on a daily basis, whereas girls tended to sit and chat around the edge of the field or play different games. In many cases this was due to personal preference, but girls also reported that they were unable to participate in playground sports as the boys pushed them out or prevented them from playing. I experienced this challenge when I tried to organize a game specifically for girls, as documented in my field notes from the town school:

... today I got a basketball from the Deputy's office and took it out to the girls who were waiting for me. At first a lot of boys joined us so we played boys

²⁴ 'Football' is the word used in Kenya to refer to the sport that, in Canada, is called soccer.

against girls. But the boys play sports all the time, and they had a few boys from upper standards, so the girls barely touched the ball. So the boys won, but I said that at lunch time just the girls would play. This proved difficult as a small group of boys kept coming in and stealing the ball, even though the girls kept asking them to leave us alone.

Boys dominated football in the space of the school field, however, their games were also prioritized by teachers during interschool athletics days. In the numerous Sports Days I attended,²⁵ there were several occasions where time ran out and the boys' football proceeded but the girls' match was cancelled. Several male teachers independently commented to me casually that girls are not as good at football as boys. When I asked them why they laughed and shrugged their shoulders. A vision of equality in the school compound is depicted in the student's drawing in Figure 3, which shows a girl happy to be at school and playing football with a boy. I saw girls and boys playing sports together as depicted during the few physical education classes I watched. The informal play I observed outside of class time did not reflect this image. Aside from physical education classes and organized sports, boys dominated the football field.

²⁵ Sports Days were day-long inter-school athletic competitions involving team sports and individual track and field events.



Figure 3: Happy as a lark. Student drawing of girl and boy playing football together.

Differentiated treatment was also exercised in school chores. Both male and female students were given school chores and were responsible for carrying out chores on a daily basis to keep the school clean. Boys, however, appeared to be given more free time in school for studies and sports, while girls often had chores that kept them occupied, as described in the following field notes excerpt:

At the end of the school day at [the rural school] I spent time with some girls (approximately 10) who were washing the utensils from the teachers' lunch. I asked them where the boys were, since I didn't see them doing other chores. They said the boys are in class. I asked why are the boys in class and you have to do chores? They said because the boys don't know how to wash.

The chores typically fell along lines of traditional gender roles with boys collecting water and chopping firewood and girls washing the floors and dishes. The gendered division of labour in relation to school chores was in some cases assigned by teachers and in some cases internalized by students, as illustrated in the quote above where the girls consider it natural that they should

have to do the washing and, as a result, boys are privileged with more class time or play time. Even while teachers feel it is important to treat boys and girls the same in their classroom and assert that the students are treated differently in school, the school compounds were full of subtle inequities that, by teachers and administration enable ignoring them through a discourse of sameness.

Some teachers deviated from this norm and took actions that challenged unequal treatment of girls outside of the class. Mrs. Mulumba, for example, a Standard 3 teacher at K, explained to me how she had intentionally changed her teaching practice to become more egalitarian in her assignment of school chores, as described in this field note excerpt:

She told me that all the girls were doing the sweeping while the boys fetched water but that next week it would switch and the boys would clean the class while the girls fetched water. She told me that all boys and girls should do all types of chores. She said previously she... had boys do certain tasks and girls do more cleaning, but then eventually she came to see it differently.

Although she could not pinpoint what prompted this change in behaviour, Mrs. Mulumba had realized that she was not, in fact, treating her students equally by maintaining the status quo division of labour. Only by recognizing the different social expectations for girls and boys was she then able to identify the difference within their experiences and adjust her practice to develop a systematic process for ensuring that girls and boys were given equal expectations in terms of their obligations to contribute to the cleanliness of their class and the school environment.

Resistance to gender inequity could also be much more overt. Mrs. Wangari, a teacher at the town school, described an intervention she had undertaken to rectify discrimination propagated by the male Deputy Head Teacher (DHT) at the school. The DHT had switched the student president from a student-elected female student to the male runner up. According to Mrs.

Wangari, the DHT had believed a boy should be in charge. She initially described this situation to me informally, proclaiming with indignity, “It is because of the gender!” I asked her about it again in an interview, when she described the situation:

Because they voted democratically... So the girl had the most marks or the highest points, huh? Then after that they picked the girl to be the leader. Then they needed an assistant, so they voted for the boy... So when they talked of the girl being the junior, of course I had to fight for the girl’s right. Yeah, and she’s still the boss because she was democratically elected. Yeah!

Mrs. Mwangari demonstrates her own empowerment by confronting and challenging the discriminatory decision of the male authority figure to ensure gender justice is realized for her student. Her indignant proclamation, ‘of course I had to fight for the girl’s right’ demonstrates her recognition that gender inequality can pervade the school environment and that there is a need to fight for a space in which gender discrimination can be explicitly identified, addressed and rectified. By resisting the patriarchal expectations exhibited by the DHT, she enabled a female student to assume the position of authority that she was elected to by her peers.

Staying Close

To eliminate risks of violence for girls and boys, physical proximity to students was described by teachers as one of their basic but fundamental practices that helps to keep students safe in school. Teachers asserted that students know that if a teacher is present it will be less likely that the students will seriously harm each other. Girls and boys faced risks of different types of physical violence at the hands of their fellow students. According to teachers and students, boys were more likely to fight amongst themselves than girls were, but girls were still known to get into physical fights occasionally. Boys were reported to sometimes physically attack girls, especially if they had been sexually rejected. Thus both boys and girls were at risk of

physical attack from peers. Girls were additionally exposed to sexual harassment from boys, mostly in the form of unwanted touching or pressure for ‘relationships’ – a term usually used to refer to sexual relationships. The practice of ‘staying close’ to the students was mentioned by numerous teachers as one of their main responsibilities and best practices for enhancing and ensuring student safety and protecting students from each other. Mrs. Wangari describes the act of simply being present as a protective factor for students:

First of all, you have to keep teacher-pupil contact. Yeah that time has to be there... you know you are with them, meaning they are safe. By being so they are ok. For example, you go to class on time. Be there during, like now we eat our lunch, so we are there even during lunch time they can’t hurt one another.

Thus teachers recognize and acknowledge that students face potential harm on school premises and the main strategy to prevent inter-student violence is teachers’ physical presence and supervision. Despite this recognition, they acknowledge students are often not in the company of a teacher and are therefore vulnerable while on school premises.

Students arrive at school at 6:30am and complete chores until 7:00 am, when they either continue chores or attend remedial classes until classes officially start after 8am. Each week a different teacher is assigned to be on-duty and come to school at 6:30am to supervise the students while they are doing their chores. Mrs. Njenga described in her interview what has happened at a nearby school when teachers were not present when they were supposed to be:

CV: And you say sometimes they are abused even by their fellow pupils... You’ve had incidences of that happening?

Njenga: We’ve found some incidences of that happening. Especially, a school just nearby... There was an incidence whereby the teacher on duty did not arrive in time. Therefore when the pupil came early a boy had to descend on a girl who had also come early... The boy descended on a girl... And abused her. Before the teacher came... so we try to curb that. By making sure that if you are on duty you have to be here early... Because if they come alone such instances can happen.

After describing the sexual violence that occurred on the nearby school property during the teacher's absence, Mrs. Njenga continued to describe the fear girls faced afterward and their refusal to come to school in the absence of a teacher:

CV: And how do you think that makes girls feel about school? When something like that can happen? How do you think they will feel about coming to school?

Njenga: They will fear. They fear because I was there at [the school where that happened] that time... girls would come and when they find that there is no teacher some could refuse to enter the compound. And wait at the gate until the teacher comes.

Mrs. Njenga's description illustrates that students, especially girls, are susceptible to violence from their peers on the school grounds and that the mere presence of a single teacher can prevent violence from occurring. On the occasion that Mrs. Njenga describes, a teacher failed to fulfill this responsibility and a female student was sexually abused by a male student. As a result, girls at this school and neighbouring schools refused to enter the school compound unless a teacher was present to dispel the risk. This shows teachers do play a vital protective role in the school ground simply through their presence, but also that it does little to reduce the propensity for gender violence as the temporary absence of a teacher provides an opportunity for students to instigate violence with little fear of the consequences.

Students confirmed that a teacher presence can be a protective factor and indicated that violence frequently occurs in classrooms when teachers are not present, even when teachers are on the school compound but not in the classroom. This phenomenon was described by Afora (Standard 8, male, rural) in terms of fighting between students and by Agape (Standard 8, female, rural) in terms of unwanted sexual touching:

Afora: Students even fight in classrooms... Sometimes when teachers are in a meeting, students fight in the class. The funny thing with fighting in this school is

that no one will shout to raise an alarm that there is a fight, they just watch to see who wins. When they are done or if a teacher comes in, they all sit down as if nothing has happened.

Agape: When the teacher is not in class, you will find boys going to where girls are seated and then they start touching them.

MNK: How often does it happen; like how many times in a day or a week?

Agape: You cannot miss one in a day.

Afora describes the students' complicity in hiding the fight, taking advantage of teachers' absence from the class, while Agape's description reveals the daily frequency of teachers' absence that exposes students to regular abuse from boys as they sit in the same seats where they learn their lessons when the teacher arrives. These narratives point to fundamental flaws in the teachers' 'staying close' logic, as it only works to prevent inter-student violence while teachers are present, and students are frequently left unattended for long periods of time during the school day.

While students may think that teachers are ignorant of their misbehaviour during teachers' absence, Mr. Wangui, a teacher at the rural school, also raised the necessity of teachers' presence in the classroom to prevent physical fighting: "To prevent fighting you have to always make sure you know where the pupils are, and wherever there are students there is a teacher." Despite this acknowledgement, teachers' absences from class were frequent for many different reasons. Sometimes they were absent due to illness, appointments or mandatory training, and sometimes because they were late, opted not to go to class, or assigned students work and then returned to the staff room while the work was being completed. The schools do not have the resources to arrange for supply teachers to come in during planned teacher absences and minimal efforts are made to redistribute teachers who have spare periods during those times.

When teachers are present, they often spend class time in the staff room or in meetings, leaving children unattended. The first and most basic strategy that teachers use for ensuring student safety and protection against physical violence and sexual harassment at schools is being physically present in the school compound and in classes, but this strategy is often neglected in various ways, leaving students exposed to multiple risks.

Turning to teachers. Students described feeling a degree of safety and protection provided by their teachers, although this was inconsistently expressed and often in relation to specific individual teachers. Some students stated that they felt comfortable turning to their teachers for assistance with non-academic problems and trusting in the ability of their teachers to protect them. Teachers were also a source of advice for students dealing with challenges at school and at home, as described by Chantal (Standard 7, female, town) and by Afora (Standard 8, male, rural):

CV: What kind of problems would go to talk to the teachers about?

Chantal: About your home. If your parent is giving you a lot of work and you are unable to do it, and you are feeling bad about that, you can come and talk to the teachers and she will advise you.

Afora: If I have a problem either at home, in school or a personal problem, I talk to a teacher because I feel if I don't talk about it, it might bring more problems to me or to other people in the future.

Chantal and Afora's statements show that they are comfortable turning to teachers when facing a personal dilemma and that they feel comfortable that they will receive helpful advice. On a more physical level, Lily (Standard 8, female, town) asserts that, even though she says fighting happens in the school and she dislikes it, she is not afraid of fighting because she knows she can turn to teachers for support:

MNK: Do you ever fear that somebody will fight you?

Lily: No.

CV: Why is that?

Lily: Because if somebody fights me I can always tell the teacher and if you are beaten on your way home, you can always tell the parent who will come to school and report.

She describes an expectation that there will be negative repercussions for fighting that will prevent the situation from re-occurring. Even if she confides in her parent, she expects that the parent will then report the issue to the school so that the teacher or administration can handle it.

While Lily acknowledged that fighting occurred at school and on the way home, she felt secure in having a trusted adult to turn to at school and at home. Faith (Standard 7, female, town) described her trust in teachers as helping her to avoid fighting and instead take her problem with another student to a teacher to be handled. Faith explained: “If they throw me and I get hit, I can go and tell the teacher, the teacher can help me... I feel like [I want] to beat her but I don’t beat her I go and tell the teacher.” Turning to teachers can provide students with an outlet for expressing their fears and trying to solve problems they are having with issues other students. This trusting relationship assuages their fears, allowing them to concentrate on positive elements of school such as learning, friendship and play and in some instances prevents fighting. Teachers confirmed that students approach them with social problems and threats they face in the home and at school, including issues of violence that students may not realize are highly sensitive, such as domestic violence or child abuse. Mr. Ngugi says, “Teachers are well positioned to identify, it’s easy. The children have a tendency of confiding to their teachers. Children will tell you everything that transpires in the home, even in the house, even at night.” Gaining the confidence of these students puts teachers in a position of confidentiality and underlines the responsibility for child wellbeing that corresponds to their positions of authority. But it is apparent that not all

students feel they can turn to teachers and some are concerned that, if they did, they would be taken seriously.

While some students said they were comfortable telling teachers about problems in school and/or at home, others said they would not go to their teachers if they had a non-academic problem. The reasons they provided included feeling that the teachers could not do anything, would not take them seriously, would tell the other teachers or would blame or criticize the child for their problem. Jet Li (Standard 8, male, rural) says he would not tell teachers about issues of domestic violence because of a disbelief in their ability to affect change:

MNK: Are there problems that you feel you can never tell teachers about?

Jet Li: Yes.

MNK: What are some of those?

Jet Li: If my father comes home drunk and beats my mum and she runs away, I cannot come and tell that to anyone here.

CV: Do you have anyone you could talk to about such kind of things?

Jet Li: Just the friends.

MNK: Why won't you tell a teacher about problems that you are having at home?

Jet Li: Because they won't help.

Jet Li prefers to confide in his friends about domestic violence in his home because of his belief in his teachers' incapacity to affect change. Even when students believe that a teacher could help them, they may be sceptical as to whether they would. They distinguish between teachers who are sympathetic to students and who would provide advice and those who will not listen to them, a distinction made by Immaculate (Standard 7, female, town): "some will give you advice on what you should do but others will tell you to go and report to another teacher." Immaculate's statement about the disinterest of some teachers regarding students' personal issues – including serious ones like experiencing violence at home and in school – highlights the individual nature of teachers' approach to caring about and intervening to protect students. Some teachers will

provide students with extensive guidance, advice and support, while others will ignore the issue all together. The teachers and administration did not identify any standard school or government policies or expectations for how to act in these situations.

Approaching teachers with problems was described by some students as a risky endeavour, as not all teachers who did not take you seriously would simply brush you off, as described above by Immaculate. Several students mentioned that there could be negative repercussions for reporting problems to teachers. One area where this risk seemed particularly strong in relation to girls was reporting sexual violence and harassment they face from their male peers. Lily (Standard 7, female, town) explains that sometimes reporting an incident to a teacher can be met with ridicule or verbal abuse: “Sometimes you can report something to the teacher and he or she thinks you are joking and speaks ill to you.” When a student reports violence or harassment to a teacher, the teacher may respond in a hostile manner, including placing blame on the student reporting. Female students report being blamed for boys’ sexual harassment of them, with teachers suggesting that they were courting this attention or did something to invite it. Agape (Standard 8, female, rural) explains that if she reported unwanted sexual touching to a teacher she expected the following response: “That maybe I was playing bad games with the boys and that’s why they touched me.” In these cases not only does the student not gain any security, but the violence perpetuated by the boy is endorsed by the teacher through their refusal to intervene and by laying blame on the girl in question. This conveys to students that boys are entitled to sexually harass girls as they please, that girls have nowhere to turn for support and that they must deserve the abuse they face.

The major risk that both boys and girls face in reporting physical attacks was that the teacher would respond by beating the student at fault. This was also reported to be a likely repercussion if teachers took girls' reports of sexual harassment seriously. Jet Li (Standard 8, rural) explains what would happen if he reported a student for fighting, compared to what he would like to happen:

CV: And what will happen if you report to the teachers, what do you want them to do?

Jet Li: Punish him.

CV: Yeah, how?

Jet Li: Wash the class alone.

CV: And is that what happens when you report them?

Jet Li: No.

CV: What happened?

Jet Li: He was being caned with a stick.

As described by Jet Li, the student may have turned to the teacher out of a desire and expectation that the perpetrator of violence would be punished, but not necessarily that the perpetrator then becomes a victim of violence themselves, which was a frequent outcome or result of reporting.

The need to stand up for students' safety was sometimes pro-actively identified by teachers, who might then assume an advocacy role for their students. Mrs. Macharia, the teacher in charge of the Special Needs unit in the town school, explicitly names advocacy on behalf of her students as part of her responsibilities, especially as her Special Needs students face heightened vulnerability: "...as a teacher I make sure that I'm their advocate for many years because most of these children are vulnerable... they cannot express themselves. They cannot tell... their rights, so they cannot speak about themselves." Mrs. Macharia extends the nurturing, caring and guiding defending the rights and needs of especially vulnerable children, striving to help them be understood by their school and community. Teachers like Mrs. Macharia do not

operate in a vacuum; they need certain conditions in the school to be able advocate on behalf of their students. Mrs. Macharia noted that in her over twenty years teaching Special Needs Education she has had a significant range in support from HT, but that the current HT at the town school recognizes the importance of Special Needs Education and thus listens and supports Mrs. Macharia's requests on their behalf. The caring of an individual teacher, Mrs. Macharia, has remained constant, but her ability to protect the needs of her highly vulnerable students is facilitated in large part by the attitude of her HT. Mr. Wangui, a teacher at the rural school, observes that the school climate fostered by the rural school's administration, which creates strict divisions between teachers and students, hampers advocacy on students' behalf:

There is a big gap between pupils and teachers. This has been created. Therefore, many things can happen without the knowledge of the teachers. It is not like this everywhere, more in some schools than others. Here the gap is big... It is due to the administration. The gap means that there is little interaction between teachers and pupils, a clear divide... Pupils are then less likely to come share issues with teachers.

According to Mr. Wangui, in order to foster an atmosphere where students are able to turn to their teachers for support, the administration and teachers have to encourage students to do so by being open and interacting with them on an equal and respectful level. The majority of students in the rural school who identified an individual teacher that they would turn to for support identified the same teacher and explained it was because she was kind and took their concerns seriously. Students' comments about why they do and do not share their problems with certain teachers confirm Mr. Wangui's observation that students value teachers who relate to students on a more equal level, and that this enhances teachers' ability to advocate and intervene on their behalf.

Guidance and counselling. The mentoring role for teachers is formalized through the guidance and counseling program. In each public primary school, all teachers are expected to provide guidance and counseling on an individual basis. A team of teachers is also led by one teacher in charge of guidance and counseling to organize large guidance and counseling sessions once per term and additionally as needed. The teacher in charge of guidance and counseling is should have taken special in-service training to obtain certification in this area. In the two case study schools, the teachers in charge of guidance and counseling had taken the special training, but I heard in many other schools the teachers in charge have not done so. Guidance and counseling was often espoused as an alternative method of discipline, prescribed for children who were behaving badly or performing poorly on examinations. The DHT at the town school, for example, announced at an assembly that the teachers did not use caning anymore but that they would meet and give guidance and counseling to students who misbehave. During the guidance and counseling sessions, students are separated by age and sex and then given lectures by teachers of the same sex on appropriate behaviour in and outside of school. When teachers described the sessions to me, they said students ask for advice and to pose questions but, of the three sessions that I observed, not a single student posed a question. The following field notes excerpt describes the first guidance and counseling session I attended in the town school. I had been invited to observe and speak at the session alongside several other female teachers to all the Standard 6 – 8 female students.

First [a teacher] spoke about having enemies and this being a bad practice... The teacher also spoke about not using vile language or spending time with those who do. Intermittently she had a student read passages from the Bible that reinforced her points. She told the students that they had no business other than school and that they should focus their efforts on school alone. She spoke cryptically about avoiding sexual relationships with boys, saying they shouldn't be "lured into

darkness”... She counseled them to never have a boyfriend. She also talked about the dangers that await girls at night... She finished by advising them to try harder to obtain their life goals in the long term, to add 10 points to their [examination] scores and to avoid being the student at the bottom of the class.

As illustrated in this field notes excerpt, the advice distributed to students jumped quickly from religious and morality advice to abstinence, chastity and the threat of sexual violence, then returned to the attainment of higher examination scores. The sessions that I observed were each over two hours long and entirely teacher-centered lectures. The discussions of sensitive subjects, especially regarding sexual relations, were rarely spoken of directly and were sometimes heavily veiled by religious metaphors. The prominent discourse delivered to students through guidance and counseling was a very clear message to stay away from sexual relations at all costs and exclusively practice abstinence. There was no distinction between sexual and romantic relationships, and when I asked Mr. Ngugi about this, he said that the students would not be able to have one without the other. The abstinence-only discourse was directed at both boys and girls, but especially to girls, as sex was equated with ending a girl’s education. Schools are supposed to re-admit students who drop out due to pregnancy, but no student or teacher could remember a case in which this had happened. Pregnancy therefore almost certainly leads to permanent dropout as, in all cases known to these school communities, it resulted in the termination of the girl’s education. This was explicitly stated to girls during a guidance and counseling session, described by Chantal and Charlotte (Standard 7 students, females, town):

Chantal: I remember there was a time when the teacher called all the class seven and eight girls and asked us if we had relationships and some girls said yes. The teacher told us that if we continue with the relationship we will not complete school.

Charlotte: [Guidance and counseling sessions] are usually good because the teachers tell us not to do things that can destroy our lives, don’t involve yourself

with boys because they will get you pregnant or make you get ailments that will make you drop out of school.

Sexual and reproductive health is also discussed occasionally in formal class sessions, such as Science. It is always discussed in the same abstinence-only terms, omitting discussions of sexual health, protection or consent. My observations about abstinence-only discourse were reinforced by Mr. Choge when he invited me to teach part of his Standard 8 Science class that I was scheduled to observe. He asked me to do so while we were walking to the class, so I did not have time to check reference materials. I quickly asked him about their approach to sexual health education and if they talk about condoms so I would not say something considered inappropriate in the class. He advised me: “if you want to bring [condoms] up, do it in a way that discourages them from using them so that they do not want to experiment.” Months later we reflected on this exchange informally in the staff room and Teacher Linda objected that the students should learn more about sex and methods of protection because it was an issue they have to deal with in their lives. Evidently, there were differing opinions among teachers about sexual education. The prevailing mentality expressed however, among both male and female teachers, was to fully discourage students, especially girls, from having sexual and/or romantic relations until they had finished not only primary and secondary school but also university and then gotten married. They were generally unable or unwilling to extend the guidance beyond an abstinence-only discourse, despite high rates of sexual violence, early sexual activity and HIV/AIDS. Teacher Linda’s objections illustrate that some teachers do recognize the need for open discussions about sexuality and protection with their students and that there is a diversity of attitudes and opinions about the practice even within the same school. This is another case where a young female

teacher adopted a position of resistance to the dominant discourse espoused by a male authority figure in the school.

A significant source of support and guidance for students was found in their peers. Many students said that they prefer being at school than at home



Figure 4: Getting help. Student drawing showing help from students and teachers

because their friends are at school. Friendships emerged as a large source of enjoyment for students as well as the space they turned to for help negotiating both academic and life challenges, including those related to GSS. In her drawing (see Figure 4), Shelsmith (female, student, town) described turning to both students and teachers for support when feeling dejected and discouraged, "...sometimes I feel like I can't do anything but my friends usually encourage me and help me to understand and even the teachers usually help us to solve our problems."

Unlike Shelsmith, Jet Li (male, student, rural), identified his friends but not teachers as where he would turn for support with problems like domestic violence in his home. Chantal (female, student, town) described herself as regularly providing guidance to her female friends on how to manage the pressure they face from boys for 'relationships'. She said, "A boy tells you that he loves and you wonder what to tell him, so the girls come to me and I advise the girls to go and tell the boys that." She assumed a guidance and counseling role, filling the space that

teachers' abstinence-only discourse and possibility of punishment prevented them from filling regarding romantic dilemmas. While Chantal initially described herself as confidently assuming this role, she brought it up again when we were closing the interview, demonstrating her insecurity and need for guidance. Once we had finished asking Chantal questions we asked if she had any questions for us. She asked, "If a boy is disturbing you and you don't want to report to a teacher, what can you do?" Her question indicated a clear breakdown in the guidance and counseling system, where teachers are positioned to provide support but students do not feel comfortable turning to them with sensitive problems that may invoke judgment or more violence. In the absence of a source of guidance and support for dealing with harassment and violence, some students feel they have only each other to turn to for advice.

Being Here for the Children

During the two terms I spent conducting research in the case study schools, there were several cases of severe child abuse or neglect that came to the attention of the teaching staff. In one such case, a teacher illustrated for me the conviction and dedication held by some teachers that showed the extent to which protection and support formed a critical part of their role as teachers. In a staff meeting, the HT at the town school suggested that there was a problem with some of the students from the Children's Home. As she reflected on how much she could share with them, Mrs. Wanyama pounded her hands down on the desk and firmly stated, 'We are here for the children!' Her declaration communicated that whatever the issue was, the teaching staff would support the students and help them through their troubles. Teachers demonstrated varying degrees of intervention to protect children from different types of abuse, neglect and harm they were susceptible to at home and in school. They demonstrated protective initiative through

numerous ways including: providing funds for students in needs, summoning parents to discuss issues at home, following up on suspicious absences (especially for girls), intervening in child abuse and/or neglect and providing emotional support to students following incidences of abuse.

Intervening. Beyond providing students with guidance, support, protection and helping to meet their basic needs while on school property, some teachers are engaged in protecting students from threats they face outside of school, including abuse in and around the home. While this role is officially played by social welfare workers, teachers are on the front line of interacting with many children on a daily basis prior to classification of a case that warrants intervention. Teachers often identify cases of abuse, neglect or harm occurring in the home or community environment because they work with children on a daily basis and, as described above, can be a source of support children turn to for reporting problems. In cases where abuse is identified and pursued, teachers can play a significant role in providing follow up support to the student, particularly when the family unit has broken up as a result of the abuse. During the data collection period, numerous cases of teacher intervention in child abuse and neglect cases were observed and reported. A major intervention that was repeatedly mentioned by teachers and one student as having occurred in the previous year was when the rural school's HT 'rescued' a female student from an early marriage. Teachers described this case as enabling the individual girl to complete her primary education and acting as a deterrent to other parents considering the same actions. The HT describes his intervention:

... there used to be these defilements of the girl child, early marriages, but sometimes last year I have tried to curb that one... a parent who snatched one of my standard eight girls last year married her off, and I had to work with the Children's Officer to go and retrieve that marriage. We took the married girl to class, she did her KCPE and went to secondary... as long as I am the HT of this school, there will be no child who shall leave school whether a boy or a girl,

having not completed the primary course. We have agreed with all the parents and if anybody does not abide to that one, I shall take measures as a HT.

The HT describes this as an identity-forming moment for him as a leader with a moral platform, defining to parents and communities the expectations for the school under his leadership and the extent of his authority.

In conducting major interventions into cases of child abuse experienced by students in the school, the leadership of the HT is absolutely necessary. There is an understanding among teachers that the hierarchy of the school staff structure cannot be violated and that the HT must support and lead any intervention. The *Safety Standards for Schools in Kenya Manual* and the 2010 TSC Circular on the Protection of Students from Sexual Abuse state that teachers must report any suspected abuse to DCS, the police or TSC authorities. In practice, numerous teachers stated that the possibilities for a teacher to report are much more narrow and circumscribed: they can report the issue to the HT but then it is the HT's responsibility to decide whether it gets taken to the authorities. Teachers said that they could possibly follow up with the HT afterward to inquire as to whether it was being taken up, but they absolutely cannot intervene without the HT's permission and leadership. The importance of respecting this hierarchical protocol is described by Mrs. Macharia, a teacher at the town school:

Macharia: ...in school we also follow the protocol that the Head should agree on whatever is going on. Or should give authority. Or delegate. Therefore, if the HT... doesn't work together with the teacher, it will be hard. I can't just go and maybe start an initiative in the school. Because the HT has to agree that...

CV: So, if the HT did not agree that it was important to intervene and do something, nothing would happen?

Macharia: Ah, nothing! I can't go ahead. No. Because I am bound. I have to use the protocol of the HT in the school.

If the HT does not approve of the intervention then teachers like Mrs. Macharia are ‘bound’ - unable to act even if they detect serious and ongoing child abuse occurring to one of their students. This was reinforced by Mrs. Njenga, also a teacher at the town school, who stated that, after reporting an abuse or neglect case to the HT, “...I have done my part. I will not go outside there, start reporting it to the police”. Despite official policy guidance requiring teachers to take responsibility for ensuring suspected cases of child abuse or neglect are reported to government authorities, in practice the decision to intervene in instances of child abuse sits squarely on the shoulders of the HT.

The importance of the HT’s approval became apparent in the case where Mr. Ngugi, a teacher at the rural school, shared with me that a Standard. 6 girl, Rebecca, had confided in him that her stepfather was having sex with her on a regular basis. Another male teacher had already reported the abuse to the HT but, instead of taking action, the HT had accused the teacher who reported it of being the one sexually assaulting her. This sent a clear message that the HT was not interested in pursuing the case and was willing to damage the reputation of the teacher should he proceed to take the matter further. Mr. Ngugi told me he did eventually raise the issue to the HT after it came to light that the stepfather was rumoured to be HIV positive and Rebecca was sleeping with other boys in the area, potentially spreading HIV among the community. In response, the HT called the staff together and arranged for increased guidance and counseling about abstaining from sex as a solution to the problem, but still did not report the issue to the DCS, the police or other local government authorities. In an interview, Mr. Ngugi describes his frustration with this situation of feeling that the teacher’s position in the community prevented

him from taking it forward without the support of the HT, and so advocated for an external organization to take responsibility for handling student safety in schools.

Ngugi: ... there's dire need of an organization to handle the challenges and problems these children are going through. Some of them are so acute that we teachers cannot handle, like the case I was telling you of a girl who is being molested by the father at night. As a person, sometimes I feel so challenged, we come from the same community as that person so I may be not well positioned sometimes.

CV: So, in addressing those issues, you said that it's very important that the administration be supportive. Open to addressing them.

Ngugi: But not all administrators are accessible. Or may have the same feeling... Some are too bossy to even to listen. That's why I'm saying that not necessarily an administration can help... I think such a research should come up with such recommendations.

