

## **Girl-child Sexual Violence and Academic Achievement in Public Primary Schools of Kuria West Sub-County, Kenya**

**\*Sussy Nafula Werunga (Sr) and Kenneth Otieno.**

Department of Educational Psychology, Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology

P.O Box 190-50100 Kakamega

Corresponding author e-mail: [sussywerunga@yahoo.com](mailto:sussywerunga@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

*The study sought to examine girl-child sexual violence and academic achievement in public primary schools of Kuria West Sub-county. Despite Mechanisms put in place by Ministry of Education to gab girl child sexual violence in Schools, home factors such as Female Genital Mutilation and developed relationships between boys and girls in school contribute significantly to sexual violence among girls. It affects girls' completion of education and disrupts their career potential since many of them drop out of school because of the unwanted pregnancy. Although Kenya's MOEST's health policy (2009) allows girls who conceive to resume their studies after delivery, girls drop out because of the shame and trauma. Guidance and counseling teachers ought to provide psychosocial support to girls to overcome shame and trauma. However there is laxity in some of the schools where guidance and counseling services have not addressed girls' sexual violence hence high dropout rate. The study was carried out in 28 public primary schools and the sub-county education office. The sample size consisted of 360 girls of class 7 and 8, 27 Head teachers, 27 Guidance and counseling teachers and 1 Education officer. Stratified, simple random and saturated sampling techniques were employed. Questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guide were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 18. Quantitative data was presented using descriptive statistics. Female Genital Mutilation was the most contributing home factor that makes girls concentrates on sexual activities. The least factor was fathers raping girls at home. Girls abused sexually due to developed relationships with boys and teachers for the exchange of grades were the most and least school factors respectfully. It was recommended that; the community should use alternative initiation rite of passage for girls instead of female genital mutilation to educate girls on cultural matters; head teachers should strengthen school rules, regulations and counseling programme to guide pupils; the Ministry of education should organize sensitization workshops for parents, Board of Management and head teachers on legal handling of sexual violence and Teachers Service Commission should employ more effective ways of disciplining teachers involved in sexual abuse in schools.*

**Key words:** Girl-child, sexual Violence, home and school factors, academic achievement

### **Introduction**

Sex violence against children particularly girls is a global concern. It is estimated globally that 150 million girls under the age of 18 years have experienced sexual violence. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2005) defines sexual violence as the involvement of a child in sexual activities that she does not fully

comprehend, unable to give informed consent to or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent. Sexual violence goes beyond the physical violence as it violates the intellectual, emotional and psychological health of an individual. The intellectual, emotional and psychological disturbance links sexual violence to issues and cases that impede children's learning or education in schools. Studies indicate that sexual abuse interferes with children's completion of education and development, disrupts their career potentials and are forced to drop out of school as a result of unwanted pregnancies (Adusel, 2009; SRGBV, 2010; Parkes and Heslop, 2011; Ondieki, 2010).

United Nations committee on the rights of the child emphasizes that teachers and staff are responsible for protecting children from violence while they are at school, and in transit to and from school (UN, 2011). Wible (2009) indicated that sexual harassment in schools is a growing problem across Africa. In response to these fears, educational organizations dedicated to social justice in education put in place measures to curb and address cases of sexual violence in schools. Arriaga and Foshee (2004), in their study in the United States of America (USA) indicated that the impact of gender violence at school affects girls in their decision to stay in school; it affects their concentration and sense of self. Girls feel exploited, worthless, alone, scared, sick, powerless and guilty when they face harassment, intimidation and violence. These highlight the traumatizing effect of such violence and underscore the sense of helplessness, fear and self blame in girls (Arriaga and Foshee (2004)

In Kenya, a survey of 2010 showed that 32% of females had experienced sexual violence prior to age 18 while 100 girls from Migori County dropped out of school for early marriage. Onyando and Omondi (2008) from the Centre for the Study of Adolescence (CSA) indicated that the Ministry of Education is fully aware that the dropout rate for girls is higher than that of boys. One of the main reasons for school dropout among girls is pregnancy and early marriage. These two reasons account for a significant number of drop out cases especially in Coast, Rift Valley and Nyanza Provinces. The Ministry of Education therefore places significant emphasis on increasing the course completion rate through reduction of drop out. It deals with

those who abuse children sexually and ensure that guidance and counseling services are established in schools. Despite the efforts, the situation on the ground reveals that Girl child sexual violence is experienced in both schools and at home. This could be attributed to various home and school factors.

