

**IMPLICATIONS OF GIRL CHILD LABOUR ON PRIMARY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE IN WAGUSU BEACH, NYANGOMA DIVISION,
SIAYA COUNTY KENYA**

BY

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**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
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ABSTRACT

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Reports show that approximately 1.01 million children aged 5-17 years are engaged in child labour, with 90% in the rural areas, working in agriculture, domestic work, informal sector, mining and fisheries. Although existing literature mainly talks of boys engaged in fishing, information concerning girl child involvement in fish processing is scarce. However, primary schools around Wagusu Beach experience high girl child school drop-out as well as irregular attendance and it may be that these girls are engaged in fish processing activities in order to earn wages to support their household economy. Specifically, the study sought to identify forms of fish processing activities that girl are involved in Wagusu Beach, examine how involvement in fish processing activities affect girl child school attendance and lastly, to establish the perception of the Wagusu Beach community about the involvement of the girls in fish processing activities. This study employed Social Exclusion theory espoused by Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman (2007). The study employed descriptive design involving mainly qualitative data collection techniques. The study sample included 22 girls selected from 84 girls aged between 10–15 years who were enrolled in the 2 schools around Wagusu Beach, 2 head teachers, 20 parents, 2 Beach Management Unit (BMU) officials and 1 Area Chief, who were purposively selected to participate in the study. Qualitative data were collected through Focus Group discussions with the girls and key informant interviews with the head teachers, parents, BMU officials and the area Chief. The data collected were analysed thematically. Findings showed that girls were involved in fish processing activities including drying, cleaning, packing, cutting and watching over aired fish to prevent birds from eating them. The findings also showed the working girls missed school for several days especially during peak fish harvesting periods- between November and April. Even though parents were aware that the labour denied the girls access to proper education, they felt compelled to allow them to work to contribute to the household income. Some parents felt working was okay and served the purpose of training the girls into responsible adults. The community leaders were aware about the situation but could not take any action because they felt that the families needed this extra income. Therefore, this study recommends for awareness creation on effect of this labour on education of these girls around Wagusu Beach. There is also a need for the Government to strengthen social protection, especially extending assistance to the needy girls.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Introduction

This section of the study gives details on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, justification of the study, scope of the study, study limitations and the theoretical frame work adopted.

1.1.1 Background to the Study

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Global Estimates Report, 264 million children between 5 – 17 years are involved in child labour, accounting for almost 11% of all the children in this age group (ILO, 2013). According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child a child is a person below the age of 18 years (ILO, 2013). On the other hand, child labour is defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development (ILO, 2014).” That is, it refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work (ILO, 2014).

According to ILO (2013) a majority of child laborers are found in Asia and the Pacific (78 million), while 13 million of them are found in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as over 9 million in the Middle East and North Africa. Worldwide, the majority of child labour takes place in the informal economy (ILO, 2013). While boys constitute 60 per cent of all children in labour, girls are disproportionately involved in less visible and often undercounted forms of child labour, including domestic duties (ILO, 2013). For example, ILO (2013) report shows that girls far outnumber boys in domestic work. That is, 3.8 per cent of all boys (5.6 million boys) aged 5-17 years in economic activities are in domestic work compared to 9.9 per cent (11.5 million) of all 5-17 years old working girls (ILO, 2013). Although ILO (2010) further indicates that boys are more likely to undertake activities in agriculture (62.8% for boys versus 37.2% for girls) and industry (68.5% for boys versus 31.5% for girls), girls outnumber boys in services (47.4% for boys

versus 52.6% for girls). These reports clearly show that girls are indeed involved in child labour except that the areas of engagement may differ in comparison to the boy child. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of child labour with more than one in five children (21%) of the 5 – 17 years age group involved in child labour (ILO, 2012, ILO, 2013). Of these child labourers, 40.6% are girls (ILO, 2013). However, it should be noted that these figures might underestimate girls' involvement in child labour relative to that of boys as they do not reflect involvement in household chores, a dimension of child labour that is not included in the global estimates (ILO, 2013). In East Africa, Walakira (2010) reports that about 3 million children in Uganda are at work, where an estimated 1.5 million children are employed in fish processing and not attending school. These children are involved in scaling fish, cleaning fish, loading and offloading fish, washing nets, fish bisecting, fish smoking, fetching water and casting nets among others (Walakira, 2010). A study conducted by MACRO International on child labour in the fishing industry in Uganda confirms that the use of child labour for fishing is common in the beaches in Lake Victoria region. However due to cultural taboos, fishing with boat is nearly exclusive to the boys, while girls along with younger children who are under 14 years engage more in support activities such as fish cleaning, processing or vending (ICF MACRO, 2011). These findings allude to fish processing activities that the girl could be involved in along the Lake Victoria in Uganda and beyond.

