

**FAMILY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, PARENT-CHILD ENGAGEMENT AND  
GIRL-CHILD RETENTION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RUBAGA  
DIVISION, KCCA, UGANDA**

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### **Declaration**

I, Aguti Martha declare that this research report titled “*Family Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA*”, is my original work which has never been submitted to any institution for any award. I am now submitting it to the Graduate School of Kyambogo University with the approval of my supervisors.

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### **Approval**

This dissertation titled “Family Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA” by Aguti Martha has been done under our supervision and has been submitted for examination with our consent.

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**Dr Ali Baguwemu**

**Dedication**

To all parents who find quality time to nurture their children's life development.

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

APA : The American Psychological Association

CVI' : Content valid index

CAVs : Cronbach's alpha Values

KCCA : Kampala Capital City Authority

MOES : Ministry of Education and Sports

FSES : Family Socio-economic Status

SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Scientists

### Abstract

Completing education is one of the key factors in the life success and empowerment of the girl child. Full involvement in education and staying in school has been a challenge among secondary school girls in most urban areas of Uganda, especially after COVID-19. This study examined the relationship between Family Socio-economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in government-aided secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA. Using a correlational design, data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire from a random sample of 315 students, selected from 5 Government aided secondary schools in the division. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The findings revealed that the Family Socio-Economic Status was positively ( $r = .34$ ) related to Girl Child Retention and predicted about 15 % of Girl Child Retention. A positive and significant relationship ( $r = .51$ ), existed between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention and it contributed 15.2% to retention. It was found that a positive and significant relationship ( $r = .36$ ), existed between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement. Parent-child engagement increased the contribution of Family Socio-Economic Status to Girl Child Retention by 15.2 %. Good Socio-Economic Status of the family, enables parents to have a clear vision for their children, and be actively involved in the lives of their children, thus improving parent-child engagement and reducing intentions to drop out of school. Schools with strong parent relationships, partnerships, and communication, sustain effective strategies for reducing girl-child school dropout. It is recommended that parents and guardians strengthen their relationship with the school and especially the teachers of their children as this may enable them to monitor their performance and character better. Parents should always pay their students' school fees on time to enable students to concentrate on their studies and limit their intentions to drop out. A comparison study of government-aided and private secondary schools on Family socio-economic status, parent-child engagement and Girl-child retention is needed.

## CHAPTER ONE

### **Introduction**

This study analyzed the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status (FSES), Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). The study was motivated by the increasing dropout of girls from secondary schools, especially after COVID-19 in urban areas of Uganda, particularly KCCA (KCCA, 2018). Failure to attain the necessary education would jeopardize the future well-being of girls (Male & Quentin, 2018). This introductory chapter gives the context of the research. It presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, specific objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, the study scope, the significance of the study, and the conceptual framework.

### **Background to the Study**

The background to the study is divided into four perspectives namely; the historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual backgrounds.

#### **Historical Perspective**

Increasing the number of girls who complete their education has been a focus of educational systems from the time when formal education became an important human need (Sayed, & Ahmed, 2015). For some time now, a lot of effort has been dedicated to understanding and improving the intention of learners to stay and complete school. Institutional approaches to improve girl-child retention started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, when stakeholders realized that education empowers people to live comfortably and more satisfying lives. It was also later realized that educated people are the foundation of a country's development (Barrett & Sørensen,

2017). A key measure that was attempted during that time was enhancing teacher characteristics. It was believed that the behaviors teachers displayed in the classroom, attracted learners to stay in school (Scheerens, 2018). This perception dominated retention programs for the girl child and several initiatives were tried to discover and even improve teacher attributes that were thought to be relevant to retention, until the 1950s when it was realized that the countrywide social–economic, home and school-based management and infrastructure factors also played a role (Pianta et al,2016).

In the 1960s, studies on the role government and the home background play in learner retention started growing mainly in the US and UK (Swafford, 2017). At that time, the effort was mainly on the government side and it was placed on identifying key aspects of school infrastructure that could be used as incentives to increase the interest of girls in education and their likelihood of completing education (Tight, 2020). Propelled by the government, Schools increased the time students did extracurricular activities and improved the serenity of the learning environment (Uddin & Ali, 2018). Some success was registered, and girl-child retention rates increased, especially at higher levels of education.

However, retention of the girl child remained low at lower levels of education; primary and secondary school (Bysenk & Locksoh, 2018).). Hence debate on the role the socioeconomic background of the family plays in the educational achievement of the children grew (Basil, 2017). The belief that schools may not be able to significantly improve pupils' academic performance beyond what they already bring from home has gained acceptance (Bysenk, & Locksoh, 2018). The disparities that children experience in their homes and neighbourhoods and



how they could undermine a child's retention in school has currently attracted research attention in various parts of the world (Baliyan, et al., 2019).

Consequently, the governments of leading countries of Europe such as Germany, England and France governments adopted education policies that ensured that schools would counter the inequalities brought about by the students' socioeconomic background of the education of students (Akhtar,2018). Interest was mainly placed on girls because they had been badly affected (Onzima,2019). Other countries in Europe also followed suit and increased funding for school initiatives that meet the needs of girls (Kayongo, 2019).

In Japan, Malaysia and Korea, the period after the Second World War, these countries experienced high dropout rates of girls due to the negative effects of the war (Aljohani, 2016). However, starting from the 1960s, governments in Asia made nationwide efforts to increase girls' retention in school. They made the learning process more engaging, schools provided special needs to girls such as sanitary pads and heavily rewarded girls who competed in school (Chuah & Lim, 2015). The academic progress of girls, especially in secondary schools increased and the dropout out of girls was reduced (Sayed & Ahmed, 2018).

In Africa, learner retention was not a priority until the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when national parliaments in Sub-Saharan countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya realized that high dropout rates of especially girls would eventually affect the speed of development of these countries and the continent as a whole (Dalangin,2018). New education policies that included more Government funding for learning infrastructure development and parental involvement were implemented to increase the retention of learners (Anderson & Sayre, 2019). But in the 1990s, girl-child retention again started to drop partly due to the increase in Family dysfunction

and economic upheavals (Aljohani, 2016). Thus, improving girl-child retention in school has remained a priority for many African countries.

In Uganda, emphasis on learner retention picked up after the introduction of UPE in 1996, when legislators and international bodies funding education programs called the government to account for the big UPE budget (Ssebuufu, 2020). From the year 2000, the government started emphasizing improving school-based factors like teacher quality and classroom environment to retain more girls in schools (Jell, 2019). However, there was a need to explore non-school factors such as the Socioeconomic status of the family and involvement of the guardians in the current girl-child retention efforts to address the needs of girls.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

This study was underpinned by Urie Bronfenbrenner's Social-ecological theory (SET) of 1979. This theory has been applied in education-related research on factors that influence performance and human development (Berben et al., 2012). The theory assumes that a person's behaviour is influenced by multiple environments (Berben et al. (2012). It also assumes that individuals can only be fully studied when viewed in the context of their environment. Thus, based on these two assumptions the girls were perceived as being affected by multiple levels of the environment (Berben et al., 2012). Bronfenbrenner identified four levels of the environment that impact an individual as he or she grows/lives namely; the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Marx, et al, 2011).

Onwuegbuzie et al. (2019) explained that the microsystem is comprised of the person's most immediate units such as the home and the school. The mesosystem relates to connections among contexts, such as relationships between family and peer experiences, and family and

work, among others. The exosystem refers to the larger social systems that the individual does not relate with directly, but could influence his or her life. The macrosystem refers to the wider socio-cultural environment where a person lives. This theory was deemed relevant to this study because it provided a holistic approach to explaining girl's retention in school from the key influencers the family and parents.

### **Conceptual Perspective**

The key concepts of this study were Family socio-economic status, parent-child engagement and girl-child retention. According to Mante et al. (2019), Retention in school involves one being in school and progressing from one level to another from admission through completion. Retention involves both continuation and completion. Therefore, girl child retention refers to girls who are enrolled in school being motivated to accomplish their education goal (Dong et al., 2019). The continuation aspects of School retention include persistence and progression, while the completion aspects involve success and completion (Bysenk & Locksoh, 2018). Thus, retention is the opposite of, withdrawal, discontinuation, early departure and failure (Dalangin, 2018). The failure of female pupils to go from one class to another from year to year is referred to as poor females' retention. It involves a female student repeating a class and subsequently dropping out of school (Furstenberg, 2018). Repetition happens when a student enrolls in a class for more than one year, whereas dropout happens when a student decides not to finish high school (MOES, 2019). In this study girl child retention was perceived in educational terms as a student remaining in school from admission to completion of a specific level of education.

Family socio-economic status (FSES) has a significant impact on how long children stay in school. According to Hosokawa and Katsura (2018), the SES of a family is not only determined by its income but also by its level of education, level of financial security, and individual opinions of its social standing and social class. According to the APA (2017), socio-economic status can include aspects of quality of life as well as the possibilities and privileges available to individuals. Family's Socio-economic status can predict a vast array of outcomes in a child's life, including physical and psychological health making it relevant to the study of educational retention (Onzima, 2019). Therefore, in this study, Family Socioeconomic status was taken to be the Socio-economic characteristics of the family that can enable girls to live in decent homes, with educated parents who have a stable income and good social status and can effectively support a child's education.

Parent-child involvement has been shown to moderate in several aspects that affect the life development of children, especially girls (Mante et al.,2019). According to Child Trends (2017), Parent-child involvement refers to parents taking an active interest in their children's life development and collaborating with them to guide them to success. Parental involvement has been conceptualized as the provision of school needs, payment of supplementary fees, and participation in school meetings with parents taken as partners, clients, consumers, and educational assistants in so far as management of schools is concerned. Weifeng and Jialing (2018) defined parental involvement as the basic responsibility of parents and the involvement of parents in daily routines of the school and at home. Similar to Izzo et al. (2019), other researchers also examined parental involvement in terms of the frequency of parent-teacher interactions, the calibre of those interactions, participation in educational activities at home, and participation in extracurricular activities.

About school and education, providing necessary guidance on life and education, giving the child necessary scholastic materials as well as attending school functions and conferencing with their children's teachers are key aspects of Parent-child involvement (Kirchengast,2018). According to Olatoye and Ogunkola (2018), parental involvement is a key factor in determining attitudes towards learning. Therefore, in this study Parent-child involvement was taken as parents having focused interaction with their children, teachers and schools to help children succeed in their education.

### **Contextual Perspective**

According to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was enacted by United Nations Education General Assembly in December 1949, education is one of the essential rights of every person. In the recent past, access to education has grown significantly, leading to a decline in illiteracy rates and a higher-than-ever percentage of persons finishing elementary, secondary, or postsecondary education (MOES, 2019).

To reduce factors that led to girls' school dropout, all secondary schools were placed under the oversight of the MOES and full access to the required educational services and support. The schools are reached by the MOES national school standards body, the Education Standards Agency (ESA), which ensures that schools maintain an environment conducive to learning (Jell, 2019). Throughout the history of education, both internationally and in Uganda, the importance of student retention has only increased. According to studies conducted in Uganda, more males than girls at the secondary level repeated classes in the years 1995, 1997, and 1998 (MOES, 2017). Due to the numerous benefits of educating a girl child and the concern raised by the poor retention rate among female students as opposed to male students, the focus

on low student retention has currently changed from looking at students as a whole to female student retention in Uganda.

To be considered effective, the education system ought to give all categories of student's opportunities for a good quality education. According to Kasente (2015), students who are taught by capable, driven, and disciplined teachers do better on national exams. Despite the importance of educating females, a lack of secondary school retention among girls has remained a significant barrier to their empowerment and the achievement of equitable educational opportunities in Uganda (Onzima, 2019). In 2000, there were 48,570 secondary school dropouts, of whom 25,679 (52.9%) were females and 22,891 (47.1%) were boys (Muhwezi, 2016).

