



Kenyan girls' fight for education and empowerment

A CASE STUDY INVESTIGATING NGOS ATTEMPT TO TACKLE
CULTURAL OBSTACLES IN EDUCATION FOR GIRLS IN KENYA

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Human Rights

Bachelor of Arts

15 credits

Spring 2020

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Abstract

Girls' opportunity to attend and stay in school is a worldwide issue especially for secondary education predominantly experienced in Sub-Saharan Africa where poverty is particularly high. This issue is caused by gender inequality as most children who is not able to attend to school are female. This thesis investigates how the NGO Dandelion Africa attempts to tackle cultural obstacles for girls' access to education in Kenya, where girls face a plethora of problems e.g. cultural norms. Through a qualitative case study comprising of online interviews with the staff, the data gathered presented the main initiatives that DA implement to improve girls' access to education. The interviews are thematically analysed through combined theories; capability approach, cultural relativism, and feminist theory to examine the initiatives DA implements to provide girls with capabilities to gain access and completion of education defying cultural and societal norms e.g. preferences to boys, early pregnancy, menstrual stigma. The conclusion showed the need for all-inclusive development and education that teaches both children and parents about basic rights, gender equality and health.

Keywords:

Non-governmental Organization, Gender equality, Girls' education, Kenya, Qualitative case study

Word Count: 13.992

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank Malmö University and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for granting me a scholarship to conduct my Minor Field Study.

I would like to thank Malmö University librarian Lotta Wogensen for a great help with finding material and sources.

I would like to extend a great thanks to Ulrika Waaranpera for her amazing and thoughtful guidance and supervision in the process of writing of this thesis.

To Wendo Sahar Aszed, I would like to offer my thanks for being such a helpful and informative field contact person, and for welcoming me into your life and family. Your drive and dedication for bettering the life of children and women in Kenya is incredibly inspiring and something that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Second, a tremendous thanks to Dandelion Africa, the staff and everyone connected to DA, which have been the main facilitators of my study providing me with their network and letting me experience the invaluable work they do, the insightful information, inspiring me and becoming my friends for this I thank you deeply.

A special thanks to the YPPs, which does a great impact on the children in Nakuru and Baringo County, by being role models, bringing guidance, trust and support as peers.

Finally, I want to thank my family for being incredibly supportive.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BFC	Boys for Change
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DA	Dandelion Africa
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFL	Girls for Leaders
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SDGS	Sustainable Development Goals
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
SSIs	Semi-structured Interviews
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
YPPs	Youth Peer Providers

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to Topic

There is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health (Kofi Annan & UN 2003)

The education of girls has been argued to be the most efficient tool to improve health standards and economic productivity in a country. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goal no. 4 covers quality education. This states: *“By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective outcomes”* (UN 2015). There are still less girls than boys in the classrooms worldwide and particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where 61% of girls never finish their secondary education (UNESCO 2018:5). In sub-Saharan Africa, girls of every school-age group are more likely to be excluded from education than boys. Often poverty combined with traditional perceptions and approaches to the role of women and girls are explanations to why there are fewer girls than boys in school. Data shows that when girls are not denied the right to education and are able to start school, they tend to pursue their studies with high motivation (UNESCO 2018:9).

Beyond the mentioned benefits of girls' education, education for girls provides a protection of the girls' sexual reproductive health i.e. pregnancy, girls out of school have higher probability of becoming pregnant and risk bodily harm. In Kenya, data shows that girls often experience sexual or reproductive health harms in their everyday life, but the risk are lessened if they are attending school. Girls' school attendance ratios in Kenya has increased in the recent years, because of the governments implementation to improve the ratio of children attending school by providing free primary and secondary education in Kenya. Despite offering free education there remains large inequality gaps in primary education, and even higher in secondary education especially in rural areas, where girls continue to face various barriers to attend school (UNICEF 2019b).

1.2 Purpose and Aim

The purpose of my study will be to identify, how Dandelion Africa (DA) attempts to tackle cultural obstacles for girls to education and how their programs conflicts with cultural practices and beliefs. The purpose is to achieve results through interviews with the professionals from DA.

The aim of this study is to gain knowledge of which and how the initiatives DA implements to improve girls' access and attendance to school conflicts with culture. The aim is conducted by analysing the data collected on initiatives and the affecting implications such as gender inequality, cultural and societal norms applying the theories.

1.3 Research Question

How does the Dandelion Africa attempt to tackle cultural obstacles to girls' access to education in Nakuru and Baringo County, Kenya?

Sub-question

- *In what ways do DA's programs for gender equality come into conflict with cultural beliefs and practices prevalent in the area?*

1.4 Thesis Outline and Relevance to Human rights

The topic of my thesis is related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) with Quality Education and Gender Equality Action goals as the most fundamental. Further Good health, Well-being and Economic Growth since these are pillars which education have a strong tie to (UN 2015). The right to education is both in the UDHR art. 26 and art. 53 of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya, which states that "Every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education". Kenya has committed itself to the SDGS to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and provide lifelong learning by implementing initiatives as the 2016 Gender Policy in Education. It aims to ensure both boys and girls have equal access to education by guarding against the obstacles girls face in accessing quality education (UNICEF 2017).

1.5 Theory, Methodology and Material

The theories will be the capability approach, the feminist theory and cultural relativism analysing the data, which will provide a central scope on the issues of gender inequality for girls in education in Kenya. Further, offering an understanding of the practices and obstacles that girls face and how these obstacles could be eradicated. The method are online interviews with the DA staff, which will provide in-depth knowledge on how to improve girls' education and tackle cultural obstacles. The material will mainly be interviews and models/procedures from DA on their processes towards equal and quality education. Academic journals and statistics will be used for background information, previous research and compare the data collected from DA.

1.6 Delimitations

This study contains a single case study, which is limited to DA's support for education for girls in Kenya in the rural areas of Nakuru and Baringo County. This will provide a detailed understanding of how DA works with girls' education, however the practices might differ from area to area. DA is chosen because of their dedication towards education for girls, the results will only be affected by DA.

The decision to focus on girls' education is because of the world-wide gender inequality within education, where girls have lower participation and access to school than boys. This does not mean that boys do not face obstacles towards education, but that the boys' obstacles will not be a focus in this thesis.

1.7 Definitions and Concepts

Gender-based violence:

Gender-based violence (GBV) describes acts committed against persons, because of their sex and/or socially constructed gender roles. It includes threats of violence and coercion, and can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature. It inflicts harm on females and males (UNHCR 2020).

Female Genital Mutilation:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure performed on a woman or girl to alter or injure her genitalia for non-medical reasons. It most often involves the partial or total removal of her external genitalia. There are several forms of FGM (UNICEF 2019a).

1.8 Disposition

Chapter 2 informs the background, the Kenyan context, the geographical area of the study and DA.

Chapter 3 outlines the method used to answer the research question – semi structured interviews.

Section 3.1 explains case study and how Covid-19 has affected the thesis. Section 3.2 describes the processes of SSIs along with the interview selection and techniques, and data analysis. In section 3.3 ethical aspects will be evaluated.

Chapter 4 acknowledges previous research with detail to the use of theories and its contribution to the thesis.

Chapter 5 clarifies the theories chosen: feminist theory, capability approach and cultural relativism and how they will analyse the material. Analytical framework will be explained.

Chapter 6 provides the analysis divided into sections: cultural practices and norms, gender equality, capabilities, and universality.

Chapter 7 discusses the data collected.

Chapter 8 gives a conclusion of the paper and the significance of the findings.

Chapter 9 will provide ideas for further research.

Chapter 10 contain the references.

Chapter 11 encompass the appendixes.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Kenyan Context

Kenya's population is estimated to be 53,771,296 people with a population growth estimated at around 1.5 million per year. Kenya has a diverse population comprising 43 ethnic communities. Around 80% of Kenyans are Christian, 10% Muslim and others follow traditional African religions, other faiths or non-religious. Kenya is classified as a lower-middle income country with a per capita income of US\$1,455 in 2016. However, despite being a lower-middle income country, Kenya suffers from child poverty, where 45% of children have experienced multidimensional child poverty (UNICEF 2017:7). Families in Kenya are susceptible to poverty and falling living standards as they run the risk of being hit by a crisis at any time.

The 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey reports the average household size of 3.9 persons. In rural areas the households are commonly larger at 4.4 persons. Childbearing begins early in Kenya with almost 25% of girls giving birth by the age of 18 and nearly 50% by the age of 20 years. 18% of adolescent females aged 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child (UNICEF 2017:5). Gender equality is enshrined in the 2010 Constitution, which provides a legal framework for the Kenyan government to fulfil basic rights with emphasis on vulnerable groups especially women and children. Women still face challenges including barriers to participating in decision-making and leadership. According to UN Women, the constitution holds no credible women's movement to advocate for gender equality (UNICEF 2017:8).

Kenya faces problems in relation to education, access to school remains an issue for primary education, in 2015 55% of girls were out of school. The issues concern low skill levels among teachers, lack of a conducive quality learning environment, insufficient infrastructure. The 2014 Education for All document identified groups of children who face challenges in accessing quality education i.e. children with disabilities, orphans and children discriminated against based on religion, culture, and/or gender. The difficulties within education are caused by the low number of secondary schools in the country, the financial costs of education, lack of teachers and lack of quality to provide quality education for all (UNICEF 2017:71). For children aged 15-17, the difference of being out of school between girls and boys is not significantly high, however girls face different and more barriers to obtaining education than boys, because of adolescent marriage, pregnancy, heavy domestic workloads and negative societal attitudes towards the importance of educating the girl child. When families have limited resources, boys will be given priority as they are considered as the future caretakers of the family, while the girls will be married. Research

shows that people believe that girls who have attended school lose their ability to get married and that many girls are enduring rape and other forms of sexual abuse. Despite these obstacles, girls report they are more able to choose who to marry, have more potential both at home and in the society because of attending school especially secondary school (UNICEF 2017:80).