In Kenya, the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS) (2015) reports that an estimated 1.01 million children are in child labour of which 700, 000 of them are engaged in hazardous child labour (National Council for Children's Services, 2015). Approximately, 90% of all children aged 5-17 years who are child labourers are in the rural areas (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ILO, 2008; NCCS, 2015). The sectors that mostly use child labour are agriculture, domestic work, informal sector, mining and fisheries (KNBS & ILO, 2008; NCCS, 2015). While approximately 79.5 percent of all working children are engaged in agriculture, working on tea and sugar plantations, ranches, and in the production of coffee, miraa (a stimulant plant), rice, sisal, and tobacco in the larger Rift Valley, Eastern and Central regions, the remaining 20.5 percent are distributed in domestic work, informal sector and fisheries (KNBS & ILO, 2008; NCCS, 2015). Although KNBS (2009) reports that children engaged in fishing use knives, hooks and dive under water to chase fish into nets, all these may be mainly boys,

which leaves out activities that girls may also be engaged in. Borrowing from Ugandan experience mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, along the fish landing beaches of Lake Victoria, on the Kenyan side, girls may also be involved in fish processing, which in turn may jeopardize their school attendance.

In the former Nyanza Province which borders Lake Victoria, Siaya County leads with about 75 per cent of children aged 5-11 years involved in child labour compared to Homa Bay County (68%), Migori County (63%) and Kisumu County (59%) (KNBS, 2013). In terms of enrolment, Siaya County had 293, 210 in primary schools in the year 2012, 57% of this number represented the boys while 43% represented the girl child (KNBS, 2013). The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of 2011 shows that 80% of the children between 6 to 13 years were attending primary schools in Siaya County while the remaining 20% were out of schools (KNBS, 2013). However, school drop-out rates stood at 8.8% for girls and 7.4 % for boys despite existence of free primary school programme (KNBS, 2013). These children drop out of school possible to engage in income generating activities to support household economy. According to KNBS and ILO (2008) children from poor households as well as orphans have to work in order to supplement household incomes. In Siaya County, there has been a high rate orphan due to effect of high HIV and AIDS and many of the orphans are left under the care of relatives including grandparents whose ability to care for the orphans is minimal (KNBS & ILO, 2008). This resulted to lower mean score of girls as compared to boys and more boys proceeding to join secondary schools than girls in Siaya County (KNBS, 2013).

In Bondo, the reports from the Sub District development office indicates that the 23% of children between 10 – 17 years are actively involved in child labour, however this data was not segregated by gender (Bondo DDO report, 2013). In Nyang'oma Division, cases of girl child labour are reported to the County Education office. In 2013 they had 132 cases of girls reported to be involved in child labour (DEOs incidences report book, 2013). The DEOs report (2013) hints that many of these girls who dropped out of school, were from the beach areas along Nyang'oma Division and in particular, schools around Wagusu Beach. Wagusu Beach is within Nyang'oma Division, Bondo, Sub-County in Siaya County (Bondo DDO, 2013). One third of it is covered by Lake Victoria, the second largest fresh water lake in the world where fishing is actively done. A lot of

fishing activities take place in Wagusu Beach (Nyambedha, 2004; DEAP, 2006). Because of high poverty rate in this area (DEAP, 2006), it is likely that girl child engage in fish processing activities in this Beach and may affect her school attendance since most of the fish processing activities are done during the day when children are supposed to be in school.

In addition, according to Ottolini (2012) 92.2% of parents in Nyanza were comfortable with their children combining school and work (2012). If indeed, girls engage in fish processing activities and in turn kept out of school, it would be important to know the perceptions of the community with regard to girl child labour in Wagusu Beach. It may be that the community expect girls to engage in similar duties as part of her training into adulthood among other reasons without which they would be seen as lazy. However, some of these gender ascribed roles are likely to affect the school time as well as influence their drop out from school.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite free primary education, many girls in Nyang'oma division, especially around Wagusu Beach drop out of school while some of them irregularly attend primary schools. Statistics in Nyangoma division show that girls are more affected by irregular school attendance in comparison to the boys. Although, culturally fishing is a preserve of boys and men, it is possible that girls in Wagusu Beach also engage in fish processing activities such as cleaning, scaling, drying and sorting among others to earn income and contribute to their family economy. Since fish processing activities occur during the day, it is likely to make the girls involved to inconsistently attend school. While in other African settings, girl child labour is regarded as part of gender role training into being a responsible person in future and should be encouraged, it is not known how the community around Wagusu Beach would view girl child participation in fish processing activities.

