

Bending them young; interrogating critical male involvement strategy for Gender Equality in Uganda

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACFODE..... Action for Development

GEST Gender Equality Studies Training

LGBTQI..... Lesbians, Gay, Bisexuals, Transsexual, Queer and intersexual

NRM..... National Resistance Movement

STEM..... Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

UN-ICPD..... United Nations International Conference on Population and Development

CSMM.....Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities

Abstract

This work entitled 'Bending Them Young; Interrogating Critical Male Involvement Strategy for Gender Equality in Uganda' is a qualitative study that explores the existing boys' involvement interventions for achieving gender equality in Uganda, highlighting their achievements and identifying the gaps to be filled as well recommending ways in which the strategy can be strengthened to ensure future transformative approaches of achieving gender equality. This study will focus on the narratives of youths aged 5 to 15 in rural government-funded primary schools, situating them within their distinct experiences and realities. I will be interested in narratives and descriptions and the contextual understanding of the boys' involvement in interventions for achieving gender equality.

The study will investigate interventions addressing gender-based violence for boys and boys' involvement in the areas of education, and parenting and identify the gaps within these strategies. It will then suggest alternative boys' involvement interventions that seek to take on boys as early as age five to deconstruct the likely harmful patriarchal norms and values that would hinder the realization of gender equality. The study hopes to establish possibilities of working with boys in rural areas of Rukungiri district, in Southwestern Uganda, to fill the gaps in the existing interventions for involving young boys.

Current strategies prioritize adult men and, to a lesser extent, boys in urban centers, and this results in the neglect of boys living in rural areas. Many civil society organizations, development partners, and government institutions focus on urban spaces. The study speaks to two different but related kinds of challenges. The first challenge is to identify and analyze the boys' involvement in interventions in gender equality and women empowerment programming and advocacy that are currently in use in Uganda. The second challenge is to unearth and understand the local conditions/ context-based impediments that have frustrated the interventions to involve boys for gender equality. The study seeks to provide an evidence-based, analytical basis for forging deliberate and meaningful synergies with critical civil society and government stakeholders in the hope that, once streamlined, these can result in incremental changes toward realizing gender equality in Uganda.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

This is a qualitative study that seeks to explore and analyze the existing boys' involvement strategies in gender equality work especially in the areas of parenting and education in primary schools of Kebisoni SubCounty, Rukungiri district, South Western Uganda. The study aims to reimagine a holistic, deliberate, and well-thought strategy to complement the bigger male involvement strategy toward the realization of gender equality in the area.

Gender refers to the socially constructed and historically made and repeated norms, values, and beliefs of being a man or a woman in society (UNESCO, 2003). The concept is contested and used in various ways. In Uganda, it is viewed with suspicion and regarded as an alien construct. A few people in formal spaces like academia, civil society, and development institutions constitute a small percentage of those who understand the concept of gender as fluid, contextual, and universal. Most of the population only limits the concept to women and women's issues, and more recently to the gay rights movement.

According to UNICEF (2017), Gender equality refers to a situation where the opportunities, freedoms, rights, and privileges of men, women, boys, and girls are enjoyed fully and on equal grounds.

In my study, I reflect on boys' involvement as the approaches and strategies that seek to enable young boys' active role and support of gender equality initiatives.

1.2 Tracing the History of Gender Regimes in Uganda

I draw on the historicization of gender equality to provide a description of the evolution of the gender order and locate ideas on involving boys in gender equality work in Uganda. My scope of historicization is from 1894 to the present because that period has visible and active gender order in Uganda.

The history of gender activism in Uganda can be categorized into three key phases: pre-independence gender activism (the period between 1894 to 1962), gender activism in post-independence Uganda (the period between 1962 to 1986), and gender activism in

contemporary Uganda (the period from 1986 to present). In the early days of colonialism, missionary women, female colonial administrators, and educators, most from Britain, fought for women's rights in Uganda (Tripp, 2004). This would later produce pioneer Ugandan women in education and club formation. In 1898, 12 missionary women taught girls in various church centers about writing, reading, arithmetic, and Christian faith. Women's collective mobilization to challenge male domination dates to 1946 with the formation of the Uganda Council of Women (Mwaka, 1996) and 1952 with the formation of the Young Wives Christian Association to promote women's empowerment and participation in the building of Uganda.

Women organized and mobilized in a structure of voluntary Christian-centered and community development-rooted women's clubs. Most notable members of these clubs were wives of colonial administrators, business people, and early Christian missionaries. These clubs' key and primary focus was on girl child education, as spearheaded by Margaret Graham and Mary Stuart (Mpanga, 2019). The clubs provided avenues for women to obtain skills in home management, childcare, sanitation, nurturing, and nutrition. However, the key focus was lobbying support from male local chiefs and administrators to allow women's education. Also, at the Uganda Council of Women's Conference in 1960, women gathered and deliberated on women's issues, agitating for women's access to opportunities in the public sphere. In conjunction with the Ministry of Information, they wrote and published leaflets on women's issues, such as access to public life, education, and maternity care (Mwaka, 1996).

Between 1961 and 1964, women's activism took a more collective action to advocate for equal rights to land access, education, inheritance, political representation, marriage, and freedom from domestic violence. Women's activism responded to double oppression of colonial and gender oppression at a time. The Uganda Council of Women, which had been earlier formed as a space for protesting gender inequalities, bred prominent gender activists like Sarah Nyendwoha Ntiro, who successfully challenged the unequal gendered pay for equal work at Gayaza High School in 1955. Others included Joyce Mpanga and Frances Akello, who, alongside Sarah Ntiro, were the first three women on the 51-member legislative council, the Ugandan parliament of the time (Mpanga, 2019). Pumla Kisosonkole and her successor, Florence Lubega, were other female legislators on the eve of independence in 1962 (Mulera,

2021). These women of firsts initiated several gender-related legislations like marriage registration and family law reforms.

The government of Sir Edward Mutesa 2, as the first president of independent Uganda from 1962 to 1966, saw some women who had taken a key role in independence activism continue to thrive in Uganda's politics, and most of them in education, joining Makerere University. However, this was short-lived with Milton Obote's takeover between 1966 and 1971, where politics were characterized by corruption, tribalism, and nepotism, with the abolishing of kingdoms being a critical moment that limited freedom of expression, identity, assembly, and belonging. There were efforts by the post-independent government of Obote 1 to change the management of the Uganda Council of Women from individual women to the state, which attempt was resisted by the women in the movement. This led to the formation of the Uganda Association of Women's organization by Obote's government to coordinate the women's movement with all other women's rights organizations as its affiliates (Kwesiga, 2003). This organization was patronized by Miria Obote (the then-wife of President Obote and first lady). This move led to the state's capture and control of women's rights organizations. According to (Mwiine, 2021), this highlighted that the women's movement had been politicized with the emergence of autocratic governments shortly after independence in 1962.