I clarified with Mr. Ngugi that the DCS is responsible for child abuse cases such as this one, but he insisted that this was not helpful because of their disconnect with schools, and that they required personnel within the MoE to take responsibility for child protection cases identified by teachers. In this case, Mr. Ngugi expresses his desire to take action to protect Rebecca from abuse, but that he feels constrained by his position in the community and the risks he would expose himself to, as well as the limitations of the rigid hierarchy that leaves the HT with unquestionable decision-making authority. Despite his concern about her safety, he also expressed fear and hesitancy about the repercussions he might face in the school or the community, choosing instead to try to arrange alternative accommodations for the child that would remove her from harm but avoid formally reporting the violence to authorities, given the threats from the HT. After Mr. Ngugi told me of the case, I consulted with my supervisors and the Kenya Child Helpline. Professor Gakuru asked a local chief to assist in reporting the case to the DCS, and Mary communicated with the chief to provide information as the case carried on after I left. Ultimately, the case was dismissed after a medical examination determined that

Rebecca had fabricated the story. Mary's communications to request a second examination proved fruitless as subsequently all authorities refused to take the case seriously. Months later, we succeeded in getting a local child protection NGO to follow up with the case but by that time Rebecca was no longer living with her mother, who said she had been married and would not provide information about her location. This terrible experience showed us first hand the inaccessibility of the child protection system and that, even with all of the privilege we had in our group, we were unable to protect a child.

Despite the lack of priority given to teachers' caring roles, when incidences of child abuse do get successfully dealt with by government authorities, teachers often play a vital role in ensuring that the child subsequently receives nurturing and support. Teachers at the town school described providing instrumental emotional support to a Standard 4 girl named Margaret whose father had been arrested and imprisoned the year before for sexually molesting her. The case had been reported to police by a neighbour and teachers claim they did not know what was going on before hand, although Margaret had become 'wild'. Mrs. Njenga, a teacher at the town school, explains the ongoing actions being undertaken by teachers:

... we have been following, following, following until it is ended. And you'll keep on counseling that child so you can bring the child back to class and to the level where the other students are. Because the child... always looks traumatized. So you have to make the child very friendly to you... We would laugh with her, talk to her. Yes, just to make her feel we want her. And even telling her, forget about those things, about whatever that man did. Now it is concentration in education, so that you be a judge or a good person in future.

Margaret's class teacher, Mrs. Wanyama, also described a practice she had used at the beginning of the year that proved effective for supporting Margaret. After finding that Margaret was still acting out in violent and disruptive ways, she assigned Margaret the responsibility of keeping the

plastic containers that the students brought their lunches in tidy and organized at the back of the class. Mrs. Wanyama described observing a significant change in the girl after this; Margaret took her responsibility seriously and it provided an outlet for her to focus her energy on. When I met Margaret, it was less than a year after her father was arrested, yet I did not see any trace of the ‘wild’ student the teachers described from the previous year; I knew her as spirited, social and intelligent with an endearing demeanour. This event was a serious turning point in her life; she lost the stability of her home life and experienced extreme violence and abuse at a young age. Her behaviour gradually transformed away from the wild, violent behaviour she was demonstrating and stabilized, at least on the surface. The support of teachers likely formed a crucial part of this transformation. For teachers such as Mrs. Njenga and Mrs. Wanyama, caring, nurturing and support of vulnerable children was delivered almost instinctually and ‘following up’ to show her she was wanted and cared for was framed as a central component of their teaching and learning mandate.

Several teachers described some version of the phenomenon of becoming a parent to their students and juggling multiple roles beyond the formal role of the teacher. This meant caring for children, protecting, nurturing and advocating on their behalf in ways that extended beyond the narrow definition of teaching and learning academic material. Mrs. Njenga described the multiple roles that teachers play in their students’ lives: “Sometimes I act as a nurse. Sometimes I’m a judge. (laughter) Sometimes I’m a parent even those are not my children... you have to stand like a mother now. A teacher and a mother.” Mrs. Njenga’s description of ‘standing like a teacher and a mother’ illustrates the maternal caring role that some teachers consider a core part of teaching. Notably, not all teachers demonstrated this perspective and it was raised more

frequently by female teachers. Male teachers also described taking initiative to protect students, but the action they described more often took the form of providing material resources to assist students, in line with the traditional masculine role of the provider.

Forgetting about boys. A growing sentiment among teachers in Kirinyaga was that, with the global and national focus on staying in school and protection for girls, boys are now being forgotten or neglected. This was expressed to me in numerous different forums that I followed up on during teacher and student interviews, asking whether teachers agreed with this view and how they treated girls and boys differently. While some teachers, such as Teacher Sharon (teacher, female, rural) felt that this was not being manifested at the school level so much as in the media, others saw its effects in their own teaching practices and in students' parents' behaviour as well. Mrs. Njenga (teacher, female, town) recounts how she devotes increased attention to girls' absences from school than boys':

We do try to be close to girls so much more than even boys... Whenever I go to class and see a girl is missing, I have to make sure I know where that girl is... I take it more serious than a boy. Because that girl can be absent and she's not at home... And I know when a boy is absent from school even if he comes and does not arrive at school, and the parent knows that the boy is at school, the boy might be somewhere around the school hiding in the bushes. They do hide.

Several teachers discussed the concern that when girls do not come to school it is because they are involved in 'bad' (sexual) activities, either voluntarily or involuntarily, with local men and boys. Girls are known to be at higher risk of sexual violence and relationships leading to pregnancy and dropout, therefore a higher premium is placed on their school attendance, resulting in higher levels of follow up when absences are observed. This is evident in Mrs. Njenga's explanation of why she takes a girl's absence more seriously than a boy's. Other teachers, such as Mrs. Macharia (teacher, female, town), claim that boys and girls are treated the

same way by their teachers, but receive differentiated treatment from their parents, also due to fears over protection of girls outside of the home:

Of late... people have catered for the girl child so much that the boys have been neglected. Because people think that the boys are not vulnerable, what do they think that even boys now if they move out even the boys when they go out, they will, the parents will still not care because this boy will not get pregnant... And the girl will be told, 'No! You can't go when it is evening, you'll not go anywhere, I don't want you to go because it is late.' But the boys will be let to move out.

Teachers from both schools noted that, while boys face lower risks than girls of sexual violence and abuse, they are more susceptible to alcohol and drug abuse and more likely to drop out of school to take up menial jobs such as driving a motorbike or working in construction. Girls and boys are both vulnerable to risks that enhance their likelihood of dropping out or missing school, but the risks they face are different and require gender differentiated but equal attention from teachers and parents to ensure academic success and protection.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the various ways in which gender safety is fostered and challenged in schools, focusing on teacher actions and interventions and the ways they are experienced and valued by students. Actions taken to enhance GSS include modeling equal academic expectations for girls and boys, staying physically close to students, providing support, guidance and advice on physical and sexual safety issues, and intervening to address child abuse, inequality and neglect. These elements are usually driven by features of caring and morality that were particularly prominent in female teachers, reflecting how conventional expectations of femininity and maternity are embodied in primarily (although not exclusively) female teachers. Several female teachers also demonstrated resistance and challenged gender discrimination and

restrictive discourses that threatened their students, stepping out of traditional gender norms in order to enable their students to do the same. All acts of caring and protection arose from individual teacher agency, and not as a result of a school or system policy or expectation. Teachers did not receive training or significant support on how to support children from a child protection perspective or how to foster gender-responsive learning environments, thus the initiative that they did take largely arose from their own intuition. Many challenges arose that prevented the full articulation of these gender safety efforts, mainly deriving from the lack of support, prioritization and recognition for the caring, equality and protection elements, a disinclination to recognize gender disparities and discrimination in favour of a discourse of ‘sameness’ and an emphasis on the protection of girls without acknowledging the risks that boys face as well. Given the lack of clarity understood by teachers as to their role in protecting children in and out of school and the central role of the HT in validating, reporting and following up on particularly serious child abuse claims, the level of gender safety emphasized by teachers varied significantly and was sometimes constrained by the school environment and especially the attitude of the administration.

GSS is characterized by a school’s culture and climate whose values, behaviours, regulations and operational practice prioritize gender equality and child protection in terms of equal opportunities for all girls and boys, a total absence of all types of violence, and an overt challenging of harmful practices of discrimination. In the two case study schools, teachers and students expressed equal academic expectations for boys and girls, although differentiated expectations in relation to sports and school chores. As will be described in more detail in the following chapter, sexual violence and harassment, bullying and peer victimization, and

especially corporal punishment were reportedly experienced by students in both schools.

Teachers did demonstrate agency and care in challenging discrimination against girls, notably by restoring the female student in the town school to her rightful place as school president and by providing ongoing support to students experiencing abuse. Ultimately, however, individual caring from often teachers was insufficient to foster a gender safe learning environment without stronger prioritization of gender equality and child protection by the education system. The next chapter will explore the different types of violence reported by students and some of the driving factors that enable GVS to continue despite the caring practices of many teachers.

Chapter 7: Showing Strength: Perpetuating Gender Violence in Schools

Like many schools, the case study schools contained ongoing practices of gender violence that also contribute to the reproduction and normalization of these behaviours. This chapter begins by describing the various elements of gender violence in the schools, categorized into sexual violence and harassment, bullying, verbal abuse and physical fighting among students, and corporal punishment and humiliation, considering how each are gendered, affecting girls and boys in different ways. A key mechanism that was observed as a factor reinforcing, encouraging and normalizing GVS is the emphasis on primary school exit examinations and the conceptualization of learning and education quality as measured and understood solely through examination marks. The examination orientation reinforces multiple forms of GVS. Most directly, corporal punishment and public humiliation was used to enhance students' motivation to study and prepare for examinations. The exam focus also contributed to the indirect perpetuation of other forms of GVS, such as bullying among students over examination results and the extension of the school day to accommodate more class time, resulting in increased risks to students walking to and from school and a reduction in extracurricular activities designed to enhance gender equality. As described in the previous chapter, both case study schools were observed and reported to be taking substantial efforts to reach out, protect and support students from gender violence and discrimination. Simultaneously, the schools are spaces where gender violence occurs and becomes normalized, particularly in relation to the stronger emphasis on examination results over child protection and students' overall development and well-being. The examination orientation is underscored by other school culture factors including strong emphases on discipline and maintaining systems of hierarchy within the school as well as broader

patriarchal social norms. Gender violence permeates the schools' cultures both structurally through the perpetuation of existing gender norms and authority structures and instrumentally as a means of enhancing examination scores and propagating hierarchies within the school system. In turn, efforts to address gender equality and school safety are sidelined and disregarded to maintain focus on the ultimate objective of staff and students: adding points to the examination scores. This chapter is divided into considerations of the three different types of GVS. Within each of these sections, I describe the ways in which violence was gendered and its relationship to teaching and learning processes.

Corporal Punishment

Despite the legal prohibition against corporal punishment in the 2013 Basic Education Act and the 2001 Children Act, corporal punishment was by far the most prominent form of GVS that I observed and was told about in both schools. It was depicted in numerous student drawings, including Figure 5. This should not be surprising, as it is also the most widely reported form of GVS worldwide (Greene, Robles, Stout, & Suvilaakso, 2012). While references to incidences of corporal punishment were made at both schools, the practice appeared to be much more prevalent at the rural school. There were many factors that may have contributed to the higher



Figure 5: Boy being hit in the staff room. Student drawing.

prevalence of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice at the rural school. Potential factors that may have jointly contributed to the discrepancies included: the school's more rural location and corresponding increased isolation, higher poverty levels and lower food security at the rural school, a male HT at the rural school and a female HT at the town school, and the close proximity of the town school to the DEO office. Both girls and boys described being beaten by male and female teachers for a variety of reasons including being late, incomplete assignments, fighting among themselves, doing poorly on examinations and losing textbooks. Some teachers at both schools proclaimed that corporal punishment has been completely eradicated in favour of alternative disciplinary mechanisms and some students also stated that there had been no beating or caning in the school during their time as a student there. In contradiction to these statements, I observed corporal punishment being administered and other teachers and students confirmed its ongoing use in both schools. Besides caning, students also report the use of forced manual labour such as cleaning areas of the school or digging (sometimes for agricultural purposes in the school's *shamba*²⁶ and sometimes just for the sake of punishment) as a disciplinary mechanism. Forced manual labour is also classified as a form of corporal punishment (Ajowi & Simatwa, 2010; Dunne, Humphreys, & Leach, 2006), and several students stated they preferred caning because it was over more quickly. Non-violent disciplinary mechanisms used included guidance and counseling, which is the formally endorsed response to students' bad behavior, and summoning the student's parents to tell them of the wrongdoing, in effect handing responsibility for punishment to the parent.

²⁶ A *shamba* is a farm.

Gendering corporal punishment. The physical act of corporal punishment in the schools was clearly differentiated between the sexes: girls were caned on their hands while boys were caned on their buttocks, as illustrated in Figure 6. Students' perceptions of whether male and female teachers cane girls and boys equally varied among students. Some claimed it was the same among male and female teachers and was equally harsh against boys and girls, while others claimed that male teachers beat more harshly than female teachers and that boys were more likely to receive harsh punishments than girls. Many students' drawings also supported the assertion that male teachers were more likely to cane and/or be harsher in doing so, as all of the student drawings depicting a teacher beating a student showed a male teacher administering the punishment.



Figure 6: Boy being beaten. Student drawing.

Girls usually reported boys and girls being treated equally in terms of punishment, or pointed to the differentiation between where they are beaten (hands or buttocks) as

the only difference. Boys were more likely to point out the harsher punishment of boys. For example, Anthony (Standard 8, male, rural) describes one teacher who systematically beats boys more than girls, doubling the number of strokes delivered to boys: "Boys are beaten more. For instance, our math teacher will cane boys twelve canes and girls six canes." Afora (Standard 8, male, rural) expresses his sentiments that the harsher beating of boys reflects teachers' preferences toward girls: "Girls are not beaten as much as boys are. Some teachers... beat boys

more harshly than he beats girls. At times, we think some teachers love girls more than they love boys.” When asked why he thinks that boys are beaten more harshly, Afora responds, “I think it is because they find boys to be stronger than girls.” A teacher at the rural school, Mr. Ngugi, confirmed this to be true in his view, as reflected in an informal conversation described in this field notes excerpt:

He said that boys are punished more severely than girls are. I asked if he means with beatings and he said yes, when you cane them. I asked why and he said it’s because you don’t think that a girl can take the same punishment as a boy, you think that a girl is weak so you don’t treat her as harshly. Also maybe you’re giving the punishment of digging somewhere and the girl you will just give her something small because you think this is a job for a man.

While many teachers feel the need to protect girls given their perceived and relative weakness, there are fewer limitations around the violence that can be inflicted toward boys, as traditional masculine norms are projected onto them. They are expected to be strong enough to handle it and, if not, it will teach them to be.

Freedom from the cane. While some teachers at both schools said that corporal punishment does not exist at all in their school, this contrasted with students’ descriptions and my own observations. More commonly, teachers at the rural school admitted that it still took place but described corporal punishment as drastically reduced from previous years. Key adult informants in the community supported this view and explained that they think students today are fortunate to have it so easy, because when they were young they were ‘really beaten up’ in school. One informant described herself as a ‘chatter box’ as a child and said that, because of her constant talking, her legs had regularly been ‘black and blue’ when she was growing up from being caned at school. Teachers described feeling frustrated that the alternative disciplinary methods they tried were not as effective as caning, therefore without corporal punishment

students became unruly and undisciplined. Mr. Choge, teacher at the rural school, described the problem of students' 'freedom from the cane':

Since our children are used to correction through the beating, when we set them free, it seems they are also not sure what to do with the freedom. Remember one day they could make noise when you are still teaching? Because they were not fearing you... violence has really gone down to almost zero in many schools. But another problem is now coming up of pupils not knowing what to do with the freedom they are now enjoying from the cane.

Despite the introduction of new laws and regulations banning corporal punishment in the past fifteen years, none of the teachers at either school reported receiving training or support in the delivery of alternative disciplinary mechanisms to replace corporal punishment. The DHT at the town school explained that teachers lack awareness and confidence in other forms of discipline because they have received no training or guidance in them, and that without this training their use of alternative discipline is less effective than corporal punishment:

...teachers are not well conversant with what the Ministry says. They do not take teachers for workshops. So, in case they call the Head Teachers and the Head Teacher fails to disclose the same to the teachers, because you know what happens, some Head Teachers do not tell teachers, because they know if they tell teachers and the teacher will stop caning, everything will run... The discipline will go down... So, there should be no beating. In any case of indiscipline we should come up with other methods of disciplining the child. But these methods are not written in the policy.

The DHT describes HTs deliberately withholding MoE instructions to eliminate corporal punishment that they are supposed to disseminate to teachers because of their fear that without caning they will not be able to maintain discipline in the school. Without training or instruction, teachers continue to rely upon corporal punishment as a primary disciplinary practice, fearing that setting children 'free from the cane' will result in chaos and an uprooting of teachers' authority and control.

Beat for success. The overwhelming focus of all teaching and learning practice was on examinations as a measurement of academic success. As Mr. Choge explained, “Many people, they see the exam as the gateway to everything... Because everybody in this life is results oriented.” This ‘results-oriented’ mindset informed teacher decision-making and treatment of students, including through the threat of corporal punishment as a motivational tool to encourage students to study harder for their examinations. Although the formal examinations at the end of the third term are the ones that determine students’ progression to the next grade, teachers assess students’ progress throughout the year through practice examinations multiple times per term, each of which take at least two days to write. Some mock exams are taken by all schools in the counties and ranked in comparison to each other and sometimes the school decides to undertake independently. In total, the town school completed three practice examinations each term and the rural school completed two each of the two terms I was conducting research in the schools. Since each one took three days, students spent between six and nine days during each of the first two school terms doing practice examinations, and a teacher informed me that they happen even more frequently in the third term leading up to the formal end of year examinations. Even the Early Child Development class in the rural school spent several days writing practice examinations, although one teacher told me they did not understand the process and often just drew circles over words, including the multiple choice questions as well as the answers. Following the first practice examination at the town school during the time that I was there, the teachers found that their results were much lower than anticipated. At the staff meeting, the administration talked to the teachers about the needs for teachers to step up their pressure on the students and “show that they [the teachers] are serious.” The DHT at the town school told the

teachers, “even if you don’t beat them, you can still attack them with words.” This illustrates that different forms of violence were the most prominent methods of motivation that the teachers had at their disposal and that these aggressive tactics were encouraged by the school administration to enhance examination performance. Immediately after the staff meeting where the DHT counseled the teachers to demonstrate that they are serious, I observed a more overt and blatant use of the cane on students at the town school than I had previously, for the first time witnessing teachers openly retrieving sticks from their desk in the classroom and caning students on the heads and hands during class time.

Students interviewed, particularly at the rural school, spoke frequently of being beaten for performing poorly on examinations and said that this was used as a motivation tool to incentivize them to perform better the next time around. Sometimes this was performed in a highly organized and systematic way. For example, Caroline (Standard 8, female, rural) and Afora (Standard 8, male, rural) describe a process by which they are asked to identify a target mark for their exam and then beaten the number of times that make up the difference between their actual mark and the target mark:

Caroline: ...we write our target marks on a foolscap and give it to the teacher before the exam, so if you fail and don’t achieve the target mark, the teacher will ask you why you have not achieved your target and yet you are the one who set it? You are going to be beaten for that.

Afora: ... it is obvious here that you are beaten when you fail exams. When I fail exams, I feel bad. Like in this recent exam, I did not perform very well. This time it was bad because the number of canes depended on the difference between the target mark and what you scored. I feel bad because it is not my wish to fail exams. At times the exams are hard and not that I had not revised.

The practice Afora describes of caning students the number of times that makes up the difference between their target mark - they are encouraged to set high target marks - and their exam result directly links incidences of corporal punishment to examination performance. At the town school, the practice of caning the number of times that made up the difference between the examination result and the target mark was not mentioned in student interviews. Although Standard 7 and 8 students were asked to set target marks for themselves before each practice examination, a different caning practice was described by a student at the town school following poor examination performance. Nyambura (Standard 7, female, town) explains:

Nyambura: ... during first term, when we failed the exam very much, all the class seven and eight were brought here and they started beating us, they beat us a lot... The class seven was made to line up here and class eight on that side. The teachers divided themselves into two and some went to class seven students and the others to class eight students and they started beating us. When one group of teachers was done beating one class, they exchanged and those who were beating class eight came to beat us.

MNK: All of them?

Nyambura: Yes.

MNK: How many strokes did one teacher beat?

Nyambura: One teacher would beat us around six.

MNK: So how many strokes had you been beaten by the end of that day?

Nyambura: Very many.

Nyambura started crying after telling us about this memory, suggesting that this was an intense experience that remained emotional for her months after this incident. The student interviews demonstrated that each school had developed slightly different tactics to punish students for poor performance in order to try and motivate them to study harder to prepare for the next set of examinations. Both tried to induce desirable behaviour by creating fear of violent and painful repercussions for doing badly.

“You have done nothing”. Another tactic regularly used at the town school and occasionally at the rural school to encourage students’ academic success on examinations was a public announcement of examination results that rewarded high performing students and humiliated low performing students. This usually took place at school assemblies where all students and teachers in the school were present. At the beginning of the year, all Standard 7 and 8 students at the town school created placards with spaces to fill in their target mark and actual result for each practice and actual examination throughout the year. On the day of the examination and during the assembly following the collection and analysis of results, students wore their placards around their necks to the assembly with the results filled in. Examination results for each class were announced to the school, making comparisons to other local schools if the information was available. Classes who performed badly were reprimanded and those who did well were told they still had not achieved their target mark so they also needed to work harder. Then the Standard 7 and 8 students’ marks were announced one by one. Each student was called to the front of the assembly on an individual basis to stand in order of their marks, from highest to lowest in the class. Once all were lined up, the teachers walked up and down reprimanding the students in the middle and at the bottom for their poor performances. Students in the middle were called to step forward to look to the top of the class to where they should be, and students at the bottom were repeatedly scolded with statements including, “You have done nothing!” and “You should go back down to the lower class.” One boy was told, “you should study eating, since that is the only thing you are good at.” The comparisons sometimes had an

explicitly gendered dimension, with teachers asking a group of girls in the middle why they could not score as high as the boys at the front, or vice versa.

When I asked Mr. Ngugi, a teacher at the rural school, if they used the same practice I witnessed repeatedly at the town school and he said they do and occasionally they invite parents to watch, which makes it particularly embarrassing for students who have performed poorly. Mr. Ngugi also told me that students often skip school on days where they know this type of assembly will take place, in order to avoid the humiliation if they have performed poorly. These humiliating practices were applied as forms of motivation to encourage students' higher performance on upcoming examinations. While there was often some movement between the students positioned in the middle and upper ends of the line-up, the same handful of students were consistently situated at the bottom of the line-up each of the three times I observed this practice at the town school. Some of these children included Special Needs students. Special Needs students could be exempt from an examination or receive accommodations, but in order to do so their parents have to agree to have them tested for a disability. Since there is a high stigma associated with disability, many parents did not want to have their children tested and so they write the examinations and many ended up standing at the end of the line, receiving criticism from teachers for their inability to perform. Other students I observed at the end of the line included students who were known to have been sexually abused and some who cannot be supported by their family and live in the Children's Home. I observed students at the bottom end standing with glassy eyes, receiving the criticisms shouted at them with no visible reaction, waiting to return to the relative obscurity of the assembly.

Sexual Violence and Harassment

Primary school age girls in Kirinyaga remain highly susceptible to sexual harassment and violence at school, on the way to school, and in their broader communities. Harassment was perpetrated by men and boys from every corner of their lives: family, friends, classmates, strangers, and teachers. Most frequently, girls mentioned forms of sexual harassment and discrimination at school coming from their male classmates in the forms of pressure for relationships, nonconsensual sexual touching, and physical violence in response to sexual rejection. Some teachers denied that these behaviours occurred, several stating that the boys “treat them like they are their sisters.” Others, however, identified that “the first risk [for girls] is their counterparts” (Mr. Ngugi, male, rural). Girls are strongly encouraged by their teachers to maintain their virginity and abstain from sex; they receive clear messages from many avenues that their education depends on their chastity. This is confirmed to them when they see their peers drop out of school and never return after getting pregnant. Yet while the promotion of abstinence bombards them from adults, girls constantly face sexual pressure from boys touching them, telling them that they love them and trying to get the girl to engage in ‘relationships,’ sometimes with violent consequences for refusing. Sexual touching from male classmates was a commonplace experience for girls at both schools, although more girls at the rural school reported that it was an issue than at the town school. At the case study schools, unwanted sexual touching on the breasts or buttocks was often, although not always, accompanied by pressure for further sexual relations. Lily (Standard 8, female, rural) told us that for this reason girls try to avoid sitting next to boys in class, where these advances are often made. When we asked Agape (Standard 8, female, rural) how often girls experience unwanted sexual touching from boys at

school, she replied, “You cannot miss one day.” The exchange where boys constantly pursue girls, who ward off sexual touching, continuously characterizes the classroom experience, so that not only the school compound but classrooms themselves become spaces where sexual pressure is experienced and thwarted on a daily basis, making learning a highly vulnerable process for girls.

Physical violence between boys and girls. Girls also endured physical violence and beating from boys in school. They faced micro aggressions from them on a daily basis, as boys carried sticks to hit with and would push girls to demonstrate their dominance. Sticks were the most common instrument with which teachers beat students, thus carrying sticks designated a threat of violence and a sign of power and authority. After observing many boys and a couple of girls carrying sticks as they walked around the school compound, I asked a group of girls in an informal discussion why boys carried sticks at school. “To beat us with,” they answered collectively. Pauline (Standard 7, female, town) described boys lashing out physically in response to even minor frustration, leaving girls unsure as to when they would be met with violence and aggression:

CV: Do you ever fear that you are going to be hit by a boy?

Pauline: Yes.

CV: Yes, why?

Pauline: Because sometimes the boys are not in a good mood and you may go asking for something from them and they shout at you.

Josephine (Standard 8, female, rural) also describes hostile practices between both girls and boys as differentiated in a straightforward manner that implies that these practices are routine, expected and accepted:

MNK: What are some of the things that girls do to boys or boys do to girls that prevent them from being good friends?

Josephine: Girls verbally abuse boys and the boys physically beat the girls.

MNK: What else?

Josephine: Boys touch girls' breasts.

Josephine's testimony asserts that girls routinely face physical and sexual abuse from boys but also indicates that girls contribute to relationships of hostility and aggression against boys through verbal abuse, which could constitute a form of resistance.

In other instances, girls' attempts at agency were denied by boys who refuse to accept their sexual or romantic rejection, responding with physical violence to punish girls for their attempted agency. Mr. Ngugi (teacher, male, rural) explained: "It is possible in our setup for girls to be beaten by boys if they don't consent. It can happen... you see when a boy approaches a girl and she doesn't want to give in, the boy may decide to beat up the girl." Lily (Standard 8, female, rural) points out that this could also occur if a girl rejects one boy but then chooses another: "The boy who is rejected feels bad and that's why he beats the girl... He beats her because she rejected him but later accepts another boy." Beating girls appears to be the automatic response for any negative feelings that arise in male students, including frustration, annoyance, rejection or anger. Lily (Standard 8, female, rural) reinforces this narrative by describing how boys will fight either in competition for a girl or to punish her for rejecting their advances: "Sometimes they fight over a girl. If a boy tells a girl that he loves her and another boy loves her too, then the two boys will fight... If a boy had told a girl that he loves her but the girl loves another boy, then the boy will beat the girl." A girl's agency to make her own decisions about who she has romantic and/or sexual relationships with is denied by boys who refuse to respect their decisions. Boys take control and establish their dominance through physical fighting – either beating up each other to 'win' the girl or beating the girl for rejecting them.

Teacher-student gender violence. Most of the teachers in both schools described teacher-student sexual violence as a phenomenon that happened in the past but is no longer prevalent, at least not in Kirinyaga. Mrs. Wangari (teacher, female, town) describes the decline as happening as a result of increased regulations: “Let me say that teachers are disciplined... In the past years, teachers used to misuse girls, the men teachers used to misuse girls but nowadays... Because of the rules and regulations that govern our top, if they are caught doing that they are just sacked. That’s all. So they are very disciplined.” Mr. Choge (teacher, male, rural) described this problem as happening in other areas of Kenya, saying he had witnessed it as a prevalent problem in schools he had worked in in different areas: “When I went to the settler communities like the Kikuyu where they were living in Lake Kenyatta, there were different problems... there was a lot of violence and also a lot of misuse of girls by teachers.” Several teachers implied that this was a bigger issue in other parts of Kenya. One of the students interviewed, however, reported that at least one of the teachers at the rural school continues to abuse girls in class, touching them inappropriately on a regular basis. Lily (Standard 8, female, rural) explains: “The teacher comes and sits beside you in class and pretends to be showing you something on your books, as the other students concentrate, they touch you.” She went on to say that there were only very minor repercussions when this behaviour was reported to the HT:

MNK: Have you ever told your parent that such things are happening?

Lily: Yes.

MNK: And what did your parent do?

Lily: They came and told the HT who warned the teacher.

MNK: And do the teachers repeat it after the warning?

Lily: They also repeat.

Despite the rhetoric of change and discipline, claiming Kirinyaga schools as safe spaces for girls in contrast to schools in other parts of Kenya, at least one teacher in the rural school continues to

abuse girls within the presence of other students and with the knowledge of the administration.

The little to no repercussions illustrate to teachers, students and parents that the employment and protection of male teachers continues to be more highly valued than the well-being and education of the female students they abuse.

Violence en route. Teachers and students openly acknowledged the risks of kidnapping or sexual violence including rape that students – especially girls – faced on the way to school. Teachers at both schools identified girls as particularly vulnerable to attacks and harassment on the way to school, acknowledging that this has happened in Kirinyaga and other areas they have taught in in Kenya. Mr Wangui explains that, while teachers acknowledge this risk, they feel unable to address the problem:

This is next to impossible to regulate. When they come to and from school they are all alone. Teachers have not yet come. It is very dangerous. Incidents have happened – abductions going home and coming to school. These are kidnappings for ransom... Girls are also at risk because of rape cases. Fortunately, we have not had any cases in [this school] but they have happened elsewhere in Kirinyaga.

He goes on to say that the route to and from school “is the unsafest part of school”. Female students also describe fearing the way to and from school, including Agape (Standard 8, female, rural):

Agape: Sometimes as we walk through maize plantations, we fear.

MNK: What do you fear?

Agape: Danger.