1.3 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following specific research questions:

1. What forms of child labour is the girl child involved in Wagusu Beach?
2. How does involvement in fish processing activities affect girl child school attendance?

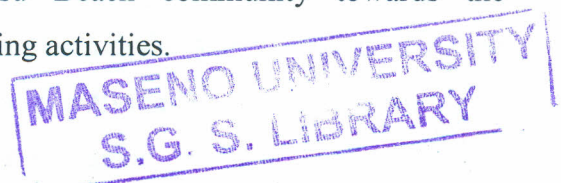
3. What is the perception of the Wagusu Beach community towards the involvement of the girl child in fish processing activities?

1.4 The Study Objectives

To identify forms of girl child labour in fish activities, examine the implications of girl child involvement in fish processing activities on primary school attendance and perception of the community towards the involvement of the girl child in fish processing activities in Wagusu Beach.

The specific objectives for this study were to;

1. Identify the forms of child labour the girl child is involved in, in Wagusu Beach
2. Examine how involvement in fish processing activities affect girl child school attendance.
3. Establish the perception of the Wagusu Beach community towards the involvement of the girl child in fish processing activities.



1.5 Justification of the Study

The future of every nation lies in her children and this can only be realised if girls regularly attend school and perform well comparatively to boy child. When girls are left out the development can never be realised. This study in Wagusu beach highlights the plight of the girls both in school and the community. If these issues are not brought to light now, then our girls along the lake will continue to be left out in our education systems in Kenya. Additionally, the findings from this study will help inform the national and county government especially the Ministry of education and the children's department on major policy reforms that need to include the special needs of the girls in the fishing communities. The findings will also generate discussions within the children's rights organisations leading to advocacy for the rights of the girl child. Besides, the information gathered will add to the existing literature of knowledge regarding girl child labour in Kenya and beyond.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study included girls within primary school going age (10 -15 years). In as much as there may have been other forms of child labour around Wagusu Beach, this study

targeted girls involved in fish processing activities. The primary schools that are within the vicinity of Wagusu Beach are Mbeka and Luore Primary schools.

1.7 Theoretical Framework.

The study adopted Social Exclusion theory as expanded by Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman (2007). Social exclusion theory emerged from France as early as 1965, when a social commentator Jean Klanfer published a book entitled *L'Exclusion sociale: Étude de la marginalité dans les sociétés occidentales* [Social exclusion: The study of marginality in western societies] (Klanfer, 1965, quoted in Beland, 2007; Hill, 1994; Silver, 1994). However, it is attributed to Lenoir (1974) who first defined social exclusion in a broad manner (Lenoir, 1974). Since then social exclusion has been given multiple meaning by different authors from different settings from Europe and other continents. For example, Silver (1994) defines Social exclusion as a rupturing of the social bond, a process of declining participation, access, and solidarity. That is, at the societal level, it reflects inadequate social cohesion or integration, while at the individual level it refers to the incapacity to participate in normatively expected social activities and to build meaningful social relations Silver (1994). Silver adds that social exclusion is also multi-dimensional, combining economic and social deprivation (1994).

Duffy (1995) also sees social exclusion as a broader concept than poverty, encompassing not only low material means but the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life and in some characterisations alienation and distance from mainstream society. Similarly, Sen (2000) argues that the idea of social exclusion needs to be examined in relation to its utility in providing new insights in understanding the nature of poverty, identifying causes of poverty, contribution to thinking on policy and social action in alleviating poverty. Sen (2000) associates idea of social exclusion to capability perspective on poverty (Sen, 2000:4). Sen (2000) argues that social exclusion as an approach to poverty makes it easy enough to establish within the general perspective of poverty as capability failure (Sen, 2000). In analysis of children's deprivations, capability failure points to respect the specific rights of the child to be able to participate equally in, and be recognized as an equal by, the rest of society (Sen, 2000).

This study, however, adopts social exclusion theoretical model espoused by Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman (2007), with three basic assumptions. First, that social exclusion is

a multidimensional phenomenon, which refers to both economic-structural and socio-cultural aspects of life. Theoretically it consists of material deprivation, insufficient access to social rights, deficient social participation and a lack of cultural/normative integration. Secondly, a distinction can be made between traits which describe the actual state of social exclusion (status characteristics) and risk factors that increase the chance of social exclusion (process). Third, the risk factors operate at the micro-level of the individual, at the meso-level of formal and informal organizations and social settings, and at the macro-level of government and society at large. According to Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman (2007), based on the distinction between risk factors and features of social exclusion as a state, the development in the degree of being socially excluded ought to be measured directly, on the basis of 'deficiencies' in the four dimensions identified. For example, the model does not equate being socially excluded with having a low income but with material deprivation, which shows in the inability to meet basic needs, having problematic debts, payment arrears, et cetera. Having a limited income as such, however, is not regarded as an indicator of social exclusion, but as a potential cause of it: a risk factor (Jehoel-Gijsbers & Vrooman, 2007).