There was limited gender activism in the period between 1971 and 1979 due to Idi Amin's dictatorship, which ran on banning political activity and activists' associations fronting authoritarian rule. This was made worse by repressive decrees on miniskirts and morality, which curtailed women's rights of choice and expression. Bakare-Yusuf (2009) defines these state controls as "legislating women's bodies." The period after Amin was marred with military coups and counter coups, including Godfrey Lokongwa Binasisa toppling Amin and taking control between 1979 to 1980, Paul Muwanga toppling Binasisa and leading between 12th May to 22nd May 1980, and then Obote coming back from 1980 to 1985 and his overthrow by Tito Okello who led for one year from 1985 to 1986—this period had no visible and traceable gender activism since it was characterized by anarchy, misrule, and insecurity.

The coming of Museveni into power coincided with the global efforts to steer women's rights and gender equality since it was shortly after the international women's conference in

Nairobi. Several gender equality interventions were adopted by the new government, which promised a fundamental change and tried to lobby for global support. Some of these included affirmative action in politics and education with women's parliamentary quotas in every district (Tamale, 1999; Rule, 1986) and 1.5 points added weights for girls joining higher learning institutions (Ottemoeller, 1999). This was a system aimed at bridging the gender gap in the enrollment levels of girls in higher institutions of learning. Museveni's government also saw Uganda draft a gender-sensitive constitution in 1995 (Tamale, 1999).

Contemporary activism in Uganda is a continuation of the hard work of the old feminists. However, there continues to be a politically motivated shrinking space that frustrates the gender equality campaigns and programs (Matembe, 2009). The male-dominated parliament that cripples gender-related legislation (Wang, 2014), religious leaders preaching misogyny (Amuge et al., 2023), as well as reactionary male rights activism spaces like boy camps (Wyrod, 2009), have sought to undermine the hard-earned feminist gains of the years before (see in the following subsection). This has resulted in development partners, civil society, and activists coming up with ideas of involving men and boys in gender equality as a critical way of addressing the patriarchal-motivated backlash against gender equality. This was after a realization that gender activism in the 20th century did not attempt to work with men or work towards progressive masculinities.

1.3 Gender Backlash in Uganda

Backlash in this sub-section can be categorized as interpersonal, institutional as well as state-orchestrated activities that threaten to cripple gender equality and women empowerment. It will also encompass ideas on misogyny and homophobia since these two involve the subjugation and discrimination of people based on their gender identity and sexual orientation. The moments of backlash against gender equality in Uganda can be traced as far back as 1945 when Sarah Nyendwoha (one of the first cohort of six women) to attend Makerere College, now Makerere University (the first technical school in Uganda), was chased out of a mathematics class by a male tutor who said that she was not trained to teach mathematics to women (Ntiro, 2022). Obote's government from 1966 to 1971 ran on the kind of social organization that

demonized gender and clamped down on all forms of organizing that sought to front women's issues as issues of national importance.

Other vital moments are Iddi Amin's 1972 decrees on mini-skirts and other immoral attire, as well as abortion being deemed a crime against the state and the president, liable for trial before a military tribunal (Ravenhill, 1974). There was also the anti-pornography bill of 2014 (Tamale, 2016), which was a legal move that targeted women's dress code, sexual expression, and satisfaction. The recently signed anti-homosexuality Acts of 2014 and 2023 (Nyanzi & Karamagi, 2015); Okech, 2023; Nakkazi, 2014) can also be categorized as a gender backlash since it entails homophobia, an idea that fronts discrimination against people depending on their gender identity and sexual orientation. It should be noted that the homophobic gender regime does not only target men but also women, and gender is a key identity marker that drives such kind of discrimination and persecution.

Decker (2015) discusses the dictatorial Amin regime, noting how militarism impacted the gender terrain in Uganda, while Goertz (2002) reflects on the pseudo-equality in Museveni's regime by unearthing women's political power and effectiveness in Uganda's multiparty system the 1996 constituent assembly that drafted a new constitution. I term Museveni's idea of equality as 'pseudo' because his initial progressive stance on gender equality, where he worked with influential and instrumental women, has now changed to appointing women in certain positions to tick boxes of gender sensitivity. However, those women have been initiated into the larger politics of nepotism, corruption, capitalism, and individualism. Also, the president of Uganda has always publicly despised gender scholars, branding them "those that study and work on women's issues" and the other related humanities and social science subjects like development studies and conflict resolution as "useless arts" (Nakkazi, 2014)."

Several strategies have been initiated mostly by civil society to promote gender equality, even in situations of dominant masculine structures. Key amongst them is the boys' involvement strategy, a product of the more prominent male involvement strategy that seeks men's active role and support of gender equality initiatives and interventions.

The historical analysis above is significant in providing a context where boys' involvement as a strategy for achieving gender equality is grounded. It provides an important highlight on the milestones reached, as well as the existing gaps to fill in the journey of gender equality. A detail on backlash opens the study to critically interrogate the existing challenges that frustrate ideas on working with boys to achieve gender equality and suggest ways to counter them critically.

1.4 Problem Statement.

In the research on gender equality in Uganda, there is not as much work on working with boys as on working with men in different contexts. The bigger picture of male involvement as a global intervention in working with men in gender equality will inform my focus on working with boys to achieve gender equality in Uganda. Male involvement in the quest for gender equality is a product of a realization that gender equality cannot be achieved when the active involvement and support of men is overlooked. This approach is a result of the evolution from WAD (Women and Development), which was experiences-based and grounded in women's voices with a women-centered approach, to WID (Women in Development), which was a liberal approach and reformist in nature, and then to GAD (Gender and Development) which was transformative with an emphasis on relations of gender arguing for a transformative approach rather than reforming the system, see (Muyoyetu, 2004).

Within the GAD approach, debates of male involvement started in the 1990s to help mainstream gender across all structures and achieve gender equality. There have been increased approaches to involve men in Uganda, in promoting gender equality in sexual and reproductive health, mitigating gender-based violence, and early childhood development, among others (Flood, 2019). These take different forms, such as male champions (Mwiine, 2019), male role modeling (Besada et al., 2016), male engagement (Westmarland et al., 2020), as well as male involvement (Ministry of Health, 2019; Ministry of Gender Labour And Social Development, 2017).