2.1.1 The Geographical area of Study: Nakuru and Baringo District

NAKURU COUNTY (appendix 11.1)

Nakuru County has an estimated population of 2.1 million people with approximately half of each sex. Some of the main issues for the people in Nakuru is access to health facilities, unemployment, and access to education. The official numbers of unemployment were in 2015-16 was measured to be 22.9%, where the female population holds 46% of the unemployment (County Government of Nakuru 2018:21-46). There is a total of 236 different kinds of health facilities in the county and a fully equipped hospital, which serves Nakuru, Baringo, Nyandarua and Laikipia Counties. The estimated use of family planning is 54% of married women using modern methods of contraceptives. There are 1089 primary schools in the area, where the 2017 student enrolment stood at 465,729, consisting of 234,154 boys and 231,575 girls. Secondary education holds 336 public schools and 172 private schools (County Government of Nakuru 2018:37-39).

BARINGO COUNTY

In Baringo County has an estimated population of 666,763 people. Some of the main issues concerns proper health access and nutrition, food insecurity, climate change, unemployment, and access to education. A major challenge experienced is the lack and inadequate of funding of effective health care, which leads to lack of staff, utilities, time, and resources for data documentation. There are 187 health facilities, where the doctor-to-population ratio is 1:57,381 in Baringo Central and in the other sub-counties approximately 1:34,716. More than one in three children 34,3% suffers from malnutrition (Baringo County Government 2017:50-51). The county contains 676 primary school with the total enrolment of 145,599 pupils in 2017. The enrolment in primary schools has improved after the introduction of free primary education. However, there are 144 secondary schools with a total enrolment of 33,472 students in 2017. The low number is caused by various factors; poor infrastructure, harsh climatic conditions, prolonged drought, high illiteracy rates and retrogressive cultural practices (Baringo County Government 2017:136).

2.2 Case study Dandelion Africa

DA is a non-profit NGO, which was founded over ten years ago working with community health, youth, and entrepreneurial development. DA is located in the Kenyan Rift Valley, operating within the areas of Nakuru, Baringo and recently Kajiado South county. The founder Wendo Aszed Sahar with her team of 32 employees have built up the organisation from the ground located in the area which they live in. This provides the organisation to understand the complex issues which it tries to tackle. To make sure the organisation stays true to its roots in the community, Dandelion Africa Community Board was created. This is an assembly that directly represents the communities which DA works for, comprising various ages, professions such as youth, village elders etc. DA has a resource centre which is located in Sarambei containing the official office, medical clinic, and maternity centre. They have a smaller base in Mogotio existing of a small office and clinic. The clinics is registered under the Ministry of Health, where DA offers youth friendly SRH services, family planning, cervical cancer screening etc. In the maternity centre DA provides maternity services for free to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. DA has volunteers and interns coming from within Kenya and from other countries like Sweden. The number of volunteers and interns variates from year to year but works as a help for DA. DA has sponsors and donors which helps in financial matters such as funding and workforce. The main programs which DA has; Girls for Leaders (GFL), Boys for Change (BFC), Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), Women Empowerment and Rights Way Forward (Dandelion Africa 2020c) The programs which will be mainly focused on in this thesis will be the GFL and BFC.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Case Selection

A case study design provides for in-depth analysis in a specific setting or place (Bryman 2012:67). This research will be an explanatory case study, which will help to examine and illuminate the understanding of the work by DA to improve girls' access to education (Yin 1996:22). The choice to focus on one case study was to get into depth with the methods and initiatives, that DA implements to tackle cultural obstacles to education for girls. The case of Kenya was chosen, firstly since I have an already established connection and relation to DA. Secondly, I have pre-knowledge of the country and education of girls in the areas and thirdly it is an extreme case study (Seawright & Gerring 2008:301).

The choice to focus on DA was due to their location in rural areas with few social and health amenities, where girls face more obstacles and their dedication to the importance of education and proper information. DA cooperates with other organisations worldwide and have a sister organisation in Sweden, Dandelion Africa Sweden. In start 2019 I went for my internship at DA in Kenya. The decision towards choosing DA as the case study for this thesis seem evident with my previous affiliation with the organisation and their dedication towards quality education for all.

The advantage of using a qualitative case study is that this one case is thoroughly examined and will obtain more detail as well as knowledge and understanding of the case, especially on a grassroots level (Bryman 2012:67). The benefit with case studies that are used in this way is to enhance the applicability factor of NGOs as well as provide the study with an example of how to conduct research on the promotion of human rights in this case with a focus on education.

3.1.1 Changes to the Thesis since Covid-19

This thesis was meant to be a minor field study (MFS) in Kenya. However, the world situation with Covid-19 changed the planning and the thesis. Since I was not able to travel to Kenya, this affected my thesis in several ways. Firstly, all interviews were conducted online. Secondly, since I could not deduct my MFS in Kenya there will be less interviews because the interviews will not be conducted in person. Thirdly, the data collection will be more limited, because Covid-19 has closed the schools in Kenya, which results in no interviews of professional personnel at the schools. I have not been able to get in touch with other NGOs besides DA, because their closure in relation to Covid-19. Lastly, the idea of studying the culture and the way of life in Kenya, which is a part of minor

field studies was not an opportunity. Luckily, I was able to conduct my thesis on the subject with the previous knowledge to the culture and DA, however the thesis will be with less interviews and less data, which can provide a biased data collection and conclusion.

3.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) is the method chosen because it provides an in-depth focus and understanding of NGO's processes to empowering youth in relation to education. The SSIs grant the possibility of a focus on the theories of cultural relativism, feminist theory and capability approach. SSIs allow for flexibility and a more comfortable atmosphere (Bryman 2012:472). This method of data collection is applicable in trying to understand social phenomena such as gender inequality in relation to education (England 1994). One of the qualitative methods' function is to clarify different beliefs and occurrences of the human life and thereby it will provide an understanding of the social phenomena. Moreover, being able to get an understanding and a personal view of girls' education will be crucial to get awareness of the situation, which is achievable through interviews with the DA staff (Bryman 2012:399,400). The interviews were conducted on online video, which provides the opportunity of both audio and video interviewing, having the presences of non-verbal and social clues. Online interviews can occur in more convenient conditions for the participants, which allows for the participants not to travel for the interviews and less time consuming. However, since both participants can themselves pick their own environment, it can cause a risk of selection of a disruptive environment, that can affect the participants concentration and thus the data. There can be disruptions in terms of internet connection, which can cause the participants to lose focus, miss important point etc. In general, on terms of ethical aspects online interviews are considered the same as in face-to-face with the right to withdrawal etc. Mainly there is a huge advantage to conducting online video interviews, because it allows factors of verbal, non-verbal and social clues (Janghorban et al. 2014:2).

There are different methods within the qualitative method, however SSIs felt beneficial by interviewing people on single hand, providing the interviewees time to go into details. SSIs have the benefits of the interviewer providing a direction and themes by the questions, but the flexibility for the respondent to express and explain their thoughts (Bryman 2012:470,471). The multiple interviews of different participants, which seem to share the same viewpoint, makes it able to reinforce the strength of the findings and the understanding of research. A fuller picture of the

phenomenon being researched is achieved by comparing interviews and locating similarities and differences. Thus, taking multiple interviews from members of the same organisation allows different opinions and perspectives on the matter to be uncovered (Sands and Roer-Strier 2006:242-243).

3.2.2 Interviews: Selections and Techniques

The main material is provided by the SSIs of DA. Eight out of the staff was chosen because of their engagement in the topic and all eight accepted to participate. The decision on eight people was based on that they should work with this topic or oversee the programs. The participants were an equal mix of both sexes, female and male, and different ages. This provide perspectives on the subject from different viewpoints and experiences based both on sex and age. The interviewees are of different rank within the organisation, which can provide diverse perspectives and experiences. All of the interviewees live in Nakuru County and have experienced some of the issues discussed in the thesis. All of them speak fluently English. By being employed by DA they all believe in the importance of gender equality, education etc. All the staff have finished a minimum of primary and secondary school and some have been interviewed before. That the participants of the study are living in the area and been in the educational system, provides them to have personal and professional expertise within the topic, the area, and the different cultures.

The interviews were conducted over the online platform Zoom, which was chosen by the interviewees. It was recorded only in audio, not with any video records to support the participants anonymity. The director and founder of DA was beforehand provided with the informed consent form (appendix 11.2), the interview guide (appendix 11.3) and list of interviewees (appendix 11.4). Then the respondents were able to state what date and time for the interview would fit them. After the interviews, the participants were told that if they wished so they can read the final thesis.

The zoom meetings were with both audio and video to provide a more comfortable and personal space. I requested the interviewees to try and find a quiet space to be interviewed, it would be more private setting and have less risk of being interrupted. There were some understandable interruptions since the interviewees were at work and because of the internet connection which failed at times. At the start of each interview the interviewee would give his/her consent. The interviews lasted between 30 min to 45 min. The interviews started with greetings to keep the familiarity established from my time at DA and for the participants to feel comfortable. The participants were asked descriptive questions about the organisation, the cultural obstacles, and

their work on tackling these cultural obstacles, thus improving education for girls. SSIs provided a basis of confidentiality but room for engaging questions. It allowed time to abandon question, if the participant did not have much to say on the question or had already answered it. Choosing the semi-structured interview method gave the freedom to ask follow-up questions and explore some of the statements in depth thus making the participants more involved in the interview process. At the end of each interview the participant were asked whether they had something they would like to add or elaborate on the subject and then ending the interview with a thanks and appreciation.