In this work, this theory is relevant to explain how poverty pushes many children into labour activities. For example, children from poor families, despite existence of rights to education, they may be forced to participate in income generating activities to support family household economy and to get food since they cannot go to school hungry. More so, many children in this community have been rendered orphans because of HIV and AIDS and live in child-headed households (World Bank, 2008). At the same time, this theory is relevant because it points to the ruptures in the social bonds where every family feeds for itself rather than communal support that used to exist in the past. For example, among the Luo community there used to be a duol system where less fortunate children would be engaged communally through a common eating point (Nyambedha, 2004). In addition, children as their age dictates may not forcefully defy what their elders (parents and guardians) say. They have no voice. Lastly, this theory opens debate on policy debates especially those regarding social protection for children.

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CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a broad analysis of available literature as per the objectives of the study. It is divided into three sections; forms of child labour that the girl child is involved in, the effects of girl child labour on her school attendance and the perception of the community towards girl child labour in fish processing.

2.2 Forms of Girl Child Labour

Children work and they are the lowest paid among labourers. The International Labour office reports that they endure work conditions which include health hazards and potential abuse. Employers capitalize on the docility of the children recognizing that these labourers cannot legally form unions to change their conditions. Such manipulation stifles the development of youths. Their working conditions do not provide the stimulation for proper physical and mental development. Finally, these children are deprived of the simple joys of childhood, relegated instead to a life of drudgery (Bequele & Boyden, 1988)

Globally according to UNICEF statistics, boys and girls are equally likely to be involved in child labour. A few exceptions are the Middle East and North Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, where boys are slightly more likely than girls to be engaged in child labour. Gender disparities are observed, however, in the types of activities carried out, girls are far more likely to be involved in domestic work (UNICEF, 2014) According to the ILO (2013) report, and girls are exploited sexually, used by adults for sex or used in sexual images (pornography) or performances. They may be bought and sold into marriage, prostitution or slavery – in both developing and industrialized countries. Children are also kidnapped and then trafficked across borders and then sold to be prostitutes in foreign countries, in Nigeria boys and girls are reported to be recruited as soldiers (ILO, 2013)

Along the lake, According to ILO report (2010), Children engage in a wide variety of activities, from harvesting and farming of fish in capture fishing and aquaculture, to all associated operations (processing, marketing and other post-harvest activities) and

upstream industries such as net making and boatbuilding. Children also perform household chores in their fishing and fish farming families and communities. In line with common gender division of labour among adults, boys tend to be involved more in fishing and girls in post-harvest activities. Data on girls' involvement is limited and information about the fish processing activities is even scarcer. (ILO, 2010). This study in Wagusu Beach seeks to fill this gap by providing additional information in the involvement of the girl child in fish processing activities.

In the Philippines girls are mostly engaged in cleaning fish and shellfish, selling and smoking fish. Poverty and Social Inequalities are the main causes behind child labour in fisheries and aquaculture, but at the same time child labour perpetuates poverty. Child labour has a negative impact on literacy rates and school attendance and limits children's mental and physical health and development, reinforcing poverty and marginalization. Not only is child labour potentially harmful for the child as an individual, children are paid less, child labour allows fishing to continue in situations where it would otherwise have stopped because of poor profits. As a consequence, overfishing and unsustainable resource utilization persists reinforcing the vicious cycle. (ILO, 2010)

In Ghana, the case studies in two districts at the Volta Lake and two in coastal areas revealed that a large number of children were involved in fishing and that they perform a wide variety of tasks. Whereas fishing is mainly the work of men and boys, it is largely women and girls who process and market the fish. Typical for the work of girls is that they combine fish processing and trade with various household chores (ILO, 2013). In Malawi a paper presented by De Young (2008) show that along the lake shores of Malawi, Malombe, Chilwa and Chiuta, a lot of children aged below 16 years engage in a wide range of activities in capture fisheries, post-harvest and related activities, especially in the informal small and medium scale sectors. However there are gender differences in the nature of work children undertake in fisheries. Girls tend to be more involved in post-harvest activities mainly in processing and marketing of fish while boys undertake most of the work related to capturing fish De Young, (2008). These findings are in line with the findings shared above on girls engagement in fish processing activities, however there is very little information detailing the girl child involvement in fish processing. Their involvement is presented in broader terms as fish processing and marketing activities.