MNK: What sort of danger?

Agape: There are times when people used to hide in maize plantations and they would catch people.

MNK: What do they do once they catch you?

Agape: They rape you... It has happened recently, but not this year.

Risk of severe violence such as abduction and rape on the way to school was a larger issue for students and teachers at the rural school where many children walked for an hour or more to get

to school, often for long distances by themselves, than the town school where students reported usually walking for less than a half hour each way. The advice that teachers gave to students to protect themselves was to walk in groups, but this was often impossible for at least part of the trip if a student was the only one coming from a certain area. Students at the town school tended to walk for shorter distances and did not fear rape or abduction to the same degree, but they did regularly experienced harassment from locals they passed on their way through town. Mrs. Macharia (teacher, female, rural) described this risk:

Girls are usually at risk in most areas... the boys usually - or even other people... will admire the girls or desire to have relationships with them. They are quite at risk and you find that since the school is in the town, there are even in the town those who deal with the *matatus*²⁷ there. When the girls go they want even to speak to them and... to have sex with them. And maybe to have relationships with them, so that they can buy tokens or sweets, sodas, chips, whatever.

Girls are likely to be harassed on their way to school by men calling out to them, propositioning them and offering them transactional sex or relationships, a common practice in the area that teachers were careful to explicitly advise against during guidance and counseling. Incidences of harassment as well as rape were heightened when students were walking to or from school either very early or very late when it is dark outside and most people are at home. Nyambura (Standard 7, female, town) and Mr. Wangui (teacher, male, rural) explained:

MNK: And are you ever afraid as you walk alone?

Nyambura: Yes.

MNK: When coming to school or when going home?

Nyambura: When going home because we leave school very late.

MNK: What are you afraid of?

Nyambura: I pass by an open field, some men who sit there start calling me but I just ignore them.

²⁷ *Matatus* are small buses that transport people between towns.

Wangui: Pupils are supposed to be at school at 6:30 [in the morning]. For them to be here for that time some have to travel for an hour and leave at 5:30, which is still at night. In one of the previous schools I worked at in the Rift Valley, it happened that men would wait for girls in the dawn to rape them.

According to MoE regulations, students are supposed to arrive at school no earlier than 7:00 am with classes to start after 8:00 am. In contradiction to this regulation, in all the schools in the area, students arrived at school for 6:30 am to complete chores before additional classes that are often scheduled to start right at 7:00 am. Similarly, classes are supposed to finish for the day at 4:00 pm but upper year students are often kept until 6pm or later for additional classes or study time. Especially for students who come from far away, this means students often have to walk to and/or from school in the dark, when risks are higher. While girls were particularly susceptible to these risks, there were several reported incidences of boys being sexually abused on their way home from school. Teachers at the town school told me about two male students from the town school who had been abused on their way home. One was a small Standard 6 boy who was sodomized by a group of older boys by the side of the road on one occasion and the other was a Special Needs boy who was repeatedly abused at a football field in town. Both cases were reportedly by groups of young men and boys using alcohol and drugs. While girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment on the way to and from school, boys are not immune, particularly vulnerable boys including young boys and those with Special Needs.

“We want results.” While teachers expressed concern for student safety – especially girls’ – this concern was pushed aside in favour of devoting additional attention to securing strong examination performance. Despite teachers’ recognition that students, especially (although not only) girls, face heightened risks of sexual violence and harassment when coming to and returning from school in the dark, schools often extend teaching hours into the early

morning and late evening with the idea that maximizing students' class time will enhance their examination results. Mr. Ngugi (teacher, male, rural), raised the dilemma when I asked how schools help students avoid the risks that were known to present themselves on the way to and from school:

We show them how you're not supposed to walk late... But unfortunately for our case, that has lingered on here for some time. Children come to school very early... the parents all the time complain that the children are coming to school so early. But what do we do? This is a competition, we try to create more time... Competition is very stiff! We want results. We want to ensure that we are also leading, we want to polish up, before anything else.

Mr. Ngugi illustrates how schools often contradict their own advice and guidance to students to avoid walking to and from school in the dark in order to avoid risks of sexual violence and kidnapping. He describes the belief that the schools have no alternative, as the importance of competition and wanting results takes priority 'before anything else,' in this case specifically before student safety from sexual violence.

The extension of the school day into the evening and early morning also undermined extracurricular activities designed to empower girls and prevent gender violence, such as Girl Guides. The Kenya Girl Guides Association curriculum includes discussion of gender equality and non-violence and explicitly tackles prevention of sexual violence, providing girls with guidance on how to prevent sexual violence and respond if it occurs. The town school had an active Girl Guides club that was supposed to meet once per month, however during the two terms that I was present in the school they only met once. I was told by the club leader that the club gets pushed off due to other demands on teachers' and students' time, and that the club never meets during Term 3 because all spare time is dedicated to examination preparation during this term. Standard 8 students at the town school did not participate in Girl Guides or other

extracurricular activities such as sports or music festivals during the entire year because they were supposed to focus strictly on studying for exams. Similarly, the life skills class that was a part of the formal school curriculum was rarely taught largely because it was not examinable, therefore teachers opted to teach an examinable subject in its place. A range of protective efforts designed to prevent sexual violence against students, including school days that began and ended during daylight hours and empowering curricular and extracurricular programs and life skills education, were subverted in order to devote as much class time as possible to the preparation of subjects that students would be tested on during their exams.

Bullying and Peer Victimization

Bullying or peer victimization was not recognized as an issue among most teachers consulted at either school, even though the town school received an in-depth report following an inspection from the MoE where one of the criticisms in the report was that the school was not following the official bullying policy. When this was reported at the staff meeting, the teachers looked around in confusion and the HT asked the staff, ‘Do we have a bullying problem at this school? I don’t think we have a problem.’ They concluded that the students could come to the teachers if they had a problem with bullying and moved on to discussing the next recommendation. This was contrasted to the discussion over the criticism of the local MoE over the previous year’s examination scores in the report, which was discussed at length during the staff meeting. There was no awareness or investigation into the bullying policy that they were supposed to follow, despite evident ignorance as to its requirements. The confusion may have been due to a lack of familiarity with the term ‘bullying’, despite the fact that this was used in the MoE report. In student interviews, students did not necessarily report repeated, sustained and

intentional bullying from the same perpetrator, however physical fighting between boys and between boys and girls was frequently mentioned. Physical abuse among girls was occasionally mentioned but girls more commonly reported different forms of relational bullying, such as exclusion and verbal abuse, as prominent peer victimization practices.

“Knocking you bad”. According to student interviews, physical fighting or beating is a common response for boys to an insult of any degree directed to them by a boy or a girl. Brandon (Standard 7, male, rural) explains:

Sometimes I don’t like [my friends] because they bully other boys. Like when a boy does a mistake and says sorry, they start beating him... When one does something wrong to another and they say sorry, the other one does not listen. When you tell them to stop fighting, they continue.

The insults or ‘mistakes’ that cause boys to respond with violence are often very minor; numerous students at both schools reported fights starting because one student had taken the pen or pencil of another student. Mrs. Njenga (teacher, female, rural) describes fights happening between boys and containing an element of humiliation and degradation:

Mostly boys are the ones who will be... fighting. Like yesterday I had a case at this time. Two boys were fighting... I have to follow to make sure that boy has to apologize to this boy in class 7. Yes. Because he even smeared mud [on the other boy].

While boys were most often reported to be fighting other boys, they also were known to attack girls over insults including teasing or minor physical wrongs, as described by Jet Li (Standard 8, male, town) and Immaculate (Standard 7, female, rural):

MNK: What else do boys do that annoy the girls?

Jet Li: Beating them when they abuse them.

MNK: Is it mostly boys or girls who fight more often?

Immaculate: Boys.

CV: Boys, and why do boys fight?

Immaculate: If you step on them and you apologize, they don’t take your apology, they just want to revenge by beating.

MNK: And why do they just want to beat and not take your apology? Why do you think they want to beat after?

Immaculate: Because if you stepped on them and they felt pain, they want to beat you up so that you can feel pain too.

Even accidents and minor slights were frequently seized upon as insults to boys' pride. Boys took their revenge by making their classmates 'feel pain too', as explained by Immaculate, so that a boy sends a clear message to his classmates that he is not to be trifled with, for he is willing and able to defend himself and demonstrate his strength and masculinity with force.

Boys' use of physical force to illustrate their strength and dominance over girls and other boys often succeeds in reproducing a self-image as physically strong and therefore powerful and feared. Faith (Standard 7, female, rural) describes fearing boys because, "Boys are very strong. They can knock you very bad." Teachers and students agreed that physical aggression was a means for boys to establish their masculinized reputation as strong men, particularly in relation to other boys, showing not only that they are strong but that they are stronger or the strongest, creating a hierarchy based on physical strength and aggression. Mrs. Njenga (teacher, female, town) comments: "They were fighting down here. And why, just because I want to feel that I am stronger than you. I want to measure myself whether I am stronger than you." Fighting also was seen as the way to show off and attract girls. Mr. Ngugi (teacher, male, rural) explains:

Ngugi: I realized that they may have been fighting because of the girls. Incidentally, the girls themselves were the spectators. So, I sensed they're interested in seeing who wins...

CV: So, do you think that they fight and show off to prove that they're strong?

Ngugi: Yes! Yes. Definitely... That's the main thing. Because their girlfriends or whoever they want to approach is around. Must show that I'm not a weakling.

In both Mrs. Njenga's and Mr. Ngugi's descriptions of fighting, boys are described as using violence to prove themselves to others – either girls or their opponents – but also to themselves.

Mrs. Njenga describes boys ‘measuring themselves’ through fights and Mr. Ngugi as reassuring themselves, ‘I can do it’. Both teachers also explained physical violence as rooted within traditional norms of masculinity. Mr. Ngugi says, “I think it is a general way of viewing issues. In our set up that fighting is one way of sorting out issues. It’s a long, long, long tradition... Even at our times when we imagine that if somebody offends you, you tell him ok, let’s leave things apart. As we go home we shall sort out that.” Fighting is normalized and even considered the more civilized approach. Presenting and maintaining a strong self-image and reputation is perceived by students and teachers to propel boys’ use of force on and around the school ground. These practices are situated within historical practices of problem-solving through force. These historical and ongoing practices reinforce expectations and understandings of masculinity as tied to violence and physical dominance, linking violence among students in and around the schoolyard to broader traditional practices and interpretations of violence in the community.

Relational bullying. While some students and teachers reported that girls occasionally initiate physical fights among themselves or with boys, over all girls were reported to be much less likely to engage in physical fighting with anyone than boys. Girls appeared to demonstrate their strength and exert their dominance over each other – and to some extent over boys as well – through what students termed ‘verbal abuse’, which included gossip and name-calling and exclusion. These processes were sometimes prescribed to boys as well, just as fighting was named to sometimes occur among girls, but was predominantly identified as undertaken and experienced by girls. It was generally described as making students unhappy, as in Figure 7, but Faith observes that, “Girls are very interesting...” in establishing friendships that are tinged with micro-aggression. She describes wanting to push other girls to test the limits of their tolerance to

her teasing, something she does toward girls because she does not fear the same degree of physical repercussions as she would from boys:

CV: Why do you first make fun of [other girls] and then you help them?

Faith: I want to see how they will become angry or first push me or knock me there...

MNK: She wants to see how far she can get.

CV: Ok, I see and do you ever see that about the boys and see how far they can get?

Faith: No.

CV: Why not?

Faith: Boys are very strong, they can knock you very bad.

Faith explores the boundaries of their power by experimenting with how far they can push their peers. While Faith states she would not treat boys the same ways because she fears their strength, some students asserted that girls sometimes verbally abuse

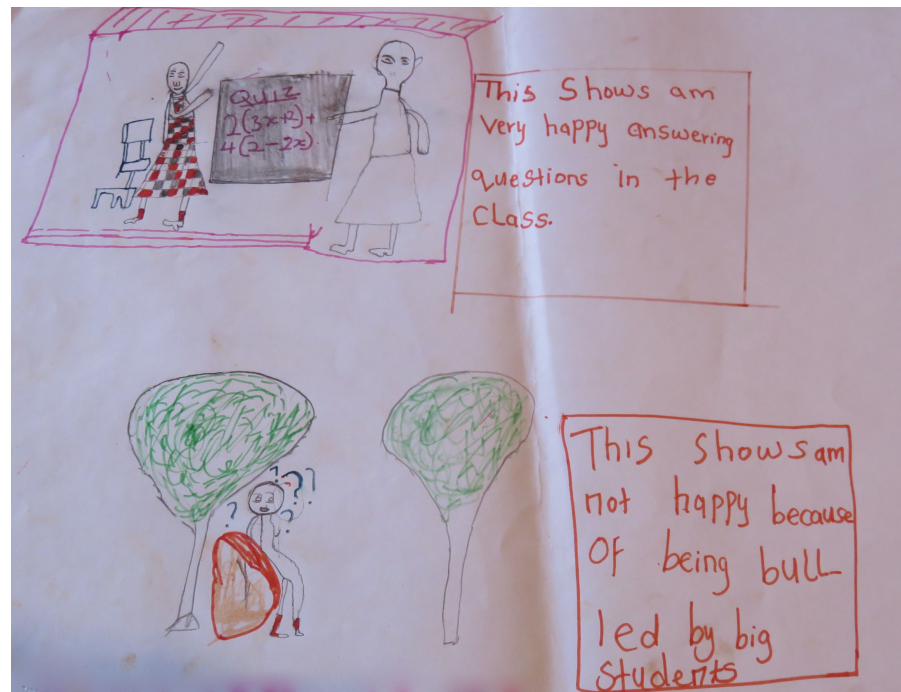


Figure 7: Student unhappy because of bullying. Student drawing.

(give insults or threats) to boys as well. Josephine (Standard 8, female, rural) classified hostile incidents between girls and boys as the following: “Girls verbally abuse boys and the boys physically beat the girls.” Josephine clearly delineates between aggressive actions for girls and

boys, illustrating that girls often exercise their power among their peers through language and relationships, while boys do so through physical strength.

Menstruation was a subject of intense bullying and teasing by both girls and boys; some girls described living in fear that they would be discovered to be menstruating. Kabanze (Standard 8, female, rural) explained that the picture she drew of herself looking sad illustrated that she was unable to tell the teachers that she menstruating because she did not know “how they will take it”. Kabanze said she disliked fighting and corporal punishment, but that neither of these forms of violence affected her desire to come to school or ability to concentrate. Bullying or persecution about menstruation was, however, a much more prominent fear that caused her to dread going to class when she had her period:

MNK: Why are you sad and wondering what to do in this part of your picture?

Kabanze: Because if I go to class, the other pupils will laugh at me.

MNK: So, she thinks that when she goes to class, other pupils will laugh at her.

CV: Does that happen that sometimes, pupils will laugh at other girls when they have their periods?

Kabanze: Yes.

CV: Yes, it happens? And is it other girls who will laugh or is it the boys who laugh?

Kabanze: Girls and boys.

She reported that, unlike fighting or corporal punishment, anxiety over bullying due to menstruation made her afraid to attend class and unable to concentrate during class time. Mrs. Wanyama (teacher, female, town) describes the bullying that girls sometimes face due to their periods by boys: “...some boys appear to know that maybe a certain girl - maybe the boys saw the pads - the boy tells the other boys when the girl has gone to the toilet, the boy opens the locker and shows the other boys! Which is very bad.” As Kabanze states, girls also participate in bullying other girls over menstruation. Faith (Standard 7, female, town) described a

complicated dynamic among girls' behavior; she had experienced feeling ashamed and worrying over whether her period or sanitary pads would be discovered, but also had participated in the bullying of other girls for the same things. She portrayed a process whereby girls will first tease and then support each other:

CV: Do you ever worry that the other kids will see that they are giving you a pad and know that you are having your periods?

Faith: Yes... Sometimes I feel like ashamed or just afraid of how they will take it... Girls are very interesting about that and sometimes they help. First they make fun of you and then they help you.

CV: And do you do that too if another girl is having her periods?

Faith: Yes.

Menstruation is a source of shame for girls and ridicule for girls, as teasing by girls and boys is used to humiliate girls for the essentially female body process that all girls experience.

Defeating each other. As previously described, the schools used the public announcement of examination results at school assemblies as a means of fostering comparisons and competitiveness among students to boost their motivation. This competitiveness interacts with students' previously described manifestations of establishing status and strength over each other through bullying practices both in terms of physical fighting and verbal abuse. This is illustrated in the drawing in Figure 8, where a student is shown being bullied over failing an examination. Lily, (Standard 8, female, rural) described being beaten by other students for



Figure 8: Being bullied after failing an exam. Student drawing.

performing well in exams, saying she was targeted by other students out of jealousy: “When my friends have failed the exams and I have beaten them, they feel bad and they start a fight between us.” By contrast, other students claimed to having been teased, bullied and verbally harassed by their peers because of their poor examination performance. Israel (Standard 7, male, town) and Caroline (Standard 8, female, rural), both describe being teased and bullied by friends for failing examinations:

Israel: When I fail Maths exams, I am not happy. I feel sad when my friends beat me in exams because they will keep laughing at me about it.

Caroline: When we do exams and I see my friends have defeated me, I feel very sad. This is one boy laughing at me because I have failed exams.

CV: He is laughing at you because you have failed exams?

Caroline: Yes, and I am looking very sad here...

CV: ... why do some [students] do it?

Caroline: So that you feel bad.

Teachers constantly compare students’ examination results as a means of fostering competition and motivation to perform better. As a result, many students are continuously comparing their performance to their peers’, resulting in frustration and low self-esteem when they are outperformed. Students referred to their inability to understand why their friends had ‘beaten’ them at examinations, especially when they felt as if they had prepared hard but not received marks that reflected their efforts. Afora (Standard 8, male, rural) describes this sense of dejection and subsequently feeling he does not belong in school: “I ask myself why I am failing the exams and others pass yet we are taught the same. I feel like I should not be in school since the others are beating me in exams.” These feelings of inadequacy are compounded by bullying that exploits the same insecurity, affecting both boys and girls, and using physical and verbal/emotional violence that plays into the same peer victimization processes regarding status

and strength previously described among girls and boys. While students continue to internalize and deal with conventional concepts of masculine and feminine ideals on the playground, these are combined with more academic concepts of superiority linked to high examination marks, providing increased fodder for physical and verbal aggression.

Pushing Students Out

Students' ability to resist and speak up against the violence they experienced in schools was limited. As identified earlier, there could be negative repercussions for reporting bullying or sexual harassment to teachers. Teachers were also using violence against students through corporal punishment and sexual touching. This left students with few options for protecting themselves. The main way that students resist the violence they confront in the school is by removing themselves from it by hiding, skipping school or dropping out all together. Stacey, a female student at the rural school, described the point at which students would turn the corner on the path to school and see the HT waiting to beat them for arriving late. They would then make the split second decision about whether to proceed to school and accept their beating or turn, exercise their resistance and spend the day elsewhere to escape the violence. Resisting violence by turning away from school was most pronounced in response to corporal punishment. This theme emerged before I started my student or teacher interviews, when I was marking Standard 8 examinations in the rural school and read a student essay in the form of a fictional story of a boy whose anger and resentment at corporal punishment he experienced in the school and the home caused him to drop out and run away. The following excerpt from my field notes describes the story:

It started after school when the class had performed poorly on an examination. The students were told by their teacher to go fetch big sticks with which to beat them... The teacher beat them and then other teachers came and beat them as well. The boy eventually got up and ran away to his home, but when he got there his class teacher was speaking with his father about how he could improve his education. The boy ran into the *shamba* and got a *panga*.²⁸ He was going to attack the teacher with it but his father stopped him just in time. Then he told his father he wanted to quit school. His father said he would beat him for this and he remembered his father had threatened to beat him if he ever said he would stop school before he reached university. The story ended with the boy saying that because of this he ran away forever.

I did not have the opportunity to talk to the boy about his story but, during teacher and student interviews, I learned that the boy's behaviour described in the story reflected the common practice of leaving school – temporarily or permanently - to avoid violence.

Afora (Standard 8, male, rural) describes a case where a girl in the rural school refused to do the manual labour prescribed to her as punishment, leading to her being pushed out of school all together:

The girl said that she would not do the punishment and she would rather stay at home or go to another school... After going to several neighboring schools, she couldn't get admission. The parents asked her to come back here and ask [the Head Teacher] to take her back but he had already warned her that she shouldn't come back here. I heard that she has since been employed.

The girl's resistance to the punishment of manual labour cost her the opportunity to complete her education, as the HT refused to accept her back at school following her rebellion. As other schools also were not willing to accept her, this punishment and her refusal to comply directly resulted in her dropping out of school. Afora said that he also considered dropping out in response to corporal punishment:

²⁸ A *panga* is a machete.

No one is happy for being beaten, I feel bad. When I am caned for failing exams I am tempted to drop out of school but when I look at those who have dropped out of school and the life they are living and our home, I just persevere.

Afora's desire for a better life motivated him to stay in school, despite his frustration with corporal punishment that tempted him to drop out. Nyambura (Standard 7, female, town) also described a temptation to drop out due to corporal punishment and that she stayed only at her mother's insistence. She said that after being severely beaten "I felt like I would never come to school again but my mum told me not to drop out of school." While Afora's determination kept him in school, Nyambura's mother kept her attending. As we interviewed students and not out of school children, we were unable to identify whether other children had actually dropped out of school because of corporal punishment, as represented in the Standard 8 boy's story on his examination paper.

Several students and teachers at both schools described a related practice of temporarily removing themselves from school to avoid corporal punishment. Commonly reported student practices to avoid being beaten include hiding in the property surrounding the school or not coming to school for the day. Jet Li and Hazard (both Standard 8, males, rural) explain:

Jet Li: When I have not finished my assignments, I feel like running away because I know the teacher will beat me up.

Hazard: When the teacher has warned that he will cane whoever will not finish the assignment, and I have not finished the assignment, sometimes some students skip a lesson.

MNK: For fear of being beaten?

Hazard: Yes.

The practice of avoiding school to avoid punishment was acknowledged by several teachers, including Mrs. Njagi at the town school, who explained, "Most of these students who run away from our classes, they just hide in the coffee bushes and along the river bushes. They just go

there because in the class there is something that is not good, and they are trying to avoid it.”

While not as extreme as dropping out of school all together, avoidance of class will obviously affect students’ academic performance by missing lessons.

Students are also pushed out of school because of sexual relationships that often result between the disconnect girls are confronted with: a strict abstinence-only message received from teachers alongside constant pressure for sex from boys in the school and men in the community. In most cases, this drop out occurs because of pregnancy. Girls were described by teachers as ‘disappearing’ from school due to pregnancy or early marriage. In one case, students from the rural school were expelled from the school due to a sexual relationship that was discovered.

Students who have sexual relationships are seen as rebelling and breaking the rules. Like the girl who rebelled against forced manual labour, sexual activity was interpreted as a transgression

against the school, and the students lost their educational opportunities even though pregnancy had not yet occurred.

These resistance factors also compound with other factors that students were sent away from school for including ‘activity fees’ (informal school fees that

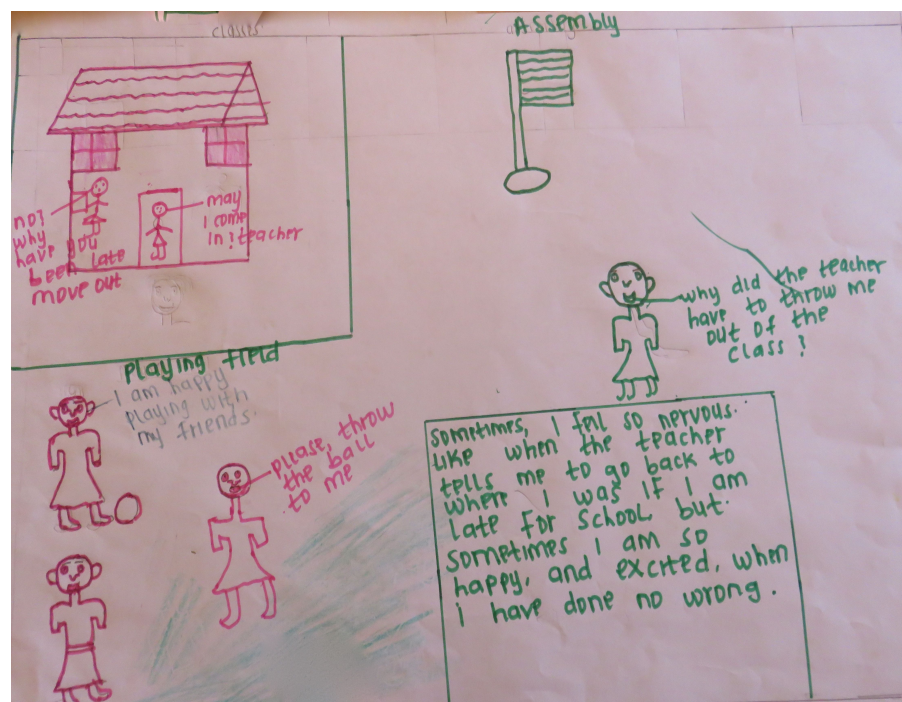


Figure 9: Turned away from class. Student drawing.

cover specific school costs such as examinations), lacking a proper or clean uniform or being late. For example, Charlotte's (Standard 7, female, town) drawing (see Figure 9) shows a student turned away from school for being late. The combined discouragement from continuously failing examinations and repeating the same grade also has the effect of pushing students out of school. Nyambura (Standard 7, female, town) describes a student who had dropped out after repeating Standard 5 four times:

CV: And why did they drop out?

NY: When we were in class five she was told to repeat a class, she had repeated four times, so she said education is not important to her....

MNK: That's sad. She had repeated a class how many times?

NY: Four.

MNK: And she was told to repeat again but she felt that was enough so she left.

These 'push' factors combine with 'pull' factors such as the opportunity cost of paid work.

While students are told that education is key to a better life and even that examinations are 'the gateway to everything', gender violence and other working in opposition to these desired futures and pushing students out of school, as the discipline and authority of the school are prioritized over student well-being and academic success.

Conclusion

All three forms of GVS commonly identified in developing countries – corporal punishment, sexual violence and bullying – are present to varying degrees at the two schools. Some of these cases are openly gendered, while others are more covertly so. They are perpetuated by other cultural factors within the school, such as the examination pressure resulting from high stakes testing and the premium placed on discipline, order and authority. The different forms of GVS observed and reported in the schools are interrelated and interconnected through prominent norms, discourses and expectations of masculinity and femininity. The most

prominent form of GVS appears to be corporal punishment. Bullying, especially physical fighting, and sexual violence and harassment were also reported both at school and on the way to and from school. Teacher-student sexual abuse was reported in the rural school, a practice which the HT was aware of but doing little to stop, thereby condoning its continuation. Although all forms of violence appeared to be more prominent in the rural school, due to the qualitative nature of the research study and the complications around student reporting of violence, it is not possible to definitively identify whether one school was more violent than the other and why. Different forms of violence were observed to be interconnected and mutually supportive and reinforcing. For example, corporal punishment of boys, who were considered able to receive harsher corporal punishment due to their perceived strength and masculinity, demonstrates to boys that physical aggression is an acceptable and expected way to illustrate dominance and control over a less powerful person. These power dynamics were mimicked by boys in the use of physical aggression as a common response and reaction to insults from their peers. Boys were also reported to physically beat girls in response to sexual rejection, again using physical aggression to assert dominance, prove their strength and masculinity and limit girls' ability to exercise agency and choice.

While each form of violence originated in gender and age-based power discrepancies, they became institutionalized in the education system through school cultures that prioritized high exam scores above student safety and exploited competition, motivation and fear among students in order to produce high results. Consequently, exam pressure among teachers and students led to increases in the frequency of corporal punishment, a rationale for physical aggression, bullying and exclusion against both high and low exam performers, heightened risk

of sexual violence by extending the school day into the early morning and late evening when students are at increased risk of attack, and undermining curricular and extracurricular activities designed to prevent gender violence. Elimination of the many forms of GVS will be even more challenging while high stakes testing continues to support, encourage and enable GVS. While violent practices, particularly corporal punishment, were justified as tactics to motivate students to succeed in school and on examinations, it was demonstrably negatively affecting students' academic performance, causing them to skip classes and miss lessons and in some cases drop out of school all together. Reconceptualizing learning and child development within a holistic, supportive, safe and equal educational framework that openly acknowledges and challenges oppressive gender norms and expectations will be necessary before practices of GVS can be more effectively addressed.

Chapter 8: Competing Regimes of Truth

Despite various efforts to enhance gender safety at the levels of the system, school and individual, GVS continues to be perpetuated by a combination of structural forces rooted in patriarchy and colonization, manifested in an education system that prioritizes hierarchy, testing and order. Performance on high stakes tests, originating in a British colonial education system, remains the overwhelming determinant of what constitutes a ‘good’ student or school, undermining efforts to shift patriarchal norms necessary to enhance GSS. The three commonly recognized elements of GVS - corporal punishment, bullying or peer victimization, and sexual violence and harassment – were all prominently identified in the two case study schools. In both schools, the prevalence of gender violence either directly or indirectly related to the prominence of examination pressure and the structural emphasis on order that reinforces masculine norms of competition and hierarchy and prevents restructuring school behaviour to meaningfully addressing gender equality and child protection. Corporal punishment is not only tolerated and exercised by teachers and school administration but is also used instrumentally to increase students’ fear of failing examinations, with the intent of increasing their examination scores. The emphasis on competition and ‘beating’ other students permeates student peer relationships, resulting in increased victimization of both high and low performing students. Finally, school-level efforts to prevent sexual violence, such as encouraging students to travel during daylight and implementing empowering extracurricular programs, are pushed aside in favour of longer days to study and prepare for examinations. Gender barriers and the prevalence of different types of violence facing girls and boys are overlooked in favour of a discourse of sameness that is gender blind.

This chapter will discuss the educational priorities and goals observed in the two Kenyan primary schools and consider how they fit within the larger Kenyan educational policy context and the structural norms related to gender and power that characterize the school systems and manifest in school culture. The concrete acts of gender violence experienced by students at the school level are enabled by broader structural violence of the education system as a social screening mechanism in a context where patriarchy, poverty and authority continue to undermine child protection and gender equality efforts. The structural factors driving these priorities are considered within a discussion of Foucault's concepts of power and discipline and with reference to Galtung's concept of structural violence to consider why GVS continues to dominate the school environment, despite laws and policies that oppose it and individual teachers' caring pedagogy. Within each of these conversations, I consider the relationship between gender safety, gender violence and student learning processes, responding to the question of how do gender safety and violence affect students' ability to learn, as well as how does the way in which schools expect students to learn affect the schools' ability to provide a safe and empowering environment for them to do so.