Parents have an extremely important role in determining a child's overall performance in Uganda, and specifically Rubaga Division. However, several parents shy away from their responsibilities due to social and economic status, these parents fail to pay their children's school fees, buy them school requirements, and provide them with other necessities. As a result, many girls have ended up getting pregnant and as a result, drop out of school. It should be noted that Rubaga Division had the most vulnerable divisions with over 309 cases of adolescent pregnancy reports in 17 secondary schools between 2015 and 2018 (MoES, 2019). Studies further consider that most unfortunate cases vary between private and public secondary schools as regards trends of adolescent behavior, especially in urban areas (Male & Quentin, 2018). As socio-economic statuses vary, and as the gap between parents and their girl child widens among Kampala parents, the influence of this girl child school retention becomes critical. This leaves an information gap that required investigation.

## **Problem Statement**

In Uganda, secondary-level education is now the basic step of education attainment required for employability and tertiary education (MoES, 2018). Girls staying in school and completing secondary education increases their employability, empowerment and eventually quality of life. With this in mind several measures have been put forth by Government and NGOs to enhance girls' stay in school and complete their education (MoES, 2018).

Although some progress has been attained in this endeavour, as a result of school-based factors, in some urban areas of Uganda, such as Rubaga division in KCCA, living conditions and home-based factors have been cited as affecting the intention of girls to complete secondary school education (MoES, 2019). The dropout of girls from secondary schools in Rubaga Division stands at 22.4%, one of the highest in Uganda (Ndejje University, 2019). According to several research such as Mikisa (2019) and Byaruhanga (2019), this situation is the result of things like unequal access to opportunities among communities, cultural norms, and parental views towards girls

However, no study has been done in public secondary schools in Rubaga Division to ascertain how the incidences of girls failing to continue and complete their education are related to Family Social Economic Status and parent-child engagement. It is upon this background that the researcher sought to examine the relationship between FSES, parent-child engagement and girl-child retention to come up with suggestions on enhancing the contribution of parents and the community on the intention of the girls to stay and complete school.

## **Purpose of the Study Objectives**

The study established the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by these specific objectives;

- i.** To examine the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division.
- ii.** To analyze the relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division.
- iii.** To assess the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division.
- iv.** To determine the predictive potential of Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division.

## **Hypotheses**

The study sought to answer the following null hypotheses;

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement



**H04:** Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement do not significantly predict Girl Child Retention

## **Scope of Study**

### *Area Scope*

The study was undertaken in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga division, KCCA. Rubaga Division is located in the western portion of the city and is bordered to the south and west by Wakiso District. The Kampala Central Division forms the division's eastern border. Rubaga Division is adjacent to Kawempe Division to the north (KCCA Strategic Plan, 2014). The study was done in five (5) public secondary schools in Rubaga division (MoES, 2019). Rubaga division was considered out of five (5) city divisions because it had a higher incidence of girls stagnating in classes and dropping out of school altogether (KCCA, education department, 2019).

### *Content Scope*

The study emphasized the relationship between the Socio-Economic Status of the family, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division. The dependent variable was Girl Child Retention, the independent variable was Family Socio-Economic Status, and Parent-Child Engagement was the moderating variable. Girl Child Retention was assessed at a female student in secondary school continuing with her education until completion of S4 or S6. FSES was operationalized as a family having a decent home, educated parents, stable income and good social status. The parent-child engagement was measured as the parent's **warmth**, Connectedness, Communication with and regulation of the child and the nature of the relationship with the school.

### ***Time Scope***

The study considered the period from 2015 to 2019. This is the period when complaints about secondary school girls dropping out of school become rampant in the KCCA annual performance reports (Lunkuse, 2018). Rubaga division is the most affected division with poor retention of girl children in secondary schools (UNFPA, 2017). A period of 1 year from July 2019 to July 2020 was considered for this study.

### **Significance of the Study**

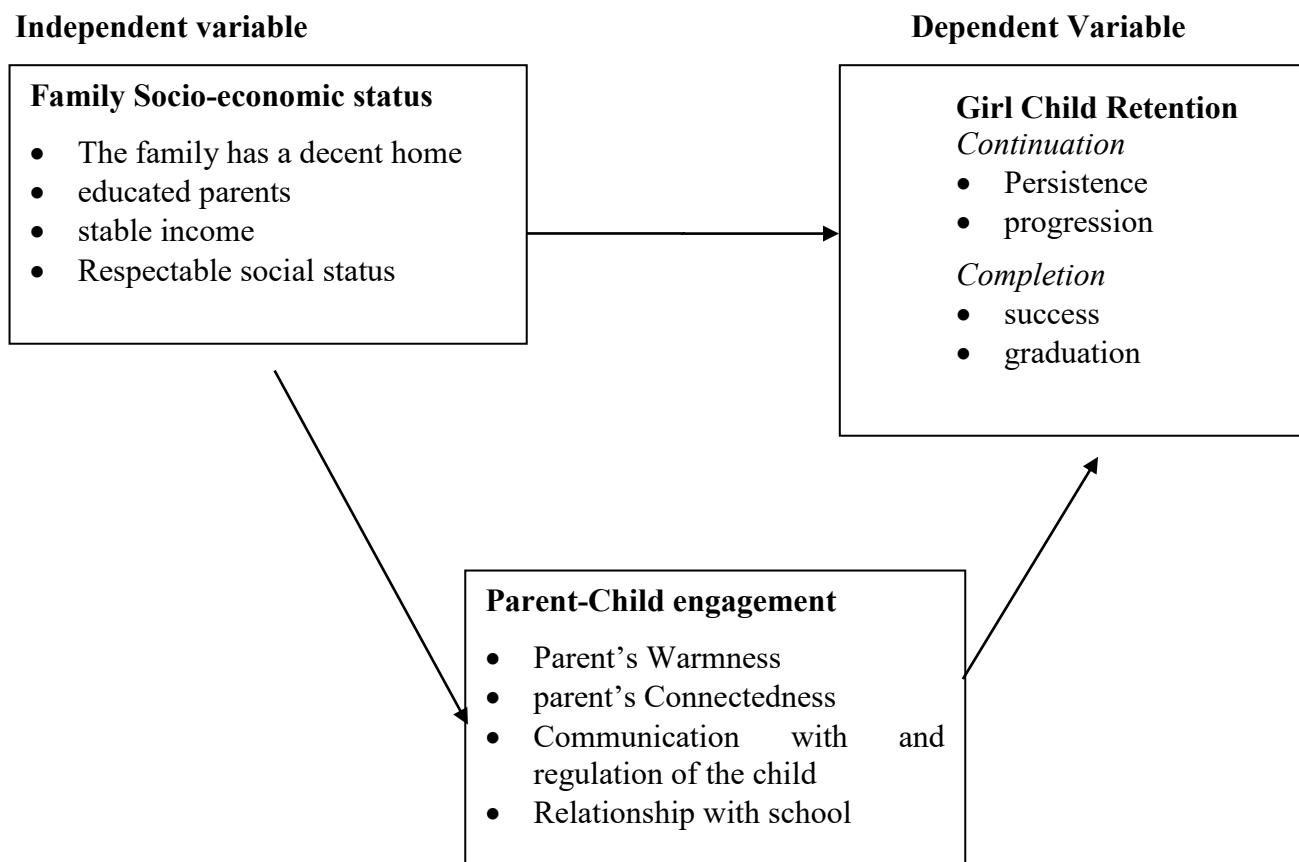
The study may help various stakeholders make and solidify policies and intervention strategies aimed at encouraging school girls focus on their education. The findings may be useful to the government by providing information that can be integrated into the formulation of laws and policies regarding Girl child retention in secondary schools in the country. The study may be useful to local leaders and school administrators in exposing to them the various factors causing girls to leave schools that they can base on the information to fight against this challenge.

The findings are useful to the girl child by providing them with information regarding how they can stay in school. This is possible by giving them information about the factors that accelerate dropping out of school. Findings may also be useful to other researchers and scholars by providing them with detailed literature and information about Girl child retention.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework in Figure 1.1 is based on the position that the social-economic characteristics of the family and parent-child engagement can lead to the retention of female students in secondary school education as indicated by Brent et al. (2001) and Odimegwu & Mkwanzazi (2016).

*The Relationship Between Family Social Economic Status, Parental Involvement and Girl-Child Retention*



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**

**Source:** Adapted from Brent et al. (2001), Pragti & Rajoura (2005) and Odimegwu & Mkwanaazi (2016).

According to Figure 1, a family where a female secondary school student stays has a good social economic status if it has a decent home, educated parents with a stable income and respectable social status. This can affect girl child retention by motivating a female student to continue with her education up to Completion. However, the outcome may largely depend on Parent-Child engagement in terms of the warmth, Connectedness, quality of Communication regulation of the child as well as the parent's relationship with the school.

## **Operational Definition of Key Terms**

The key terms were defined in the ways they were used in the study.

**Retention in School:** Continuation and completion of a specific level of education

**Girl child retention in School:** A girl enrolled in school being motivated to stay in school and complete her education

**School Continuation:** persistence and progression in a specific level of education

**School Completion:** success through and completion of a specific level of education

**Poor girls' school retention:** Female students fail to pass from one class to another from one year to another and subsequently drop out of school (Furstenberg, 2018).

**Socio-economic status:** Quality of life attributes, opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society (APA, 2017).

**Family Socio-economic status:** Socio-economic characteristics of the family such as living in a decent home, with educated parents, having a stable income and good social status

**Parental involvement:** refers to a parent being actively involved in ascertaining, meeting and caring for the general life needs of a child

**Parental support:** Participation in educational activities of the child at home and school.

**Parent-child involvement:** Parents have focused interaction with their children, teachers and schools to help children succeed in their education

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews both the theoretical and empirical works and research done regarding Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl child retention in Public Secondary Schools. It consists of a review of several studies that have been carried out about the study topic.

#### **Theoretical Review**

The social-ecological theory (SET) of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), perceives a child's environment as being the center for sustaining his/her educational achievement. The child's environment (Family, Community, School,) is perceived as having a system of actors who act together to enhance a child's motivation to engage in the learning provided by the school (Binder et al, 2013). Thus, through collaboration, the school and family act to enhance the learning gains of learners from primary education. The SET provides a basis for explaining how the family (parents and guardians) could act (support) with guidance of the school, to enhance the achievement of learners from education. The theory also assumes that actors in a child's life, such as, parents have defined roles and expectations to enhance the effective learner support of primary education (Pianta et al, 2016). Indeed, when parents accept their assigned roles, they are expected to behave responsibly as they strive to do these roles (Ketskajorn et al., 2018). Thus, as guided by this theory, to understand girl-child retention in school, the study focused on the influence of the family and the parents in the education life of the student.

The major weakness of the Socio-ecological theory is emphasizing the effectiveness of the dynamics (relations, structure, collaboration) in the system without showing how the shift in

dynamics can be achieved. For example, the theory does not show how the environment should provide relevant conditions such as resources, and interactions to influence individual behavior (Binder, et al, 2013). The theory assumes the existence of better communication among actors in the system, without showing how to achieve this communication. However, despite such weaknesses, the Socio-ecological theory was relevant to the study because it suggested how the education of girls can be influenced by an existing system.

## **Empirical Review**

### ***Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in Secondary Schools***

The contribution of family socioeconomic status to a child's education has been strongly affirmed. According to Schmidt et al. (2017) and Filmer & Pritchett (2020), students from low socio-economic level homes are at a disadvantage in school since their homes lack a supportive academic environment, which may jeopardise their academic achievement. School dropout mainly due to adolescent pregnancies is more common in rural areas and urban slum areas than it is in developed urban areas (Male & Quentin, 2018). This perspective tells us about the social setting in which the person lives. Most rural and slum communities have idle youth who instead of living in singlehood resort to marriage and sexual acts at a young age. In a related view, Girls from poorer socio-economic groups are more likely to marry early or engage in sexual acts at a young age. Rural and less developed communities experience high levels of Adolescent pregnancy. According to the authors, the notion that SES translates to a child's conduct at school seems realistic, especially when shaped by the school environment (Arifin, et al., 2018). There is also a long history of SES being associated with parenting and education outcomes in Africa (Arifin et al., 2018).