This strategy has, to a certain degree, helped in efforts to achieve gender equality. The achievements include, in Uganda, having men support their spouses for Sexual and

Reproductive Health services (Besada et al., 2016) and men being at the frontline for gender justice in some civil society organizations. Other ways include men pushing and supporting gender bills in legislative spaces (Mwiine, 2018) and engaging in gender-transformative work in institutions of higher Learning (Kikooma et al.,2022).

The key milestones in Uganda's male involvement in gender equality include Uganda's commitment to implement a program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 in Cairo, seeking active male involvement in family planning (Ssendawula,1999). There has also been growing scholarship and broad study and knowledge in the area of men and masculinities, with the introduction of a course module on men's studies, masculinities, and development at the Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies in 2011. Other key moments include the launching of the national male involvement strategy and guidelines in 2014 (WHO-Africa,2014) and the drafting of the national male involvement strategy for prevention and response to gender-based violence in Uganda in 2017, both under the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development, 2017), and the national strategy for male involvement/participation in reproductive health, maternal, child, adolescent health and rights-nutrition including HIV/TB under the ministry of health in 2019 (Ministry of Health, 2019).

Regardless of all these, male involvement still leaves questions about the persistent male domination within Uganda's gender order (Wyrod,2009), even when the strategy has been in place for over 20 years. I reflect on this male domination as men using their preponderant power to control development initiatives as well as resist any incursions that threaten their authority. In areas with a growing scholarship and practice on masculinities and male involvement strategies for achieving gender equality, the shift has changed from engaging older men to young boys. However, this approach is still unpopular among Uganda's male involvement strategists. It is always tagged along the broader male involvement with no clear-cut, deliberate, and specific focus on young boys. Even those trying to involve young boys are not doing it deliberately but have it tagged along with mainstream programming, such as gender-responsive planning and teaching gender to youths (Jones, 2021: Gro-Gest, 2023).

Hence, its weaknesses resemble those of the broader male involvement strategy in Uganda, whose Male Action Groups have yet to be effective due to the failure to popularize them among community members (Mwije, 2018), which points to the gaps in implementation. (Gopal et al., 2020) argue that the inadequate appreciation of male involvement strategies in Sexual and reproductive health rights initiatives in Uganda by men, women, girls, and boys due to rigid cultural practices, is another gap. The Ministry of Health report on male involvement in health in Uganda stresses that several government policies and strategies mention male involvement but with no visible policy and guidelines for implementation (Ministry of Health, 2019).

By focusing on the connection between broader masculinity interventions and a specific focus on young boys, this research study, therefore, aims to interrogate ways in which the interventions for involving boys in gender equality in education and parenting can embrace the idea of developing and harnessing positive and progressive masculinities at a relatively younger age to enable working with boys to promote gender equality without reproducing a male hegemony. The study seeks to critically engage with context-specific interventions involving young boys toward the achievement of gender equality in Uganda by creating deliberate synergies with critical stakeholders like rural religious-founded but government-funded primary schools, curriculum developers, teachers, gender activists, parents, and guardians in the South Western district of Rukungiri in Uganda.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Main Research Question

How do we critically understand and analyze young masculinities as preparatory steps to inform interventions that seek to involve young boys in gender equality work in rural government-funded primary schools in Kebisoni Sub-county, Rukungiri district, South Western Uganda?

1.5.2 Sub-questions

- What are the existing boys' involvement interventions for achieving gender equality in Kebisoni Sub-county, Rukungiri district, South Western Uganda?

- What are the existing negative patriarchal and heteronormative issues that limit boys' involvement in gender equality in Kebisoni Sub-county, Rukungiri district, South Western Uganda
- How do we teach positive masculinities to boys while they are still young to disrupt the possibility of negative patriarchal and heteronormative socialization?
- How do we advocate for critical boys' involvement without reproducing the masculine hegemony that may threaten the hard-earned feminist gains?

1.6 Research objectives

1.6.1 General Objective

To identify processes of inculcating positive and progressive masculinities in young boys

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

- To establish the existing interventions for boys' involvement in gender equality in Uganda
- To assess how successful these interventions are in gender equality work with young boys
- To explore alternative ways of involving young boys in gender equality work

1.7 Study impact.

I envision the study to be significant for the existing boys' involvement interventions to critically strategize and build coherent, sustainable, and deliberate partnerships with institutions like families, schools, and religious centers to train young boys about positive masculinities at an early age to achieve gender equality, especially looking at fairness in opportunities and healthy coexistence. The study will add scholarly material/content to the GEST GRO and the Makerere University School of Women and Gender's activities, including activism, mentorship, teaching, research, and learning toward achieving the gender equality agenda.

1.8 Researcher as an Activist.

I come into this study as a researcher, a student of gender, an activist with a passion for an equal and just world, and a man doing gender work in a country with a problematic, hostile gender order. I also come into this study with ideas of thinking globally and acting locally (within context). To explain my positionality in detail, I use three life case studies below;

Case study one;

During one of my field outreaches in August 2023 under our organization (You Have the Potential-YOHEP), I was disturbed by a scene that seemed normalized but problematic in subtle and implicit ways. We had gone to Katanga slum, one of the biggest urban slums of Kampala, Uganda's capital city, and we were doing a community outreach to sensitize, educate, and equip young girls with menstrual hygiene management information and equipment. During the sensitization sessions, I overheard a conversation between a young girl of around 15 years and a seemingly younger boy of around 10 years, and here was their conversation;

Girl (Mockingly/Teasingly---pointing at the boy): Come and join us (to pause for a picture with reusable sanitary pads given to the girls).

Boy, (Counteractively) leave me alone. I do not put on Pampers 'local name for diapers' (referring to sanitary pads in a loathing, demonizing way).

Group of other small boys (Burst into a loud mocking laughter and run away).

Case study 2;

I joined Makerere University in 2017 after being admitted to a bachelor's degree of arts in social sciences. The degree is divided into six-course units: Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Social Administration, and Gender and Development. Every student admitted to the Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences is supposed to take three of the six-course units in their first year, drop one, and continue with the remaining two units, one as a major and the other as a minor in their second year. While students often have a chance to choose which units to enroll in during application, I was never able to since I was ignorant about the basics. As such, the admission came back when Gender and Development, Social Anthropology, and Social Administration were my course units. I never had issues at first, but with time, I started getting discomfoting questions, which seemed to doubt what I was studying.