3.2.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis process was in the form of data analysis process of transcription. The data was analysed through thematic analysis (Bryman 2012:580). Which mean that after the interviews were conducted, notes and/or recordings was organized and transcribed to be reflected and analysed upon by looking for themes. The main themes found cultural practices, gender equality trainings, capabilities, and universality. When locating these themes in the data, the theories was applied to create an understanding of the initiatives, the cultural practices etc, and in the end to discuss these implementations by DA affected by the cultural practices and beliefs. The analysis organized and structured the collected data through the main themes and later being analysed down in detail through a thematic analyse grid. This resulted in a visibility of different patterns and understanding of concluding discussions (Bryman 2012:578-579). The questions were affected by the chosen theories, the feminist approach had questions focus firstly on the girls and on girls' initiative and created questions regarding involving boys in the girls' empowerment. The cultural relativism theory produced questions of cultural practices; how DA is perceived within the community since their topics are culturally taboo. This placed a focus on the cultural practices and how DA works with the culture in order to improve girls' access to education. The capability approach has led the questions to how DA processes are and if they give girls the capabilities to access school.

3.3 Ethics and Reciprocity

Since the interviews was conducted through an online platform, ethical issues of different background and power relations was considered before and during interviewing. This required thoughts on the different power positions of the researcher and those who were researched, which

could affect the conversations (Scheyvens & McLennan 2014). In order to not conduct harmful interviews and research, different measures and strategies was adapted to achieve the best possible way to conduct the interviews. To achieve an ethical right study, there has been communication around the topic and ethical issues with my contact person in Kenya, who is the director of DA. She looked through my interview questions to see if anything would cause harm or would be a sensitive subject since it was online interviews. This relationship can have affected the interviewees answered, however they were all told that these interviews would only be looked at by me, and the anonymity provided the interviewees with a security. My contact person suggested, who to interview of the staff in relation to the topic fitting with their work at DA. This collaboration and that I have been to the area and been in contact with all of the participants provides a base of equal positions within the interviews and a comfortable atmosphere for both the participant and the interviewer. This helped especially in relation to the interviews being conducted online instead of in persona.

For the SSIs, it was decided from the beginning that all the interviewees would be adults, no children. This was important since some of the topics is of sensitive matter and stigmatized in Kenya. All the participants were sent an informed consent form, which informed them about their rights and that the interviews will only be used for this thesis. At the start of interviews, they gave verbal consent to being audio recorded etc. Lastly, the personal information about the interviewees was handled according to GDPR to protect the interviewee and anonymity. All the recordings were saved on an encrypted extern hard drive. The only information in the thesis are general background information and limited details in the List of Interviewees (appendix 11.4). All the participants were interviewed during their worktime, which was payed and not seen as a break. The director thought the interviews would be beneficial by the participants getting practice in being interviewed and through the questions might rethink why DA is doing these initiatives and how.

4. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

4.1 Cultural Obstacles and Gender Inequality in Education

Girls face a lot of obstacles to education in Kenya, cultural obstacles are the focus, since it causes gender inequality within education. These are instigated by certain cultural gender norms formed by traditional beliefs. The belief that women occupies a second place in the society beneath the men (Kisaka 2015). The previous research shows that inequality within education is an issue in many countries not only newly industrialized but remains an issue that culture and countries has not yet been able to escape. The fact that women still face more challenges at home, in the family, education and work shows the gender inequality. Psaki (2016) argues that the cultural norms affecting girls in the school system is vast barriers to education. Within the school system there is a lack of awareness of gender inequality and gender gaps, where the girls encounter stigma around general sexual health e.g., they are seen as weaker and less intelligent than boys. Poverty increases gender inequality and puts cultural norms in centre, where the role of the women hinders education for girls in terms of marriage, FGM, the priority of boys. The cultural gender norms expect girls to get married and the boy to get educated and work. This is reaffirmed by Abuya et al (2014) presenting another cultural obstacle to girl's education, where cultural gender norms are implemented the family sphere. Girls are imposed with household chores; cleaning, washing, cooking etc. In this previous research the interviewed girls mentioned they were often taken out of school because of household chores and were missing school. While the boys are not taken out of school and have time for homework, since it is not boys' chores. It shows that gender inequality is in a perception of these cultural gender roles, which enforces more work and responsibility in the house for the girls than the boys.

Oruko (2015) explains that there are gender imbalances within the schools, where girls are ridiculed and punished by teachers both male and female. When the girls are able to attend school, they will be corporal punished for not being there the day before because of house chores. These gender discriminatory practices and attitudes in the school causes girls not to attend school in fear of the possibility of punishment and harassment both sexual and non-sexual. Mensch et al (2001) confirms that girls highly experience sexual and non-sexual harassment in schools in the 90s there were mass rapes of girls within the schools. The previous research discusses ideas of improvement, Kisaka (2015) explains how various implementation such as workshops, seminars and scholarships which the Kenyan government and non-government agencies has enforced, has little improvement, there still remains the negative cultural impact which interferes with the

education of girls. The majority of previous research shows that girls, who attend school, will have a chance of a better and more successful life. If the school has better equality stances, it will improve girls' general attendance and motivation at school.

4.2 Theories applied in Previous Research

Capability Approach

Warrington et al (2012) uses the conceptual framework of Amartya Sen's capability approach, where it explores the factors relating to girls' retention in Kajiado Schools in Kenya. The authors explain that the capability approach is applicable in the research since freedom of individuals provides fundamental steps of development. Freedom enhances the ability for people to help themselves. Thus, providing a theory to point out areas of social policy as education, and then providing a specific tool to evaluate and conceptualise educational inequality. The approach showed the unfreedoms which the young women experienced daily impacts their education.

Zelezny-Green (2018) analyses the data through the capability approach, because it is a people-centred international development perspective which sees development as a process of expanding real freedoms which people enjoy and need. It explains the need to remove barriers or obstacles which prevent people from leading lives with opportunities, development, and freedom. Zelezny-Green (2018) describes that human development within the capability perspective shares commonalities with the human rights doctrine and that education is both positioned as a right and a major component of human development.

Pearson's theory

Akinyi & Musani (2015) makes use of the theoretical framework Pearson's theory, where society sees all activities that are carried out to be based on social roles and the interactions of women and men. This theory is based on an assumption of gender roles as dictated by society that the society has the ultimate authority on the precise nature of what women and men do and should do, their contribution to reproduction and production, which turns to be negatively biased against women. The theory argues that these biased perceptions of sex, especially for women, the performance of men and women is affected in all spheres of life such as education. The scholars decided to use this theory, because it emphasises the various cultural, social, and economic norms and standards. Through their research this theory was applied to show in which areas females face biased cultural gender norms, which can limit their access to making decisions and gender equality.

4.3 Previous Research's Contribution

The previous research has contributed in several ways. what obstacles girls face in Kenya in relation to education. It has helped to determine the focus of the thesis to cultural obstacles for girls. There is a tendency to interview mostly schoolgirls on the topic, but not interviewing NGOs/professionals on how to attempt to eradicate these obstacles. Thereby the previous research showed an angle to the topic, which is not commonly studied. The theories in the previous research showed which theories are mainly used, and how they are used. When reading about how others have used the capability approach, it seemed ideal to use to analyse how DA help girls attain capabilities to education. The Pearson' theory created the idea to use both feminist theory and the cultural relativist theory to explain which cultural and societal structures, norms, and traditions, which affects how DA work to improve access to education for girls.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Feminist Theory

The feminist theory explains that inequality between women and men originate in the patriarchal structures of society. The feminist theory claims that inequality between the sexes is not only linked to political or economic factors but have been differentiated throughout history (Gemzöe 2014:53). The power relationship infiltrates all areas of society to an extent where it is perceived as the norm. Already as young girls, women are educated into the ideology of patriarchy through different factors in society such as schools, literature, culture, etc. These ideas are internalised by both women and men and becomes part of an invisible power structure, which mostly ranks women and girls subordinate to the men (Gemzöe 2014:50).

It is important to understand that both men and women in the Kenyan cultures places specific gender roles and norms on both girls and boys. Kenya has been described as a patriarchal society, where women are subordinate to men, where the family as a social institution is strong and sets a foundation for the different treatment of men and women at home, society and school (ICJ and Simiyu 2019). The feminist theory offers an understanding of the structural gender inequalities in the Kenyan society, which is important knowledge when analysing the obstacles and initiatives to tackle them. The patriarchal structures have significant impact on how female sexuality is perceived, the different roles of the sexes, how women and men are treated differently according to cultures. The feminist theory will not provide a framework of how the norms should be, but an understanding of the patriarchal structures in Kenya. This theory will help analyse if and why there is a need for DA to focus on gender equality, gender norms and changing the perception of girls being less worth or subordinate to men. The feminist theory has influenced and in the configuration of the questions for the interviews put an emphasis on gender equality, empowering girls, and women in a patriarchal society. The feminist theory has been applied to get an understanding of the struggles which girl face in Kenyan education and the structure of the male dominance in the society in Kenya. The use of the feminist theory provides a way of understanding the suppression of women in Kenya not only in terms of education, which is the main focus of the thesis, but in other spheres of the society, family etc. The decision to interview both women and men through DA provided a perspective that showed how the different sexes perceives gender equality. It showed that they have different focus points e.g. the men often talked more about the BFC than GFL.