In spite of the individual initiative of teachers and students to foster a caring and supportive learning environment for all girls and boys, the structural issues shaping the school system ultimately provide a more powerful discourse that has a larger impact on practices of gender equality and contribute to the perpetuation of GVS. The multi-level forces that are perpetuating GVS are contrasted to the individual teacher agency that is the main factor influencing GSS. Figure 10 shows the conceptual framework that shapes this analysis, depicting multi-layered interrelated influences that build upon each other to shape the student experience

in school. The red arrows highlight the factors perpetuating GVS and the purple arrows show the factors promoting GSS, based on the data collected in the two case study schools. The influences in the outer layers may be further removed from the student's frame of reference, but they nonetheless shape the school culture and climate that determine the practices of administration, teachers and students. Each outer layer influences all of the layers within it, building to eventually reach the student at the innermost circle. The outermost layer contains the historical legacy of colonialism and the ongoing neocolonial influence of international development. The second layer contains systems, structures and social norms including the education system, forces of structural violence, and gender regimes. The third layer comprises the culture, climate and operations of the school. Each of these three outer layers contains forces that contribute to the perpetuation of GVS among students and teachers. The fourth layer is where teachers' caring pedagogical practices are situated, close to the students and yet ultimately unable to overpower the layers of structural violence building from further out. At the center is the student's experience and development in school, shaped by each of the external factors. The following analysis unpacks each of the layers of influence as they relate to gender safety and gender violence in schools and affect students' learning processes.

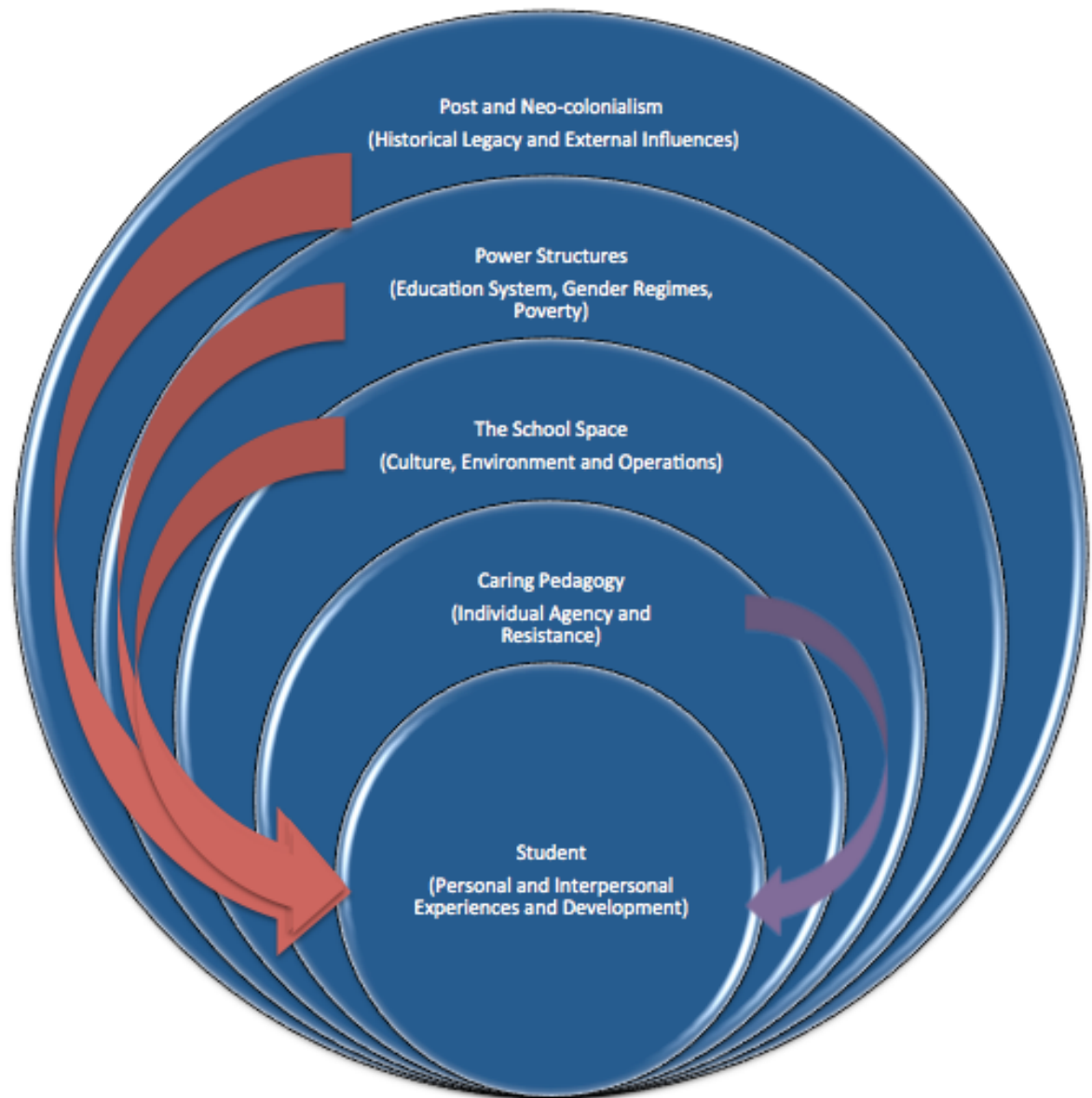


Figure 10: Layers of influence. Conceptual framework.

Historical Legacies and Modern Discourses

The outermost layer of influence is that of external stakeholders, reflecting the historical legacy of colonialism and the ongoing impact from neocolonial systems including international development. The current structure and system of public education in Kenya is inextricably linked with the British establishment of formal schools, first through missionaries and then by

the colonial government. The educational practices that govern that school day are almost exclusively drawn from the British school system established during the colonial era. This is reflected in practices including the operation and structure of classrooms, the teacher-centered lecture style pedagogy, wearing school uniforms, and starting each school assembly with a prayer and a sermon. There are very few elements of the school structure or operation that reflect indigenous Kikuyu education systems as overtly as the influence of the British colonial education system. In fact, students were punished for speaking Kikuyu in school, as some teachers explained to me that Kikuyu is a ‘dirty language’. Similarly, the town school DHT explained to me that the reason students were required to keep their hair cropped short was because long hair was associated with Mau Mau fighters. The educational values of British colonial education were reflected in the values privileged in the school cultures of the two case study schools. The emphasis on examination success as the primary measurement of learning and educational achievement, the use of corporal punishment to instill discipline and respect for authority, the streamlining of Christian morality and religious education, and the abstinence discourse that governed student sexuality all originated in the formal public, private and missionary education systems established by the British (Alhberg, 1994).

While the Kenyan government has governed the education system in the over fifty years since Kenya’s independence, the values of hierarchy, authority, competition and violence with which the education system was initially established remain prominent. Corporal punishment was legally abolished in the 2001 *Children Act*, but the disciplinary practices common in British private schools in colonial Kenya including corporal punishment remain prominent as a means of maintaining order, discipline and respect for authority in Kenyan schools today. This study has

described the prevalence of corporal punishment in the two case study schools, and this is confirmed by other studies with various methodologies (Kimani, Kara & Ogetenge, 2012; Mweru, 2010; Saito, 2013). Very little is evident of Kikuyu indigenous knowledge and traditional education, despite Kirinyaga's almost exclusively Kikuyu population, and students are punished for speaking Kikuyu by being forced to wear a jacket made out of a potato sack or a sign that reads "I cannot speak English well." Other forms of Indigenous knowledge systems, cultures or practices were notably absent in schools, with the exception of the music festival that positioned traditional African cultures as celebrated but in a historical sense (Battiste, 2006). Much of this study has concentrated on the intense examination orientation that shapes daily school life. Exam pressure on teachers and students occurs because students' future educational and career opportunities are tied directly to their success in a high stakes testing system that originated in British colonial Kenya, referred to by one teacher as 'the gateway to everything'. The quality of schools is also evaluated largely based on these KCPE scores, and only recently did the government stop publishing the KCPE rankings of each school every year.

As elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, discourses of Christianity morality governing sexuality are evident in the formal and non-formal sex education curricula, resulting in an overarching discourse of abstinence and heterosexuality (Chilisa, 2006). These religious-moral sexuality discourses, originating with European missionaries and formalized in the British colonial education system, were observed to be highly prominent in the two case study schools, where all romantic and sexual relationships between girls and boys were forbidden, and girls in particular were counseled to avoid boys and sex at all costs. Numerous male and female Standard 8 students at the rural school were reportedly expelled when they were discovered to be having

consensual sexual relations with each other, showing that a higher premium is placed on chastity and order than students' completion of primary education. The guidance and counseling sessions observed in both schools reinforced the religious abstinence discourse, including biblical references, advice to strictly avoid all relationships with members of the opposite sex and to concentrate instead on raising examination scores. In the decolonizing moment when they assumed governance of the education system, the Kenyan government concentrated on expanding access to education, creating more equitable opportunities for all Kenyan citizens. At the same time, maintaining the values of the British colonial education system within that expansion, including systems of authority, competition, discipline, and abstinence discourses, led to the recreation of structures of power that propagated colonial regimes of patriarchy and social stratification and transmitted these values to the new independent education system.

Through international assistance, the Kenyan government's educational system continues to be influenced by external agendas. One way in which the international development agenda impacts gender practices and norms of schools and parents is through the explicit emphasis on girls' education and protection that is espoused by many international development organizations. The prominence of this discourse reflects a narrow interpretation of gender that does not substantively address the root causes of girls' marginalization. Although there is not a strong INGO presence in Kirinyaga County, the discourse has reached the communities through advocacy campaigns and events, as reported by the teachers who were frustrated with the consistent emphasis on girls. The effect has been to concentrate on enhancing girls' access to school before they get pregnant or married, promoting their abstinence and trying to keep them constantly in the presence of adults or each other to prevent their victimization. As illustrated in

the two case study schools, the girls-focused discourse has not resulted in strengthening of reporting systems to effectively respond to sexual abuse, counseling that empowers girls and boys in conversations about decision-making around consensual and non-consensual sex, or even meaningful efforts to address the touching and harassment that girls face at the hands of their peers and teachers during the school day. There has been minimal attention devoted to enhancing girls' agency and empowerment beyond getting them into schools, despite the growing evidence showing that gender violence also permeates the school space, or addressing the gender norms and patriarchal structures that lead to enhanced vulnerability for girls. Furthermore, the concentration on girls as victims overlooks the vulnerabilities and protection needs of boys. Teachers reflected that the increased emphasis on girls' education and violence against girls caused them to focus their attention on girls' safety but not to consider the safety and attendance of boys with the same urgency.

While there has been significant international pressure from international development stakeholders on the national government to address the increasingly recognized phenomenon of school-related gender-based violence and gender inequality in education more broadly, this pressure tends to result in the creation of ineffective policies at the national level, such as the 2007 *Gender Policy in Education* - which was the result of an intervention supported by the UK government - or through short-term interventions at the local level that have limited reach or sustainability (Parkes, Heslop, Johnson Ross, Westerveld, & Unterhalter, 2016). The positioning of girls as victims was observed to have a more poignant effect at the local level, causing concern over the concept that boys are being forgotten, the implication that the way to protect girls is to control their movement and sexuality, and overlooking the broader gender norms

implicated in risk and violence toward both. The international development agenda is now shifting from a focus on access to education to concentrating on the measurement of learning outcomes (Barrett, 2011). It is possible that the concentration on measuring learning outcomes could reinforce the examination orientation that was originally instituted through colonial education system and is shown in the two case study schools to contribute to the perpetuation of GVS. The degree to which this new focus will positively or negatively affect school cultures will depend on whether learning is assessed using the same high stakes tests that are already the focus of intense examination pressure and if international assistance will be dependent on improvement in demonstrated learning outcomes. As the global mechanisms for assessing and comparing learning outcomes are currently being developed, the direction and effects of these mechanisms remain to be seen.

Gender Regimes

The second layer of influence contains the power structures that permeate social institutions and relationships, including gender norms and patriarchal structures and the education system and its operations. Gender norms determining ‘acceptable’ and expected behavior for girls and boys, women and men, are created by regimes of truth and the status and relative power of competing discourses (Foucault, 1980). These norms formed at the layer of power structures then become infused in the third layer of the school space, as this space becomes an actor that normalizes and naturalizes the broader social norms within the routines and practices of everyday life (Massey, 1994; Tyner, 2012). This section examines the gender regimes socially constructed at the second layer of influence and their impact on the school space within the third layer of influence. Discourses of hegemonic masculinity reflect ongoing

patriarchal privilege, with prominent effects in the school space, such as the harsher use of corporal punishment against boys and the unofficial authorization of sexual violence and harassment against girls by male teachers and students. The effects of gender discrimination become minimalized through expressions of ‘sameness’ that imply that gender equality has already been achieved and ignore the gender barriers that both girls and boys continue to face in going to and succeeding in school.

As explained by Connell (1996), hegemonic masculinity refers to the dominant male role where a man’s strength is equated with power, control and superiority. The dominance of this expectation leads to increased use of force by boys and men, and legitimizes other forms of violence by authorizing men and boys to break the official rules governing sexual relations, empowered by their unofficial superiority and privilege (Jakobsen, 2014). The power associated with hegemonic masculinity led to acceptance and normalization of sexual violence and harassment toward girls. Male teachers’ and administrators’ blatant sexual touching of girls in class and reluctance to handle cases of abuse reported to them illustrates to both the male and female students that men and boys can use girls’ bodies as they please; that girls’ bodies are at boys’ and men’s disposal and there are no consequences for men who fondle girls under their guidance and authority. When there are consequences for boys who sexually molest, pressure and otherwise harass girls, it is usually corporal punishment, which again reinforces the concept of violence as a means of exerting power, dominance and authority.

Boys accepted the discourse of force as strength and power and demonstrated it in their behaviour, using violence to respond to anything that threatened their pride and sense of control. Students and teachers indicated that boys used violence in response to a threat from another boy,

sexual or romantic rejection from a girl, minor offences and even randomly if they were in a bad mood. The use of violence in response to sexual and romantic rejection is a particularly clear illustration of the linkages between sexual violence and harassment and physical violence (Leach, 2003). The reaction mirrors the beating that boys receive from teachers in response to their misbehaviour. Beating boys as punishment constitutes a form of ‘poisonous pedagogy’ that endorses the hegemonic version of masculinity (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; 2006) and teaches boys to use physical beating when they are not getting what they want. This lesson then gets applied when their own status as strong and masculine is threatened by rejection, verbal abuse or even when a minor incident does not go their way, by reacting violently against girls and other boys to re-establish their dominant status. Corporal punishment was reported by students and teachers to be harsher toward boys in both intensity and frequency, consistent with the literature on corporal punishment in Sub-Saharan Africa (Dunne, Humphreys & Leach, 2006; Leach & Humphreys, 2007). The practice relies upon established and accepted power discrepancies between teachers and students as well as gender expectations for girls and boys, women and men. The idea of holding back to spare girls some pain but not doing so for boys because boys were expected to be tough was also raised by a female teacher in Humphrey’s examination of corporal punishment in Botswana, who stated: “We tend to lessen the punishment with the girls but with the boys you just do whatever you want to. You just hammer them” (2006, p. 64). The practice of caning boys on their buttocks and girls on the palm of their hands is a common regulation that was previously in place in Kenya prior to the abolition of corporal punishment via the 2001 *Children Act* (Human Rights Watch, 1999). By dictating that girls cannot be caned on their buttocks but boys can be, the practice is infused with a sexual

connotation that schools try to distance themselves from in relation to girls, yet somehow deem acceptable for boys (Butt & Hearn, 1998; Green, 2002).

Both male students and teachers are observed jostling to establish and maintain positions of hegemonic masculinity within the school through the use of physical violence. Girls were also observed striving to establish power and control both among themselves and to a lesser degree in relation to their male peers. This power struggle observed among girls reflects the call from Leach and Humphreys (2007) to 'take the girls-as-victims discourse' forward by recognizing the agency that girls have in contributing to and responding to GVS. Girls in the case study schools are often victims of boys' and men's aggression, but they are also responding or even perhaps initiating incidences of violence with their own form of aggression, usually involving insulting language and manipulation of interpersonal relationships, attempting to establish dominance and gain control in relation to each other and/or their male peers. Some described doing so cautiously toward boys because they feared violent repercussions, but enjoying seeing how far they could push other girls through teasing. Their harassment of each other could constitute a response to the hegemonic form of masculinity embraced by boys and men by using the power associated with aggression to establish their own hierarchies and systems of strength outside of the docile expectations of femininity imposed upon girls. Hegemonic masculinity enables teachers to act with violence against children and boys to act aggressively against girls. Girls understand the status given to aggression within the discourse of hegemonic masculinity and thus resist violence by also using aggression to establish their own power, negotiating the limits of their strength in relation to boys and exerting it more forcefully through their relationships with other girls.

The 'sameness' discourse expressed by teachers to label boys and girls as 'students' or 'human beings' and erase distinctions between the sexes shows a shifting status within the patriarchal structure as it moves away from an acceptance portrayal of girls as inherently intellectually inferior to boys. The sameness discourse is intended to be equalizing and explicitly rejects previously accepted stereotypes. The attitude is a positive move that breaks with much of the evidence emerging from Eastern and Southern Africa that indicates that discriminatory masculinity and femininity norms and expectations are often explicitly reinforced by teachers in classrooms (Chege, 2006; Kamwendo, 2014; Stromquist, 2007). Equality has become a dominant discourse in the case study schools, subverting the explicit expectation that girls are less intelligent than boys, which teachers claim was a previous belief that still lurks outside of their school context but not within the schools. The equality discourse used by the teachers and students shows the discourse has shifted from previously differentiated expectations for boys and girls, which are also consistently identified in the literature, indicating a change in the regime of truth that governs gender norms (Foucault, 1980). The shift resulted in increased academic opportunities and reduced discrimination toward girls in schools. It does not, however, reflect the Stein et al. (2002) definition of GSS that includes challenging oppressive expectations associated with masculinity and femininity. The idea that the school has a role in tackling oppressive norms such as the gendered division of domestic and school chores or the prevalence of sexual harassment in and out of school still constitutes a subversive discourse that is only occasionally taken up by individual female teachers in the schools. To challenge oppressive gender norms, it is first necessary to acknowledge the influence and prevalence of conventional beliefs and their influence in the school environment in order to then challenge them. The sameness discourse

fails to do this because it pretends that gender norms, differences or discrepancies of any kind do not exist in the school zone. The discourse points to an underlying assumption that boys and girls cannot be both different *and* equal and a reluctance to acknowledge gender relations and identity as potentially empowering. Furthermore, labeling all students as the same contributes to an inability to actually address gender oppression faced by students, which must be acknowledged in order to be addressed. By insisting on the students' sameness, there is an implication that there are no remaining gender issues for schools to contend with. Recognition and rectification of gender inequity or discrimination was expressed by several female teachers on occasion; these were rare acts of resistance that challenged the dominant discourse of sameness by pointing to instances where boys and girls were not, in fact, treated the same way.

The sameness discourse is echoed in the statements made by Kenya MoE officials in Unterhalter and North's (2011b) study examining the discourse of Kenyan government officials in relation to gender and education rights in the MDGs, where the idea of prioritizing gender equality was dismissed because girls and boys were considered equally treated by the education system. Ultimately, the sameness approach prevents gender-responsive pedagogy that could counter-balance the gender discrepancies in treatment students face in and especially out of school, which is not the same. The classrooms in the two case study schools were realms where teachers expressed equal academic expectations for girls and boys, but in many other ways the external gender social roles and expectations permeated the school boundaries and influenced student and teacher behaviour in the non-academic expectations held by students and teachers for male and female students.

Disciplinary Power

Through a multi-layered hierarchy that establishes relations between teachers and administration, among students and between staff and students, order is established, empowering administration over teachers, teachers over students, males over females and those who succeed in producing the desired test scores over those who do not. These forms of ranking create a highly privileged order in the school, reflecting other socially constructed hierarchies including patriarchy, competition and the labour economy that drive gender and class inequalities and discrimination within and outside of the school. The various ranking schemes create the school system Foucault referred to as like “a learning machine” (1975, p. 147) that pushes and pulls students through processes of memorization while supervising, classifying and rewarding desirable behavior and punishing those who deviate from the expected norm. The current *National Education Sector Plan* (NESP) espouses principles of inclusiveness, equitable school environments, and quality of learning (Republic of Kenya, 2014), but in practice, those principles were undermined by stronger emphasis on order, discipline and obedience. Multiple forms of violence were both directly and indirectly used to reinforce the social power system fostered through the school. Violence was simultaneously an instrument and a result of the disciplinary emphasis that characterizes the school climates.

Rigid hierarchies of authority governed the two case study school spaces. Teachers are expected to respect the complete decision-making authority of the HT, even when in contradiction to the legal policy framework, and students are expected to demonstrate complete obedience to teachers, with low tolerance for excuses or consideration of possible external factors or motives influencing behavior. Both students and teachers become docile bodies

subjected to the authority, will and expectations of the more powerful figures above them (Foucault, 1975). This hierarchy is maintained by discipline and order that respect the formal and informal regulations that govern the school space. Concern over the maintenance of this discipline was highly valued in the case study schools, over and above the physical safety of the students, as demonstrated in the prominent use of corporal punishment to control student behaviour. A common concern among Kenyan teachers is the perception that alternative forms of discipline – referred to in the new MoE/TSC Handbook as ‘positive discipline’ - are less effective than corporal punishment and that indiscipline is increasing as a result of the prohibition of corporal punishment. While caning is quick and often produces immediate short-term results, alternative disciplinary processes are significantly more complicated and require time, patience, skill and training to effectively apply. The disciplinary expectations observed in the schools are also a reflection of expectations in the home and community, as there is a widespread perception that corporal punishment is justified in both Christian religion and traditional African customs (Archambault, 2009; Mweru, 2010). Tao (2015) and Morrell (2001b) referenced parental expectations for teachers to use corporal punishment to instill discipline in their children in Tanzania and South Africa, respectively, as did the DHT in the town school. To overcome teachers’ own upbringing and exposure to corporal punishment and the similar expectations from parents, teachers require extensive support and training to foster the skills necessary to effectively implement positive discipline. Beyond this, the eradication of corporal punishment would involve shifting the status of the discipline discourse to privilege the law prohibiting corporal punishment and the safety and protection of students above the concern that a lack of corporal punishment may result in indiscipline. These shifts are even more challenging

while schools lack the human resources to manage large class sizes, particularly in more marginalized, under-resourced and impoverished areas than the case study schools are in (Kimani, Kara, & Ogetange, 2012; Tao, 2015). The ban on corporal punishment in Kenya comes without significant support to teachers for implementing alternative discipline mechanisms and is situated within a context that reinforces expectations for corporal punishment and the prioritization of discipline and respect for authority within the home and the school.

Teachers who observe or suspect students are being abused reported feeling that their only option is to report to the HT further demonstrates the premium on respect for authority and its negative effect on student safety. Once teachers report a child abuse case to the HT, they believe that their role is fulfilled, regardless of whether the HT takes action or not, because of the dominant discourse that gives the HT the sole authority to make this decision. Policy regulations to the contrary were demonstrated to be the more marginalized discourse as they were less influential on behaviour and practices in the schools. Teachers' capacity to enhance child protection through reporting child abuse is often further constrained by a fear of violent repercussions and a failure of social and police services to act on the issue and uphold anonymity (Bhana, 2012). Recommendations that the MoE should have enhanced support for handling child abuse cases through schools echoes Hoadley's (2007) ultimate vision for schools and education as institutionalized sites through which support can be offered to vulnerable children, instead of tacking it onto the teaching and learning tasks that many teachers are already struggling to perform with limited resources. The TSC is using a program called 'Beacon Teachers' that seeks to empower interested teachers to become champions of child protection, training them on skills including challenging their HT's authority when necessary to report a case of abuse, but the

program is only being implemented in certain sections of the country where it is funded by INGOs. In other areas, such as Kirinyaga County, the strict hierarchy that places decision-making authority squarely with the HT, combined with negative repercussions for teachers who do report cases, leads to a weak and ineffective reporting system that significantly curtails teachers' ability to use the systems they are supposed to in order to protect their students.

This is a Competition

The most highly ritualized technique of disciplinary power in school is the examination (Foucault, 1975). It serves to categorize and classify students by their success and failure in a narrow form of ability that is a frequently misused and often inaccurate as a measurement of actual learning, application, critical thinking, problem-solving or long-term knowledge retention (Chapman & Snyder, 2000; Goldstein, 2004; Meier, 2000; Roberts, 2015). In the two case study schools, the high value placed on examinations resulted in the use of violence as a form of punishment for failure and the subordination of concerns of safety in favour of examination preparation. The classification system by which multiple choice questions produce superior and inferior students, teachers and schools had by far the largest impact on all school decisions of the teaching and learning processes I observed. The school system's orientation toward discipline and order was reflected in the process of measuring learning and achievement that enables the system to compare students easily without considering the larger elements of the person, their development and their ability to apply knowledge outside of the examination context. Like labourers in a factory, students are reduced to their ability to produce – in this case high examination scores – and to be obedient, again positioning them as docile bodies (Foucault, 1975). Students are conditioned to produce examination results that will benefit the school. This

reinforces an inequitable system that uses examinations to identify ‘good students’ – usually from higher socioeconomic backgrounds – to proceed to better quality national secondary schools.

The process categorizes student ability and thus determines the future of lower achieving students to either go to public day secondary schools or to leave the school system entirely. In this way, the class structure and system of hegemony are maintained, sorting students into the categories that will determine their future socioeconomic status and condition them to accept and expect these outcomes. Students become complicit in the struggle for examination marks and accept their value and worth in relation to these marks. While they express frustration with their inability to achieve high marks despite their efforts, they rarely lash out at teachers for fear of being beaten, and instead take out their frustration either by retreating from school or by turning to exercise power on each other through forms of violence that are socially acceptable within the school, including bullying, physical fighting and sexual harassment.

Among the various forms of violence enhanced and enabled by the emphasis on examination success, order and discipline, corporal punishment is most directly implicated. Teachers use corporal punishment to motivate students to study and prepare for their examinations and as a response meted out for various forms of disorderly conduct. A fear of being caned is intended to drive students to behave in a fashion that respects the order and hierarchy within the school and increase their examination results. Examination results are of critical importance to the school in part because of the status associated with high and low performances and the pressure inflicted upon schools to perform well by the sub-county level government authorities, who in turn are pressured to perform well by the higher government system. Teachers’ performance on examinations grants them a higher status within the school

and the sub-county, and a low performance can prevent promotions or cause them to lose their position in the school. Just as the schools sort ‘good’ and ‘bad’ students according to their examination performance, so does the broader community identify a school as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ by its examination score, influencing the demand for student enrolment, which in turn determines the amount of funding a school receives as this is allocated on a per student basis. At the same time, teachers’ use of corporal punishment is also justified by consideration of the best interests of the students. Strong KCPE scores are highly influential in determining the outcomes of students’ future academic careers. Secondary schools in Kenya are classified based on the following: national, extra-county, county, and sub-county (Oduor, 2015). The quality of the different tiers of secondary school differs immensely and entrance to each category of school is determined exclusively by KCPE scores. Thus, teachers believe that the use of corporal punishment as a motivating factor to influence examination outcomes is not only in the school’s best interests but also in the students’. There is a strong perception that to escape poverty and acquire desired symbols of wealth, it is necessary to have a professional career. Corporal punishment is justified by the examination orientation and considered by school staff to serve the interests of all by increasing students’ motivation to prepare for and subsequently succeed in achieving high KCPE scores.

Most teachers and school administrators wish to provide girls and boys with safe learning environments and ensure safe access to and from school. Teachers described sexual harassment and violation of girls and boys as a tragic reality that should be prevented when possible. With the notable exception of teachers who sexually violate students, many teachers try to intervene and support children who are experiencing or have experienced sexual violence. Prevention of

sexual violence does not, however, take precedence over examination preparation and, when the two conflict, examination preparation is privileged over efforts to prevent sexual violence. This was observed in several ways in the two case study schools: first, by keeping students late and forcing them to come early for extra examination preparation, requiring students who travel long distances to walk in the dark when the risk of sexual violence is greater. The other way in which efforts to prevent sexual violence and harassment are undermined by the examination orientation is through the cancellation of empowering extracurricular activities, such as Girl Guides, also in favour of providing additional class time for tuition or examination preparation. The gender positive messages in these curricula were never covered, again demonstrating a cultural and educational priority placed on order and discipline over empowerment of girls and schools to take responsibility and control of student safety. Efforts to prevent sexual violence and harassment are unlikely to take hold while prioritization is devoted to examinations and discipline above the wellbeing of students and addressing the risks of gender violence students face in and out of school.

The push to classify, rank and order students becomes internalized by the students themselves and expressed in the forms of competition and hostility manifested in bullying and peer victimization. Students are subject to, participate in and validate their own ranking. Foucault writes that “the examination is the technique by which power... holds them in a mechanism of objectification. In this space of domination, disciplinary power manifests its potency, essentially by arranging objects. The examination is... the ceremony of its objectification” (1975, p.187). Students in both case study schools illustrated their internalization of the competition via their exercise of power against each other. Both high and low performing students reported being

victimized directly because of their examination results – high performing students because they make the others look bad and low performing students because they are identified by the school as inferior. The concept of ranking and comparing students against each other also permits other gendered forms of hierarchy and order to become legitimized, such as physical fighting to express masculine superiority, the temporary exclusion of friends from a group, or physical or verbal harassment to see how far you could ‘push’ another student, thereby exercising power over the other and establishing or re-establishing a hierarchy. Similarly, boys exercise their power over girls in the classroom space, physically and sexually touching them, pressuring them for relationships and sex when the teachers are out of the classroom. Each action is an exercise that establishes dominance and orders the social ranking. It is both permitted by and reinforces the patriarchal structures that seep beneath the social fabric of the school, despite the teachers’ insistence that girls and boys have the same experience within the school setting. The fabric of the school environment is governed and stitched together by a regime of truth that constitutes and is constituted by power relations. As Foucault writes, “Each society has its regime of truth... that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enables one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the technique and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (1980, p. 131). The regime of truth within the case study schools dictates that examination results, order and discipline are the most important objectives of the primary school system. As a result, the gender violence that permeates the school environment is considered regrettable but ultimately less important and subsequently easily ignored.