The demeaning was both internal and external. Externally, colleagues and friends from other fields like the agricultural and environmental sciences, natural sciences, health sciences, and engineering thought I was just at the university to waste time since they considered social sciences a women's course and specifically for slayers (girls from well-to-do families, outgoing and beautiful). Internally, the students within my course who offered other course units apart from gender and development thought men who were studying gender were crazy and of lesser value than those doing the other social sciences, for example, psychology, sociology, and political science, among others. My

cousin, who happened to offer social sciences in his final year majoring in political science and public administration, advised me to apply for a change of subjects and replace gender and development with any other of the remaining course units.

I pretended to have accepted (since I never wanted another scandal) but never heeded his advice. I was determined to continue with the course units given to me at the admission stage. I would later suffer his ridicule, sneer, and slander, and the common questions asked could be, "So, you have stuck on studying about women?" Where and what job will you get? Even back home in the village during holidays, I always had difficulty explaining to the people what subjects or courses I was studying at Makerere University, 350 km from home.

Their ideas of whoever was at Makerere revolved around training as economists, engineers, teachers, medical doctors, and veterinarians, among other foundational and historical disciplines within their contexts. Regardless of the banter and ridicule surrounding me because of my chosen path, I never lost track. I fell in love with the course because of the learning atmosphere, which consisted of tutors with a deep sense of humanity beyond their expertise and knowledge. That definitive moment would later determine and shape my career path. I majored and performed well in Gender and development, built networks, and got into the community with my knowledge. Unsurprisingly, even after graduating with a second-class honors degree in 2021, I stayed around for mentorship and enrolled for a master of arts in gender studies a year later.

Case study 3;

I am a person who believes in humanity before anything else. I think that to be a feminist is not to be a woman but to be a human. Therefore, I constantly labor to grab all the opportunities that can enable me to master this ideology I so much adore. GEST program, being such a platform, first caught my attention in February 2022, 8 months before I had enrolled for my masters at Makerere University. I landed on the call for nominations for young practitioners in gender equality and immediately requested my university mentor to nominate me via his new research consultancy that I had interned on for nearly a year. Unfortunately, I never made it to the admission, but my resolve never died. I enrolled for my master's program eight months later (October 2022), and in May 2023, I expressed interest in the GEST program again. I was consequently nominated by the School of Women and gender studies, a partner university to the University of Iceland, the Gro-Gest program, and Erasmus+ scholarships, which are critical entities in this program. This time, I made it and was selected and admitted to this program. I was optimistic about flying out of my country to a country ranked number one in gender equality. The thought of receiving this high-class education, skills, knowledge, and expertise but also building solid networks towards the cause of redefining young men's perceptions towards gender equality was an idea that I had in mind as I prepared to come to Iceland.

Therefore, based on the above three case studies, I have always grappled with situations with more questions than my ability to answer them. These questions are always grounded in my career choice and how it has shaped my life in ways that are not ideal for men to exhibit. Sometimes, I feel at a crossroads with my true self-worth. Nevertheless, with more work, community engagement, and support from my seniors from whom I draw daily inspiration, I have always raised my head higher, broke out of the socially defined boxes, and developed a great resolve to fight for gender equality. From this background, I draw inspiration to use my experiences to suggest a new male involvement strategy that seeks to dismantle male socialization and normalization of problematic masculine behaviors and fuels backlash against gender equality campaigns. I dream of a future where men would love with emotions and where boys would co-exist with girls in peace, love, harmony, and kindness for one another.

My position is that of a young researcher interested in qualitative studies and critical theory, a scholar in men's studies, masculinities, and development, and a gender justice activist involved in issue-based grassroots activism. I pursued a bachelor's degree of arts in social sciences, majoring in Gender and development and minoring in social administration. Currently, I am a postgraduate student of a master of arts in gender studies researching the male involvement strategy for achieving gender equality in sexual and reproductive rights in Uganda, and I am involved in a couple of research projects that are integral in mainstreaming gender in critical spheres of societal development in Uganda. From this background, I have developed unwavering zeal and an immense passion for actively participating in gender equality spaces.

I will locate my experiences in the existing interventions on working with boys to achieve gender equality, for example, those that seem to center on studying social norms that can facilitate positive and progressive masculine behaviors in these young boys to benefit the realization of gender equality. I will also focus on those who engage young schoolboys against harassment in the form of gender-based violence and bullying in schools. The above experiences will also guide on how to approach the study area with a focus on examining boys' ideas and perceptions on gender equality but also work with their teachers, parents, guardians,

and community leaders in negotiating critical and effective ways of nurturing them to appreciate ideas on gender equality.

2.0 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON BOYS' INVOLVEMENT IN GENDER EQUALITY IN UGANDA

2.1 Introduction

This section consists of the theoretical perspectives on critical masculinities studies, the broader male involvement strategy, and the specific boys' involvement in the gender equality campaign.

2.2 Understanding masculinities for a critical boys' involvement in Gender Equality

I use Raewyn Connell's work on hegemonic masculinity to unpack gender power relations between and amongst men (Connell, 1995). In this work, Connell borrows the word hegemony, see (Boothman, 2008; Salem, 2021, pp. 86-95; Andreas, 2008) from the initial works of a Marxist theorist, Antonio Gramsci, in the latter's analysis of class oppression.

Connell reflects on men, women, children, and other social categories to explain the social organization of masculinity (Connell, 2005, p. 85). Ideas on social gender order explain masculinities as social constructs, (Kedia, 2019), which are fluid, dynamic (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016), multiple, and varied in different contexts. Therefore, in hegemonic masculinity, hegemony refers to cultural dynamics in which one social group claims and sustains dominance over the others in a social hierarchy (Gomez, 2007). Connell explains different versions of masculinity in a pyramid, including the hegemonic model, which comprises men with much-cherished powers of social domination; see (Yang, 2020) at the top.

Complicit masculinities follow the hegemonic model, see (Gomez, 2007, p. 118) and comprise masculine traits that do not fit in the hegemonic model but, again, are not critical of the inequalities in the hegemonic model: "These do not actually embody hegemonic masculinity yet, through practice, realize some of the benefits of unequal gender relations and consequently, when practiced, help sustain hegemonic masculinity" (Wojnicka, 2021).

Following complicit masculinities are marginalized masculinities (Hall, 2017), consisting of those who find themselves at the margins of social processes (Neloufer et al., 2013). Subordinate masculinities, (Eivergard et al., 2020) consist of those who are subordinated but who are still hierarchically above women and children.