These studies also reveal to us that girls may also combine their activities in fish processing with household chores. The study in Wagusu beach will give further information on the activities the girl child is involved in within Wagusu beach and unpack the fish processing into the different tasks that the girls, engage in.

In addition to this, a study conducted by ICF MACRO to establish causes and consequences of child labour and forced child labour in the fishing industry in Uganda, revealed that children performed tasks similar to adult fishermen along the lake. Their labour is characterized by long hours of work under hazardous conditions, usually with inadequate safety equipment. Moreover, children of all ages can be found working at the landing sites. Most of them are engaged by the men who own the boats and the fish from the lake. Younger children (under 14) typically perform supporting activities. Older children (15–17) are more likely to engage in fishing on the lake. Both boys and girls are found working in the fishing sector. However, due to cultural taboos, fishing with a boat is nearly exclusive to boys. Girls, along with younger children (under 14), tend to engage more in support activities such as fish cleaning, processing, or vending. (MACRO, 2011)

A study conducted by Iversen in 2006 gives a different dimension to this issue by saying that one important technical problem is that ILO's guiding definition of child labour generates a biased picture of children's work in fishing communities. For instance, rather than being directly involved in fisheries-related operations off-shore or even on the beach, young girls may often substitute for their mother's work within households with fisheries dependent livelihoods thereby facilitating maternal participation in fish trading and other activities (Iversen, 2006). This shows that the girls may seem to be engaged in household chores but in the real sense they are supporting their mothers who are fending for them in other fishing activities an assumption that maybe many of the studies reporting household engagement for the girls may have overlooked. It is important to find out if this could be the situation in Wagusu beach.

It is a fact household chores engage the girl more than the boys. This is shown in the statistics from the ILO reports of 2012, 2013. According to Moyi (2011) in his study to explore more on Child labour and school attendance in Kenya, between 56% and 84% of the children involved in the study reported to help with household chores. Girls were most active in the household, about 77% helped in the household compared to 64% of

boys. A similar case to this is highlighted by a study conducted by Tietjen in 2007 of street children done under the auspices of African Network for the Prevention and protection against Child abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) on request by the Attorney General's Chambers which revealed that many children are working in different sectors, predominantly in agriculture and in the domestic sector. The findings showed that these children tend to come from certain communities, namely, Kiambu and Murang'a districts for agriculture. The report goes further to say that many girls from Siaya and South Nyanza were in domestic service (Tietjen, 2007) In this two studies, domestic work is highlighted as part of the work the girl child is involved in however as we have realised above the girl child along the lake may be combining this with fish processing activities or could be engaged in household chores to allow the parent to fend for the family through fishing and fish processing activities. Additionally, as much as Kenya as a country was part of the study conducted by Tietjen, the main focus of the study was on street children and of factors that lead to them going to the streets. The findings may not be a true reflection of Siaya Nyangoma Division, Wagusu beach which is quite different.

According to a report of the World Bank, In the Nyanza province, agriculture, mining and fishing are some of the sectors that many boys and girls drop out of school to join. On the beaches along the Lake Victoria region, many girls have dropped out of schools to engage in fish trading. With the high rate of HIV/AIDS in fishing communities, there are many orphans and families headed by children; the girl child is likely to head a house hold if all the parents are demised compared to a boy child. This forces girls to engage in economic activities at a very young age. Sadly though, in the coastal areas, including around Lake Victoria, many children – especially young girls – are engaged in prostitution (World Bank, 2012). This report highlights other additional forms of labour like child prostitutions that the girl child may be involved in along the lake. It brings to attention the fact that fish processing activities along the lake may not be all that engages the girl child.

In addition to this, Odundo and Owino (2004) in their study in Nyanza Province which revealed that Poverty and orphan hood have reduced the rates of school enrolment and completion. Many children resort to Child Labour to fend for themselves and siblings and in some cases, the elderly grandparents, whom most of them stay with. Orphan hood and poverty according to Odundo and Owino are great determinants to child labour.

Maitra and Ray (2003) in their study to assess the joint participation of children in schooling came to similar conclusion when they reported that girls frequently drop out of school to look after their younger siblings. In Tanzania, some respondents described how changes in household circumstances such as death of a parent and abandonment by a parent had forced them to leave school and earn some sort of a living (Maitra & Ray, 2002) Similarly ILO (2004) report indicates that poverty is a major cause of Child Labour. This report indicated that 37% of children interviewed said that they worked so that they could buy school books and pay for other school activities.