5.2 Capability Approach

The capability approach by Amartya Sen provides a tool to human rights through capabilities, where he sees freedom as the primary mean of development (Sen 2001:36). He explains the necessity to look beyond economic growth in relation to development, although he still states that economic growth is an contributing factor to achieving capabilities, but that development is not reached only through economic factors but rather through freedom (Sen 2001:14). This was important to consider in relation to the case study area, where poverty is an immense issue and economic factors might be seen as the primary factor to achieving capabilities. Sen divides development into constitutive and instrumental roles, where the constitutive role is what a person is able to be and to do, whereas the instrumental role represent the entitlements, opportunities that contribute to the reach of the capabilities (Sen 2001:36-37).

Sen provides five instrumental types of freedom: political freedom, protective security, transparency guarantees, economic facilities, and social opportunities. Sen explains that all the types of freedoms are connected and strengthen each other (Sen 2001:38). In relation to the main issues towards capabilities in Nakuru and Baringo County the focus will be on economic factors and social opportunities. Social opportunities represent the accessibility to education and health facilities, which play an important role for increased standards of living. This have an impact on political participation and can improve the capacity to participate in economic activities through education (Sen 2001:39). This implies that development is to remove obstacles for people, then they can reach their capabilities. Sen states that severe sources of unfreedom must be removed like the lack of public facilities or social care, or denial of political and civil rights. The broad approach to development acknowledges the role of social values, which influences the freedoms which people can exert. This places emphasis on human diversity by considering personal and external characteristics additionally to the differences in social and natural environments, such as disadvantages and advantages which people can hold in different settings (Sen 1992). Robeyns (2005) explains how the capability theory provides a broad normative framework for the conceptualisation, assessment and evaluation of individuals social arrangements and well-being, the proposals and design of policies concerning social change in society. Beyond providing an approach for assessment of human development in general, this theory was applied to point out areas of social policy in this case education supplying a tool to conceptualise and evaluate inequality within education (Robeyns 2005). Nussbaum has developed Sens capability approach by creating a

universal list of fundamental capabilities, which centres on women and development. Nussbaum states that this focus is necessary:

“Women in much of the world lacks support for fundamental functions of a human life. They are less well-nourished than men, less healthy, more vulnerable to physical violence and sexual abuse. They are much less likely than men to be literate, and still less likely to have preprofessional or technical education.”(Nussbaum 2009:1).

Nussbaum states that this gender inequality is linked to lack of basic capabilities and are reinforced by lack of basic health and nutrition care etc. She argues that international political and economic thoughts should be feminist and there should be a specific focus on women’s fundamental capabilities (Nussbaum 2000:3-4). From Nussbaum’ List of Central Human Functional Capabilities, there will be a focus on these points in the thesis:

2. Bodily Health. Being able to have good health, including reproductive health, to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.
3. Bodily Integrity: being able to move freely from place to place; having one’s bodily boundaries treated as sovereign i.e. being able to be secure against assault, including sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.
4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought. Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason ... by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training...
6. Practical Reason. Being able to form conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one’s life (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience)

Martha C. Nussbaum 2000:78-79

These specific points on Nussbaum’ list was chosen, since the Kenyan context, previous research and the data in the areas of Nakuru and Baringo shows that these points matches obstacles girls face in Kenya in relation to education and these choices were reaffirmed through the interviews. The interviews stated that the main obstacles to girls’ education was limitation, denial, and abuse of these four points. The capability approach was cooperated into how and if DA try to help female students to realise which capabilities they already attain and provide with capabilities that are

limited for them. Thereby supporting them with entitlements which can contribute to development. The framework was used as a tool to conceptualise and evaluate the inequality within education and DAs attempt to improve gender equality within education. The theory provided the main base of questions of the interviews, since the aim is to understand how DA attempts to improve girls access to education, it created questions in how DA would be able to help girls realise their worth and achieve the capabilities described.

5.3 Cultural Relativism

In the 1990s anthropology abandoned the understanding of culture as “*a homogenous, integral and coherent unity, instead it changed the perception of cultures to be “complex, variable, multivocal, and above all contested”* (Donnelly 2003:86). Donnelly explains that culture is used in a lot of human rights literature in the ways which is was perceived as before 1990s, which often lead to “spurious explanation based on false essentialism and excessive aggregation” (Donnelly 2003:86). Cultural relativism has several possible meanings and is widely discussed and critiqued. Cultural relativism can be defined as the position according to which local cultural traditions (religious, political, legal practices etc.) determine the experience and scope of civil and political rights enjoyed by the individuals in the given society (Tesón 2001:380). There is a need to consider culture when dealing with human rights and gender equality. In this case how culture affects girls’ access to education. Since many of the obstacles which girls face are bound to cultural customs, norms, and traditions such as a preference to sending boys to school over girls and FGM. Cultural relativity is an undeniable fact; moral rules and social institutions shows astonishing cultural and historical variability, which means that culture is a part of everyone everyday both in the past and present (Donnelly 2003:89).

Cultural relativism contains internal and external judgments of a practice which diverge, most cultural relativist prioritises the internal judgements of a society. In the most extreme cases, radical cultural relativism holds that culture is the sole source of the validity of a moral rule or right. Strong cultural relativism holds that culture is the principal source of validity of a rule or a right. This means that in some cases strong cultural relativism accepts some basic rights with universal application, however, perceives these basic rights to already be a part of the culture. Weak cultural relativism considers culture as a secondary source of the validity of a rule or a right. Cultural relativism is used to protect culture in especially post-colonial countries to maintain roots of their culture and traditions, while trying not to have external culture forced or influenced them.

There is a sensitivity to external judgements on culture for post-colonial states especially African, Asian, and Muslim. Cultural relativism hereby is rooted in a desire to foster and express regional, national, cultural or civilisation pride (Donnelly 2003:90, 99).

In general, cultural relativism attempts to tackle the collision between human rights and cultural practices. Donnelly explains how there is no moral reason for societies, communities, and states not to accept extrafamilial moral and political commitments such as the basic human rights. That even though culture is a primary consideration in validity of a rule, human rights are based in human nature and that fact that one is a human being, thus culture cannot be a moral reason for not accepting and implementing human rights (Donnelly 2003: 90-91). This case focus on education, the access to education for girls is a global issue, which frequently is caused by culture and poverty. Cultural relativism provides an understanding of how the communities and people understand human rights such as education for girls and how culture affects this perception, providing an understanding of how to solve issues of cultural practices which hinder girls to education such as FGM and early marriage.

This theory was used to analyse the methods applied by DA, where the procedure was not only a question of human right or legal practices, but of the cultural factors that affects the methods and trainings used by DA and the obstacles girls face in education and the society. This theory has shaped the questions in ways of how DA has to work with the culture and at the same time end harmful parts of culture in Kenya to improve girls' access to education.

5.4 Analytical Framework

The delimitations with selecting the feminist theory was that it would put a specific view on women suffering and possibly affect that some issues were not examined since they are not gender-related, but still affects girls in education. When using the capability approach there was a need to consider the focus on capabilities picked from a possibly universal approach, which might not deal directly with the specific problems related to girls' education in Kenya. After the interviews and the analysis of the data it seemed to fit with the obstacles girls face and how they might overcome them through e.g. practical reason. With the cultural relativism theory, it was important to notice that even if a culture is seen as important in the society for some, it might cause harm to others like FGM, culture cannot excuse a human right violation. There was still a need to acknowledge culture and take it into account and use it for girls' empowerment in Kenya. By choosing these theories and writing the interview questions from their perspective it might cause, that other factors was not included in the

thesis like topics of health etc. which was barely touched upon and it focused on specific cultural issues that are obstacles to girls.

Combined the theories conceptualised a multi-angled phenomenon. Merging the feminist theory with the capability approach helped bring an understanding of the complexity of the reality that the female students face and how DA can help female students in education. The capability approach does not investigate impacts of external factors on the individual's possibility to achieve a certain capability. This is valuable to an NGO in terms of recognizing, where the hinderances lies. Both the cultural relativism and the feminist theory provides an understanding of the structure of society and the norms and its negative or positive impact on women's (educational) rights and their capabilities. Cultural relativism provided an understanding of the Kenyan context with the different cultural traditions, norms, and customs. This knowledge was crucial when analysing how DA tries to tackle cultural obstacles and helping girls in achieving capabilities that will lead to full participation in school. According to cultural relativism and feminist theory, upbringing and culture are an important factor in how one sees the world and are perceived by others, thus influencing the willingness for change. The combination of these three theories provided a thorough understanding of the results presented in chapter 7 and 8.

6. ANALYSIS

6.1 Cultural Practices and Norms

6.1.1 Cultural Hinderances

One of the common obstacles to girls to education is cultural misconceptions. In the environment that DA works in, which is an extremely rural area, the education of girls is not a priority. The culture dictates that girls should not be educated, since girls will be married early. Poverty is a factor in cultural hinderances to girls' education, in a family consisting of both sexes the boys will be educated over the priority of girls. There are issues of stigmatisation of menstruation seeing it as being shameful. This causes girls on their period with no sanitary pads to not attend classes and finish schools. There is a problem with the expectation that when girls go through all these issues e.g. using rags as pads, the girls still have to be competing on the same level as the boys without any regard to their obstacles. FGM is one of the cultural practices that disrupts girls' education, even though a lot has been done to reduce FGM it still persists in communities. FGM is a problem which affects girls who are turning into teenagers and causing that they will not proceed to high school. After getting circumcised girls get married, often before they turn 18, after pregnancy follows and this results with girls not being able to go back to school (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020).