Rape, defilement, trafficking, incest, sexual harassment among other forms of sex violence still continues to be experienced in the Kenyan school. In 2009, a total of 600 teachers had their names struck off from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) register for impregnating pupils. In 2010 more than 500 teachers were dismissed by the TSC after being implicated for impregnating girls in schools. In June, 2015, TSC banned 126 teachers from working in any school in Kenya. Of these, 100 were found guilty of having sexual relations with students. And in July 2015, TSC interdicted the Njoro High school Principal and her deputy after one of the teachers at the institution was charged with sexually molesting six girls. In Migori County, more than 100 primary school girls dropped out of school to get married during the three week teachers' strike in September 2012. In Kuria West Sub-County, reports from the schools and children's department indicate that sexual violence is high among girls. Between September 2012 and May 2013, about 90% of school going girls had either been sexually abused, abducted for early marriage, had conceived or gone through Female Genital Mutilation.

Whereas sexual violence against young girls is occasioned by individual misbehaviour of the perpetrators or lack of ineffective guidance and counseling in schools, there is evidence that economic deprivation and cultural practices such as FGM makes girls vulnerable to sexual violence (Ondiek, 2010). Sexual violence takes place in the homes, schools, care and justice institutions, at work and within the communities at large (CDC, 2007). UNICEF Unite children (2010) indicated that child sexual abuse occurs within the family. Experiencing sexual violence by parents, caregivers and others has been associated with a number of emotional and behavioral problems including poor academic performance, reduced self esteem, depression, early pregnancies, school dropout among others. It was for these reasons that the study sought to examine girl child sexual violence and academic achievement in public primary schools of Kuria West sub-county.

The objective of the study was to; Find out the extent to which home and school factors contribute to girl-child sexual violence and academic achievement in public primary schools of Kuria West sub-county.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design which are procedures in quantitative research in which questionnaires are administered to a small group of people(sample size) to identify trends in attitude, opinions, behaviors or characteristics of a large group of people called population(Creswell, 2008). The design allowed the researcher to collect original information on home and school factors contributing to girl-child sexual violence.

The study focused on all the 90 public primary schools of Kuria West sub-county. The sub-county covers 387 km<sup>2</sup> divided into five administrative boundaries: Maberu, Masaba, Kehancha, Ikereke and Isibania. This area was selected for the study because there are many reported cases on sexual violence. The rate of enrolment for girls depreciates as they move up the levels of education. Poverty, early marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) attitudes, child labour, peer influence are common reports for girl-child school drop-out (Children's department office Kuria West sub-county, 2013). It was mainly for these reasons that Kuria West sub-county was selected as the study area to examine the relationship between girl-child sexual violence and academic achievement.

Population of the study comprised of 90 head teachers, 90 guidance and counseling teachers, 4590 class 7 and 8 girls all from public primary schools and 1 sub-county Education officer in charge of Kuria West sub-county. However the study was conducted in 28 public primary schools.

Stratified random sampling, saturated sample and simple random sampling techniques were used in this study. Stratified random helps to reduce chance variation between a sample and the population it represents. It was used to select 180 class 7 girls and another 180 class 8 girls thus sample size of 360 (8%) girls. The stratified random sampling focused on two strata of class 7 and 8 girls both balanced at 180. Stratified sampling was preferred for the class 7 and 8 girls because most girls in the two classes fall into the same age

bracket. This is usually the onset of adolescent stage and so the girls in the two classes tend to have the same characteristics and are therefore vulnerable to sexual violence. The stratified sampling technique was also used to select five public primary mixed day schools from five divisions in the sub county, thereby yielding a total of 25 public mixed day schools for the final study. Three divisions had girl's boarding Schools. One of the boarding schools was used in pilot study and was therefore not included in the final study. The remaining two boarding schools were involved in this study. There was only one mixed day/ boarding school. The girls from this school were included in the study.