In Homabay County, according to a study conducted by Ololtuaa in 2012 on effects of child labour on access and retention of primary school majority (94%) of the head teachers considered fishing to be the most common Child Labour activity in Mbita district. However, other activities also contributed to Child Labour. These included employment in beaches and other businesses (52%), charcoal burning and selling (38%), housekeeping (32%), looking after domestic animals (28%), sand harvesting (26%) and baby-sitting 18%. (Ololtuaa, 2012).

This study focused on Mbita District because of the fact that it lays along the Lake basin a common factor with this study that was conducted in Wagusu beach. Both studies have also used Descriptive survey methods. The two studies differ though in the uniqueness of the areas of study, as much as Mbita may be having beaches, it cannot be assumed that the circumstances surrounding the girls there are similar to those in Wagusu. Furthermore unlike this study which focused on all the pupils, In Wagusu beach we are going to exclusively look at the girl child and the activities she is engaged in that could be affecting her school attendance.

Wagusu beach in Siaya County has fishing as one of its major economic activity. From the literature reviewed above, the girl child in the fishing community is engaged in fish processing, marketing and fish supporting activities. Additional information about the girls' involvement in the fishing industry apart from this is lacking in literature. One additional factor that comes in is the fact that girls may seem to be involved more in domestic activities yet in actual sense they are relieving their mothers who have to engage in fish processing to fend for their family. This study in Wagusu beach tries to explore the specific types of work that is engaging the girl along the beach. There is a need to clarify

the specific activities that the girl child is engaged in within fish processing and also find out the other additional activities that may be engaging the girl.

2.3 Girl child labour and school attendance

Child labour cannot be approached separately from the issue of schooling. Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (1997) argue that schooling and child labour are not mutually exclusive activities and could even be complementary activities. The assumption that children either work or attend school is no longer valid. There exists a complex relationship between child labour and education. Even when work does not prevent children from attending school, it may reduce study time or tire the children, reducing concentration and learning abilities (Bass, 2004).

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Orazem, & Gunnarsson (2004) in their effort to assess child labour, school attendance, children and Performance and Hassan & Dehnath (2000) in their study in India to assess issues and problems of girl child labour both report that socially, children who engage in various tasks for economic gain at the expense of their education were found to experience negative consequences in their educational development and performance. Bass (2004) in his study in Sub Saharan Africa concluded that the prevalence of illiteracy, low school attendance and low enrolment is attributed to children's economic participation. According to Orazem, & Gunnarsson (2004), Bass (2004), the global phenomenon of child labour can be attributed to several factors. The rapid population growth of many less developed countries, high rates of unemployment, inflation and low wages have contributed to occurrence and necessity for children to engage in economic activity.

In the lake region, migration is a common livelihood strategy in many fishing communities and child labour "hotspots" are often linked to situations with high levels of migration. Boys and girls of all ages participate in migration, often already working or training to become fishers or fish workers. Transferring from one place to another tends to negatively impact education, also because receiving areas may have insufficient schools. Moreover, as well as frequent travelling, implicit or explicit demands to help in work may also contribute to children leaving school prematurely (Njock & Westlund, 2010)

This report further indicates that in poorer fishing communities, deprived of education and alternative employment opportunities, sons following their fathers into fishing – and girls their mothers into fish processing and marketing – may be perceived as the only viable options for professional training. If childcare, schools and educational opportunities are inexistent or of low quality, parents may see working and learning a trade as the sole path for their children. In other cases, children may have to work to help their families who cannot afford to send them to school even when education exists and is free of charge, as there are indirect costs and lost opportunities (Njock & Westlund, 2010) This report highlights the effects of the migratory lives of the fishing communities and how this can negatively impact on the children's education. Lack of schools also as presented may be a contributing factor to girl child labour. In Wagusu beach the fisher folk migration may be a reality but the migration of parents along with children is not recorded in any literature. The effects above therefore may not entirely be reflective of the situation in Wagusu beach.

Akabayashi & Psacharopoulos (1999) in their journal on a case study in Tanzania indicate that young girls in Primary Schools sort sardines along the shores of Lake Victoria instead of attending classes. Child labour is blamed for school dropouts and chronic absenteeism and such girls represent a significant percentage of victims of child exploitation which is reported at alarming trends in natural resources rich areas in Geita Region. Instead of attending class, the young girls are attracted to petty businesses like selling foodstuffs and some are being employed as fish hawkers along the Lake Victoria (Akabayashi & Psacharopoulos, 1999). A similar case is also reflected in Ghana where 75% of children along the lake combine school with work. Girls are more affected since the fish processing activities they participate in are conducted throughout the day when they are supposed to be in school (ILO, 2013). Dachi and Garrett (2002) in their study carried out in Tanzania on child labour and its impact on children's access to and participation in primary education indicate that absenteeism in school affects the students' performance. The study concluded that labour and school attendance was a pervasive problem throughout the world. This report draws attention to the girl child who because of the kind of activities she is engaged in along the lake, is likely to have more challenges

than the boy child in attending school. The studies however were conducted in the Lake Victoria Shores of Tanzania where the cultural beliefs and other practises may differ from the situation in Wagusu beach.