The Limited Power of the Policy Framework

The concepts of safe and equal school environments for girls and boys that are espoused in government policy documents such as the *Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya*, *Child-Friendly Schools Manual* or the *Gender in Education Policy* rarely reach the school and sub-county levels where quality of education is almost exclusively assessed by examination performance. Despite the weak policy implementation, some teachers and students are engaging in different forms of resistance to the patriarchal status quo and undertake acts of care that contribute to a partial fulfillment of Stein et al.'s (2002) definition of a gender safe school. They do so by recognizing and challenging traditional gender expectations, making efforts to mediate threats students face by being physically present and fostering relationships whereby students can turn to teachers for support. In some ways, they even extend beyond Stein et al.'s definition, which relates strictly to the school setting, as teachers' caring practices support students beyond the physical space of the school. The teachers at the two schools provided support for students' safety that extends along the school-home-community safety continuum and includes a role in reaching out to support students struggling with abuse and neglect outside of school. Simultaneously, these support efforts are limited by their individualized nature and the lack of institutional and administrative consistency in relation to school safety. Schools and teachers lack the necessary training, resources, support and direction to fully implement the vision of GSS and/or schools as nodes of support, requiring stronger institutional guidance and emphasis on child protection and gender equality in order to foster a safe learning environment for girls and boys. Decision-making power for the school sits solely with the HT, who is not held accountable for decisions related to safety and child protection. As teachers pointed out in their interviews,

the disconnection between the child protection and education systems prevents teachers from easily accessing and having confidence in anonymous reporting frameworks necessary to protect children from violence within and outside of the school. A climate of fear of negative repercussions constrains both students' ability to report to their teachers, as this may involve in blame or further violence, and for teachers to report to the proper authorities, as it is seen as an affront to the authority of the HT.

Nationally, there has been a lot of publicity in recent years surrounding the arrest and dismissal of teachers for having sexual relations with students, pointing to the emergence of repercussions for severe abuses of power between teachers and students (Ochieng, 2015; Wanzala, 2015). Teachers described these repercussions as curtailing this practice among teachers as compared to the past, although they acknowledge it still occurs in some schools. In relation to less extreme forms of violence such as corporal punishment, sexual touching and harassment and peer victimization, Kenya's policy framework has not been successfully implemented in the two case study schools as it has not significantly influenced administrative decision-making or teacher behaviour to prevent these behaviours at the school level. Several NGOs in Kenya have initiated in-service teacher training projects designed to enhance teachers' ability to use child-friendly teaching practices which include positive discipline and alternatives to corporal punishment and the TSC has recently produced a manual for teachers on how to use positive discipline. Despite these positive movements, guidance on positive discipline has not yet been systematized in teacher training colleges and none of these NGO initiatives are active in Kirinyaga, where there is a low NGO presence due to its relatively high socioeconomic status. There are government and non-government manuals and guidebooks, such as the 2010 *Child-*

Friendly Schools Manual and Toolkit, which provide instructions for teachers on positive discipline, but these resources have been notorious for their lack of ability to reach and effect change at the school level (Vanner, 2015). Teachers in Kirinyaga are therefore expected to implement a policy that many are unaware of and which lacks detail as to the alternative disciplinary mechanisms that should be used instead of corporal punishment.

One of the main limitations of the policy frameworks relating to GVS is their lack of clear operational plans for implementation. The 2007 *Gender Policy in Education*, for example, provides a holistic understanding of gender that encompasses child protection. It contains sections on gender-responsive learning environments, gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and gender empowerment, among others. Unfortunately, the only guidance it provides on how to implement this holistic understanding in schools is through a vague description of a new governance structure specific to the policy. Ten years after the development of the policy, its implementation does not seem to have been initiated. Its ineffective implementation is also observed by Unterhalter and North (2011b), who observe:

While both the [Kenya Education Sector Support Program] and the national gender and education policy were concerned with gender as a cross-cutting issue, many structures to make this happen were not in place... only one official in the national department of education had responsibility for the gender policy and provincial and district officials were instructed to implement centrally directed policy, often with virtually no additional staff, training or strategic direction (p.497).

In all the formal and non-formal discussions of gender equality, school safety and child protection I had with government officials in County and Sub-County Education Offices and the administrators and teachers in schools in Kirinyaga, the only policy or legislation that was referred to was the 2001 *Children Act*. Teachers and administrators expressed frustration about the lack of clarity in the *Children Act* about how to implement the ban on corporal punishment

without proper guidance and support for using positive discipline. In direct contradiction to the policies, students and teachers reported actions taken by schools that extended as far as expelling students from school for having sexual relationships, refusing to do manual labour as punishment, for failing to perform well on examinations, provide school fees or be appropriately dressed. These actions indicate that administrative order, discipline and examination results are given a higher status and priority than the objective of keeping children enrolled in and attending school. Even less consideration appears to be given to the specific regulations documented in the policies governing gender equality, school safety and child wellbeing in schools and, indeed, it is unclear whether these policies are even known to the teachers and administrators tasked with their implementation. The need for clear and accountable lines of communication between local level DCS and MoE, along with a reconsideration of the priorities that govern school culture align with the recommendations put forward in the review of global research evidence on SRGBV by Parkes, Heslop, Johnson Ross, Westerveld & Unterhalter (2016). Their review calls for a better integration of services from various sectors, as well as critical reflection on the ways in which critical reflection on values, norms, and school and institutional cultures can strengthen policy enactment to connect the policy discourse at the national with implementation in schools.

Care and Resistance

The layer of the conceptual framework that has the most direct influence on student experience and development in schools is teacher's pedagogical practices in relation to the formal and informal curriculum. Despite the lack of policy implementation or orientation at the school level, teacher practices often involved significant acts and expressions of caring and support for student safety and equality and – to a lesser degree - resistance to discourses of

patriarchy. These expressions emerged at an individual level by teachers and students and were not driven by administrative or professional expectations; in fact, on occasion they moved in direct contradiction to those expectations. Teachers and students demonstrated care and resistance, but both were ultimately constrained to varying degrees by the education system as they navigated the prescribed interests of the school and its governing administration and the safety and equality of the students, in some cases having to choose between teaching and learning and child protection. Teacher and student engagement in caring pedagogies can be supported, promoted and encouraged by the school system but it can also be undermined by competing expectations such as premiums placed on examination results, disciplinary power or gender norms that privilege traditional masculinity. Caring can become an act of resistance to dominant discourse in cases where it is not an approach that is explicitly promoted and empowered through the educational system. Even acts that are prescribed within a teacher's official duties, such as leading a school club, can be an act of resistance when they are done in the face of pressure to cancel school club meetings to extend time for examination review. More overt acts of resistance demonstrated by teachers include challenging the administration's authority by encouraging them to handle a child abuse case after they have already refused to or uprooting the decision to make a boy the student president over the girl who was democratically elected. These are acts of resistance as they defy the expectations established by existing power structures, moving instead toward an appeal to a future governed by an alternative regime of truth (Foucault, 1978). Teachers' practices of caring pedagogy were the primary form of support for enhancing gender safety in the two case study schools, serving as acts of resistance to

regimes of disciplinary power, patriarchy and a hierarchical system embedded in a legacy of colonial concepts of moral superiority and academic success.

The major factor influencing teachers to act in protection of children in the two Kirinyaga case study schools appeared to be their own compassion, instead of policy or administrative requirements. This compassion reflects what Noddings describes as education driven by morality: “Everything we do, then, as teachers, has moral overtones. Through dialogue, modeling, the provision of practice, and the attribution of best motive, the one-caring as teacher nurtures the ethical ideal” (1984, p. 179). Although teachers of both sexes sometimes express provider and nurturing approaches to caring and protection, the theme of ‘standing as a teacher and a mother,’ referred to by a female teacher interviewed, explicitly positions caring as a role and responsibility for female teachers. The feminized status of caring lends itself almost immediately to an undervalued role against the hard, ‘main’ teaching objective of producing measurable learning outcomes in the form of examination results upon which the reputation and future of the school and students rely. While these feminized approaches to education have been undervalued in favour of more masculine approaches to discipline such as corporal punishment, an emphasis on the power of care could provide a return to an embrace of women’s agency as derived from motherhood, as articulated by many African conceptions of feminism (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Presbey, 2013). Noddings describes an alternative vision for education where sentiments expressed by teachers like ‘standing as a teacher and a mother’ and being ‘here for the children’ are prioritized and supported, with the aim of enhancing learning and caring: “Our alternative is to change the structure of schools and teaching so that caring can flourish, and the hope is that by doing this we may attain both a higher level of cognitive achievement and a more

caring, ethical society” (1984, p. 180). Together the efforts undertaken by teachers and students to contribute to school safety for girls and boys produces a tenuous vision of school safety, where the desire of many individuals to ensure safe learning environments is present but remains unsystematized and unsupported by the larger school structures. As a result, individual efforts are prominent and, in some cases, make a substantial difference in children’s development and experiences of safety and security in schools.

Most teachers contributed both to practices of gender safety and gender violence to some degree. While this did vary greatly based on individual teachers, it was clear that their caring practices that enhanced gender safety were not strongly supported by the school system, whereas practices of gender violence were enabled and sometimes encouraged and endorsed by the school administration and the broader emphasis on examinations, hierarchy and order. Despite the policy guidance within the *Safety Standards Manual* that requires teachers to report suspected cases of abuse to the relevant authorities, teachers did not appear aware of this responsibility, framing their primary responsibility as reporting to the HT, who could then use their discretion to decide whether to report it to official authorities. There was no explicit approach to intervening to protect students from abuse in or out of school, therefore there was significant variation in the understanding of risks and the level of teachers’ dedication to mediating them. The influence of teachers’ individual compassion, instead of policy or administrative requirements, reflects what Noddings describes as education driven by morality: “Through dialogue, modeling, the provision of practice, and the attribution of best motive, the one-caring as teacher nurtures the ethical ideal” (1984, p. 179). Although teachers of both sexes sometimes express provider and nurturing approaches to caring and protection, ‘standing as a

teacher and a mother' explicitly positions caring as a maternal practice. The feminized status of caring lends itself almost immediately to an undervalued role against the hard, 'main' teaching objective of producing measurable learning outcomes in the form of examination results upon which the reputation and future of the school and students rely. Teachers' ability to pursue caring in the face of this resistance is further undermined by a low social status assigned to teachers and resource limitations that limited their ability to go above and beyond the basic teaching and learning expectations and the high level of pressure they face in relation to examination performance.

While all of the teachers' acts of caring were significant, most work within the status quo and only a few constitute a challenging of the discriminatory and oppressive gender norms that lie at the heart of gender violence. Acts like being present, providing food or resources, or supporting a child after they have been abused, are incredibly important sources of support that are expressly valued by students. But they are means of supporting students without challenging the structural hierarchies and divisions that lead to gender violence in the first place. There were several teacher acts observed, however, that constitute true resistance, including two instances where young female teachers resisted the dominant discourse advanced by male authority figures in the school to protect and empower the girls in their care. Unfortunately, teacher efforts to protect students are inconsistent and unpredictable, requiring students to rely on each other or themselves when they feel their teachers cannot be all together trusted to ensure their safety. An emphasis on caring would give credence, recognition and power to teachers seeking to ensure girls' and boys' security and equality in school and enhance teachers' and students' ability to address gender violence that transcends the school-community continuum. Wangari Maathai's

activism is based on the concept that individual activism and resistance is stronger when rooted in collective mobilization (Mungai 2012; Presbey, 2013). This reflects traditional Kikuyu forms of social organization among women, in which women influenced political agency in their community through age-based social groups (Ahlberg, 1991). In these instances of teachers' resistance to dominant discourse, individual teachers act alone, possibly in response to the hierarchical structure of the school. A return to community organization among teachers, particularly among female teachers, could provide a source of empowerment that would strengthen resistance and care. An orientation toward caring, safety and equality needs to be supported by system changes that strengthen teachers' platform for reporting directly and confidentially to the DCS, enable teachers to mobilize to support each other collectively, and extend the way school quality is understood and assessed beyond examination scores to include child well-being and social development.

The effectiveness of the caring approach in enhancing GSS was constrained by its low status in the values of the education system that were observed in the school culture of the two case study schools. While individual teachers demonstrate acts of caring, protection and support on large and small scales, there are structural factors within the school system that undermine the effects of these individual acts and prevent their broader uptake and systematization. A prioritization of an alternative caring vision of education would require embracing traditionally feminized conceptions over traditionally masculine understandings of discipline and authority that emphasize sternness and exercise violence or the threat of violence. The impact of teachers' caring practices is further undermined by the contradictory use of violence as a disciplinary repercussion for students' use of violence. By beating a student as punishment, the teacher

discourages fighting but simultaneously reinforces the idea of violence as a problem-solving mechanism while also deterring students from reporting to them in future. The same applies for punishment of students' fighting and sexual harassment. Students are less likely to turn to teachers for guidance or security in relation to fighting at school when physical or relational punishment either of themselves or the other student is likely to follow, thus the teacher's role as counselor, adviser and protector is diminished.

Students' descriptions of when they can turn to and trust their teachers for protection, guidance and advice in handling the gender safety issues that shape their school and non-school lives point to the importance of caring demonstrated by teachers, reflecting Nodding's (1984) ethics of care. In the elements of gender safety observed, described and valued by teachers and students, it is evident that caring is at the crux of gender safety. Despite these individual intentions, together the efforts undertaken by teachers and students to contribute to school safety for girls and boys produce a fragile vision of GSS. The desire of many individuals to ensure safe learning environments is present but remains unsystematized and unsupported by the broader school structures, largely because many efforts to enhance school safety and confront gender discrimination are perceived as time consuming and complicated and so in conflict with the much more strongly emphasized goals of producing high examination scores and maintaining order and discipline within the school setting. These practices are thus subverted by the more dominant discourse. As a result, individual efforts in some cases make a substantial difference in children's development and experiences of safety and security in schools, but these efforts are inconsistent and unpredictable, requiring students to rely on each other or themselves when they feel their teachers cannot be all together trusted to ensure their safety.

The Relationship Between GSS, GVS and Student Learning Processes

This study's qualitative case study methodology was applied to examine the ways in which gender safety and a interacted with students' learning processes. Results demonstrated that not only did GVS negatively affect students' learning processes, causing some to avoid school and disengage to the point of dropping out, but because the learning process was so consumed with examinations, it also perpetuated practices of GVS, creating a cycle of violence. The emphasis on examinations, order and discipline interacted with patriarchal gender regimes to contribute to the perpetuation of gender violence in the two case study schools in the following ways: a) the need for high examination results provided an accepted rationale and justification for the continued use of corporal punishment; b) the devotion of as much time as possible to preparation for examinations subverted school efforts to prevent GVS; c) the emphasis on competition, comparison and ranking increased bullying and peer victimization; and d) students were pushed out of school by frustration with examination failure and a fear of resulting corporal punishment.

Tactics including the use of corporal punishment and public comparison of students' grades to enhance examination performance and discipline seek to enhance students' behaviour by stimulating their extrinsic motivation, in line with early theories of motivation that fall within a behaviourist approach. Positive incentives offered to students who perform well in the schools, such as promising the class a prize or sweets if they behave well and awards ceremony for the high performing students at the end of the term, similarly seek to stimulate extrinsic motivation within a behaviourism mindset. These practices overlooked all forms of intrinsic motivation or student wellbeing, which are considered essential for motivation and engagement (Perry,

Turnery & Meyer, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Longer hours in school and harsh punishment for failure are unlikely to enhance the interest and meaning of schoolwork for students and may have the opposite effect. The two schools' motivational approaches are largely in line with performance-avoidance motivational strategies, which are generally considered ineffective and contribute to lower learning outcomes (Anderman & Wolters, 2006). By publicly comparing students' test marks, berating students who have performed poorly in front of their peers and even their parents, and beating students the number of times that make up the difference between their test goal and result, schools seek to motivate students by making it painful, humiliating and depressing to be at the bottom of the class. These humiliating comparison tactics that concentrate on students' under performance are more likely to result in lower rather than higher educational performance as students reported that the practices have negative effects on their perceptions of their own self-competency.

Despite the stated objective of corporal punishment to try to enhance student performance, it often had the opposite effect. Students reported leaving school to avoid violence on a temporary basis and struggling with the temptation to drop out of school all together in response to school violence. Boys were especially likely to report these avoidance strategies. This is consistent with the literature pointing to corporal punishment as a common factor pushing boys to drop out of school (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Vanner, 2015). Absence from school is negatively associated with learning outcomes and should be a key consideration in assessments of education quality and equality (Gottfried, 2010; Lewin, 2009; Ready, 2010). Corporal punishment is thus clearly and negatively influencing student learning, as students –

especially boys – practice school avoidance strategies to miss school in both short and long-term durations, and class attendance is necessary for strong learning and academic achievement.

Within the rigid structure of the school environment, children have few opportunities to exercise their own power. They can work within the system by studying hard and reaching the top of their class and by so doing try to assume a position at the top of the ranking structure. When this does not succeed, they may attempt to exert dominance against each other through bullying and victimization of their peers. Not all students have the same aptitude for taking tests. Many other social inequality factors influence a student's examination score, including their socio-economic status, the literacy, language, education and engagement levels of their parents, beliefs of self-efficacy, and the presence of a learning disability (Barrett & Crossley, 2015; Hampton & Mason, 2003; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). For many students working within the system and achieving success within the confines of the examination is an ongoing struggle, potentially making the latter options of peer victimization, absenteeism and dropout more appealing.

While the exercise of power through disciplinary practices including the examination, corporal punishment and hierarchy within and between staff and students are practiced to create docile bodies and maintain a system of order (Foucault, 1975), all power produces resistance through 'reverse discourses' that oppose the dominant discourse (Ramazanoğlu, 1993). In the case study schools, the dominant discourse observed was that students should attend school so that they could achieve the highest possible KCPE score, to enable them to proceed to a high ranking secondary school and subsequently a 'good' professional career. Students are expected to behave in a disciplined manner, be subject to and respectful of the authority of their teachers

and in constant competition with their peers to be at the top of the class. They are expected to accept corporal punishment as a response to poor examination scores and/or undisciplined behaviour and endure a plethora of physical and sexual risks to participate in the schooling process. Yet students reported resistance by deciding whether to attend school and participate in the process. Students demonstrated agency through a daily decision either to attend or not attend school, sometimes hiding in the bushes outside of the school for all or part of the day, changing their route on their way to school, or dropping out of school entirely. While out of school students were not interviewed in this study to examine whether any had dropped out due to corporal punishment, consultations with boys who had dropped out of school in Coastal Kenya showed corporal punishment had been a factor contributing to their drop out (Vanner, 2015). Similarly, a study of factors leading to drop out in Northern Ghana found that corporal punishment was one of several inter-related factors leading to drop out (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009). Even when corporal punishment on its own may not be sufficient to drive students away, when combined with other push and pull factors such as school fees, poverty and income-generating opportunities, it may influence students' decision to leave school.

The relationship between the emphasis on examinations, order and competitive rankings on sexual violence and harassment was less pronounced than its relationship to corporal punishment and peer victimization, as there was no direct correlation between exams and occurrences of sexual violence. There were, however, several indirect relationships. The examination orientation resulted in extended school days that required practices known to enhance girls' vulnerability to rape, such as walking to and from school in the dark. The extra time devoted to examination preparation also prevented the dedication of time to gender

positive extracurricular activities such as the Girl Guides program that was designed with empowering content for girls. These school decisions reinforce the value of examination scores as prioritized over the safety, protection and empowerment of girls and boys, showing that the dominant teaching and learning processes in the schools result in direct increases in corporal punishment and peer victimization, increase girls' vulnerability to sexual violence, and decrease time spent on enhancing girls' agency and empowerment. The emphasis on examination results and social comparison among students is a form of structural violence (Galtung, 1969), as it results in increased physical and psychological violence against and between students and diminishes human potential by preventing schools from prioritizing practices of gender safety through pedagogies of care and empowerment. These practices in turn reduce learning outcomes by causing disengagement and pushing students out of class rooms and, in some cases, out of school all together.

Conclusion

In 2007, the Kenya government published *Kenya Vision 2030*, their development blueprint for transforming Kenya into a “middle income country providing a high quality for all its citizens by the year 2030” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 1). The *Medium Term Plan for Education and Training* states that it seeks to contribute to the creation of “a comprehensive, equitable and just society based on democratic ideals” (Republic of Kenya, 2013, p. v) and this includes priority areas related to: “actualizing the right to free and compulsory basic education; enhancing quality and relevance of education; integrating ICT into teaching and learning; enhancing governance of education sector; improving quality and relevance of post basic education; and financing education and training” (Ibid). The *Medium Term Plan* clearly

identifies that, within its curriculum review, values including school safety and non-discrimination will be prioritized:

Reforming education curriculum with emphasis on character formation, imparting values, talent identification and development, and development of knowledge, competences and skills, that are required for economic growth and societal transformation will be undertaken... The proposed curriculum reforms seek to create acceptability of education based on relevant content, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate outcomes. Professionalism and safety of the schools are also critical in curriculum reform (Ibid, p.67-68).

The Plan goes on to also identify some of the limitations and shortcomings of the examination system and the willingness to shift the practice toward a new approach:

...The current system of summative assessment... dictates the teaching/learning process towards examinations as opposed to learning. In order to improve the education and training, the Government will adopt an approach where there are no mandatory examinations and create a situation where teachers make their own assessment tests and not quoting numeric grades but using descriptive feedback and no longer comparing students with one another. This will help teachers and students focus on learning in a fear free environment... (Ibid, p.69).

A curriculum reform has recently begun to be piloted that does place less emphasis on summative assessment. These plans could align closely with the recommendations of this study: to focus more strongly on school safety, equity and support for student learning and move toward a holistic understanding of educational quality that focuses on individual performance and minimizes student comparisons. They remain limited, however, in its acknowledgement of gender norms and authority structures that contribute to GVS and inequality among girls and boys. Key informant interviews within and outside of the government explained that the move away from high stakes testing is being hotly debated and meeting extensive resistance from parents and community stakeholders, whose understanding of accountability and quality education has been rooted in test scores.

As discussed by Ramazanoğlu, Foucault's theory of power indicates, "It does not make sense to think of political change... in terms of emancipation from oppression. It does make sense to think of transforming political relations through the production of new discourses and so new forms of power and new forms of the self" (1993, p. 24). To be effective, the curriculum and assessment reform must shift toward an alternative discourse of education that prioritizes students' learning, talents and achievements within an overarching framework that confronts harmful structural norms that prioritize existing power structures over the protection and equality of students. While external actors will inevitably continue to influence Kenyan educational policy, this shift toward holistic education and student well-being must come from within. Current efforts to revise the Kenyan curriculum and testing system show potential movement in that direction, but the degree to which they will be upheld and prioritized at the local and school level remains to be seen. Meanwhile, bilateral and multilateral donors and international NGOs should examine the extent to which their efforts to enhance school safety are ignoring critical driving forces such as the examination orientation within Kenyan primary schools, and take extreme caution when advancing learning measurements within the new Sustainable Development Goals framework to avoid enhancing GVS by contributing to increasing pressure on examination outcomes. They should also consider the extent to which use of a girl-focused discourse, instead of a gender-responsive one, can reinforce concepts of girls as victims and boys as less in need of attention and support. In order to contribute to safer school environments, not only the Kenyan education system but the global actors that influence it must shift toward a more complex understanding of education quality that prioritizes the well-being of the student within a

school environment framed explicitly in safety and equality and supported by systems that reflect and enhance the implementation of those priorities.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The prominence of gender violence experienced by students in the case study schools means that the schools cannot be considered gender safe spaces. That said, identifying and acknowledging the existing efforts to enhance GSS is essential to enable the development of practical and culturally appropriate plans for creating gender safe schools that are routed in existing teacher and student initiatives. Recognition of the structural and systematic obstacles that currently prevent these practices from becoming more widespread is critical to clarify the necessary policy and operational changes at school and system levels that can enable the institutionalization of gender safe practices. This research seeks to demonstrate to the Kenyan Ministry of Education (MoE), Teacher Service Commission (TSC) and Department of Children's Services (DCS) that strengthened implementation of their policies related to GVS is important for both improving student learning and child protection, and that addressing these issues requires coordination and political commitment from the three government departments. To international development stakeholders, this dissertation illustrates the interconnectedness of School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) prevention initiatives, efforts to increase learning and the potential adverse effect of prioritizing learning outcomes on GVS, particularly when initiatives to improve learning contribute to the enhancement of a high stakes environment characterized by discipline, competition and patriarchy.

I began this research initiative by responding to a call for more evidence demonstrating the negative effects of GVS on student learning outcomes. I wanted to understand how gender violence operates at a school level and interacts with teaching and learning. This objective led to the development of a qualitative case study approach that concentrated more on learning

processes than learning outcomes. Evidence emerged indicating that gender violence does negatively influence learning processes by showing students' tendencies to avoid school to avoid violence, leading to less time in class and thoughts of dropout. Avoidance was a form of resistance described by both boys and girls, but more commonly by boys, to whom corporal punishment was reported to be harsher and more frequent.

The clearest relationship that emerged from the results, however, was the way that the teaching and learning processes practiced in the school contributed to the perpetuation of GVS. The examination orientation derived from the pressure that prioritized achievement of high examination scores as the ultimate marker of a 'good' school and 'good' students led to an increase in corporal punishment, as the threat of corporal punishment was used as a motivating factor to improve examination scores and to punish students for low scores or for failing to achieve their target mark. Peer relationships also become increasingly driven by the competition fostered and encouraged by practices such as public ranking and humiliation based on examination results, leading to bullying targeting both high and low achieving students. More indirectly, the drive for examination scores pushed out other considerations such as extracurricular activities and student safety when these considerations conflicted with time for examination preparation. Gender positive activities were diminished to leave more time for extra examination preparation and basic safety practices such as starting and ending the school day with time for students to walk to and from school in daylight were ignored. GVS occurs as a result of the gender, power and poverty norms that shape school and community cultures and would almost certainly occur regardless of examination pressure, but the intense examination orientation was shown to provide fodder to justify and augment the use of corporal punishment

and humiliation of students and undermine activities to enhance protection, empowerment and equality.

Examinations are not the root of GVS and, as such, a reduction in high stakes testing would not be sufficient to enhance GSS. A school culture that prioritizes high stakes testing, discipline and order is, however, identified as a factor that is currently contributing to the perpetuation of practices of GVS. The high stakes for schools, teachers and students that are associated with examination results means that examinations – and by extension, schools themselves – not only open the gateway to future academic and career opportunities for students, as referenced by the teacher who called examinations ‘the gateway to everything’. When accompanied by a lack of priority to safety, protection and equality, the pervasiveness of examination pressure also opens the gateway wider to practices of gender violence that shape students’ educational journeys and daily school experiences. To effectively enhance GSS, the reduction of high stakes testing must be accompanied by more systematic recognition and support for schools as nodes of support and gender-responsive spaces for girls and boys to flourish. In line with Noddings’ concept of caring pedagogy, this requires a subversion of more traditionally masculine values such as competition, physical strength and authority in favour of more traditionally feminine values such as compassion, care, concern and support. Gender equality and child protection have to move from a secondary concern that are addressed when time permits and it is convenient or advantageous for the administration, to a priority that is a central focus of the school system and curriculum, understood by all teachers and administrators and monitored and supported by the MoE, TSC and DCS.

The strongest element of GSS that emerged was teacher agency to protect students. This

occurred in a variety of ways, including through the provision of food and covering costs of school fees and uniforms that would exclude students from school or undermine their concentration, staying physically close to students and acting to protect and support students suffering from abuse. In several cases, teachers rose up to directly challenge discriminatory practices in the school. For the most part, however, teachers' efforts to care for and protect their students did not significantly challenge the status quo and operated within the confines of the gendered power and authority structures governing the schools and communities. Teachers' limitations were partially determined by the hierarchical expectations for reporting abuse within the school, where teachers did not feel they had the ability to act independently from the will of the HT, even when this meant a student remained at risk and contradicted official government policies. Teachers' ability to support students was also undermined by the discourses that promoted abstinence and order, shutting down opportunities for guidance and counseling around sensitive topics such as sexual consent and harassment and putting the onus on girls to protect themselves through avoidance of relationships with boys and men without discussing or challenging the gender dynamics that contribute to their vulnerability.

The discourse and behaviour surrounding the importance of examinations, authority, corporal punishment and sexuality are rooted in the school system and expectations of morality and order established during missionary and public education systems founded in the British colonial period. The power regimes that govern the behaviour of administrators, teachers and students are informed by concepts of truth including test scores as a reasonable singular measurement of learning and education quality by which schools, teachers and students can be evaluated in comparison to each other. The absolute authority of administrators over teachers and

teachers over students prohibits the challenging of their regulations even when they are in direct contradiction to national education and child protection laws and policies. Corporal punishment is considered an acceptable means of motivating, punishing and keeping order in the school and is even considered to be in the best interests of children. Sexual violence is enabled through strict moral discourses that promote unrealistic and ineffective expectations of abstinence and prevent open conversations between teachers and students about how to negotiate sexual consent, make decisions about engaging in sexual activity, and effectively respond to sexual violence and harassment. These discourses and socially accepted regimes of truth are rooted in understandings of the educational practices established by the British as marks of superiority, knowledge and power. International development actors conduct projects to try to tackle GVS, but most do so without addressing the larger gender and power norms and discourses that shape school culture, including the examination orientation of the school. Undermining these efforts are a singular discourse focused on girls that does not recognize the gendered vulnerabilities of boys and the enhanced concentration on measurement of learning outcomes that has the potential to lead to a further intensification of examination pressure.

