POLICY AND PRACTICE OF SCHOOL-BASED SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF ETHIOPIA AND UGANDA: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Declaration

I, hereby, declare that this dissertation, entitled "Policy and practice of school-based sexuality education in selected primary schools of Ethiopia and Uganda: A gender perspective", is my original work and has not been presented for a degree to any other university, and that all sources of materials used in the dissertation have been dully acknowledged.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the policy and practice of school-based Sexuality Education (SE) from a gender perspective in the case of selected government primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. Since the 1980s, following the HIV/AIDS epidemic, emphasis on providing adolescents with sexual health education increased in Africa, including Ethiopia and Uganda. There was positive result achieved with regards to the knowledge transfer on HIV/AIDS awareness, and some behavioural change among adolescents. Although, studies show that Sexuality Education (SE) remains challenged to expand to large number of schools and achieve the intended behavioural change among the adolescents. Standing on the transformative/ critical philosophical paradigm, this study employed theoretically informed ethnographic research design. Observation in the classroom, outside the classroom, and school surrounding, and document review was followed by in-depth interviews, and FGDs conducted in the natural setting of the participants. The study participants were the SE students (boys and girls, age 12-14), SE teachers, school management, and experts from MoE and I/NGOs. The data was analysed from Connell's gender theory, neo-institutional and southern theoretical frameworks categorized under the central themes generated from the data, and the research questions. The findings indicate that in both selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda, in which SE is being implemented, the gender interaction remains to normalize the disadvantage and silence of girls. On the other hand, boys seem relatively being socialised to a more empowering traits, similar to the global gender pattern. In Ethiopia, there is no explicit SE policy in the education system, but it rather claimed to be integrated in multiple programs and subjects. In Uganda, efforts to develop separate SE framework was challenged by various resistance voices. The findings show that, in both Ethiopia and Uganda, SE policy and practices supported by I/NGOs is challenged by the resistance coming from religious leaders, and local influencers. The SE practices in both schools appear to be trapped in a dilemma between the function of

instilling the existing sexuality and gender values and transforming them. The dominant SE contents in both schools includes HIV/AIDS awareness, gender equality, and body awareness. However, the contents of SE happen to remain focused on abstinence-only, particularly targeting girls with protective and judgmental messages while behaviours of boys are justified and tolerated. The study findings indicate that the SE contents practiced in the schools have discrepancy with what learners yearn to know. The SE contents, especially in the school in Ethiopia, appear radical in challenging societal gender power relations while neglecting the gender relation in school. In the school in Uganda on the other hand, appear radical in creating body awareness among adolescents in contrary to the approach observed in the HIV/ AIDS related sessions. The teaching-learning approach in SE is relatively democratic and participatory compared to the regular classroom in a way that helps empower students. The selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda have generally similar SE practices where slight differences are observed in the emphasis given for gender equality in the school in Ethiopia and more open discussion on body change in the school from Uganda. The study suggests the need to bring the needs and experiences of students, especially girls, to center of the policies and practices of SE. Moreover, it is also suggested to capacitate and utilize local structures such as religious leaders, and community influencers as an ally to support the SE policies and practices.

Key Words: **Sexuality, Sexuality Education, Adolescents, Gender, GBV, Neo-institutionalism, and Ethnography.**

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AKA:	Also Known As
AOUM:	Abstinence Only Until Marriage
CCEPS:	Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSA:	Central Statistics Agency
CRSE:	Comprehensive Rights-based Sex Education
CSE:	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
EDHS:	Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey
ERIC:	Education Resources Information Center
ESDP:	Education Sector Development Plan
ESSP:	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ETP:	Education and Training Plan
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FGM:	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
HDI:	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS:	Human Immuno Virus/ Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HTTP:	Harmful Traditional Practice
i.e.:	id Est (that is)
I/NGO:	International/ Non-Governmental Organization
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MoES:	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoH:	Ministry of Health

PEPFAR:	President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PHE:	Physical Education
PSE:	Personal and Social Education
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goal
SE:	Sexuality Education
SRHR:	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STD/I:	Sexually Transmitted Disease/ Infection
UBOS:	Ugandan Bureau of Statistics
UDHS:	Ugandan Demographic Health Survey
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO:	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA:	The United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF:	The United Nations Children's Fund
WHO:	World Health Organization
UPPET:	Universal Post Primary Education and Training

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The purpose of this ethnographic research was to understand the policies and practices of school-based Sexuality Education (SE) in selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. Sexuality in this study is understood as a natural phenomenon that is dynamic across cultures and times due to the socialization of sexual and gender expectations (Scott, 2009; Sanjakdar et al., 2015). One of the critical instruments for sexual and gender related socialization for adolescents is school, and school-based SE in particular.

School-based SE usually encompasses topics such as sexual development, sexual and reproductive health and rights, intimacy, consent, body image and development, and gender relations (UNESCO, 2018). It is an education that promotes the knowledge, skill, and attitude of boys and girls with regards to the *natural* and *learned* behaviours of being sexual, sexual health and rights, and informed choices on sex and relationship (Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2015; UNESCO, 2018). Studies indicate that school-based SE is also an active player more widely in the formation of gender patterns (Connell, 1996), and as such has the ability to challenge and change behaviour related to sexuality and gender practices among adolescents (Mueller, et. al., 2008). This type of education is sometimes referred to as CRSE (comprehensive rights-based sex education), CSE (Comprehensive Sexuality Education), or more simply, SE (sexuality education). For this study, it is referred as Sexuality Education (SE).

There are more than 1.8 billion adolescents in the world today, more than ever before, making up 16 per cent of the world's population (UNFPA, 2021). Defined by the United Nations as those between the ages of 10 and 19, adolescents experience a transition period between childhood and adulthood and with it, significant growth and development (UNFPA, 2014; Kar et al., 2015). In the Ethiopian context, the adolescent population constitutes about

24% of the 110million total population, with a national median age of 18.5 (UNFPA, 2021). Similarly, Uganda is the most rapidly growing and youngest population in the world where 34.8% of Uganda's 41.6 million total population are adolescents with a national median age of 15.9 (UNFPA, 2021b). This section exhibits a multitude of characteristics such as rapid physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and sexual change, and growth (Vanwesenbeeck et. al., 2015; WHO, 2011; Kar et. al., 2015). These unique growth and development imply social and psychological consequences related to sexuality such as the development of interest in sexual attraction, need for sexual practices, and intimacy that necessitates SE to help them make an informed decision (Vanwesenbeeck et. al., 2015; WHO, 2011; UNESCO, 2018). The socio-cultural norms related to adolescent sexuality is intolerant to premarital sex, SRH service utilization (e.g., contraceptive use) by unmarried adolescent; and discourage SRH communication with unmarried adolescents (Munea et. al., 2022). Similarly, having communication on SRH issues with unmarried adolescents are considered equivalent to encouraging them to initiate sex, therefore, should not be practiced (Munae et. al., 2022; European experts' group on SE, 2016). As a result of lack of knowledge on SRH, adolescents could engage in risky sexual behaviours such as unprotected sex, multiple sexual partnerships and transactional sex, and acquire preventable health problems that might continue throughout their adult life (WHO, 2012; Munae et. al., 2022). These preventable health risks include sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy and unsafe induced abortion among adolescents.

Discussing sexuality is still a taboo topic in many African societies**,** making it less challenging for education to silence the issue and remain largely associated with HIV/AIDS (Mupotsa, 2012; Wangamati, 2020). Since the 1980s, there has been increased emphasis on providing adolescents with sexual health education in many African countries (WHO, 2011) following the growing rate of HIV/AIDS in the region. Moreover, the alarm of *global*

organizations (UNESCO, 2009) which highlighted the need for education to address the threat to adolescent's health also contributed to the emphasis given to sexual health.

Sexuality education is one of the understudied subjects in Ethiopia, and also in Uganda. The research on this issue remains scarce and also generally point to dominant discourses focusing on health risks (Wekesah et al., 2019; Wangamati, 2020). Despite often positive results in knowledge transfer, many SE programs have seen limited behavioural change, and adolescents are still challenged with conflicting and confusing messages around sexuality and gender due to the unavailability of adequate information to discuss both at school and home environment in both context of Ethiopia and Uganda (Browes, 2015; Lewinger and Russell, 2021). It has been suggested that gendered – or absent – information has failed adolescents, particularly girls, meaning that they remain exposed to sexuality and gender related challenges i.e., early sexual debut, unplanned pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other STIs, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), early marriage, FGM and other Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) (CSA, 2016).

Against the above backdrop, this ethnographic study was designed to focus on the SE policies and practices in the selected schools and to relate this to the views of the study participants from a gender perspective. As various research has discussed the final impact of SE practices, this ethnographic study especially focuses on the process, the middle. Hence, to help understand what happens in the middle, this ethnographic study engages the policies and practices of school-based SE from a gender perspective by focusing on two government primary schools in the context of Ethiopia and Uganda. Standing on transformative/ critical philosophical paradigm, the study employed southern theory as a general orientation, and neo-institutional and gender theories as tools to explain the policy and practices of SE respectively.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Adolescents face a great challenge in which many of them are not prepared enough to cope with, which often puts them under stress. Onset of menstruation, change in voice (puberphonia) in boys, development of secondary sexual characteristics, and psychological changes often perceived as challenges (Kar et. al., 2015). Sexual exposure during adolescence is a matter of serious concern due to the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV infection/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, and adolescent fatherhood (Ott, 2010; Auslander et. Al., 2007). In many developing countries and most of the underdeveloped countries, formal SE in school mostly does not exist; if it exists, then mostly found to be inadequate and lack of proper sex education often leads to unprotected sex, unintended pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (Kar et.al, 2015). Studies show that adolescents face barriers in accessing SRH services, may feel embarrassed, face stigma on sexual matters, and have concerns about judgmental providers of SRH services, including SE (Santhya and Jejeebhoy, 2015; Ayehu, 2016).

Similarly, in Ethiopia and Uganda, it is reported that adolescents remain at risk due to inadequate SRHR information and services, including school-based SE (CSA, 2016; UBOS, 2016). In Ethiopia, according to the CSA's EDHS (2016) only about 24 percent of young women and 39 percent of young men between the age 15-24 have knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention. It is reported that the percentage of adolescents with knowledge about HIV prevention is even lower among those age 15- 17 (CSA, 2016). On the other hand, this age range is the age when adolescents have their first sexual practices (median age 16.6), median age at first marriage is 17.5, and some (about 13% of women aged 15-49) already have begun childbearing (CSA, 2016).

Similarly in Uganda, 46% of young women and 45% of young men age 15-24 have comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS (UBOS, 2016). With this level of information, on

average, 18 percent of women age 20-49 have had sex by age 15 and 62% by age 18 indicating that many women engage in sexual practices at school age (UBOS, 2016). Teenage pregnancy is also the highest in the region where 25% of Ugandan young women become pregnant between the ages of 15–19 and unsafe abortions are the leading cause of death among 15–19 years old Ugandan women (Maly et. al., 2017). In Uganda, 25% of teenage girls are either pregnant or have already had their first child (UBOS, 2016). In both Ethiopia and Uganda, it is at the age of adolescence at they start to experience sexual practices and it is at that age that they lack the right information on sexual practices.

Moreover, in Ethiopia, more than one-third of ever-married women (35%) reported that they have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence at some point in time. Similarly in Uganda, at least 98%, 76%, 74% of children aged 8-18 years interviewed have experienced physical /emotional, sexual, and economic violence respectively. However, the data reported by the government of Ethiopia and Uganda lacks comprehensiveness and overlooks the experience of adolescents.

Studies indicate that school-based SE, as the agency of socialization, Connell (1987), has the potential to promote sexuality and gender awareness and promotes healthy adolescence (Le Mat, 2017; Mueller, et. al., 2008). However, adolescents routinely express inadequacy of the SE that is offered in schools (Pandora, et al., 2016) and achieving behavioural change on sexuality and gender practices among adolescents remains limited (Mueller, 2008; Le Mat, 2017).

Some of the previous studies in Ethiopia have scrutinized the aims, reach, and effectiveness of some SE programmes at school level (Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2015; Le Mat, 2017). The findings indicate that adolescents are excluded in three forms: exclusion to participate; exclusion of their views through gendered interpretations and practices; exclusion through omission of topics that are relevant to adolescents i.e., love, relationships, and sexual

intercourse (Le Mat, 2017). As a result, they concluded that the potential of SE to contribute to questioning gender relations and improving the emotional and sexual health of adolescents is undermined (Le Mat, 2017). It rather reproduces the existing gender order in the school and arguably broader society, which makes SE practice ineffective to bring behavioural change among adolescents. Young people remain vulnerable to SRHR risks and gender injustices without being equipped on how to manoeuvre adolescence. As a result, some young people, especially urban background, in the context of the globalization era have greater exposure to sexually explicit information through the internet and other media (Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2015). Although the educational role of the internet and other media is undeniable, at the same time, the message can be inconsistent, contradictory, and even problematic (Nikkelen et al, 2020; Hio Tong, 2016). It also takes place in the framework of no accountability, neither joint purpose.

The studies dealing with SE in the school context in Ethiopia have mainly emphasized on measuring the output and impact of SE rather than the process that led there (Kemigisha, et al, 2019; Boti, et al., 2019). There is also a research gap that conceptually neglected to analyse what happens in the middle, the process, in a comprehensive manner to understand why SE is not being successful in bringing behavioural change. Those few pieces of research that analyse the process were focused on one variable, like the role of teachers (Le Mat, et al., 2019), factors affecting SE (Browes, 2015), and the perspective of young people in SE practices (Le Mat, 2017). The studies that are available lack comprehensiveness, were merely focused on health risks, while lacking gender perspective and social interaction to understand the power dynamics in SE context. Discussing sexuality without looking into the gender dynamics also denies the comprehensive attribute of what needs to be studied. Previous studies lack a holistic understanding of SE by looking into both policy and practice and they usually lack dealing with more than one case to bring about comparative perspective to draw a lesson from the

experience of others. This study included the case of a selected school from Uganda to make a contrast, draw a lesson and present possible suggestions to improve the policy and practice of SE in Ethiopia.

Furthermore, most research on SE in Ethiopia are conducted predominantly by researchers from the global North (Browes, 2015; Vanwesenbeeck et. al, 2015; Le Mat et.al, 2018 & 2019). As one roughly looks into the list of references used in local SE research (Menna et. al., 2015; and Taffa et al., 2003) one can see how they are dominated by researchers from the global north. As Browes (2015) stated, study participants perceive her foreigner identity in a certain way (superior, outsider, and donor), and discussed how it may influence interaction and findings. Done by a researcher from the global South, the knowledge produced in this research can be used as an input for related studies by being a resource produced by reflecting genuine southern perspectives. This study fills the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological gap around SE research, educational research, and comparative education research.

1.3 Basic research questions:

The following are the basic research questions that guided this study:

1. How is gender interaction performed in the selected SE implementing schools in Ethiopia and Uganda?
2. How are the global and local SE policy actors interacting in the selected cases?
3. What are the dominant agenda in the SE policy discourse in relation to the SE practices?
4. How do the SE contents respond to the values and needs of students in the selected schools?
5. How does the pedagogy in SE classroom inform the learning environment?
6. How do SE policies and practices in the selected cases of Ethiopia and Uganda compare?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

The general objective of this study is to understand the policy and practice of school-based sexuality education in selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda.

The Specific objectives of the study are:

A. To understand the general gender interaction in the selected SE implementing schools in Ethiopia and Uganda?
B. To explore on the interaction between the global and local SE policy actors
C. To identify the dominant agenda in the SE policy discourse in relation to the SE practices
D. To explore the SE contents in relation to the values and needs of students in the selected schools
E. To identify the pedagogy taking place in the SE learning environment
F. To compare the SE policies and practices in the selected cases of Ethiopia and Uganda

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is significant in contributing to the knowledge and understanding of what happens in the middle, the process of SE, by discussing the SE policies and practices in school context from a gender perspective. By discussing and comparing the SE experience of selected schools from Uganda, the study could help to produce knowledge and lessons that can be borrowed to the context of Ethiopia and vice-versa. This could inform SE policies and practices in Ethiopia, Uganda, and others with similar contexts.

The study helps to answer policy and practice divergence and convergence and gives explanations for isomorphism by using neo-institutional theory. By looking beyond the classroom, gender interaction and power dynamics in SE classrooms and other subjects are studied to understand differences within and between sexes in SE from the gender perspective. Other identity backgrounds like rural/urban were put into perspective to the include issue of

intersectionality emphasising that all girls and boys are not the same. Hence, this study is significant to fill the research gap by recognizing the importance of southern theory both epistemologically and methodologically.

Given the fact that SE subject is under researched in the context of Ethiopia and Uganda, it is anticipated that this study could be an empirical, methodological, and theoretical resource for future research in the field. The study is important to help reflect the Southern perspectives by documenting the genuine experiences and values of the study participants through ethnography. This ethnographic study, as it is done by a local researcher, is significant to bring inward-looking from a southern perspective, cultural consciousness, and better interaction. The study is also significant in contributing to the theoretical and conceptual resources in the fields of sexuality and gender education, International and Comparative Education, and the field of education in general.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The study is about the policy and practice of school-based SE in the case of selected one primary school in Ethiopia and one in Uganda. The study being focused only on one school in each country is identified as the limitation of the study. More number of schools from various context, for example: schools outside the capital city, private schools, secondary schools, could have yielded more diversified knowledge. Hence, I aspire and recommend other researchers to conduct future research to understand and explain SE experience of schools in different context.

In this comparative study, the "field" visits were short and intense the case of Uganda, and the case of Ethiopia to be relatively longer and sporadic. I acknowledge the significance of spending longer and equivalent time in comparative research which needs to be discussed as a limitation resulting some missing elements due to compressed ethnography. To address this limitation, in line with modern ethnography authorities (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004),

"compressed time mode" of ethnography conducted in Uganda have attempted to generate thick data through intense observation and in-depth interaction with the study participants.

Some important data with regards to experiences and views of the study participants were not discussed in the findings to avoid cultural and legal backlash, and respect individuals' confidentiality (no matter the individuals share their stories). For example, the important aspects of sexuality and gender discourse, issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity were not discussed due to legal and cultural matters. This may have limited the comprehensiveness of the research, but the researcher pledged to prioritize the protection of study participants and to avoid potential backlash during the dissemination of the study.

This study is an ethnographic study that demands interaction with study participants and field observation to have an in-depth understanding of patterns of behaviours. However, due to the controversial nature of the study topic area, sexuality education, some experts from Ministry of Education in Ethiopia and large number of boys were not interested to participate in the study. The researcher had to negotiate with other voluntary experts to conduct group interview long after the rest of the data collection was completed. The interview with the experts was a group of only men experts who self-selected to the interview, which the researcher couldn't influence rather than ensuring complete voluntary participation of the experts, even at the cost of missing voices.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The focus of this study is to explain the policy and practice of school-based sexuality education in the case of selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda from a gender lens. Among the recognized schools in the educational structures, this study is delimited to primary schools that are managed by the government. The study is delimited to schools located in an urban context, in the capital city of Ethiopia and Uganda, Addis Ababa and Kampala

respectively. In this study, only schools implementing SE programs in partnership with NGOs are included.

The study is delimited to the policies and practices of SE from the perspectives of the study participants, i.e., the views and experiences of SE students, teachers, school management, MoE, and I/NGOs. The study analysed the perspectives of the study participants from the theoretical perspective of gender and neo-institutional theory. The study data collection was mainly conducted in the year 2019 and the study is delimited to the context of SE policies and practices around the same time.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study comprises eleven chapters. The first chapter introduces the major issue of the study, states the problems of the study, the objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, and organization of the study. The second chapter presents the theories that informed the study. In this chapter, the gender theory of Connell, neo-institutional theory, and southern theory were introduced and how they are used in the study was discussed. The third chapter of this research dealt with the reviews of previous literature related to the Sexuality, SE, and gender including the illustration of the conceptual framework of the study. The fourth chapter presented the study design and methodology including the research paradigm, approach, design, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data analysis technique, ethical considerations, and data reliability. The fifth chapter presents the finding of the study, the general gender interactions in the selected schools. The sixth chapter presents the national context of Ethiopia and Uganda where the demography and socio-economic context and the education system was discussed. In chapter six, the gender interaction in the selected schools was discussed under the subchapters of Gender interaction in classroom, outside the classroom, and the school surrounding. The seventh chapter dealt with the SE policies including subtopics of the overall institutional interaction and discourse on the SE curriculum

development. Chapter eight discussed the SE practices in the selected schools including SE contents, and the pedagogy in SE. The ninth chapter presented students and teachers voices regarding SE policy and practices. Chapter ten presented the discussion of the research findings followed by the last chapter, eleven, that highlighted the conclusion and implication of the study.

1.9 Definition of key terms

a. **Adolescence:** Adolescence in this study is defined as the period of life when a child developing into an adult (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). To be specific, as it is defined by the United Nations, adolescence covers between the age 10–19 years (UNESCO, 2009). Most developmental psychologists refer to three distinct stages of adolescence in their frameworks, early, middle, and late; between 11-13 years old, 14-17 years old, and 18-19 years old respectively (Salmela-Aro, 2011; Steinberg, 2008). For this study, early and middle adolescents are selected from ages 13-16, who are in grades 6-7. The terms adolescents and young people are used interchangeably in this research and no significant difference is intended to refer.

b. **Sexuality**: According to the Cambridge dictionary, the term sexuality in this study is defined as the state of being sexual (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.) experienced and expressed in attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles, relationships, desires, and fantasies shaped by psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, and religious factors (WHO, 2011).

c. **Sexuality Education:** SE in this study is defined as learning activities and events discussing sexuality, reproductive health, body change in puberty, informed choice, and gender equality, governed by guidelines taking into consideration of age, the cultural values of the society as well as the laws of the country (Merriam-Webster, n.d.; Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2015).

d. **Gender:** Gender in this study is defined as a social construct that involves a pattern of relationships, expectations, roles, and characters expressed and deeply embedded in every aspect of society (Connell, 2009) to be performed by men and women (Butler, 1990, 2015).

e. **Gender Based Violence (GBV)**: in this study encompasses all physical, sexual and psychological violence that is rooted in individuals' gender roles or identities. Violence against women is the main focus of the study, which is the most common form of gender-based violence and one of the most pervasive violations of human rights worldwide.

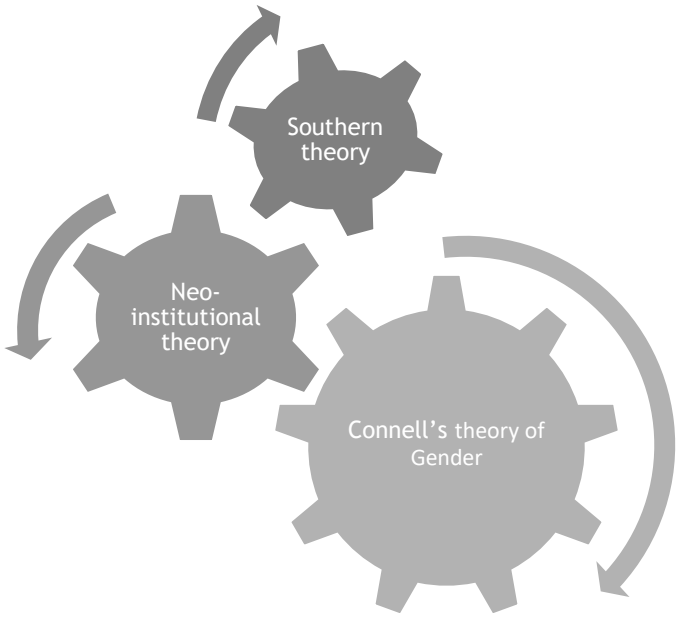
f. **Neo-institutionalism**: AKA 'world polity' approach, 'world culture' or 'world society' approach, in this study is defined as an approach that help explain and analyse the way that institutions interact to affect society and why so many of them end up having the same system (isomorphism) even though they evolved in different ways (Meyer, 2009).

g. **Ethnography**: in this study is about telling a credible, rigorous, and authentic story told through the eyes of local people in their own local context, typically relying on verbatim quotations and a "thick" description of events (Fetterman, 2010).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is theoretically informed ethnographic research that employs gender perspective into the analysis at all levels. Coming from the transformative/ critical philosophical paradigm, the theories that guided the study are Connell's gender theory, Neo-institutional theory, and Southern theory. Connell's gender theory (Connell, 1987) is the major theory used to analyse policies and practices of Sexuality Education in the selected schools of Ethiopia and Uganda. Neo-institutional theory is mainly used for policy analysis aspect of the study to explain how SE policy making institutions interact and to understand the patterns of policy borrowing. The last theory, the Southern theory served as a general umbrella to guide the study to have intentional integrity and just representation of the Southern voices and experiences at all stages of the study.

Figure 1Theorethical framework



The three selected theories appear to be complementary in serving the purpose of the study as they provide a critical framework to analyse SE policies and practices. In this chapter,

the concepts of the selected theories, why they are the preferred theories, and how they are going to be used in the study are discussed below.

2.1 Connell's Gender Theory

The major and most suitable theory selected for this study to discuss SE from Gender perspective was Connell's gender theory. Connell's Gender theory is based on a sequence of assumptions that, first, men and women have different experiences, that the world is not the same for them (Connell, 1987). Subsequently, the oppression of women is the element of the construction in which the world is ordered, also named "patriarchy" where men have more power and resources (Connell, 1987). The gender theory of Connell (1987) helps to explain this structure, "patriarchy", at both world-systems level where women remain the oppressed and local level where gender patterns could be diverse at various local contexts. Similarly, the theory helped this study to understand the gender pattern is manifested at local level in the selected schools implementing SE standing on the assumption that women remain oppressed in the world system.

Moreover, Connell questions the North-South global hierarchy of knowledge that marginalizes the southern perspective away from the metropole to the periphery (Connell, 2014). Standing against the North-South binary, Connell explains how the southern theorists are seen as regional interest than important voices of the "general" gender theory. This critical perspective is one of the compelling reasons to use Connell's work as a guiding theory of the study.

Connell calls the agencies of socialization where men and women (learn to) "do gender", where gendered experiences occur in settings like schools, home, the street, and workplace, as the "gender regimes" (Connell, 1987; Butler, 1990). She on the other hand used the term "gender order" to articulate the general historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women or "the current state of play in the macro-politics of gender"

(Connell, 1987: 20). In this study, the selected schools are the central "gender regimes" placed in the gendered macro-level cultural and policy context and pattern, the "Gender Order".

Connell presents three dimensions, i.e., labour, power, and cathexis, to explain any society's ideas of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. These structures ideologically construct 'women' from emphasised femininity and 'men' hegemonic masculinity standpoint. This hegemonic masculinity, which Connell (2000, 2002) posits is white, western, heterosexual and aggressive, becomes normalised and other forms of masculinity are, by contrast, subordinated, damagingly stigmatised and marginalised. Other forms of being men are expelled from the circle of legitimacy, the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) within a society because popular versions of masculinity and femininity are repeated, universalized, so that they feel "natural" and acceptable. Connell used the term 'emphasised femininity' as opposed to 'hegemonic femininity' which is associated with white, heterosexual, "feminine" women. Connell also argued, in a patriarchal society no femininity can be hegemonic as all femininities are compliant with, and dominated by, masculinity and 'constructed in the context of the overall subordination of women to men' (Connell, 1987: 186–187). The 'emphasised' image of femininity may be less marginalised than other femininities, but it is still 'defined around compliance with this subordination [to men] and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men' (Connell, 1987: 183). Engaging Connell's conceptualization of emphasised femininity and hegemonic masculinity provided the study the advantage of understanding gender patterns and expectations at the school-level, interpersonal interactions, and at macro-level SE policy. The three dimensions were employed to discuss the policy and practice of SE in the selected schools as discussed below.

2.1.1 Labour Division

One of the dimensions of explaining gender relations is the division of labour which refers to the allocation of different jobs, paid and unpaid types of works and activities assigned

to women and men (and girls and boys) (Connell, 1987) at home, workplaces and in the community. For this study, division of labour was used to understand who does what in SE classrooms and the general school environment in relation to femininity and masculinity. It was also used to analyse the gender roles expected from boys and girls communicated through SE, embedded in the messages. The division of labour among boys and girls to be delivered in and out of the classroom i.e., games, sports, classwork, group work, assignments, favourite subjects, friendship, and sexuality related practices were observed, explained in interviews, and analysed. This helped to explain the general gender order in which SE is functioning and how SE as a gender regime is challenging or rather confirming it at the local level.