Several other social factors are reported to be responsible for the low retention of the girl child, these include unemployment, high moral decay in sexual control and sexuality, high levels of pornography and exposure to matters of sex among Adolescents (UNICEF, 2017). Arifin et al., (2018) recounted that proper FSES is key for influencing the overall girl's retention levels, and this indicates that when FSES is well managed, and supportive the children's conduct is not only at parents and at school. The adolescent age is highly vulnerable especially when parents are negligent and do not pay attention to their adolescent children (Mawusi, 2018). These studies tend to agree with the perspective that SES and adolescents are interlinked, although this study was done outside the Ugandan scope.

Raj et al. (2019) in their study also revealed that in Nepal social economic factors of education, poverty, desire for wealth, and family greed have increased Adolescent pregnancies and subsequently school dropouts. Earlier studies also agreed that FSES is a precursor of conditions at home and in other socializing agents such as schools, and community. A higher level of FSES is critically vital in shaping behavior and hence any deviance may account for increasing school dropout or repeating classes. In other studies, the scope of FSES has been profound in shaping children's and siblings' conduct. Where the family is poor, and cannot afford to provide separate rooms, even early pregnancies arise as a result of incest. Poverty has a negative effect on the entire household, community, nation, and global economy (Arifin et al., 2018; Naureen, 2017). These social factors include many social disorders including adolescent pregnancy which in no way can enable them to freely study and thus an explanation for poor retention of the girl child in such cases (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, NCPTP, 2018).

Living in poverty, having little or no education, and having children young all have significant correlations (Healthy Teen Network, 2018). Early parenthood can have detrimental effects, including reduced educational attainment, reduced earning capacity, and a higher likelihood of living in poverty. In addition to not completing their studies within the allotted time, children born to adolescents may be more likely to replicate early sexual behaviours and motherhood, perpetuating the cycle of poverty among future generations (Healthy Teen Network, 2018). Increasing girl-child retention is just one way to positively impact critical social issues, but preventing or breaking the cycle of poverty has a tremendous impact on our nation (Furstenberg, 2018). In relation to the above literature, it is possible to assert that FSES is key in helping girls stay in school. There was a need to test this assertion from a Ugandan perspective in KCCA.

### ***Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in Secondary Schools***

Scholars worldwide have explored the aspect of parenting and its influence on the behavior and conduct of children. In adolescence, children need a great deal of parenting, lest they fall prone to challenges including early pregnancies (Wang et al., 2018). According to the authors, parenting takes many approaches: style, approaches, relations, and as a result, this current study explores Parent-Child Engagement. These studies in common have a perspective that: Parents and how they relate with their adolescent children shape their conduct and behavior, and void of this results in challenges including adolescent pregnancies. However, this has not been explored for schools in Makindye Division, Kampala City.

Parenting styles that are authoritarian (high control and low warmth) or permissive (indulgent or negligent) have typically been linked to poor outcomes for children and



adolescents. Current research on parent-child relationships is being guided by the themes of connectivity, regulation, and autonomy (Jessica & Diana, 2019). These three constructs are utilised to structure research findings about parental influences on adolescent pregnancy risk since many researchers in recent decades have used them to examine parenting. These concepts include parental support (connectedness), control (regulation), and parent/child communication.

Mother/child connections have been the exclusive subject of several studies on parent-child closeness. The idea that the mother-daughter connection is a particularly prominent sexual structure was created about 40 years ago (Brent et al., 2019). As predicted, strong mother-daughter bonds were found to be associated with girls delaying sex (Brent et al., 2014). The sexual behaviours of daughters and sons were found to be similarly influenced by mother/child proximity by other researchers who focused on mother-adolescent connections (Jaccard, et al., 2018). High-quality mother-adolescent connections have been linked to both sexes' sexually active teens using contraceptives more frequently (Yakubu, 2019). Parents' and children's positive interactions within the family had a substantial impact on the sexual experiences that adolescents had, which exposed them to early risks of adolescent pregnancies and eventual school dropout (Yakubu, 2019).

A lack of parental support was also linked to depression in teenage boys and females, according to Wanget al.'s (2019) analysis. Low parental support was also linked to a higher propensity for alcohol use, which has a detrimental impact on students' academic performance and was more strongly linked to early teenage male sexual engagement than female sexual activity (Getachew, 2018). A significant amount of parental consideration of parental attitudes and associations has been seen. Girls who did not have close relationships with their parents

tended to engage in more emotionally and sexually intense peer relationships, with the majority of these interactions ending in pregnancies (Jessica & Diana, 2013). Other researchers (Allison et al., 2019; Arifin et al., 2018; Elliset al., 2019) have proposed that family conflict over teen autonomy plays a significant role in the relationship between parent/child closeness and early pregnancies. Evidence suggests that parental guidance and observation of children have an impact on adolescents' sexual behaviours in ways that reduce their likelihood of becoming pregnant. This might not apply to many towns and schools, though. This study was required to establish whether parent-child interaction influences the retention of girls in secondary education in the KCCA.

### ***Family Socio-economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement***

The socioeconomic level of the home can define what we believe in, what we do and how we behave. Several times, this is core to influencing our relations with our children and siblings (Wang et al., 2017). In several publications, the interlink between Socio-economic status and parenting is highly echoed (Dlamini et al., 2019; Ikamba and Quedraogo, 2018). These concur with the fact that the SES of a parent shapes the potential and ability of the parent to spare time for the child, relate with the child and several times extend wise counsel. In a detailed discussion, Ikamba and Quedraogo (2018) revealed that FSES is core in influencing the ability of children to listen and heed their parents' advice. When the parent has no financial and social status that can command influence over the children, several times, as children come of age, they tend to act on their own and venture out to find their destiny. Instances of young teenagers looking for employment to earn, sometimes fending for the whole family were also reported in several studies (Dlamini et al., 2019; Dong et al., 2019).

Relatedly, Dong et al. (2019) emphasized that there is a close bond between SES and Parent-child engagement regarding how parents control their teenagers on how to use the internet, and how this is played by parents as a moderating role. Given several authors, family economic status, internet use, and strong parent-child bonds increased with an improvement in FSES (Dong et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2019; Getachew, 2018). However, the above scholars do not specifically focus on outcomes of poor or excellent Parent-child engagement on the overall behavioral outcomes of children. Nevertheless, Naureen (2018) contradicts this perception revealing that despite the challenges in poverty-affected homes, some exceptional children still stand out and exhibit good and acceptable behaviour. Contextually, these studies give varying opinions, and this calls for another empirical inquiry regarding FSES and parent-child engagement.

While exploring the FSES factor and adolescent outcomes, Bethany and others revealed that how parents relate and engage with their children is a function of their socio-economic status. Significantly, however, FSES may have negative adolescent development outcomes especially when (FSES) is not a befitting standard (Bethany et al., 2017). Similarly, Velisiwe, et al., (2018), after interacting with learners found it core that self-concept, efficacy, and willingness of parents to go further to support their adolescents, were key in shaping their behaviors. This made it rather a complex situation for guardians, teachers, and counselors to cater for the love and physiological needs of these teens. This exposed them to reckless behaviors in guide to support themselves instead (Velisiwe et al., 2018). Researchers, Bethany et al. (2017 and Velisiwe et al. (2018), greatly expound on the relevancy of the Socio-economic status of parents/family on the wellness of their children and their behavioral outcomes

especially in sexual development. However, their perception is outside the Ugandan scope, and this may not be conclusively adopted for the Ugandan cases, without local-based study.

On this issue, Rich and Nicolette (2018) also recounted that Just like in early childhood, care and parenting extend to the adolescent years. Better and well-provided parenting yields cordial parent-child engagement and tends to solve multiple growth-related behaviors. Additionally, several scholars opine to the fact that good socio-economic background may have a profound effect on a child's growth lifestyle not only in behavior but also in academics (Dong et al., 2019; Rich & Nicolette, 2018). As children grow older, their background tends to delimit their anxiety, and as so, they try to counter the influences of FSES, exposing themselves to social ills, including early sex and its risks. These risks tend to increase where the parents-peer engagement and talk are limited (Velisiwe et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019). It is critical to observe that hardly can we anticipate good parent engagement when the socio-economic background is challenged. However, this has not been studied in many countries, Uganda inclusive, hence the need for this study.

### ***Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl Child Retention in Secondary Schools***

Several scholars have explored the aspect of FSES and Parent-Child Engagement (Cater & Coleman, 2017; Darin-Mattsson et al., 2017). In the study by Carter and Coleman, it was established that FSES is key in influencing how parents relate with their children and subsequently results in social behavior. For instance, SES affects how parents communicate with their kids; trying to get pregnant was associated with a turbulent past. Regardless of the

socioeconomic standing of the family, almost all young women reported experiencing some level of unease while growing up for a variety of causes (Darin-Mattsson et al., 2017).

Sometimes, this unsettling background was brought on by life experiences like being estranged from or distant from one's parents (Cater & Coleman, 2019). Other times, the uneasy feeling was linked to feeling unsafe in the family setting, possibly as a result of strained connections and disputes. In other more extreme instances, the circumstance forced the young woman to leave her home. All of these researches confirm that there are common teenage problems, one of which is the prevalence of adolescent pregnancies, which leads to low retention rates for girls in secondary education (Darn- Mattsson et al., 2017).

This adolescent appeared to be more susceptible to further disruption and involvement in dangerous health behaviours as a result of leaving home earlier than usual. Many times, finding a partner who would later give birth to their kid helped stabilise their lives (Cater & Coleman, 2019). Authors have also agreed that there is a close relationship between SES, parent relationships and the outright behavior that arises. In a study by Checa et al., (2019) it was recognized that improvements in SES, at times guarantee the control and abilities the parents can assert on their teens to improve their conduct. Additionally, Scholars have pointed out that SES plays a distinctive role in shaping the conduct of learners in Uganda. Where FSES is not good, the prevalence of behavioral disorders such as early exposure to irresponsible sex is manifested (Muzaki, 2018; Mahuro & Hungu, 2016). In many cases, FSES coupled with the laxity in parents' relations and communication, yields to choices. Parents have to make choices, and they tend to desire to be free, and this "complete freedom" on their yields to deviant behavior including early pregnancies, drinking alcohol and not attending classes.

Regarding particular insecure attachment styles, it has been found that externalising problem behaviours, such as aggression and delinquency, more drug experimentation, and riskier attitudes towards safe sex, are related to dismissing attachment styles, which are characterised by poor communication and trust along with feelings of alienation and disengagement from the attachment relationship. Peers see dismissive adolescents and young adults as being more unfriendly than people in attachment groups (Naureen, 2018). The length of a girl's schooling is influenced by a variety of household factors. Parent-child interaction is influenced by a variety of family factors, including the hereditary or biological transmission of potentially significant traits like early menarche, hormone levels, and genes, as well as contextual and structural aspects of families (parents' education, marital status, and sibling makeup), as well as common parenting practises like parental support, control, or supervision of adolescents. Relationship issues between parents and adolescents are among the family-related factors of attitudes towards adolescent pregnancy. Some parents struggle to maintain nurturing surroundings that might help adolescents move to more mature responsibilities as a result of these issues (Naureen, 2018).

This is especially important because conflict between parents and adolescents might encourage adolescents' propensity to seek approval from their peers and distance themselves from their family network (Jaccard, 2016). The daughter's attitude towards pregnancy will depend on how she gets along with her parents, especially her mother. Indicators of an adolescent's sexual behaviour include included conversations about sex, the attitude of the mother, and the amount of time spent alone at home. A corpus of research from the past two decades has established that FSES has significant effects on students' behaviour, but that these effects are intimately tied to parents' interactions with their offspring (Mawusi, 2019). However,

a study was required to determine whether socioeconomic status and parent-child involvement did not significantly affect the retention of girls in public secondary schools in KCCA, Uganda.