The critical concepts of plural masculinities and power hierarchy will allow me to appreciate the heterogeneity of men and masculinities as constructed from childhood and, hence, be flexible in dealing with each category to identify processes of inculcating positive and progressive masculinities in young boys. The critical idea of looking at boys as a heterogeneous category embodying distinct and diverse forms of masculinities will provide me with a critical approach to interrogating the interventions in place for involving young boys in gender equality work for example those around negotiating social norms, parenting, and education, and also enable me to come up with ways on how to feel the gaps in these policies. I will rely on the information from the teachers, parents, guardians, and gender activists in the area to understand the existing boys' involvement interventions but also, analyze them using the information from the boys around how young masculinities are constructed. This will enable me to work with the community to come up with ideas for filling the gaps within the existing interventions.

2.3 Boys' Involvement in Gender Equality.

Boys' involvement according to my study objectives will be defined as boys' active role, and participation in any activity that seeks to establish a society in which opportunities, privileges, rights, entitlements, and resources are shared and enjoyed equally between men, women, and other diverse categories. Boys' involvement has existed in Africa for a long time, and gender scholars have engaged with boys in the school context for almost forty years. In South Africa, psychologists have been working with boys for a long time, though not always critically and not always heeding insights from feminism and gender equality. Hence, boys' involvement existed as an ideal but not a practice. However, Kopano Ratele and Deevia Bhana have been working on/with boys for a long time, and before that, Rob Patman's work was ground-breaking. Their works encompass ideas on how young masculinities are constructed and performed affecting young boys' relationships and interactions (Frosh et al, 2005: Ratele, 2015: Bhana, 2005) and these are vital elements in negotiating young boys' roles in promoting gender equality

There are no deliberate ways of engaging young boys in gender equality work in Uganda save for scanty work on engaging young boys conflated with engaging men in changing negative

social norms and mitigating the effects of gender-based violence. Most of the interventions seem to tag boys along with men in the existing male involvement strategies for gender equality (Westmarland et al, 2020: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2017). Male involvement in gender equality is a product of the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which recognizes the need to address relations of gender rather than having women-specific interventions toward the realization of sustainable gender equality. This approach in Uganda dates from the 1994 UN-ICPD in Cairo, which sought male involvement in family planning. This would later be cascaded into other areas like maternal and child health in Uganda, ending gender-based violence, and early childhood education (see 1.3).

This study on the deliberate involvement of young boys aged 5-15 will draw from the existing theoretical approaches in other countries like South Africa and adopt them to enable practical interventions in the Ugandan context while being critical of the cultural, economic, political, and structural convergences and divergences. Borrowing from Deevia Bhana's work on violence and gendered negotiation of masculinity among young black school boys in South Africa (Bhana, 2005), my study will analyze the culturally specific norms that shape behaviors, roles, responsibilities, choices, aspirations, relations in young boys in rural community schools of Uganda. The role of socialization and reproduction of certain masculine behaviors that are often policed and idealized will give a spine to my study to enable me to understand how masculinities are constructed within the same community but in different ways depending on the social, economic, tribal, religious, and identity differences within fluid communities with limited traceable specific cultural values due to intermarriages, and cross-cultural mixture of identities due to formal school systems.

Bhana's work explores the relationship between masculinity, violence, and the educational performances of young black boys in South Africa (Bhana, 2005). This critical analysis of historical causation into the intricate layers of the social identity formation and its exhibition of violence in, amongst, and against school-going boys will be reflected in my study to understand the different types of masculinities within young school boys and how these impact on their lives but also the lives of those around them.

My approach to masculinities as a heterogenous category within a fluid school setting will also be informed by (Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman's, 2002) argument that there is not a singular and monolithic form of masculinity but many masculinities shaped by diversities in the social, economic, and geopolitical contexts. While unearthing the social structural layers and the formation and negotiation of power on which masculinities are learned, performed, and reproduced, the study will be informed by ideas from Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003 on how young boys in school settings navigate and negotiate social-cultural pressures and expectations around masculinities. This will enable me to understand masculinities within masculinities, masculinities against masculinities, and masculinities against femininities. Such critical theorizing will be essential to the effects of masculinities on young boys themselves, on other boys, girls, and other diverse identities, as well as on the broader social spectrum in which they live.

3.0 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Building on the above adoption of critical models by Deevia Bhana, Frosh, Phoenix, and Pattman to involve schoolboys in the quest for gender equality, the study will be informed by the southern theory supplemented by the social constructionist embodiment theory as contextual theoretical underpinnings to address the objectives of the study which include; to establish the existing interventions of boys' involvement work in Uganda, to assess how successful these interventions are in gender equality work with young boys, and to explore alternative ways of involving young boys in gender equality work.

3.2 Southern Theory

Connell developed this theory in 2007 to analyze the geopolitics of knowledge production and expressly pointed out inequalities between the global North and the global South (Connell et al, 2016). It critiques classical theories that establish the global dominance of Western social theory and argues for understanding the social world outside the Western lenses (Connell, 2015). Connell provides examples of a theory developed in the global South and argues that such theory-making continues to be sidelined due to inequalities in publishing and the dominance of publishing houses in the global North (Connell, 2014).

I will use the Southern theory to critique the dominant Western theories that often theorize and research the global South merely as case studies and objects, not subjects of knowledge creation. This will enable my study to reduce the theoretical and conceptual discrepancies in the knowledge and practices of involving young boys in gender equality work. This approach will enrich ideas on boys' involvement in gender equality work by embracing diversity, lived experiences, and inclusive approaches.

This theory, however, will not be applied in isolation from the geopolitical north theorization; instead, it will inform my ability as a researcher to adopt some concepts and ideas from the latter and carefully apply them to fit the rural Ugandan context. A case in point, I will borrow from Connell's ideas on 'Teaching the Boys: New Research on Masculinity, and Gender

Strategies for Schools' to emphasize ideas that schools are active sites for the construction of diverse masculinities. I will be able to understand the interventions of involving boys in gender equality work especially in areas of parenting, and education, and reimagine other progressive ways of involving boys. Likewise, borrowing from the ideas of Olsen and Pihlstrom (2011), I will pay attention to how teachers' classroom arrangements shape boys' ideas on gender and gender equality. From how they relate with the boys, the choice of texts they teach these boys, and their expectations, I will be able to establish whether there is a correlation between teachers' ideas on gender and boys' perceptions of gender equality. This will enable me to think globally but act locally, upholding the theoretical concept of transnational reflections on masculinities, as Shefer et al., 2015 elaborated on.