To select the desired sample size, the simple random sampling technique was used. Pieces of papers written on "Yes" or "No" were given to all class 7 and 8 found in the school. Only those who picked "Yes" filled the questionnaire. This method ensured that all possible population characteristics were captured and that each of the girls in class 7 and 8 had an equal chance of being selected. Orodho (2003) defines saturated sampling as a method where all items/individuals are included in the sample. Saturated sampling technique was used to select one sub-county education officer (100%) since the education officer was just one in the study. Simple random sampling was employed to select 27 head teachers (30%) and 27 guidance and counseling teachers (30%). This technique gave the head teachers, guidance and counseling teachers and girls an equal chance to participate in the study.

Data was collected using a questionnaire, interview schedule and document analysis guide. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order or set of forms (Kothari, 2004). Questionnaire was the most appropriate tool to collect data from girl-child to allow the researcher to collect information from a large sample with diverse background. The Questionnaire focused on school and home factors contributing to girl-child sexual violence and the effect of girl-child sexual violence on academic achievement. The interview schedule sought information on issues such as the mechanisms put in place to monitor girl-child sexual violence in schools by the Ministry of Educations and home and school factors contributing to sexual violence, girl-child academic performance and completion rate. Document analysis

guide was used to obtain information documented in the office of the guidance and counseling teachers such as girl-child drop out rate, guest speakers in schools, girl-child sexual violence cases handled in schools, records were obtained from education offices, head teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. The three were to ensure triangulation of information or facts.

Face and content validities of the instruments were ascertained by experts from the department of Educational Psychology of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. Reliability of the instrument was established through test re-test method and the reliability of  $r = 0.76$  was deemed adequate in this study.

The researcher sought permission from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) through the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) of MMUST. Thereafter the researcher sent notification letters to the various authorities concerned and the sampled schools. Questionnaire return rate was 100%. The researcher made an appointment with sub-county Education Officer prior to the interview. Data collected was sorted, edited, coded, classified and tabulated for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentage, and means. Qualitative data was transcribed, put into various categories and reported as themes and sub-themes. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 18 was used for data analysis. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), ethical considerations are vital for any research study. The researcher sought permission of the respondents and assured them of confidentiality and privacy of the data collected.

## **Results**

The objective of the study sought to determine the extent to which home and school factors contribute to girl-child sexual violence in public primary schools. The means and the Standard Deviation (SD) of the responses are presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

### **4.3.1 Home Factors Contributing to Girl-Child Sexual Violence**

Home factors contributing to girl-child sexual violence are presented in Table 4.3. Where A=Agree, UN=Undecided, D=disagree, SD= Standard Deviation.

**Table 4.3: Scores of Home Factors Contributing to GCSV**

Statement	A	UN	D	MEAN	SD
Going through FGM makes girls concentrate so much on sexual activities as it makes them feel ready to get married.	318	10	31	4.25	0.190
The culture of boys and girls walking together after circumcision makes them get used to sexual behaviors with their age mate boys	274	33	51	4.01	0.189
The girls are sexually abused by men in dances of circumcision and funerals at night until they fear attending these dances	267	40	47	3.94	0.411
Brothers and sisters have sex with each other several times because they sleep together in their small houses at home	246	46	68	3.75	0.391
Sometimes relatives after taking alcohol force girls to have sex with them	242	38	80	3.72	0.423
Girls are sent by their fathers to go and have sex with the father's rich friends so that they get married to them	214	47	99	3.50	0.521
Parents always want their daughters to get married so that their sons can get school fees	212	43	104	3.48	0.519
Mothers send their daughters to get money from men they call their "uncle" who later have sex with the girls before giving them the items	207	46	107	3.46	0.516
Neighbours at home sometimes holds knives and threaten girls when they refuse sex with them	190	56	114	3.33	0.439
When mothers visit their parents fathers forced their girl child to have sex with them	184	57	119	3.25	0.529