2.1.2 Power Relation

With power relation, the gendered patterns of authority and control between women and men are explained. Connell's gender theory assumes that in the existing patriarchal *world culture,* men are entitled to more power in a way that affects women, by recognizing local level differences (Connell, 1987). This study aims to locate these local differences by discussing the gendered hierarchies of institutional and interpersonal interaction, violence against women, and sexuality related policing, regulation, and surveillance (Connell, 1987, p. 96) in SE policy and practices. Understanding the pattern of power relations helped the study to explain useful elements of gendered interaction reflected in and out of the classroom among boys and girls by answering questions like who is assigned as a classroom leader? Whose voice is heard and listened to? Who has more time with teachers? Whose behaviour is policed, and agency denied? Whose needs and safety are prioritised in school? Which group occupies more space in the playground and school environment? Engaging these questions related to power dynamics in the general school practices and SE helped to reflect on the implicit and explicit messages embedded in SE policies and practices in the selected schools.

2.1.3 Cathexis

The third dimension, 'cathexis', in Connell's terms, refers to the arrangement that constructs people's emotional attachments to each other and governs sexual desires (Connell, 1987). In this study, the social blueprint of desire, relationship, friendships, and their set of regulations was discussed. Engaging the dimension of cathexis in SE policies and practices helped to debunk the dichotomy of femininity and masculinity in the relationship, the cast of "who should feel affection to who" (as the *world culture* favours the 'naturalness' of the hegemonic sexuality), and the gendered friendships. Like gender, sexuality is performed operating through structures; it is not only expressed or felt (Connell, 1987, p. 111). Hence, cathexis was explained as political manufacture of power manifested in the schools, beyond affection and desire, and discussed how SE address such patters (Connell, 1987).

Critically engaging these gender dimensions, division of labour, power relation, and cathexis, helped the study debunk the gendered constructions and experiences in a school-based SE environment.

It is understandable that Connell's theory of gender is not the only theory suitable for SE research from a gender perspective. There are various renowned scholars with established theories in the field that philosophically intersect with Connell's perspective such as Judith Butler's Queer theory. Butler is influenced by the works of Foucault, Freud and De Beauviour (Butler, 1990; 1993; 2004; 2015). Butler sees gender as unstable "fiction" that is a fluid identity constructed through interaction. She states that individual subject is never exclusively "male" or "female," but rather is always contextually dependent that "one is not born but rather becomes wo/man" (Butler, 1993). Butler argues that gender is not something we "have" but we "do" as per the theory of "performativity". She criticizes modern feminists for sticking to the traditional gender binary by taking her argument to another level of ontological perspective that dismiss the alleged "biological" dimensions of gender that, in her view, perpetuate

patriarchy (Butler, 1993). As opposed to a naturalist view, which says gender relations are imposed by nature and therefore cannot be changed in any fundamental way, her performative principle enables the subversion of fixed notions of identity. Her work, "undoing gender", also brings up the queer theory standpoint that highlights the need for a more flexible conceptualization of gender and sexuality.

However, Butler's radical work may subject the researcher and her work to backlash from the legal and cultural environment in both selected contexts, as both Ethiopia and Uganda remain closed for the discourse around queer theory. Moreover, Butler's queer theory doesn't seem to stress the local variance from the global gender pattern of patriarchy (Lloyd, 2005), like Connell precisely did, which is one of the important questions of this study. Furthermore, the theory of Connell appears to be giving explicit emphasis for southern perspective in gender researcher than Butler's work, making Connell's theory more applicable for the study.

2.2 Neo-institutional theory

The neo-institutional theory is one of the dominant theories in comparative research and applies when the level of analysis is an institutional field/ organizational context, school in the case of this study (Meyer, 1977). In this study, neo-institutional theoretical perspective helped to understand the dynamics and consequences of Macro level *world society* perspective on the national and local SE policy and practices. It helped to explore how actors such as international organizations construct appropriate beliefs, norms, and cultural models and how local states, schools, students and teachers behave (Meyer, 2009). According to the theory, the *world society* perspective inclines towards macro-level institutionalism that applies human rights, health and science perspectives (Drori, et al., 2003 and 2006) that is more focused on the state of similarity and shared norms (Zucker, 1991). Whereas micro-level institutionalism suggests that variation in strategic response to the same environment can bring about differentiation rather than isomorphism. Neo-institutional theory's assumption on micro-level

variation aligns with Connell's theory of gender that acknowledges local-level divergence in gender regimes while the general gender order remains patriarchal in structure.

Neo-institutional theory is an appropriate perspective for this study as it helped to understand the concern with internationalization coincided with an increases educational policy borrowing and transfer between countries that resulted unprecedented convergence and standardization in policy priorities and strategies as an aspect of globalization. Cross-national policy borrowing is the phenomenon most commonly associated with neo-institutional theory (Astiz et. al., 2002) and similarly it is an essential concern of this study to explain convergence in SE policy and practices.

The questions of the study that Neo-institutional theory helped to explain are the shared gender norms and expectations at school level, the influence of the *world society* perspective on SE policy development process and school practices in the selected contexts, and the role of globalization in fuelling structural isomorphism. Since schools are institutionalized sites to the embodiment of locally and globally "legitimized" culture, neo-institutional frameworks offer the researcher to be able to see the contradictions and interaction of the local culture and *world society* perspectives (Wiseman et al., 2009). Neo-institutional theory helped to explain SE policy isomorphism, standing on the assumption that "international standards" and "internationalization" coming from the *world society* perspective have become an increasingly common point of reference in policy decisions (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Isomorphism is ''a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions'' (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 160), and does not mean homogenization as much as it means the development of shared expectations and activities.

As some critics have suggested, there are still concerns about the ability of neo-institutional perspectives to embrace the micro-level changes and exceptions. This means that the methodology, which is associated with neo-institutional theory and the empirical research

developed using a neo-institutional framework, could be reimagined from a more micro-perspective. Hence, this study implements ethnographic approach to emphasize micro-level experiences from southern perspective and Connell's gender theory that stresses local level divergence.

In light of Neo-institutional theory, the study used the catalysts of change resulting SE policy and practice isomorphism: a) *Coercive isomorphism* that occurs when the formal and informal pressures exercised both local and international powers because of their regulatory and financing role. Government forces its educational system to comply with a ''best practices'' model from another national system perceived to be high performing. Oftentimes, *global* forces dictate this sort of change (Wiseman & Mayora, 2013). b) *Mimetic isomorphism* occurs when the goals and procedures of the organization are unclear and tend to imitate behaviours of others that they perceive as legitimate or successful. c) *Normative isomorphism* is associated with professionalization in a group that establishes a cognitive and legitimate basis of occupational autonomy and exerts coercive and mimetic power just like organizations (professional work networks, and influencers) (Meyer & Rowan, 2006).

In this study, these explanations of policy development and isomorphism were used to understand the SE policy development process, rationale behind policy borrowing, and isomorphism in practices.

It is undeniable that there are some competing theories that are used in comparative research such as the critical theory that helps to understand race, class and gender differences, and human capital theory. Paulo Friere's critical theory in his work *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1974) by focusing on the themes of liberatory education, domination, critical epistemology, and democracy seems appropriate to help the study explain SE policy and practices. Freire wanted teachers to treat learners as co-creators of knowledge and help them to emancipate themselves from the culture of silence and to meet the needs of humanity and to develop a more

just society (Freire, 1974; Taylor, 1993). However, this emancipatory education theory helps to expose the irrationality of life's reality (Shor and Freire, 1987), it seems to lack comprehensive and broader perspective by focusing only on the oppression and liberatory explanation of education research. Moreover, Freirean theory is a perspective that is predominantly associated with colonial power and dehumanizing education (Riasati et. al., 2012) which makes it difficult to discuss the nature of global and local interaction in a more complex manner. Neo-institutional theory on the other hand is a new perspective that makes a room to explain the general global and local education policy and practices by still having oppression and liberation as a subset discussion, which makes it more applicable to this study.

2.3 Southern Theory

Southern theory argues that the global north remains to control the academic journals and their academics epistemologically dominate the knowledge production (Altbach, 2004). As a central thinker that theoretically influenced this study on gender justice, Connell (2007) has also conveyed persuading critique on the global north dominated knowledge production that helped this study to intentionally showcase southern perspective. Arguing against the assumption what counts as knowledge is often determined by powerful northern intellectual's 'Northern theory', Connell sought to end silencing southern voices and marginalising southern perspectives in a variety of contexts, including South America, Iran, Africa and India. Her call is for the democratisation of knowledge which includes refraining from treating the periphery as a site primarily of data collection and rather searching for its potential to produce new knowledge and new theories (Connell, 2007).

In this study southern theory, as it is inspired by Connell, offered a general umbrella that is more than interesting data from the south in ethnographic and qualitative research. Southern theory helped the researcher to intentionally employ research methods and approaches that empower and amplify the southern perspectives during all stages of the study.

Conceptually, southern theory helped the study recognize context and the alternative theoretical component in the intellectual work, NGOs, schools, and state agencies in the global periphery. It also further provided developing sophisticated sets of alternative concepts, and experiences to the global economy of knowledge that Northern scholars can, and should, learn from as each local context remains unique. The southern theory was used to study manoeuvre the global knowledge economy where the Northern perspective is dominant and Southern voices are silenced, by combining both the mainstream knowledge in the metropole and southern theories in the periphery.

In summary, all the three theories synchronised to help explain the policies and practices of school-based SE which functions in the context of Ethiopia and Uganda as a critical standpoint of data analysis. Connell's gender theory that emphasized on local dynamics in gender regime by recognizing the patriarchal gender order at a global level helped to analyse gender division of labour, power relation, and cathexis in the selected schools and the SE they practice. Using this theory, how and if the global gender order is manifested through emphasized femininity and hegemonic masculinity was studied at local school level. The neo-institutional theory helped analyse the interaction between the global and local SE policy and explain reasons of isomorphism i.e., coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphism. Standing on the assumption that "international standards" and "internationalization" coming from the *world society* perspective, usually claimed as the "legitimized" culture, SE policy and practices at micro-level was analysed through the theory. Southern theory, the umbrella theory of the study, argues on the importance of bringing southern perspectives from the periphery to the center. Against the global north's epistemological hegemony by positioning the global south just as an interesting data site, the theory helped the deliberate attempt to amplify the southern perspectives by combining both the *mainstream knowledge* in the metropole and southern theories in the periphery.

3. REVEIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study aims to understand the policy and practice of school-based Sexuality Education (SE) from a gender perspective in the context of Ethiopia and Uganda. This section presented the overview of previous research on SE and gender in different contexts. The studies have been read and reviewed from, mainly Connell's gender theory, neo-institutional and southern theoretical perspectives. The studies found in the field of SE appear limited and predominantly qualitative; hence, the review largely includes qualitative studies.

The search strategy involved search engines mainly Google scholar and ERIC, by access from Gothenburg University and Addis Ababa University e-libraries. The searching technique was the combination of phrases i.e., Sexuality Education, Sex Education, Adolescents Health in Schools, Gender, Gender and Education, and Gender and Sexuality. Country specific studies, particularly Ethiopia and Uganda, were also searched to give more context-based perspectives. Besides, the reference lists of included studies were searched for additional eligible studies as well as handbooks on gender education research and SE.

The screening of all relevant references was limited to a date range of January 1, 2000 - 2023. In fact, exceptions are made for the classical works that are foundational for the fields of education, SE, gender, and the selected theories (Connell's gender theory, Neo-institutional theory, and Southern theory) regardless of date.

Based on the review of previous research and the research questions, four common themes were identified for discussion i.e., the concept sexuality and SE; the global north experience on SE; the Southern experience on SE - focus on Africa, and gender and SE in schools.

3.1 The concept of Sexuality and Sexuality Education

Sexuality is a difficult term to define since it does not simply mean 'sex'. It is a controversial, contested, and complex subject to study. As Foucault (1979) stated, sexuality covers all aspects of becoming and being a sexual and gendered person. While Sexologists focus on sexual acts with little concern for the shifting social significance, Foucault persuasively argues that sexual act is meaningless without the social/cultural setting. Foucault (1979) also debates that nothing that went into one's total composition was unaffected by one's own sexuality. This supposition appears to correspond with the UNESCO's (2018) conceptual definition of sexuality.

> Sexuality can be understood as a core dimension of being human which includes: the understanding of, and relationship to, the human body; emotional attachment and love; sex; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; sexual intimacy; pleasure and reproduction. Sexuality is complex and includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, religious, political, legal, historic, ethical and cultural dimensions that evolve over a lifespan. It is a subjective experience and a part of the human need for both intimacy and privacy (p.17).

Sexuality is a universal aspect of being human but there are substantial differences in sexual behaviours and expectations across the world depending on the dynamic social construction (Butler, 1993). It is also different among adolescents including their body development. Puberty changes differ in among individuals and different sexes. Some experience changes earlier than others, and the time of attaining maturity can impact the adolescent development and their experience in sexuality differently. Early maturing boys usually have good body image are more confident, secure, and independent as compared to late maturing boys (Kar et. al., 2015). Early maturing girls on the other hand, experience self-

conscious, are more likely to face sexual advances from older boys, which may increase the risk of unwanted pregnancies (Kar et. al., 2015). Most of these dynamics are embedded in the local cultures and norms that determine socially acceptable sexual behaviours, growth and practices (Weeks, 2011).

Sexuality Education is a major tool for promoting sexual well-being and preparing children and young people for healthy and responsible relationships at the different stages of their lives. Sexuality education is an education that is characterized as the central process to the social construction of sexuality and gender expectations (Haberland and Rogow, 2015; Miedema et el., 2017) that includes themes like sexual development, SRHR, consent, and gender roles. It also involves affection, intimacy, close relationships, body image, and emotions (Miedema et el., 2017; 2020).

Sexuality education has always been controversial around what information should include in its curricula; whose role it is to impart this information; and at what age is it appropriate to begin talking to adolescents about sexuality (Allen, 2005; Haberland and Rogow, 2015; Robinson and Davies, 2017). Certainly, when younger children and schools are engaged, the contentious nature of SE escalates, sparking debates such as "SE is irrelevant and improper for young children"; "how early is too young"; and "sexuality is adult knowledge" (Haberland and Rogow, 2015). This relates to the range of polarized debates in the field of SE such as health versus morality; human rights versus religious rights; and reason/science versus faith, where the former is idealized and linked to freedom, progress, empowerment, and autonomy from the *world society* perspective (Carlson, 2012).

The post-modern scholars see adolescents as sexually active, autonomous subjects who have the right to be educated by experts on issues of sexuality in order to make informed decisions (Scott, 2009; Sanjakdar et.al., 2015). They also suggest the need for *sexularism*, as it is coined by Scott (2009), to discuss secularist logic behind sexuality by excluding religion

from SE and allowing adolescents have agency over their sexuality (Sanjakdar et. al., 2015). Sexuality education that acknowledges young people as sexual subjects whose sexuality is viewed positively and as legitimate rather than a problem to be managed would also recognise their agency to make their own sexual decisions (Allen, 2011, p. 151).

3.2 The Global North Experience on Sexuality Education

In this section, previous studies particularly the case of US, the Dutch, UK and Sweden were included as they appear dominant and surplus in the search for previous works related to SE. The studies reflect on some of the seemingly interesting experiences and different programmes implemented in these countries.

In Western societies, SE and its consequent research grew in the late 1950s, often as part of biology lessons discouraging people from having sex outside marriage (Carlson, 2012). The European expert group on SE (2016) in their policy briefing for the Standards on SE in Europe, the concept of 'holistic SE' is defined as:

> Learning about the cognitive, emotional, social, interactive and physical aspects of sexuality. Sexuality education starts early in childhood and progresses through adolescence and adulthood. It aims at supporting and protecting sexual development. It gradually equips and empowers children and young people with information, skills and positive values to understand and enjoy their sexuality, have safe and fulfilling relationships and take responsibility for their own and other people's sexual health and well-being. (WHO, 2010; European experts group on SE, 2016)

They identified a good good-quality SE as grounded in internationally accepted human rights, in particular the right to access appropriate health-related information. They also addressed common myths about SE, also largely told in the case of Ethiopia and Uganda, that it does not lead to adolescents having sex earlier than is expected based on the national average. They debated that SE rather leads to later sexual debut and more responsible sexual behaviour

(UNESCO, 2009; Van K. et. al., 2015; Apter, 2011; Haldre et. al., 2012). The also argued that SE does not deprive children of their innocence; it rather benefits children by giving children information that is scientifically accurate, non-judgmental, age-appropriate and complete, as part of a carefully phased process from the beginning of formal schooling (including kindergarten and pre-school). Sexuality education and an open attitude towards sexuality does not make it easier for paedophiles to abuse children. They argued that the opposite is the case: when children learn about equality and respect in relationships, they are in a better position to recognise abusive persons and situations.

One of the renowned SE approaches in the US is the abstinence promotion program, Abstinence-Only Until Marriage (AOUM) (Santelli et al., 2017), that has religious origin that promotes abstinence from sexual activity until marriage. Scholars in the area argue that this approach would further restrict adolescents access to education they need to stay safe and healthy sexuality (Schalet, 2011; Carlson, 2012). Such approach ignores adolescent's reality and the statement that abstinence is "the only certain way to avoid" such "health problems" as pregnancy and STDs gives the impression that condoms and other contraceptives are ineffective (Haffner, 1997).

In some context, this abstinence-only approach is presented as a funding requirement by the US government that various affected interventions, not only nationally but also influenced the sexuality education efforts internationally (Santelli et al., 2017). The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for the global South announced by George W. Bush in 2003 can be used as an example of an approach that favoured abstinence over condoms in the international SE efforts. This plan emphasised the prevention of HIV through the ABC model: Abstinence for youth and unmarried adults, Being faithful within marriage, and Condom use for high-risk groups (Oliver, 2012, p. 227). As Santelli et al., (2017)

argued the restrictive AOUM has undermined SE and suggested that the program should be abandoned.

One of the dominant SE approach in the Netherlands, on the other hand, is the one that aims to promote open dialogue with teens about sex. This approach, according to Schalet (2011), is identified as the explanation for what she calls the ‘‘normalization’’ of adolescent sexuality in the case she studied in the Netherlands, as opposed to the ‘‘dramatization’’ of adolescent sexuality observed various contexts. The student by Lewis & Knijn (2003) in the case of the Netherlands and in the UK revealed that they have substantial similarities in the way in which SE is structured and yet in some cases they follow different approach. While SE is controversial in both countries, they argue that most of the SE approaches in the Dutch context appears more open, comprehensive, and more coherent (Lewis and Knijn, 2003). One of the dominant approaches in the case of UK remains conservative in argument by mentioning examples in the materials produced by Family and Youth Concern that have changed very little since the 1970s (Lewis and Knijn, 2003). They also exemplified that the science texts studied in the British case remain more mechanistic and strictly biological, and they argued that the British Personal and Social Education/ PSE (known as ‘care’ in The Netherlands) SE messages appear more likely to treat sex in the context of danger, risk and prevention that designed most contents for private reading (Schalet, 2011; Lewis and Knijn, 2003).

Studies in the case of Sweden, on the other hand, shows that SE has been a compulsory part of lower and upper secondary schooling since 1955, as its focus has shifted over the years (Bolander, 2015). As advised by a Swedish Government Official Report (1969) schools appear to be expected to educate adolescents on sexually transmitted diseases and methods of contraception including condoms, contraceptives pills, intrauterine devices, coitus interruptus, and safe periods (Zetterberg, 1969 p.49). Studies on SE in the case of Sweden generally show

that the dominant approach reportedly aims to achieve a balance between affirming pleasure and reducing risk.

The SE practice in the some of the western countries seem to differ in its approach ranging from abstinence only to comprehensive approach. One can learn from this that there is no standardized "western" approach, usually claimed to be the "*world society*" perspective, and it is rather a continued process to find the right approach that works for the needs of young people and their local context.

3.3 The Southern experience on Sexuality Education: Africa in Focus

Studies that reflect the southern perspective on school-based SE are scarcely available, few review materials in the context of Africa particularly the case of Kenya, South Africa, and most importantly the case of Ethiopia and Uganda, are found and used. The domination of review materials from the global West and the limited recognition for the southern perspective in the global knowledge production is the materialization of the unjust North-South hierarchy in the global knowledge economy (Connell, 2014).

Just like the case around the globe, the discourse on sexual practices in Africa is still considered taboo, despite the evidence that such practices are associated with health risks (Djamba, 2005; 2013). Particularly, since the 1980s, following the HIV/AIDS epidemic, there has been increasing emphasis on providing adolescents with sexual health education in many African countries particularly with regard to the potential dangers of sex (WHO, 2010). With the aim of stopping the risky behaviours among adolescents, SE programmes have stressed 'abstinence first' and then access to condoms as the last resort (Oliver, 2012). Yet despite often positive results in knowledge transfer about HIV/AIDS risks and its prevention methods, many programmes have seen limited behaviour change among the adolescents (Mupotsa, 2012; Agha & Van Rossem, 2004; Wangamati, 2020). To address these weaknesses, an increasing number of experts and institutions are calling for sexual health education to be embedded in more of a

social framework (Haberland and Rogow 2015; Wangamati, 2020) using a comprehensive and rights-based approach (UNESCO, 2018). As well as teaching the risks and pleasures of sex, they suggested the need to conceptually focus on culture, gender and the decision-making, communication, and negotiation processes that are a key part of sexual relationships (Aggleton and Campbell, 2000; Haberland and Rogow 2015; UNESCO, 2018).

In most African countries including Ethiopia and Uganda, SE is not offered as a standalone subject in school but is integrated into other subjects. In various contexts in Kenya, for example, SE is predominantly taught as part of the compulsory but non-examinable life-skills curriculum (Sidze et. al., 2017). Although the policies emphasize the right to access accurate sexual health information, studies show that there are restrictions on the content of messages that can be provided in the school-based SE (Sidze et. al., 2017; Kirby et. al., 2006). Moreover, it is found that teachers often skip SE to focus on "core" examinable subjects, as a result, students continue to be exposed to the risk of sexual practices and quest for comprehensive sexuality information. Some scholars in Kenyan context arguably suggest that moving SE into examinable subjects could encourage teachers to pay attention to it (Keogh et al, 2018).

Similar to many African countries, in South Africa, SE does not exist as a separate subject, but it is rather integrated approach. South Africa's national policies such as the HIV/ AIDS for learners and educators in public schools and the HIV/ AIDS emergency guidelines for educators shows the pattern observed in many cases that reduced SE to the information about HIV/AIDS (Francis, 2010). Eventually, the sexual life orientation and HIV/AIDS education program introduced in South Africa in the late 1990s to improve sexual health among students (Rooth, 2005). Life orientation comprises a diverse number of components such as guidance, life skill education, health promotion, physical development, environmental education, citizenship and human rights education and religion education (Francis, 2010).

Ngabaza and Shefer (2019) in their recent work also argued that SE in South African schools remain deployed to regulate and discipline young people's sexualities, reinforce and perpetuate gender *binarisms* and heteronormativity, and represent continued assumptions of adult authority in a 'taming' mission over adolescents.

All these experiences are similar to the case of Ethiopia, however, school-based SE remains understudied and there are only limited data resources around it. In one of the few studies by Vanwesenbeeck et al., (2015) on the school-based SE practices in Ethiopia, the lessons learned from a decade of implementation of one particular SE programme was analysed. By analysing the aims, content, reach, and effectiveness and challenges of SE programme, the study suggests that there is a need for improvement. The suggestions proposed for increased understanding to sexual health, further advancement towards gender transformativity, a far-reaching expansion of comprehensive forms of teacher training and coaching, and a serious stepping-up of multilevel 'whole school' approaches.

According to the research carried out in one secondary school in Ethiopia, which discussed NGO supported SE programme, Browes, N. C., (2015) argued that cultural context affects interpretation of programme contents as culture is a defining rationale in various aspect of life, particularly gender relations and sexuality in a society. For an impactful implementation, Browes recommended SE approach that aims to engage with and involve the wider community to reduce contradictory messages among learners and to increase programme support. Furthermore, she suggested extensive and comprehensive pre-programme training for teachers to speak to their attitude and value, not just their knowledge (Browes, 2015).

According to Le Mat (2017) titled "(s)exclusion in the SE classroom: young people on gender and power relations, Sex Education" in Ethiopian context, three forms of "(s)exclusion", exclusion in sexuality education of young people, was discussed. The first (s)exclusion is through selection to participate in the programme; second, (s)exclusion of the

views of young people through gendered interpretations and practices; and third, (s)exclusion of the views of young people through the omission of discussion on topics that are relevant to them, such as love, relationships and sexual intercourse. For this reason, she concluded that the programme's prospect to contribute to questioning gender relations and improving the emotional and sexual health of young people is trapped (Le Mat, 2017).

According to the recent work by Le Mat et al., (2019) in Ethiopian school, the role of SE teachers and their understanding was discussed. The paper highlighted that while CSE teachers were typically conceptualised as 'facilitators' of the SE initiative, in practice teachers seemed to perform what might be understood as 'activist' roles within and beyond the classroom and school. Despite this activism, teachers' possibilities to address GBV still seemed limited, in part due to lack of guidance from policy and programme designers, lack of support from community and school management, and socio-economic factors (Le Mat et al., 2019).

The study by Muhanguzi and Ninsiima (2011) examined the extent to which sexuality knowledge drawn from home and school address adolescents lived sexual experiences in Uganda and presented evidence that the education offered is inadequate. The finding revealed that SE is largely prescriptive and feminized (targeting to discipline girls), generally divorced from teenagers' personal experiences, and sometimes even contradictory. By sending protective messages to girls, and disciplinary messages boys may use, the contents might risk reproducing the same gender stereotypes, rather than addressing them. The article suggests the need for a rigorous re-examination of the current sexuality learning resources and advocates for an empowering approach that integrates considerations of gender dynamics.

The study by Kemigisha et. al., (2019) is one of the few types of research conducted on the effectiveness of SE for early adolescents aged 10–14 years in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study evaluated the effectiveness of a CSE intervention for early adolescents in Uganda, analysing both positive and negative outcome indicators. Qualitative evidence echoes

perceived SRH knowledge acquisition, increased their perception of SRH related risks, and intentions to delay sexual intercourse to prevent unwanted pregnancy, HIV and other STIs. The study found greater improvements in SRH knowledge among intervention schools and no significant differences in self-esteem, body image or gender equitable norms. They concluded that CSE can improve SRH knowledge and behavioural intentions among early adolescents in Uganda. These results further emphasize the importance of initiating SE before most adolescents have started engaging in sexual activity, enabling them to make informed decisions in the future.

The study, also by Lewinger and Russell (2021), discussed about the gendered dimensions of Abstinence-Only Education (AOE) by focusing on the case of Uganda due to the high sexual risk factors, especially for women and girls, as well as the strong presence of AOE. In case of Uganda, as early as 1987, HIV/AIDS education was introduced in primary schools, being one of the first countries in the world to do so (Lewinger and Russell, 2021). The study demonstrated how AOE reinforces deeply embedded cultural norms and harmful traditional practices. The AOE is inherently gendered, damaging to young women's self-esteem and perceived bodily integrity, and does not promote informed sexual health decisions. They recommended that comprehensive SE that promotes inquiry and critical thinking from students may serve as a powerful weapon against gendered oppression.

In a bid to gain a better understanding of African women's sexuality, the study by Tamale (2006) explained on one particular cultural/sexual initiation institution among the Baganda people of Uganda, the Ssenga. Talk of 'ensonga za Ssenga' (Ssenga matters) signifies an institution that has endured through centuries as a tradition of the paternal aunt. The study described the role of the aunt that is to tutor young women in a range of sexual matters, including pre-menarche (i.e., before first menstruation) practices, pre-marriage preparation, erotics and reproduction. The study also discussed the phenomenon of commercialization of

Ssenga services has emerged through the print and electronic media in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

In summary, SE is controversial, contested, complex and political but at the same time under-studied subject that covers aspect of being sexual person manifested in a social/ cultural setting. Discussing sexuality is considered as a taboo subject in many African societies including Ethiopia and Uganda. The cultural context affects the interpretation of the program information, influencing the nature of discussion on sexuality. Although sporadic, the common themes one can identify from the literature review is that the school-based SE remains prescriptive of abstinence-only by (s)excluding young people's needs. Sexuality education is said to encourage respectful relationship between girls and boys but also criticized to be reproducing the existing gender power relation. It is often girl-focused by victimizing and sending protective messages for girls and problematizing boys sexuality.

One important lesson that one can learn from the African experience is the need to go beyond abstinence, reproduction, violence, and disease in the discourse around African sexuality to also explore the area of desire, pleasure, relationship, and diversity to gain deeper and comprehensive insights into this complex subject. Broadening the scope of our discourse on sexuality in this way offers a fresh perspective on strategic interventions on adolescents SRHR. When doing so, utilizing local structures like *Ssenga* for a better good of adolescent SRHR is the other take away from the review of previous studies.

3.4 Gender and Sexuality Education in schools

The term 'gender' refers to the social expectations that are performed and associated with being male or female (Butler, 1990; Connell, 1987). Throughout childhood boys and girls are taught, in direct and indirect ways, about the roles, behaviours and attributes that are considered appropriate to being a man/boy and those that are appropriate to being a woman/girl (Moser,1993; Connell, 1987). Through the process, boys learn social expectations of being a

man that is defined socially, historically and politically, rather than being biologically driven. Similarly, girls learn society's ideas about the roles, behaviours and attributes considered appropriate for girls and women. School is an institution that highly affects and shapes the construction of a certain type of femininity and masculinity among adolescents, often reflecting the dominant gender relations in the larger society (Connell, 1996; Öhrn and Weiner, 2017).