The Southern theory will enable me to acknowledge the influence of the geopolitical North on the South (Connell, 2014), acknowledging forces like colonial hangovers and effects of imperialism like neoliberal structure re-adjustments programs that birthed privatization of education, leaving the government-funded schools with fewer resourcing and funding from the government, as well as the effects of globalization like increased access to phone use by young boys. Shefer's (2015) ideas on transnational research approaches will enable me to draw from the global north theoretical underpinnings, such as Connell's ideas on the pyramid of masculinities. However, these ideas will be applied while critical of distinct social, economic, and political perspectives. I will be critical of things like distinct beliefs, norms, value systems, the weak global south economy, and the hostile gender order in Uganda (see the discussion of this gender order in 1.3).

3.2.1 Application of the Southern Theory.

My study reflects on Cooper et al, 2017's work on 'Disentangled, Decentered, and Democratized: Youth Studies for the Global South' to identify the critical areas of attention while applying theoretical and conceptual assumptions in the Southern theories. The authors critique how global north perspectives are used within the global south contexts where global south experiences and ontologies are neglected. While reflecting on Cooper et al. (2017), I will be critical of context-specific youth issues in global South schools from a diverse social,

economic, and political precarity perspective. The theory will enable me to look beyond the symbolic relations to the social, financial, and political aspects that characterize youths' experiences in the global south. While using this theory, I will be keen on the global north middle-class elitist biases that have always characterized Western researchers studying the global south using southern theories.

I will enter this study with a willingness to learn with the participants and not necessarily to impart my assumptions to them. For example, I will focus on local experiences and conceptualize them rather than explicitly rely on the global north theoretical and conceptual determinism. I will focus on the Ugandan gender regime and its impact on negotiating progressive masculinities in young school boys, as well as explore the effects of the neoliberal and globalization aspects like privatization, capitalism, economic gaps, and decline in social service provisioning, on the efforts to involve young boys in gender equality work.

This will prevent me from victimizing the young boys in schools and imparting to them ideas of risk prevention and positive youth development. These ideas are fond of producing universalization of truth and using patronizing approaches and paternalism, where researchers pose as the overall knowers and impose interventions as heroes.

3.3 Theories of Embodiment

These theories are grounded in how humans use their bodies to experience, feel, think, perceive, and relate in an environment (Hornecker, 2005). They include, among others, the theory of phenomenology, feminist theories of embodiment, and social constructionist theory, but my study will use the Social constructionist theory of embodiment.

3.3.1 Social Constructionist Theory.

I will use the embodiment theory to point to the sociology of the body. While engaging with the young boys, their teachers, their parents, guardians, and colleagues in the community, I will ensure agency so that they can freely reflect on their experiences to inform the research with ideas on boyhood and gender equality, including motivations, gaps, and prospects for filling these gaps to realize gender equality. The social constructionist theory will not be used in

isolation. However, it will inform ideas of the Southern theory that prioritize lived experiences and contextual understanding of young boys to imagine transformative ways of engaging them to achieve gender equality.

I will use the social constructionist ideas to critique biological essentialism and establish that behaviors, norms, beliefs, and values that inform boyhood are products of the social environment rather than natural traits (Boero & Katherine, 2019) and hence can be renegotiated and shaped through social interventionist approaches to aid the realization of gender equality. relating to my childhood experiences as a boy who received his education in the same school setting within the Kebisoni community, I will use the social constructionist theory to study the sociology of the school community both from within and outside. Borrowing ideas from Gilbert and Gilbert (1998), I will be able to explore the formation of young masculinities within school settings and how those identities shape young boys' experiences, attitudes, and relations.

4.0 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

4.1 Qualitative research approach

A research approach refers to the researcher's procedure to collect, analyze, and interpret data. There are three main research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and pragmatic (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Taherdoost, 2022), using both methods interchangeably. This study will apply a qualitative research approach to gather in-depth data and multiple truths (Al-Ababneh, 2020, p. 86). The research will employ an embodied methodology, and I will study the boys' involvement in interventions for gender equality for example those around negotiating social norms, parenting, and education using an experiences-based approach. The embodied methodology is where I will base on my knowledge of the area, language, culture, and norms around boyhood to come up with effective ways of studying these young boys and their ideas, and motivations on gender equality (see much of my methodological approach in 4.3).

4.2 Research Design

The study will use Ethnographic design through Storytelling and narratives. It will focus on the Western part of Uganda due to my childhood experiences there. This region is accessible and convenient to research since I know the language and culture. I will take a keen interest in the community places of river Birira, Mineera hot spring, and Lake Garubunda and how these shape lives to enable me to think with the community to assess how boys have been involved in gender equality work and form a critical and extensive situated knowledge on how to address the existing gaps in these interventions.

The choice of the hot spring, the river, and the lake is because they are features of social significance that connect people in the community as places of life through providing water to fulfill gender roles, providing hot water for healing skin-related diseases but also highly gendered spaces with limitations and control over which gender, which age group access what type of resource from these presumably communal features.

Alongside the exploratory design, the study will employ the ethnographic design to understand the subtle cultural definitions of boyhood or who a boy ought to be in Ugandan

cultures and how these descriptions of boyhood impede or promote boys' appreciation of their own and community members' attainment of gender equality. I will ensure that my study prioritizes insider knowledge through storytelling and narratives of what it means to be a boy and how the meanings and identities of boyhood can be passed on to facilitate complementarity and relations of equality in society.

4.3 Research Sites

I was born in the Kebisoni sub-county and studied my entire primary school in the village government-funded community school of Karire. I intend to use my local knowledge to research several government-funded primary (UPE) schools in the area. Essential data will include several kids in the school, gender composition in these schools, number of teachers in schools, the syllabi, the co-curricular activities in the school, and the involvement of kids in these activities, among other dynamics. Below, I describe my educational journey that took me from primary school to secondary school and then university, and from boyhood to manhood.

Across my educational journey, I was exposed to different forms of being a man. From the distinct treatment at Karire Primary School, where boys played football alone in the school playfield during games times, and girls played dodge the ball either in the school compound or on the peripheries of the football playfield to most boys preferring making ropes, hoe handles and papyrus mats as girls made swamp mats, baskets, shawls for the mandatory annual school handiwork; and then to boys bringing pangas and fencing reeds, and girls bringing hoes and locally made brooms for monthly school general cleaning, such as a kind of gender socialization that placed us into separate gender boxes right from elementary schooling.