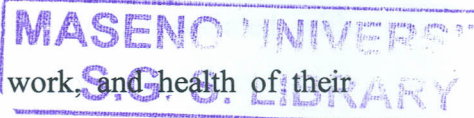
In Kenya along the lake region a study conducted by Auma (2013) along the lake shores of Sori indicate a negative relationship between school attendance and child labour where 45.7% of her respondents confirmed that participating in child labour never allowed them time to attend schools and do their assignments, Auma (2013). This is confirmed by a report by the ILO (1999) which indicates that, In the Nyanza province, agriculture, mining and fishing are some of the sectors that many boys and girls drop out of school to join. On the beaches along the Lake Victoria region, many children have dropped out of schools to engage in fish trading. With the high rate of HIV/AIDS in fishing communities, there are many orphans and families headed by children, forcing children to engage in economic activities at a young age (ILO, 1999) This findings concur with the findings shared by World bank (2012) report which indicated that On the beaches along the Lake Victoria region, many girls have dropped out of schools to engage in fish trading (World Bank, 2012)

The literature discussed above highlights the different factors that can affect the consistent attendance of school by girls. The supporting activities that the girl child engages in which are conducted during the day when she is supposed to be in school even pose a greater challenge to the girl. Additional statistics show that girls drop out of schools or attend school inconsistently along the beaches. This study in Wagusu beach tries to find out if this could also be affecting the girl child along the beach and explore the question on school attendance of the working girl further.

2.4 Community Perception on Girl child Labour

The problem of child labour has lingered on in many countries because of the complex combination of social, cultural and economic factors involved (Heady 2003). Parents and the community play a critical role in child labour as it provides much needed extra income for the family. This means that the community might have different perceptions towards child labour. In different countries child labour is taken as a normal practice in which children contribute to income earned in the home. In some communities it is taken as part and parcel of child development process (Dachi & Garret, 2004).

Child labour seems to be justified by people who practice it. For example Nyaoga (1984) in his study found that employers prefer child workers because of their efficiency, fastness on the job and obedience unlike adults who can be rude and slow. At the same time the problem of child labour is a controversial issue among many nations and especially those in Africa, Kenya included (Kagunye, 1999). This is because child labour as a social phenomenon hinges between two crucial perspectives. At one end, child labour is beneficial as it serves a socialization function. For example, (Nyaoga, 1984) in his study on children at work in Kenya found out that those children who worked in their childhood became responsible citizens in their adult life. On the other hand, Child labour is destructive and exploitative as it directly interferes with the development of the child (Globalmarch, 1998 and ILO, 1996). The perception of the community therefore may vary depending on the stake they hold in the labour industry.



Parents normally have variable attitudes towards education, work, and health of their children. Among the poor, some parents may condone child labour, others may not. Educated or families from a middle or higher income are less likely to send children to work. In a rural economy and deprived urban areas, it may be seen as a luxury not to have children not help their families. The extent to which parents allow their children to engage on long, exploitative paid jobs is also dependent among other things on the degree of parental authority, and need for supplementary income (Boozer & Suri, 2001; Sackey, 2007). Whether children's support is through indirect employment, as in forgoing education and leisure in order to let their parents work, or directly earn a living, are somehow under the control of parents, their values, standards, and attitudes.

Boyden & Bequele (1988) pointed out that one of the most serious problems in many countries is the high dropout rate and the poor quality of education. Child labour is rampant in developing countries and this can be attributed to the fact that most of these families are poor. Poverty forces parents to allow their children to go work in order to supplement the little if any income for their families (Boyden & Bequele, 1988). Children workers are not free; their recruitment is more responsive to social obligation than to market forces. Parents depend on these earnings. They send their children to work despite knowing the disadvantages to their physical and educational wellbeing

In evaluating the perception of parents towards child labour in Nigeria Omokhodion and Uchendu (2010) realized that most parents indicated that they want their children to work to supplement family income, to gain experience and to help in family business. However according to Uchendu, some parents with working children were not satisfied with their children's work conditions and complained of low earnings, long working hours, and work on school days and unsafe work environment. (Omokhodion & Uchendu, 2010).