The two case study schools illustrated a relationship between GVS and learning processes that moved in multiple directions. GVS – particularly corporal punishment – caused students to avoid school, missing class to hide from violence and considering dropout. Simultaneously, the concentration on examination results that characterized all teaching and learning processes contributed both directly and indirectly to the perpetuation of GVS via the concentration and validation of examinations by the education system and the subsequent undermining of student safety and well-being. These factors operated within a patriarchal context whereby individuals –

mostly men - in positions of authority made decisions that privileged the maintenance of order and status quo over the protection and equality of students. The regimes of truth rooted in regulations around punishment, competition, ranking, and controlling docile bodies that were established during the British Colonial era risks being reinforced through the emerging emphasis on enhancing learning outcomes with globally comparable measurement frameworks that may fall back on examinations. Efforts to enhance GSS were driven at an individual level and rarely challenged the entrenched hierarchies of power within the schools and the communities. My own failure to successfully use the reporting framework to ensure the protection of a student from sexual abuse illustrates the complexity, inaccessibility and ineffectiveness of a child protection system that is characterized by corruption and patriarchy at the expense of children. Without larger institutional support to challenge the patriarchal norms that characterize the social structures that the schools operate within or the valuing of examination results above all else, efforts to promote gender safety are largely undermined by behaviours that directly and indirectly contribute to gender violence.

These research findings show that efforts to eradicate GVS cannot be designed in isolation from the broader teaching and learning processes that are interrelated with gender safety and violence. While the prevalence of high stakes testing on teaching and learning processes in Kenya and other sub-Saharan African countries is well established, the influence of these practices in relation to gender violence in the schools has not been substantively explored. By analyzing gender safety and violence in depth at the school level, opportunities and obstacles for enhancing GSS became evident, including those such as high stakes testing that are outside the direct focus of many interventions that seek to eradicate GVS. To realize a gender safe

school environment, administrators cannot manage child protection cases on an individual basis. A stronger system of accountability, guidance and oversight that connects education and child protection stakeholders is required to ensure that cases are handled in the best interests of the children. Overcoming the structural norms of gender, power and authority that govern the school and community systems requires clarifying the explicit roles for teachers, students and administration in dealing effectively with micro-aggressions and inequities within the school. A more open system of accountability needs to encourage teacher reporting of suspected cases of abuse and provide better assurances of confidentiality and protection from violent repercussions to teachers. On a higher level, cases of child abuse must be institutionalized through systematic linkages between the DCS and the education system so that the decision as to whether or not suspected cases of child abuse should be pursued is not left to the discretion of an individual in the school. More broadly, the existing policy framework must be operationalized and prioritized at the sub-county and school level so that teachers can be supported in moving beyond a ‘sameness’ doctrine toward one that systematically challenges gender bias and threats to girls’ and boys’ education and well-being.

Limitations of the Research

Limitations of the research design include the broader applicability of the findings, given that the research took place in only two case study schools. As each school culture differs, the findings from these two schools cannot necessarily be applied more broadly as patterns of behaviour will vary within each school. This limitation was countered somewhat by considering the extent to which consistencies were evident in other studies on GVS in Kenya, including another study I conducted as a Consultant in Kwale and Kilifi Counties in Kenya’s coastal region

(Vanner, 2015), but remains a significant consideration. Similarly, the study took place over the course of seven months, therefore observations were made based on a limited time period and may not reflect consistent trends or patterns over the long term. Another limitation is the inability to point conclusively to an effect on learning outcomes, which would have required the development of an alternative mechanism to measure learning and a more longitudinal research design using a larger sample size of schools to examine how experiences of GVS impacted not only learning processes, as addressed in this study, but also concrete academic outcomes.

Conducting research from an outsider perspective has disadvantages, as the depth of my cultural understanding was more limited than a local researcher's or even a foreigner's who had spent more time in the country would have been. I was reliant on Mary as my translator to conduct interviews with students in a language in which they felt comfortable, and my limited abilities in Kiswahili and Kikuyu prevented me from having substantive informal conversations with younger students throughout the participant observation phase, as I did in English with teachers on a daily basis. It also prevented me from integrating further into the community and getting to know parents and community members who were not comfortable speaking English. I sought to minimize these limitations by discussing my emergent results regularly with Dr. Gakuru and Mary to reflect upon my analysis and consider possible alternative interpretations from local perspectives. I was fortunate to have had an incredible research assistant in Mary, who continuously provided insightful observations that contributed to data analysis, was instrumental in investigating Rebecca's child abuse case, enabled a comfortable and child-friendly environment for student interviews, and provided clear translation and transcription. Following the completion of data collection, we proceeded to work together again as consultants,

to co-publish on our experience with the Draw-Write-Narrate method (Vanner & Kimani, 2017), and to continue to support each other personally and professionally. The opportunity to discuss the emerging analysis together with Mary and Dr. Gakuru was invaluable to ensure I was properly situating the findings in the local and national context, but there is still a risk that I was missing substantial nuance that I would have better understood had I been more familiar with the cultural context. I studied Kiswahili to enable me to have basic conversations with students and community members, although Kikuyu was spoken more prominently in the community, and I did not obtain even minimal fluency in either language. If I were to conduct further research in Kenya in future, I would partner more formally with local Kenyan researchers and undertake a joint study, to ensure that my outsider perspective was more fully balanced by an insider perspective. I would also improve my Kiswahili language skills.

The ethical protocols that were developed during the design phase of the research project had to be significantly modified mid-way through, after discussing with school and community stakeholders and determining practices that would satisfy standards for ethical research and also meet the needs of stakeholders. For example, the practice of discussing and getting input on research methods with all teachers and administration had been envisioned as using a formal committee but was adapted to take a more informal and continuous consultation process after testing out several approaches with the teachers. Gaining ethical approval in two stages – first for the observation stage prior to starting the research and second for interviews after I had spent several months working in the schools – was a very useful approach and could be considered for others doing research in a foreign context or for any multi-step research projects dealing with sensitive subjects with vulnerable populations. By far the most challenging issue encountered

was Rebecca's child abuse case, where I drew heavily on the support of Mary, Drs. Gakuru and Maclure, the national child helpline, among others, but we were ultimately unsuccessful in protecting Rebecca from the abuse she was reportedly experiencing in her home and subsequently from an early marriage. The only avenue that I think could possibly have led to a different outcome would have been to identify different avenues for reporting that could be pursued at the outset of the research, as opposed to waiting until a case arose to do so. Initially, we were able to reach Rebecca and investigate the case through a local chief, but following the dismissal of the case by the hospital, the only way we were able to reach her again was through connections I gained through my consultancy with an INGO. Establishing stronger connections with local child protection organizations at the outset of the research could possibly have expedited the process so that we could have reached Rebecca before she was married and could then not be tracked down. Thus, my recommendations for future research ethical protocols would be to establish a local child protection network with multiple avenues for reporting and investigation, including government and non-government actors, at the outset of the study, and maintain a strong relationship with these stakeholders throughout so as to minimize delays if a child abuse case arises.

Curriculum Reform

When presenting the initial results of this study to the MoE, I learned that there is currently strong debate about the direction that the MoE is taking in relation to the role and prominence of examinations. The government of Kenya's *Medium Term Plan II Education and Training 2013 – 2018* to guide education strategies to achieve Kenya's broader government objectives, outlined in their *Vision 2030*, notes the limitations of their current approach to

examinations:

The current summative assessment at the end of primary cycle does not adequately measure learners' abilities while school based assessment is not standardized. In addition, there has been widespread malpractice in examinations... In essence, the current system of summative assessment at the end of the various cycles together with the limited availability of student places at secondary and higher education level dictates the teaching/learning process towards examinations as opposed to learning. Assessment must inform teaching and learning processes that are in tandem with Vision 2030 and to enhance learner achievement, skills and competences (p. 24).

They indicate an interest in shifting the assessment process to reflect broader skills and competencies and recognize the inability of the current assessment system to do so as well as some of its shortcomings and harmful effects. The objective of reforming national assessment and examination systems through the development of a system of competency assessment tests is also included in the NESP and a substantial curriculum reform is currently being piloted, which includes a reduction in the emphasis on summative assessments. This research supports the move away from an examination orientation and toward the development of a system of learning assessment that concentrates on understanding, problem-solving and knowledge application without sacrificing the well-being of students.

An orientation toward learning within a safe and equal environment would not only require a shift toward an alternative assessment system. These changes need to take place within the context of a policymaker shift in their dedication toward gender equality to move from an understanding of safety as infrastructure and equality as parity to a prioritization of child protection and equality of opportunity. The current emphasis on equal access to school would have to expand to recognize the gendered nature of the teaching and learning processes that take place there and that these practices are not automatically safe and empowering. The policy

framework for doing so has already been established through policies and manuals such as the *Gender Policy in Education*, the *Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya*, the *Child-Friendly Schools Policy* and the *Positive Discipline Handbook*. A number of steps could take place to improve their implementation. Teachers' in-service and pre-service training should include gender-responsive pedagogy that validates processes of student protection and empowerment and reflects a more caring approach and concern for student well-being and equality. Efforts to provide gender-responsive pedagogy teacher training have already been taking place for over a decade in Kenya, including through FAWE's efforts to apply their (2005) *Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Teacher's Handbook* and Chege's (2006) work using teacher memory with pre-service teacher candidates to reflect on the impact of gender violence on students, in which she had them journal about their memories of gender violence growing up and the different ways it impacted them. The TSC has also been supporting in-service training on responding to SRGBV through projects with international development organizations. These efforts, which have for the most part been projects driven or funded by NGOs, should become more systematized and prioritized at a larger scale within teacher training colleges and other in-service training opportunities for all teachers and administrators.

GSS also needs to be reflected more strongly in the mechanisms for assessing school quality. A coordinated approach to the implementation of the existing gender safety and equality policies would require prioritization of these issues in the monitoring and feedback provided to schools by the TSC tutors and the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers within the DEO. Efforts to assess gender safety and equality would need to extend beyond a checkmark approach of assessing inputs to conversations with students, teachers and administration about teaching,

learning and safety processes such as managing discipline, ensuring equal opportunities for girls and boys, and providing safe and confidential spaces for students, parents and teachers to report cases of abuse including against teachers in the school. Finally, closer alignment of the DCS, TSC and MoE is required to facilitate direct access for teachers and students to report concerns without necessitating the approval of the HT. For the Kenyan government to operationalize policies in a way that will substantively enhance the preventative and protective elements of the school environment, a shift is needed toward prioritizing holistic student wellbeing and recognizing academic learning and achievement as inextricably linked to a safe and supportive school environment.

Reframing External Influence

International development organizations, including bilateral and multilateral donors and INGOs, should critically reflect upon their influence. The implications of this research for international development stakeholders is the necessity of considering the adverse effects of their actions and the need to situate efforts to enhance GSS within the broader structural and systemic factors that enhance gender violence in the school context. As the global international development community drives toward stronger measurement of learning to evaluate progress toward achievement of the SDGs, it is essential to consider the possible adverse effects of these efforts in terms of increasing examination pressure on teachers and students at the school level. International development organizations have been increasing their research and project activities to address GVS, but these efforts rarely connect project activities with the broader context of the school environment. Strategies such as extracurricular clubs or training for teachers on the importance of gender equality and child protection are likely to be ineffective and

unsustainable without addressing them in the context of the values of examinations, order, discipline and competition that are currently more strongly prioritized by the broader education system. Parkes (2015) calls for initiatives that address GVS to take a multi-dimensional and multi-level approach that tackles systemic and structural intersections between gender, violence and poverty in education. This research supports a complex approach and additionally calls for attention to the concept of quality education and student achievement that is prioritized within the education system and the ways in which these values and regimes of truth interact with GVS. It also advances a necessarily nuanced approach to gender that does not equate gender equality, empowerment and protection strictly with the needs and interests of girls. Gender violence is clearly illustrated to negatively affect boys as well as girls in numerous ways, and discourse that concentrates exclusively on girls can further concentrate images of girls as victims that should be protected by constant supervision – without necessarily challenging the gender norms that enhance their vulnerability - and boys as strong, masculine beings able to roam free without need of supervision or support due to their perceived ability to protect themselves.

These findings point to several avenues for future research: the first is to follow the development of complementary assessment systems that are described in the NESP and evaluate the extent to which they would result in similar examination pressure and/or whether they would enable the reorientation of schools toward a more balanced culture of teaching and learning alongside emphasis on student well-being, protection and equality. The issue of teacher agency should also be explored in further depth to investigate the best ways of expanding support for teachers to prevent and respond to GVS. Further research to address teacher agency supporting GSS could include action research to integrate gender-responsive pedagogy into large scale in-

service teacher training to enhance their capacity to support gender safety, piloting a monitoring system to reinforce the establishment of gender safe schools from the Sub-County Education office, action research to consider scaling up the TSC Beacon Teacher training program on child protection, or a more targeted analysis of the connections and blockages that prevent teachers from successfully accessing the reporting frameworks established through the DCS.

The SDGs reflected a dramatic shift in the objectives of the international development community that were enshrined in the MDGs. They demonstrate a new orientation toward country ownership of development agendas, a commitment to reaching the most vulnerable, and highlight the broader intersections and interlinkages between objectives within different sectors, such as health, education and child protection. As the global community moves toward their implementation and measurement, it remains to be seen how dramatically international development practices and behaviours will be able to shift to reflect these new objectives. GSS is an essentially intersectoral issue, necessitating the cooperation of stakeholders from child protection and education sectors and requiring the embodiment of a gendered analysis of education systems. Its promotion requires uncomfortable critical reflection in relation to the adverse effects of discourse and power and a consideration of how to use international influence in a way that promotes gender-responsive education and child protection systems that are still driven by country priorities. Through its *Medium Term Plan for Vision 2030* and the NESP, the Kenyan government has articulated a willingness to reflect critically and to shift the orientation of its procedures to reflect a broader understanding of teaching and learning. It has created a policy framework that recognizes the importance of gender equality and child protection in its education system. It has not, however, effectively implemented these policies to date and the

NESP's operational plan has not sufficiently budgeted for the operationalization of components related to gender equality and child protection in education. International development stakeholders can start by holding governments accountable to the gender and protection commitments they have made. In Kenya, these would include reinforcing the importance of equality and safety for reaching broader quality of education objectives, supporting a multi-sectoral systems approach to child protection that reflects upon current and historical power structures that shape school cultures, and building upon existing opportunities within schools for enhancing gender safety and thus learning for all girls and boys.

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Appendix 1: Parkes et al.'s (2013) Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Violence Against Girls in Schools

550

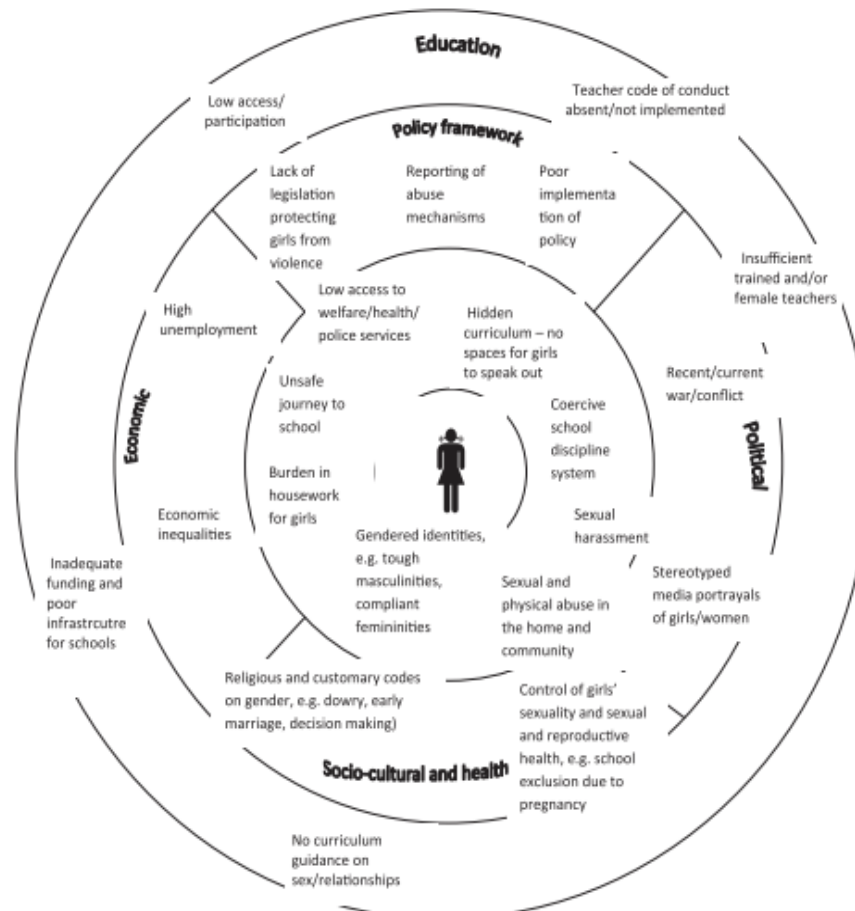
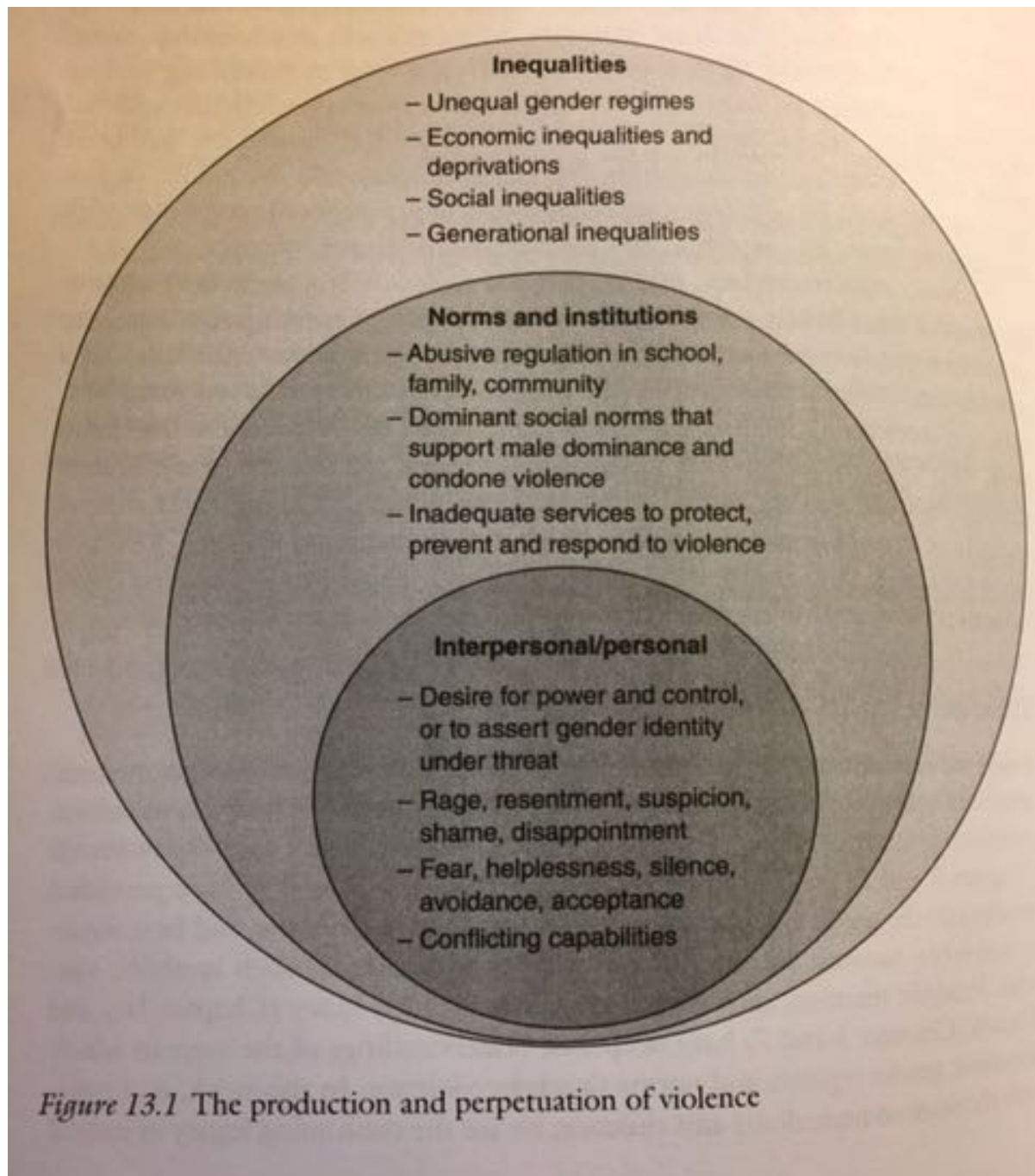
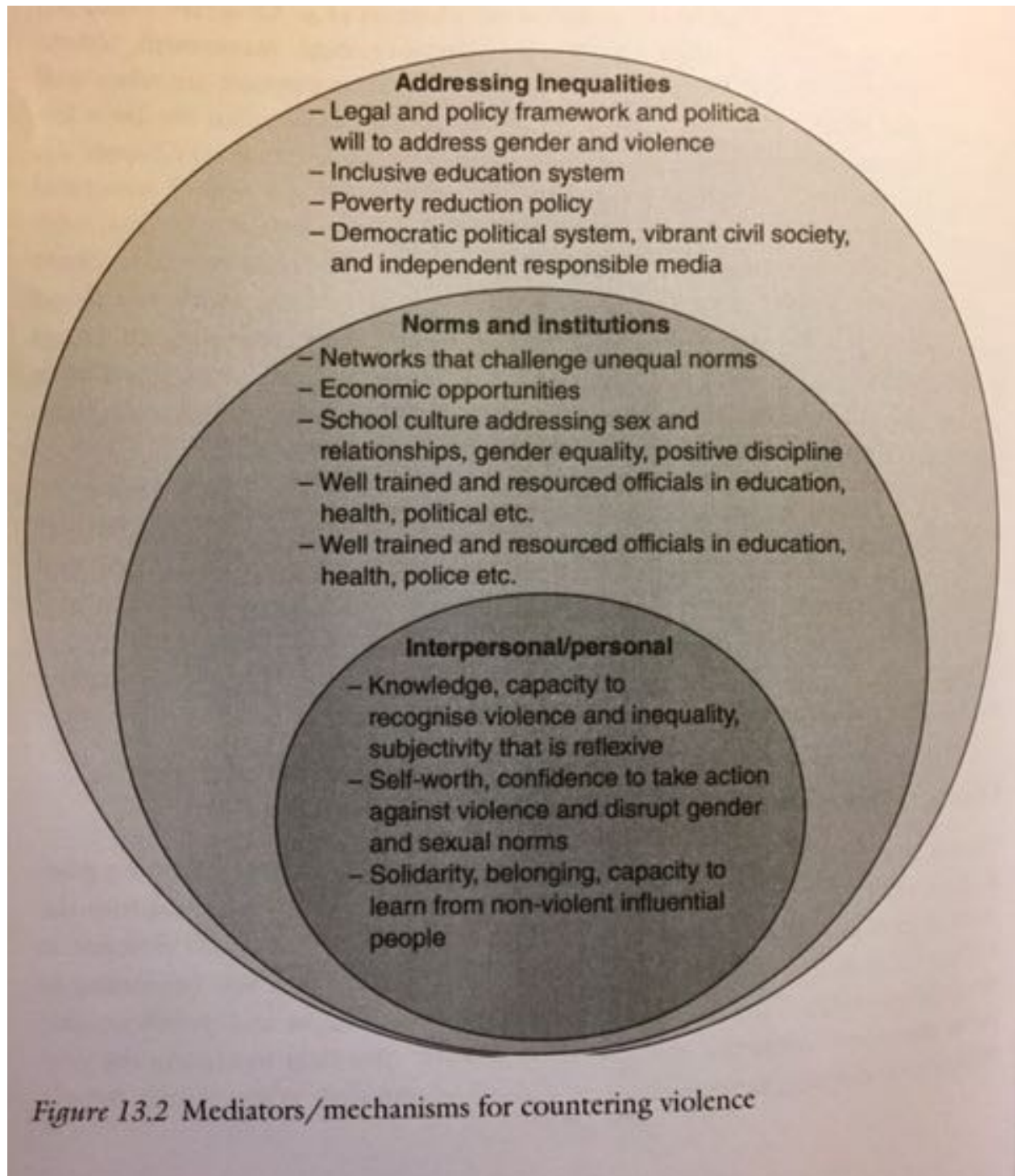
J. Parkes et al./International Journal of Educational Development 33 (2013) 546–556

Fig. 1. Violence against girls in schools: conceptual framework.

Appendix 2: Parkes (2015) Models of Producing and Countering Violence**Model 1: Production and Perpetuation of Violence**

Model 2: Mediators/mechanisms for countering violence

Appendix 3: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. CATHERINE ELIZABETH VANNER
of UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA &

has
been permitted to conduct research in
Kirinyaga County

on the topic: ACADEMIC CAPABILITIES
IN RELATION TO GENDER SAFETY IN
KENYAN SCHOOLS: A QUALITATIVE
CASE STUDY COMPARING TWO PRIMARY
SCHOOLS

for the period ending:
24th July, 2015

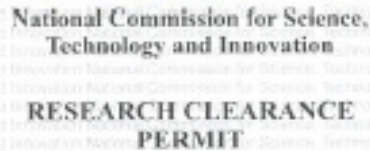
Applicant's
Signature

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/15/9490/4119
Date Of issue : 16th January, 2015
Fee Received :USD 400



Secretary
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one(1) soft copy of your final report.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.



CONDITIONS: see back page



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

9th Floor, Uhuru House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

Ref. No.

Date:

16th January, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/9490/4119

Catherine Elizabeth Vanner
University of Ottawa
CANADA.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Academic capabilities in relation to gender safety in Kenyan Schools: A qualitative case study comparing two primary schools,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kirinyaga County** for a period ending **24th July, 2015**.

You are advised to report **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kirinyaga County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are required to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

SAID HUSSEIN
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kirinyaga County.

The County Director of Education
Kirinyaga County.



Appendix 4: School Recruitment Letter

To Whom It May Concern:

September 18, 2014

My name is Catherine Vanner and I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Education at the University of Ottawa in Canada, working under the supervision of Dr. Richard Maclure, Professor of Education at the University of Ottawa and Dr. Octavian Gakuru, Professor of Sociology at the University of Nairobi. I have contacted you because I am searching for a school in which to conduct research for a period of January – July 2015. The purpose of the study is to build understanding about the relationship between gender safety in schools and students' academic performance, engagement, motivation and ambition. This research project will serve as my doctoral dissertation.

By participating in this research study, your school will contribute to the enhancement of knowledge on school safety, gender equality and student learning in Kenya. The results of the research study will be shared with the school, local education authorities, the Kenya Ministry of Education and education researchers and policymakers internationally. The project will be divided into two stages of one term each. For the first stage, I would spend three months volunteering and contributing to your school as a tutor, teacher's assistant or in any other way you might find to be helpful. During this time I would conduct participant observation, as I learn about daily school life and school culture. The methods to take place during the second stage would be determined in collaboration with members of the school community during the first stage, based on the needs and priorities of community members.

All the information obtained in the study will remain confidential. The research will lead to reports and presentations for the school and the Ministry of Education, academic peer-reviewed international publications and presentations, and my doctoral dissertation. To be eligible to participate, the school must be a primary school in a semi-urban or rural location with Standards 1- 8. Both the head teacher and the SMC must be in favour of the research project taking place in the school. Participation of the school is entirely voluntary. There is no obligation to participate and there will be no repercussions if the school or potential participants choose not to. This research is being conducted with the knowledge and support of the Ministry of Education.

Thank you for considering participating in this research initiative. If you are interested in participating, please let me know by phone or email. I can be reached by phone at [removed for privacy] and by email at [removed for privacy]. You may also contact my supervisors, Dr. Gakuru can be reached by phone at [removed for privacy] and by email at [removed for privacy] and Dr. Maclure at [removed for privacy]. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Catherine Vanner

Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Appendix 5: Research Invitation Letter

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Telegrams:
Telephone:
When replying please quote



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

SUB COUNTY DIRECTOR OFFICE,
KIRINYAGA EAST DISTRICT,
P.O BOX 208-10301,
KIANYAGA.

DATE: 25/11/2014.

REF: KE/ED/R/VOL1

Dear Catherine Vanner,

I take this opportunity to thank you for showing interest in conducting research in this district. I believe that the findings and recommendations of your research will go a long way in assisting the district and the Ministry of Education Science and technology solve pertinent issues in perspective.

I therefore take this opportunity to welcome you to Kirinyaga East District with a promise that I will accord you all the support that you may require from us.

In pursuant to your request, selection criteria and nature of your research I and my team have identified two schools: Kianjiru primary school and Raimu primary school. These two schools are a perfect fit to your requirements.

I will write to the two SMCs and the head teachers to inform them of your intention to volunteer and conduct PhD research in the areas mentioned in your mail. I am sure they will be delighted and will welcome you warmly.

I look forward to meeting you in January 2015.

JOSEPH M.KARANJA
SUB-COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIRINYAGA EAST SUB-COUNTY C.N.M

File Number: 08-14-29b

Appendix 6: Ethics Certificate (Phase 1)

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 05/12/2015



Ethics Approval Notice

Social Sciences and Humanities REB

Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
Richard	Maclure	Education / Education	Supervisor
Octavian	Gakuru	Others / Others	Co-Supervisor
Catherine	Vanner	Education / Education	Student Researcher

File Number: 08-14-29b

Type of Project: PhD Thesis

Title: Academic Capabilities in Relation to Gender Safety in Kenyan Schools: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Primary Schools (Phase 2)

Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Approval Type
05/11/2015 05/10/2016 Ia		

(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)

Special Conditions / Comments:
N/A

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2010) and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above named research project. Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the project, the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the project (e.g., change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct

of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, including consent and recruitment documentation, should be submitted to the Ethics Office for approval using the “Modification to research project” form available at:

<http://research.uottawa.ca/ethics/submissions-and-reviews>.

Please submit an annual report to the Ethics Office four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval. To close the file, a final report must be submitted. These documents can be found at:

<http://research.uottawa.ca/ethics/submissions-and-reviews>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5387 or by e-mail at: ethics@uOttawa.ca.

Signature:

[Signature removed for privacy.]

Riana Marcotte

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

For Barbara Graves, Chair of the Social Sciences and Humanities REB

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

(613) 562-5387 • Téléc./Fax (613) 562-5338

www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie/ www.research.uottawa.ca/ethics/

Appendix 7: Ethics Certificate (Phase 2)

Ethics Approval Notice
Social Sciences and Humanities REB

Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
Richard	Maclure	Education / Education	Supervisor
Octavian	Gakuru	Others / Others	Co-Supervisor
Catherine	Vanner	Education / Education	Student Researcher

File Number: 08-14-
29b

Type of Project: PhD Thesis

Title: Academic Capabilities in Relation to Gender Safety in Kenyan Schools: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Primary Schools (Phase 2)

Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Approval Type
05/11/2015 05/10/2016 Ia		

(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)

Special Conditions / Comments:
N/A

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2010) and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above named research project. Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the project, the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the project (e.g., change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, including consent and recruitment documentation, should be submitted to the Ethics Office for

approval using the “Modification to research project” form available at:
<http://research.uottawa.ca/ethics/submissions-and-reviews>.