**Source: Research data, (2015)**

When the respondents were asked if going through FGM makes girls concentrate so much on sexual activities as it makes them feel grown up and ready to get married, most (318) of them agreed. Those who

disagreed were 31 while 10 were undecided with a mean score of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.190. The culture of boys and girls walking together after circumcision makes them get used to sexual behaviors with their age mates. Whereas majority (274) agreed with the statement, 51 disagreed while 33 were undecided with a mean score of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.189. The respondents were asked whether girls are sexually abused by men in dances of circumcision and funerals at night until they fear attending these dances. Most (267) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 47 disagreed with it and only 40 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.411. Most (246) of the respondents reported that brothers and sisters have sex with each other several times because they sleep together in their small houses at home. Those who disagreed with the statement were 68 while 46 were undecided with a mean score of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 0.391. The respondents were asked whether sometimes relatives after taking alcohol force girls to have sex with them. Most (242) of the respondents agreed while 80 disagreed and 38 undecided, with a mean score of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 0.423. The respondents were further asked whether girls are sent by their fathers to go and have sex with their fathers' rich friends so that they can accept getting married to them. Whereas the majority (214) agreed, 99 disagreed and 47 were undecided with a mean score of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.521. Respondents were also asked whether parents always want their daughters to get married so that their sons can get school fees. A total of 212 respondents agreed while 104 disagreed and 43 were undecided with a mean score of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.519. Respondents were asked whether mothers sent their daughters to get money and shopping from men they call their 'uncles' who later have sex with the girls before giving them these items. Most (207) of the respondents agreed while 107 disagreed and 46 were undecided with a mean score of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 0.516. The study sought to establish whether neighbours at home sometimes hold knives and threaten girls when they refuse sex with them. Majority (190) of the respondents agreed while 114 disagreed and 56 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.439. Respondents were asked to indicate whether when mothers visit their parents, fathers force their girl children to have sex with them claiming it is normal and that it happens in every family. Most (184) of them

agreed while 119 disagreed and 57 were undecided with a mean score of 3.25 and a standard deviation of 0.529.

#### 4.3.2 School Factors Contributing to Girl-Child Sexual Violence

The mean scores related to school factors contributing to girl child sexual violence are summarized in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of Scores on School Factors Contributing to GCSV**

<b>Descriptive Statements</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UND</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>SD</b>
Girls abused severally by boys due to developed relationship in school	230	53	77	3.66	0.362
Sports led to boys forcing girls to have sex when coming back at night	213	52	95	3.52	0.376
Boys hiding in bush and raping girls on their way to or from school	199	57	104	3.39	0.420
Girls have fear of going to teachers for help since some teachers have touched their sexual parts	192	51	117	3.33	0.439
I feel insecure at school because occasionally I have been forced into sex by men workers on school compound	186	63	111	3.30	0.429
Girls usually ask clever boys to help them do difficult math in class in exchange for sex	173	61	126	3.19	0.467
Girls who went for consultation to male teachers during night preps and had sex with them after help	174	62	124	3.18	0.504
Raped by male teachers in the offices when called upon to take books	163	78	119	3.17	0.458

Shopkeepers near Schools give money and gifts to girls in exchange for sex	170	54	136	3.12	0.438
Girl who have been sexually violated because they usually ask their teachers to help them pass exams	156	68	136	3.04	0.491

**Source: Research data, (2015)**

Results in Table 4.4 show that most (230) girls agreed that learning in the same school with their boyfriends has made them have sex which has affected their performances in class. On the other hand, 77 disagreed while 53 were undecided with a mean score of 3.66 and standard deviation of 0.362. Whereas most (213) agreed that they like sports very much but they fear going out nowadays because every time they come back at night some boys force them to have sex with them, 95 disagreed and 52 were undecided with a mean score of 3.52, and a standard deviation of 0.376. When asked whether boys hid in the bush and raped girls on their way to or from school, majority (199) of the girls agreed while 104 disagreed and 57 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 0.420. Most (192) girls agreed that they perform poorly in class because they fear going to teachers for help since some of them always touch their sexual parts. Those who disagreed with the statement were 117 while 51 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.33, and a standard deviation of 0.439. The respondents were asked whether they felt insecure at school because girls have been forced into sex by male workers on school compound. Most (186) agreed while 111 disagreed and 63 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.30 and a standard deviation of 0.429. Most (173) of the girls reported that they asked clever boys to help them do difficult math problems in class and thereafter rewarded these boys with sexual favours. Whereas 126 girls disagreed, 61 were undecided with a mean score of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.467. Girls were asked whether they go to teachers for help during night preps and the teachers ask them to have sex with them after the help. Most (174) of the girls agreed while 124 disagreed and 62 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 0.504. When asked whether male teachers had raped girls in their offices when called to take books to them, 163 of the girls agreed while 199 disagreed and 78 were undecided with a mean score of 3.17 and a standard deviation of 0.458. The respondents were asked to indicate whether shopkeepers near schools sometimes