### **Literature Summary**

The literature above has expounded on various ways in which FSES is influential in shaping girl-child behavior in schools and further described the extent to which this could be associated with parent-child engagement. However, a lot has not been explored regarding FSES and its relationship with Parent-child engagement, and how do influences together girl child retention in secondary schools, while the review, gives scholarly evidence of a relationship between FSES, Parent-Child Engagement, and Adolescent girl child retention, distinction regarding public secondary schools is not well presented. This still left an information gap that this study sought to fill.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the methods that were employed in the study. It describes the research design, target population, sampling design and size, data sources, data collection methods and procedures, validity and reliability of instruments, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

#### **Research Design**

A research design is important in helping the researcher, determine relevant data to be collected and how to analyze the results to add meaning to the research findings (Curtis, 2008). It provides the glue that holds the research project together to address the central research questions (Kothari, 2007). The study employed a correlational research design. This design was adopted because of the relational nature of the study hypotheses and the need to measure and analyze the magnitude and direction of relationships among the study variables (Combes, 2019).

#### **Study Population**

The population for this study comprised Female students in Public secondary schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA. Rubaga Division has a total of five (5) public secondary schools (Rubaga Division Records, 2019). The schools included A, B, C, D, and E (see appendix for profile of schools). Public schools were chosen because they have several reported incidences of low retention which provided a formidable background to information needed for this study. The secondary schools in Rubaga Division by the end of 2018 had a total population of 92,271 students of whom 35,980 were females and close to 2,700 were in public schools (KCCA, 2018).



Therefore, the study population included 2,700 female students enrolled in the 5 public secondary schools in Rubaga division.

### **Sample Size**

According to Tromp and Kombo (2004), a suitable sample size is that one is representative of the target population in major characteristics. Using, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample determination guide from a population of 2700 girls, a sample of 335 is representative enough. Therefore, a sample of 335 girls was selected from the 5 public schools. In each of the schools that participated in the study, a proportion of 0.2 students was selected to cater for representativeness. Thus, a total of 67 girls were selected from each school, from S3-S6 classes (see *Table 1*). These four classes were targeted because the girls are more mature and have sufficient life experience. In each of the 4 classes, one stream was targeted. The streams were selected from S3, S4, S5, and S6 classes (see *Table 1*). After data collection, 315 questionnaires were returned fully completed making the actual sample 315. This made the response rate 94.0% which was a good representation of the population, thus representative enough.

**Table 1: Population and Sample Size**

<b>School</b>	<b>Stream</b>	<b>Target Sample</b>	<b>Actual sample</b>	<b>Sampling Technique</b>	
<b>A</b>	S 4 Stream B	67	62*	Convenience random	Stratified
<b>B</b>	S 4 Stream A	67	64*		
<b>C</b>	A-level Arts (S.5)	67	65*		
<b>D</b>	S3 Stream C	67	63*		
<b>E</b>	A-level Arts (S.6)	67	61*		
<b>Total</b>		<b>335**</b>	<b>315*</b>		
<b>Response rate</b>				<b>94.0%</b>	

**Source:** \* (2021) School records

\*\* Krejcie & Morgan (1970)

### **Data collection Techniques**

A Survey method was used to collect data. A survey was adopted because it enables one to collect information from a large number of respondents, who were targeted as individuals (Creswell, 2013). Data was collected from primary sources and Structured, self-administered questionnaires (SAQs) were used. The SAQ was written in English the official language of the country. The questionnaire was utilised to produce a lot of information, encourage on-the-spot data collection, and provide more assurance of anonymity. Structured questions were employed since they allowed the researcher to collect precise data and prevent hurried responses, increasing the accuracy of the data acquired.

### **Sources of Data**

Primary sources are the authentic materials on which research is based; they were employed in this study. They provide first-hand accounts or concrete proof of the subject at hand. They do not interpret, compress, or assess the material they give; it is presented in its original form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Students were subjected to structured questionnaires which were the source of primary data.

## **Data Collection Instruments**

### **Instrument and Measurements**

A questionnaire is a tool for data collection, which helps the researcher gather the necessary research data for the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2005). A standardized and adapted instrument was used consisting of close-ended questions arranged on a 5-point Likert scale. The Socio-economic Status items were based on the New Standardized Questionnaire of FSES by Pragti & Rajoura (2005), Parent-Child Engagement was measured based on the Parent Adult-Child Relationship Questionnaire (PACQ) as designed by Peisah et al. (1999) and so was Girl-Child retention. Directly administered paper questionnaires were administered to students in selected public secondary schools in Rubaga Division. This method of data collection was preferred because it prevented the respondents from giving irrelevant information (Mbabazi, 2011).

### **Data Quality Control**

#### ***Validity***

Validity is the ability of the tool to measure with the highest level of accuracy the aspect that it's meant to measure (Shirali et al., 2018). The researcher established the construct validity of the instrument using exploratory factor Analysis. This was done to confirm whether the adapted instrument would be suitable to the socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample. Data was entered in SPSS version 23.0. Any item that loaded above 0.50 was considered valid. However, any item that loaded below 0.5 was considered to have a low loading and it was discarded (Pedrosa et al, 2016). Items with eigenvalues greater than 1 were considered significant contributors to the variables. The factors were rotated using a Varimax rotation, to

identify items that are more correlated with one another. The findings are presented in the tables below.

**Table 2: Rotated Factor Matrix for Family Socio-economic status**

<b>Components</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Girls with greater family financial support tend to perform better in school	.872		
My parents/guardians are highly supportive of my education	.742		
My parent/guardian is not quite interested in educating children	.692		
The person responsible for my schooling is financially stable and doesn't face any difficulties in this regard		.811	
Our family's income is relatively high compared to others in the society.		.743	
My parent's occupation is more prestigious compared to others in the society		.697	
My parents/guardian's education created an environment conducive to learning for me.			.860
Our family enjoys a higher standard of living than others in our community			.740
Eigenvalues	1.95	1.86	1.77
% of Variance	24.1	23.27	22.1
<b>Cumulative Variance</b>	<b>69.8</b>		

**Source: Primary Data (2021)**

The findings in Table 2 show that most of the aspects of Family Socio-economic status that were measured, loaded strongly on 3 factors. An inspection of the factor matrix above indicates that factor 1 was the Social status of parents, and accounted for 24.1% of the variation, factor 2 was the Financial stability of parents or guardians, and accounted for 23.27% of the variation and factor three was parents/ guardians' education attainment that enables to provide a good standard of living to their children and accounted for 22.1% of the variation. The three factors accounted for 69.8 % of the variation in Family Socio-economic status and were thus a suitable measure of the variable.

**Table 3: Rotated Factor Matrix for Parent-Child Engagement**

<b>Components</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Do not discuss this with my parent/father/mother because I fear her/him	.859					
Guardian/parent talks to me at least every day, and asks if I have any challenge	.843					
Like telling my guardian/parent (s) when I am going out with my friends	.712					
Parents come to school and talk to teachers about their children's performance	.698					
mother/female guardian advises and interacts with me often		.852				
always share my needs and problems with my guardian/mother		.834				
guardian/parents know my friends and their parents well		.784				
guardian/parents appreciate what I do and encourage me to respect my body		.635				
do not do things my father/mother/guardian wants, he/she reprimands me			.888			
have strict regulations at home regarding the friends we make			.739			
respect my father/mother/guardians' opinion about my life			.689			
parents/guardians tend to control my movements			.661			
Parents' turn-up for school meeting invitations is very high.				.775		
feel my father/mother/guardian gives us reasonable freedom to do what we want				.735		
sit and chat with my father/ male guardians every day				.706		
exists a strong relationship between my parents and my teachers					.903	
Parents attend class days/AGM meetings whenever called upon					.564	
parents/guardians come home late and do not speak a lot to me						.927
<b>Eigenvalues</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>1.39</b>
<b>% Of Variance</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>Cumulative Variance</b>						<b>82.96</b>

*Source: Primary Data (2021)*

The findings in the 3 show that the aspects of Parent-Child Engagement that were measured loaded on 6 factors. The factor matrix above indicates that factor 1 was good child-parent communication and accounted for 18.9% of the variation, factor 3 was parental understanding and accounted for 16.6 % of the variation and factor 3 was parental control and accounted for 15.6% of the variation. On the other hand, factor 4 was warmness and accounted for 14.3% of the variation, factor 5 was the relationship between the parent and school and accounted for 9.8 % of the variation, while factor 6 was the availability of parents and accounted for 7.7 % of the variation. The 6 factors account for close to 83 % of the variation in Parent-Child Engagement and hence were a good and appropriate measure of the variable.

**Table 4: Rotated Factor Matrix for Girl Child Retention**

<b>Component</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
More girls than boys in my school are seeking bursaries to stay in school		.910
There has been a reduction in the number of dropouts of Girls from this school		.878
completion rates of Girls at O-level and A-level in this school have increased in the past year		.835
Most of the girls in my school are keen on completing their education		.809
Eigenvalues	1.63	1.40
% Of Variance	40.71	34.85
<b>Cumulative Variance</b>		<b>75.56</b>

*Source: Primary Data (2021)*

The findings in Table 4 show that the aspects of Girl Child Retention that were measured loaded on 2 factors. Factor 1 was the intention to remain in school and accounted for 40.71 % of the variation and factor 2 was resolve to complete education and accounted for 34.85% of the

variation. Overall, the 2 factors accounted for 75.56% of the variation and so were a valid measure of the variable.

The items that were used to measure the three variables of the study measured more than 50% of the constructs, so were good measures of the variables and hence the instrument had good construct validity recommended by Shirali et al. (2018) for research purposes.

### ***Reliability***

According to Shirali et al. (2018), reliability refers to the degree to which a set of variables in a questionnaire are consistent with what they are intended to measure. The reliabilities of the constructs for both the independent and dependent variables were retested using the Cronbach Alpha method provided by SPSS. The self-report pilot study results on a sample of 10 girls were used. Reliability was reached for the items in the various constructs at the benchmark of = 0.70 and above (Bryman, 2016). The reliabilities obtained for the questionnaire are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha Results**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Alphas</b>
Family Socio-economic status	8	.715
Parent-Child Engagement	18	.845
Girl Child Retention	5	.642

The findings in Table 5 show that Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three variables were above .6 and therefore good enough for research purposes.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher sought permission from the Administrators of the selected schools to conduct the study in the area using the researcher's introductory letter got from Kyambogo University. After the approval, the researcher went to the field. Using the authority letter from the university, the researcher introduced herself to the officers in charge of the places where the targeted respondents worked. She first explained the purpose of the research and its potential benefits and then requested for permission to sample respondents. On meeting the target respondents, the researcher assured them of confidentiality about the information they provided. Respondents who completed questionnaires were requested to provide written consent by signing the consent form. The researcher then collected data. Data collection took three weeks.

### **Data Management**

The data collected was assembled for Management. Assembled data was kept under lock and key for confidentiality purposes. The questionnaires that were returned were examined by the researcher for accuracy and consistency of replies. The data in the questionnaires was cleaned, and coded. Data cleaning involved carefully reviewing the survey items to find any that may have been left blank or incomplete, as well as those that might have been answered incorrectly. Coding is essential for streamlining data entry. Coded data is easy to classify and analyse (Bryman, 2016). The data was entered into the Excel workbook and ensured that it was kept under a password for safety and privacy purposes.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis, according to Kothari (2007), is the systematic organisation and synthesis of research data as well as the testing of hypotheses to obtain information relevant to a certain



research issue. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The data on general information like age, gender and occupation of parents was analysed by frequencies and percentages (Sarantakos, 2005). Data on a Likert scale was entered and analysed using means and standard deviations while the relationship and effect between variables were analysed using correlation and regression analysis respectively. Correlations analysis determines the degree of linear dependence between the variables in the study (Pallant, 2005). This technique was preferred since it is efficient and gives a straight formal analysis.