Please submit an annual report to the Ethics Office four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval. To close the file, a final report must be submitted. These documents can be found at:
<http://research.uottawa.ca/ethics/submissions-and-reviews>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5387 or by e-mail at: ethics@uOttawa.ca.

Signature:

[Signature removed for privacy.]

Riana Marcotte

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

For Barbara Graves, Chair of the Social Sciences and Humanities REB

Appendix 8: School Introduction Script

Hello everyone! My name is Catherine Vanner and I am a Ph.D. Student and researcher in Education at the University of Ottawa in Canada. I will be spending the next seven months volunteering and conducting research at [School Name] .

The purpose of my study is to better understand how the safety of your school affects the students' learning and ambitions. By being a part of this research study, your school will help to build knowledge about school safety, gender equality and student learning in Kenya. The results will be shared with the school, the Kenya Ministry of Education and education researchers and policymakers around the world.

For the next seven months, I will be volunteering as a tutor and teacher's assistant and helping out around the school. At the beginning, my research will be observing school life by being in the school, helping the students and teachers and talking to the students, teachers and community members whenever you want to talk to me.

Later on in the process I may ask to talk to some people individually or in small groups, but for now I will just be working in the school, watching and listening. I will not write down anybody's name or talk about anybody specifically, I just want to get a better understanding of the school.

You do not have to be a part of the research project if you do not want to. If you feel uncomfortable having me watching and listening to you while you are at school, you can just tell me or any teacher and I will avoid you and will not take any notes about you. I may still come to your class but I will not take notes about conversations or other exchanges that you are part of. Nothing bad will happen to any students or teachers who choose not to be a part of the project.

I am so excited to be here with you and I cannot wait to get to know you better and to learn from you. I hope to meet you all before long. You can come talk to me at any point to ask questions about my research project or to talk to me about anything. Thank you for listening.

Appendix 10: Teacher Consent Form (Observation)

Project title: Academic Capabilities in Relation to Gender Safety in Kenyan Schools: A Qualitative Case Study Comparing Two Primary Schools

Principal Investigator:

Catherine Vanner, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Ottawa

The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between the safety of the school and students' ability to do the things that they think are important in school, such as learning, and achieve what they want to after school. It is also to investigate the gendered nature of this relationship, meaning how and why it is different for girls and boys.

Description of the research:

The project will be divided into two stages of one term each. For the first stage, I would spend three months volunteering and contributing to your school as a tutor, teacher's assistant or in any other way you might find to be helpful. During this time I would conduct participant observation, as I learn about daily school life and school culture. The methods to take place during the second stage would be determined in collaboration with members of the school community during the first stage, based on the needs and priorities of community members. This consent form relates only to the first stage of participant observation.

Participation involves allowing the researcher to conduct observations in your classroom of the teacher(s) and students on a regular basis for a period of up to one term. The frequency and duration of the researcher's time in your classroom are determined through discussion and mutual agreement between you and the researcher. This stage will not involve interviews and the researcher will not make any notes while in the class.

If you decide to allow participant observation to take place in your classroom, the researcher can contribute to assisting with instruction, assessment or classroom management if you would like. The nature of her contributions can be determined based on your needs through discussion and mutual agreement with the researcher.

Rights of the participant:

If you feel uncomfortable or self-conscious while the researcher is conducting observation in your class, you may ask the researcher to leave at any time. You may also choose to stop participating at any time and then the researcher will no longer conduct observation in your class. There is no obligation to participate and there will be no negative repercussions for not participating or for agreeing to participate and then changing your mind. You can ask questions about the research project at any time. No formal interviews will take place during this stage and you can choose not to engage in informal conversation with the researcher at any time.

Neither your name nor the names of your students will be noted in the researcher's field notes or

in any reports or publications. The only exception is in the event that direct harm to a child within the school is observed, in which case the researcher is obliged to report this incident to the head teacher.

Contact:

If you have any questions or concerns about this study you can contact:

Catherine Vanner

Principal Investigator

Email: [removed for privacy]

Kenya Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Octavian Gakuru

Local Supervisor

Department of Sociology and Social Work

University of Nairobi

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: [removed for privacy], Nairobi, Kenya

Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education

University of Ottawa

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: Lamoureux Hall 457,
145 Jean-Jacques-Lussier Private,
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

University of Ottawa

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

Phone: 1(613) 562-5387

Address: 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Consent:

By signing this form (or providing my consent orally), I agree that:

- The study has been explained to me.
- All my questions were answered.
- The possible harms and discomforts and the possible benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me.
- I understand that I have the right not to participate and the right to stop participating at any

time.

- I understand that I may stop participating without any problems.
- I have a choice to not answer any questions.
- I am free now, and in the future, to ask any questions about the study.
- I have been told that my personal records will be kept confidential
- I understand that no information that would identify me will be released.
- I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

I hereby consent to participate.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature

Date

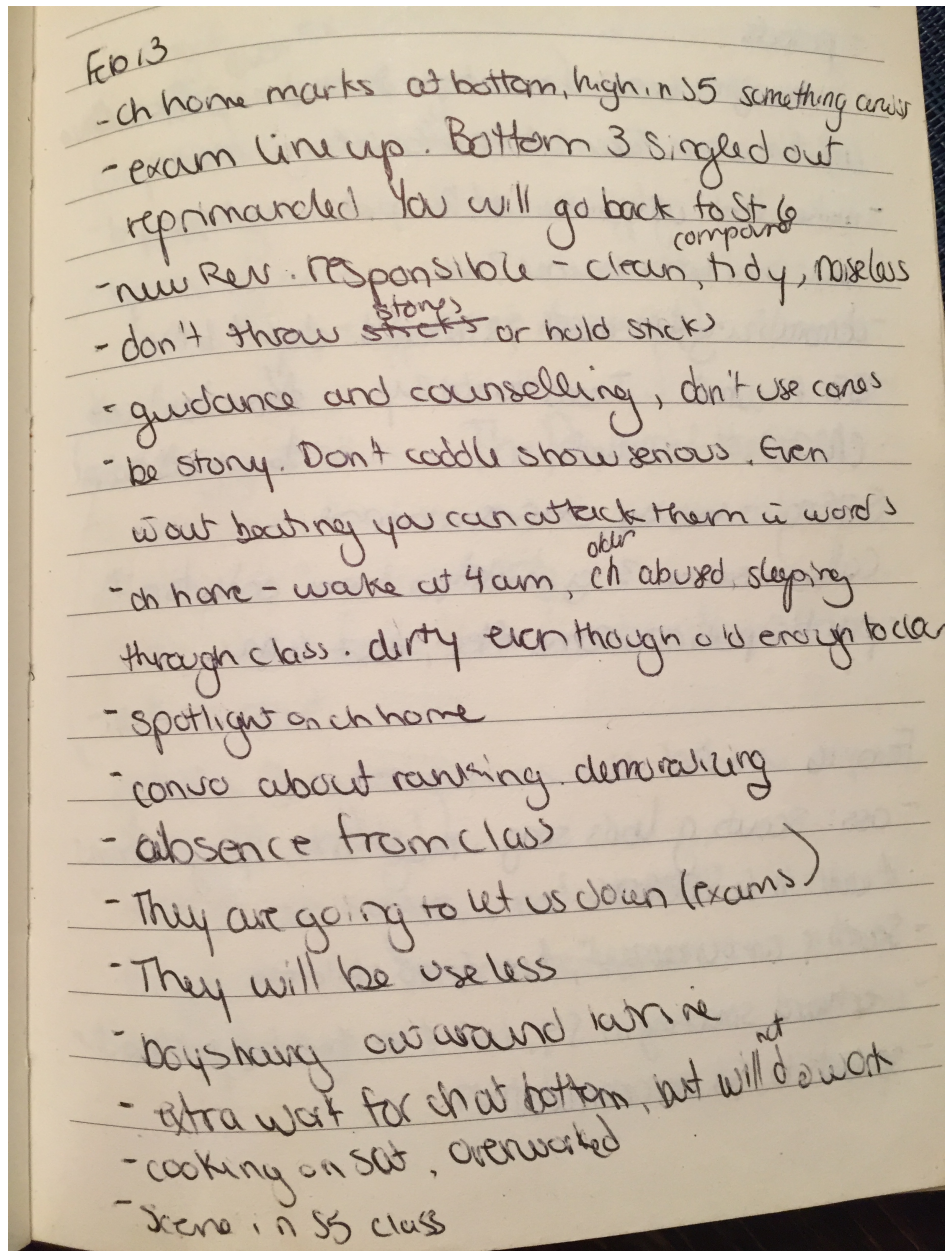
Name of person who obtained consent: _____

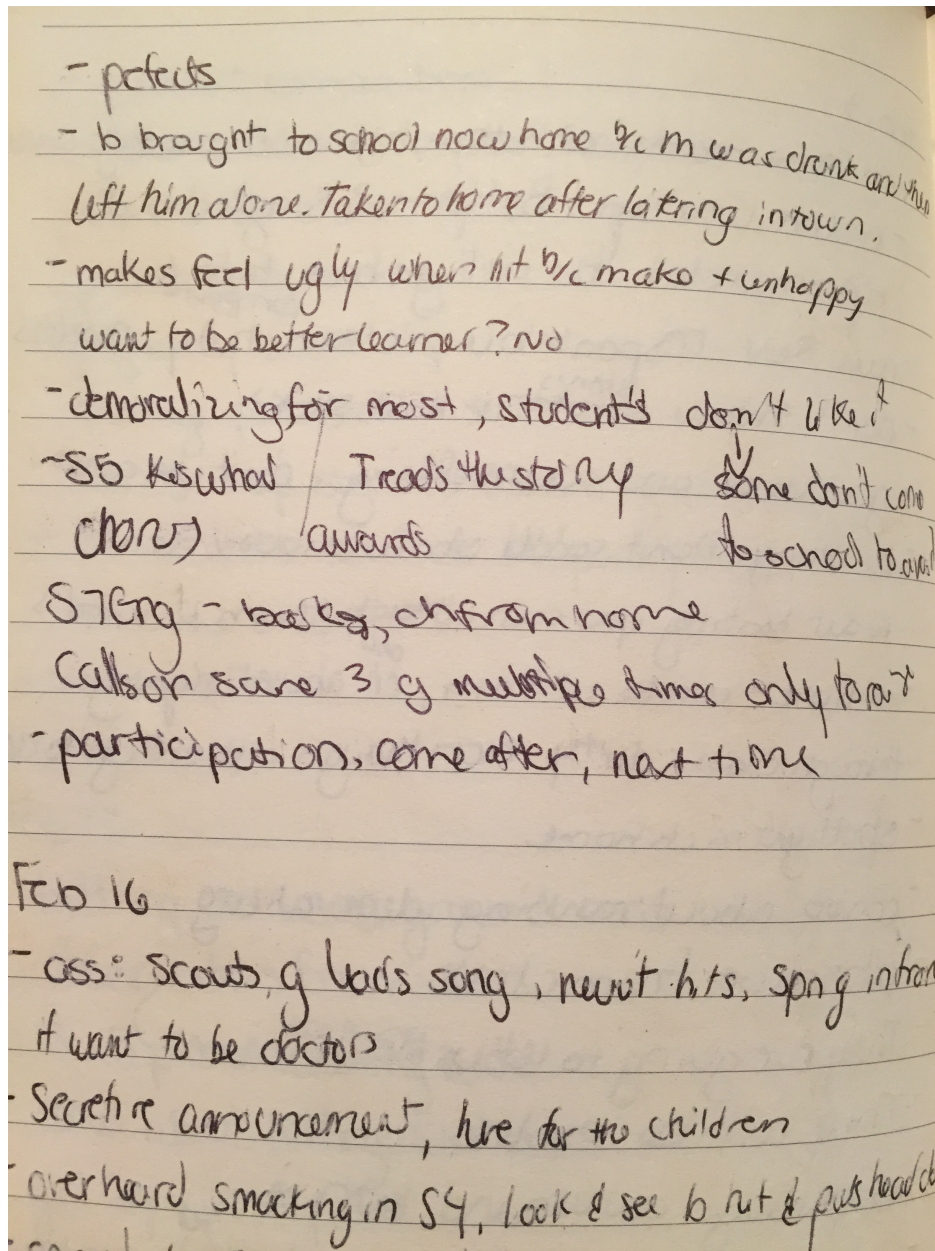
Signature

Date

Appendix 10: Example of Field Notes

Initial rough notes for February 13:





Detailed journal notes for February 13:

February 13, 2015

My day started with the Friday morning assembly at R, with a different reverend than usual. This one did not sing and he gave a sermon on responsibility that was somewhat uninspiring. The things he counselled the students on being responsible about were keeping themselves clean, keeping the school clean and being noiseless in class when the teacher is not there. He said if they cannot do this at school it is likely they are also a problem at home, since the school reflects

life elsewhere. Before he spoke the teacher who had been on duty that week, the Sr Teacher, gave the usual recap of the week about how disappointing the children's performance in coming to school on time and doing their chores had been. He said they did not use caning anymore but they would meet and give them guidance and counselling if they misbehaved. He did say that the prefects had done a commendable job, and that they were to keep up this good work. The Deputy HT contradicted this somewhat later, when he called into question the reliability of the Standard 8 prefects, who had not reported anyone for speaking in Kikuyu in school, and he was suspicious that this was the truth. During this time the Deputy HT also counselled them not to throw stones since they were 99% likely to hit another person, and he added on also do not pick up these sticks. The HT also reprimanded boys for hanging out by the latrines.

Then the Deputy HT did a recap of the performance on the practice examinations from earlier in the week and said that they did very poorly overall and it was a sign they were not studying. He said you have done nothing! Then he got all the Standard 8 students to come forward. They were wearing the cardboard cards around their neck with their exam targets written on them and this time they also had their marks from the practice exam written in. They were lined up in front of the whole assembly and all the teachers in order of their examination marks from highest to lowest. The three students at the bottom were separated further and it was announced to the school that they had gotten below 100. One was clearly special needs. Then the HT, Deputy HT and Sr Teacher walked up and down reading the marks and berating the students for their poor performance. After a while of this the Standard 8 students left and the Standard 7 students were called up. The same thing they were organized in line based on the highest to lowest achieving students, with the special needs boy at the very end. Then the teachers walked up and down berating them on their poor performance and also on the fact that many had put their examination marks in the wrong place on their cards. I heard one teacher tell a student, "You will have to go back to Standard 6." During this time the Sr Teacher told many that they needed extensive guidance and counselling to do better.

The teacher in charge of Standard 7 had told me before the assembly that all the students at the bottom of the examinations are from the children's home, and that something was going wrong since when she'd had these students in Standard 5 some of them had been the strongest. I later asked the teacher how she will help this group improve and she said she will give them more work. She said if they continue like this they will be useless later on.

I was shocked that one of the students was in that low group, since he is one of the strongest performers in my class. He always is an active and eager participater and is one of the few students who can explain why he got an answer as well as give the correct one. He is also a very polite and courteous boy.

I did have one discussion with a teacher about this and she said she thinks it is demoralizing for the students to be ranked in this way and that it is unfair since it doesn't account for their circumstances. I spoke to another teacher about this at K, asking if they did the same practice of lining the children up in front of the school or if this is something just at R. He said they do it too, although not every time only sometimes. He said sometimes they do it in front of the parents as well. He said the students really dislike it, they have told him so, especially when in front of

their parents. Sometimes if they know they will be at the bottom they skip school on this day. He said it is motivating for some but demoralizing for many. He said sometimes they give out awards for the best performers, and that it is used as motivation for students to encourage them to work harder but acknowledged that for some students it just makes them feel worse. Afterwards the teachers had a staff meeting where they talked about the results from the examination as well as the feedback from the DEO's visit the previous day. The feedback from the DEO was that they were not impressed that the teachers did not have their finished documents, in particular the schemes of work, they also commented on the lack of learning aids in the class. This is what the HT said, but earlier I was told that their debrief meeting had gone well over all. In talking about the practice exams, the Deputy HT said that the school had performed very poorly, and were 10 points behind the school average at the same point last year, so they really have to work hard to improve. He said that the students are not working hard enough and that the teachers have to get really tough with them and not coddle them but make sure they are serious students. He said that teachers have to be stony and not even beat them but you can attack them with words.

The HT also reported on the meeting with parents and said some parents are hearing that some teachers are always absent and the students' work is never marked. The staff meeting takes place during class hours so none of the teachers were in their classes at this time.

The discussion then transitioned to the children's home, as many students from the children's home had been among the poorest performance. The HT led this discussion and let her frustration be well known. Many other teachers agreed and started sharing stories of the children from the home, that they fall asleep in class and always lose their textbooks and notebooks. They also apparently often go back to the home midway through the day and are not told to return to school. Also they talked again about how the older students are underperforming because they have to wake up on 4am to prepare the younger children and each child has 5 younger children to look after. On Saturdays they also have to prepare lunch and dinner for everyone. As a result they are consistently underperforming. A teacher talking to me later also said this was an abuse of the older children as well as the younger ECD children who are then waking up at 4am too. There was concern about how poorly these students are doing and that they are bringing down the examinations for the school. Another teacher said, these students are going to let us down! A teacher later told me a story about a child who now lives at the home. He had initially failed the interview to go into Standard 5 so he had been made to repeat Standard 4. This is the first I'd learned that they have the children do these interviews to see if they are ready to move on. She said, however, that he was ready and he had been stressed on the day of the interview so she wanted to promote him. His mother was drunk all the time and eventually disappeared and then he was found wandering around town by a police officer and taken to the home and the school. Since then he is performing better and she thinks he belongs in Standard 5 and should not have been held back.

Shortly after the staff meeting ended and classes resumed, I was in the staff room preparing my lesson and a female teacher walked in and went to her desk across the class and got out a sturdy bamboo stick, turned and walked back out. Under the pretense of going to collect some plant samples for my science lesson, I followed her a short distance behind and glanced in the class as

I passed and saw her striking a student with the stick. I believe it was a girl although I am not certain. After I passed the class I could still hear her shouting in the class from some distance away. At the break I met a group of girls from that class and asked them about what happens when a teacher hits them with a stick. They said that a teacher will do this when a student makes them unhappy. I asked how it makes them feel and one student answered, "Ugly." I asked them if it makes them want to try harder to learn more and they said no. I tried to pose these questions in a neutral voice so that the expected answer wasn't clear. Later on at K school I was surprised when hitting with a stick was mentioned casually by a teacher in front of me for the first time. A female teacher had a large group of Standard 8 students at her desk in the staff room. She was asking them questions and they were very reluctant to answer but eventually all did. She said, so why did you not speak up in class then? Next time you will speak up or I will use the stick. I asked her about it afterward and she cheerfully explained to me that she was reprimanding them for not volunteering to participate in her class, so next time they will provide answers.

I observed a Standard 7 English class at R with the teacher who has been absent. She scolded the children from the home in front of the whole class for always leaving their books. The class was very unmotivating and even though it was review it was a lot of her speaking. The students did provide answers and if they got it wrong they were borderline mocked, their names repeated and saying "some students like C still do not know the difference between positive and negative..."

I also observed a Standard 5 Kiswahili class at K. For most of the class the teacher read the story in the textbook aloud and the students huddled in groups around their limited textbooks reading silently along with her. For most of it when she called out answers they were in a chorus.

Initially she called on the same 3 girls many times as they were the only ones putting their hands up, but eventually she called on another boy and girl as well.

Appendix 11: Student Introduction Script

Hello everyone! As you know, I have been getting to know you and your school since January. This is part of my research project for my Ph.D. My project is studying how school safety affects students' learning. By being a part of this research study, your school is helping to build knowledge about school safety and student learning in Kenya. The results will be shared with the school, the Kenya Ministry of Education and education researchers and policymakers around the world.

In Term 2, my research will be different than in Term 1. Instead of watching your classes, I want to hear from you. I am inviting you to be a part of the research project by doing an individual interview with me, where you get to draw a picture showing how you feel when you are at school. You will also be asked to write a short description of the picture, and then tell me about it. I will be doing these interviews with around 14 students from Standards 7 and 8.

Everybody will get a chance to do a drawing showing how they feel when they are at school. Mary and I will show you examples of our drawings showing things we like and do not like about school.

If you want to do an interview, you can write your full name and your Standard down on the piece of paper. If there are many of you who want to do an interview, we will randomly pick the names for the participants to be interviewed so everyone has an equal chance.

You can only do the interview if your parent or guardian agrees, so if your name is picked we will come visit your parent or guardian and ask them if it is all right for you to do the interview.

If they agree, we will set up a time for you to tell us about your drawing. We will also ask you follow up questions about your opinions about and experiences at school.

After the interview is over, if you want to do even more, we can meet again and I can tell you what I learned from your interview and talk with you about it some more.

You can choose whether you want to do the interview in Kikuyu, Kiswahili or English. Even though you are often told not to speak Kikuyu at school, in this case it is ok. In fact, it would be great to have interviews in Kikuyu because we want you to be as comfortable as possible.

The interviews will take place at school in an empty classroom during lunch time or after 3:10. If you are all right with it, the interview will be audio recorded, so that we can hear it afterward and know exactly what you said. But the notes and recording would not be shared with anybody else. We would never tell anybody, including the teachers, what you said in the interview. We also will not tell teachers which students are picked to do the interviews.

You **do not** have to do an interview if you do not want to. Only students who are sure they want to should put their names down. If you put your name down, but then decide later that you do not want to do it, you can change your mind and it is no problem.

Nothing bad will happen to you if you decide you do not want to do an interview. Teacher Catherine will still think just as highly of you and the other teachers will not even know that you did not want to do it.

If you get upset or uncomfortable during the interview, you can stop at any time. We have arranged for two ministers from the church to be available to provide you guidance and counselling afterward if you would like.

You can come talk to me at any point to ask questions about my research project or to talk to me about anything. I will be in the school all day. Then tomorrow I will come back and ask students who want to do the interview to write down their names. Thank you for listening. Do you have any questions you want to ask now?

Appendix 12: Interview Records

Participant (Pseudonym)	Sex	School	Student/Teacher	Interview Type
Gatimu	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Maitho	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Githinji	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Mwangi	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Wangui	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Mulumba	F	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Choge	M	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Ngugi	M	Rural	Teacher	Member Check
Sharon	F	Rural	Teacher	Member Check
Linda	F	Rural	Teacher	Individual
Komeni	M	Town	Teacher	Individual
Kirimi	M	Town	Teacher	Individual
Wanjiku	F	Town	Teacher	Individual
Wanyama	F	Town	Teacher	Individual
Njenga	F	Town	Teacher	Individual
Wangari	F	Town	Teacher	Individual
Macharia	F	Town	Teacher	Member Check
Musyoka	M	Rural	Student	Art-based & Member Check
Lily	F	Rural	Student	Art-based & Member Check
Stacy	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Kabanze	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Anthony	M	Rural	Student	Art-based
Jetli	M	Rural	Student	Art-based & Member Check
Afora	M	Rural	Student	Art-based
Diamond	M	Rural	Student	Art-based
Janet	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Gathama	M	Rural	Student	Art-based
Charity	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Caroline	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Abigail	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Josephine	F	Rural	Student	Art-based
Agape	F	Rural	Student	Art-based & Member Check
Faith	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Messi	M	Town	Student	Art-based
Hazard	M	Town	Student	Art-based

Immaculate	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Charlotte	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Pauline	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Courtoius	M	Town	Student	Art-based
Nyambura	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Size 8	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Shelsmith	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Ronaldo	M	Town	Student	Art-based
Dominica	F	Town	Student	Art-based
Dennis	M	Town	Student	Art-based
Israel	M	Town	Student	Art-based
Brandon	M	Town	Student	Art-based & Member Check
Chantal	F	Town	Student	Art-based & Member Check

Appendix 13: Interview Guide for Individual Interviews with Students

Prior to interviews, the researcher will have demonstrated to group of students the draw-write-narrate technique using herself and her own narrative of how she feels at their school as an example. All students in the classroom will have been provided with art supplies and instructions to draw a picture accompanied by a written description of the picture that demonstrates how the student feels when they are at school. Students will have had the opportunity to ask questions and will have gone through a process to indicate if they are interested in conducting an interview about what they have shown in their drawing.

1. Welcome student, make sure he/she is comfortable.
2. Explain the project: I am an education researcher from Canada, here because interested in getting to know more about school safety in Kenya. I hope that what is gained from my research will eventually help teachers and governments to improve education practices.
3. Research Assistant will introduce herself and explain her role.
4. Explain rights of participants by going over consent form. Assistant will describe all parts of the form out loud and provide paper copies in Kikuyu and English, checking throughout to make sure students have understood and ask questions to verify that they have. She will clarify that we will go over this again at the end of the interview and that the student can decide not to participate at any time. Ask the student to indicate verbally if they wish to proceed.
5. Ask the participant's permission to audio-record the discussion. If the student is uncomfortable the discussion will not be audio-recorded and the researcher and assistant will take written notes instead.
6. Have the participant indicate the self-selected pseudonym they chose during the focus group interview. Explain that this will be used in publications to be shared with other researchers if a particular quote is referenced, but that no individual quotes will be used in any reports shared with the school.
7. Explain to the student that, unless it becomes evident that a child is being severely harmed, everything the student tells me will remain confidential and that I will tell the child during the interview if I will need to speak to the adult they identified.
8. Ask the student if he/she is willing to describe it, repeating that it is completely voluntary and there will be no negative repercussions if he/she decides not to.
9. If the student agrees, ask him/her to describe the contents of the picture, asking follow up questions related to school safety and the student's perception of his/her learning and his/her educational goals.

10. Explain that at the end of my time with the school, I share the research results with the school via a meeting with the teachers and presentations in any classes where students have participated and want to have the research presented. I will only share the results of the research project in a classroom if all the student participants in that class consent. Ask the student if he/she consents to having the results of the research project shared with their class (without identifying that the student participated).

11. Provide the student with the information of an individual in the community he/she can go to if he/she is upset by the discussions or if he/she experiences any negative repercussions as a result of the interview. Talk about whether he/she may want to talk to the identified counsellor and how he/she might approach the adult to have this discussion.

12. Go over the consent form and participants' rights one more time, stress that if the student wants to withdraw he/she can let me know by phone or in person.

13. Thank the student.

Appendix 14: Teacher Introduction Script (Interviews)

Hello everyone! As you know, I have been getting to know you and your school since January. This is part of my research project for my Ph.D. My project is studying how school safety affects students' learning. By being a part of this research study, your school is helping to build knowledge about school safety and student learning in Kenya. The results will be shared with the school, the Kenya Ministry of Education and education researchers and policymakers around the world.

In Term 2, my research will be different than in Term 1. Instead of watching your classes, I want to hear from you. I am inviting you to be a part of the research project by doing an individual interview with me, where you will meet with me and answer questions about how you make the school safe and how it helps students learn.

If you want to do an interview, you can write your full name and cell phone number down on a piece of paper. If there are many of you who want to do an interview, we will randomly pick the names for the participants to be interviewed so everyone has an equal chance.

If your name is selected, I will call you and we can set up a time to do the interview. The interview will take place in an administrator's office either during lunch hour or after 3:10.

If you are all right with it, the interview will be audio recorded, so that we can hear it afterward and know exactly what you said. But the notes and recording would not be shared with anybody else. We would never tell anybody, including the other teachers, what you said in the interview or even that you did an interview.

You **do not** have to do an interview if you do not want to. Only teachers who are sure they want to should put their names down. If you put your name down, but then decide later that you do not want to do it, you can change your mind and it is no problem. You could also stop the interview at any time without a problem.

Nothing bad will happen to you if you decide you do not want to do an interview. I will still think just as highly of you and the other teachers will not know that you did not want to do it.

Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions. Thank you for your time today and for all of the support and encouragement you have provided me over the past few months. Do you have any questions you want to ask now?

Appendix 15: Interview Guide for Individual Interviews with Teachers

1. Begin by reviewing the project objective and introducing the purpose of the teacher interviews. The research project is examining school culture in Kenya with a focus on school safety and gender equality and how these elements foster student learning. It is hoped that what is gained from my research will eventually help teachers, head teachers and governments to improve education practices. The purpose of this interview is to hear about the teacher's experiences of the school and the initiatives being undertaken by the school from the perspective of the teacher.
2. Go over consent form together, provide written copies to the teacher in English. Discuss the form and ask questions to confirm their understanding of the content.
3. Explain that the discussion will be audio-recorded, unless the participant is not comfortable with it being recorded. Ask the participant if he/she is comfortable with the discussion being recorded, if not it will not be recorded and the researcher will take notes throughout instead.
4. Ask the participant to select a pseudonym for use in publications to be shared with other researchers. Explain that individual quotations will not be used in any reports or presentation of results to the school or to the District Education Office.
5. Ask the following questions, accompanied by relevant follow up questions:
 - How do you support the safety of the students in the:
 - school grounds?
 - your classroom?
 - way to and from school?
 - What safety issues are most important at the school?
 - Are there any safety issues that are more or less important for girls than for boys?
 - Do you consider the following places to be safe for students? Why or Why not?
 - the school grounds?
 - your classroom?
 - the way to and from school?
 - Do you think that the safety of the school environment affects students' learning? Why or why not?
 - What do you think are the most important factors affecting students' learning?
6. State that my questions are completed, ask if he/she has anything else to add or suggestions for the research process.
7. Go over the consent form again and reiterate the voluntary nature of the interview and his/her right to withdraw their consent at any time.
8. Thank the participant.

Consent:

By signing this form (or providing my consent in an audio recording), I agree that:

- The study has been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- All my questions were answered. Yes ☐ No ☐
- The possible harms and discomforts and the possible benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I have the right not to participate and the right to stop participating at any time.
Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I may stop participating without any problems. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I have a choice to not answer any questions. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I am free now, and in the future, to ask any questions about the study. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I have been told that my personal records will be kept confidential Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that no information that would identify me will be released without asking me and my parents first. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. Yes ☐ No ☐

I hereby consent to participate.