In rural settings the issues of gender roles play a huge part in if girls get access to quality education, it affects their well-being, time to be with friends, to be kids according to Interviewee 7 (4 June 2020). They should have time for education but also to unwind and to take care of themselves. Girls grow up rapidly in this society and have responsibilities of a grown adult woman at an early age. *"The patriarchal society we are living in, you will find that a lot of the priority is given to male dominated roles in the family"* (Interviewee 7, 4 June 2020). In the area DA operates, the cultural harmful practices consist of FGM, early marriage, preference of the boy over the girl etc, however it might be different in another area such as urban areas. Cultural differences must be accounted and valued in terms of seeing what the obstacles for girls to education are and how to improve girls' education in Kenya.

6.1.2 Prevention of FGM and Early Marriage

In Nakuru and Baringo county, FGM is done in December, when the girls have holidays and will be taken for mutilation. The girls will go through the mutilation and shortly after they will be married. It is a common cultural practice getting married at an early age even if the girl is not circumcised. When girls are working home chores and do not attend school, e.g. because of the lack of money,

they see the best opportunity to enrich their lives by getting married. Then they will have the position of a housewife and eventually a mother (Interviewee 2 2020). In terms of marriage and FGM, girls are supposed to get instructions from the men, to be submissive and follow every order of the men. They will do the chores and housework providing no time for education, therefore FGM and early marriage pulls girls away from education, sometimes before they have finished primary school (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020).

GFL tries to end FGM by engaging the girls in activities in the period in December, DA sets up camps for girls like dance camps with their mentors to keep them occupied and watch over the girls. By activating the girls and giving them activities to do, their minds will be occupied and in these camps DA keep reminding girls the negative effects of FGM. Interviewee 6 states that when DA talk to some girls, they say they want to get FGM, because they will get presents, get new dresses and been seen as more valuable. There is a lot of misconceptions of FGM such as a girl becoming a valuable woman and only marriable if circumcised. The initiative by DA can be questioned whether informing the girls and keeping them busy in this period will even help, since the parents are the ones making the decision. A plausible more effective method would be to teach and spread the correct information to the parents before this period, since they are the ones taking the girls to be circumcised. This method could break this cultural practice not with the next generation, but possibly with the older generation and end FGM.

DA further have 16 days campaigning of prevention of FGM, which tries to keep the events of FGM from happening. This is done in cooperation with the chiefs of the communities, where they can provide information if there is FGM events happening or being organized in their area, and then DA can prevent the FGM from happening (Interviewee 6, 2 June 2020). This prevention of FGM relies a lot on the community whether they are against FGM or if they believe in the tradition, if so the events will most likely not be reported to DA. If the information spread by DA is not properly received in the community, the campaigning will probably not have much effect.

Another way of preventing FGM is the BFC, where the boys do awareness campaigns against FGM. They visit villages prone to practice FGM to inform the villagers about the negative effects and consequences such as difficulties of giving birth (Interviewee 2, 27 May 2020). The initiative using boys in changing the conceptions of FGM can possibly have a greater impact than having the girls advocate against FGM. Since the society is structurally built so the boys have more influence than girls. This could be a way for DA to work with the culture instead of against to change cultural practices, as Donnelly (2003:89) states by working with the culture against some cultural practices

or beliefs which are harmful, it can at times be more effective to work with the culture, such as with DA having the males spread knowledge regarding FGM in a male dominated society. There are different cultural perceptions of bodily health as a capability, where some cultures see FGM as a means to provide bodily health and integrity for women (Nussbaum 2000:87). Thereby is important to consider the cultural concept of bodily health and integrity to show how FGM can be harmful and a violation of human rights.

6.2 Gender Equality

6.2.1 Gender Equality Trainings

GFL was founded to improve opportunities to education for girls, DA locates schools who does not perform well in the end of the year national examination. Then DA visit the schools and question why the school is not performing well, why the girls have the lowest grades, why are there many early pregnancies, what are the issues and root causes of these problems. DA engages the schools through their YPP program, where youth speak to youths on the issues of sex education, self-esteem, confidence, career choice, importance of education. This program has worked from 2013 till now, DA's own statistic shows there is a transition of 98% of the girls who transition from primary school to high school, whereas in 2013 it was 45 % of the girls who transitioned. In 2019 two girls from the GFL have gotten a one-year scholarship to study coding in Nairobi, those girls started GFL in 2013 (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020). There are possible inequality within selecting the schools, where DA should look into all schools on the gender inequality instead of looking into the grades of the year national examination, a school that scores high on grades can still have gender equality issues. The main objective of the program is to support education for girls, which is being done by providing basic needs to girls such as supplying girls in primary schools with reusable sanitary towels. Then the girls will not miss school based on the lack of proper hygiene while menstruating. Within the program the mentorship is important, DA has girls from high end schools to come and mentor girls in lower end schools. Here the girls support younger girls and provide a basis of youth speaking to youth. The mentors become role models for the younger and shows that girls can become leaders of their lives, participate in education, and get equal chances to the boys (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020). This shows great potential with engaging girls who live in rural communities, who otherwise would have been married off. Though, it can be problematic to chose girls from private elite schools to mentor girls from public schools, it could potentially exacerbate the class-based differences between school kids in Kenya. Having a mentor from a different class

mentoring a younger girl, who are facing different obstacles towards education and life can cause other issues. This mentorship needs to be evaluated in terms of cultural and societal class-based differences. DA tries to take this into consideration by having mentors who come from different classes in the society, some of them which have come from a public school and have gained access to high end schools through GFL and the scholarships DA provide.

BFC was started to demystify the issues of FGM and menstrual hygiene. DA wanted to eradicate this perception of menstruation being shameful and saw that it is mostly the boys who shame girls, if they are soiling their dress. DA created this program for boys to get an understanding of exactly what they are shaming (Interviewee 8, 5 May 2020). DA felt like they could not just work with the girls, they need to include the boys to empower boys to support girls' education, especially since the decisions at home culturally destined that the men/fathers and the boys/sons make the decisions. If the boys have the correct information and know the importance of girls' education, they will support the girl in relation to education. *"Whenever the father plans to take the girl out of education, the boy will say no and say that FGM is outdated and it reduces the dignity of the girl"* (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020). Seen from a feminist theory perspective (Gemzöe 2014) this could be a way of reaffirming the inequality between boys and girls in the society, stating that girls need the support from the boys to be able to be heard and for the boys to make decision on the behalf of girls. This method could position the girls under the boys as subordinate, thereby it is important that DA acknowledges and shows the importance of the girl being equal to the boy and being able to speak for themselves as well, which I think they do through GFL.

BFC and GFL discuss the cultural gender roles of girls and boys. According to Interviewee 1 (27 May 2020) a lot of the boys are idle, but the girls are at home working and has a limited freedom, where they are controlled by their parents. The girls have to adhere to the cultural gender roles, where girls do the chores at home such as fetching firewood, looking after the babies, while the boys have the freedom to play and education. The trainings on gender equality, some of the exercises puts the gender roles on spot, such as the Sex vs. Gender game, where the YPPs explain the difference between sex and gender and the negative cultural gender roles (Dandelion Africa 2020a:11). These trainings might change the attitude in the families where the boys and girls stand together and support quality education for both. GFL and BFC causes a change according to DA, where boys and girls see quality of education as a means of improving the lives and the possibility to get knowledge to transition from one level of education to another (Interviewee 6, 2

June 2020). Correct information is missing within the rural communities and there is misconception that gender equality is only about girls' movement, women empowerment. DA is trying to inform what gender equality means and train on GBV especially for males. It seems important to place a focus towards men, that they understand what GBV, Sexual assault etc is. in order to lessen the occurrence of GBV against women and reaffirming women and girls' capabilities of Bodily Health and Bodily Integrity (Nussbaum 2000:78). BFC is to advocate for girls' rights, champion for girls and to learn about the roles of boys and men in the communities (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020). According to Interviewee 8, there is a need for change in how men are and how they should be in relation to gender equality.

Things have changed it is not like before in an African content or Kenyan content, where boys were taken somewhere to be taught how to be a good man, how to be a responsible man, how NOT to be a violent man, how to treat women with respect. ... you know the young men are growing up with entitlement and imagine that women are punching bags and that we don't deserve to sit on the same table as they do and this have continued for years and that have to change now! The only way this can change if boys understand that the table is for all of us, the Boys for Change program is basically to support Girls for Leaders program to build the capacity of boys, the boys understand their role as men in the general gender equality

(Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020).

Thereby DA believes gender equality cannot be only by championing for the girls and involving the girls, there is a need to have the boys learn about gender equality, get scholarships and come back to mentor younger men on importance of education and gender equality to make a change (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020).

6.2.2 Gender Equality in the Communities

GFL and BFC help to improve gender equality in the society, but there is a need to engage the older generation, the parents, grandparents, the village elders etc. DA has an advocacy program which focuses on equality and solving issues of GBV, which take place in the villages, called Jukumu Langu. This is even more important during Covid-19, since more women and girls are subjected to GBV and rape in the time of covid-19 (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020). Jukumu Langu educate the villagers on gender roles and how to share chores within the family, it is not only the girls or women having chores. The Rights Way Forward program holds the same element which is mostly

for the women or youths. It is about teaching not just the boys, but the parents and the community about gender roles. Interviewee 8 (2020) states that as parents they are conditioned to treat girls and boys a certain way, girls will do the indoor work, while the boys will do the outdoor work. The parents are the ones telling the girls to behave like girls and telling the boy not to cry, they are the ones who are instigating and perpetuating gender roles right from the kids are small. That is why DA need to educate the elder generation on gender equality and gender norms to achieve gender equality in the homes and society. In order to reach the parents, DA ensures to be present at Parents' Day at the schools and teach about the importance of education, gender equality and the prevention of harmful cultural practices e.g. FGM. DA has itself stated that gender inequality starts in the home in the upbringing that the parents are enforcing certain gender roles, it seems like DA could do more to involve parents especially in the trainings on gender equality and cultural gender norms, engaging them more in the process than parents day meetings. A possible method would be to have a program involving only the parents to put more emphasis on creating equality in the upbringing.