Correlations were calculated at the bivariate level to show how the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV) components related to one another. In particular, correlations were useful for finding relationships between variables and evaluating hypotheses (Sarantakos, 2005). As indicated below, hypothesis testing was carried out.

*Hypothesis 1:*

A precise process was followed for testing the hypotheses. The null ( $H_0$ ) hypothesis was put to the test which stated that Socio-economic status and retention of girls do not significantly correlate. This hypothesis-related data was imported into SPSS. The association between family socio-economic status and girl child retention was determined using Pearson product-moment correlation ( $r$ ). A 5% significance threshold and a p-value of 0.05 were used. The alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected for p-values less than 5%. As indicated below, hypothesis testing was carried out.

*Hypothesis 2:*

Ho<sub>2</sub>: Parent-Child Engagement and Retention of Girl Children are not significantly correlated. This hypothesis-related data was imported into SPSS. The association between the aforementioned variables was established using Pearson product-moment correlation (r). The p0.05 cut off was used to determine whether statistics are significant. The alternative hypothesis (Ha) was kept and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected for p-values less than 5%.

*Hypothesis 3:*

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between FSES and Parent-Child Engagement. Questions related to this hypothesis will be entered into SPSS. Pearson correlation (r) was used to explain the magnitude and level of association of variables. The level of significance was set at 5% and p-value at  $p < 0.05$ . For the p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was retained.

*Hypothesis 4*

Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5 were explored at the Multivariate level. To analyze the Ho<sub>4</sub>: Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement do not significantly predict Girl Child Retention. The researcher applied multiple regression to predict the contribution of both the independent variable, Family Socio-economic Status and moderator variable; Parent-Child engagement to girl-child retention.

**Ethical Considerations**

The ethical aspects of research are crucial. According to Bryman (2016), ethics are the rules or standards of behaviour that define what is right and wrong. They aid in defining what

constitutes acceptable and inappropriate behaviour. This study took a number of ethical considerations into account. Research subjects had the option to withdraw participation at any time; it was entirely voluntary. Therefore, before distributing the study questionnaires to respondents, the researcher sought for consent, explained the purpose of the study and assured them of confidentiality. In addition, the researcher discussed the intended data collection period with subjects before giving them questionnaires to complete. Unauthorised disclosure of study findings may damage the esteem and reputation of respondents. However, the researcher addressed this by restricting its accessibility to only authorised persons with a need to know.

The respondents were also fully informed on how their responses would be treated during the research, how risks would be managed, and the advantages of taking part in this study before the research ever started. The researcher minimised coercion and undue effect by giving responders enough time to think about the material presented. Following data collection, a debriefing was held for any interested Participants.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the findings of the study that examined the relationship between Family Socio-economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in government-aided secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, KCCA. The findings in this chapter are based on the questionnaire responses from 315 students who were selected from 5 schools.

#### Demographic Characteristics of the participants

In the study, the researcher collected demographic information of respondents, which was perceived to help understand the views of respondents on the issues that were being investigated. The personal information of the respondents is given first.

##### *Personal information*

Relevant Personal information of respondents about gender, age and secondary level class of the respondents was collected and the findings are presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Gender, Age and Class of Respondents (N=315)**

Variable	Percentages		
	Category	f	%
<b>Age</b>	<16years (younger teenager)	139	44.1
	>16 years (older teenager)	176	55.9
<b>Class</b>	O level	229	72.7
	A level	86	27.3

*Source: Primary data from the field (2021)*

*Age category of respondents*

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. The results in the Table show that the majority (55.9 %) were older than 16 years and the rest (44.1%) were younger than 16 years. The majority of respondents were older, with more life experiences and thus had sufficient knowledge of the issues that were being investigated.

*Level of secondary education*

The respondents also indicated the level of secondary education in which they were. The results in Table 6 show that the majority (72.7%) were in O- level, that is S1 to S4 and the rest (27.3%) were in A- level, S5 and S6. So, the views of the study are representative of all levels of education in secondary school education in Uganda.

*Family information*

The respondents also gave information about their family. The findings are in Table 7.

**Table 7: Family related information (N=315)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentages</b>	
		<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Person Stayed with</b>	All my parents	156	49.5
	Father only	56	17.8
	Mother only	74	23.5
	Guardian	29	9.2
<b>Parent/Guardian Occupation</b>	Civil Servants	72	22.9
	Business Persons	127	40.3
	Farmer	92	29.2
	Unemployed	24	7.6
<b>School location</b>	Urban-organized	156	49.5
	Slummy-shanty	159	50.5
<b>Knows a friend who has ever contemplated dropping out</b>	Yes	172	54.6
	No	143	45.4

*Source: Primary data from the field (2021)*

#### *Person Stayed with*

In relation to the Person respondents stay with, the results in Table 7 show that the majority (49.5%) stayed with all their parents, followed by 23.5% of the respondents who stayed with their mothers only, then by 17.8% who stayed with their fathers and finally by the 9.2% who stayed with guardians. Therefore, most of the respondents stayed with an adult person with a parenting experience, who was more likely to provide the needed support to stay in school, even when the girls had challenges that would lead to school drop-out.

#### *Parent/Guardian Occupation*

As far as the occupation of the Parent or Guardian is concerned, the results in Table 7 above show that the majority (40.3%) of Parents/Guardians were business persons, followed by

29.2% who were farmers, then by 22.9% who were civil servants while the smallest proportion (7.6%) were unemployed. Generally, most of the Parents or Guardians had a reliable source of income, implying they were able to give some financial support to the girls to reduce pre-disposition to school drop-out.

### *Respondents' School Location*

Respondents were also asked to indicate their school location. This was done to ascertain their pre-disposition to delinquent behaviour that would result in school drop-out. The results in Table 7 above show that the majority (50.5%) had their schools located in a more slum area than 49.5% in an Urban and organised area. It can therefore be concluded that most of the respondents were pre-disposed to delinquent behaviour as they went to school or went back home.

### *Whether knows a friend who has ever contemplated dropping out*

The researcher also sought to find out whether respondents had any friends who had contemplated dropping out of secondary school. The results in Table 7 above showed that the majority (54.6%) of respondents had female friends who had contemplated dropping out of secondary school while 45.4% of the respondents said they had none. This implies that the intention for girls to drop out was generally high.

### **Data characteristics**

The characteristics of the data that were collected were examined to determine the appropriate statistical tests (parametric or non-parametric) that would be used to test the study hypotheses. The normality and linearity of data were explored and confirmed before doing the final analysis. Normality was tested using a histogram of the residuals. The findings (see *Appendix 2*) showed that data for all three variables were normally distributed. The kurtosis and

skewness of the distributions were normal and so data was appropriate for inferential parametric tests analysis as recommended by O'Brien (2007).

Concerning linearity, it was ascertained whether the relationship between the independent and dependent variables could be expressed in a graphical and mathematical format. The Q-Q plots were done for each of the 3 variables. The findings (*see Appendix 2*) showed that data for the 3 variables was linear enough so that the dependent variable could be determined from the dependent variable. *Therefore*, as recommended by O'Hagan and McCabe (1975), *data met* the key requirements of descriptive, Pearson correlation and regression analysis.

*Family Socio-economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in Government -aided secondary Schools in Rubaga Division*

The Family Socio-economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in government-aided secondary Schools in the Rubaga Division were explored using descriptive statistics. Scores on each variable were determined by summing up the numbers representing the responses on each of the items measuring the variable. This action transformed the measurement of variables to an ordinal scale that enabled the calculation of descriptive statistics.

Family Socio-economic Status was measured using items on a 5point Likert Scale that were adapted from Brent et al. (2001) and Odimegwu and Mkwanazi (2016). The key items which were used to measure Family Socio-economic Status included; Girls with greater family financial support tend to perform better in school, My parents/guardians are highly supportive of my education, My parent/guardian is not quite interested in educating children, The person responsible for my schooling is financially stable and doesn't face any difficulties in this regard, Our family's income is relatively high compared to others in the society, My parent's occupation



is more prestigious compared to others in the society, My parents/guardian education create an environment conducive to learning for me, Our family enjoys a higher standard of living than others in our community

Parent-Child Engagement was measured using 18 items on a scale of 18 to 90 and values  $\Rightarrow 72$  meant that respondents had good Parent-Child Engagement. Parent-Child Engagement was indicated by parent's Warmness, Connectedness, Communication, regulation and relationship with the school. Girl-child retention was measured using 5 items on a scale of 5 to 25 and values  $\Rightarrow 20$  meant that respondents agreed to their school having a good number of girls staying in school even when they are exposed to school dropout factors. The descriptive statistics of the variables are given in Table 8.

**Table 8: Family Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-child retention in Government -aided secondary Schools (N=315)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>Social-economic status</b>	8.00	38.00	27.7	3.11
<b>Parent-Child Engagement</b>	18.00	86.00	63.1	1.13
<b>Girl-Child Retention</b>	5.00	24.00	17.6	2.02

*Source: Primary data (2021)*

*Family Social -economic status: Values  $\Rightarrow 32$ (agree), meant girls have supportive Social -economic status*

*Parent-Child Engagement: Values  $\Rightarrow 72$ (agree), meant adequate Parental Warmness, Connectedness, Communication, regulation and relationship with the school*

*Girl-child retention: Values  $\Rightarrow 20$  (agree), meant that girls had sufficient intention and resolve to remain in school*

The findings in Table 8 above show that the scores for Family Social -economic status were (mean=27.7, SD=3.11), Parent-Child Engagement were (mean=63.1, SD=1.13), and Girl-child retention was (mean=17.6, SD=2.02). The mean scores were lower than the maximum scores pointing to average Socio-economic status Parent-Child Engagement and girl-child retention.

The researcher then explored the aspects that mainly contributed to the Family's Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention.

The researcher then explored the aspects that mainly contributed to the Family's Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention. To achieve this, Percentages and mean responses were used. The findings are presented in the tables below.

#### *Family Socio-economic status*

Concerning the Family Social Economic Status, aspects with mean response => 3.5 implied that respondents agreed to experience them and those below 3.5 meant that they were not experienced. The findings are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Percentages, Mean response and SD of Family socio-economic status aspects (N=315)**

Socio-economic status aspects	Percentages (%)					Mean	Std. deviation
	SD	D	NS	A	SA		
Girls with greater family financial support tend to perform better in school	4.8	43.5	10.2	37.8	3.8	2.92	1.07
My parents/guardians are highly supportive of my education	6.7	38.1	11.4	39.0	4.8	2.97	1.11
My parent/guardian is not quite interested in educating children	7.3	58.1	7.9	26.7	0.0	2.54	0.97
The person responsible for my schooling is financially stable and doesn't face any difficulties in this regard.	8.6	31.7	11.1	44.8	3.8	4.03	1.12
Our family's income is relatively high compared to others in the society.	6.3	35.9	17.5	35.9	4.4	3.96	1.07
My parent's occupation is more prestigious compared to others in the society	5.4	46.3	15.6	30.8	1.9	2.77	1.01
My parent's/guardian's education creates an environment conducive to learning for me.	7.6	41.3	17.8	30.2	3.2	2.80	1.05
Our family enjoys a higher standard of living than others in our community	6.7	43.8	13.3	33.0	3.2	2.82	1.07

**Source: Primary Data (2021)**

The results in Table 9 above show that most of the respondents disagreed (mean response=2.92, sd=1.07) to whether girls with greater family financial support tend to perform better in school, disagreed (mean response=2.79, Sd=1.11), disagreed to whether parents/guardians are highly supportive of my education (mean=2.97, Sd =1.11), disagreed to

whether their parent's occupation is more prestigious compared to others in the society (mean response=2.77, Sd=1.01), disagreed to whether their parents/guardian education create an environment conducive to learning for me (mean response=2.80, Sd=1.05) and disagreed to whether their families enjoy a higher standard of living than others in our community (mean response=2.82, Sd=1.07).