Signature

Date

Name of Participant: _____

Name of person who obtained consent: _____

Signature

Date

Appendix 16: Teacher Member Check Interview Guide

1. Begin by reviewing the project objective and introducing the purpose of the teacher interviews. The research project is examining school culture in Kenya with a focus on school safety and gender equality and how these elements foster student learning. It is hoped that what is gained from my research will eventually help teachers, head teachers and governments to improve education practices. The purpose of this interview is to hear about the teacher's experiences of the school and the initiatives being undertaken by the school from the perspective of the teacher.
2. Go over consent form together, provide written copies to the teacher in English. Discuss the form and ask questions to confirm their understanding of the content.
3. Explain that the discussion will be audio-recorded, unless the participant is not comfortable with it being recorded. Ask the participant if he/she is comfortable with the discussion being recorded, if not it will not be recorded and the researcher will take notes throughout instead.
4. Ask the participant to select a pseudonym for use in publications to be shared with other researchers. Explain that individual quotations will not be used in any reports or presentation of results to the school or to the District Education Office.
5. Explain that this is a member check interview. It is different than the typical interviews that have been conducted with most of the other teachers. This is because it is to check to see if the analysis that is being gathered from the other teacher interviews is accurate and relevant to teachers in the school.
6. Provide the participant with a list of the emergent themes that have arisen from initial analysis of teacher interviews to date. Ask them to review the themes and point to any that they agree or disagree with. Discuss each of the themes in turn using an open-ended approach.

Emergent themes identified in initial analysis:

- Consensus that violence in the home and at school is harmful to student learning
- Perception that there are more school violence issues in other counties than in Kirinyaga
- Food insecurity a major factor preventing student learning (poverty, neglect or both?)
- Teachers well positioned and want to intervene in child abuse or neglect occurring in the home, but protocol is unclear
 - To do so requires significant support from HT, unlikely to happen without
- Boy child perceived to be more at risk educationally
- Boys also more at risk of drug and alcohol abuse
- Girls still vulnerable to abuse – especially in community and en route to school
 - (Do teachers think girls ever face this abuse at school?)

- If girls get pregnant very unlikely to return to school
- Teachers lack knowledge and training in alternative discipline mechanisms, not confident in their effectiveness
- Teachers promote gender equality in schools by treating girls and boys the same.
 - Do they think this effectively addresses equality issues?
- Uncertainty about whether and if so how schools should address insecurity en route to school

6. State that my questions are completed, ask if he/she has anything else to add or suggestions for the research process.

7. Go over the consent form again and reiterate the voluntary nature of the interview and his/her right to withdraw their consent at any time.

8. Thank the participant.

Appendix 17: Student Member Check Interview Guide

1. Welcome student, make sure he/she is comfortable.
2. Explain the project: I am an education researcher from Canada, here because interested in getting to know more about school safety in Kenya. I hope that what is gained from my research will eventually help teachers and governments to improve education practices.
3. Research Assistant will introduce herself and explain her role.
4. Explain rights of participants by going over consent form. Assistant will describe all parts of the form out loud and provide paper copies in Kikuyu and English, checking throughout to make sure students have understood and ask questions to verify that they have. She will clarify that we will go over this again at the end of the interview and that the student can decide not to participate at any time. Ask the student to indicate verbally if they wish to proceed.
5. Ask the participant's permission to audio-record the discussion. If the student is uncomfortable the discussion will not be audio-recorded and the researcher and assistant will take written notes instead.
6. Have the participant indicate the self-selected pseudonym they chose during the focus group interview. Explain that this will be used in publications to be shared with other researchers if a particular quote is referenced, but that no individual quotes will be used in any reports shared with the school.
7. Explain to the student that, unless it becomes evident that a child is being severely harmed, everything the student tells me will remain confidential and that I will tell the child during the interview if I will need to speak to the adult they identified.
8. Tell the student that this interview will be different from the first when they talked about their drawing. After having talked to a lot of students about their drawing, we are now asking students about the things that we have learned to make sure they are correct and show what students wanted to tell us.
9. Reassure the child that the same rules apply: they can stop the interview or ask a question at any time.
10. Show student the following list of things that students have told us that they like and do not like about school. Ask if there is anything on the lists that they disagree with or anything else they would add. If so, talk to the student about what they would add/remove and why.

Things Students Like About School:

- Being with their friends
- Learning
- Performing well on examinations
- Playing
- Extra-curricular activities (sports days, music festivals, girl guides/brownies/boy scouts)

Things Students Don't Like About School:

- Teachers caning
- Other types of punishment (not caning)
- Performing poorly on examinations
- Students fighting
- For girls: boys touching them

11. Ask the student to point to the thing on each list that they like/dislike most about school and ask them to explain why they selected that experience over the others.

12. Ask children the following questions based on emergent themes that emerged during the art-based interviews with students:

- Students told us that they feel they can talk to teachers about (most of their problems)
 - o What are some problems students prefer to deal with on their own rather than tell teachers?
 - o Ask girls if they could tell the teachers if a girl was being abused in the school or community and what they would expect the teacher to do about it.
 - o Do you think that guidance and counselling helps students? Why?
- Students told us they feel bad when they are caned, when there is fighting in school and (for girls) when boys touch them. Do you think you learn better when they feel good in school or feel bad? Why?
- Boys seem to show off by fighting, prove that they are strong. Do you think this is true? Do you think boys are showing off more for each other or the girls?
- Which do you think is worse: when other students tease with words or fight physically? Why?
- Are there any things that make you not want to come to school or want to skip school or skip a class?
- Some students told us they love school because they like learning, but almost all like school and stay in school because it is important for their future. Is this true?

Questions only for girls:

- Girls are teased for having their periods (especially staining dresses but also for having sanitary pads) making them nervous and anxious at school. Do you agree that girls often feel this way? Why?
 - Girls told us that boys often touch girls or tell girls they love them at school. How do you feel when this happens? Have you ever heard of adults doing this to girls as well?
13. Explain that at the end of my time with the school, I share the research results with the school via a meeting with the teachers and presentations in any classes where students have participated and want to have the research presented. I will only share the results of the research project in a classroom if all the student participants in that class consent. Ask the student if he/she consents to having the results of the research project shared with their class (without identifying that the student participated).
 14. Provide the student with the information of an individual in the community he/she can go to if he/she is upset by the discussions or if he/she experiences any negative repercussions as a result of the interview. Talk about whether he/she may want to talk to the identified counsellor and how he/she might approach the adult to have this discussion.
 15. Go over the consent form and participants' rights one more time, stress that if the student wants to withdraw he/she can let me know by phone or in person.
 16. Thank the student.

Appendix 18: Parental Consent Form for Child's Participation**Research project:**

School Safety and Student Learning for Boys and Girls in Kenyan Primary Schools

Main researcher:

Catherine Vanner, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Ottawa

Research assistant:

Name of Research Assistant to be determined, will be included after the individual is confirmed and hired.

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between school safety and students' ability to learn and achieve what they want to after school. It is also to investigate how and why school safety and student learning is different for girls and boys.

Description of the Research:

The study is divided into two phases: Phase 1, which consisted of school observation, and Phase 2, which consists of interviews with students and teachers. This is an invitation for your child to participate in an individual interview, which would involve the researchers talking to your child about his/her experiences and opinions related to school safety and learning.

During the interview, your child will be asked to draw a picture showing how school makes him/her feel. He/she will then be asked to describe the picture using written and spoken words in his/her choice of Kikuyu, Kiswahili or English. The researchers will ask follow up with questions about your child's drawing, experience and opinions. He/she can take as long as necessary to draw the picture and then the researcher will talk about it with him/her for about a half hour. Your child will be invited to participate in a second shorter interview to talk about the results but only if he/she wants to.

At the end of the research period the results will be shared with the schools and the District Education Office. Participants will pick a pseudonym (fake name) to identify him/her in research publications. Your child's actual name will never be included and your child will not be quoted in any reports, publications or presentation of results for the school or the District Education Office. If there are any changes, you and your child will be informed.

Access to Research Information:

Only the researchers and the principal researcher's supervisors at the University of Nairobi and the University of Ottawa will have access to the information collected.

If you and your child agree, the interviews will be recorded. Afterward, the researchers will listen to the recording, write down what was said and translate it into English.

Your child will not have to answer any questions he/she does not want to. Participation is entirely voluntary and you or your child can change your mind about participating at any point. If you do change your mind about participating, any information recorded about your child will be destroyed immediately.

Potential Benefits:

By participating in this study, your child will get to do an art project and share his/her thoughts about school. This will lead to a better understanding of what school safety is, how it helps him/her grow as a student and how he/she can help make his/her school a safer place. The research will be shared with your local school community, the Ministry of Education and with education researchers around the world. Your child's participation will help make schools in Kenya and other countries safer places for students to learn.

Potential Harm Injuries, Discomforts or Inconvenience:

If your child finds it difficult or emotional to talk about school safety and wishes to speak about his/her experiences with a trusted adult, a male and female minister from _____ church are prepared to provide counselling for your child. I will tell your child this.

If your child feels uncomfortable at any time he/she can stop at any time and either continue at a different time or stop participating in the study all together.

The researchers will not to refer to anybody by name or use quotations when the results are shared with the schools or the District Education Office. If anything difficult arises because of the interview, a male and female minister for _____ church are available to provide counselling for your child. I will tell your child this.

Confidentiality:

No information that reveals your child's identity will be released, published or shared with any school staff, parents or community members.

If the researchers discover that a child has been severely harmed or is likely to be harmed, the researcher will consult with her supervisors about whether it is necessary to share this information. It is possible that if a child is being severely harmed, the head teacher or another community leader will be informed.

Participation:

You and your child can choose not to participate at any point. Participating in the first interview does not mean your child has to participate in the second interview.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep. A copy will also be given to your child.

Contact:

If you have any questions about this study you can contact:

Catherine Vanner

Principal Investigator

Email: [removed for privacy]

Kenya Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Local Address: Pafecta Apartments, Kianyaga, Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Octavian Gakuru

Local Supervisor

Department of Sociology and Social Work

University of Nairobi

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: [removed for privacy], Nairobi, Kenya

Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education

University of Ottawa

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: Lamoureux Hall 457, 145 Jean-Jacques-Lussier Private, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

University of Ottawa

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

Phone: 1(613) 562-5387

Address: 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Consent:

By signing this form (or providing my consent in an audio recording), I agree that:

- The study has been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- All my questions were answered. Yes ☐ No ☐

- The possible harms and discomforts and the possible benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I have the right to prevent my child's participation not to participate and the right to stop his/her participation at any time. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I may prevent my child's participation without any problems. Yes ☐ No ☐
- My child has a choice to not answer any questions. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I am free now, and in the future, to ask any questions about the study. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I have been told that my child's personal records will be kept confidential Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that no information that would identify my child will be released without asking me and my child first. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. Yes ☐ No ☐

I hereby consent to my child's participation.

Signature Date

Name of Child Participant: _____

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

Name of person who obtained consent: _____

Signature Date

Signature Date

Checkmark in box indicates child to participate
Note: _____

Appendix 19: Children's Consent Form**Research project:**

School Safety and Student Learning for Boys and Girls in Kenyan Primary Schools

Main researcher:

Catherine Vanner, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Ottawa

Research assistant:

Mary Nyambura Kimani

Goal of the Research:

This project is trying to understand how schools help students to learn and how this is different for girls and boys.

Description of the Research:

The project takes place in two parts: Part 1 was in Term 1, when Teacher Catherine was watching classes in your school. Part 2 will happen in Term 2 and will be speaking with teachers and students on one on one in an interview. You are invited to do an interview with Teacher Catherine to tell her about your thoughts on school and learning.

You will be asked to draw a picture showing how school makes you feel. You will then be asked to explain the picture in writing and out loud in your choice of Kikuyu, Kiswahili or English. Teacher Catherine will then ask you questions about your drawing and your thoughts about school and learning. You can take as long as you want to draw the picture and then Teacher Catherine will talk to you about it for about 30 minutes. You will be invited to do a second shorter interview afterward, but only if you want to.

Before Teacher Catherine leaves she will tell the schools about what she found during the research project. You can pick a made-up name for Teacher Catherine to call you in the research project, so your real name is kept a secret. Your name and anything you say will not be quoted when the project is shared with the school. If there are any changes, Teacher Catherine will let you know.

Access to Research Information:

Nobody besides Teacher Catherine, her assistant and her supervisors will know what you have said in the interview.

If you are fine with it, the interview will be recorded. Afterward, Teacher Catherine and her assistant will listen to the recording, write down what was said and translate it into English.

You will not have to answer any questions you not want to. You should only do the interview if you want to. You can change your mind and decide you no longer want to do it at any time. If you do change your mind, all the information Teacher Catherine has about you will be destroyed.

Potential Benefits:

If you choose to do the interview, you will get to do an art project and share your thoughts about school. This will help Teacher Catherine and your other teachers better understand how the school helps students learn and how to do this even better. The research will be shared with your school, the Ministry of Education and with education researchers around the world. You will help make schools in Kenya and other countries better places for students to learn.

Potential Harm Injuries, Discomforts or Inconvenience:

If you child find the interview difficult or emotional you want to speak about it with a trusted adult, a male and female minister from _____ church can counsel you.

If you child feel uncomfortable you can stop the interview at any time.

Confidentiality:

Your name will never be used and you will not be quoted when the project is shared with the school.

If the researchers discover that a child has been severely harmed or is likely to be harmed, the researcher will consult with her supervisors about whether it is necessary to share this information. It is possible that if a child is being severely harmed, the head teacher or another community leader will be informed.

Participation:

You can decide you do not want to be a part of the research project at any point. Doing the first interview does not mean you have to do the second.

You get to keep this form.

Contact:

If you have any questions about this study you can contact:

Catherine Vanner

Principal Investigator

Email: [removed for privacy]

Kenya Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Local Address: Pafecta Apartments, Kianyaga, Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Octavian Gakuru

Local Supervisor

Department of Sociology and Social Work

University of Nairobi

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: [removed for privacy], Nairobi, Kenya

Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education

University of Ottawa

Email: [removed for privacy]

Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Address: Lamoureux Hall 457, 145 Jean-Jacques-Lussier Private, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

University of Ottawa

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

Phone: 1(613) 562-5387

Address: 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154

Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Consent:

By signing this form (or providing my consent in an audio recording), I agree that:

- The study has been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- All my questions were answered. Yes ☐ No ☐
- The possible harms and discomforts and the possible benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I have the right to prevent my child's participation not to participate and the right to stop his/her participation at any time. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I may prevent my child's participation without any problems. Yes ☐ No ☐

- My child has a choice to not answer any questions. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I am free now, and in the future, to ask any questions about the study. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I have been told that my child's personal records will be kept confidential Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that no information that would identify my child will be released without asking me and my child first. Yes ☐ No ☐
- I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. Yes ☐ No ☐

I hereby consent to my child's participation.

Signature

Date

Name of Child Participant: _____

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

Name of person who obtained consent: _____

Signature

Date

Checklist for Parental Consent: _____

Note:

Appendix 20: Consent Form for Individual Interviews with Teachers**Title of Research Project:**

Academic Capabilities in Relation to Gender Safety in Kenyan Schools: A Qualitative Case Study Comparing Two Primary Schools

Principal Investigator:

Catherine Vanner, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Ottawa

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between the safety of the school and students' ability to learn and achieve what they want to after school. It is also to investigate how and why school safety and student learning is different for girls and boys.

Description of the Research:

The study is divided into two phases: Phase 1, which consisted of school observation, and Phase 2, which consists of interviews with upper primary school students and teachers. This is an invitation to participate in an individual interview, which would involve talking about your experiences and opinions related to school safety and student learning for about one hour. You will be invited but not required to participate in a second shorter interview to discuss the results.

If you participate, you will be asked to pick a pseudonym (fake name) with which you will be referred to in any research publications. At the end of the project the results will be shared with the schools and the District Education Office to provide feedback to improve school safety and student learning. Your name will never be used and you will not be quoted in any documents or presentations for the school or the District Ministry of Education. If there are any changes to the project, all participants will be informed.

Access to Research Information:

Only the researchers and the principal researcher's supervisors at the University of Nairobi and the University of Ottawa will have access to the information collected. If you agree to it, the interview will be recorded. Afterward, the researcher will listen to the recording and type out what was said. All of the information will be kept for five years after the research is completed and will then be destroyed.

You do not have to say anything or provide any information you do not want to. Participation is entirely voluntary and you can change your mind at any point. If you do change your mind, any information about you will be destroyed immediately.

Potential Harm Injuries, Discomforts or Inconvenience:

If you feel uncomfortable at any time you should let the researcher know. You can leave the meeting at any time and either continue at a different time or stop participating in the study all together.

Potential Benefits:

By participating in this study, you will contribute to improving understanding of what school safety is, how it helps students grow and the school can become a better place for students to learn. The research will be shared with the local school community, the Ministry of Education and with education researchers around the world.

Confidentiality:

No information that reveals your identity will be released, published or shared with any school staff, parents or community members.

If the researchers discover that a child has been severely harmed or is likely to be harmed, the researcher will consult with her supervisors about whether it is necessary to share this information. It is possible that if a child is being severely harmed, the head teacher or another community leader will be informed.

Participation:

You can choose not to participate at any point during the study.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Contact:

If you have any questions about this study you can contact:

Catherine Vanner

Principal Investigator

Email: [removed for privacy]

Kenya Telephone: [removed for privacy]

Local Address: Pafecta Apartments, Kianyaga, Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Octavian Gakuru

Local Supervisor

Department of Sociology and Social Work

University of Nairobi

Email: [removed for privacy]
Telephone: [removed for privacy]
Address: [removed for privacy], Nairobi, Kenya

Richard Maclure

Faculty of Education
University of Ottawa
Email: [removed for privacy]
Telephone: [removed for privacy]
Address: Lamoureux Hall 457, 145 Jean-Jacques-Lussier Private, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research

University of Ottawa
Email: ethics@uottawa.ca
Phone: 1(613) 562-5387
Address: 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Appendix 21: Theoretical, Selective and Initial Codes

Theoretical code: Caring about protection and equality	
Selective codes	Initial codes
Treating students equally	Including everyone
	Doing all chores
	Playing the same
	Seeing girls and boys as the same
	Calling on individuals
	Making it balanced
	Boys have more dignity
	Arranging seating
	Assigning chores
	Facing tradition
	Beating boys more
	Boys playing first
	Electing boys
	Favouring boys
	Electing boys
	Building together
	Supporting girls
	Letting girls learn
	Evolving
Challenging expectations	Knowing everyone is equal
	Doing girls' work
	Using female role models
	Seeing change
	Girls can lead
	Coming to an end
	Fearing girls
	Challenging convention
	Carrying chairs
Staying close	Seeing change
	Neglecting guidance
	Being close
	Knowing where girls are
	Seeing where girls are
	Following up
	Guiding and counselling

	Being friendly
	Feeling wanted
	Concentrating on the future
	Forgiving
	Fearing disappearance
	Keeping contact
	Staying around
	Standing like a teacher and a mother
	Being confined
	Being an advocate
	Taking the role of teacher
	Understanding students
	Working whole-heartedly
	Keeping them in
	Releasing children
	Being open
	Being sensitive
	Taking care of girls
	Here for the children
	Dividing teachers and students
	Feeling comfortable
	Being taken seriously
	Controlling wildness
	Paying attention
Turning to teachers	Reporting
	Helping students
	Keeping silent
	Talking to teachers
	Counselling
	Making yourself soft
	Talking about problems
	Teachers unable to help
	Unable to tell
	Asking for help
	Confiding
	Trusting female teachers
	Forgiving
	Refraining
	Being accessible

	Being comfortable
	Advising students
	Fearing teachers
	Taking you seriously
	Maintaining a good rapport
	Doing something
	Standing like a teacher and a parent
	Seeking guidance
	Blaming girls
Feeling safe	Feeling safe
	Fencing the school
	Hiring a gatekeeper
	Controlling movement
	Being spoiled
	Exposing toilets
	Passing drugs
	Safer inside than out
	Harassing students
	Not molesting students
	Mapping safe places
Intervening	Intervening
	Doing my part
	Following up
	Protecting teacher rapists
	Taking a stand
	Voicing concerns
	Correcting inequality
	Protecting girls
	Calling the mother
	Following protocol
	Being bound by protocol
	Staying within the boundaries
	Being tough on early marriage
	Investigating
	Rescuing a girl
	Serving as a warning
	Advocating for Special Needs children
	Witnessing parents beating their children

	Advising parents
	Taking unpopular steps
	Taking measures as a Head Teacher
	Problem-solving
	Needing administration
Reporting abuse	Reporting
	Informing administration
	Handing over the story
	Taking over
	Consulting stakeholders
	Opening a file with the police
	Being unable to report
	Out of teachers' hands
	Working hand in hand
	Not speaking up
	Involving a leader
	Being traumatize
Doing something	Compensating
	Providing
	Taking from your pocket
	Doing something
	Sharing food
	Fundraising
Summoning parents	Summoning parents
	Being engaged
	Getting report from home
	Calling home
	Being connected by the student
	Sharing the issue
	Involving parents
	Parents beating teachers
	Extending hands home
Valuing friendship	Valuing friendship
	Walking together
	Being excluded
	Helping each other
	Appreciating learning

Theoretical Code Perpetuating GVS
--

Selective Codes	Initial Codes
Caning criminals	Teachers beating
	Teachers not supposed to beat
	Expecting beating
	Being beaten
	Beaten for coming late
	Beating boys more
	Avoiding school to avoid beating
	Boys caned for touching girls
	Persevering in spite of violence
	Accepting caning
	Rarely beating
	Hating being beaten
	Caning criminals
	Unfamiliar with alternatives to caning
	Beating boys and girls differently
	Feeling sad after beating
	Beaten for harassing girls
	Caning an acceptable unacceptable
	Unable to imagine school without caning
	Knowing beating is wrong
	Valuing alternative discipline
	Making light of school violence
Refusing	Refusing to enter
	Running away
	Boys hiding
	Sleeping in bushes
	Fearing the teacher
	Avoiding punishment
	Hiding
	Refusing to help
	Telling boys off
	Facing the music
	Pushed out
	Oppressing too much
	Running away after beating
	If you want to eat you must work
	Being forced to do things
Verbally abusing	Using alternative forms of abuse

	Verbally abusing
	Just too slow
	Using abusive language
	Teachers being rude
	Speaking ill to students in class
	Facing teachers' verbal and physical abuse
	Teachers on your case
	Teachers harassing students
	Disrespecting students
	Feeling bad because of gossip
	Teasing over exam failure
	Avoiding threatening children
	Threatening but then making up
Descending on girls	Risking rape
	Boys harassing girls
	Sexual abuse
	Affecting girls disproportionately
	Being abused
	Descending on a girl
	Looking for girls
	Being raped by her father
	Involved in sexual harassment
	Relationships leading to violence
	Boys beating girls
	Boys touching girls
	Misusing girls
	Privilege to be raped by a teacher
	Going scott-free
	Girls historically endangered
	Wanting to enjoy her innocence
	Desirable to marry a schoolgirl
	Relationships distracting from school
	Relationships leading to divorce
	Having to pay for it
	Destroying their lives
	Leaving school late
	Boys beating girls
	Misbehaving

	Teachers touching girls
	Beating after rejection
	Boys pressuring girls
	Fearing rape on way to school
	Boys' bad habits
	Boys shouting at girls
	Father harassing daughter at school
	Getting misused on the way to school
	Being coerced by peers
	Beating girls for refusing sex
	Teacher holding onto a girl
Showing Strength	Becoming authoritative
	Scolding students
	Practising fighting they see in the media
	Being injured
	Exchanging blows
	Not fighting but playing
	Feeling greater than others
	Testing other girls
	Feeling stronger
	Measuring myself
	Proving to the class
	Expected to show strength
	Harassing their wives
	Feeling like men
	Distinguishing boys from girls
	Playing rough
	Wanting to be felt or heard
	Fighting
	Beating
	Laughing at fighting
	Girl bullying a boy
	Being weak
	Bullying
	Seeing who wins
	Provoking fights
	Using excessive force
	Fighting over a girl
	Showing strength

	Threatening
	Carrying sticks
	Fighting it out
	Showing off
	Impressing girls
Knocking you down	Rejecting apology
	Ignoring appeals
	Smearing mud
	Apologizing
	Boys can knock you very bad
	Fearing injury
	Fighting over disagreements
	Fighting to solve problems
	Getting revenge
	Associating the school with fighting
	Fighting as a first response
	Fighting when left unattended
	Pushing
	Ignoring school violence
	Fighting between boys and girls
	Fighting over relationships
	Playing rough
	Stopping fights
	Fearing fighting
	Normalizing fighting
	Fighting on closing day
	Boys fighting girls and boys
Fearing violence all around	People hiding in the river
	Fearing getting raped
	Fearing teachers
	Being kind or harsh
	Kidnapping
	Hit by a car walking to school
	Disliking Special Needs children's violence
	Moving to fetch water
	Coming to school despite violence
	Fearing the river
	Anything can happen
	Sodomizing

	Waiting for girls to take them
	Feeling scared of strangers
	Disliking the river
	Needing a school fence
Starting at home	Lacking parental support
	Lacking motherly love
	Not bothering
	Coming from homes with harassment
	Jumping on each other
	Telling the teacher
	Father chasing the family out
	Starting at home
	Witnessing domestic violence
	Problems with violent orphans
	Uncomfortable family relationships
	Having problems at home
	Parents strict on studies
	Taking responsibility
	Trying my best
	Doing their part
	Sleeping outside
	Going wrong
	Suffering from trauma
	Violence a continuum
	Valuing education
	Staying in tact
	Wanting to practice
	Sharing the issue
	Lacking discipline and care
	Jeopardizing children
	This is ignorance
	Finding solace in beer
	Taking alcohol from home
	Linking sexual abuse and lack of food
	Running from home
	Distracted by unsafe home
	Moving up and down
	Coming to school dirty
	Increasing indiscipline

	Overworking children at home
	Bringing fighting to school
	Feeling unsafe at home
	Lacking basic needs
	Avoiding abuse at home
	Resolving disputes
	Calling parents as punishment
	Chores preventing studies
	Expecting domestic violence
	Father beating mother
	Mother beating son
	Being familiar with violence
	Sexually molested
	Lying to keep their daughters at home
	Being badly influenced by peers
	Playing a bad game
	Inheriting violence
	Controlling wildness after abuse
	Parents needing counselling
Forgetting about boys	Neglecting boys
	Concentrating on the girl child
	Forgetting about boys
	Media focusing on girls
	Addressing issues affecting boys
	Focusing on pregnancy
	Forgetting drugs and alcohol
	Drugs increasing among girls
	Boys at higher risk
	Fading perception of boys' superiority
	Boys smoking
	Boys abused outside of school
	Taking girls' absences more seriously
	Income opportunities
	Boys dropping out
	Boys are now endangered
	Coming to class drunk
	Facing risks
	Pressuring boys
	Copying grown ups

	Spoiling their brains
	Lacking role models
	Endangered by drug abuse
	Bringing alcohol to school
	Remaining silent because you are a man
	Neglecting boys' toilets
	Ignoring boy dropout
	Lacking risk
Disappearing	Dropping out because of pregnancy
	Feeling awkward returning
	Allowing to return
	Depending on parents
	Dropping out because of harassment
	Leading to pregnancy
	Married on the way
	Fearing school
	Girls disappearing
	Refusing to return
	Becoming mothers
	Dropping out for financial reasons
	Looking at life negatively
	Repeating
	Dropping out due to lack of food
	Girls dropping more than boys
	A sure end
	Disappearing
	Knowing you are the next target
	Keeping children in
	Feeling hated
	Dropping out to get married
	Dropping out to work
	Skipping class because of period
	Sent home for activity fees
	Demanding cleanliness
	Special Needs child sent home for uniform
	Expelling
	Pushed out by activity fees

Theoretical Code: Gateway to everything	
Selective Categories	Initial Codes
Beating for success	Motivating with threats
	Beaten for failing exams
	Beaten for making mistakes
	Beating for a good reason
	Beaten for failing
	Beaten together
	Caning the difference
	Motivated by beatings
	Reflecting on beating
	Publicly humiliating
	Liking being beaten
	Disliking school violence
	Attacking with words
	Beating for success
	Humiliating as motivation
Taking you far	Learning to get good job
	Marks will take you far
	Advancing to secondary
	Wanting a good job
	Going on to secondary
	Valuing education
	Making me a good girl
	Helping one in life
	Setting targets
	Being successful in life
	Wanting to be a good man
	You will never see a farmer with a car
	Needing high marks
	Being among the rich in future
	Thinking ahead
	Valuing national secondary schools
Going nowhere	Lacking alternatives
	Going nowhere
	Getting rid of bad students
	Being teased for exam failure
	Avoiding repeating
	Repeating

Being the best	Best school
	Showing progress
	Referring to 'model' school
	Valuing exams over welfare
	Comparing exam performances
	Competing
	Creating more time
	Wanting results
	Fighting to lead
	Fearing becoming the worst
	Benefiting the learner
	Challenging to be at the top
	Ranking schools
	Being serious
	Adding points to your score
	Dealing with performance
	Being dropped at the bottom
	Comparing self to friends
	Motivated by competition
	Looking down on special children
	Valuing ranking
	Maintaining confidence through marks
	Seeing the results
	Breaking the rules, Going the extra mile
The gateway to everything	Wearing targets
	Setting school target
	Time consuming
	Wasting time
	Kicking students out of school
	Valuing exams over learning
	Assessing results
	Comparing classes
	Feeling should not be in school
	Undervaluing SNE
	Working for the future
	Passing exams
	Fearing exam failure
	Getting bad results
	Beaten in exams

	Bullying over exam failure
	Public shaming
	Valuing exams over learning
	Going to secondary
	Doing nothing
	Comparing exam performances
	Valuing exam performance
	Overlooking safety
	Passing exams
	Measuring learning
	Going to secondary
	Punished for failing exams
	Taking exams seriously
	Keeping their promise
	Demoralizing
	Poorly preparing for secondary
	Assessing teacher performance
	Pushing through curriculum
	Presents for passing
	Attaining target
	Valuing high scores
	Measuring success in marks
	Focusing on standard 8
	Teachers feeling exam pressure
	Taking a long time to change
	Focusing on failure
	Excluding Standard 8
	Feeling sad after exams
	Closely critiquing
	Letting the teacher down
	Public shaming and encouragement
	Playing their part
	Reviewing exam performance
	Maintaining high performance
	Finishing curriculum
	Extending teaching hours
	Valuing school's performance
	Knowing intelligence
	The gateway to everything

	Lacking time for extracurriculars
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