The gender and education is a field that emerged in the 1970s with themes that changed over years, like equity and justice in education by incorporating "intersectionality" (i.e., the interlocking nature of gender and other categorizations such as social class, race, ethnicity, sexualities, disability) (Öhrn, and Weiner, 2017; Öhrn, E., 2019). As it is discussed by Öhrn and Weiner (2017) studies consistently shows that boys are more visible in classroom and have more time with teacher compared to the girls receiving less attention, having less influence and less likely to be remembered by teachers. Studies also indicate that gender and sexuality trajectories affects the overall experiences of schooling for girls differently from boys' experiences, including male domination, female marginalization, sexual abuse and harassment, pregnancy, and lack of self-esteem, and all serve to undermine girls' schooling (Le Mat et al., 2019). The discourses of gender and sexuality that circulate in school, in Uganda for example, revealed particular meanings attached to the dress code overly targeted at bodily appearances to downplay sexual attractiveness of the girls toward the boys. and the student/student and student/teacher interactions (Muhanguzi and Ninsiima, 2011). Studies suggested that SE will help adolescents develop an understanding and challenge gender power relation, and nonviolent forms of sexual behaviour (Le Mat, 2016; Muhanguzi and Ninsiima, 2011).

In summary, gender is a fluid concept, undergoing through substantial shift from dualistic view of emphasizing on dichotomy and differences towards focus on relations among individuals. School is one of the important places where socialization to femininity and

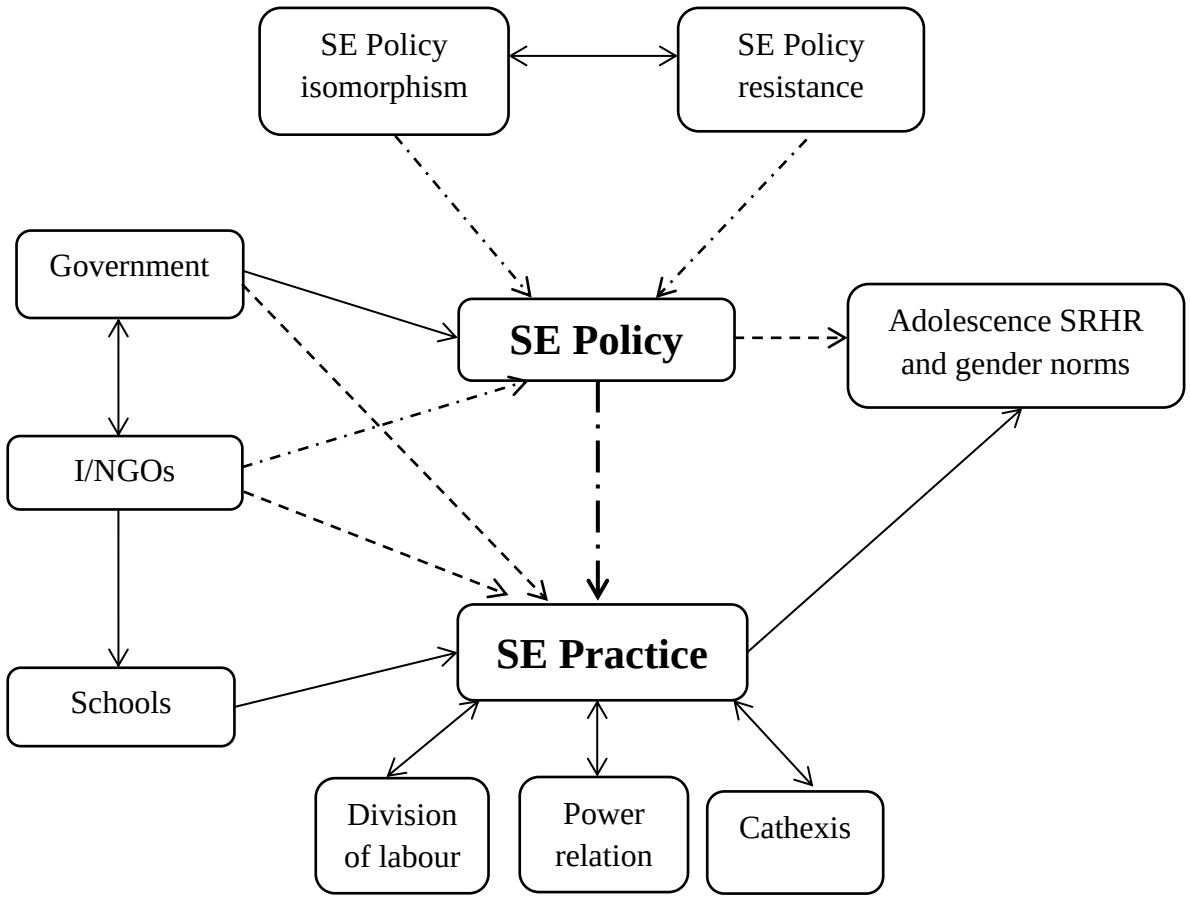
masculinity is constructed and gender power relation is reproduced. The school SE curriculum can help improve the gender power relation and healthy sexuality.

As one can understand from the review of literature SE practices have a positive outcome on the knowledge and intended behaviours around HIV/AIDS while the impact on other aspects of SRHR is limited. This study aims to understand the why, the process that led to this result on adolescents' sexuality.

3.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework used in this study (figure 1) demonstrates the interaction among the major issues and actors in SE. This conceptual framework is developed based on the theoretical frameworks, the study questions, and previous empirical studies on SE.

Figure 2 Conceptual framework



Source: *Adopted from Meyer, 2009; Wiseman & Mayora, 2013; and Connell, 1987*

This conceptual framework illustrates the policy interaction and school practices to influence the adolescent SRHR and gender norms. The government, mainly federal MoE in this case, is connected in steady line as they directly and authoritatively interact in the SE policy making process. The government also informs the SE practices in the schools are connected with broken line as they indirectly (through local bureaus of education) and sporadically engage with schools in a way that influence the Adolescents SRHR and gender norms. The steady line between the government and I/NGOs illustrates the direct and continuous two-way interaction and sometimes friction between the two actors in terms of SE policy decisions and SE practices. The I/NGOs are connected with broken line to represent the fragmented, "unofficial", and inconsistent influence they have on the SE policy and practices. The schools on the other hand directly and consistently interact with SE practiced in the schools, in a way that strongly impact adolescents SRHR and gender norms.

Moreover, the competing policy isomorphism and resistance is illustrated by the steady line, as it is consistent two-way interaction and friction in a way that informs the SE policy. The SE practice through the contents of SE and teaching methods, illustrated by straight line, directly and continuously impacts the dimension of gender division of labour, power relation, and cathexis, and vice versa. Finally, the SE practice in the schools is connected with straight line as it strongly and consistently engages to improve the adolescents SRHR and gender norms.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses details on the research paradigms, designs, methods, procedures of data collection and analysis administered in the study. The chapter presents the philosophical paradigm for the study, the study design, the sampling procedures to select the case and individual participants, the data collection and analysis techniques, and ethical considerations employed throughout the study as discussed below.

4.1 Research paradigm, and approach

The fundamental paradigm that shaped this study was critical philosophical position. This worldview focuses on the needs and experiences of groups and individuals in the society that are marginalized, girls in this case. Because it seeks to change the politics to confront social oppression and improve the social justice, it is sometimes called the Transformative paradigm. In this case, the political change agenda is the issue of adolescent sexuality, gender, the oppression of women in the global gender order.

Ontologically, this worldview reasons that there are multiple realities that are socially constructed, but it is necessary to be explicit about the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, racial, gender, age, and disability values that define realities associated with characteristics of participants and researchers (Martens, 2010). The researcher often begins with one of these issues as the focal point of the study, gender issues and adolescents SE in this case.

Epistemology, transformative paradigm identifies knowledge as a socially and historically located within a complex cultural context. To know realities, scholars on the paradigm advises that it is necessary to have an interactive link between the researcher and the participants in a study (Martens, 2015), similar is done in this study through ethnography.

Methodologically, there should be an interactive link between the researcher and the participants Ethnography in this case, should be adjusted to accommodate cultural complexity of each context, power issues should be explicitly addressed, and issues of discrimination and oppression should be recognized (Mertens, 2010).

Axiologically, the basic ethical principles in the research are respect to the participants and beneficence in terms of the promotion of human rights and an increase in social/ gender justice (Creswell, 2012).

Standing on the transformative orientation, a study employed qualitative approach with a general purpose of understanding the policy and practice SE in selected primary schools of Addis Ababa and Kampala. This helped the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the research subject and context, engaging the "how" questions on SE policies and practices from the participants point of view (Patton, 2002; Bryman, 2012). The research findings and meanings were presented in a more discursive and explanatory manner.

Despite positivists neglect the role of the researcher in the generation of knowledge, Creswell (2012) on his end argues that in transformative paradigm in qualitative research, the researcher brings values to the study. It is acknowledged that the role of the personal experiences of the researcher as an active participant and key instrument in data collection and interpretation of the study (Creswell, 2012). I am influenced by transformative thinking in relation to the nature of knowledge and social reality that influenced the selection of the study subject. Moreover, the paradigm also informed the theoretical standpoint, gender theory, Neo-institutional theory, and Southern theory, in which all help critically explain power dynamics. As Lather (1988) argues that the politically value-laden/ critical nature of feminist research requires a methodological approach that insures to address subjectivity issues, by studying women from the perspective of their own experiences (p. 2), ethnography in this case as discussed below.

4.2 Research Design: Ethnography

The researcher is inspired and influenced by Ethnographic design to understand people's experiences and values, and telling their story in a credible, rigorous, and authentic manner. By acknowledging the subjectivity of knowledge, engaging the views and experiences of students, teachers, school management, and experts through ethnography is the central paradigm and approach of the research. Ethnography in this research helps to follow the groups in their natural setting and develop a portrait of how they interact (Fetterman, 2010). It appears that the ethnographers typically spend considerable time "in the field" observing, interviewing, and gathering documents about the group to understand their culture-sharing behaviours, beliefs, and language (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the "field" visits, that took place in the year 2019, were determined by the researcher to be short and intense the case of Uganda, and the case of Ethiopia to be relatively longer and sporadic. The "compressed time mode" of ethnography applied in case of Uganda involved a short period of intense observation and interaction to look for explanations of behaviours (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004).

In both Ethiopia and Uganda, the researcher managed to develop relationships the selected schools in short time, to ensure greater collaboration between students, teacher and herself. The researcher sensibly used the observation time to make small conversations, choreographed dances with students, joined sport classes, and used every opportunity to build rapport.

4.3 Sampling procedure

According to the UNDP (2022), Ethiopia and Uganda are identified as a least-developed country and the World Bank ranks them as low-income countries. In both countries, HIV/AIDS and other sexuality related challenges are affecting the health and productivity of young people. In both countries, Ethiopia and Uganda, discussion about sexuality is a taboo and conversations are highly influenced by culturally restrictive perspectives. In addition to the

general context similarity with Ethiopia, the major equivalence variable to purposively select Uganda for comparative analysis is the similarity of school-based SE program being implemented in the selected schools in both countries. In both schools selected from Uganda and Ethiopia, similar SE partnership and curriculum initiated by international organization is in place. This was used as common ground to analyse similarities and differences in the two contexts.

The study employed two levels of sampling procedures to select the research participants. The first procedure was the sampling of cases, selection of school, and the second level was the selection of the individual participants from within the case. Non-probability sampling method was the method used to select information rich cases and individual participants.

To select the school in Addis Ababa, critical case sampling was employed to make the concept and practices clearly evident as proclaimed by Patton (2002). As a result, "school one" (name changed for confidentiality), a government primary school, was selected as a sample from Addis Ababa. School one was established in 1980, is in the heart of the city. Most of the students going to this school are students coming from economically disadvantaged background. The school comprised grades 1 and 8, also including pre-school, O class. If students complete these grades, they may have the opportunity to continue onto secondary school and from there, university. The school is considered large by local standards, hosting the total number of students 1147 (657 female and 490 Male), and staff 35 (65% female) (school data, 2019).

School one is implementing SE with the support of international development partnership to teach the specific curriculum. As SE is not mandatory and not offered as a standalone subject in the curriculum in Ethiopia, school one is one of the few special schools having NGO partnerships to provide SE. This makes this school unique in its experience and

not be representative of all schools in Ethiopia. The school was selected because SE is being implemented for a long time that would yield rich information and experience on the subject. On top of that, the chain of recommendations from experts in the area, mentioned the name of the school frequently as a critical sample.

In case of Kampala, snowball sampling method is used to identify which school and individual is information rich by asking well-situated experts from previous connections in Ethiopia and Uganda. The sampling of cases, as Paton (2002) calls it *searching of excellence,* was made by highlighting the names that get mentioned over and over out of the chain of recommended informants. Snowball sampling helped to gain a group of knowledgeable people to identify experienced school and organizations that are information rich. As a result, "school two" government primary school was selected as it is recommended by the chain of informants from Kampala. This school is implementing SE that is similar to the program being implemented in school one of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. School two (name changed for confidentiality) is located in relatively the outskirts of Kampala city. It is a government primary school where majority of the students are students coming from socio-economically disadvantaged background. The school is relatively medium size with a total number of students 610 (389 female and 221 Male), and 15 staff (63% female) (School data, 2019).

In the sampling of individual participants within the case, by taking the leverage of qualitative research being open to what happen in the field Patton (2002), on-spot decision during the data collection field work was implemented in both countries. The researcher approached the school management, explained the objective of the study and presented an official support letter from Addis Ababa university the Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies (CCEPS), after which they linked the researcher with SE teachers. The SE teachers were briefed on the objective of the study and consented to participate in the study. The SE teachers also linked the researcher to other teachers who were interested in volunteering

for classroom observation. The teachers were requested to maintain natural behavior in the classroom and were assured that this was not an evaluation of any sort.

To select students, the researcher entered SE classroom for upper-primary grades (early and middle adolescents from ages 13-16) and briefed them on the objective of the study and requested for their voluntary participation in the study. An empty classroom was arranged to wait for the voluntary students to come and join the FGD. The intention was to gain a voluntary sample made up of learners who self-selected into the study. Considering the sensitivity of the topic and the unbalanced power relationship between the researcher and the primary school students, the selection of FGD participants depended wholly on consenting volunteers. Girls who chose to participate in the study significantly outnumbered boys in both selected cases, which will be discussed later in the finding section. Regardless of the risk of missing out the views of the ones who did not choose to participate in the study, ensuring voluntary participation of informants had the ethical priority of the study.

As a researcher who was involved in SE research projects prior this study, I acknowledge my privileges of relatively easier access to critical informants. However the previous involvement in projects was valuable, the researcher acknowledges possibilities for potential biases that might reflect on to the study. Accordingly, the researcher intentionally dissociate herself from organizations and standpoints by presenting herself to the study participants only as a student researcher. Even if the researcher had previous connections with to benefit from, it doesn't mean that the process has been friendly all the time. In case of Ethiopia, for instance, connecting to experts Ministry of Education with the right expertise and enthusiasm to discuss SE was a challenge. Experts expressed scepticism to participate in the study, some declined calls, and some denied consent to discuss anything related to sexuality. To help me manoeuvre, a change from critical sampling to snowball sampling was needed considering the need for approaching them through experts they trust and utilize previous

connections. Finally, the experts agreed to have a group interview which took place in their office. Similarly in Uganda, well placed expert was involved in the snowball sampling to approach informant groups recommended from the pull of information rich experts.

4.4 Data collection methods

The main purpose of the research was to understand the policy and practice of school-based SE from gender perspective in selected schools from Ethiopia and Uganda. In order to conduct this study, data was collected from multiple sources in the year 2019, from May-July in Ethiopia and August in Uganda. The researcher spent about half a semester in Addis Ababa school for more than 192hours and three weeks in Kampala school for about 90hours conducting observation. Among the instruments of data collection, the study employed the sequence of document analysis, school observation, followed by in-depth interviews and FGDs. Following the observation, interviews with the SE teachers and FGD with students were conducted to help explain the gender patterns observed in relation to SE (see section 5.4.4). The FGDs and all interviews in Ethiopia were conducted in the local language – Amharic – and transcribed in English by the researcher. All FGD and interviews in Uganda were conducted in English and also transcribed in English. Distancing oneself and having an outside position helped the data collection to yield the most natural information out of the setting.

4.4.1 Document analysis:

Various global and national policy documents with respect to sexuality education and gender were reviewed. The international policy documents, mainly the UNESCO's International Technical Guidance of Sexuality Education (2018) is analysed to discuss the research question related to the international policy documents on SE and how they communicate to the local context. The documents were collected from the official websites and offices of the dominant multilateral organization, UNESCO, working on SE.

At local level, the national policies such as MOE's ESPDV (2016-2020), MOH's National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy (2016-2020) (MoH, 2016), Ugandan National sexuality education framework (MoES, 2018), policy related researches and journal articles have been reviewed. The purpose of reviewing the local policy documents was to understand the national SE context in relation to the international policy. The review was conducted standing on the southern theory, neo-institutional and Connell's gender theory. A hard copies and soft copies of various local policy documents used in this study were collected from the MoE in both countries, NGOs head office, and schools. In addition, policy documents and research in the area were cautiously extracted from online sources to insure authenticity and quality.

4.4.2 Observation

In this study, the first and central procedure conducted in the school is observation, and it took major share of the time spent in the schools. The aim of the observation was to explore the natural school environment and interactions by observing regular classrooms, observing SE classes, and attending school activities and events in a way that also helps interviews become rich in contextual details. The observation conducted is not just seeing things, but it is carefully following patterns to understand and explain the interaction among the participants of the study (Fetterman, 2010).

The critical observation essentially took place in and around regular classrooms, SE classrooms, the playgrounds and school neighbourhood. In the regular class, the subjects chosen for observation were biology, civics and language, by considering that sexuality related content are reportedly embedded in these subjects. In Ethiopia is five regular classes was observed and three in Uganda. The time of observations was flexible depending on the availability of volunteer teachers. The teachers were given prior notice before observation. In

the case of SE session observation, five sessions in school one and two sessions in school two were observed. Each session took about two hours.

It was guided by the dimensions of gender relation from the gender theory of Connell (1987) i.e., gender division of labour, power relation and cathexis/ emotional attachments. To understand gender division of labour, critical observation was conducted on who does what, as per the indicators suggested by Connell (1987), such as allocation of classroom activities, participation, games, outfits, classroom leadership, responsibilities, SE messages directed for the boys and girls. To understand the gender power relation the pattern of dominance among boys and girls that is manifested in communication and interaction were observed. Furthermore, student's interaction among each other and with teachers, GBV, and the social hierarchy in the general schools and SE classroom were critically observed. With cathexis, the attraction and affection girls and boys show in the regular classrooms, SE classroom, lunch areas, and playgrounds was observed to understand the pattern of relationships expressed by various means including words, eye-contacts, gestures, touches, and proximity.

Observation guide was used throughout, informed by the theoretical framework, and the research questions. Particularly, the research questions related to the content of SE, the teaching methods of SE and the dominant SE values reflected in the SE were guiding the observation. By explaining that this is not evaluation, all teachers were requested to maintain natural behaviour in the classroom. Although some teachers requested for feedback after classroom observation, the researcher persistently refrained from giving any comments. Field notes were taken on the spot and in instances in which note taking was impossible, key comments and crucial quotes was jotted as soon after the observation as possible.

4.4.3 In-depth interviews

An in-depth interview was conducted by having face to face meetings between the researcher and the study participants to understand their perspectives according to their own

words. In this study, semi-structured interviews, guided by specific list of questions, was conducted with the selected individuals i.e., SE teachers (2 from each school), school management (1 from each school), MoE experts (a group of 4 experts from Ethiopia and 1 expert from Uganda), and NGO experts (2 from each country). In-depth interview questions were prepared in English and for the case of Addis Ababa it was translated to local language, Amharic; and English was used in the case of Kampala. All in-depth interviews were conducted by the researcher herself in search of explanation for acts observed in the selected schools. The objective was to gather information and understand the perspectives, personal and professional/ official reflections of each participant regarding school-based SE. Letter of cooperation and letter of consent were constantly used in all interviews. All interviewees agreed to be tape recorded which helped the researcher to focus on the discussion and make an eye contact instead of taking notes.

4.4.4 Focus group Discussion (FGD)

In this study FGD was conducted to obtain in-depth information from students on concepts, perceptions, and experiences regarding SE and gender. The objective of the FGD was to understand the shared views and experiences of boys and girls regarding SE practices and gender in school in their own words (Patton, 2002) and record the outliers. Questions regarding the content of SE, their information needs, challenges were raised for discussion. The general gender patterns and interactions were also discussed by engaging the gender dimensions of division of labour, power relation and cathexis in the schools (Connell, 1987).

The FGD guiding questions were prepared in English and translated to the local language, Amharic in case of Ethiopia. All FGD in both countries were conducted by the researcher herself with 6 to 10 members in a group (grade 6 and 7). In the case of Addis Ababa two FGD with female students, one FGD with boys and one FGD mixed group was conducted

with average length of ±1:15 hour each. In case of Uganda, one boys and one girls FGD was conducted with an average length of ±1hour each.

During the FGD the researcher served as a moderator who introduced the topic, asks specific questions, controls digressions, and stops break-away conversations. All FGDs were tape recorded by asking consent of the participants.

Table 1: Summary of data collection method

No.	Participants	Number of Participants	Sampling technique	Data collection instrument	Remark
1	Students who are attending SE	-Four FGD groups (from Grade 6 and 7) in Ethiopia -Two FGD in Kampala (Boys and girls from P7)	Purposive Sampling	FGD and observation guides	-Total of 34 students 13-16 of age (70% girls) -Total of 18 students (80% girls)
2	SE Teachers	2 SE teachers from each school	Purposive sampling	In-depth interview and observation	50% women
3	School Management	1 from each school	Purposive sampling	In-depth interview	100% women
4	Ministry of education	1 group interview in Ethiopia and 1 expert interview in Uganda	Snowball sampling	In-depth interview	100% men
5	I/NGO experts	2 from each country	Purposive sampling	In-depth interview	50% women

4.5 Data Analysis Techniques

After conducting document review, observation, in-depth interviews and FGD, the data collected was transcribed in English by the researcher herself. Following the stage of data

transcribing, initial stage of categorizing started and developed the notes into codes through time guided by the research questions i.e., gender interaction in the school, and the SE response to the school gender interaction in the school, and theoretical frameworks i.e., Connell's theory, Neo-institutional, and Southern theory. Following the coding process, the researcher identified major themes for the data analysis was organized into major themes and subthemes. The first main theme, gender interaction, was analyzed by looking into the general school settings where gender regime is manifested i.e., inside the classroom, outside the classroom and school surroundings (these are also discussed as sub-themes). The second main theme was SE policies that discussed structural and discourse level policy makings analyzed under the subchapters including the overall institutional interaction, and the discourse on the SE curriculum. The other main theme, the SE practices in schools discussed how SE is implemented in the selected schools from gender perspective under the subthemes identified i.e., SE contents, and the SE pedagogy. The last main theme was the learners and teachers voices on the SE policies and practices where they reflect what is working and what needs improvement. The finishing stage of the data analysis was to conduct within case analysis and cross-case analyses of the common themes guided by the theoretical frameworks.

As a researcher with a previous experience in the study area, I recognize my pre-informed self and engage the data by being cautious of biases. The researcher self-distanced by trying to view the contexts from an outsider perspective by entertaining alternative viewpoint equally, which are different from one's understanding. The data analysis and interpretation convey an impersonal, objective tone, and do not bring either of my views into the study as I critically used theories and authorities to use proven arguments and employ multiple voices to build objectivity into the study (Creswell, 2012).

4.6 Researcher positionality

Before presenting the findings, as a researcher I would like to acknowledge the role of my social and philosophical positionality in shaping my outlooks of the world and potential biases. I am a feminist advocate, based in urban, the capital city of Ethiopia, who speaks the official language of the country, and I have been working around gender and SRHR. I am relatively cultural stranger in Uganda. I recognize that my positionality influenced this study to some extent in making meaning of the data and even in the selection of the tittle itself. As a university lecturer in Ethiopia, I have observed the SRHR challenges young women and men face in and out of campus where they are not prepared for it from lower grades. As a researcher, I was able access the necessary resources to conduct my research, yet I am aware of the biases I may bring due to my positionality as feminist researcher. I attempt to remain mindful of my own biases, and to not make assumptions based on my experiences and opinions. I also recognize how these may shape my research.

4.7 Data Reliability

It is important quality and reliable research to ensure that the data and its interpretation is accurate and genuine to reflect the context and issues studied (Bryman, 2012). For qualitative research, 'trustworthiness' is a crucial attribute to be accepted as a scholarly work contributing to the knowledge production. To establish reliability, this study employed different methods i.e., triangulation with multiple sources, continued interaction with participants for validation, thick data, and objectivity. To triangulate the study, evidence was collected with different data collection techniques i.e., observation, in-depth interviews and FGD from various data sources i.e., students, teachers, school management, MoE, I/NGOs and documents to have thick data with thorough perspective than a single source of information.

Data collection guides were reviewed by the supervisors and critiqued in different seminars for modification to insure reliability of evidence and possible transferability of

findings. The audio recorded data and notes helped to the direct use participants own words by taking verbatim from their responses which lowered the possibility of subjectivity. The communication with study participants continued over phone calls and school visits were conducted to settle confusion in times of a need for better understanding.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

During the entire stages of the study, ethical considerations required from a social sciences researchers were carefully contemplated. Dignity and protection of the research participants was the fundamental principle guiding this study. The initial issues considered in this study are negotiating for consent with the research participants. By communicating the details on the aim of the study and the mechanism of protecting their confidentiality, the participants are made to freely give informed consent based on their interest. The researcher attempted to ensure that there was no direct or indirect pressure on the teachers and students to participate in the study by allowing the teachers to select their fellow teachers and students to self-select for the FGD. As a result, all the participants gave their verbal and/or written consent to voluntarily take part in the study. The copy of the written consent form was given to the participants with contact details of the study supervisors and the researcher.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research topic, the privacy and confidentiality rights of the research participants were protected by making sure that their views remain confidential (including anonymity of the school), and by respecting their right to decline answers to any of the questions when reluctant, and free withdrawal from the study at any stage. And this was all communicated to the study participants.

Moreover, all participants were requested for consent before audio recording the interviews and FGD. The recorded audio, observation notes and transcribed data were stored with great care. Some of the private experiences, even though they are shared by the study participants, were not used in the study to protect the privacy and safety of study participants

(even at cost of missing out on interesting data). In general, higher consideration was given to treating all participants involved with the utmost respect at all stages of the study.

5. NATIONAL CONTEXT

This chapter discussed the national context within which the study is conducted, Ethiopia and Uganda. The selected countries demographic, socio-economic, and educational system was briefly discussed. The chapter is organized in two major sections Ethiopia and Uganda, with two subsections of Demography and socio-economic context, and Education system in the two countries.

5.1 Ethiopia

5.1.1 Demography and socio-economic context

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa. The capital city of Ethiopia is Addis Ababa, where the study is conducted. Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa with a population numbering more than 110 million with women counting about 51% of the population, along with more than 80 ethnic and linguistic groups (UNFPA, 2021). Ethiopia is the country of the young where the median age of the population is 18.5 and 53% of the total population are between 15 and 65 years (UNFPA, 2021).

The government of Ethiopia is made up of two tiers of parliament: the House of the Peoples Representatives and the House of the Federation. Ethiopia is a federation subdivided into eleven regional states and two chartered cities, the latter being the country's capital Addis Ababa, and Dire Dawa, which was chartered in 2004.

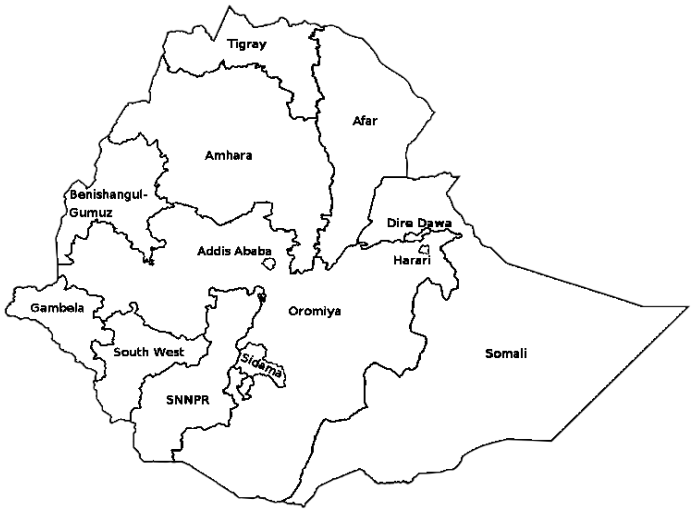


Figure 3 Map of Ethiopia with regions

Ethiopia's total land area is about 1.1 million square km., of which about two thirds is estimated to be potentially suitable for agricultural production. Ethiopia is one of the poorest nations in the world, and one of the least urbanised countries in the world, having 81% of its population living in rural areas (CSA, 2016). In Ethiopia, agriculture remains the leading source of livelihood for a large majority of the population.