Lastly, there is the need to alter the misconceptions and attitudes of the teachers within the schools, the teachers remain a vast challenge for girls in education. They prefer teaching boys over girls and the teachers are encumbered by culture and how they perceive children should be raised, some do not believe girls can do math. DA is starting trainings of teachers, which would have started in start 2020, but is delayed because of Covid-19. DA had identified some mentors through the community who has been through DA programs such as Rights Way Forward to be mentors for the teachers to teach them on gender equality. DA decided it needs to be some people from the community instead of YPPs or DA staff in order for the teachers to accept the teachings (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020). This seems to be important to provide a better environment for girls in education as previous research have showed (Oruko 2015), which shows that girls skip or dropout of school because of the discriminatory treatment from teachers. One of the most important factors in improving gender equality in the community is that the population themselves have to be engaged in the programs and involved in adding topics, games, and discussions to the trainings. The population needs to have ownership over the programs and care for the programs for them to work, if DA one day would not be there, they would still be able to continue the programs and progress (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020).

6.3 Capabilities

6.3.1 SRHR, Dreams and Goals trainings

The YPPs go to school and train the students who are becoming a part of GFL and BFC, then they go through the SRHR curriculum. This provides the students with opportunities to understand their self-worth, understand SRH and thinking about their goals and how to achieve them. DA start with exercises in building confidence and self-awareness, where the YPPs ask the students to visualise and dream a great future of becoming doctors, engineers or what they would like to be. After that they talk to them, how to achieve this dream and how education will give them higher chances to achieve the dream. The students have to write about people coming from a similar background to them and how those have achieved their dream (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020). In this curriculum the various topics consist of first getting to know the students and for the students to get to know DA, this part helps opening up the students to the YPPs and creating a trustful relationship. This is strengthened by the YPPs being close to the students age, being youth to youth talks and that the YPPs live in the same communities, which provide a confidentiality between them. As they pass on in the curriculum the topics are Bodily changes, Menstruation, GBV, Early Pregnancy, Peer-Pressure, Sexual Harassment and Rape, etc. According to Interviewee 7 (4 June 2020), the dream and career topics helps the students to keep motivated for school, e.g. knowing that the two girls from GFL went to coding college in Nairobi has helped motivate many students. This can be related for DA to provide capabilities for girl students in terms of bodily health and bodily security. The importance of educating students on menstruation and sexual harassment can spread knowledge regarding bodily health and security within schools. However, it could be a possibility to extend this into the course for teachers, they should be able to identify sexual harassment etc. and be aware when the teachers themselves puts risks to students' bodily health and integrity.

When teaching these subjects DA chose to have students of both sexes together, because it is when these issues are discussed separately there is a problem in the first place. If they only talk to girls, it is perceived to be only a girls' problem and vice versa, while gender equality and education is a matter for everyone. DA decided not to divide the sexes even though it can cause some students especially girls to not feel as free in front of the other sex, but it is even more important to break the taboo of these issues, open for communication and correct information. Interviewee 8 (5 June 2020) states it has to start with the children, making them all equal not just in class, but in the households. DA has chosen not to directly involve the teachers in the trainings unless all the students wish to, because some students fear the teacher. They are afraid to open up to

the teacher e.g. telling that she was raped and is now pregnant, since the teacher is likely to scold the student. By this statement it seems even more important to educate the teachers on bodily health and integrity. Using youth to youth communication provides a safe space, where the students know they will not be judged or punished and the YPPs understands and have possibly experienced some of the same issues as the students.

6.3.2 Library, Health Clinic and Prevention of Pregnancy

DA tries to provide female students in relation to education tools to reach their capabilities and goals. At DA's office, there is a library where the girls tend to come and learn. In the library they can borrow books, ask older students for help, and most of all give them time for their education which they do not have at home. In the library there is a Youth Friendly Corner, which consist of a soundproof room, where they can seek counselling from DA staff (Interviewee 4, 29 May 2020). This can be analysed to create capabilities in forms of knowledge to everyone, not just based on gender. To provide a great help for families who do not have the money for schoolbooks and tutoring, providing them a capability to literacy, mathematical training as a part of Senses, Imagination and thought (Nussbaum 2000:78-79).

In ways of preventing pregnancy DA advocates abstaining from sex in schools, and motivation education. DA is not allowed to hand out contraceptives at schools except in tertiary college by the Kenyan Government. The Kenyan Government see it as an encouragement to sexual activity. However, if students show up at the DA clinical facility with their parents, they are provided with contraceptives. DA's Health Clinic offers family planning, testing of sexual transmitted infections (STIs), which are important since apart from getting pregnant early, HIV is common in the area and all these are contributing obstacles to girls' education (Interviewee 3, 27 May 2020). Many pregnancies happen in primary school around standard 7 or 8, before they are going to high school. These early pregnancies make the girls not transition to high school and disrupt their education (Interviewee 4, 29 May 2020). DA teaches the SRHR curriculum in schools talking about how to abstain, contraceptives and how to avoid getting STIs. In public community places they can teach SRH and are able to hand out contraceptives. The most important remedy against early pregnancy is education, if girls are aware of how not to get pregnant, how to abstain and where to get contraceptives, they have a higher chance of not getting pregnant and staying in school. These topics are taboo in the community, this is not spoken about between the mother and daughter or the father and son. Thus, they gain incorrect information from other young people,

therefore it is important to spread the correct information (Interviewee 5, 29 May 2020). It seems clear that it is important to break the taboo on sexual matters, the question is whether DA is doing enough in the whole community to educate on SRHR. It seems they could implement the trainings of SRHR not only to students but several within the communities and to the parents to break the taboo of talking about sex, menstruation and rape.

DA provides 5 scholarships each year to the most successful and needy students, they prioritise girls over boys since boys have the most advantage, the community will often raise funds for them to go to school but not for the girls. The scholarships benefits girls in 70/30 or 60/40. Additionally, they have different partnerships which grants scholarships to the students (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020). All these programs, implementations, projects and facilities tries to help girls access education and to stay in education, since education is the way of improving life for all, by educating one girl, there will be development of the whole community.

6.4 Universality

All the interviewees stated that these programs would be able to be implemented within all of Kenya and worldwide with some alterations in relation to the context. At conferences and meetings DA has experienced that many other organisations have the same processes and there is an exchange of knowledge between the organisations (Interviewee 7, 4 June 2020). Anytime there is a touch upon a culture of a people, it is important to implement this within the work process and find the correct process. There will be resistance as DA was met with a first, but the acceptance will come through if there is a proper cooperation between the organisation and the people of the communities.

You will have people who will resist, who truly believe that this is their culture, and this is how everything is supposed to happen. For example, we have women who believe they have to be circumcised to be real woman and will recruit other women. They will stigmatise other women who have not been cut. But this resistance is nothing compared to the support of a community and the fight for girls' education (Interviewee 8, 5 June 2020).

7. DISCUSSION

This chapter will identify the programs and actions taken by DA to tackle cultural obstacles to girls' education and bring evaluative thoughts on the programs and processes. In order to improve girls' access to education, DA believes it is not enough to only engage the girls but the whole community. This is seen in previous research (Warrington et al 2012) that it is necessary to engage the whole community in the improvement of girls' access to education especially in relation to cultural obstacles such as the cultural gender norms. DA attempts to do this through the BFC, Jukumu Langu and Rights Way Forward program. DA says that there is a need to involve the whole community because of the patriarchal system, which persists in Kenya, where the female is perceived as subordinate to the male. This correlates with the feminist approach that there is this patriarchal society where females mostly gain power and respect through marriage in extension of their husbands (Gemzöe 2014:50). However, having the BFC advocating for girls and that DA have this focus on boys in girls' empowerment could possibly reaffirm the patriarchal structures where the girls are seen as subordinate. The focus on BFC can overshadow the GFL, which was seen at times through the interviews, where the interviewees especially the males had more focus on the boys on advocating girls' rights instead of how girls themselves achieve their rights and gender equality. It is important not to forget that the girls need their own voice and own fight for empowerment. DA need to make sure that the girls are the first priority, the process of having the boys championing for girls is a valid process in a society but can risk valuing boys' voices over girls (Gemzöe 2014:144). DA shows by giving preference to girls in scholarships 60/40 or 70/40, that they still focus on girls' empowerment while still bringing the boys into the fight by supporting the girls. Having BFC as a supporting program bringing the boys into the empowerment of girls, is a way of taking the culture into consideration, since the culture and the society is built upon the male dominance. DA tries to work within the culture, instead of directly working against it. Working against the cultural practices could result in the people, the communities not to accept the programs. DA is working from within to change the gender imbalance which lies in the structures of the Kenyan society (Donnelly 2003:89). Almost all the staff is Kenyan and lives in the neighbourhood, this put an emphasis on respecting the culture and understanding it and the way of life. The misconceptions and lack of correct information negatively impacts girls' education and gender inequality. This is especially seen with FGM, where there are specific beliefs tied to FGM: the thought of a girl only becoming a woman by circumcision, marriageability etc. FGM is a practice for men to hold power over women's body and the female sexuality (Interviewee 3, 27

May 2020), thus the practice contributes to the suppression of women and men. Donnelly claims though cultural relativism that this cultural practice has no excuse, it is a human right to have bodily security. This right rises above the cultural belief, thereby FGM needs to eradicate and it will achieve greater gender equality and uphold the rights of the girl against harmful practices as described in CEDAW and UNCRC (Donnelly 2003:90-91). DA believes the best way to end FGM is to be working with, not against, the cultural and community practices and beliefs reinforcing positive cultural values, which can be more effective in eradicating this harmful practice (Dandelion 2017:46). It is difficult to see how DA can work with the cultural and community practices to end FGM, since some in the community believes FGM is a valuable positive cultural practice (Donnelly 2003:70). Thereby it is important not only girls who are being taught, or who are advocating against FGM, but that the boys are championing for ending FGM in terms of the patriarchal structures seems like the most effective way to change the beliefs of FGM and to ending FGM. Cultural considerations need to be counted when trying to implement programs and changing norms, which will result in quality education for all.