From Karire, where I spent seven years of primary education, I left for Muntuyera High School, a boys' only single boarding school that is approximately 20 km away from home in the neighboring district of Ntungamo, in 2011. At Muntuyera, there was much of being socialized into violent masculinities and also exhibiting subordinated and violent masculinities. From being boxed into the stomach four times on my first day at schoolboy by a notorious secondary four boy having gotten lost in his dormitory; to being forced to dance with pillows as an imaginary gesture for squeeze dances with girls every Friday after prep/ night revision (10 pm); to being taken to the school farm and forced to inhale dried and smoked cow dung; to seeing and hearing about boys who were homosexuals and were being feared and rumored to be engaged in a devilish kind of cult; and then the worst of all being forced to put our little penises in holes made by dipping a finger in wet clay at the school pond of Kibeya, such was the horrific experiences of my

year 2011 which were too much for a 14-year-old me to contain. Such teasing would carry on for every boy who wanted revenge on a new secondary boy, having been promoted to secondary two and surviving that horror.

I left Muntuyera after my secondary education in 2014, having not performed to my father's expectations, and he attributed this to harmful behaviors that I had gotten accustomed to at Muntuyera, whose boys were known in the entire region for their unending strikes, notoriety, and chaos. My dad was determined to make a change and sent me to a high school (Standard College Ntungamo) a few kilometers away from Muntuyera in the same district. This school was well known for its discipline and strict punishments given to any misbehaving student. I had difficulty socializing with girls in class and shared spaces like dining halls, watching rooms, and computer labs, but by the second and final year of high school, I had already gotten used to it. I finished high school in 2016 and left western Uganda for Kampala to join Makerere University, which is 382 km away from my home district. At Makerere, I was to embrace a new life of self-drive, independence, and detachment from my rural western Uganda community, where I had lived all my 20 years on earth.

With such rich multiple experiences, I will treat individual experiences as crucial research sites. I will use the hauntological model to reveal the presence of the boys' experiences in a school setting; including norms, beliefs, and values on which young masculinities are constructed, performed, and carried on. A hauntological model is a research approach that prioritizes exploring past and present relationships to predict the future while studying any given social phenomenon (Mcpherson, 2024). I will use the experiences of specific rural community members like gender equality activists, teachers, parents, and guardians to assess the existing boys' involvement interventions in gender equality work in areas of parenting and education.

I will also review annual school reports, and school curricula taught to these young boys and visit the relevant authorities, such as rural radio stations, primary school departments in the sub-county, and the district education officer's office. This will be aimed at establishing the existing interventions, how they operate, and what gaps are visible from the past. Employing the hauntological model, exploring these interlinkages will enable my study to critically understand the traditional social norms, values, and belief systems around young masculinities and how these have changed over time. It will further help in identifying how these beliefs,

norms, and values influence gender equality and enable the reimagination of alternative critical ways around the existing ones to realize gender equality.

My area of concentration, which is Rukungiri district in the southwestern part of Uganda, has two major types of primary school systems: privately owned and government-funded. All government-funded primary schools are day schooling types where students go to school in the morning and return home in the evening on a commuter basis. This differs from privately owned ones, which have boarding (sleeping at school) and day schooling-commuter sections. My research will focus on village government-funded primary schools. I will use rural government-funded primary schools and engage young boys in Sports fields. Given the day schooling system, I will also engage young boys from their family homes and others in community spaces like swimming at River Birira, Mineera Hot Spring, and Lake Garubunda. Since Kebisoni is a communal space with an everyday mix of people, I will engage young boys but also their parents, their guardians, and their teachers to explore the interventions that are in place for example those around negotiating social norms, parenting, and education to enable young boys in the ages of 5-15 to push for gender equality and assess the applicability of these interventions.

To understand the social experiences and behaviors that form masculinities in these young boys, I will use school settings and the neighboring social spaces that are central to the day-to-day life experiences of these boys. My research will take a keen interest in life on the community river of Birira, which curves around the Kebisoni sub-county and influences either directly or indirectly the lives of boys who attend community schools of Kakibaya, Karire, Kahengye, Kabingo, and Rwabigangura. The Mineera hot spring will enable me to interrogate boys' lived experiences in the Kiborogota, Rumbugu, Kebisoni, and Mutojo community schools. In contrast, the community lake of Garubunda will be vital to situating the context-specific experiences of young boys in the community schools of Garubunda, Kigiro, Omuri' Italiano, and Nyeibingo. Drawing on Tamara Shefer's ideas on hydro-feminism, I believe these are not merely bodies of water but embodied features that cannot be separated from the lived experiences of the community.

4.4 Sample size

My sample will be 65 participants, including young boys of school-going ages 5-15 years, in six government-funded primary schools representing the Kebisoni sub-county. My choice of schools will represent all four regions of the sub-county. I will choose Karire Primary School in Karire Parish, Rumbugu Primary School in Mutojo Parish, Kahengye Primary School in Karuhembe Parish, Kiborogota Primary School in Kakinga Parish, Ndama Primary School in Kabingo Parish, Garubunda Primary School in Nyeibingo parish. The above schools will constitute one Muslim-founded, three Christian-founded, and two catholic. I will choose five boys from each of the six sampled schools. I will select one male teacher and one male top administrator in each school. I will choose 6 participants (both men and women) in the three communal features of the river, the lake, and the hot spring. I will select three participants from the NGOs working on boys' involvement in gender equality and two officials from the district education office. To enable my entry and authorization to work within the area, I will use my knowledge and the area to obtain stamped letters from the office of the district education officer, the district security officer as well as the chairperson of local council three to allow me to conduct my research within the community.

4.5 Methods of Data Collection

The study will use unstructured interviews, dialogue techniques, and short desk reviews as data collection methods for understanding the formation of young masculinities as well as exploring and assessing the existing intervention toward involving school-going young boys in the quest for gender equality in the Kebisoni sub-county. These methods will enable me to address the two key objectives of the study which are to analyse masculinities amongst the boys at school and examine male involvement interventions for gender equality. To understand how young masculinities are constructed and performed and how they consequently produce a certain gender order, I will engage young boys in different groups of 5-10 and 10-15 years to explore their experiences, relations, roles, and responsibilities attributed to boyhood. On the other hand, I will engage key stakeholders like teachers, guardians, parents, and gender equality activists in the area to explore the existing interventions that seek to involve young boys in

gender equality, establish the gaps, and together identify ways of filling these gaps to enable the attainment of gender equality.

