

**CULTURAL BELIEFS AND GIRL CHILD EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KISORO DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY OF HILLSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
IN KISORO MUNICIPALITY**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at cultural beliefs and girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro district and it was guided by the following objectives; To find out the level of cultural beliefs in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality, to find out the level of girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality and to find out the relationship between cultural beliefs and girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) measured the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. In this case, the correlation coefficient between cultural beliefs and girl child education is 0.79. This indicated a strong positive correlation between the two variables, suggesting that as cultural beliefs increase, so does the impact on girl child education. The correlation was significant at the 0.01 level, which means that it was highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The sample size (N) in this study was 100, which indicated that there were 100 respondents who participated in the study. The significant p -value of 0.000 suggests that there is a high level of confidence in the correlation relationship observed in the study. School administrators should improve on teaching learning facilities in their schools to enhance academic achievement of students in general.

Key words: **cultural beliefs and girl child education**

Background of the study

According to Oso (2009), Cultural beliefs refer to a set of behavioral patterns related to thoughts, manners and actions, which members of society have shared. Religion on the other hand, refers to the

belief in the existence of a god or gods. Religious beliefs therefore encompass all the activities, sentiments and opinions connected with the worship of a deity (Lorton, V , 1979).

Culture refers to the shared knowledge, beliefs, values and rules about behavior which exist in a society (Omondi, 2008). It also involves people's personalities and techniques in which they go about their own affairs. Education is one of the ways into which knowledge; rules, values and beliefs are shared or handed down from one generation to another. The schools or an educational institution is greatly impacted by culture in an equal or more way as other social institutions, like family and community (Omondi, 2008).

According to (Gracious, A, 2022), girl child education refers to the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at school or university among girls. The quest for sex among teenagers seems to be high and uncontrollable (Olatunbosun, M, 2008) summarized this experience in the northern part of Nigeria and concluded that it has become impossible for parents to control the youths from indulging in sexual activities. He reported this, having an average of one request for one month from parents to abort the pregnancy of their daughters still in school. The action of parents goes to confirm that teenage pregnancy is now rampant in our society and if not correctly checked will undoubtedly amount to an unhealthy increase in the population of many school dropouts (Okebukola, P, 1997).

Girl child education refers to a discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in schools or school-like environment as opposed to various non-formal and informal means of socialization among girls (Nelson, 2009). In rural areas, social and cultural patterns combined with relatively poor quality of schooling place girls, their education and development in a disadvantaged and vulnerable position (Sarri, R., & Phillips, 2004). Girls bear the heaviest burden for household responsibilities, including care of sick parents and siblings, and are first ones to drop out of school (Mensah, 2010). The global aspect according to limited nation's world survey (2002) on the role of women in development today assumes that girl childhood is politically and culturally mute and this veil of silence needs to be lifted if any corrective affirmative action is to occur (Mensah, 2010).

Statement of the problem

Despite efforts to promote girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro District, cultural beliefs continue to pose a significant challenge. This case study focused on Hillside High School in Kisoro Municipality to examine how cultural beliefs affect the enrollment, retention, and academic performance of girl students. The study aimed at exploring the perceptions of teachers, parents, and community members towards girl child education, identify the cultural beliefs and practices that hinder girls' education, and suggest strategies to overcome these challenges. The findings of this study contributed to the existing knowledge on the impact of cultural beliefs on girl child education and inform policy and practice for promoting gender equity in education.

Specific Objectives

1. To find out the level of cultural beliefs in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality
2. To find out the level of girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality
3. To find out the relationship between cultural beliefs and girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality

Research questions

1. What was the level of cultural beliefs in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality?
2. What was the level of girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality?
3. What was the relationship between cultural beliefs and girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality?

Methodology

Research Design

The research study used descriptive research design because of the nature of the variables that was at

hand, to produce data, required for qualitative and quantitative analysis to allow simultaneous description of views, perceptions and beliefs at any single point in time (white, 2000). Geneserth (1984) defines descriptive survey as a method of collecting information by interviews or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. This method was adequate for the study because it provided both qualitative and numeric descriptions of a sample of the population.