Over the past recent decades, aiming at reaching middle-income status by 2025, Ethiopia has experienced exceptional growth since the early 2000s. However, the progress began to see a slowdown in the capacity of the economy to grow, export, and produce jobs since roughly 2015 (Hausmann, et al., 2022). This intensified a set of macroeconomic challenges including high, volatile, and escalating inflation has been compounded by COVID-19, conflict, and climate change impacts. The pandemic and the internal conflict that led to massive internal displacement also slowed down the efforts and progress made in the human development dimension including education, health, and gender equality. Drawing on lessons from past success in Ethiopia and new constraints, the government of Ethiopia is now moving a path forward to Homegrown Economic Reform strategy that reportedly builds to a more sustainable and inclusive growth (Hausmann, et al., 2022).

Ethiopia is a patrilineal society where gender roles are deeply entrenched and gendered power relations have a strong bearing on cultural practices and every day lived reality. With major progress in place, GBV remains widely acknowledged to be of great concern. In Ethiopia, twenty-four percent of women report that they experienced emotional violence, 25 percent experienced physical violence, and 11 percent experienced sexual violence. This intensified a set a result of the conflict, displacement, instability, and also COVID-19 that slowed down the efforts and progress made against GBV and gender equality.

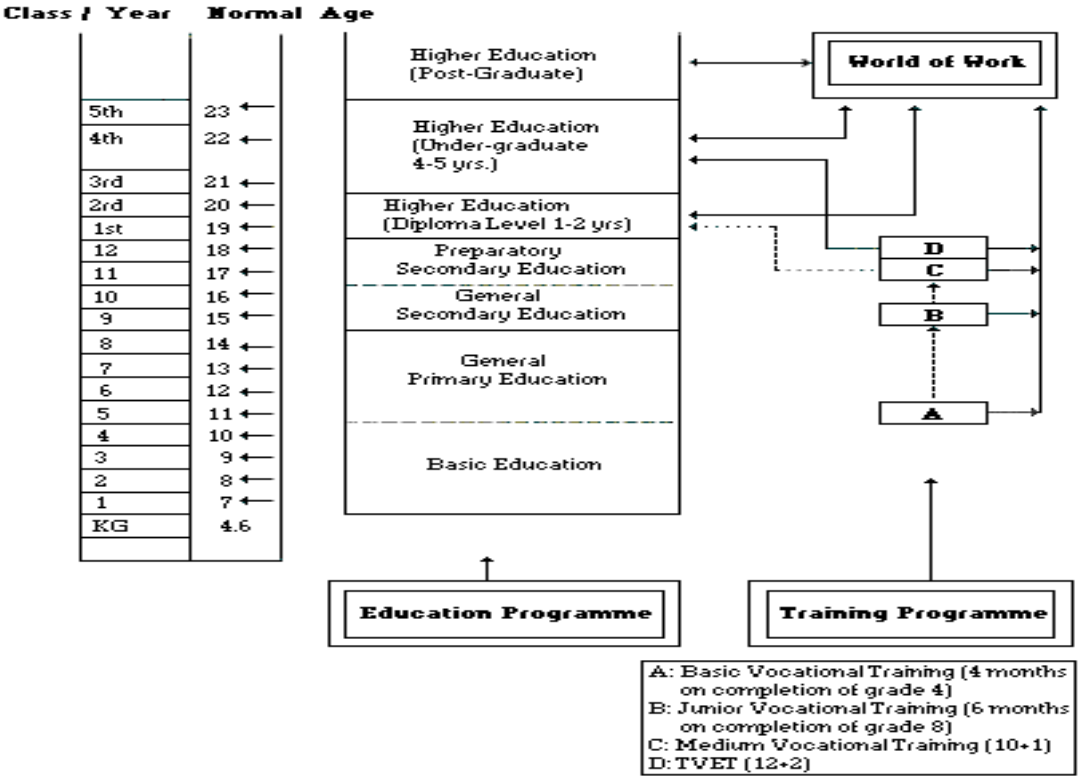
5.1.2 Education system

Modern education is launched in Ethiopia by Emperor Menelik in 1908 aiming to cope up with western ideas and modernization, and to advance the nation (Sisay, 2017; Pankhurst, 1976). The establishment of modern school then spread throughout the country and the curriculum includes subjects like science, mathematics, drawing, English, French, Arabic, physical training and home management. Following five years of Italian occupation (1936-41), Emperor Haile Selassie returned to power with strong local support and help from Great Britain. Under his rule, that the education sector was principally influenced by two ideas. First, strong belief by the emperor that modern education is indispensable to 'educate and train citizens who respected their king, country and religion' (Negash, 2006:13). A practical aspect of this conviction was that the modernization process itself needed a large number of educated young people 'to staff the growing sector of the state apparatus' (Negash, 2006:13). The second idea that influenced the education sector was the prevailing international consensus regarding education, principally represented by UNESCO, that education is the most important component that contributes to economic development, with the argument that there is a direct link between investment in human capital and development of a society' (Negash, 2006: 13-14).

The Derg Regime came to power in 1974, chanting socialism as the fundamental political philosophy of the government. As a result, the curriculum during this period was highly politicized that students were required to take courses in political education for expanding the communist ideology (Alemayehu and Lasser, 2012). Under the Derg, Eastern European governments (East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, etc) served the Ethiopian government as policy advisors (Negash, 1990; 20). In line with the goal of free education for all, the Derg regime issued a policy directive in December 1974 proclaiming that 'under the banner of education for all, citizens shall have the right to free fundamental education' (PMAC, 1974, cited in Tefera, 1996:7). Thus, the expansion of access to education to achieve the goal of universal primary education became an immediate priority of the government. In line with socialist ideology, the government ensured that schools remained under public ownership (Teshome, 2008).

In 1991, when the Derg was defeated by Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), established a transitional government. It was in 1994, during the lifetime of the transitional government that EPRDF introduced the current Education and Training Policy (ETP) (Teshome, 2008). Following the ETP of the 1994, education sector has passed through a series of successive and rolling policies including the Education Sector Development Programs (ESDP) I-V. The first three ESDPs were largely concerned with expanding access over improvement in education quality and it was only in ESDP IV and ESDP V that quality came to feature more prominently (Gershberg and Hailu, 2023). The previous ETP was in use without any amendments for more than 28 years ago, until 2018. It used to follow the series of educational structure that included basic education from grade 1-4, general primary education from grade 5-8, general secondary education 9-10, preparatory secondary education 11-12 and higher education. The structure also diverts at completion of the general secondary education to vocational training at various levels as illustrated below.

Figure 4 The previous education system of Ethiopia



Source: MoE, 2006

Over the last two decades, as the MOE (2016) reported, Ethiopia has continued to expand access to achieve universal primary education with net enrolment rate 94.3% in 2014/15 in line with the Education for All goals. However, this "uncontrolled expansion/ massification" in Ethiopia, as Negash (2006) argued in his prominent work, has compromised quality and produced graduates that can't be absorbed by the economy that contributed to the unfortunate trajectory of the education sector from a crisis to a brink collapse. Quality of education is the challenge and the central debate that is leading to deficiency of critical thinking, lower rate of employability and minimal problem-solving skills (Negash, 2006). Moreover, not only quality is the challenge, also too many students, particularly girls, leave the system early which is reflected in a Grade 8 completion rate of only 47% (MoE, 2016). The issues of inequity associated to gender, rural-urban, regional, and economic background is reported as one of the bottlenecks in the educational equity (MoE, 2016).

The most ambitious (but also controversial) ongoing reform effort in education has been the draft Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap, 2018-30, issued in December 2017 and implemented from 2018 with the new political leadership (Gershberg and Hailu, 2023). The Education Development Roadmap began as a full-fledged sectoral project in January 2016 and was endorsed by stakeholders in 2018 as it proposed fundamental changes for the decade ahead. Initiated by the MoE's Education Strategy Centre, the roadmap was prepared by a team of experts, mainly from Addis Ababa University, involving political leaders at all levels, professionals in universities, schoolteachers, students and parents (MoE, 2017:4). The roadmap envisages the use of education as an instrument for attaining Ethiopia's vision of becoming a lower- middle income country by 2030 and speeding up its industrialisation process by accelerating human capital development and technological capacity. It proposes some significant shifts, which has progressed in terms of implementation, is a change in the curriculum, with both the regional governments and the federal government currently developing new textbooks. The roadmap introduced a 6-2-4 system – six years of elementary education, two years of junior school education and four years of high school education. Another aspect is administration where the roadmap recommended splitting the ministry of education into three separate ministries – dealing with general education, higher education, and human resource management. However, the government decided to split it into two – one for general education (MoE) and another for higher education, Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) (Gershberg and Hailu, 2023).

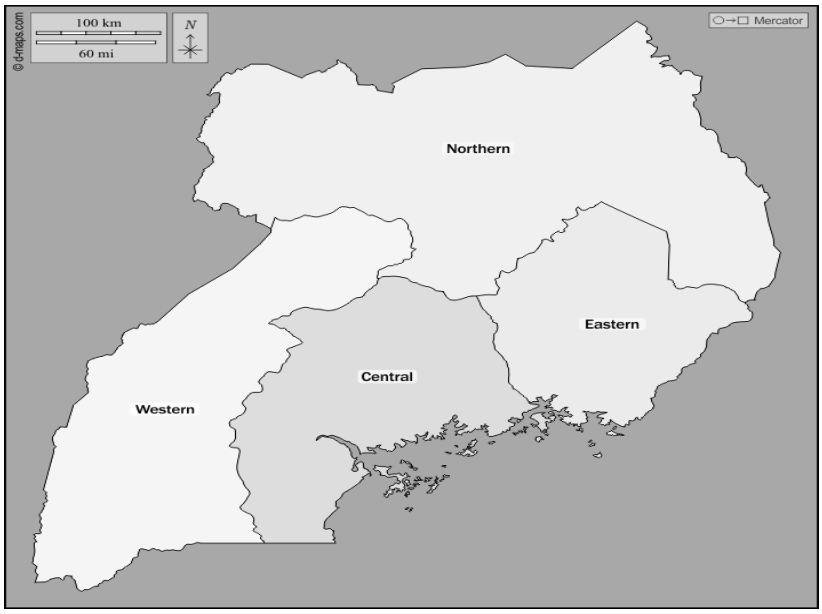
5.2 Uganda

5.2.1 Demography and socio-economic context

The Federal Democratic Republic of Uganda is a country located in the Horn of Africa, with a total population of Uganda is over 41.6 million total population with women counting 50.5% and the median age in Uganda is 15.9 years (UNFPA, 2021b). Uganda achieved its

sovereignty on 9 October 1962 from the British. Since gaining independence in 1962, Uganda has been referred to as the "Pearl of Africa". In 1945 Uganda divided into four provinces of Buganda (Central), Eastern, Northern and Western, and as of today, Uganda has 121 districts and 1 capital city, Kampala.

Figure 5 Map of Uganda with regions



Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa on Lake Victoria. The land has a total area of 241,550 km² (93,263 mi²). Uganda is a presidential republic in which the President of Uganda is the head of state and the prime minister is the head of government business. There is a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is given to both the government and the National Assembly.

Most of the population (74%) in Uganda resides within rural regions. In Uganda, agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the economy, employing 72% of the work force (OECD, 2015). Uganda has a small industrial sector that is dependent on imported inputs such as refined oil and heavy equipment. The economy improved rapidly during the 1990s and early 2000s, and Uganda has been acclaimed for its economic stability and high rates of growth

(OECD, 2015). The economy is basically agricultural, and it occupies some four-fifths of the working population. Uganda's moderate climate is especially congenial to the production of both livestock and crops. The country also outlined its aim of achieving lower-middle-income status by 2020, and upper-middle-income status by 2040 in its 2015/16 to 2019/20 National Development Plan. Economic activity was hit by COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. Growth recovered from a contraction of 1.5% in 2020 to 6.0% in 2021, lifted by household consumption and investment.

Similar to Ethiopia, major progress was recorded in promoting gender equality in Uganda with gender equitable constitution and legal framework. However, women still remain oppressed and disadvantaged as domestic violence was taken as an appropriate method of resolving spousal conflict; early (child) marriage was still a problem; and domestic "care" tasks is left for women (OECD, 2015).

5.2.2 Education system

The glaring inadequacies in the colonial educational system, stimulated the newly independent government to immediately attempt its reform. Early efforts aimed at two long-term policy goals: universal elementary education, and the provision of an education able to equip students with the skills required to power Uganda's growing economy and political administration. However, the political turmoil of the 1970s and early 1980s upset these early ambitions, freezing reform efforts and severely eroding the quality of education at all levels throughout Uganda.

The education system encompasses a series of levels that include the pre-primary, primary (7 years), lower secondary (4years), Upper secondary (2 years), and University (3-5 years). Elementary education is the only compulsory level, and, since the introduction of UPE, is free for all Ugandan children aged six to 13. Upon successful completion of the seventh year

of education, and the passing of the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), students are awarded the Primary School Leaving Certificate. The National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) designs and publishes a standard national curriculum for use at all UPE elementary schools.

Figure 6 The Structure of Formal Education System in Uganda

Uganda's Education System

Education level	Cycle	Award	Progress opportunities
Pre-primary (not mandatory	2 years	-	Primary Education
Primary	7 years (ages 6-12)	Primary Leaving Examination (PLE)	Lower Secondary/ Technical School
Lower secondary (ordinary level)	4 years (ages 13-16)	Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE)	Upper Secondary (A-level)/ PTC Technical Institute
Upper Secondary (A-level)	2 years (ages 17-18)	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE)	University Other higher education training institutions
University	3-5 years (ages 19-21++)	Diploma/Degree	Postgraduate studies
Note: **Progression through the different levels depends on performance in examinations (there are 3 national examinations before tertiary education…)** [4]			

Source: Shallon and Huang (2018)

Uganda's educational system has expanded remarkably over the past few decades, but significant access and quality issues remain. To address these problems, and to better align the educational system with the needs of the modern global economy, Uganda introduced and implemented a series of ambitious reforms. Although the reforms substantially expanded access, critics allege that in the rush to boost enrolment numbers, educational quality has suffered.

The Ministry of Education Sports (MoES), a cabinet-level ministry, manages and oversees all levels of education throughout the country. The mission of MoES is "to provide

for technical support, guide, coordinate, regulate, and promote the delivery of quality education and sports to all persons in Uganda; for national integration, individual and national development". According to the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) (2015), general education in Uganda is free since 1997. The Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET) programme was launched in February 2007 making Uganda the first country in Africa to provide free education at this level.

6. GENDER IN THE SCHOOLS

This study is about understanding the policy and practice of school-based Sexuality Education (SE) from a gender perspective. Before discussing the SE practices, it is important to learn about the general gender regime in both selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. This chapter discussed how gender interaction is contributing to students' socialization to masculinity and femininity, and how school structures are responding to them. It also discussed the everyday schooling experience of boys and girls with special focus on the shared experience of girls.

It was discussed from the gender theory of Connell's perspective by looking into the dimension of gender division of labour, power relation, and cathexis to understand who is doing what in the schools. The gender division of labour was discussed from the activities that are given for boys and girls such as classroom monitoring, class participation, games, and outfits in school. Regarding the power relation, the issues of communication and relation among students, with teachers, and GBV in and around the school was discussed. The gender cathexis was discussed from the gendered affection and emotionally related variables expressed by words, eye-contacts, gestures, touches, and proximity.

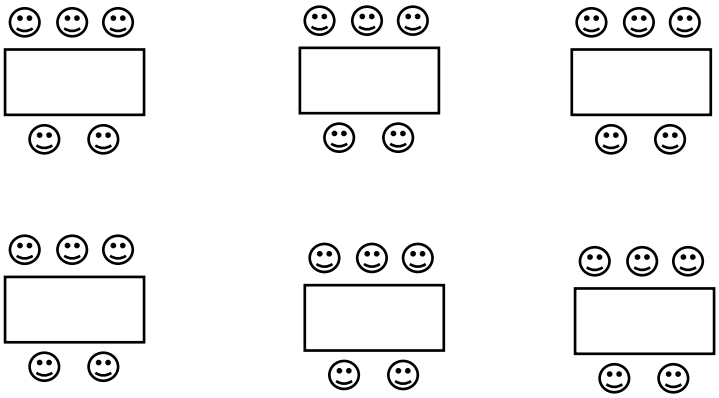
The school observations, FGDs, and interviews have been conducted to understand the above gender dimensions. During the school observation sessions, gender interactions in the classroom, playground, eating area, toilet areas, physical exercise field (PHE), and school surroundings were targeted. The gender interaction was analysed within the three subchapters divided into the settings where gender is manifested and performed i.e., inside the classroom, out of the classroom, and in the school surrounding as follows.

6.1 Gender interaction in classrooms

The dichotomy between being a boy and a girl is embedded in the classroom interaction through gender division of labour, power, and cathexis (Connell, 1987). The most dominant interaction observed in the classroom was the teacher-student interaction; hence, the discussion in this subtopic will mainly focus on it.

According to the classroom observations in both school one and two, boys and girls were mixed in one-to-five group seating arrangements assigned by the homeroom teacher. One to five seating arrangement is a group circle includes five students (more than five depending on the class size) sitting in to one group around the table, boys and girls jointly, with “fast”, “medium”, and “slow” learners mixed in the group.

Figure 7 One to five group seating



It is reportedly intended to encourage teamwork and peer learning among students in case of both schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. However, it is observed that the seating arrangement was not often utilised by the teachers.

Regarding the gender division of labour, both boys and girls were observed participating in class, leading group discussions, and delivering presentations. Particularly in school one, teachers seem to be proud of the equal participation of boys and girls as one of their unique achievements unlike many schools in the country. It is recorded during classroom

observation in school one that teachers give equal chance by mentioning the name of boys and girls who raised their hands to answer questions. Having an equal number of boys and girls actively participating in class, one can claim that there is an issue of no gender discrepancy. However, the average population ratio of boys and girls in school one is roughly 35:65, which shows equal numbers may not always translate to equal representation. When there is a large majority of girls in the class, more should have been heard from the girls to claim that the school achieved equal participation and representation. From this, one can take the impression that schools seem to measure their gender related success by roughly looking at numbers than critically looking into equitable participation.

Moreover, it's not only a number issue but the concern in the quality of classroom participation was observed in the classroom. The gender division of labour manifested in the classroom participation was that some girls were observed speaking with a hesitant, 'broken' voice, holding their heads down, and with hands shaking during presentations –possibly indicating shyness. It was observed that some teachers seem to normalize such patterns by appearing reluctant to encourage hesitant and shy girls to participate. The behavior of boys was markedly different and in general more outspoken. I recognize that all girls or all boys are not inherently the same, but behaviors like being publicly outspoken, witty, and holding their heads up even when giving wrong answers were observed more commonly among boys as elements of hegemonic masculinity. As shown in the observation note below, the teacher failed to encourage and reward girls who participated, which could potentially have challenged the element of emphasized femininity normalized in the classroom as a gender regime.

> ... All of them [the students] gave the right answer except for the last girl. The teacher asked, 'Is she right?' All students said 'Noooo' altogether... The girl took her seat with her head down. The girl next to her said 'You're lost. I told you not to raise your hand in the first place.' (Classroom observation 3.1, May 2019)

In this example, the way the teacher told the girl that she didn't get the right answer may discourage other girls who were already hesitant from participation. On the other hand, according to the observation, the students who were active participants, usually with correct answers, had attention, eye contact, and seemingly good relationships with teachers, while the shy ones, mainly girls, are ignored. The observation note below shows the experience of a girl who was suffering from menstrual cramps and was in a sense missing the class even while she was still physically present in class.

> … A girl around the front seat is sick, leaning on the desk, holding her stomach, stretching her legs and she started crying (we found out later that she was having menstrual cramps). All students are taking notes, some answering questions, except h. But the teacher didn't notice her. He is a bold, loud, and smiley teacher. He kept lecturing and asking some questions, and he takes mass answers from the students. The whole session the girl is sick. The teacher came near her seat but didn't notice her again. He gave a quiz that has 5 marks, she missed it. The teacher checked students' work moving round the tables. The students secured 5 marks. She didn't. He picked one girl to come to the front and show on the blackboard how to use the formula for the class. (Classroom observation 2.1, School 1, May 2019)

As for boys, it was observed that some of them were physically punished for reportedly being unruly inside the classroom.

> … A boy was laughing during classwork, the teacher looked irritated. She knocked him down on the head; she slapped and pinched his cheeks. The class remained in silence and fear afterward. (Classroom observation 3.1, school 1, May 2019)

In contrast, girls who did not finish their homework were punished verbally e.g., by being called names as lazy and in some cases by the teachers making intimidating statements,

e.g., one of the teachers yelled at a female student: *'this is not a bar where you can just drop by empty-handed, giggling without your homework.'* The girls' misconduct was usually directed to what seem deliberate intentions rather than to childhood mistakes.

The gender division of labor and gender power relations are parallelly manifested in the classroom and shows that both boys and girls are assigned as class monitors, as the national education policy requires in both schools. This can be a good way to indirectly communicate to students that both girls and boys can potentially lead. However, some boys and girls from both school reported that the monitor should be boys and girls who are *physically bigger* and *stronger* to be able to discipline unruly students by physically punishing them.

> I'm the class captain, he is too [pointing at his friend]. We are the class captain because we are bigger and taller. The other students are scared of us therefore they don't disturb us in class. (Boys FGD 1.2, school 2, August 2019)

Similarly in school one students reported that "girls who migrated from rural are mostly preferred as class monitors areas because they are older, physically bigger, and stronger" (also see 6.2 on rural migrant girls). This assumed criterion seems to apply for both boys and girls, but it may translate as aspiring leadership is a 'masculine' characteristic that requires certain physique. Moreover, the assumption that 'discipline is a result of physical punishment' seems to be a result of the larger school culture as discussed above and may hinder the culture of dialogue. This example might indicate that there are informal gender values parallel to the formally (on paper) stated school culture.

In summary, gender division of labor and power relation, "who should do what" and "who should act in what way", are manifested inside the classroom classrooms, offering different experiences to boys and girls, also within the same gender. The hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity seem normalized in both schools where boys and girls

seem to be performing and socialized to these elements. Gendered division of labor manifested through the classroom participation was neglected by the teachers in both schools. The gender power relation embedded in classroom leadership and participation seem normalized against some of the schools *on-paper*. To compare the gender interaction in the classroom of school one and two, school one seems to be proud of the equal representation of girls and boys in-class participation and leadership. However, it seems that there is no practical difference observed between school one and two in the classroom interaction and participation. Similar trends and values are observed in both schools as it is discussed throughout the sub-chapter. The aspect of cathexis was not substantially observed inside the classroom, rather widely observed outside the classroom as discussed below.

6.2 Gender interaction outside the classroom

The gender interaction outside the classroom setting includes the playground, lunch space, PHE field exercise, and toilet areas. According to the study, it is outside the classroom where student-to-student interaction, is dominantly performed while the teacher-student interaction is mainly inside the classroom. Hence, this subtopic focuses mainly on the student-to-student gender interaction outside the classroom by discussing the gender division of labor, power relation, and cathexis aspects.

In school one, boys wear a blue uniform shirt and pants while girls wear a shirt and a long skirt, also blue. In school two, the boys wear orange uniform pants and a white shirt while the girls wear a short orange skirt and a white shirt. It is subtly reported by the school management from both schools that wearing uniforms help to equalize students who come from different economic backgrounds and to focus on their studies, not their looks.

Regarding the gendered division of labor, it was often observed that boys and girls were engaged in dissimilar activities and games during school break time in both schools. The boys

were largely seen playing and engaging in similar activities, while girls on the other hand were carrying out diverse activities depending on their age and background. The boys were largely seen playing football in different groups by occupying all playgrounds of the school compound. In contrast, some girls were observed sitting under the shade, talking in a group ("sharing their secrets" as the teachers call it) and some (later learned from interviews that they are from rural background in school 1) were braiding each other's hair.

> In this school, we have rural background girls who joined school a little later. They have a lot of household burdens from their relatives. For this reason, they are forced to finish their homework during lunch break. I have seen some students sleeping by the corner of the class at lunch break because they just want to rest. You can just tell that some are sleep deprived. I feel so sad that I called upon their relatives to the school to have a meeting on how to give the girls a break. Unfortunately, there is no much difference. (Teacher interview1.1, school 1, May 2019)

It is reported by the teachers from school 1 that the students from rural backgrounds are children who migrated from rural areas, escaping early marriage, forced abduction, or poverty, to continue schooling by living with their relatives in the capital city. These children are predominantly girls because the relatives living in urban areas want them for free household labor – boys are not preferred for this sort of work and so tend not to undergo this type of migration. It is reported that they are disadvantaged in many ways i.e. lack of time to study because of household chores, physical, psychological and sexual abuses, *period poverty*[1], and homesickness. These girls are predominantly age outliers from their class because they join school later (some of them re-enrol after dropout). The girls from rural background, were

[1] Period poverty is a lack of access to menstrual products, education, hygiene facilities, waste management, or a combination of these. It affects an estimated 500 million people worldwide (Cardoso, L. F. et al., 2021).

observed working on their homework which be related to the time poverty to study or take care of themselves (e.g. braiding their hair or rest) when they get home from school.

In comparison, the urban background students mostly live with their immediate family which makes their living conditions relatively friendly where they don't have to be overburdened by household responsibilities. Some girls, reportedly from urban backgrounds, were observed playing jump-rope, hopscotch, and hand-clap games. The younger girls from lower grades were seen playing hide and seek, running around with younger boys, unlike the upper primary boys and girls who rarely mixed to play together.

In the case of school two most girls were observed sitting in a group and chitchatting while other girls play games like jump-rope and hopscotch. There was no socio-economic including the urban/rural divide division was observed or mentioned during interviews. It was the gender difference that is dominantly discussed than differences within gender. During break time, boys in school two, like school one, were seen playing football in different groups by occupying all playgrounds of the school compound.

According to the school observation, boys and girls rarely have lunch or play together in both schools. Both boys and girls said in the FGDs that they shy away from each other to avoid rumors of having feelings of desire for each other.

> If I eat or play with a boy, they gossip that I like him. And the girl who ignores the rumors and still goes with the boys is called a bad girl who likes boys. (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, June 2019)
>
> I like football, I want to play with the boys but it is hard. It is hard to join the boys' team because they don't want us to join them. They think girls are weak to run fast and play with them. Even when we are in the field, they push us out of the field so that they can play. (Girls FGD1.2, school 2, August 2019)

In addition to fear of rumor, some girls reported that they wanted to play with boys, but boys did not let them play, assuming that girls are bad at sports, which may translate to the gender power relation. This also seems related to the PE practice that assigns separate exercise to boys and girls and lined them up separately in different groups. This pattern of a gender-separate division of labor and inconsistency in the sports activities given to boys and girls with the seemingly underlying implication that endorse elements the hegemonic masculitiy and emphasized femininity among students.

> The interview with girls interrupted because a boy was bleeding and students were running here and there to help him. He bumped into a sharp tree and his head was bleeding. The girls from the FGD said, "He was playing bad games, the boys are like this". He was taken to the staff office escorted by his friends. He wasn't crying, he was rather trying to smile and seems like showing his toughness. Teachers made him sit under the tree shade and gave him water and pain killer (first aid), his blood is still all over his t-shirt. I asked them what happened, a female teacher said: "boys, he was playing, he will be okay". (School observation1.2, School 2, August 2019)

From the above observation note, it seems like the boy were coerced to appear tough however painful the situation was; seemingly to fit in the hegemonic masculinity. The girls or even the teacher seem to be unworried about the boy. Here one can learn something interesting about the double expectation that boys were treated as the immature child in the classroom, while on the other hand they were in certain occasions expected to remain "the tough man" as observed outside the classroom.

During the lunch break, in school one, boys and girls queue in a long line for the school feeding program sponsored by the government. According to the observation, the physically taller boys were at the front line by pushing small boys and girls aside. As it is discussed in the

previous discussions one can understand physical strength seems to influence power relations that physically stronger/ taller students, particularly boys, have more benefit.

Lunch break is a joy in school two. As the bell rings for lunch, the school plays African music that almost all students sing loudly with the speaker standing outside the school management office. They dance in a group. As it is discussed by the school management and SE teacher, it is the mechanism the school is using for students to dance in school rather than going to out-of-school party that could put them in danger with adults involved.