give money and gifts to girls in exchange for sex. Whereas most (170) of the girls agreed, 136 disagreed and 54 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 0.438. When the respondents were asked whether they had been sexually violated because they usually asked their teachers to help them pass exams, most (156) of the girls agreed. On the other hand, 136 disagreed and 68 were undecided, with a mean score of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 0.491.

## **Discussion**

The results show that cultural practices of FGM, seclusion after initiation ceremony and night dances for funeral vigils are the key home factors contributing to girl-child sexual violence. Apart from the use of sharp objects during the process which is also considered as a form of sexual violence against the girl-child, the respondents acknowledged that after going through FGM ceremony, they have that feeling of being grown ups and therefore their concentration shifts from classroom to sexual activities with a feeling that they are ready for marriage. FGM is considered as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood conducted when girls are within the age bracket of 9 and 13 years. This usually is the time when most of them are in classes ranging from four and seven of primary education. To the initiates, education becomes less important thereafter because they are considered mature and ready for marriage. They feel they have reached womanhood and therefore are uncomfortable among “younger children” in class. Given this situation, some of them drop out of school either to get married or go to towns to look for jobs which may include working as house helps or engaging in child prostitution.

When boys and girls mix freely after the circumcision ceremony, they develop close relationships between themselves. Since the girls are aware that the rite is meant to prepare them for marriage, the relationship develops into sexual misuse. That is why majority of the girls indicated that after FGM, they concentrated so much on sexual activities on the expense of their studies. These girls therefore tend to look at boys as future husbands and no sooner have they healed than they engage themselves in the sexual behaviour. This

behaviour undermines their performance in class hence difficulty in adjusting at school leading to frequent absenteeism.

Both circumcision and funerals create space for night celebrations and vigils respectively. The girls however expressed their fears attending these night dances because they provide avenues for men to abuse them sexually.

Brothers and sisters have sex with each other (incest) several times because they sleep together in their small houses at home. Whereas some parents are sensitive to the development of their children and would separate children of opposite sex once they are in teens, others, for lack of space, leave their children in adolescent stage to share sleeping rooms. Sharing of sleeping space therefore creates fertile ground for boys to release their suppressed sexual feelings on their sisters who are sexually weak. The girls get affected psychologically both from the abuse and lack of privacy at their age.

Sexual violence is further highlighted when drunken relatives rape the innocent girls. When people drink excessively, alcohol affects the brain and hence there is critical loss of the sense of judgment. Girls who have been sexually abused by drunkard relatives reported that it was unbelievable that their own kinsmen could go to the extent of behaving in this manner. As a result most of them get traumatized, pregnant and eventually drop out of school. Revealing the perpetrator is perceived to be shameful and therefore girls bear all the pain alone.

Some parents consider their daughters as a source of wealth in the family. They make arrangements with wealthy men to marry their daughters; so they introduce the girls to the men who end up abusing the girl sexually. The girl is eventually forced to get married to these men before completing primary education. This leads to a situation where girls drop out due to pregnancy. Early marriages are common among the Kuria community and unfortunately, most of these are initiated by parents. The study findings showed that

some parents marry off their daughters so that they get school fees for their sons. As mentioned earlier, the girls are considered as a source of wealth and therefore educating them is seen as a waste of resources.

Given that poverty is rampant in most homes, the study established that some mothers use their daughters for monetary gain. Some mothers make arrangements with wealthy men to provide for their livelihoods. This is done when they use their daughters as baits. The innocent girl is sent to collect money from an “uncle” meaning her brother or cousin. However, it later turns out that the girl has been conned and has to return sexual favour on behalf of the mother so that the required items are released. It was established that these men sometimes keep the girls for more than two days just abusing them sexually leading to the absenteeism of the girl from the school. Naturally, when such a girl gets back to school, she is not only psychologically tortured by the incident but also finds it very difficult to catch up with the missed lessons hence deterioration in academic performance.