The interviews will be conducted more vigorously to capture multiple truths and vivid reality, both verbally and nonverbally. The unstructured interviews and dialogues will be careful of the language used to avoid attracting biased responses. The schools sampled are primarily founded on religious foundations, for example, Karire Primary School under Karire church of Uganda, Rwabigangura Primary School under Rwabigangura catholic parish, Kabingo Primary School under kabingo church of Uganda, Ndama Primary School under Ndama catholic parish, Kakibaya under Kakibaya church of Uganda, Rumbugu under Rumbugu church of Uganda, Kiborogota primary school under kinkiizi Muslim district among others. Whereas the government funds these schools under its establishment of Universal Primary Education, the religious institutions have a stake in the micro-management of these schools, and that is why Christian religious education/ Islamic religious education is compulsorily studied and examined with social studies in these schools.

These schools compete in parish, sub-county, and district extra-curricular activities like athletics, ball games, debate, music, dance and drama, and scouting. Most of these schools are for middle-class and ordinary poor citizens since most of the parents with a relatively higher economic status prefer private primary schools with boarding sections, and there are only two schools of such category (Kebisoni et al. School and Father Baldo Nursery and primary school) in the whole sub-county. The rest of the private primary schools are boarding in the next sub-counties of Buyanja, Nyarushanje, and Rukungiri municipality.

Interviews are a qualitative research technique involving intensive individual interactions with a few respondents to explore their perspectives on a popular idea, program, or situation (Boyce, 2006). The choice of this method allows open-ended questions and discovery-oriented techniques, which will enable the study to explore the respondents' (parents, guardians, teachers, gender equality activists) knowledge of any interventions that seek to involve young boys in achieving gender equality in Kebisoni sub-county, Rukungiri district, Southwestern Uganda, as well as their feelings and perspectives, see (Guion et al., 2011) on the status of these interventions and how these interventions can be critically re-

thought and effectively re-framed to include the lived experiences of young boys. Added to the in-depth unstructured interviews will be the dialogue technique in which groups of boys in different age groups from 5 to 15 years will be engaged differently.

The first group will be of boys between the ages of 5-10 and the second group will be of those between the ages of 10 and 15. I am choosing this age bracket because it is the standard age for children in primary schools; 5-10 for lower primary and 10-15 for upper primary. I will ask these boys about their experiences and relationships with their female classmates, sisters, mothers, and other females in the community but also relationships between and amongst themselves. The study will engage parents, guardians, teachers, and NGOs in the area that work on gender equality by consulting them about existing interventions for involving young boys in gender equality work, and on the best ways of having an intervention that does not exploit the young boys but also does not threaten to reintroduce the patriarchal hegemonic practices that are detrimental towards the realization gender equality.

I will also review the existing literature, including 'grey' literature—NGO year reports, end-of-term school activity evaluation reports, and documents from the responsible offices for primary education at the sub-county and district levels. This will be significant in establishing the state of gender equality work in Kebisoni Sub-county, in the Rukukingiri district of South Western Uganda. This review will help fill the data collection gaps that qualitative research will not be able to address.

I will translate my research tools like interview guides, questionnaire guides, and focus group discussion guides into the local dialects of Runyankore, Rukiga, and Ruhororo to embrace diversity and gather much data and truth. I will be conducting my study in Runyankore, Rukiga, and Ruhororo dialects to ensure reach and inclusivity among the participants since those languages are central to the area of study and are spoken by almost over 98 percent of the population.

4.6 Research ethics.

In the entire research process, my study will be guided by research ethics. First of all, I will apply for ethical clearance from the GRO GEST research ethics committee to allow me to go to the field to conduct this study.

I will stick to the ethics of research, which include ensuring the safety and social and psychological well-being of the person, community, or animals. Much emphasis will be put on the critical ethical issues in conducting qualitative research, for example, voluntary participation, informed consent, see (Hardicre, 2014), anonymity, confidentiality, and potential for harm, hence ensuring that the participants' autonomy is preserved, see (Barrow et al., 2024) and results communication. Confidentiality will include giving each interviewee a made-up name to hide their true identity. I will apply anonymity in a way that while transcribing and detailing the participants' voices, I will use initials. I will also keep the information given confidential and never share it with anyone for any other purpose apart from academia.

Since young boys are central to my study and according to Ugandan law, they are below 18 years old and therefore cannot provide consent, I will apply ethical issues like refraining from adult-centeredness where we tend to exercise power over children and always treat them as non-agentic beings, see (Kirk, 2006). I will ensure respect for their rights to be free from harm, as well as seek consent from their parents and guardians as the law stipulates. I will refrain from engaging them in a way that exploits them based on their naivety and innocence. While making sense of the transcribed texts, I will ensure that I shift from standardized knowledge to specifics. This is what (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999) term "the technique of interpretive positionings."

4.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis involves receiving the raw data sources, creating an electronic database from them, cleaning the database, and correcting and clarifying the raw data sources, among other processes.

4.7.1 Thematic analysis

The data collected will be stored on a voice recorder and later transferred to the laptop in a specific folder. Then, the data will be transcribed verbatim, named, and saved appropriately for analysis. The data will be named confidential to ensure anonymity. I will turn my qualitatively gathered raw data into reliable facts and test conclusions. This will be done by centering my working objectives into the transcribed texts and critically internalizing them to arrive at themes, hence applying the thematic type of data analysis.

The thematic concerns denote the convergences and departures in conceptualizing young masculinities for an effective and well-grounded male involvement strategy for achieving gender equality. On one hand, they will enable critical analysis of the diverse ways in which young masculinities are constructed, and performed through social processes and how that informs ideas on gender order and social structure. The second layer is to use thematic analyses to engage key stakeholders like parents, teachers, guardians, education officers, and gender activists to explore the existing interventions that seek to involve young boys in gender equality work for example in parenting, negotiating social norms, and in education as well as assess their effectiveness in imagining the realization of gender equality. The study will come up with conclusions and recommendations on how to critically understand and explore the existing boys' involvement interventions, identify the gaps, and predict the significance of using an alternative model of engaging boyhood masculinities to negotiate the male domination of the gender order which impedes progress towards gender justice in Uganda.

4.8 Conclusion

This work is a qualitative research project idea that seeks to explore and analyze the interventions for involving boys in gender equality work among primary school-going boys in Kebisoni Sub-county, Rukungiri district, Southwestern Uganda. By exploring and analyzing interventions within the areas of parenting, education, and social norms, the study predicts a more deliberate, specific, and well-structured boys' involvement strategy to complement the bigger male involvement strategy towards the realization of gender equality in the area.

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