Gender power relation and cathexis is also manifested in the way boys are observed to find ways to express their feelings to girls by writing love letters secretly, by writing the name of the girl they like on their uniform shirts; some boys throw seemingly appreciative words from a distance. During school observation, boys were throwing some words and whistling towards the researcher regardless of the age and power imbalance. Such manifestation gender cathexis seems justified and normalized by both students and teachers, as the latter were not seen to interfere. This gendered cathexis may translate as it is normal for girls to remain passive recipient of boys expressed desire. Some girls mentioned during the FGD that boys touch their bodies inappropriately because they do not know how to play or socialize with girls.

> Boys are bad to play with. They don't know how to play with girls. That's why some of them do a bad touch. They touch your breast or anywhere your body (the girls laughed). That's why I don't like to play with boys. (Girls FGD1.2, school 2, August 2019)

This is in line with findings in previous research of boys' behaviors being seen as unintentional, ignorant, and just part of relationships (Kenway & Willis, 1998). Here, they also appear as justified and tolerated because boys are 'immature.' Girls' own behavior and appearance are also assumed to be the reasons for why they are treated this way.

> You know the “extra” type of girls by their revealing outfits, by the lipsticks they use, the way they interact with male teachers and students. Sometimes it is hard to say that men are the one who abuses girls. The girls are deceiving. They are a bad influence on other students. (Teacher interview1.1, school 1, June 2019)

Both male and female teachers seem to reflect similar assumptions judging on the looks and gestures of girls. This assumption determines the way the teachers communicate and treat girls as indicated under this observation note below about the girl who was having menstrual cramp without the teacher noticing in the classroom, (also refer 6.1).

> When the class is over, the girl who was sick left the class with her friend. They asked permission from the directory to allow her to go home. The director got mad about it, he said: “Yes go and giggle mingling around town for no reason instead of learning”. She started crying, her friend was carrying her bag for her. “Go you can go, but you will regret it,” he said... The girl left the school compound while still crying. The 2 female teachers around his office said to me “ya he has a point, girls say they want to go home because they have their period by painting their skirts with a red pen but they don’t go home. They rather meet with older men (who were mentioned as boyfriends later in different conversations), they spend the day in town” ... (School observation2.1, school 1, August 2019)

This indicates that a certain kind of generalized assumption that seems to label the acts of girls are deliberate, as discussed in the classroom setting. It doesn’t seem like there is considerable difference in the assumption male and female teachers have on girls. According to teachers and students’ reflection, it seems normalized for boys to be noisy, childlike, immature, football fanatic, and restless, while girls are perceived to be shy, ahead of their age, matured, sexually intentioned, and deceiving.

> When girls reach adolescence they are unbearable. If girls ask for permission to go out of school, they are not going home, some go to hotels with older men. Especially the ones in grade 8, oh actually it is coming down to grade 6 these days. They deceive both male teachers and students. You know such kind of girls just by looking at them by the way they dress and the way they talk. We have a very beautiful student who has a relationship with many men. Everyone in the school wants to be with her. We told her to leave our kids alone from her bad acts. (Interview Female Teacher 2.1, school 1, May 2019)

In response to this, girls from school one reflected that their friendship with boys and how they look shouldn't be judged "when you play with boys, they gossip behind your back that you love the boy…" indicating that "this kind of students who spread the gossip should be punished". According to the girls reflection, they seem to expect female teachers to be less judgmental and understanding for girls. Girls in school one discussed that it is relatively easier for them to share their issues to female teachers than male teachers.

> Some girls get so scared and cry when they have their period in school. They are so scared and shy to ask for help. Especially male teachers don't understand. Female teachers are preferable to ask for help because they understand us because they are women. (Girls FGD1.1, school 1, June 2019)

Some girls in school one seems to relate that being a woman teacher helps to understand girls better, as they reported male teachers are unaware and uncurious about their experience. Nevertheless, some girls in school two reported how female teachers are not trustworthy to share "secrets" and to ask for help.

> For me if I have my period, I will never ask for help in this school, I will never tell madam. You can tell madam and the whole school knows about your period [all the girls laughed]. My friend asked [bathroom break and sanitor pad] madam for the first

time, and she told all the teachers about her secret. The other teachers said to my friend "we heard that now you have become a woman". I will not do this to my secret… [after a bit of silence] So I will go out of the school, and I will tell my mother or my *Ssenga* [the aunt who teaches girls about body change and sex] … Because if they [boys] know you have your period, they can say that you are old. Also, if you are on your period, they say jokingly "Mmmmm you stink, you are smelly" you understand? (Girls FGD1.2, School 2, August 2019).

This indicates the multifaceted relationship between girls and female teachers where girls (from school one) reported female teachers understand them better than male teachers but at the same time girls (from school two) reported that female teachers are not trusted with "secrets". One can also understand that the issue of menstruation seems to be considered as "secret" that they openly don't share about it and reportedly made fun of. It seems that the more girls open up with their "secrets" for teachers, they seem to expect teachers to be more trusted. On the other hand, both female and male teachers seem to perceive themselves as the most understanding and trusted in both school one and two.

In summary, the gendered division of labor was manifested in different activities girl and boys perform outside the classroom. Concerning the division of labor, boys and girls seem to behave and engage with dissimilar activities and games without mixing. In school one, the girls who migrated from rural area seem disadvantaged and the difference they have with the urban background girls was visible outside the classroom. Such difference was not observed or mentioned in case of school two. Boys and girls seem discouraged to play and eat lunch together in both school one and two. Boys themselves don't seem to "allow" girls on the playground for to play in group or to play with the boys, which manifested power relationship in both schools. With regards to power relations and cathexis, the boys seem to have the space to express their feelings and desire more freely while girls seem to be expected as the passive

recipients in both schools. Harassment seems to be ignored and justified in the schools which may socialize girls and boys to the unquestioned gender power relation. The boys seem inherently socialized to and normalized the characters claimed to be hegemonic masculine such as toughness, boldness, and free of fear, while girls are being socialized what it seems emphasized femininity characters like shyness, recipients of male sexuality, and modesty. The relationship between girls and female teachers is another interesting finding that seems complex and multifaceted. The girls from school one reported female teachers understand them better than male teachers, and girls from school two reported that female teachers are not trusted with "secrets" (issue of menstruation). On the other hand, both female and male teachers from school one and two seem to be satisfied with the way they understand and protect their students.

6.3 Gender interaction in the school surrounding

School surrounding is a setting that is immediately outside the school compound, where students interact with each other and the surrounding community. Since understanding school surrounding was not the main focus of the study, only a brief pragmatic overview was discussed to give a comprehensive understanding of the selected schools.

With regards to the division of labor, in school one, students were observed in mass around the school surrounding in the morning, at lunch break, and end of school hours. Boys and girls were observed behaving and interacting in different ways with different individuals and groups in the school surrounding. Some boys were seen teasing and laughing with girls and boys from their school while having snacks and some boys were observed trying to practice in group fights, and one-on-one fight what seemed "masculine".

> Boys are known for wrestling. We punish such behaviors, so they do it outside the school. They even make proper appointments to fight. It is about who is a hero and who is frightened. We all have been there. (He laughed)" (Teacher interview2.1, school 1, May 2019)

The boys engage in what seems to be masculine to reportedly ensure that they maintain their status of popularity among their peers. This practice is reported and also observed in both school one and school two.

In contrast, girls in school one were observed standing in group chitchatting and laughing out loud, some were observed having snacks. The gender division of labor and cathexis manifested among girls manifested in laughing, chatting, and snacking with each other and with few boys. There are also few girls who are observed talking to men who are not members of the school community. Young men who own shops, shoeshine boys, and men passing by the school were observed approaching the girls to talk to them or they just drop a seemingly appreciation words when the girls are wandering around the school alone or in a group. The teachers reported in interviews that taxi drivers (reportedly boyfriends) come to the school to pick up girls.

> Last month we caught our female student red-handed when she was taking a ride in a taxi driver's car by bringing another innocent student with her. We couldn't tolerate this behavior; we called her parents to have a meeting. The girl wasn't even surprised or scared at all. I don't think they punish her well. (Teacher interview 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

Teachers seem rather to blame girls for having relationships with adults than to focus the responsibility of the adult men who come to the school looking for underage girls and hold them accountable. Protecting the girls is not raised as part of the school's mandate. In addition, the issue of group fights among boys is not reported as the school's concern as long as these disputes happen outside the school. This issue is largely discussed as a problem in school one rather than school two. Girls from the school located at the hurt of the city seem to be more exposed to sexual harassment and abuse from adults. The reason for the difference could be

because school one is located at the hurt of Addis Ababa city while school two at the outskirt of Kampala.

According to the observation outside the school compound in both schools, girls seem to show affection to their friends by hugging and kissing as a goodbye when they depart to home and greetings when they meet in the morning. This can be the manifestation of the friendship, and trust in their “secrets” built among female students. Similar to what it is observed inside and outside the classroom in the schools, boys and girls are observed going their separate ways in the school surrounding.

In summary, the school surrounding is a setting that the extension of gender relations observed inside the school is manifested on a smaller scale. In both schools, girls predominantly reflect close friendships by chatting and laughing in a group outside the school as the extension of intimacy inside the school. Few girls in school one were also exposed to sexual harassment and abuse from adults as they are located at the hurt of the city, unlike school two that is located in the outskirt of the city. The girls seem to take the blame from their school for having relationship with adult men, leaving the adults not accountable. On the other hand, group fights took place among boys at the school surrounding as it is forbidden in the school compound. Winning the fight seems to be important for the boys as they are demanded to toughen up, to be masculine and powerful by the larger patriarchal system. This could determine their power relation within gender and between genders.

7. SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICIES

The purpose of this study was to understand the policy and practice of school-based Sexuality Education (SE) in the selected schools of Ethiopia and Uganda from a gender perspective. One of the major research questions was the issue of policy. This chapter discussed SE policy to understand the policy context where the school-based SE is functioning. The chapter utilized data from interviews with experts from the MoE, I/NGOs, and review of policy documents from both countries.

The international technical guidance of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) (UNESCO, 2018) is the global policy document discussed to understand the global policy influencing SE practices at local level. To understand the school practices, the SE curriculum specifically implemented in the two selected schools of Ethiopia and Uganda were discussed in this chapter. The central policies that potentially integrate SE in Ethiopia are the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDPV) (2016–2020) (MoE, 2015), The Education Sector Policy and Strategy on HIV/AIDS (MoE, 2009), and National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy (2016–2020) (MoH, 2016). Given that the ESDPV is repeatedly mentioned as a central policy by the MoE and I/NGO experts during the interviews, it was selected as a central national policy for the sake of this study. Incase of Uganda, the new National SE framework (MoES, 2018) developed by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) was discussed as recommended by the MoES and the I/NGOs.

The data was analysed from neo-institutional, and Connell's gender perspective under the bigger umbrella of the southern perspective. By taking the Neo-institutional theory assumption that institutions are central to the subject matter of power analysis (Lowndes, 2013), the interaction among various institutions i.e., MOE, I/NGOs, and schools in the process of SE policy development were discussed. Standing on the assumption that girls and boys have different experiences and realities that demands a policy framework that can accommodate

these differences (Connell,1987), the study also discussed the SE curriculum practiced in the selected schools as a gender regime. This chapter was categorized into two subchapters i.e., the overall institutional interaction, and the policy discourse on the SE curriculum.

7.1 The overall institutional interaction

Sexuality Education policy remains a subject of debate and controversy in Africa including Ethiopia and Uganda. Throughout the years, there have been various global policies that aim to promote SRHR and gender justice i.e., the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), Frameworks and Policies on Sexual and Reproductive Health (2009), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015-2030). The global policies related to gender and SRHR declare to develop *world culture* values that aim to ensure wellbeing and equality as human rights by leaving no one behind (UNESCO, 2018). Following the development of these global policies, there is increasing anticipation of SE policy homogenization/ institutional isomorphism, where local SE policies are expected and forced in certain contexts to resemble the *world culture* as the "best practice" (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014).

Sexuality education policies were first developed in the global west aiming to discourage adolescents from having sex outside of marriage. In recent years, by drawing lessons from Western practices, global policies were transformed claiming to pay more attention to the emotional aspects and right-based approach to SE (UNESCO, 2018). By compiling the Western practices, the first distinctive version of CSE policy was published by the UNESCO in partnership with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2009. By looking into the pattern of institutional interaction, the UNESCO's global CSE guideline, with all its controversies, was

portrayed as a *world society* perspective (Meyer, 2009) as the dominant approach that is influencing school-based SE curriculum globally, including in the selected schools of Ethiopia and Uganda.

In case of Ethiopia, the Federal MoE of Ethiopia is the lead decisive actor in educational policymaking including the development of school-based SE curriculum. The ministry is advised by various government ministries, I/NGOs, and local influencers to make policy decisions. Following the policy decisions developed at the national Ministry level, the regional and *woreda* (local district) administration adapt to any new policy by adjusting it to their respective context. According to the policy document review, there was no separate national policy to guide school-based SE. It is rather reported by the experts from the MoE that SE is integrated into the mainstream education policy ESDPV as a cross-cutting agenda. It is found that the new educational road map still lacks explicit focus on sexuality and gender education (MoE, 2018). According to the interview with experts from the ministry of education, it is reported that basic SE contents are adequately integrated in the national ESDPV policy document.

> It [sexuality education content] is sufficiently included in the curriculum. Harmful traditional practice, early marriage, the primary sexual characteristics, and HIV/AIDS are all included in different subjects. There are also co-curricular clubs like HIV clubs and gender clubs that teach the same thing. I don't believe there is a lack of knowledge among the adolescents. Considering the socio-political instability in the country, this [SE] is not a burning issue for us now. I don't even know why it is increasingly becoming a public discourse. (MoE expert 1.1, January 2021)

According to the interviews with MoE experts, the issue of SE seems to be perceived as the least priority agenda for Ethiopia. However, it is stated in the ESDPV policy document that the full integration of the identified crosscutting agendas is intended to make them priority

programmes of the sub-sectors and comprehensively address them throughout the plan (MoE, 2015). The cross-cutting issues include Gender, Special needs and inclusive education, HIV/AIDS, Education in emergencies, School health and nutrition, Drug and substance abuse prevention, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. Regardless of the policy emphasis on the full integration of a comprehensive kind of gender and SE, the above quote from the MoE experts shows that the policy is interpreted as the abstinence-only and HIV/AIDS-focused type of SE is just enough, if not too much, for adolescents.

Even though the MoE experts reported that the existing SE content integrated into the curriculum was enough, there is still a continuous push coming from various powers on the explicit SE policy development towards a comprehensive curriculum. These powers include the I/NGOs and Multilateral organizations.

> We are trying to work with the MoE in the development of the Comprehensive type of SE curriculum. Young people have the right to get information about their own body and their relationships with others. Mentioning the term Comprehensive is becoming a challenge while working with the MoE of Ethiopia. But we believe that SE is nothing without its wholistic content. (I/NGO expert 1.1, June 2019)

According to the interview, one can understand that INGOs and multilateral organizations are facing resistance coming from the MoE experts on the proposed Comprehensive approach to SE. The resistance from MoE, as it is reported by local NGOs, can have a direct implication on the expected fundings from INGOs.

> Policies matter. If the ministry keeps resisting the policy advice, the financing coming from the INGOs will be affected as a result. (NGO expert 1.1, June 2019)

On the contrary, an expert from INGO discussed the need for flexibility as follows:

> I don't know why we (INGOs) are not flexible anymore. Unfortunately, adults in our age of 40s and 50s, particularly men, are the ones who are debating on the curriculum.

> We can rebrand by including the voice of the youth… let the youth decide what and how to learn. This is what we call the democratization of education. I don't think we will get there by trying the same way we tried and failed before. The majority of the contents can be delivered while waiting for the time to come for the rest of the contents the society is unable to accept. Ethiopia is not ready for open communication now. While we are stubbornly fighting for the few chapters, we are also missing the opportunity to teach young people the other many chapters that are allowed to discuss in school. We need to adapt. We need to rename the SE itself if that's necessary. (INGO expert 1.2, June 2019)

From the diverse view reflected from INGO experts, one can understand that SE policymaking and the interaction of actors in the policymaking is a complex process. Moreover, according to the above quote, the national policy development process at the Ministry level is reportedly influenced dominated by the views of adult men. This same pattern is observed during the data collection phase at the MoE as all the research participants happen to be men experts in both Ethiopia and Uganda. Unfortunately, the new national education policy roadmap occurs to have no women in the policy development team that was gathered from various sectors and Higher Educational Institutions (MoE, 2018). By observing the deficiency of the representation of women in the policy-making arena, one can understand that the policy making process is no different than the larger the gender order that constrains the voice and agency of women against negotiating progress on the SRHR and gender justice. This exclusion of voices seems to defeat the equalizing purpose of education in general and SE in particular.

On the other hand, the MoE experts seems discontented by the INGO Comprehensive approach as it is reportedly against their values influenced by religious and cultural standards.

> The INGOs say "all means all, tell them [adolescents] everything". They want us to include the issues of homosexuality, abortion, sex, and all the unacceptable contents in

> our policies. This is a "Western" agenda. We all did grow up in religious and cultural societies, we can't do this. I come from the background of the health profession, I know what needs to be said or not, and it is already included in the policy. (MOE expert 3.1, January 2021)

As one can understand from interviews with MoE experts their expressed beliefs seem to be influenced by various powers, mainly local powers who also, as a result, pressure the policy decisions of the MoE on a religious and cultural basis. The experts are also observed mentioning their professional background as an authority to reflect their beliefs and values that challenges the "western curriculum". This practice was also observed in the campaign led by an Ethiopian medical doctor who actively organized thousands of people against CSE curriculum. According to the interview with MoE and INGO experts, the social media influencers were campaigning against the ongoing policy development "pressure" coming from INGOs. The reported campaign to collect signed public petition against any development to integrate CSE in to the education curriculum and against the existing SE practice in few schools including school one of this study (see: StopCSE.org | Ethiopia (comprehensivesexualityeducation.org); and Ethiopia-Paper-Petition.pdf (comprehensivesexualityeducation.org)). The campaign attracted social media activists, some local celebrities, religious leaders, and some professionals. Consequently, the campaign coerced the MoE to pull back from the national SE policy development and curriculum integration it started in partnership with I/NGOs and multilateral organizations.

> Look up the social media campaign on YouTube and Facebook. They are dominating the narrative with their false accusation. They are collecting an online petition for people to sign against SE. The sexuality education policy we are advocating for is not to encourage abortion… They say we promote same-sex relationships too [laughter]... The ministry did withdraw from the SE curriculum development because of them. But

> young people deserve to have information about their bodies and emotions, that's all we are doing. (INGO expert1.1, June 2019)

As it is illustrated in this above quote, the doings of I/NGOs to influence SE policy development seem to be reversed by the confrontation it is facing from local influencers. The local influencers, by flagging religious and cultural arguments, seem to have coercive power to pull the ministry from SE policy borrowing. From this pattern, one can understand that these local actors play a vital role in potentially influencing policies without being an officially recognized policymaker. Hence the policies coming from the MoE determine the local school practices, the local NGOs who are directly working with schools on SE seem to begin to adapt to the change.

> We have changed the name of our SE program to Gender and life skills education because the MoE is not interested in CSE anymore. Moreover, according to our international partners, we can't just call it CSE when major contents of CSE are not included. It is what we can do, to meet the bare minimum of information need of young people. (NGO expert1.1, June 2019)

The expert also added discussion on the recent amendment of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) law by revoking the restrictive and contested Civil Society Proclamation 621/2009 that came into effect in 2009 to restrain organizations that are supported by foreign funds from working on human rights and advocacy.

> Because of the restrictive policy environment, Local NGOs were not allowed to discuss the right of adolescents, the right of a child, and the right of girls in SE. Because of that rights-agendas has been implicit, it's only SRH, not SRHR. The new administration (that took power in 2018) amended the restrictive Civil Society Proclamation. It is a big opportunity to have a democratic working environment that the new legislation can

bring for civil society organizations. We can now work on advocating for the rights of adolescents particularly the right of the girl. (NGO expert1.1, June 2019)

The recently updated CSO law allows NGOs to carry out rights-based interventions including SRHR issues. As the local NGOs are required to gain approval from the MOE and budget from INGOs, they seem to have developed the capacity to work in a constantly changing policy environment to work with both local government and international partners. It is also interesting to hear the local NGO experts discuss the information needs of adolescents as a concern while it is dismissed by other experts from MoE and INGOs. The findings indicate that central arguments experts from the MoE seems more invested on guarding the culture, while INGO experts mainly argue on the matter of policies and what should be done to meet the "global standard".

Uganda, on the other hand, has passed a separate SE framework in 2018 but was later rescinded after religious leaders opposed sections of the framework citing the lack of involvement of religious leaders. The findings show that challenges came from the arguments claiming that the framework wasn't age-appropriate and that it was shifting the traditional roles of parenting from parents to teachers. It is still open for public debate as it is reported by experts from the national Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). The policy was developed by the MoES by the consultation from INGOs, similar to the case of Ethiopia.

> The framework was developed by experts coming from different backgrounds by learning from experience gained from working on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in partnership with INGOs. I was part of the framework development team by the way. We learned that we don't have to just leave our schools for NGOs to teach whatever they want. That's why we needed the SE framework to guide the school practice. (MoES expert1.2, August 2019)

As one can understand from the discussion of the MoES expert, the framework intended to protect the schools from unguided SE curriculums especially from NGOs. However, the framework is dominantly criticized by NGO experts for prescribing an abstinence-only approach to sexual health, as it discourages the information provision on condom use, other contraceptives, and predictably said nothing about sexual pleasure, abortion, or gender, and sexual diversity.

> The new framework is doing more damage than good. It doesn't even allow you to conduct simple condom demonstrations in schools. What is sexual health without learning about safe sex? It's unfortunate to not be able to meet the information need of young people by delivering an Abstinence-only kind of curriculum. (NGO expert1.2, August 2019)

One can learn from this finding that, similar to the case of NGOs in Ethiopia, NGOs have less power in the policy development and yet they are directly involved in the implementation of SE in schools. In Uganda, as a result of having the policy framework, it seems that the practice of school-based SE to be even more restricted than the times of the policy absence (also see, 10-Concerns-Analysis-of-Uganda-2018-NSEF-final Family watch.pdf). As it is illustrated in the above quote, the framework seems to do more harm than good for the progress of school-based SE implemented by the NGOs. Unlike the NGOs, religious leaders seem to have coercive power over the ministry's decisions to the level of SE policy as reported by experts from MoES.

> The new framework is just floating for now. We can't implement it. The religious leaders are against it. The church made a strong campaign against the new framework by saying that they don't want children to learn values that are against our religious values and they believe that teaching sexuality issues is not the role of the school but

> the parents. Hmmm the concern is understandable. We are having an intensive discussion and debates on it. (MoES expert1.2, August 2019)

Similar to the case of Ethiopia, religious values are brought into SE policy decisions in the context of Uganda. However overlapping it is, culture appears to be the dominant reasoning among SE policy decision-makers in Ethiopia while religion remains the main rationale in the case of Uganda. From the pattern in both Ethiopia and Uganda, it seems the policy decision-makers are not only the experts in the ministry offices. It appears that various powerful local actors such as religious leaders and activists seem to also influence policy decisions. It also appears that local religious leaders in Uganda are opposing the need for school-based SE depending on the assumption that adolescents are already getting sexuality related information at home environment by the *Ssenga* (the aunty that teachers sexual matters to adolescents) (see the SE content in the next chapter).

Moreover, international actors in Uganda also have a share of influence in the policy decisions, similar to the case of policymaking in Ethiopia.

> … hmmm multilateral giants, they have money. To receive the funding, we must endorse their policy suggestions… If you say no, there is no money… It's tough especially for NGOs like us who depend on international funding and at the same time must abide by the restrictive local policies. (NGO expert 2.2, August 2019)

From this discussion, one can learn that local NGOs seem to be trapped between the financial needs to sustain as an organization by meeting the INGO expectations, and the pressure to function within the local policy framework.

In summary, in Ethiopia, there is no separate national SE policy, while in Uganda SE framework was developed and later rejected by the MoES. The interaction among actors in the SE policy development process seems to lack democratization and gender perspectives at all levels in both Ethiopia and Uganda. These policy actors are not just the experts in the MoE or

International actors, it seems that there are various powerful local actors such as religious leaders and activists who seem to increasingly influence policy decisions. The possible room for all actors to come together and propose tailored policies to meet the information needs of boys and girls seems denied by both government and international actors. All actors, the MoE, INGOs, and the local influencers seem to stand divided rather than reaching a collective consensus in addressing the SE needs among adolescents. Even though they recognize the call to contextualized curriculum that reflects the information need of boys and girls, the INGOs seem to be advocating towards external isomorphism while the ministry of education seems to push towards cultural and religious-based isomorphism in both countries. In case of Ethiopia, protecting the culture seems to be the central reasoning against SE policy decision-making. On the other hand, in Uganda, religion remains the main rationale in the SE policy decision. The INGO experts, on the other end, seem to focus on importance of SE policies to meet the "global standard" as their central argument. The NGOs seem to be trapped between the financial needs to sustain as an organization by meeting the INGO expectations, and the pressure to function within the local policy framework.

7.2 Discourse on the SE curriculum

The selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda, in the absence of a national SE curriculum and teachers training, are especially implementing a curriculum that is borrowed and adapted from a "global" curriculum to the local context by that NGOs that are directly working on school-based SE. The dominant debate in the global and local SE policy, according to the study, seems to be the decision on "what and how to teach SE in the school environment". It seems like the "why", the need, is not observed in any of the central debates/ dialogues the study has come across in both Ethiopia and Uganda.

According to the data from the interview with the NGO expert quoted below, the SE curriculum is limited to selected schools as a pilot project with a future intention of expanding

to more number of schools. In both Ethiopia and Uganda few schools that have the privilege of working in partnership with NGOs are implementing the SE curriculum.

> Because of the absence of a national curriculum to guide SE practices in Ethiopia, we use the curriculum adapted from the Netherlands. We adapted it to the local context; it is culturally sensitive and age appropriate. It is also translated into different local languages. We implement the curriculum in a limited number of schools. The curriculum is impacting the lives of young people for the better, we wish to expand it to all schools at the national level, but it remains too controversial to be accepted at a national level. (NGO expert1.1, June 2019)

According to the SE curriculum review, the SE curriculum practiced in the selected schools includes various lessons with learning objectives. The components of SE cover the full range of topics that are assumed to be important for students to know. The curriculum is reportedly age-appropriate and logically sequenced with increased complexity across age groups (5-8years; 9-12years; 13-15 years, and 15-18+years).

> Each learner is expected to go through the 16 lessons to graduate from the SE. the lessons include Self-awareness, Emotional ups and downs, Body change, Friendship and relationship, being a boy and a girl (Gender), Culture and Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP), Seeking human entitlement, Sexuality and love, Pregnancy for girls and boys, Protect yourself: STI and HIV/AIDS, HIV/AIDS: you have a role to play too, Love shouldn't hurt, Drug/substance abuse and sexuality, Your future dreams and plan, My top tip peer book, and Graduation exhibition. (SE curriculum 1, 2015)

According to the curriculum, targeting the age above 9, first three lessons deal with physical changes that adolescents experience and the challenges of their body growth and change, and the knowledge and skills needed to overcome the challenges. Lesson four to eight focus on the social dimensions of confront related to the SRH of adolescents. Lesson nine to

eleven and thirteen are concerned with tribulations faced by adolescents as a consequence of sexual interaction (sexual relationships) and how to deal with the challenges. Finally, the last two lessons deal with the learning and decision of the boys and girls after successful completion of the lessons in the manual. The curriculum is reportedly delivered by well-trained teachers with a continuous follow-up by the local NGOs working in school settings in both Ethiopia and Uganda.

> The comprehensive SE curriculum we borrowed is translated to local languages with the help of volunteer young advocates and continuous training is provided for selected teachers. The Ministry approved the implementation of the curriculum except for the lessons sexuality and love, love shouldn't hurt and some contents that discuss safe sex including condom demonstration. The ministry expects us to promote the abstinence-only type of curriculum. (NGO expert 1.2, August 2019)

However, the lessons are comprehensive on paper, NGOs are required by the MoE to exclude the lessons that discuss safe sex, love, sexual and gender identity from the curriculum. The cultural arguments such as "SE contents are against our cultural values" are seemingly used to pressure NGOs for the revision of the curriculum in Ethiopia as discussed in the previous subchapter. On the other hand, in the context of Uganda, religious values are dominantly used to resist the contents of SE curriculum.

Starting from its cover page, a picture of a boy and a girl, the curriculum seems to aim to attract ownership of boys and girls by showing that it is intentionally made for both. According to the document review and the interview with NGO experts, the curriculum also seems to equally value the concerns of boys and girls in the lessons.