The neighbours are not left out when it comes to girl-child sexual violence. The factor is among the least probably because of the government’s legal provision of heavy penalty on girl-child sexual perpetrators. The girl-child ought to be equipped with assertive and defensive skills which may help them ward off the challenges posed to them by the sex predators.

The study findings show that when mothers are away from home to visit their parents, some irresponsible fathers take advantage of the mother’s absence to force their girl-children to have sex with them. The fathers rationalize for their shameful behaviour that the activity is normal and it happens in every family. Incest is not only a taboo but it is also a barbaric form of sexual abuse which causes shame in families. Since it is shameful for girls to reveal to their mothers when they are abused by a member of the family or a relative the girl remains traumatized for a long period of time. It is rare for mothers to leave their children at home with their fathers. However, in cases of domestic violence, mothers have a tendency of going back to their

maternal homes for protection. Peaceful home climate ensures that the girl child is protected from sexual violence and therefore, the presence of the mother at home with children is of essence.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that home factors to a large extent contribute to girl-child sexual violence and their academic achievement. The results agree with that of UNICEF Unite Children (2010) which established that in Barbados, mothers' boyfriends were a likely factor in sexual abuse in children. The finding of this study is also in consonance with that of Ondiek (2010) who indicated that persistent senseless genital mutilation has effects on education and professional growth and social development of girl-child in Kuria Sub-county.

These findings show that the key factors in school have to do with boys involving themselves in girl-child sexual violence leading to poor performance. To this end therefore, it is clear that mixed schools are fertile grounds for girl-child sexual violence. School rules and regulations should be strengthened and implemented so as to guide boys and girls in school and hence minimize incidences of sexual violence. Religious teachings especially on moral values in schools guide girls and boys on how to relate. However, if boys and girls are not guided well then their relationships develop into misusing sex and diverting their attention from academics to sexual activities.

According to the study findings, girls reported that sexual abuses by boys have instilled fear in girls and therefore they are reluctant to participate in sports beyond their school compound. Boys take advantage of girls especially on their way home from interschool sports events at night. Participation in sports generally helps pupils to redirect excess sex energy into constructive activities besides developing their talents and abilities. A student who may not be good in class may use their talents in sports to rise to greater heights through co-curricular activities.

By hiding in the bush, the perpetrators hope to escape from punishment as they may not be identified easily. Raping girls on their way to school instills fear in both the girl-child and the parents. Out of fear and the stigma of rape, parents are forced to keep the child at home for some time before allowing her to resume school. Absence from school inevitably undermines the girl's learning process and therefore, the academic performance is adversely affected.

Touching girls' private parts is an attempted act of sexual abuse. Touching girls arouses them emotionally and so they choose to fail rather than risk going back to the teacher for help. This fear escalates up to the class room especially when the teacher involved in the vice goes to class to teach. The girls who are not helped in class, because of the fear they have, fail to achieve good grades leading to dropping out at primary level due to poor performance.

Teachers are protectors of children from any form of violence when they are at school. However, there was a feeling of insecurity among girls in schools because they have been forced into sex by male workers on the school compound. School environment can be potent grounds of sexual abuse, some of the places in which this heinous crime is practiced include, toilets, fields, classrooms, dark buildings, bushes around schools, dormitories and staff quarters. These areas if not strictly monitored easily become abusive grounds for many girls. Because of this feeling of insecurity in schools, girls absent themselves frequently from school for fear of being sexually violated.

The study findings showed that whereas girls usually ask clever boys to help them do difficult math in class in exchange for sex there are teachers who give girls high scores in exchange for a gift or money. For the girls to cope in class and avoid ridicule, they ask for help from the boys who accept to help them but on condition that they return sexual favours. The consequences of this have been increased failure in final exams, early pregnancies or contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

The respondents reported that those who went to consult male teachers during night preps were sexually abused. However, this may not have affected day scholars who do not have evening preps at school. They are forced to do it before, during or after the assistance. Teachers take advantage of night preps because there are usually few adults on the school compound.