Another program are the YPPs going to schools to teach the students on SRHR. The topics are highly taboo and stigmatised in the areas, which makes them not normally discussed. A part of the SRHR curriculum are self-defence in the communities where GBV and rape are common (Dandelion 2020b:12). DA provides the students a means of protecting themselves and giving them the capability to achieve bodily health and bodily integrity. The two girls who have gotten a scholarship to do coding is an example of how girls can achieve their dreams (Interviewee 7, 4 June 2020). DA tries to make female students realise their capabilities to Senses, Imagination and Thought and Practical Reason through their dream course. In DA's games in the schools and events they try to encourage imagination, creative thinking, self-worth, confidence, team spirit and leadership, providing the children with tools to believe in themselves and in their dreams. For the girls to imagine another outcome and believe in themselves proves to help them access education and stay in school. All these programs seem good, however as Kisaka (2015) explains how different workshops, seminars and scholarships have limited effect and thus little improvement, there still remains many negative cultural beliefs towards girls in education. DA might not have a big impact on the whole country in this case as Kisaka expects, but even if DA improves gender equality and education for just one girl, it is worth it. DA is a grass-root organisation, which improve and influence the individuals life for better, which is seen through the interviews, programs and the staff, the will to help create gender equality and quality education for all.

8. CONCLUSION

As examples in this thesis have showed, DA have implemented various programs GFL, BFC, YPP program, Rights Way Forward, which all tries to improve the people's lives in the areas of Nakuru and Baringo County. All these programs are intertwined and affect each other, the Rights Way Forward program educates the adults in the societies on gender equality and education, which affects the girls' access to education. DA's programs GFL, BFC and the YPP program works directly with the importance of quality education for all. GFL supports girls by educating them on their basic human rights, where the right to quality education is in the Kenyan Constitution and UDHR. GFL puts a focus on the girls' obstacles to education such as menstrual hygiene, DA thus provides sanitary pads to the girls in primary school, so they will not miss school while being on the period. DA tries help the girls to realise their dreams and enhance their motivation for education by the Dream Course and prioritising granting scholarship to girl students. The mentorship program within GFL helps the girl to see, how other girls have transitioned to quality high school and colleges, creating role models who holds a narrative of success with education. In the communities the girls are often enforced with specific cultural gender norms, which tells them they are destined to be housewives and not being successful in education and career. When DA provides them with role models, who are having great careers or opportunities within education, it contradicts the common perception of girls not being worth an education, thus allows the girls to dream and gain motivation for school.

The program to end FGM, which is a part of GFL and BFC, breaks the cultural obstacle, where girls are circumcised and taken out of school. DA's initiatives to end FGM, eradicating a cultural obstacle to girls' education in these areas is especially important, since the commonality of the practice and the consequence of girls dropping out of school afterwards.

BFC provides the girls with a support from the boys toward their education, if their parents should wish to withdraw the girl from the school. The boys realise that it is as important for girls to be educated as boys, then girls have an ally who in this society are part of the decision making. Though here it is important that the girls' voices are valued, and not overshadowed by the boys from BFC, which there is a risk of within DA and the society. The part of not just involving boys in the fight for girls' education but involving all people in the communities by the Jukumu Langu, Sara Lango and Rights Way Forward programs, DA tries to spread the importance of education and the correct information of gender equality, gender roles and the gender imbalance that exist in the society. By educating on these things in the whole community it will create a higher

impact for all, not just for the girls. DA has implemented various initiatives in the areas, which improves the girls' access to education, which shows by DA's statistics of the rise of girls transitioning from primary school to high school in 2013 from 45% to 98% in 2019. DA tries to improve girls' access to education through these programs by spreading the right knowledge on topics of SRHR, the misconceptions of FGM and Gender, by trying to improve gender equality and providing family planning for girls not to get pregnant. DA helps the girls realise their capabilities, worth and their opportunities within education. They keep evolving with time, expanding programs such as creating BFC after GFL, involving the community through Jukumu Langu, Rights Way Forward. All these programs are generally accepted and owned by the people within the areas, which creates a possibility for it to be sustainable even without DA in some time. It will be interesting to see how DA will evolve with time and how they will expand on improving Girls' right to education in Kenya.

8.1 Significance of the Findings

The significance of the study has been to identify how DA tries to tackle cultural obstacles to girls' education in Kenya and how culture comes to conflict with these gender equality programs. By examining this, the results show how DA have implemented programs to improve girls' education and gain gender equality. The significance of identifying these initiatives, it can provide an understanding of how to improve girls' education not just in Nakuru and Baringo County or in Kenya, but possibly in other countries as well. It provides a view into a society which is highly affected by cultural beliefs, which limits girls access to education and how to work with, not against, the culture by taking the positive traits of the culture to achieve greater gender equality and thus improving the education for girls. Previous studies focus more on the obstacles not how to tackle these obstacles. By interviewing DA staff working on how to tackle cultural obstacles to education, it will provide a view into a less examined area.

9. FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research could be to examine how Covid-19 in this period and in the future has affected girls' education and the attendance rate in Kenya and world-wide. Interviewee 8 has expressed concern on, how many girls will be allowed by their families to continue with education once the schools open.

Further comparing the methods which DA uses to tackle cultural obstacles for girls to education with another NGO in Kenya or another country. A comparative analysis and view different angles on how to improve girls' access in education.

Further research could be on implementation of men's group or a form of including the men on a more regular basis than the Champions and Jukumu Langu programs or a parents' program. Whether this would eradicate the traditional gender norms which reinforces gender inequality.

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Zoom interview with Interviewee 1, Sarambei, Nakuru County, May 27, 2020.

Zoom interview with Interviewee 2, Sarambei, Nakuru County, May 27, 2020.

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Zoom interview with Interviewee 4, Sarambei, Nakuru County, May 29, 2020.

Zoom interview with Interviewee 5, Sarambei, Nakuru County, May 29, 2020.

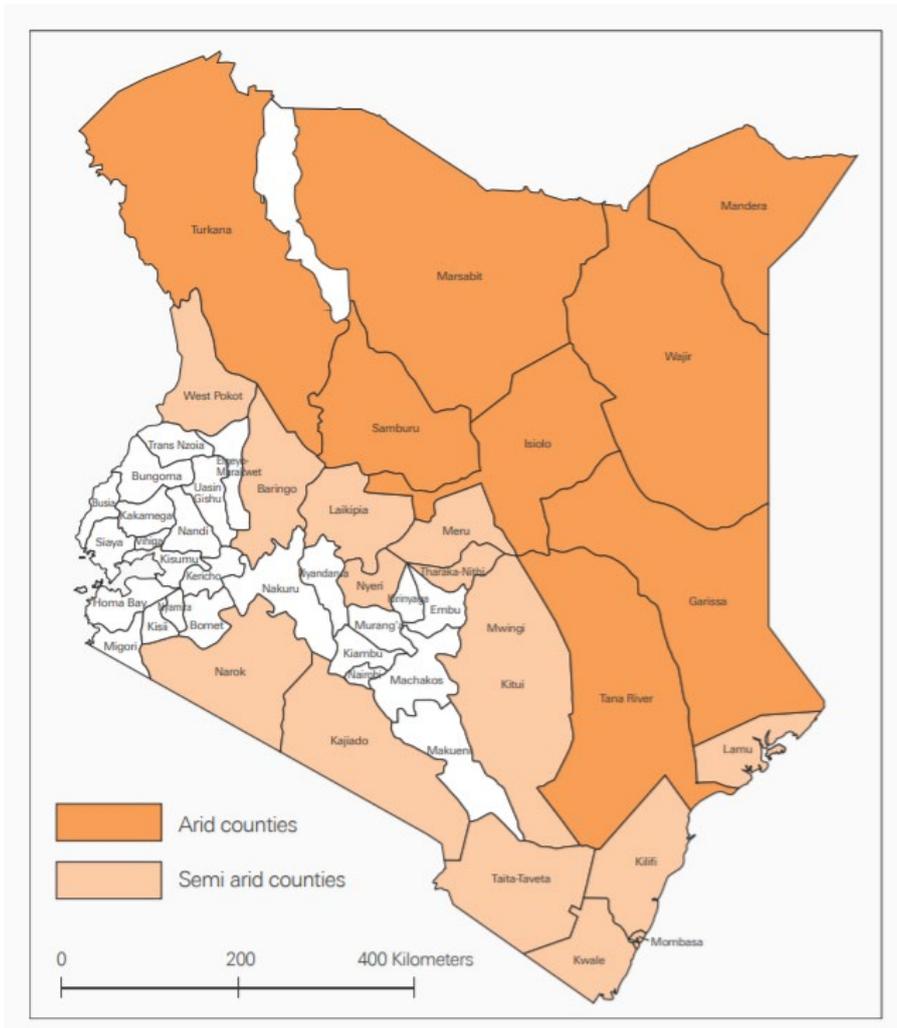
Zoom interview with Interviewee 6, Sarambei, Nakuru County, June 2, 2020.