> The lessons are comprehensive enough to address the information the issues that both boys and girls face during adolescence. There are lessons like the natural body change of boys and girls, what it means to be a boy and girl, challenging gender inequality, and

challenging HTP that dominantly affecting girls. Most importantly, I believe that this curriculum can help us address the challenges girls face just for being a girl such as GBV. (NGO expert 1.1, June 2019)

The adapted curriculum appears to emphasize gender issues. Furthermore, various experts from both Ethiopia and Uganda highlighted the emphasis of the SE curriculum to address the concerns of girls as they are primarily disadvantaged groups with regards to sexuality and gender power relations.

The SE curriculum practiced in the selected schools of Ethiopia and Uganda appears to be getting positive reception from NGO experts, teachers, and learners, and the resistance remains at macro-level policymakers and local leaders. This could be due to the "foreign" façade appearance of the curriculum that is claimed to draw lessons coming from the "West" by marginalizing the Southern perspective in the global economy of knowledge (Connell, 2007). As the curriculum is facing resistance from local powers, it seems that their concerns are received as primitive, and inferior to the "international standard" by the NGO experts.

They (local experts and leaders who resist the SE curriculum) need to modernize to be progressive. They don't even read the science, their claim is not knowledge-based, it is just fear. I don't know how we can ever get there [meet the global standard]. (NGO expert 1.1, June 2019)

As this example quoted from Ethiopia illustrates, the views that diverge from the "international standard" seem to attract less interest from the NGO experts and international partners. Conversely, efforts to understand the standpoint of the local leaders that can help find a mutual ground seem to be missing in the discourse.

To understand differences in perspectives on SE curriculum, how actors understand the issues of Sexuality, gender, and CSE matters. According to the global policy document review and interviews with experts from the global policymakers and I/NGOs, SE is defined from a

human rights perspective as a part of natural human development. Moreover, they argue that SE needs to be offered to adolescents as it is their right to know about their body, and emotions.

> Sexuality is natural, and SE is a human right. We shouldn't deny adolescents 's right to information on the emotional, social and physical development that happens naturally. (INGO expert interview, June 2019)

On the other hand, the MoE experts and local leaders in the case of Ethiopia and Uganda seem to perceive SE as a matter of social construct that demands constant policing. Moreover, discourse regarding sex, gender, and sexuality exist in heteronormative and fixed binary position (one is either a feminine heterosexual female or a masculine heterosexual male) among local actors in both Ethiopia and Uganda. Similarly, diversity beyond this dichotomized model was found to be negated, pathologized, and declared a crime. Furthermore, even the purpose of Education in general, as it is stated in the Ethiopian ESDPV is to provide learners the knowledge, skills, and values to become productive and responsible citizens which seems to emphasize the *economic rate of return* than healthy human development.

In summary, standing on two different perspectives, INGOs and local actors seem to remain contradicting/ diverge on policy matters. Their issue lies on "what and how to teach SE in the school environment" by neglecting the "why" in both Ethiopia and Uganda. The INGOs seem to push for "teaching all", while the local actors including the MoE appear to be compelled with the idea of abstinence-only and heteronormative SE coming from a cultural and religious place. The "global" policymakers and I/NGOs understand SE as human rights and undeniable part of natural human development while the MoE experts and local leaders in both countries seem to perceive SE as a matter of social construct that demands constant policing from heteronormative and fixed binary perspective.

According to the "global" curriculum borrowed in the selected schools, each student is expected to go through the 16 lessons to graduate from the SE. The lessons include Self-

awareness, Emotional ups and downs, Body change, Friendship and relationship, being a boy and a girl (Gender), Culture and Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP), Seeking human entitlement, Sexuality and love, Pregnancy for girls and boys, Protect yourself: STI and HIV/AIDS, HIV/AIDS: you have a role to play too, Love shouldn't hurt, Drug/substance abuse and sexuality, Your future dreams and plan, My top tip peer book, and Graduation exhibition. However, NGOs are required by the MoE to exclude the lessons that discuss safe sex, love, sexual and gender identity from the curriculum. It is reported in both Ethiopia and Uganda that emphasis is given in the SE curriculum to address the concerns of girls as they are primarily disadvantaged groups with regards to sexuality and gender power relations. However, the curriculum is facing strong resistance from the ministries and local actors in both Ethiopia and Uganda. This could be due to the "foreign" appearance of the curriculum borrowed from the "West". The resistance the curriculum is facing by local powers seems to be received as primitive, and inferior to the "international standard" by the NGO experts.

8. SEXUALITY EDUCATION PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOLS

This chapter is about the content of Sexuality Education (SE) that teachers and students are able to discuss in the classroom and the pedagogy of SE in the case of school one in Ethiopia and two in Uganda. The data from SE classroom observation and interviews were broadly analysed from a gender perspective from Connell's theory of gender by looking into the division of labor (sexuality expectations and roles are assigned for boys and girls), power relations (the control, freedom and agency given for boys and girls), and cathexis (discourse of affections and relationship). The data in this chapter were obtained from school observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and FGDs with students. Students and teachers reflection on the SE practices were discussed to explain and triangulate the data obtained from the classroom observation. This chapter is divided into two subtopics to discuss the content of SE and the pedagogy used in the SE classroom.

8.1 The Sexuality Education Contents

There are various contents of SE divided into 16 chapters as it is reviewed in the policy document in both contexts in Ethiopia and Uganda. Based on the classroom observation and interviews, the most common/ dominant topics discussed in SE classrooms i.e., HIV/AIDS and abstinence, gender equality, and body change are identified for this chapter. These contents are discussed as follows.

8.1.1 Discussing HIV/AIDS with emphasis on abstinence

As it is discussed in the literature, in many African nations, SE is initiated as a result of the unprecedented spread of the deadly HIV/AIDS virus among the adolescents. In both Ethiopia and Uganda HIV/AIDS remains to be the persistent public health and socio-economic hazard among which, as a result, is no surprise that modern-day schools SE still focus on HIV/AIDS awareness.

Throughout the observations, the issue of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) was the core content repeatedly discussed during SE lessons. Also, when asked to list the content of their SE, students generally mentioned the subject of HIV/AIDS first.

> We learned about HIV/AIDS, how it is transmitted … through unsafe sexual practices, how we can protect ourselves … hmmm I know ABC rules hmmm Abstinence from sex, Being faithful to your lover, and using a Condom (she looked down smiling) but for students like me, we have to choose 'A' abstinence. Girls are not allowed to have sex. (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

According to interviews, teachers, students, and NGO experts seem to agree on the claim that SE does make an evident difference in HIV/AIDS awareness among students. By looking at the HIV/AIDS knowledge students demonstrated during interviews and class observations, one can say that both boys and girls seem to have basic information regarding HIV/AIDS prevention and transmission. Moreover, both schools one and two seem to have a similar trend in successfully providing basic HIV/AIDS information among SE students.

According to the interviews and observations, abstinence from sexual relationships seem to be presented as 'THE way' for students to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS. This is further emphasised by messages promoting abstinence, posted on the walls and trees of both selected schools.

> As I enter the school compound, messages saying "say no to sex" are hanging on trees. As I go further, next to the chemistry periodic table painted on the wall, there is a picture of a girl in school uniform saying "I am keeping myself for marriage, what about you?" this picture on the wall did take me back to the poster that still exists in my university compound, Addis Ababa University that says

> "My virginity, my beauty" apparently with a picture of a girl in a school outfit. (School observation 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

The intention of such messages in both selected schools seem to delay sexual practices among girls and avoiding risks by abstaining from any sexual activity.

> When we teach about HIV, we teach the 3 ways to protect oneself... but the main thing we recommend our students is abstinence, not condom use or faithful relationship. If we make it open for choice, since they are children, they might be encouraged to engage in sexual practices. There are so many health risks associated with this. What I do is to keep them informed. It is my contribution to saving the generation… (Teacher interview 2.1, school 2, May 2019)

Although the curriculum appears to be comprehensive, the practices seem to focus on one way to protect oneself from HIV/AIDS, abstinence. Moreover, the intended messages of the SE curriculum are reportedly to teach the need to delay sex for both boys and girls, the classroom discussions generally seem to focus on promoting abstinence primarily among girls manifesting gendered division of labor and gendered cathexis.

> … We learned that we should not have sex when we are still young girls. Girls should have worn the four gowns before enjoying sex that is school uniform, graduation gown, wedding gown, and maternity gown … (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

In this Ethiopian school as elsewhere, the burden of protecting their bodies from sexual practices is placed on the girls, contrary to their reality, without equipping them with the ability to make sound judgements, blaming and shaming appears to be the approach used instead, as it is discussed previously on how school handled the interaction adult men have with the girls in school one.

Similarly in one of the sessions observed in School two, the SE teacher conducted a presentation on HIV/AIDS prevention, followed by a drama about HIV by the students, and a summary on the topic.

> "If you look at this beautiful girl when you are walking in school, keep walking, don't turn around and stare at her until your saliva comes down... [students laughing loud] ... If you do, today you are clever in class you score 80, 90… and tomorrow you look at the girls and you are going to score zero" (School observation 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

The message that the SE teacher jokingly transferred seem to portray the body of the girl as the obstacle for the boy's academic achievement. This may translate to a problematic gender cathexis assumption that the body of the woman/girl is for the sexual pleasure of a man/ boy and it could lead to both intentional and unwanted temptation on the man. It is interesting dynamics how girls are perceived to be the cause of the problem/ distraction on boys academic achievement and at the same time girls are seen as the main victims of sexual practices. In both schools, the same trend that puts girls in the position of "the deceiving" and "the victim" of sexual practices both at the same time is observed. It is also interesting to see the contradicting gender expectation that boys are treated as "the child" (boys will be boys) while girls are treated as "matured woman" that know about the consequence of their action but on the other hand the school focus on protecting girls against any sexual activity than boys. When it comes to SE, girls seem to get more protective information against any sexual act compared to boys. These problematic assumptions form the gender power relation that might normalize sexual harassment by presenting the women's body like the recipient of men's desire. Moreover, the statement also could give the unintended impression that boys academic achievement is too important that it shouldn't be destructed by the body of the girl.

In both school one and two, girls seem to be portrayed both as the cause of 'the problem' of pre-marital sex and the main victims of sexual practices.

> One girl fell in love with a bad boy who ruined her life. She was out at a party with him, she got pregnant, she got HIV, and he abandoned her. After being treated with traditional medicine, church prayer, and traditional religious prayers, she died. (School observation 2.2, school 2, August 2019)

> When it comes to the risk related to sexual practices, it is the girls who experience the upper hand of the danger. There is an unwanted pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, on top of that the partner could abandon her and leave her in poverty with a new-born. That's why I fear for girls. (Teacher, school 2, August 2019)

This kind of information, as presented in SE classes, portrays girls as the vulnerable and at risk when it comes to sexual practices (see also Gacoin, 2016). It has been pointed out that such message might lead to the policing and over dramatization of girls' sexuality (Schalet 2011) and normalisation of boys' sexuality. This includes excessive reactions to girls' behaviour within the 'good girl' vs 'bad girl' framework, making it difficult for girls to connect to their lived experiences, and also leading to secrecy in relation to their sexual/romantic relations (see also Lewinger and Russell, 2021). For instance, during the FGD, girls said that 'there are no boyfriend–girlfriend relationships in this school' while boys openly talked about such relationships. This might affect their health and counselling seeking behaviours among girls. This could be the challenge to the realization of the central SE intention against the spread of HIV/AIDS among adolescents.

In summary, one can learn that HIV/AIDS is the central content of SE practiced in both selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. To protect students from HIV/AIDS, schools are seen promoting mainly abstinence-only SE content rather than providing comprehensive

information. Concerning gender division of labour, girls seem to be more prescribed to abstain from any sexual acts compared to boys whose sexual behaviours seem somehow normalized assuming that the body of the girl puts them in temptation. The role of girls and boys appears to differ in the labour division that girls seem to be expected to abstain themselves and help boys to abstain by not being the "deceiving". On the other hand, girls appear to be portrayed as a passive recipient of boys desire. This certainly has a lot to do with the gender power relation that tolerates the culture of harassment and GBV. It is profoundly a complex position where girls seem to be placed at both the provoking and the victim's position who needs constant policing when it comes to sexuality.

8.1.2 Discussing gender equality

Gender equality is the other dominant SE content identified during observation and interviews. As Ethiopia and Uganda are both patriarchal societies, this content seems to intend to promote gender equality values among boys and girls by challenging gender stereotypes and biases.

During SE session observation in school one, the social construction of gender and gender norms were discussed and questioned by defining sex and gender. The classroom seems to have a warm discussion and active participation of learners. Role plays, group discussions, debates, and poems were presented by learners followed by a summary from the teacher. The social construction of gender was discussed repeatedly and questioned in SE by raising 'natural' sex roles and socially constructed gender roles, students were asked to list them down on a flipchart.

> The teacher asked learners to list down natural sex roles and socially contrasted gender roles given for men and women on a flipchart. Students listed giving birth, breastfeeding under the sex-role while they listed cooking, child-care, doing business, construction, community leadership, president, doctor, and teacher as the gender role. Although these

> roles are divided among men and women in the community being exclusive to each other, learners agreed that gender role can be performed by both men and women. The teacher in her summary discussed that the famous saying in the community "A place of the women in the kitchen, but men to the court" is a wrong assumption that it is okay for men to cook too. She concluded by suggesting learners, especially boys, to share household burdens with their sisters. (SE session observation 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

This session could potentially contribute to promoting new values by challenging the gendered division of labour reflected in the broader society. However, the challenging of gender norms rarely included school issues. For instance, school-based gender divisions of labour and power relations were not addressed, as academic achievements, and boy's dominance in classroom participation or in games during break time, or sexual naming/blaming and harassment of girls. Such gendered labour and power relations in education are found in studies throughout the world (see Öhrn and Weiner, 2017) but are rarely problematised by teachers.

In relation to gender power relations, GBV was part of the main discussion in school one.

> Learners were asked to list traditional sayings in Ethiopia that include stereotyping, bias or values that show disdain for women. The learners listed sayings like 'Women and donkeys like the whipping stick', 'When women gather together, they are not productive but talkative' and 'No matter what the woman knows, the man rules. The list left the students laughing loudly. (SE session observation 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

According to their classroom reactions, students seem to agree that these traditional sayings are unjust. The SE teaching also addressed gender-based violence in the name of love, as in a chapter called "Love Shouldn't Hurt" in the SE curriculum. This content seems provocative by questioning different relationships like father-daughter and student-teacher:

> The teacher discussed the fact that close family members (father, uncle, brother, or any guardian), teacher, health workers, or employers could be perpetrators of sexual harassment and violence. She also encouraged learners to report gender-based violence to a family member they trust, the police, and/or teachers. (SE session observation 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

Such information on GBV seems to empower students and improve their violence reporting habits. Judging from the observations and the student's responses in the interviews, the information on GBV might empower girls in particular and would ideally make them more likely to report violence. However, as the GBV in the home environment is emphasised, it seems likely that issues in the school environment remain difficult for the students to identify and thus also to report. To address violence and harassment of girls in teaching acknowledges a gendered power relation but downgrading it to only out-of-school contexts takes away the relevance and centrality of GBV both in this setting and in the global gender order.

Gender-based violence content is not largely observed in school two, compared to school one. It could be why more stories on reported sexual violence such as rape by a family member, and attempted sexual induce by teachers were discussed both by students and teachers in school one compared to school two. The low number of stories of such incidents may not indicate that school two has low cases, but they might be rather underreported. For instance, sexual harassment girls from school two jokingly mentioned during an interview in the previous chapter that boys touch them inappropriately can be an example that harassment exists in school two. However, these girls didn't have the right vocabulary to put it into words that they called it "boys don't know how to play with girls".

The gender power relation in the gender equality content observed in school one seems to portray all boys and girls as homogeneous. The notion of hegemonic masculinity is more emphasized by silencing the subordinate masculinity. The content discussing sexual

harassment, for instance, places the men/boys in the perpetrator's position and girls in the victim's position, and there were no observed instances of discussing boys as being subjected to sexual harassment or GBV. As a result, boys who might be experiencing sexual harassment or any kind of GBV might be forced to refrain from reporting because their problem seems to be seen as "the problem of the girl". As the school is trying to empower girls to report sexual harassment, it seems to create unintended silencing of boys by fear of being finger pointed as what seems to be becoming less of a man.

With regards to affection/ cathexis, consent has been a point of discussion in the gender equality sessions.

> The teacher discussed that girls have the power to choose who they want to marry. An interesting role play that challenges the absolute power of a father in the patriarchal society is presented in the session observed. The role play goes at the court scene about a father (a role taken by a girl) who forced his daughter to drop out of school and get married. The daughter reported the case to her teachers and they brought him to the court (the judge role taken by a girl). The court decided to keep the girl in school and the father is seen crying with disappointment. All students were laughing and seem to be enjoying the role play. The teacher summarized that girls have the right to choose who and when they want to marry, not by the choice of their parents. (SE session observation 1.1, School 1, May 2019)

The role-play and the discussion observed shows the values that SE seem to advocate for girls agency to choose when and who to marry and love by questioning the role of the father on the decision. In a patriarchal society like Ethiopia, where households are led by a father and anyone acting in this role has unquestioned power over the household and matters related to the children, this approach seems radical.

In general, the issue of gender equality is widely discussed in school one compared to school two. SE appears to examine and challenge the gender division of labor by discussing gender roles assigned to boys and girls in the home environment. When it comes to the gender division of labor, school one seems to challenge the gender roles assigned to boys and girls and the need for change on that. However, the gender division of labor observed in the school was not discussed in the SE content. The skewed gender power relation was also discussed when discussing GBV in the larger society. However, the harassment girls face in the school environment is ignored in the SE. When it comes to gender power relations, school one seems to make a promising effort to address GBV compared to school two. With regards to cathexis, when and with whom to have affection, and the issue of consent was discussed in the SE in school one. However, consent in the sense of school interactions, friendships and intimacy is overlooked in the SE content. School one reportedly seems to have a better GBV reporting trend than school two as it seems that the students are well equipped and empowered to report. However, subordinate masculinity seems to be overshadowed by hegemonic masculinity that might have portrayed boys as the perpetrator and girls as the victim of GBV. This might take away the opportunity of boys to report GBV as it is portrayed as "girls' problem".

8.1.3 Discussing the body change and menstruation

Body change refers to a kind of SE content that includes both physical and mental growth of adolescents at the age of puberty. Body change is not a subject discussed openly among both Ethiopian and Ugandan wider society; it is rather a silent topic that children grow up sensing that it is a personal secret. However, it is relatively discussed more openly in the context of Uganda in the culture of *Baganda*[2] *by the Ssenga*[3] that seem help adolescents to

[2] The Baganda are the largest tribe in Uganda, comprising of slightly more than one-fourth of Uganda's total land mass. Kampala, Uganda's largest city and capital, is in Baganda/ Buganda kingdom.

[3] Among the father's many sisters one would be selected (based on exemplary behaviour) to play the role of Ssenga, to 'socialise' her nieces about body change and menstruation at early age, and later on the art of becoming 'good' wives who were subservient and ensured their husband's sexual pleasure.

learn about their body change and sexual relationships in a home environment, unlike the case of Ethiopia.

During lessons, students looked at the human anatomy poster on the SE classroom wall entitled ‘my body is changing, what about yours?’ and were asked to list and sketch body changes during adolescence. According to the SE observations, students were uncomfortable and shy about discussing the human body with their peers and the teacher. In the interviews, students mentioned the body change session as informative but makes them uncomfortable and shy. The following SE session observation shows how the body changes were discussed.

> The teacher distributed a piece of paper to each learner, and they were told to sketch the body of the other sex. After sketching the human body, they were asked to highlight and list what body parts change/ grow at the age of puberty. The teacher asked students to show each other the pictures. Everyone started laughing. Girls listed the body changes that happen to adolescent boys, while boys listed the body changes experienced by girls. The group of girls seemed to be shy about presenting and even listening to the presentations compared to the boys. Their body language, such as their hands covering their face or mouth and some of them putting their head down on the desk, indicated that the subject can be uncomfortable for them compared to the boys who just listen with their heads up and smile. When pressed by the teacher, both boys and girls managed to present the body changes by naming human private body parts and menstruation, which seem to be culturally taboo. The teacher kept encouraging students to be free by talking about all parts of the human body in a relaxed manner. (SE class observation 1.3, School 1, May 2019)

The SE teachers approach to openly discussing this culturally taboo content relating to bodily changes might be specific to the selected schools as a result of the continuous training from NGOs. The teacher openly discussed issues such as the growth of breasts and pubic hair,

menstruation, producing bodily fluids, ‘wet dreams’, mood swings, and more. Moreover, the SE practiced in the school focuses on the changes to the bodies of girls, allocating more time to discuss the subject and address the prejudiced assumptions around it:

> The teacher discussed the fact that girls who are growing bigger breasts or thighs should not be assumed to, or accused of, being sexually active, but it is rather natural that some have big breasts while some have small ones. She also added that menstruation is natural to all women, indicating that a girl is getting ready to be able to get pregnant, but it doesn’t mean that her body is sufficiently mature to care for a child. The teacher summarized the session by explaining that all bodies [male or female], whether big, skinny, light skinned, dark, short haired, long haired, and with different facial structures are beautiful. (SE class observation 1.3, school 1, May 2019)

By looking into the difference between the boys and girls in their level of openness in school one in Ethiopia, one can learn how girls are more silenced to discuss their body change and how discussing the body of the girl seems even more dramatized. In addition, facts about menstruation were presented regardless of the students being shy and seemingly uncomfortable. The girls especially seemed uncomfortable discussing the subject, which might be due to cultural shaming, especially of women’s bodies and sexuality.:

> … The teacher discussed the fact that menstruation is a sign of the healthy growth of a girl. In response to the girl’s shy reactions – giggling and putting their heads down – the teacher emphasized to both boys and girls that there is nothing to be ashamed of, menstruation is a just natural experience for a girl … (SE class observation 1.3, school 1, May 2019)

It appears that the teachers seem to try to bring about new values when it comes to girls’ bodies. This could help to address the shame girls display in school (for instance in relation to

periods) but might also create unintended dramatization of the female body, whilst male bodies are ‘normal’ and require no special discussion (Schalet, 2011).

Based on the interview with students, some girls and boys expressed their interest in separate sessions for girls where they learn about their body changes and menstruation while boys learn about their own body change to feel more comfortable.

> It makes me shy when we learn about body change with girls. Drawing human body made me uncomfortable. I think I prefer to learn only with boys. (Boys FGD 2.1, School 2, May 2019)

There are other groups of students who argue for mixed group where both boys and girls learn about each other's body change so that they can support each other.

> I think we have to learn in mixed group. Girls know period is natural and there is nothing to be ashamed of, but what is the use [of her knowing about menstruation] if the boys keep mocking her about it… They don’t have the awareness… when boys learn about girls, then this [period bullying] will change. (Girls FGD 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

As it is reported by the SE teachers, mixed groups seem to be recommended to teach SE classes because they intend to break the silence around body change and menstruation.

> Boys’ engagement around making our school friendly for girls is one of our purpose in sexuality education… When boys are aware of menstrual facts, they give support to their female friends. I have witnessed a boy who did lend his uniform shirt to a girl who got stain on her skirt. That’s why we need to have the boys and girls in a mixed group so that they can understand and be ally for each other… (Teacher interview 1.1, school 1, June 2019)

The mixed group seem to be favoured by the SE teacher, in a way that could potentially create supportive boys and they seem to believe that continuous awareness creation can create

the empowerment to have open discussion with regards to puberty and the changes following it.

The experience of school two of Uganda seems different when it comes to teaching body change. Discussing body change is not as difficult as it is observed in school one in Ethiopia. In school two, both boys and girls already have basic information on the body change that they get from home environment. In *Baganda* culture, it is the aunty (Ssenga) who is assigned to teach sexuality and body change subjects openly to adolescents.

> …For girls, it is the Ssenga (the aunty) that teaches them about the body change, menstruation she is going to experience in puberty, and also about how to give (sexual) pleasure to the husband; there is no secret between them…It is good that girls learn about menstruation at home. (Teacher interview 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

As it is reported by the SE teacher, the *Ssenga* helps to prepare and equip girls before they experience menstruation. School two is observed trying to continue the discussion that is already happening at home environment and learners seem less timid compared to the atmosphere in school one.

> Girls and boys were loudly answering questions the teacher's question teacher asked about body change. Girls were discussing about menstrual hygiene as it is facilitated by SE teacher. A girl mentioned that "we can manage our period by using locally available materials, we have to tell mother or *Ssenga* or sister, to give some help. Some boys and girls are observed laughing, they say to each other "this is nature, it's not funny, there is nothing to be shy about" … fun atmosphere where most students are smiling... When the session was over, boys and girls started dancing, some girls and boys joined the teacher to the front of the class to dance. (SE observation 2.2, school 2, August 2019)

Compared to school one, school two SE session appear to be more at easy to discuss menstruation and body change. When it comes to the body of the girls, the school seems to try

challenge some of the gendered division of labour narrative on "womanhood" expectations to satisfy their husbands sexual desires that is usually promoted by the *Ssenga*.

> … I got the information on menstruation…how to manage it… and "visiting the bush" from my Baganda… I know what to do when it (period) comes… She (aunty) also knows everything about me. When I grow up, I will tell her when I want to "visit the bush"[4] [they all laughed]" (Girls FGD 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

It is reported that SE classes intend to discuss about the values students learned from their *Ssenga* and challenge the problematic traditional practices. However, it seems like the school and even the NGOs seem to exist in a vacuum where they seem to have no interaction and no efforts to utilize such powerful structures like *Ssenga* in the Baganda culture to bring change. It rather appears the other way around that school SE content are censored by the powerful structures like church as it is discussed previously in the policy chapter.

In summary, SE in school and two give emphasis for body change and menstruation as one of the major contents. Students also mention it as the important content they remember. In school one, students seem uncomfortable to discuss body change because body change remains culturally a silenced subject they don't discuss at home. In case of school two of Uganda, learners get basic information at home environment through their *Ssenga* and it seems normalized to discuss about body change and menstruation. As a result, school one of Ethiopia, particularly girls appeared too timid to discuss the body change compared to school two that has relaxed atmosphere.

[4] Visiting the bush is elongating the labia minora of the womens sex organs. The aunties (*Ssenga*) prescribe herbs to be used to their nieces in the process to keep the labia minora long whenever they are stretched. They also teach them what to stretch and how to go about the whole business of pulling as it is called. Since all ladies are traditionally expected to grow up and get married, and thus serve their husbands sexual desires, this culture of pulling or visiting the bush is highly practiced even today with many parents intending their daughters to be bedroom superstars when the time comes. Some parents have even resorted to introducing their girl children to this practice at a tender age, for some as early as 7 years.

In general, one can say that the SE contents discussed in the selected schools seem generally prescriptive, protective, and in some cases radical enough to challenge some of gender and sexuality misconceptions and injustices. Similarly, the school also seems trapped between practicing the SE curriculum by challenging existing individual and collective values; and preserving cultural values that is widely accepted.

8.2 Pedagogy in SE classrooms

High-quality content of SE is only effective if it is delivered with a working teaching method, the pedagogy. In this subtopic, the pedagogy practiced in SE classroom of school one in Ethiopia and school two in Uganda was discussed from gender perspective. Informed by the classroom observation and interviews, the SE pedagogy was analysed only from two aspects of the classroom practices i.e., the teaching-learning method, and classroom setting.

8.2.1 Teaching-learning Methodology

Studies indicate that modern/critical pedagogy is a working radical approach to learning and teaching SE that seeks to transform oppressive structures (i.e., patriarchy) in a society by using democratic approaches (Freire, 1974). This modern pedagogy, as Freire (1973) put it, implements the participatory, democratic, critical, and reflective learning that is also suggested by the policy of SE in Ethiopia and Uganda. It is also recommended in the SE policy implemented by schools in Ethiopia and Uganda that teachers follow the principle of andragogy (the art of adult learning) i.e., self-directed, and autonomous learning by making boys and girls active participants in the learning process. To understand how the policy is being implemented, this subtopic discussed the teaching methodology observed in school one of Ethiopia and school two of Uganda from gender perspective.

The teaching methods observed in the SE classrooms in both schools included cooperative learning (group discussion, pair-share, and debates), role play, storytelling, and

questions and answers unlike the other lessons that overwhelmingly followed a traditional pedagogy, i.e. the lecture method. The participatory teaching methods in SE appear helpful to address the gendered division of labor by increasing girls' participation in the SE. This modern pedagogy, as Freire (1973) put it, implements participatory, democratic, critical, and reflective learning that aims to empower students and play a liberatory role. This democratic style of teaching appears to lessen the gap in the gendered division of labor as well as the gender power relations compared to the non-SE classes.

With specific regard to the gender division of labor, according to the classroom observation boys and girls in the SE classes contributed rather similarly, taking part in debating, group discussions, and delivering presentations on various content. Sessions commonly begin with recapping the previous lesson by using the Q&A method.