The respondents agreed (mean response=4.03, Sd=1.12) to whether the person responsible for my schooling is financially stable and doesn't face any difficulties in this regard. It is also revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed that their family's income is relatively high compared to others in the society (mean response=3.96, Sd=1.07). Generally, respondents agreed to only two-family socio-economic support factors out of 8, implying that they did not experience very supportive Family Social Economic Status.

#### *Parent-Child Engagement*

As far as Parent-Child Engagement is concerned, aspects with mean response => 3.5 implied that respondents agreed to experience them and those below 3.5 meant that they were not experienced. The findings are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Percentages, Mean response and SD of Parent-Child Engagement aspects (N=315)**

Parent-Child Engagement aspects	Percentages (%)					Mean	Std. deviation
	SD	D	NS	A	SA		
<b>Parental Warmness</b>							
I sit and chat with my father/ male guardians every day	8.3	38.4	7.9	42.2	3.2	2.94	1.12
My mother/female guardian advises and interacts with me often	6.7	35.2	7.9	46.3	3.8	4.05	1.11
My guardian/parents appreciate what I do and encourage me to respect my body	4.1	35.2	12.4	41.6	6.7	4.11	1.09
My guardian/parents know my friends and their parents well	4.8	43.8	10.8	37.8	2.9	2.90	1.06
<b>Parental-child connectedness</b>							
I always share my needs and problems with my guardian/mother	7.0	36.8	7.3	45.1	3.8	4.02	1.12
My parents/guardians come home late and do not speak a lot to me	5.1	36.8	10.8	43.5	3.8	4.04	1.08
I do not discuss this with my parents/father/mother because I fear her/him	4.8	35.6	7.0	48.9	3.8	4.11	1.09
<b>Parent-child communication</b>							
My guardian/parent talks to me at least every day, and asks if I have any challenge	4.8	41.0	16.8	34.9	2.5	2.90	1.02
I like telling my guardian/parent (s) when I am going out with my friends	5.1	38.1	8.9	43.2	4.8	4.04	1.09
I respect my father/mother/guardians' opinions about my life	5.1	39.4	6.7	45.4	3.5	4.03	1.09
<b>Parental regulation</b>							
If I do not do things my father/mother/guardian wants, he/she reprimands me	6.7	34.3	8.3	46.0	4.8	4.08	1.12

I feel my father/mother/guardian gives us reasonable freedom to do what we want	4.1	36.5	12.4	42.5	4.4	4.07	1.06
My parents/guardians tend to control my movements	4.8	31.4	5.7	54.0	4.1	4.21	1.08
We have strict regulations at home regarding the friends we make	8.3	39.0	11.4	37.5	3.8	2.90	1.11

### **Parent school relationship**

There exists a strong relationship between my parents and my teachers	7.9	43.2	11.1	33.0	4.8	2.83	1.12
Parents' turn-up for school meeting invitations is very high.	6.0	37.1	10.2	39.7	7.0	2.04	1.14
Parents attend class days/AGM meetings whenever called upon	5.4	36.2	8.6	44.8	5.1	2.08	1.11
Parents come to school and talk to teachers about their children's performance	6.7	36.2	8.9	43.5	4.8	4.03	1.12

### ***Source: Primary Data (2021)***

Concerning parental warmth, the results in Table 10 revealed that the majority of the respondents did not agree (mean response =2.94, Sd=1.12) that they sit and chat with their father/male guardian every day, disagreed (mean=2.90, Sd=1.06) that most of the guardian/parents know the respondents' friends and their parents well. Respondents, however, agreed that guardians/parents appreciate what their children do and encourage them to respect their bodies (mean response =4.11, Sd =1.09). Regarding Parental-child connectedness, respondents agreed (mean response =4.02, sd =1.12) that they always share their needs and problems with their guardian/mother agreed that parents/guardians come home late and do not speak a lot to their children (mean=4.04, Std=1.08) and do not discuss with their parent/father/mother because they feared him/her (mean=4.11, Sd =1.09).

Concerning parent-child communication, the respondents disagreed (mean response =2.90, sd=1.02). But the majority of the respondents agreed (mean response =4.04, Sd =1.09) that they like telling their guardian/parent(s) when they are going out with their friends and respect their father/mother/guardians' opinion about their life (mean response =4.03, Sd=1.09). On the issue of parental regulation, majority of the respondents agreed (mean response =3.08, std. deviation=1.12) that they are reprimanded if they do not do things their father/mother/guardian want, fathers/mothers/guardians give them freedom to do what they want (mean=4.07, Sd=1.06) and parents/guardians tend to control the movements of the girls at home (mean=4.21, Sd=1.08). However, respondents disagreed (mean response =2.90, Sd=1.11) that there are strict regulations at home regarding friends.

Regarding parent-school relationship, respondents were in disagreement (mean=2.83, Sd=1.13) that parents and their teachers had a good relationship, disagreed (mean response =2.04, Sd=1.14) that parents' turn-up for school meetings invitations is always very high and parents attend class days/AGM meetings whenever called upon (Mean response =2.08, Sd =1.11). The respondents agreed (Mean response =4.03, Sd =1.12) that parents come to school and talk to teachers about their children's performance. Generally, Parent-Child Engagement was only average mainly contributed to by connectedness and regulation. Other aspects of engagement such as warmth, communication and parent-school relationships were generally low.

### *Girl Child Retention*

As far as Girl Child Retention is concerned, aspects with mean response  $\Rightarrow$  3.5 implied that respondents agreed to girls in their school having the intention to stay in school and those below 3.5 meant that they did not agree. The findings are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Percentages, Mean response and SD of Girl Child Retention aspects (N=315)**

Girl Child Retention aspects	Percentages (%)					Mean	Std. deviation
	SD	D	NS	A	SA		
There has been a reduction in the number of dropouts of Girls from this school	2.5	37.8	8.6	43.5	7.6	4.16	1.09
The completion rates of Girls at O-level and A-level in this school have increased in the past year	6.0	33.0	10.8	41.3	8.9	4.14	1.15
More girls than boys in my school are seeking bursaries to stay in school	5.1	36.8	10.2	44.4	3.5	4.04	1.07
Most of the girls in my school are keen on completing their education	8.3	36.8	10.2	42.2	2.5	2.23	1.09
The rate of repetition of classes among girls in my school has declined	5.4	36.2	8.9	43.8	5.7	2.08	1.11

**Source: Primary Data (2021)**

The findings in Table 11 show that concerning the reduction in the number of dropouts of Girl children, the majority agreed (mean response=4.16, sd=1.09). They also agreed that the enrolment level of Girl children in secondary schools in the Rubaga division increased (mean response=4.14, sd=1.151) and more girls seeking bursaries than boys (mean response=4.04, sd=1.076).

However, respondents disagreed (mean response =2.23, sd=1.09) with most of the girls in their school being keen on completing their education completion and the rate of repetition of classes among girls in their school declining (mean response=2.08, sd=1.11). Generally, the Girl Child Retention was just slightly above average and girls to some extent were pre-disposed to drop out of school.



## Relationship among Family Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in government -aided secondary Schools

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to establish the nature and magnitude of association among the variables. The findings are shown in Table 12.

**Table 12: Correlation Matrix of the Study Variables**

Variables	1	2	3
1- Family Social -economic status	1		
2- Parent-Child Engagement	.364**	1	
3- Girl -child retention	.342**	.508**	1

*Note: \*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

The findings in Table 12 show that the variables were significantly and positively correlated. This implied that as the independent variables increased the dependent increased. Therefore, the predictor variables significantly and positively predicted the dependent variable. Girl-child retention was significantly and positively correlated with Family Social-economic status and Parent-Child Engagement. Therefore, Family Social-economic status and Parent-Child Engagement were likely to be significant predictors of Girl-child retention. Low Social-economic status and Parent-Child Engagement would lead to low Girl-child retention and vice versa.

### ***Objective one: The relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in government- aided Secondary Schools in the Rubaga division***

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary Schools in the

Rubaga division. The researcher hypothesized that a significant relationship does not exist between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the relationship among the variables. The findings in Table 12 showed that a positive and significant relationship  $r(313) = .342, P < 0.01$ , existed between the Family Socio-Economic Status of the family and Girl Child Retention. This implies that better living conditions, stable incomes and employment of parents do increase the likelihood of girls in Secondary Schools remaining in school even when they are exposed to dropout factors.

***Objective two: The relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools***

The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary Schools in the Rubaga division. The researcher hypothesized that no significant relationship existed between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the relationship among the variables. The findings in Table 8 revealed that a positive and significant relationship  $r(313) = .508, P < 0.01$ , existed between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention. This means that better Parent-child relationships, communication and Parent-teachers relationships increase the resolve of girls to stay in school.

***Objective Three: The Relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement in Rubaga Division***

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement in the Rubaga division. The researcher had hypothesized that no significant relationship existed between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the

relationship among the variables. The findings in Table 8 revealed that a positive and significant relationship  $r(313) = .364, P < 0.01$ , existed between Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement. Therefore, good Family Social Economic Status Increased Parent-child relationship, communication and Parent-teachers relationship.

***Objective Four: The predictive potential of Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl-Child Retention***

The last objective of the study was to examine the predictive potential of Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary schools in the Rubaga division. The researcher hypothesized that Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement do not significantly predict Girl Child Retention. Hierarchical regression analysis was then used to examine the moderating potential of Parent-Child Engagement in the relationship between Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention. Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement were entered in the model as predictors, one following the other, and then both Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement were entered in the model as predictors of Girl Child Retention. The findings are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13: Results of Regression analysis of predictors on Girl Child-Retention**

<b>Model</b>	<b>Predictors</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>ΔR<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>ΔF</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>P-value</b>
<b>I</b>	School location, Parent-Guardian Occupation, Age Category of respondents, Class, Gender of respondents, Person stayed with	.026	.026	1.34	.160	.236
<b>II</b>	School location, Parent-Guardian Occupation, Age Category of respondents, Class, Gender of respondents, Person stayed with, FSES	.150	.124	44.88	.387	.000
<b>III</b>	School location, Parent-Guardian Occupation, Age Category of respondents, Class, Gender of respondents, Person stayed with, FSES, PI	.302	.152	66.62	.549	.000

The findings in Table 13 show that in the first model, demographic characteristics, though predicted about 2.6%, did not affect girl-child retention ( $\beta=.16$ ,  $P>0.05$ ). Then in the second model, both demographic characteristics and Family Social Economic Status had a positive and significant effect ( $\beta=.387$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) of 15 % on girl child retention. Then demographics, Family Social Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement also had a positive and significant effect ( $\beta=.549$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) of 30 % on girl-child retention. Therefore, Parent-Child Engagement led to about a 15.2 % increase in the predictive power of Family social economics on girl-child retention. This means that good Parent-Child Engagement does significantly moderate the relationship between family Socio-Economic Status and girl-girl-child retention by increasing the girls' resilience and ability to overcome dropout factors. Good Family Socio-Economic Status of the girls thus, leads to supportive Parent-Child Engagement which subsequently results in a stronger intention for secondary school girls to stay in school and complete their education even when exposed to various dropout factors.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion of Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion, conclusion and recommendations of the study that assessed the relationship between Socio-economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl-Child Retention in government-aided secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, Kampala District. The chapter gives a detailed discussion of results based on the study objectives and hypotheses. Lastly, this chapter presents conclusions and recommendations for action and further study.