Target population

According to the pre-study survey conducted by Mwiti Robinson (2022) at Hillside high school, Teachers considered were of bachelors only because they had more experience in teaching and had taught for more than 5-Years basing on the school calendar and payroll list of July (2022) and therefore, the researcher also used the same criteria to obtain the same data from the school and the target population for this study constituted 28 out of 30 as target population. The study contained students from S.3, S.4, and A` level, teachers and the head teacher of the school was selected because he was easily accessible and was the one who introduced the researcher to the teachers and the students

Sampling procedures

Sample size

A sample is a small subset of the total population (George & Mallery, 2003). A sample was used to Kisoro Municipality where there were both private and public secondary schools but only one private secondary school was chosen for the study which was Hillside high school.

The study sample comprised of 28 respondents out of 30 of the total population.

Therefore 20 were students, 07 teachers and 01 head teacher as the parent population. This was because the population more or less shared similar socio-demographic characteristics and also due to resource and time constraints. The respondents interviewed included teachers, students and the head teacher.

Table 1; shows different Categories of the respondents in the Study sample with their Sizes.

Population (N)	Target	Sample
Students	20	20
Teachers	09	07
Head teacher	01	01
Total	30	28

Source from: Primary data, 2022

Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling

As each member of the population has an equal probability of being selected, simple random sampling is the best-known probability sample. Even though it may not be considered an ideal method of choosing the sample, still result obtained through this method has high external validity or generalizability as compared to some other method of sample selection (michelle, 2008).

The respondents in this study were school students as primary respondents. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents in the group students. A total of 20 students were selected from only S.3, S.4, and A 'Level and were the ones participated in the study and their selection involved simple random sampling and specific attention was paid to inclusion of both male and female students in the study school.

Purposive sampling

The researcher also used purposive sampling technique to purposively select the 07 teachers and 01 head teacher of the school because they were considered as the key informants that is, they were the

major sources of the information and were the ones to update the findings from the students as far as the study findings was concerned

Data collection Methods and instruments

The data collection methods used in data collection included; interviewing, and questionnaire methods.

Interview Guide

The interview guide contained open-ended questions which compelled the respondents to give more unrestricted responses since open-ended questions are perceived as less threatening (Picho, 2014).

In this method, informed members were selected to inform the researcher about specific issues regarding the study. The instrument employed a key informative guide which included questions on the specific objectives of the study. This helped in capturing of qualitative information in the study.

Brief interview guides for the students were used to collect data. Interview schedule began with the factual information on specific issues regarding the study. Interview guide was used to collect data on the impact of cultural beliefs on girl child education, the level of cultural beliefs, and the level of girl child education at Hillside high school in Kisoro Municipality.

Questionnaire method

The researcher constructed an easy, clear, and straight-forward questionnaire for the comfort of respondents 'understanding, interpretation, and feedback. A structured questionnaire consisting of both open-ended and closed-ended questions based on a set of questions in relation to the study objectives as were administered in order to gather relevant in-depth information. This helped the researcher to use respondents and help them to think more about the questions and give well explained and clear answers.

Data analysis

Data processing was done through editing, coding and tabulation. Data analysis was done using computer analysis with the help of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). This helped the

researcher analyze the raw data and transform it into meaningful and usable information. After this process, a report was written based on the findings of the researcher (Nelson, K, 2022).

Despite the fact that since qualitative data was gathered during the study, this entailed the classifying, comparing, weighing and combining empirical material from the questionnaires, interview guides and field notes to extract the meaning for an understanding of the subject under study in coherent explanation. The data units were sorted according to the study objectives in order to produce coherent meaning.

RESULTS

Respondent's Background Characteristics according to their Categories

Beliefs are the background characteristics of respondents in different categories. These were identified in order to relate them to issues cultural beliefs, level of girl child education in Kisoro Municipality

Table 2: Categories of students according to their gender, age and marital status

Item	Responses	Frequency (N=20)	Valid percentage (%)
Gender	Male	12	60
	Female	08	40
Total		20	100
Age	13-15 yrs.	05	25
	16-18 yrs.	13	65
	Above 18	02	10
Total		20	100

Marital Status	Married	01	5
	Single	19	95
Total		20	100

Table 2; shows the majority of the students interviewed (representing 60%) were males while females were 40% of the total students. The table also shows that the students fell in different age categories for instance, 13-15 years were 25%, 16-18 years were 65% while those above 18 years were also represented because they were considered as the old students which had more knowledge about cultural beliefs and level of girl child education. This was because the students were randomly selected from different sample in Kisoro Municipality.