> The teacher said 'let's recap what we have discussed last week' ... She used Q&A approach. The teacher waited until hands are raised, waited until more hands come... After a certain time waiting, more girls started to raise hands. The teacher gave appreciative feedback for the answers coming from both boys and girls. (SE observation 1.2, school 1, June 2019)

This participatory approach and the affirmative feedback from the teacher seem to cheer learners by putting smiles on their faces. The teacher was seen to wait for boys and girls who might need to think for a little longer before raising their hands in a way that helped a greater number of students to participate, especially girls who were unlikely to participate in the regular classroom.

Based on the SE classroom observations, encouraging words (e.g., 'there is no right and wrong answer'; 'you can say anything you want'; 'great job'; 'clever'; 'don't be shy'; and 'it's okay') used by the teacher appeared to create a genuine space for learning. Students reported that it was a friendly atmosphere for them to participate without fear, unlike in the regular class.

Regarding gender power relations, boys and girls were observed actively participating in group discussion, unlike in regular classes, where the lecture method is mostly used, and girls were usually silent and shy. This teaching thus seemingly helped learners, particularly girls, to speak in front of large classes comfortably.

> I was very shy. Especially in the normal class, regular class I don't participate at all. But here [in SE class] I answer questions, I ask questions, I participate in the role play exercise... But here with teacher x [the SE teacher], I participate freely, without any fear. I practiced here and now I also present my poems and sometimes I sing in our school mini media. I am not scared anymore. (Girls FGD 1.2, school 1, May 2019)

Here, one can learn that the more democratic forms are employed in the pedagogy, the better learners, particularly girls, become empowered to participate. In this way, SE is playing an emancipatory role by using learning that is self-directed, democratic, and autonomous. By making boys and girls active participants in learning, it also cultivates an empowering environment in which the normalized gender oppression are challenged.

Moreover, the teaching and learning in SE in school one is conducted in the local language (Amharic) that is the mother tongue for the majority of the learners as well as the reseacher. Similarly in school two, local language that is mother tongue for students and some English (for the sake of the researcher's observation) is used. This practice can indicate efforts to achieve democratic learners where learners get knowledge with the language of their heart. As Nelson Mandela (1994), anti-apartheid revolutionary, put it elegantly "if you talk to a (wo)man in a language (s)he understands, that goes to (her) his head. If you talk to (her) him in (her)his own language, that goes to (her)his heart." This seems to promote safe space where learners reported that it is friendly atmosphere for them to participate comfortably than the regular class. Role play, group discussion and debates seems to be the most preferred teaching method students, particularly girls, seem to enjoy by observing their smiles, warm participation

and debates. Learning SE in local language also seem to help challenging the values which are deeply embedded in the language itself, particularly tales, anecdotes, and myths connected to gender prejudice and implicitly encouraging GBV as mentined in the SE contents in the previous section. This democratic and engaging teaching and learning approach is distinct in creating comfortable and liberating environment it created for learning and improved gender relations, which the school can borrow for use in the formal curriculum.

The non-verbal communication pattern observed in SE in the selected schools i.e., eye contact, gesture, proximity, touch, and posture of teacher-student communication. In case of both school one and two, the teachers were observed closer to the seat of learners than regular class that teachers usually stand by the blackboard at the front of the class. By moving around the group seats of students, teachers are observed giving shoulder pat and high-five. Particularly in case of school two of Uganda, less hierarchy and more friendship appear to be observed between the SE teacher and students compared to school one of Ethiopia.

> This communication was conducted in local language; I was recording only the gesture. When a girl answer question he [SE teacher] run to her seat to give high-five, the smile on every student follows. The teacher was sitting with learners around table during discussions and debates are conducted among learners. By the end of the session, music started playing, group of learners took over the front side of the class to dance. After seconds, the teacher joined them too. (SE classroom observation 2.1, School 2, August 2019)

This session shows the practice of SE teaching method that seems less hierarchical and closeness between the teacher and learners. The friendly gesture the teacher demonstrates above for both boys and girls seem to show the effort to improve the gender interaction and empower students for the better.

Throughout the effort to employ democratic and gender responsive learning, it is observed that some students, particularly from school one, to be unruly by being inattentive and dropping seemingly absurd words to make others laugh. As SE is merely a voluntary attendance and participation, it is observed that the teachers did attempt to handle such behaviours in a democratic manner.

> ...The boy in one of the groups, seem restless compared to the students in his group, was making jokes by ignoring the teacher and his group discussion. The teacher, with a smiling face, said "please engage in your group, don't you like the discussion? What can I do for you? Ask me any questions or give me your suggestions if you find it boring. No pressure, it is completely voluntary participation here" ... the group discussion continued... (SE observation 1.2, school 1, June 2019)

Observing this, one can learn that SE teachers unusually seem to be trying to make the atmosphere democratic compared to the regular classroom where learners, dominantly boys, are slapped and paddled if they 'misbehave'. As corporal punishment in schools are used as a rule, it could be interpreted among boys and girls that violence is an appropriate means for managing conflict, including normalizing GBV, by seeing their teachers doing it. Meanwhile, students remain distant from their teachers due to fear of the hostile classroom environment. Sexuality education classroom in contrary is observed creating friendly environment by treating boys and girls with dignity and voluntary participation.

In summary, SE teaching methodology seem dramatically different from the formal teaching in its methodology. It appears to playing liberatory role in challenging gender division of labor and gender power relation by promoting participation and democratic learning. The SE teaching methods in both schools included cooperative learning, role play, storytelling, and questions and answers unlike the regular class with traditional pedagogy. Moreover, the SE

teachers seem to use more ecouraging to students that reportedly created a genuine space for learning. The teaching and learning being conducted in local language also seems to promote safe space where learners reportedly enjoyed friendly atmosphere for them to participate comfortably. It also seem to help challenging the gender prejudice and implicitly encouraging GBV values which are deeply embedded in the language itself. The non-verbal communication the SE teachers used in both selected schools seem less hierarchical and friendly for students.

8.2.2 Classroom setting and schedules

In both school one and two, separate SE learning spaces was organized for less than thirty students where the seating arrangement is not fixed, unlike the regular classroom with a large number of learners (more than 50) assigned on a permanent seating arrangement. Depending on the learning activity, the seating arrangement changes to a large oval seating, small group circle facing one another, and pair. For some activities, boys and girls mix in group seating, and for other activities, a single-gender group seating arrangement was observed. According to the classroom observation, each group seating arrangement boys and girls seems to be able to communicate easily with each other and the teacher appears to be able to move between desks to facilitate learning that seems to help challenge the gender division of labor and power relation manifested in classrooms.

In case of school one, it is observed that SE classroom was highly decorated with learning posters, drawings and charts made by students, printed quotes and pictures posted on the wall compared to school two. The SE classroom in school one seems to demonstrate an attractive visual-learning atmosphere compared to the regular classroom.

> Pictures on the wall made by learners includes the wedding of a very young bride on a hoarse with an older man, a girl bleeding during FGM, blasé with blood on it, group of men abducting a girl who is near the river carrying a pot, a boy playing football,

and a smiling girl in graduation gown. (SE classroom observation 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

The visual materials made by boys and girls appear to be pictures related to SE contents and illustration of their hopes and fears. The hopes and fears depicted in these pictures seems to reflect the gendered reality that fear of violence is dominantly attributed to girls, compared to boys. In the case of school two only a few visual learning materials, posters developed by NGO, are observed in the SE classroom wall rather than the work of learners.

In the case of school two, as a means of responding to inadequate time for SE in the school, it was observed that the NGO involved with organizing out-of-school SE sessions for interested students. Here, there are more number of boys than girls unlike the SE happening in the schools that girls dominate in number. According to the SE teacher it is difficult for most students, especially girls to attend out-of-school sessions because their parents do not want them to go to other places other than school.

> Students like to attend out-of-school session because it includes contents that they want to know, contents that are banned in school context and they can ask any question… We are like friends to them…But parents assume that the students, especially girls, are lying to them, they assume that she is going to some party with a boy [laughed]… (SE teacher 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

According to observations and interviews, the comprehensive session that includes contents banned at school level i.e., condom demonstration, gender identity, sexual identity, and contraception seem to attract more learners. However, the gender variation in the way parents permit boys and girls to attend out-of-school sessions is acknowledged, one can also understand the increased level of keenness boys show towards more a comprehensive SE content.

In summary, both school one and two appear to have separate SE learning spaces where student seating arrangement was flexible based on the learning activity to create convenient environment for peer learning and improve the gender interaction. The classroom, especially school one appears more decorated with visual materials made by students depicting their hopes and fears where the latter is dominantly attributed to girls. School two in comparison appears to be provided few visual learning materials by the partner NGO, not the work of students. Some students from school two seem to get out-of-school SE sessions organized by the NGO. More number of boys attend this session than girls unlike the SE happening in the schools that girls dominate in number. This was explained this variance might be due to reasons of family not allowing girls to attend out-of-school sessions and the increased level of enthusiasm boys seem to show towards more a comprehensive SE content.

9. STUDENTS AND TEACHERS VOICES ON THE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

This chapter discussed the views and opinions of boys and girls on their experiences in the school-based SE. It also includes the views of teachers on the practices and policies of SE practiced in their respective schools.

9.1 Students' voices on Sexuality Education practices

Boys and girls, in general, seem to demonstrate enthusiasm regarding SE in both school one of Ethiopia and school two of Uganda. Particularly girls appear to show a greater interest in the SE sessions than boys as evidenced by their regular attendance, punctuality, active participation, and encouraging boys not to miss the sessions. Boys, on the contrary, appear to be reluctant as they arrive late or sometimes miss the session.

> I like it [sexuality education class], I want to attend… But sometimes when I and my friends want to play football, it's hard to join the session while they are playing. Even though I join to the [SE] class, my mind goes to the game. (Boys FGD 1.2, school 1, May 2019)

Boys in both schools generally reported that they wish to play during their lunch break than joining SE. In contrast, girls appear to complain less about the time they spend in SE classes during their lunch break. Girls also appear to be more negotiating, by suggesting various time schedules to conduct the session to free their lunch break.

> Many teachers don't understand us when we get to class a little late after lunch... Lunch break is too short to have both lunch and the [SE] session. I think after school or Saturday would give us more free time than a lunch break. Also, the boys like playing football at lunchtime, they miss the session a lot. It is good to have it on a weekend, it is just my suggestion. (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

This challenge regarding schedule is frequently mentioned by both boys and girls that some girls suggested using the weekend. But some girls seem to disagree with the suggestion.

> No, weekend, or even after school hour is impossible for me. My parents don't allow me. You know how parents think; they assume that I'm going somewhere bad by lying to them. I like the lunch break, one hour is enough if we use it properly I think. (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

Both boys and girls are concerned about the insufficient and inconvenient schedule given for SE, but girls seem to be more negotiating compared to boys who simply seem to miss the sessions. This may indicate the variation in the level of priority girls and boys demonstrate regarding SE.

Concerning the forms of SE, learners debated the need to integrate the session into the formal curriculum. Some learners mentioned considering integrating SE in the curriculum may help to get more time freedom and more serious emphasis on the content. However, some learners commented that it is better to have it as an extracurricular activity.

> I don't wish the SE to be part of the normal subject. It will not be exciting and participatory anymore if it is part of the classroom subject, it might end up being boring. Here in SE class, we are like family… We learn by playing, open discussion, by debating and the teacher gives us a chance to talk than in a normal classroom... (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

> It [SE] doesn't have to be included in the normal class. Teachers don't beat you here, they smile, there is freedom. But if SE is included in the normal class it is going to be less free as any normal class. (Boys FGD 1.2, school 1, May 2019)

This indicates the extent to which learners, particularly girls, seem to enjoy the participatory teaching approach happening in SE compared to the regular classroom. In contrast

boys from both schools debated that SE should remain as an extracurricular activity by reportedly appreciating the democratic and friendly approach of SE teachers.

Concerning the content of SE, what the students wish for seems to be a bit different from what they are offered during SE. Their responses during the FGD, as well as their questions to the interviewer, refer to more issues that those currently taught. Most students said that the dominant discourse in SE is abstinence from sex, and that they themselves would like to include issues like sexual practice, consequences of sex, contraceptives, and natural functions like menstruation. This was also found when students were asked, during a SE lesson, to write a question anonymously for the teacher to address, repeatedly asking about pregnancy, condom use and sex:

If I jump after sex, do I still get pregnant?

Can a girl get pregnant before she experiences menstruation?

How do people have sex?

How safe is a condom?

I heard there is a medicine to take so that you don't get HIV after unsafe sex, what is it called?

(SE class observation, May 2019)

These questions mirror the most requested issues mentioned by boys and girls, and show the mismatch between the information needs of the students, who are swamped with the abstinence-only message to the detriment of learning about methods of protection. This indicates that learners' demand a comprehensive kind of SE that is beyond the assumed homogeneous 'child innocence'. These questions that appear silenced in SE are issues that could help address teenage pregnancy, STIs, and help to raise healthy young people.

In addition, students views show that teachers are considered too judgmental towards young people and the lives they lead. This includes responses to the dramatization of girls'

sexuality as pointed out previously. In particular, in the FGDs, girls appear critical of the presentation of relationships as generally harmful to their future.

> If a girl falls in love or if she is in a relationship, then automatically teachers assume that she is going to dropout from school. I don't think that's true. There are girls and boys, even in my class, who are good in school and keep their love relationship too… Their relationship is secret because they fear teachers… But there is no harm… They love each other… He gave her a paper-ring [they all laughed] … I think if both have a purpose to grow together, love is good. (Girls FGD 1.1, school 1, May 2019)

The girls voice in both schools seem argue love and intimacy as positive in a way that is in contrast to the SE that portrays them as dangerous practices. This obviously represents a divergence between the SE messages and girls' understanding. Girls' comments also highlight the importance of viewing SE in a longer perspective and understanding that student questions and requests for information do not necessarily equate to immediate activity. The tendency of teachers to view questions as relating to present practices and to judge them, acted as a barrier for girls' to communicate their wishes. They pointed to their need for comprehensive SE with openness in relation to now and future experiences in life, but that it was difficult for them request such information because of fear of judgment:

> For me, if I ask my teacher about sex, the teacher may think directly that I am in need, they say "mmmm aha" … If you ask a teacher about periods, they think that you are having your period … If you ask a teacher about a boyfriend, they say "aha you have got someone". Students who talk about love and sex are generally perceived as bad students, this is the problem of understanding, I don't think open discussion should be seen as indicating a bad personality. (Girls FGD 2.1, school 2, May 2019)

The other participant also argued similarly:

> They [teachers] start teasing you because of that [the question] … If you ask about sex, that means you want to do it with somebody. That's why for me I keep my questions until some outsider like you [the researcher] comes. Because you don't know me, and you are not from this school. (Girls FGD 2.1, School 2, August 2019)

According to the girls in both school, the 'bad girl' label seem to be applied for asking openly about the knowledge they need. As a result, girls mentioned that they keep their experiences and questions secret from teachers to avoid judgment or blame (see also Lewinger and Russell, 2021). As mentioned earlier, even in the interviews, most girls hid the truth, stating that there are no romantic relationships in their school, although this was contradicted by the boys. This dramatization of girls' sexuality seem to be identified as a challenge to better utilization of the SE access in place and might make them refrain from seeking counselling from their SE teacher. Instead, girls tend to seek information and services from other sources, just like they asked the researcher detailed intimacy and sex-related questions; such sources may not always provide accurate and scientific information or have any accountability.

The other most important issue raised by the girls relates to gendered school interaction and their relationship with teachers, which is overlooked by the SE.

In summary, the study indicates that boys and girls in both schools seem enthusiastic about SE, even greater interest among girls (see also Strange, et. al., 2003). The study also indicates that students remain enthusiastic due to the school SE practices that seem relatively participatory and democratic, reportedly better than in regular lessons. Moreover, girls from both schools asked for comprehensive SE that covers sexual practice, consequences of sex, contraceptives, and bodily functions like menstruation. The questions posed by the girls regarding pregnancy, sexual practices, contraception and condoms represent interesting evidence about the need to know more about issues that are simply not addressed in SE. It appears that girls appear to be unable to express their information needs in school because they

fear that their teachers will be judgemental. Thus, they seem likely to try to seek answers to their questions from other sources, who may not be well equipped with accurate and scientific information.

9.2 Teachers' views on Sexuality Education policies and practices

The SE teachers from both schools seem to acknowledge the importance of SE in school to protect young people from the assumed risks associated with sexuality. They also seem to be passionate and determined to help students from the challenges they witnessed and navigate through adolescence.

> We don't have SE policy as a nation, it would have been more impactful for a large number of schools in the country if there was a policy… It is very useful to help young people navigate the change they experience as an adolescent, so we need to give it emphasis… It is my voluntary work… I'm not required to report on this, I am not paid for this… but this has to change. Schools should be required to teach SE by using a nationwide policy… I care about young people and their experiences… I feel extremely satisfied about doing this. (Teacher interview 1.1, school 1, June 2019)

The SE teachers seem greatly interested to provide students with the necessary SE information and expressed their wish for the government to give it emphasis. At the same time, the teachers argued that it is critical to promote limit the contents to abstinence-only SE so that students can avoid and delay sexual practices at a younger age. Their views on the content of SE seem to be hesitant in incorporating messages on what seems to be "western" and "robber of students childhood innocence".

> We don't discuss such [safe-sex] issues. These kids are adolescents ready to practice sexual activities. If we teach them how to use a condom, they will be more curious to practice it. We don't want to do that. It could be useful information but let know

themselves in their own time as a grown person. (Teacher interview 2.1, school 2, August 2019)

According to the interviews with SE teachers in both schools, contents like affection, sexual relationship, gender identity, and sexual identity were not supposed to be discussed in the school context, as they believe it might encourage students to sexual practices. According to the SE teachers, the contents suggested by NGOs seem to be assumed as *ungodly* "western topics" that don't align with the long-lived *Ethiopian* culture of purity[5] and adult subjects that rob "childhood innocence".

Unlike what they reported in support of abstinence-only SE, some teachers from school one argued themselves that the silenced topics in SE doesn't necessarily mean that the issues are non-existent in the practical life of the students. They also expressed the need to break the silence around sexuality as adolescents are experiencing and knowing about it from different sources, despite the silence in school.

> These issues are silenced, they are sensitive, we [teachers] don't want to talk about them. But the children are ahead of us, they know it, they are practicing it. Our only way to save them is by including it in SE. Children have to know the danger of homosexuality, the danger of abortion, the danger of multiple partners. Once they are involved with same-sex relationships, then it is hard to heal them. I think we have to break the silence and teach our students about this before it goes out of hand. (SE teacher 1.2, school 1, June 2019)

The other teacher also added on the same matter:

> We [teachers] are not equipped with training on how to deal with students who reveal their sexual behaviours. When I found out about my student who is practicing same-

[5] "ኢትዮጵያዊ ጨዋነትን አይመጥንም"

> sex relationships, I was speechless… He was very ill. I found out that he had STI and he told me he is in a same-sex relationship... I was not ready; I gathered my thoughts and I decided to bring him to the hospital for medication…. I told his father… he had nothing to say but tears. (SE teacher 1.1, school 1, June 2019)

Observing the teachers' reflections, one can learn that SE teachers seem to perceive themselves as unequipped to deal with the needs of students. They also seem in dilemma between the complex values that come from the local culture, religion, and the practical challenges they witness among their students. Teachers suggested for the government to address the need for a clear national policy that guides SE practices in a way that may lift the pressure on the decision on what SE content to teach and what not.

In summary, The SE teachers from both schools seem to acknowledge the importance SE and determined to help adolescents from the assumed risks associated with sexuality. At the same time, the teachers argued for limiting SE contents to abstinence-only to discourage young people from sexual practices at a younger age. They expressed their hesitance in incorporating messages on issues of affection, sexual relationship, gender identity, and sexual identity, what seems to be *ungodly* "western" and adult subjects that rob "childhood innocence". On the other hand, some teachers from school one argued on the need to discuss the silenced SE issues as adolescents are experiencing and knowing about it anyways. The SE teachers seem to recognize themselves as unequipped and in dilemma between the complex values that come from the local culture, religion, and the practical needs among students. They also stated their wish for the government to give it emphasis and for national policy to standardize the SE practices.

10. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this ethnographic research was to understand the school-based Sexuality Education (SE) policies and practices in selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda from a gender perspective. The study implemented school observation, in-depth interviews with teachers, MoE, and I/NGOs, and FGD with SE students. This chapter includes a summary and discussion of the main findings of the study in relation to previous research and the theoretical frameworks, i.e., Connell's gender theory, neo-institutional theory, and southern theory. The chapter is divided in to four subtopics guided by the research questions i.e., the overall gendered interaction and students' schooling experiences; the tension between the global vs local SE policy actors; the contents and messages of SE practiced in the schools; and the democratic learning and students' enthusiasm.

10.1 The overall gender interaction and dissimilar schooling experiences

To understand the SE practices, the study first engaged the general gender regime as background context to understand what it is to be a boy and girl in the selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. The overall question on "who does what in school" and "who should act in what way" was discussed from the gender theory of Connell (1987) by looking into the dimension of gender division of labour, power relation, and cathexis performed inside the classroom, outside the classroom, and in the school surrounding neighbourhood.

In line with previous study, the findings indicate that gender interaction inside the classroom including activities assigned for boys and girls such as classroom monitoring, class participation, and interaction with teachers appeared gendered in both schools in Ethiopia and Uganda (e.g., Öhrn & Wiener, 2017; Paechter, 2007). The study findings show that the classroom interactions appear to socialize students to certain versions of masculinity and femininity manifested in the way boys and girls (are expected to) behave by normalizing

different behaviors among girls and boys (Öhrn & Wiener, 2017). For example, the findings indicate that more class participation, classroom leadership, self-expression, and toughness are normalized among boys, while girls are being socialized to shyness and modesty in both schools.

The study findings outside the classroom show that boys and girls behave and engage with dissimilar activities and games without more than occasional mixing. Boys and girls reported that they are hesitant in playing and eating together in both schools in fear of rumours that they might like each other. Such rumours running the school shows the need for more of the SE content discussing that boys and girls can be friends. Moreover, it is also found that boys themselves to discourage and ignore girls on the playground to play in group or to play with the boys, which manifested power relationship in both schools. This is in line to the findings of previous studies that gender division of labor and power relation are to be communicated in school interactions (e.g., Öhrn & Wiener, 2017; Öhrn, 2019; Smith, 2007; Younger et al., 1999).

With regards to power relations and cathexis, it appears normalized among boys to have the role and freedom to express their affections while girls are expected to remain passive recipients in both schools. This pattern on gendered cathexis helps to understand the gender power relation that is empowering the boys and policing the girls behaviour. For example, harassment seems to be ignored and justified in the schools which may socialize girls and boys to the unquestioned gender power relation. This is in line with the old observation in feminist education research that boys' behaviours are overlooked or trivialised with reference to 'boys will be boys' (e.g., Epstein et. al., 1998), and their acts in school are typically explained by unintentionality, ignorance or simply as 'part of normal relationships' (Kenway and Willis, 1998, 108). The recent educational research shows that no change was achieved over the time on how the act of boys is reasoned as "boys will be boys" as they are expected to be naughty,

and strong (Skipper and Fox, 2022) while the acts of girls is policed with expectations likes "behave like a girl" and "girls are matured". This privilege seems to follow men in to adulthood, as the finding from the school in Ethiopia shows on how some girls who were also exposed to intimate interaction with adult men seem to take the blame from their school, leaving the adult men with no accountability although this act is a crime.

The findings also show within-gender differences depending on students background, i.e., rural migrant girls disadvantaged status, indicating that schooling experiences can be different students depending on their intersecting identity, i.e., rural vs urban background; shy vs extrovert; age; and academic performance. In the school in Ethiopia, the girls who migrated from rural area seem disadvantaged and the difference they have with the urban background students was visible outside the classroom. Such difference was not observed or mentioned in case of Uganda. Boys and girls seem discouraged to play and eat lunch together in both schools. Such identities intersecting within gender appears to shape the gender interaction in the schools by allowing the privileged ones (e.g., boys, urban background, extrovert personality, active participant in classroom activities) to be even more visible in school, dominate play areas, and good relationship with teachers. This finding supports the views from previous study, for example Reay (1991), that the impact of gender on girls is not uniform and consistent across boundaries of race and class but that the three categories are inextricably interwoven. Similarly in the research focused on Ethiopia by Jones et. al, (2020) also indicates how young people's overall health and access to information about their changing bodies is heavily shaped by intersecting social identities. The research also linked the impact of structural disadvantages such as poverty, distress migration and differential access on the healthcare (including Sexual and reproductive health) intersect with gender norms to generate further inequalities in adolescent girls' and boys' health outcomes.

The relationship between girls and female teachers is another interesting finding that seems complex and multifaceted. The girls from the school in Ethiopia reported that female teachers understand them better than male teachers, and girls from school in Uganda reported that female teachers are not trusted with "secrets" (e.g., on issue of menstruation). The findings thus fit into the growing literature on the role of women teachers for girls lifelong well-being, including being a role model (Card, 2022). On the other hand, both female and male teachers both schools seem to be satisfied with the way they understand and protect their students, while the latter reported the opposite. Even at school level, the school in Ethiopia seems to be proud of the empowering learning environment they claim to have created by equal representation of girls and boys school participation and leadership. However, the findings indicate that there was no practical difference observed between the school in Ethiopia and the school in Uganda in the general gender interaction.

From this pattern, one can conclude that school gender interaction is exacerbating the existing inequality through socialization process that is made to happen. As Connell discussed that women remain oppressed in the global gender order, similar pattern is observed in the local (school) context where boys are granted power and freedom compared to girls in both schools. Hence, gender context in the selected schools shows the critical need for policies and practices of a comprehensive form of SE. Since gender injustice is not something that naturally exists but rather made to happen, it can be undone (Butler, 2007). Bending gender by making it less important in determining patterns of interaction in schools may help deconstruct the gender dichotomy at both macro and local level discourses and expectations (Burdge, 2007).

10.2 The tension between the global vs local SE policy actors

Standing on the gendered school context, SE policies were analysed and explained from the neo-institutional and southern theoretical standpoint. The global SE policies defined SE as a human right that everyone deserves to have access to a comprehensive SE, which is usually

referred as the *world society* perspective. However, the study findings show that the global SE policy is centrally driven from the western experience as a standard that every nation should aim to resemble in their policies and practices, creating (mimetic) isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). For the global South, the study generally identified that meeting this "global standard" determines the national credibility, and financial opportunities provided from the global North (Le Mat, et al., 2020). Studies show the dissemination and harmonisation of the policies are at times considered as an imposition in a context where SE is donor-driven (Le Mat, et al., 2020; Dale,1999; Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Nevertheless, as argued by neo-institutional theory scholars, the adoption of these "global" ideas tends to be more policy mimicking than having much effect on practice due to various resistances (Cohen, et. al., 1972; Meyer, 2009).

Standing on the same ground regarding the importance of SE for young people, INGOs and local actors seem to remain contradicting/ diverge on policy matters. The I/NGOs (the *world society* perspective) seem to push for "teaching all" (e.g., UNESCO, 2018), while the local actors including the MoE appear to be compelled with the idea of abstinence-only and heteronormative SE coming from a cultural and religious place. It is for similar reasons that SE is resisted, with an emphasis on cultural, religious, and legal differences, particularly in reference to sexual diversity. This is not unique to Ethiopia or Uganda (see De Haas2017; Huaynoca et al., 2014; Crossouard et al., 2017). The "global" policy and I/NGOs understand SE as human rights and undeniable part of natural human development. The MoE experts and local leaders in both countries on the other hand seem to perceive SE as a matter of social construct and a means to policing adolescents 's sexuality from heteronormative and fixed binary perspective. These actors' debate on when, what and how to teach SE while some don't even agree on the need to teach SE arguing that it is an adult subject.

The study findings show that Ethiopia has no explicit national SE policy but rather claimed to be integrated in the broader education policy. In Uganda on the other hand separate SE framework was developed and remains under scrutiny as resistance started to grow among the religious leaders. The findings in both Ethiopia and Uganda indicates that there are various powers, beyond the official powers, such as religious leaders, and community leaders including social-media leaders, particularly adult men who are disconnected from the experience of students, are found to be powerful to impact the SE policy environment. The study identified that, actors including the MoE, INGOs, and the local influencers seem to stand polarized in their differences rather than reaching a collective consensus in addressing the SE needs. The new work by Moore (2022) in Uganda that examined recent moral panics over SE in Uganda from historical perspectives similarly shows that the public outcry over comprehensive SE erupted in 2016 over claims that children were being taught "homosexuality" by international NGOs. Such resistances that polarized actors are usually claim to protect national, religious, and cultural values from “foreign infiltration”. Moreover, the study found that the voices of students, teachers and local NGOs are less entertained in the policy making arena while they remain central actors to put the policy into school practices. In both Ethiopia and Uganda actors with culture and religion views are powerful, who could have been used as an opportunity to improve SE by capacitating and collaborating with. Instead, they are labelled as primitive and hard to reconcile which resulted policy development failure, which contributed for more polarization.