#### Discussion of Results

***Objective one: The relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in government- aided Secondary Schools in the Rubaga division***

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary Schools in the Rubaga division. It was found that FSES was positively and significantly ( $r = .34$ ) related to Girl Child Retention and predicted about 15 % of Girl Child Retention. Hence, the hypothesis that a significant relationship does not exist between FSES and Girl Child Retention was rejected in favour of the alternative. Family Socio-economic background does influence the way children act when exposed to dropout. In reality, girls who live in conditions and in families that have more stable incomes, are more likely to receive motivation to study and complete their education. They are also given better life goals and achievement orientation increasing their likelihood to stay and complete secondary school.

These findings agree with Akella (2015) who said that the financial stability of the family enables the parents and guardians to provide a standard of living to the girls that enables them to focus on their studies. However, it was revealed that only two socio-economic aspects, financial stability and interest in education were the factors that were related to girl-child retention in secondary school. This implies that generally, the predisposition to drop out of school among girls in secondary school in the Rubaga division was still looming since most of the girls were living in the low-status category.

Therefore, as mentioned by Dong et al. (2019), a large proportion of girls are living in low-status households and are at risk of experiencing difficulties in school adjustment. Further, as acknowledged by the World Health Organization (2019), some of these students from low-income households are more likely to exhibit high rates of social difficulties that cause struggle with academic success, thus increasing the intention to drop out of school. In confirming the above fears, World Vision (2016) discovered that growth and development-related issues such as the challenges of adolescence, prevent children from low Family Social Economic Status from effectively participating in the learning. Highlighting the above findings, UNICEF (2017) also indicated that children from low Family Social Economic Status environments face prejudiced biases which prevent teachers from accurately assessing the student's real, rather than class-associated, learning capabilities. These children receive little teacher-student interaction, increasing their learning difficulties and the like hood stopping their education.

***Objective two: The relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools***

The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary Schools in the Rubaga

division. The findings revealed that a positive and significant relationship ( $r = .51$ ), existed between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention and it contributed close to 15.2 % to retention. Thus, the hypothesis that no significant relationship existed between Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention was rejected in favour of the alternative. Certainly, a better Parent-child engagement increased the intention of girls to stay in secondary school and complete their education. The findings further confirmed that the key aspects of Parent-child engagement involved in this relationship were parents maintaining a better Parent-child relationship and communication and a good Parent-teachers relationship.

The findings above agree with Bethany et al (2017) who said that parents who unite with their children and make them move toward some common goal – for instance, successful academic performance have children who are more committed to avoiding dropout so that they can accomplish their life goals. Therefore, in line with Dong et al (2019) argument, parents being actively involved in the lives of their children, which means being committed and guided by a clear vision for their children, can substantially improve parent-child engagement. From the practical perspective, parents have to assume leadership parenting by understanding and promoting their children's major aspirations and by incorporating these into their parenting activities. Parents who do this are more likely to influence the behaviour of their children and raise their motivation to succeed, thus reducing the likelihood of school dropout.

The findings also highlight the role of the school in increasing girl-child retention in secondary school. It was found out that children want their parents to take an active interest in their school life. This confirms Odimegwu and Mkwanzazi's (2016), earlier findings that children who see their parents interested in their education, school and teachers, usually develop a

trusting relationship with their parents, remove barriers in communication, and allow numerous opportunities for their parents to take part in the decision related their educational outcomes.

This implies that parents have to be encouraged to follow Rich and Nicolette's (2018) advice that, for parents to develop effective relationships between their children and school, they have to incorporate trust and respect as an integral part of their school-parent every relationship. When children see parents seeking and attending Informal meetings with teachers at various school events, they realise that their parents want to know the teachers, and informally discuss various aspects of their children's learning progress. The findings also pointed to the need for trustful relationships between parents and schools in reducing girl-child dropout. As indicated by Allison (2019), durable learning-related partnerships allow both parents and the school to work on the developmental needs of children, reducing their like hood dropping out of school. The partnership between parents and school staff is an integral part of positive child-parent-school engagement since it allows the school to share responsibility for children's learning with parents.

The findings also revealed that apart from parents, schools also have a role to play in motivating parents of all backgrounds, origins and beliefs to be actively involved in the lives and education of their children. According to UNICEF (2017), schools must create a supportive environment that encourages true openness to parent and community involvement as well as staff accessibility. When teachers and staff show a willingness to learn about a child's past and a keen interest in their unique needs and interests, this builds parent confidence and improves parental involvement and want to participate in their children's learning.



*Objective Three: The Relationship between Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement in Rubaga Division*

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between FSES and Parent-Child Engagement in the Rubaga division. It was found that a positive and significant relationship ( $r = .36$ ), existed between FSES and Parent-Child Engagement. Consequently, the hypothesis that no significant relationship existed between FSES and Parent-Child Engagement was rejected in favour of the alternative. A good Family Social Economic Status of parents enhanced the quality of Parent-child engagement.

The findings have revealed that Parents from high Family Social Economic Status are more likely to be actively involved in their children's lives, learn about their life goals and use the school to support the child's education. This agrees with Velisiwe (2018), who said that parents who have stable incomes and living conditions, value educational success more and usually have more self-confidence to prude the school to be able to provide parents with timely feedback on their children's progress and the curriculum changes. On the one hand, World Health Organization (2019), discovered that in Africa, schools are more drawn to providing parents of a high Family Social Economic Status with regular information regarding student's learning and achievement. Then, schools can quickly work with parents to resolve any occurring issues such as misbehaviour or failure to capture the presented material, immediately before they escalate into school dropout. Further Wado et al. (2019) mentioned that timely notifications allow parents of a higher Family Social Economic Status to follow the children's process of learning, as well as take an active part in it.

***Objective Four: The predictive potential of Family Socio-Economic Status and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl-Child Retention***

The last objective of the study was to examine the predictive potential of FSES and Parent-Child Engagement on Girl Child Retention in government-aided Secondary schools in the Rubaga division. The researcher hypothesized that FSES and Parent-Child Engagement do not significantly predict Girl Child Retention. It was found out *that* both FSES and Parent-Child Engagement were positively related to Girl Child Retention and predicted 30.2 % of it. It was also discovered that Parent-Child Engagement positively moderated the relationship between FSES and Girl Child Retention and increased it by 15.2 %.

This implies that Parent-Child Engagement plays a positive role in the influence of FSES of girls on their intention to stay in school and complete their education. The findings agree with the World Health Organization (2019), Which said that Parent-Child engagement does increase the effectiveness of the social -economic status on the ability of girls to overcome dropout factors. A good FSES of the family gives parents and guardians more exposure to the benefits of education and skills in supporting girls to stay in school. This leads to a stronger intention for secondary school girls to stay in school even in the face of dropout factors.

The results have also showed that schools should seek to create community networks in order to benefit kids and to increase parents' motivation in cooperating in achieving shared goals of learning and academic achievement in children. To be successful, Male and Quentin (2018) argue that this process requires the school to promote formal networks. For instance, schools can cooperate systematically with parents who are health professionals, artists, and representatives of other fields of activity to be role models to the girls. The good examples of

these role models may motivate girls who have been facing dropout factors to stick on and eventually complete their education

The findings also pointed out the role of parent-child-school communication in girl-child retention. Important communication was related to strategies parents and the school should implement to make their relations more effective in supporting school retention. In line with Wado et al. (2019), the findings emphasised personalized and regular communication, that contains easy-to-understand information, enables both the school and parents to participate in decision-making that promotes a child's involvement in educational endeavours and resolve to complete education and achieve personal life development goals. Communication is crucial for effective interaction between parents and the school, otherwise, lack of communication can be a serious impediment to the positive effect of Family Social Economic Status and parent-child engagement on girl-child retention.

A Supportive Family Social Economic Status coupled with enhanced parent-child engagement, do influence girl-child retention both directly and indirectly. Such an effect is most likely to occur, in the educational process of the girl child if strong social networks develop the child's self-efficacy and positive behaviour to resist dropout and strive to attain life development goals.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The respondents were expected to deliberately refuse to give the necessary information to the researcher regarding the study while questioning the confidentiality and purpose. However, the researcher explained to them that the information was only to be used for academic purposes and would be handled with utmost care.

The researcher anticipated experiencing a problem of limited finances concerning this study since it's a self-sponsored research study. Costs included transport, printing and photocopying of relevant materials. However, the researcher sourced some money from relatives, and friends and used it sparingly to overcome the cost constraint.

## **Conclusions**

The study has confirmed that Family Social Economic Status affects girl-child retention in Uganda by either reducing or increasing difficulties in school adjustment. Girls in high Family Social Economic Status environments receive better physical and emotional support to face or even overcome educational difficulties that predispose them to school dropout. On the other hand, Girls in low Family Social socioeconomic status environments face high rates of social difficulties that result in a struggle with academic success, thus increasing the intention to drop out of school. The challenges of adolescence, such as managing growing up and negative peer pressure significantly prevented girls from low Family Social Economic Status from effectively participating in their education and learning activities at school. These girls also faced prejudices from teachers as they were perceived as delinquent, resulting in little teacher-student interaction. This increased their learning difficulties and the likelihood of stopping their education.

The Parent-child – engagement that supports girl-child retention in secondary schools in Uganda involves parents working with their children to help them decide their children's life goals such as successful academic performance, and then build responsibility and resilience in them to make them move toward these goals. This type of parenting nurtures girls who are more committed to avoiding dropouts so that they can accomplish their life goals. Therefore, parents

being actively involved in the lives of their children, guided by a clear vision for their children, can substantially improve parent-child engagement and reduce intentions to drop out of school.

Efficient school-family-child relationships, enhance teacher-parent communication about the child's educational challenges, enabling timely decision-making on the needed support. schools with strong parent relationships, partnerships, community networks, and communication sustain effective strategies for reducing girl-child school dropout.

### **Recommendations for action**

#### ***Enhancing the contribution of Family Social Economic Status to girl child retention***

There is a need for the government to implement economic and educational empowerment programmes for parents in Uganda so that they can develop a better outlook on the value of education and the need to support girls in attaining employability education. The government and other stakeholders should come up with projects and programs aimed at improving the socio-economic status of different people in different communities as this would have a positive impact on girl-child retention in schools.

The government should support families and students with low Family Social Economic Status by providing them with scholarships, educational materials and regular home visits and follow-ups to reduce predisposition to drop out such as poor academic performance and unwanted pregnancies among girls.

The schools, through their guidance and counselling departments, should be helped to build capacity to eliminate negative outcomes of low socioeconomic status on learning through life development teacher-student communication and teacher's sincere interest in both student's learning and student's personality.

The interactions teachers have with their students from low-income status should be able to leave permanent impressions on students that “Yes they can Succeed”.

### ***Enhancing the Contribution of Parent-child Engagement to girl Girl-child Retention***

The study recommends that parenting programmes should be initiated on radios and community levels to train parents on the skills of interacting with their children on key life development issues such as education. The parents will learn how to effectively interact with their children to encourage them to respect their bodies and not engage in activities that may endanger their lives. The parents and guardians will also learn how to create quality time to mentor their children on how to overcome challenges they face in school as this may enable them to find solutions to the different problems and enable them to keep in school and also improve their performance.

School-teacher-parent communication programmes should be initiated at the school level to enable parents, teachers and school managers to understand and fulfil their roles of supporting girls to remain in school.

The study recommends that parents and guardians should strengthen and implement strict laws and regulations at home regarding their children's movements and the different friends they make as this may enable them not to get bad friends that may influence their studies which may even result in dropping out of school.

The study recommends that parents and guardians should strengthen their relationship with their student's teachers as this may enable them to monitor their students' performance and character in school.

The study also recommends that parents and guardians should always pay their students' school fees on time as this may enable the students to stay in school and concentrate on their studies which could limit the level of dropouts.