Background factors of other Key Informants

Table 3: Background factors of Key informants in the sample

Item	Responses	Frequency(N=08)	Valid percentage
Gender	Male	05	62.5
	Female	03	37.5
Total		08	100
Age	18-25	01	12.5
	25-35	04	50
	35 and above	03	37.5
			100

Position of responsibility	Teachers	07	87.5
	Head teacher	01	12.5
Total		08	100

Source, Primary data, 2022

As regards to the findings in table 3 above, it can be noted that the respondents of the key informants were not equivalent enough to one another where the ratio of males were (62.5%), and the ratio of females were also 37.5% which means that the findings were representative enough. This was done systematically to get first-hand basing on the research questions. As regard their age, each of the respondent 12.5% in this category were between 18-25, followed by 50% who were between 25-35 years of age and finally those who were above 35 years were 37.5%

On the other hand, the researcher asked the respondents whether the students knew some information about cultural beliefs and 80% answered in the affirmative (YES) whereas only 20% answered in the negative form (NO).

Level of girl child education at hillside high school in Kisoro Municipality

Girls Education in Uganda varies from region-to-region Njong (2010). The gender gap has become smaller; however, there are serious issues holding back the progress of the development of girl's education Njong (2010). The United Nations girls 'education Initiative (UNGEI) reported that more than 700,000 girls in Uganda between ages of 6 to 12 have never attended school. In fact, around half of girls between the ages of 15 to 24 are illiterate and four in five girls do not attend high school.

Table 4: Correlation level of girl child education at Hillside high school in Kisoro Municipality

Classes	Frequency (f)	X	FX
0-5	5	2.5	12.5
5-10	3	7.5	22.5
10-15	6	12.5	75
15-20	8	17.5	140
20-25	4	22.5	90
25-30	2	27.5	55
	$\Sigma f=28$		$\Sigma fx=395$

Table 4 appears to be a frequency distribution of the correlation level of girl child education at Hillside High School in Kisoro Municipality. The table presents the number of classes (ranges of correlation levels), the frequency of occurrence of each class (f), the midpoints of each class (X), and the product of frequency and midpoint (FX).

From the table, we can see that the most frequent correlation level is in the range of 15-20 with a frequency of 8. This indicates that most of the respondents perceive a moderate correlation between cultural beliefs and girl child education. The lowest frequency is in the range of 25-30, which indicates that only a few respondents perceive a strong correlation between cultural beliefs and girl child education.

The midpoint of each class shows the central tendency of the distribution for each range of correlation levels. For example, the midpoint for the range of 0-5 is 2.5, which means that the respondents who fall within this range perceive very weak or no correlation between cultural beliefs and girl child education. The midpoint for the range of 25-30 is 27.5, which means that the respondents who fall within this range perceive a strong correlation between cultural beliefs and girl child education.

The sum of the frequencies (Σf) is 28, which indicates that there were 28 respondents in the study. The sum of the products of frequency and midpoint (Σfx) is 395, which can be used to calculate the mean correlation level. The mean correlation level can be calculated as $\Sigma fx / \Sigma f$, which is 14.11 in this case. This means that, on average, the respondents perceive a moderate correlation between cultural beliefs and girl child education at Hillside High School in Kisoro Municipality.

Relationship between cultural beliefs and girl child education in secondary schools in Kisoro Municipality

Table 5: Correlation relationship between cultural beliefs and girl child education

	cultural beliefs	girl child education
Pearson correlation		0.79
N	1	.000
	100	100
Pearson correlation		1
N	0.79	
	.000	100
	100	

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. In this case, the correlation coefficient between cultural beliefs and girl child education is 0.79. This indicates a strong positive correlation between the two variables, suggesting that

as cultural beliefs increase, so does the impact on girl child education. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, which means that it is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The sample size (N) in this study is 100, which indicates that there were 100 respondents who participated in the study. The significant p-value of 0.000 suggests that there is a high level of confidence in the correlation relationship observed in the study.

Conclusion

Cultural factors in almost all circumstances depict girls as inferior to boys, a factor that demeans girls and indeed impedes girls' aspirations in life. They even fail to consider education as the best investment in good life free from poverty, slavery, ignorance and diseases. The consequence of which is laxity and negative attitude towards education. This lowers girls' moral and eventually low academic achievement.

All these factors encourage girls to develop a negative attitude towards schooling and ultimately result in low academic achievement. Where the girls have been liberated from the cultural bondage through religion, they have in fact excelled in National examinations. This implies that indeed negative cultural impede girls' academic achievement.

Recommendations

Head teachers should put in place rules and regulations that should protect the girls from harassment by hostile teachers and fellow student.

School administrators should improve on teaching learning facilities in their schools to enhance academic achievement of students in general

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