10.3 The contents and messages of SE practiced in the schools

The study findings indicate that the selected schools SE curriculums and practices aim to resemble the global policy as a “standard” by diverging from the restrictive policy environment at the national level. Both selected schools in Ethiopia and Uganda practice SE as a co-curricular activity with the absence of clearly separate national policy. However, I/NGOs

are pushing to practice SE integrated in the regular subjects in the mainstream curriculum, the findings reveal that students prefer the co-curricular approach. This choice by students is surprising finding as INGOs and researchers in the area suggested that integrating SE in the curriculum was advised to give more value and emphasis to it (e.g., Chavula et. al., 2022; UNESCO, 2018). However, in need of the current democratic and safe learning space nature of co-curricular approach that they enjoy in SE classrooms, students don't want SE to come as a regular subject in the formal curriculum. This comes as an interesting finding indicating the need for engaging students' voices before advocating for curriculum integration. This finding also indicated how students are enthusiastic for democratic learning being implemented in SE as compared to the regular classroom.

In line with previous research, the findings indicate that HIV/AIDS education is one of the prime content areas in SE in both schools (Browes, 2015; Le Mat et al., 2019). However, the subject remains limited to an abstinence-only approach that appears unlikely to help girls to make informed choices about their bodies and sexuality, and to acknowledge the fact that about 13 percent of women aged 15–19 have already begun childbearing in Ethiopia (CSA, 2016). This approach is highly risk-oriented messages of fear among girls due to risk of pregnancy that could lead to them being forced to drop out of education because of school policies. Similar to previous studies, it is found a tendency to idealise girlhood as 'childhood innocence' in a way that is (s)excluding the needs of sexually active girls (Le Mat, 2017) and does not speak to their lived experiences and questions. In line with this, they are also presented as vulnerable to sexual risks. Parallel to this is the representation of 'bad girls', with girls being portrayed as provocative and responsible for sexual misconduct. This emphasis on abstinence and especially, on girls' abstinence, accords with findings from other contexts. For instance, Lewinger & Russell (2021, 909) conclude from a Ugandan SE study that 'the pressure to remain a virgin is placed on the shoulders of girls and women, not boys and men'. Furthermore,

they are in line with findings from Western studies, for instance the US (Connell and Sinikka 2009), that show girls to be more likely than boys to receive messages about avoiding pre-marital sex (Lindberg and Kantor 2022). This shows the complex positioning of girls in the SE messages that on the one hand denies them the agency to make an informed choice, and on the other hand blames them for the crisis. Girls remain the primary victims of blaming and shaming when it comes to sexuality related risks as their bodies and relationships are portrayed as provocative. In line with a previous study by Schalet (2011), this policing and dramatizing of girls' sexuality and judgmental approach has led girls to be secretive in a way that may affect their information and health service-seeking behaviour.

Whereas the dominance of HIV/AIDS as a subject in SE was expected from previous research, the rather radical approach to body change and gender equality was not. The gender equality sessions, especially in the school in Ethiopia, appear empowering in their questioning of the existing gender order, by radically countering the shaming of girls' bodies, early marriage, and gender-based violence and even mentioning fathers and teachers as potential perpetrators. The discussions on gender issues in SE questioned the gender power relations in the home environment and encouraged violence reporting in a way that probably enhanced self-image among girls. However, while challenging gender inequality and gender-based violence at home, the teaching appeared less critical of what happens in school. For instance, consent and sexual harassment could have been discussed by mentioning gender interactions among peer groups and student–teacher relationships in school, hand in hand with what happens in the home environment. But the messages seemed to lack an inward-looking approach regarding the challenges voiced by the female students, while being ready to address gender context in the surrounding community (see also Öhrn, 2009).

It is commonly expected that schools should police girls' behaviour, dramatize their sexuality, and blame girls in a patriarchal and overly religious society like Ethiopia and

Uganda. A previous study in Ethiopia by Browes (2015) the findings similarly showed the fact that cultural context determines SE content because culture is a defining rationale in various aspects of life, particularly gender relations and sexuality in a society. For instance, the issues of gender and sexual diversity are absent from SE due to the cultural and religious context of both countries, where in Uganda one's sexuality might be punishable by death. However, as Connell (1996) recognises, it is interesting to look for local-level differences, where schools diverge from the general pattern of the patriarchal gender power relationship. In this study, school SE is, on the one hand, rather conservative by advocating fear-based SE among girls and on the other hand radically playing an emancipatory role by challenging patriarchal patterns. It forwards patriarchal understandings operating through traditional values and tales, and the parallel victimisation and blaming of girls for male sexual violence, but also conveys potentially empowering messages about equality, women's rights and challenging violence and gender structures, that challenges the status quo. The latter has long been pointed out as vital to feminist approaches to SE that should 'of necessity challenge sexism, homophobia and violence against women and children, and may ultimately bring about a celebration of the difference and diversity within human sexuality' (Lensky, 1990, p. 218). As part of this, it should take into account the local and overall social context in which girls lack power and privilege and encourage girls agency. This clearly was not the case in the observed teachings, even less in the school in Uganda.

The contradictory messages could be a consequence of the school being torn between cultural values and the *world society* perspective; between national and local expectations that teach girls to be a 'good girl' in a traditional sense and the school partners' (I/NGO) expectations that question the existing gender pattern. In some instances, the SE practice seems to successfully align both with local policies and the I/NGO curriculum. For instance, the issues of gender equality, early marriage, GBV, and body image explicitly align with the national

policy framework that punishes such crimes in both countries, and it might appear convenient for schools to challenge them. However, schools need to widen their scope to cover situations when policies and cultural context do not support of the discourse, rather than sticking to convenience-based intervention, and need to support girls in the local context.

The findings on the students voices regarding the SE contents indicate that they place more value on the subjects that are silenced than those the content addressed and discussed in SE. Previous studies have also revealed that young people often consider their SE to be too 'scientific', neglecting emotional and relational aspects of sexuality, and detailed real-life sexual knowledge (Allen, 2005). These silenced and neglected areas include sexual practices, consequences of sex including pregnancy, methods of contraception, and the issue of STDs. According to the study by Le Mat (2017) on young peoples' evaluation of SE in Ethiopia, there is (s)exclusion through the exclusion of the views of young people, gendered practices, and omission of topics that are relevant to them, such as love, relationships, and sexual intercourse. For this reason, she concluded that the opportunity for SE to contribute to questioning gender power relations and improving the emotional and sexual health of young people is not being capitalised upon (Le Mat, 2017). The present study also indicates that, due to the omissions and judgments in SE practices, girls are trying to search for answers from sources other than school, and these may provide inaccurate and unscientific information; their efforts to get information from the researcher of this study represent one example.

10.4 The democratic learning in SE and students' enthusiasm

The study findings indicates that school SE practices, observed in both schools, are relatively democratic and the learners to be enthusiastic about the SE lessons as opposed to the regular classroom. The SE teaching methods included cooperative learning, role play, storytelling, and questions and answers in both schools by also using encouraging words that reportedly created a genuine space for learning. This approach created positive relationship

between learners and teachers and made SE preferred learning than the regular class particularly for girls to participate freely. Furthermore, more girls with higher enthusiasm to the sessions by asking questions and actively engaging in discussions are observed in SE classroom unlike the regular class.

Through its democratic teaching methodology, other research also agree that SE appears to challenge some gender power relation by promoting equitable participation in group discussions, presentation and debate among boys and girls (Browes 2015; Wangamati, 2020; Le Mat, 2017). The findings indicate that the SE is implementing modern/critical pedagogy that is recognized as a radical approach seeking to transform oppressive structures (such as patriarchy) in a society (Freire, 1973). It seems to bring about the culture of democratic and empowering learning atmosphere by challenging gender division of labor and gender power relation by encouraging otherwise silent groups in class. This inherently democratic approach, as Freire (1973) put it, implements the participatory, and reflective learning that is helping liberate girls (and boys) to engage in the classroom activities and question standard gender power relations. However, this liberatory approach seems to remain limited to the SE sessions, not borrowed by the formal schooling where girls are usually shy and quiet.

It is also found that the teaching and learning being conducted in local language seem to promote comfort where learners were at ease to participate and help challenge the gender prejudice that are deeply embedded in the language itself. Nonverbal communication is critical that SE teachers show signs of less hierarchy to make learners, particularly girls, at ease than the regular class. It is believed that getting SE teacher training helped teachers to improve their teaching-learning approach in SE from the banking system of education into modern learning in SE which may reason the students repellence on SE to be integrated in the regular subject.

Despite the enthusiasm towards critical thinking in democratic learning in their teaching approach, SE teachers in both schools still remain authoritarian in their argument that they demand learner to think in a certain way with regards to sexuality and gender. The democratic learning appears to be performed within the specified box, limited content that learners are allowed to discuss and think. Given SE functioning in the sexuality discourse and gender relations firmly embedded in the patriarchal and heteronormative social construct, teachers' attempts to engage pedagogies that disrupt, disturb, and expose such issues can be quite challenging. As a result, students may end up with conflicting and contradicting messages that the SE may signal by employing democratic learning and the discourse that denies them the agency to learn beyond what is availed in both schools.

11. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to understand the school-based SE policy and practices in selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. The data was collected in one urban government primary school in each country. Therefore, the experience of SE education policies and practices, and my interpretations are limited to the particular settings. The study generated thick and genuine data from each school and also including their contexts. The data was analysed by from the theoretical standpoint of Connell's gender theory, and also neo-institutional theory and southern theory. The findings on the research questions of the study are concluded as follows.

11.1Conclusion and implication of the research findings

11.1.1 How is gender interaction performed in the selected SE implementing schools in Ethiopia and Uganda?

The gender theory of Connell helped the study explain the interaction better as it recognizes the oppression of women in the global arena and allows explaining local differences. The main finding of the study shows that the school level gender interaction, the gender regime, appears similar to the global gender order that generally oppress/ disadvantages girls/women and empower boys/men. There are also some within-gender variations depending on physical strength, students who participate in class, also urban/rural background (particular for the school in Ethiopia) that determines the different experience of schooling among students. The study shows that both the selected schools are gendered sites where boys and girls experience and perform gender through collective engagement that operates at the level of formal classrooms and through informal peer interactions. Boys and girls performed dissimilar activities which shows the gendered division of labor manifested in the school. Cathexis also appears gendered where it is normalized for boys to express their desire and

affection while girls are expected to remain recipients and their sexuality is dramatized. Such division of labor in cathexis manifests gender power relation where boys harass girls and it is justified as affection, which may grow into GBV and domestic violence in their adult life. One can also learn from this that the pattern of who does what seems to inform the gender power relation in the school. According to the study, one can conclude that the schools are even empowering the already empowered ones while neglecting the silenced ones particularly girls by overlooking their experiences and needs. The study suggests the need for continuous reflection, capacity building, and follow-up in the gender aspect of schooling in a way that could promote accountability. Promoting SE in a way that also deals with in-school gender interaction is vital.

11.1.2 How are the global and local SE policy actors interacting in the selected cases?

The study concluded that actors in Ethiopia and Uganda in general agree on the importance of SE. In general, the SE policy development process lacks democratization at all levels to come together and propose tailored policies in both Ethiopia and Uganda. All actors, the MoE, INGOs, and the local influencers seem to stand polarized to create a possible room to come together and propose tailored policies to meet the information needs of boys and girls. Their issue lies on "what and how to teach SE in the school environment" by neglecting the "why" in both Ethiopia and Uganda. Even though their policies call for contextualized curriculum, the INGOs seem to focus on importance of SE policies to meet the "global standard", isomorphism, as their central argument from the *world society* perspective. However, the "global experience" which stands on the *world society* perspective is dominated by experiences from the western world by neglecting the southern perspectives and local knowledge. The ministry of education and the local influencers seems to push towards cultural and religious-based arguments against SE in both countries. In case of Ethiopia, protecting the

culture seems to be the central reasoning against SE policy decision-making. On the other hand, in Uganda, religion remains the main rationale in the SE policy decision. The local NGOs and schools in both countries seem to be trapped between the financial needs to sustain as an organization by meeting the INGO expectations, and the pressure to function within the local policy framework. The study recommends for a continuous discussion among various actors at all levels including the schools, also students representatives, and local NGOs with non-judgemental and respectful manner.

11.1.3 What are the dominant agenda in the SE policy discourse in relation to the SE practices?

Their dominant point of debate in the SE policy discourse is on "what and how to teach SE in school" in a way that neglected the "why" in both Ethiopia and Uganda. The I/NGOs defining SE from *world society* perspective as human rights that appears to push for "teaching all". The MoE and local influencers in both countries perceive it to policing adolescents 's sexuality from adult subject and what seems to be *ungodly* "western" that rob "childhood innocence" from a perspective that promote abstinence-only and heteronormative SE. The SE agenda are advised to be controlled as the MoE and local influencers aim to protect childhood innocence of the students. The study recommends acknowledging that the agenda of school-based SE is primarily the agenda of the students, it shouldn't be solely dominated by who has power or who brings money or the issue of isomorphism itself.

11.1.4 How do the SE contents respond to the values and needs of students in the selected schools?

As shown in this study, students voices indicate the need for comprehensive SE content with a non-judgmental learning environment. The SE practiced both schools dominantly discuss the issue of HIV/AIDS and abstinence-only messages targeting girls; the body development focusing on puberty; and the issue of gender equality. The contents also educate

students with gender messages embedded in each content where some are radically addressing gender issues and some contents seem to confirm them. Both schools are practicing SE that is on one hand challenging gender power relations and offering a methodology that gives girls more opportunity to raise their voices; and on the other hand, remains silent of the school-based gendered inequalities and stereotypes. By acknowledging the emancipatory role that SE might play, the study suggests that there is a need to continuously reflect on and challenge the gendered values embedded in SE as molded by the school culture. For effective implementation, it is also recommended that SE aims to engage with and involve the wider community and provide extensive gender-conscious training for teachers, addressing their values, not just the facts. I suggest that bringing the voices of girls to the center of the discourse and addressing their information needs is critical for a successful SE practice.

11.1.5 How does the pedagogy in SE classroom inform the learning environment?

The SE practiced in both schools appears to play emancipation role by bringing about the culture of democratic and empowering learning atmosphere that challenges gender division of labour and gender power relation, encourages otherwise silent groups in class. In parallel to promoting participation, the SE being conducted in local language helps challenge the gender bias embedded in the language as part of the culture. The continuous training provided by NGOs helped teachers to improve their teaching-learning approach into modern learning that also resulted students enthusiasm towards the SE class more than regular class. However, this experience of emancipatory and less hierarchical approach in SE is not adopted by the formal schooling where girls are usually shy and quiet. It is implied that this democratic learning can be extended to other subjects by capacitating more teachers.

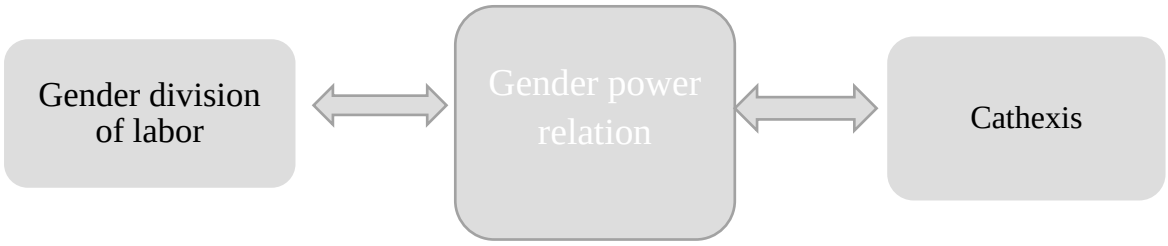
11.1.6 How do SE policies and practices in the selected cases of Ethiopia and Uganda compare?

The SE context in Ethiopia and Uganda appears largely similar in acknowledging the significance of SE and more on the cultural and religious importance. There is no clear national policy guiding SE implemented in the selected schools. However, both countries have drafted national SE framework that is discarded by the MoE, influenced by local powers including religious leaders. This resulted restrictive SE policy environment where various policy actors stand polarized. In the meantime, both schools also have shared experience in implementing gendered SE contents that teach the dominant contents HIV/AIDS, body change and gender equality; however, the quality that each topic are addressed varies. The issue of body change is discussed in the school in Uganda with more depth as a result of *Ssenga* culture at home that promoted open discussion on the body. Gender equality and GBV on the other hand is radically discussed in the school in Ethiopia that helped promote more violence and harassment reporting skills while the school in Uganda appears indifferent. The school in Ethiopia appears to claim to have major accomplishment in the gender equality compared to the school in Uganda. However, the study findings on the other hand shows similar patterns of gender interaction where girls are, compared to boys, judged/ blamed for their sexuality, expected to remain recipients of other's sexuality, and at the same time vulnerable/ victims of sexual practices.

11.2 Theoretical reflections and suggestion for future research

Connell's gender theory has significantly helped the study to analyse the gender interaction in school and also the SE practices. Connell's theory states that the oppression of women is inherent in the way in which the world is ordered (aka *gender order*); and in the potential that there are local and regional variations to this order (aka *gender regime*) (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The theory presents three dimensions to discuss gender regime's ideas of 'masculinity' and 'femininity': the division of labor, power relations, and cathexis. From implementing the theory, I have learned that in one context all the three dimensions may or may not be qualified all at the same time. However, the most dominant dimension manifested in the schools was power relation that can be common denominator for both the division of labor and cathexis. One can learn from this that the pattern of who does what seems to inform the gender power relation.

Figure 8 Theoretical suggestion on Connell's gender theory



Connell's gender theory is also compatible with neo-institutional as it recognizes local level divergence from the *world society* perspective/ global trend. The neo-institutional theory helped analyzed the global and local policy interaction and explain isomorphism. I suggest that it is an ideal theory to explain policy borrowing and understand local and global dynamics. As neo-institutional theory seems to merely focus on global-local dynamics in policy making, which is cross-border, it may not be applicable for other forms of policy development that may

not be cross-border borrowing or unrelated to external environment. Neo-institutional theory seems to lack theorizing about the causes and variations of endogenous change. The southern theory helped to explain who is dominating the global/ *world society* perspective.

The southern theory was also important as a general umbrella that served as standpoint of the study. The southern theory served its purpose when issues of power dynamics especially in decolonization and democratization of knowledge and policies are explained as Connell (2009) mainly advocates. Hence, I suggest that this theory is effective in engaging the global knowledge economy in the context of the global north-south dynamics.

For future studies, as SE is understudied in both contexts, I suggest involving more schools to have a broader understanding of the national practices i.e., rural schools, schools with different population of students, and also some private schools. This could help to indicate policy and practical implications at national level applicable for various socio-cultural context. Moreover, further study on the role of local influencers particularly religious leaders, (social) media giants, and community leaders in the SE policy development could be an interesting research area as it is becoming a critical aspect of policy development in relation to the role of the ministries. Also, it would be intersectional if the experience of rural-urban migrant students in relation to SE is further studied as their lived experience is different but overlooked.

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List of Publications

Siyane Aniley, Elisabet Öhrn & Temesgen Fereja (2023) Gender Interaction and Its Implications on Sexuality Education in an Ethiopian Primary School: Girls in Focus, American Journal of Sexuality Education, DOI: 10.1080/15546128.2023.2214748

Siyane Aniley Amentie, Elisabet Öhrn & Temesgen Fereja (2022): What sexuality education teaches and what young girls want to learn: voices from an Ethiopian primary school, Ethnography and Education, DOI: 10.1080/17457823.2022.2095218

Marielle L. J. Le Mat, Esther A. J. Miedema, Siyane A. Amentie & Hülya Kosar Altinyelken (2019): Moulding the teacher: factors shaping teacher enactment of comprehensive sexuality education policy in Ethiopia, Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, DOI: 10.1080/03057925.2019.1682967

13. ANNEXES

13.1Annex I: Consent Form

Title: Policy and practice of school-based sexuality education and gender

I am Siyane Aniley, PhD candidate at Addis Ababa University, undertaking a research for dissertation to be submitted for the Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies. The study is on the policy and practice of school-based sexuality education (SE) and gender in selected primary schools of Ethiopia and Uganda.

The purpose of this study is to understand the policy and practice of the school-based sexuality education and gender, the case of selected primary schools in Ethiopia and Uganda. The study also aims to produce knowledge that can contribute on the policy and practice sexuality education and gender in the selected school in Ethiopia by putting the case of Uganda into perspective and to draw lesson. To this end, I am particularly interested in your perspective.

This study will use focus group discussion (FGD), and in-depth interviews, which will be conducted at the respondent's convenient time and location. Interviews will take about one and a half hours and will be recorded on audiotape with your permission. However, you are free to request that interviews not be taped, and if so, I will request permission to take notes during the interview. In addition, tapes and transcripts from your interview will be destroyed if you decide to withdraw at any stage of the study.

Participation in the study is strictly voluntary and confidentiality will be assured. No information given in the interviews will be made public in any form that could identify you, and when mentioned, pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw and to discontinue participation at any time. You may also choose not to answer any questions asked.

The data gathered will be anonymously used in my PhD research and may also be used in journal articles or at conference or seminar presentations. In addition, I may also need to conduct a follow-up interview (most likely by telephone) in order to check on any issues that may arise over the research period.

Following the interview, you will be provided with two opportunities to review your comments:

1. A **Member Check** – Summary Document will be sent to you to review and provide feedback on. A transcript of the interview will also be made available to you upon request.

2. **A copy of the draft Findings**: Chapter will be sent to you at a later stage for review and verification.

The research is being conducted under the supervision of Professor Elisabet Öhrn, (University of Gothenburg) and Dr. Temesgen Fereja (Addis Ababa University). If any issues or questions are raised as a result of your participation in this research please contact Dr. Temesgen Fereja, on +251911839766.

Name of Student: Siyane Aniley, PhD Candidate

Signature:

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13.2Data collection tools

Thank you so much for consenting to participate in this study. I am Siyane Aniley, PhD candidate at Addis Ababa University, undertaking research for dissertation to be submitted for the Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies. The purpose of the study is to understand the policy and practice of school-based sexuality education (SE) in selected primary schools of Ethiopia and Uganda. The study also aims to produce knowledge that can contribute on the policy and practice sexuality education in Ethiopia by putting the case of Uganda into perspective and to draw lesson. To this end, I am particularly interested in your perspective.

Observation guide

General school gender interaction

School setting	**Gender division of labor**	**Gender power relation**	**Cathexis**
Inside the classroom	Classroom participation, activities, self-expression, characters boys and girls show/ perform	Relationship/ interaction with teacher, classroom hierarchy, classroom leadership/ monitor	Friendship and affection expressed in class
Outside the classroom	Games, activities, characters, sports, self-expressions exhibited at break/ lunch time	School resource usage (playground, sport area, lunch area), harassment issues, fight	Friendship and affection expressed outside the classroom
School surrounding	Games, activities, characters, and expressions performed in the school surrounding	Group fight, group leadership, harassment issues	Friendships, intimacy, and

			affection expressed

SE practices observation

SE practices	**Areas to observe**
SE contents	- Expressed content vs "Silenced" content - Representation of what it means to be boys and girls in the contents - The messages in the contents in relation to the global and local SE policy
Classroom interaction	- Student-student interaction (peer learning, discussions, friendship, communication) - Student-teacher interaction (teaching methods, encouraging methods, participation, hierarchy) - Students' reaction/ expression to the contents (shyness, interactive, participation level)

Focus group discussion (FGD) guide for Boys and girls

Issues on Gender

1. Which grade are you?
2. Draw anything that comes to your mind when you think of being a girl and boy in your school… (mind mapping)
3. Why are girls not playing on break time (according to the school observation)?
4. Are boys and girls friends? Why don't they play/ eat or study together?
5. Where do you change your clothes for sport class?
6. When you are sick (e.g., menstruation) and ask permission, what do teachers say? Why was your teacher angry (based on the observation)?
7. Who is usually preferred class monitor? Why?
8. Who has good relationship with teachers? Why?
9. Do you feel like boys and girls are equally treated in the school (in the classroom, outside the classroom)? How?
10. Have you ever heard a story of harassment girls or boys experience in the school? If yes, was it reported? By whom did it happen?
11. Do you generally believe that your school is a happy place for girls? Explain How?

Issues on Sexuality education

12. How have you found out about relationships, menstruation, sex and contraception first time ever?
13. What made you interested in this topic in the first place?
14. Have relationships, sex and/or contraception ever been spoken about at school?
15. In which lessons was Sexuality Education taught? Biology, English, civics?
16. Is SE class in your program free elective or compulsory?
17. When was it taught? Was this the right time for you / others?

18. What information has been given out at school? What topics did you learn about?
19. Do you get menstruation care awareness and access to sanitary pad?
20. What areas of Sexual Education do you think are the most important?
21. Were your lessons taught by a teacher or an Outside Agency?
22. If the lessons were taught by a teacher, do you feel that they were comfortable?
23. Did you feel you could ask any question?
24. What kinds of struggles did you encounter when trying to find information on sex and sex education?
25. Was the information appropriate / relevant/ adequate to you? Did you learn anything new?
26. From whom, or where, would you prefer to receive more information on this topic?
27. What topics would you like to know more about in sexuality education? Is your need met? Could it have been better / improved upon? How?
28. When should they be taught? At what age?
29. Do you get SE with boys and girls or single sex group?
30. How does it feel to learn in mixed sex group? What do you prefer??
31. Do girls and boy have to learn the same topic? Or anything gender specific?
32. I observed that girls outnumbered boys in SE class, how is this common? Why is it?
33. How was it taught? What teaching methods were used?
34. As a result of receiving SE from your school, what effect has this had on you?

Teachers interview questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been teaching SE?
3. What comes to your mind when you think of what it means to be a boy and girl in this school? How is it manifested?
4. Are there students who don't fit to the gender expectations?
5. What made you interested to teach SE in the first place?
6. How did you become SE teacher? Selection criteria?
7. What do you teach? Is there any policy on SE? Who made the policies? What curriculum do you teach?
8. Any training you have received in relation to SE?
9. In which lessons was Sexuality Education taught? Biology, English, civics?
10. What is the purpose of teaching SE?
11. What topics do you teach related to SE?
12. What teaching methods are used? small group discussions / videos / drama etc?
13. Do you teach about relationships, sex and/or contraception ever been spoken about at school?
14. How do students get menstruation care awareness and access to sanitary pad?
15. What areas of Sexual Education do you think are the most important for boys and girls? Consent, gender, pregnancy, HIV, STD, contraception?
16. Should students be taught about 'pleasure' in discussions of sexual activity that have traditionally been confined to reproductive matters?
17. Is SE class in your program free elective or compulsory?
18. When was it taught? Was this the convenient time for you / others?

19. Do you think year 12 and 13 students (6th and 7th formers) should continue to receive sexuality education?
20. Do you feel comfortable when teaching about Sexuality? Were there any topics that you skipped?
21. What is the most challenging part of teaching SE?
22. I observed that girls outnumbered boys in SE class, how is this common? Why is it?
23. Do girls and boy have to learn the same topic? Or anything gender specific?
24. What topics would you like to know more about in teaching SE?
25. As a result of teaching SE, what change have you seen in your students?
26. Was the information appropriate / relevant/ adequate to you? Did you learn anything new?
27. Any room for improvement? How?
28. At what age should they be taught?

School management interview questions

1. How long have you been teaching/ director?
2. How do young people learn about sexuality?
3. How long have you been implementing SE in your school?
4. How did you start implementing it?
5. What is the purpose of teaching SE?
6. What policy do you follow? Is there a national policy? Who made the policies?
7. Is SE achievement included in your annual report?
8. Is it a choice or compulsory to implement SE?
9. What contents do you teach? What is silenced?
10. What is the right age to learn SE?
11. What is the use for boys and girls?
12. I observed that girls outnumbered boys in SE class, how is this common? Why is it?
13. What are the challenges in implementing SE?
14. What comes to your mind when you think of boys and girls in your school?
15. Special class is full of girls… why is it?
16. Girls don't play on a break time, why is it?
17. I observed that girls outnumbered boys in SE class, how is this common? Why is it?
18. Where do girls and boys change your clothes for sport class?
19. Girls uniform is long… what do you think is the reason?
20. When girls are sick (menstruation) and ask permission, what do you say?
21. How do they feel when girls only are asked to take vaccination or any meeting (they are called virgins?)? Why didn't they come quickly? What do the boys say?

NGO experts interview questions

1. How long have you been working on SE?
2. How long have your organization working on SE?
3. How did you start implementing it?
4. What is the purpose of your program?
5. What policy do you follow? Is there a national and international policy? Who made the policies?
6. What is the criteria to select SE teachers?
7. What is the criteria to select SE students?
8. How did you adopt it to the local context?
9. Is there any room for the schools to adjust the policy to their context?
10. What contents do you teach? What is silenced?
11. What is the use for boys and girls?
12. What is the right age to learn SE?
13. How do you follow up the outcome of your intervention? Parameter?
14. What are the challenges in implementing SE?
15. What comes to your mind when you think of boys and girls in your program? What is their need?