In as much as mechanisms have been put in place to protect the girl child, the study established that girls are raped by male teachers in the offices when called upon to deliver or collect books. School rules and regulations and the Ministry of Education's policies are directly applied in the school and therefore protect girl-child's learning. Teachers know the consequences of having carnal knowledge of underage girls. Those found and proved guilty lose their jobs as teachers. It is very unfortunate that the innocent girls are naïve since they are not aware that they should report such incidences. Worse still the girls who know that sexual abuse is an offence do not report hence they continue to suffer silently.

The girls who lack certain basic needs are seduced by gifts and money and sexually violated by shopkeepers. This finding was among the least contributing school factor because the study was carried out in some boarding schools where rules do not allow girls to leave the school compound and go out to purchase goods from the nearby shops. Also, in ordinary public schools, areas like shops are out of bounds for pupils during school hours. The results however indicated that the few girls who are poor and need basic items for personal use have fallen victims of sexual abuse by the shopkeepers near their schools.

The results showed that sexual abuse by teachers in exchange for class marks was the least school factor contributing to girl-child sexual violence. Considering that, additional marks in class performance may not add value to a child's national examinations, girls decline to exchange sex for marks in class. The girls know that subject teachers have no influence on individual KCPE national examination results. Therefore, attracting girls by giving high scores in exchange for sex or avoiding ridicule for failing is a common occurrence for those girls who are weak academically. The inflated marks in exchange for sexual favours do not give these girls any advantage in the final national examination, KCPE.

Further when the interviews were conducted, most 24 (89%) of the head teachers reported that they had several cases recorded on girl-child sexual violence in their schools. They backed the pupils' views on home and school factors having contributed to girl-child sexual violence. Majority 25 (95 %) of head teachers cited the following factors; orphan hood, drunkenness among family members, carelessness of parents in caring for their children, poverty stricken homes, long illnesses, child labour, child abuse, quarrels and fights at home, misunderstanding in families, cultural practices such as FGM, wife battering and lack of guidance and counseling in some schools due to negative attitude of teachers and pupils. The sub-county officer added that home environment facilitated assault of girl child sexual violence especially where girls and boys shared sleeping rooms. Relatives too have facilitated the increase of incest and more so for the girl child. In schools, he cited boys in mixed schools harassing and assaulting girls' sexually through the very acts and the kind of suggestive words they use.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that school factors to a larger extent contribute to girl-child sexual violence and negatively impact on their academic achievement in public primary schools of Kuria West sub-county. The findings corroborate those of Adusel (2009) for plan Ghana which indicated that teachers were responsible for child sexual abuse in schools.

## **Conclusion**

From the foregoing presentation, it is clear that the most key home factors that contribute to girl child sexual violence are: Going through FGM which makes girls concentrate so much on sexual activities as they feel grown up and ready to get married with a mean of 4.25, the culture of boys and girls walking together after circumcision which makes them get used to sexual behaviours with their age mate boys with a mean of 4.01, and girls being sexually abused by men in dances of circumcision and funerals at night until they fear attending these dances with a mean score of 3.94. The least factors are: mothers sending their daughters for money and shopping from men they call 'uncle' who later have sex with the girls before giving them the

items with a mean score of 3.46, neighbours at home sometimes holding knives and threatening the girls when they refuse to have sex with them with a mean of 3.33 and, when mothers visit their parents' fathers force their girl child to have sex with them with a mean score of 3.25.

It is also evident that the key school factors contributing to girl-child sexual violence are; girls being abused severally by boys due to developed relationship in school affecting their performance in class with a mean score of 3.66, followed by boys forcing girls into sex when coming back from sports at night with a mean score of 3.52 and finally boys hiding in bush and holding girls by force to have sex on their way to or from school with a mean score of 3.39 respectively. On the other hand, the least school factors are; girls who were raped by male teachers in the offices when called upon to deliver or collect books had a mean score of 3.17, followed by shopkeepers near schools who give money and gifts to girls in exchange for sex with a mean score of 3.12 and finally, girls who have been sexually violated because they usually ask their teachers to help them pass exams with a mean score of 3.04.

In conclusion this study established that home and school factors to a larger extent contribute to girl-child sexual violence and adversely affect their academic achievement in public primary schools of Kuria West sub-county.

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