Zoom interview with Interviewee 7, Sarambei, Nakuru County, June 4, 2020.

Zoom interview with Interviewee 8, Sarambei, Nakuru County, June 5, 2020.

11. APPENDIXES

Appendix 11.1 Maps



Map 1: Kenya

Source: County Government of Nakuru

Available at:

<file:///C:/Users/Ida/Downloads/Nakuru%20County%20Integrated%20Development%20plan%202018-2022.pdf>, viewed July 6, 2020.



Map 2: Nakuru County in Kenya

Source: County Government of Nakuru

Available at:

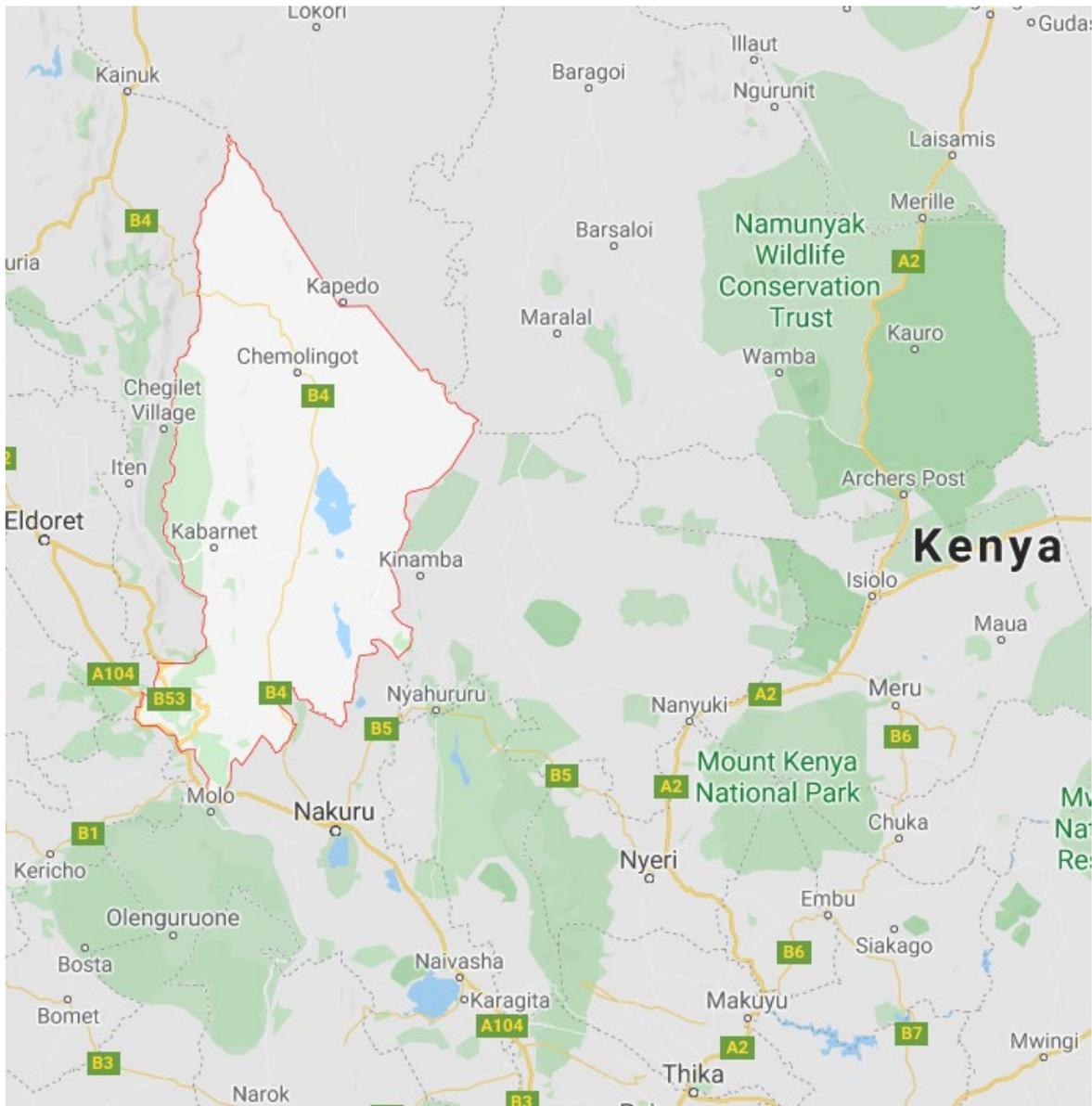
<file:///C:/Users/Ida/Downloads/Nakuru%20County%20Integrated%20Development%20plan%202018-2022.pdf>, viewed July 6, 2020.



Map 3: Baringo County in Kenya
Source: Google Maps [online]

Available at:

<https://www.google.dk/maps/place/Baringo+County,+Kenya/@0.7136863,34.881969,8z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1786cb6c7b9dc769:0x5b5f4b5a5e98c8e!8m2!3d0.8554988!4d36.0893406?hl=da> [accessed 04.06.2020]



Map 4: Baringo County in Kenya

Source: Google Maps [online]

Available at:

<https://www.google.dk/maps/place/Baringo+County,+Kenya/@0.7136863,34.881969,8z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1786cb6c7b9dc769:0x5b5f4b5a5e98c8e!8m2!3d0.8554988!4d36.0893406?hl=da> [accessed 04.06.2020]



Informed Consent Form

Researcher: **Ida Grube Lorentzen**

Research: **Kenyan Girls fight for education and empowerment** – *A case study investigating NGOs attempt to tackle cultural obstacles in education for girls in Nakuru and Baringo District, Kenya.*

I, the researcher, am a bachelor's student of the Human Rights program at Malmö University in Malmö, Sweden. For my research, I will be conducting semi-structured interviews. The interviews will only be used for the purpose of my thesis. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are allowed at any time to ask questions or to terminate the participation. Further, any knowledge that is uncomfortable to share does not have to be shared.

Do you wish to stay anonymous?

Yes / No

Do you grant permission for audio recording?

Yes / No

Do you give permission for direct quotation?

Yes / No

By signing this form, I agree to participate:

Date _____

Signature _____

Thank you for your participation!

Introduction

Since the participants already know me, there was no need to introduce myself. I instead introduce what my study would concern and the premise of the study. I made sure that the participants had read and understood the informed consent form and thereafter the participants give their consent.

The guide was structured to mostly have open-ended questions, which brought a space for discussion and for the participants to properly give their story / view on the point. There was space for follow-up questions if needed.

The questions are listed this way, however in the interviews the questions were not in any special order. Some of the questions were left out in the interviews, because of the participant answering them in previous questions. Some questions were added in the moment of the interviews, which are not listed here, to get the participant to further explain. The first question and the last question is in the right order to start and end the interview on the participants reflection.

Questions

- Can you shortly explain the most common obstacles to girls in relation to education?
- By your perception, are girls supported by their family to get educated? And how?
- What is the general opinion in the community to girls attending school and getting educated?
- Is there a need to change the general perception on girls' education in the area, where DA works? – /Why?
 - o If so, how does DA improve or change these beliefs, so it benefits the girls?
- DA has two programs within educational matters, Girls for Leaders and Boys for change. - Shortly can you describe the two programs and the difference between?
 - o Is this way beneficial of improving education for girls and changing traditional and cultural perceptions of girls?
 - o Boys for change, how does DA and the boys improve gender equality?
- How do DA empower girls to attend secondary schools?
- Do DA provide or improve materials and utilities at schools?
 - o If so how?

- Which ways does DA help especially female students with financial matters?
- DA has youth peer providers teaching a sexual reproductive health rights curriculum in schools. How is this done?
- Why is there a decision of not dividing girls and boys during these lessons?
- How are the teachers at the schools participating at the SRHR lessons?
 - o Which benefits are there to YPPs teaching SRHR instead of teachers?
- On the topic of Sexual health rights, how does DA provide measures of contraceptives in schools? If not, why?
- In previous studies it is shown that girls face obstacles towards education based on the perceived gender norms, especially in relation to home tasks. That the girls have more chores at home than boys, which limits their time to education and doing homework.
 - o Is these obstacle which girls faces in Nakuru?
 - o If so, how does DA attempt to improve or lessen the girls' task at home?
- What are the traditional Gender norms for girls in the area, DA works?
- How is DA teaching or trying to change the traditional gender norms, which sometimes put girls' as subordinate to boys/men?
- In previous research, interviewed girl students in Nairobi stated that their situation in relation to education might improve, if their parents were taught on SRHR, Gender equality etc.
 - o Does DA believe it to be important to involve the parents in girls' education and being taught about SRHR and Gender equality?
 - o How does DA involve the students' parents in this to further girls' education and wellbeing?
- How are DA perceived by the community on the work of education for girls?
- These general perception towards girls and education are they limited to the area, which DA works in or general in various districts of Kenya?
- How could the work done by DA in relation to improving girls' education be implemented any other place in Kenya and other countries?

Interview ended with a question whether they had anything to add and a great thanks and appreciation for their participation.

Appendix 11.4

List of Interviewees

Interviewee	Date	Place	Sex/Gender
Interviewee 1	27.05.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Male
Interviewee 2	27.05.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Male
Interviewee 3	27.05.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Male
Interviewee 4	29.05.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Male
Interviewee 5	29.05.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Female
Interviewee 6	02.06.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Female
Interviewee 7	04.06.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Female
Interviewee 8	05.06.2020	Sarambei, Nakuru County	Female