### **Area for Further Research**

The findings of this research point to the need for further research in the following areas:

1. The study concentrated on the Rubaga division, a small area of KCCA. yet literature indicated that low levels of girl-child retention exist in most government-aided secondary schools in rural areas. There is a need for a country-wide study of the problem to have more compressive information that may improve girl child retention in the country.
2. There is a need to have a comparison study of government-aided and private secondary schools on socio-economic status, parent-child engagement and Girl child retention.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Study

Dear Student

I am a student of Kyambogo University Pursuing a master of counselling psychology of Kyambogo University. In fulfilment of this requirement, I am expected to undertake a study. The purpose of contacting you is regarding this study. The topic of the study is "The Influence of Socio-Economic Status, Parent-Child Engagement and Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary in Rubaga Division, KCCA.

This is an academic study and your participation will be voluntary and meant to provide information that can answer the set research questions and objectives. Please feel free to provide all information you know about the study. Your information will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and will exclusively be used for that purpose.

Instructions: Please respond to the given questions/statements by putting a tick mark [ ] in the spaces provided as guided

#### **Section A: Demographic information about the respondent**

1. Name of School.....

2. Age

1. Less than 12 years  2. 12- 15 years  3. 16- 19 years  4. 20-23 years

4. Whom do you stay with at home?

1. All my parents  2. Father only  3. Mother only

4. Guardian

5. What is the occupation of your parents/guardians?

1. Civil Servants  2. Business Persons  3. Farmer  4. Unemployed

6. Where is the school situated?

1. Urban  2. Semi-urban  3. Rural

7. How many are you in class.....

8. How many female students started with you and dropped out.....

9. Do you have some of your friends (female) who repeated class?

Yes  No

10. If yes in 9 above, how many were they .....

**Section B: Family Socio-Economic Status Scale** (*Adapted from Pragti & Rajoura 2005*)

In this section, please respond to the statements given based on your level of agreement with them. The rating scale is; strongly disagree (1) Disagree (2) Not sure (3) Agree (4) strongly agree (5)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree [SD]	Disagree [D]	Not Sure (NS)	Agree [A]	Strongly Agree [SA]

In the following statements about the socio-economic status of your family, please give your level of agreement on a scale of 1-5

S/N	Respond to the Statements	Response scale				
		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Girls with greater family financial support tend to perform better in school					
2	My parents/guardians are highly supportive of my education					
3	My parent/guardian is not quite interested in educating children					
4	The person responsible for my schooling is financially stable and doesn't face any difficulties in this regard					
5	Our family's income is relatively high compared to others in the society.					
6	My parent's occupation is more prestigious compared to others in the society					
7	My parents/guardian's education created an environment conducive to learning for me.					
8	Our family enjoys a higher standard of living than others in our community					

### Section C: Parent-Child Engagement

In this section, please respond to the statements given based on your level of agreement with them. The rating scale is; strongly disagree (1) Disagree (2) Not sure (3) Agree (4) strongly agree (5) as given by Bhandari (2020).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree [SD]	Disagree [D]	Not sure (NS)	Agree [A]	Strongly Agree [SA]

11. In your opinion, how do you agree with the following statements related to your relationship with your parents/guardian?

S/N	Respond to the Statements	Response Scale				
		SD 1	D 2	NS 3	A 4	SA 5
	<i>Parent-Child Engagement</i>					
1	I sit and chat with my father/ male guardians every day					
2	My mother/female guardian advises and interacts with me often					
3	My guardian/ father/mother is my best friend					
4	My guardian/parents appreciate what I do and encourage me to respect my body					
5	My guardian/parents know my friends and their parents well					
	<i>Parental-child connectedness</i>					
1	I always share my needs and problems with my guardian/mother					
2	My parents/guardians come home late and do not speak a lot to me					
3	If I do not see my father/mother/ guardian I feel guilty					
3	I do not discuss this with my parents/father/mother because I fear her/him					
	<i>Parent-child communication</i>					
1	My guardian/parent talks to me at least every day, and asks if I have any challenge					
2	I like telling my guardian/parent (s) when I am going out with my friends					
3	I respect my father/mother/guardians' opinions about my life					
	<i>Parental control/regulation</i>					
1	If do not do things my father/mother/guardian wants, he/she reprimands me					
2	I feel my father/mother/ guardian gives us the freedom to do what we want					
3	My parents/guardians tend to overlook and control my movements					
4	We have strict regulations at home regarding the friends we make					
	<i>Parent school relationship</i>					
1	There exists a strong relationship between my parents and my teachers					
2	Parents' turn-up for school meeting invitations is very high.					
3	Parents attend class days/AGM meetings whenever called upon					
4	Parents come to school and talk to teachers about their children's performance					
5	The period within which my school fees are paid impresses the school					

### Section D: Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools

In this section, please respond to the statements given based on your level of agreement with them. The rating scale is; strongly disagree (1) Disagree (2) Not sure (3) Agree (4) strongly agree (5) as given by Bhandari (2020).

In your opinion, how do you agree with the following statements related to Girl Child Retention in Public Secondary Schools?

S/N	Respond to the Statements	Response Scale				
		SD	D	NS	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There has been a reduction in the number of dropouts of Girl child from this school					
2	The enrolment level of Girl children in this school has increased					
3	More girls are provided with bursaries because of their improved performance					
4	The completion level of girl child in this school has increased					
5	The rate of repetition of girl children in class has declined					

**Thank you for your cooperation**

### Appendix 2: Data Characteristics

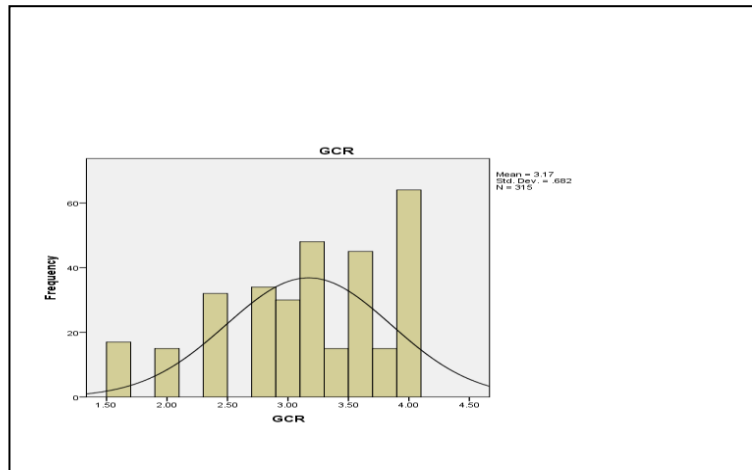
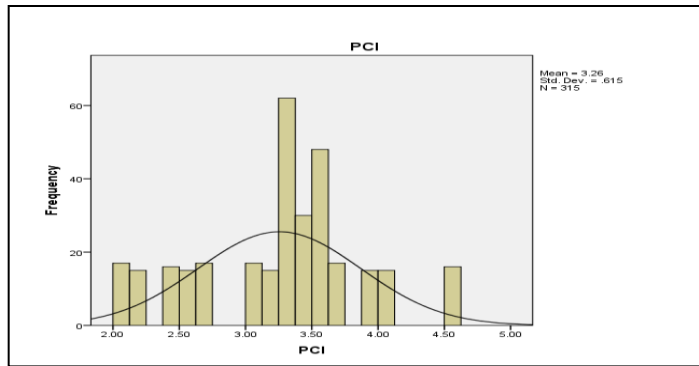
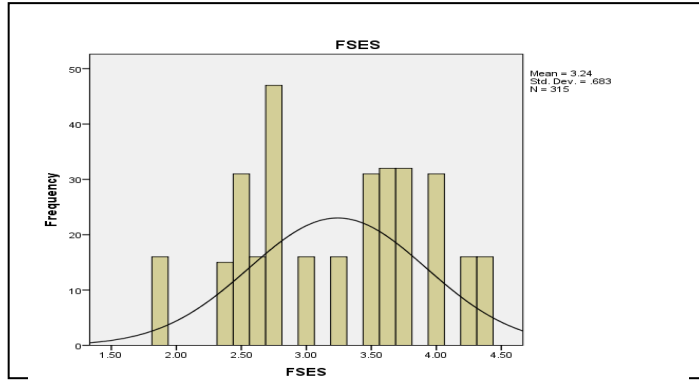


Figure 4: Q-Q plot of Family Social Economic Status

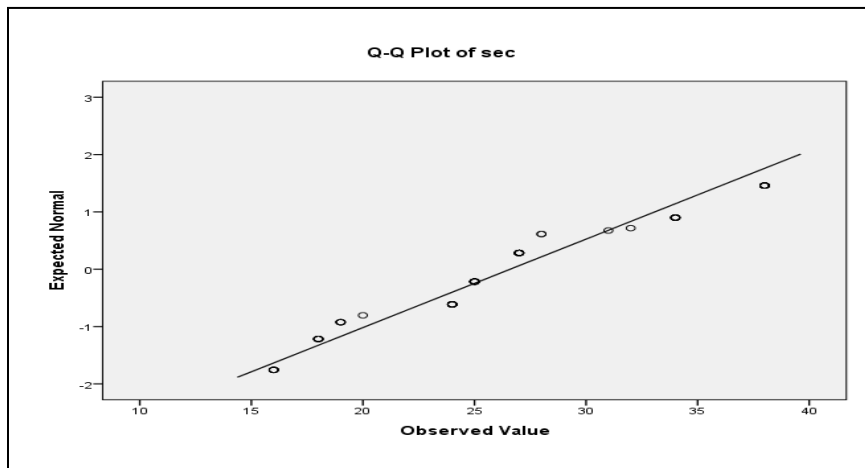
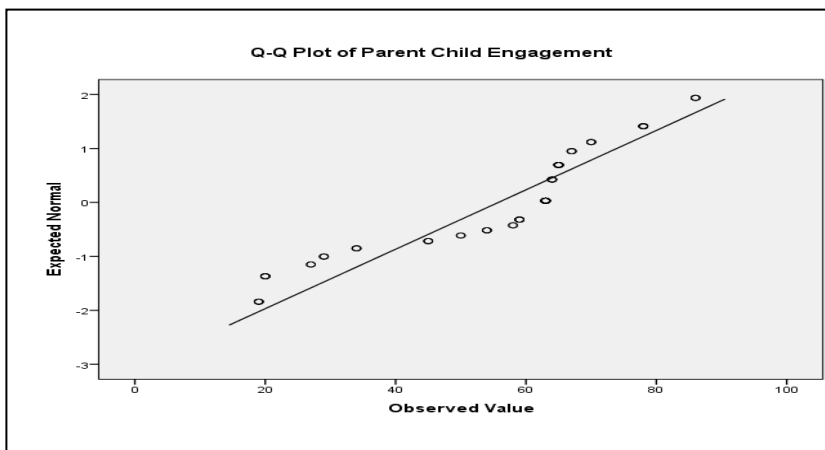


Figure 4: Q-Q plot of Parent-Child Engagement



### Appendix 3: Table for determining sample size

Table for Determining Sample Size for a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Note: "N" is population size

"S" is sample size

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970



#### Appendix 4: Profile of Secondary Schools in Lubaga Division

School Code	School Name	The population of female students	Number Selected
A	Nateete Muslim High	390	62
B	Kitebi Secondary	460	64
C	Lubiri senior secondary	560	65
D	Mengo senior secondary	540	63
E	Lubaga girls	780	61
<b>Total</b>		<b>2730</b>	<b>315</b>

*Source: Lubaga Division, Education Department Annual Report (2021)*

## Appendix 6: Plagiarism Test Report

### Plagiarism Report-Aguti by Martha Aguti

Submission date: 30-Sep-2023 09:13PM (UTC+0100)  
 Submission ID: 2181267200  
 File name: Martha\_Aguti\_-\_Edited\_Report\_Final-30-9-23\_version\_1.doc (874.5K)  
 Word count: 19986  
 Character count: 114264

#### Plagiarism Report-Aguti

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<b>5</b>	<b>docs.mak.ac.ug</b> Internet Source	<b>1</b> %
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<b>8</b>	<b>Yu-chu Yeh, Yu-Shan Ting. "Comparisons of creativity performance and learning effects through digital game-based creativity learning between elementary school children"</b>	<b>&lt;1</b> %