Studies on child labour in fisheries in the Volta Region of Ghana by Afenyadu (2008) reveal that the Tongus who mostly fish along the Volta Lake for example regard fishing as an integral aspect of their cultural identity and therefore insist that their children assimilate the fishing-fish processing occupation, no matter the circumstances. Consistent with this orientation, Tongu households no matter their social class would ensure that their citizens assimilate the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values associated with fishing and fish processing in their childhood. Therefore, children are trained from a very tender age, to acquire skills in swimming, handling the fishing net, and diving, through apprenticeship (Afenyadu, 2008).

Kufogbe, Awadey & Appenteng (2003) also report that fisher entrepreneurs in the marine sector would insist that at least one or more of their children familiarize enough with the practice and management of fishing and related activities to be able to inherit their parents assets, and thereby take over and sustain the family business in future, hence their insistence on engaging their children in the industry. Child labour in fishing and fish processing therefore becomes the socio-cultural mechanism by which the fisher culture is transferred from one generation to the next. Clearly besides economic challenges here we are seeing culture as a major motivator to child labour across the board for girls and boys. In addition to this training and equipping children to take over family assets also is seen as a reason behind parents allowing their children to work, though the contexts In Nigeria and the Volta region are quite different from Kenya and Wagusu beach in specific.

Several factors appear to be influencing the attitudes and perception of communities towards child labour. In Kenya, Evidence from different literature suggests that socio-cultural factors such as being in a polygamous family may lead to child labour unlike being in monogamous relationships; parents with high level of education and living in urban areas with access to adequate social support develop negative attitudes towards

child labour. Thus factors such as level of social support, coping mechanisms, level of education, health status, level of income, and stressful life events, all has an impact on parent's attitude towards child labour (Adejuwon, 2008). These findings are generalised to Kenya as a whole with different tribes and therefore different cultural contexts. The scenario may not be reflective of the case in Wagusu beach which this study endeavours to find.

A study conducted by Auma (2013) on the dynamics of child labour along fishing beaches of Lake Victoria revealed that along the lake region, About 66.8% of parents/guardians indicated that child labour improves families' livelihoods by supplementing income. According to the findings, a number of parents encouraged their children to participate in child labour as a source of extra family income. A further 40.9% believed child labour instilled a sense of responsibility in children making them responsible adults. This was confirmed by 8% of the respondents' children who indicated that their parents prompted them to go and look for some form of employment. High level of poverty within the community forced parents into accepting child labour as alternative source of livelihood (Auma, 2013)

A report by ILO (2002) however indicates that parents despite the fact that they need the additional income, they worry a lot about the dangers their girls are exposed to along the beaches, The support activities that girls perform usually expose them to cuts and bruises, long durations of time exposed to the sun and the possibility of them getting involved with the fishermen sexually (ILO, 2002)

The perceptions of the community on child labour vary as highlighted above depending on different surrounding factors. This study in Wagusu delves further into the perceptions of the Wagusu beach community on girl child labour. The fact that it is along the lake and fishing is a major economic activity may bring out other experiences. It is important to find out the perceptions of this particular community towards girl child labour.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research site, population composition and study design. It also describes the sampling strategy and sample size, as well as methods and instruments of data collection and how the data was processed and finally analysed. It also reflects on the problems encountered.

3.2 Research Design

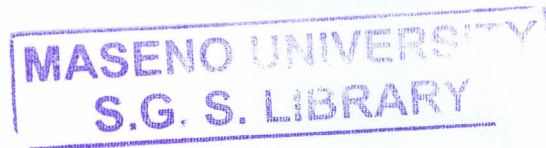
Orodho (2009) defines research design as a programme to guide the researcher in collecting; analysing and interpreting observed facts. This study used descriptive design and employed qualitative research methods. Qualitative methods were used to deeply examine the pre-existing community perceptions and experiences of child labour, to identify the different forms child labour and to describe the school attendance patterns of girls involved in child labour. Given that the study was concerned with educational process of child labourers, qualitative methods were more suitable.

Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with an outcome or product(s) (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The descriptive design therefore, was meant to help present the qualitative information about the different types of child labour present along the Lake region of Nyangoma Division of Siaya County, how this affects their school attendance and the perceptions of the community towards girl child labour.

Descriptive study design helps the researcher to collect data at one point in time to describe the current state of affairs and results can be used to predict what may happen in future or plan for other detailed studies (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This design was therefore suitable in examining the problem of child labour and its implication on school attendance of the girl child in Wagusu Beach in Nyangoma Division.

3.3 Study area

The study was conducted in Wagusu Beach of Nyangoma Division, Bondo sub district, Siaya County. The district was carved out of the original Siaya District in May 1998. The total area of Bondo sub District is 1, 972 km² of which 972 km² is land surface, while



1000km² is covered with the waters of Lake Victoria, the second largest fresh water lake in the world. The Sub district lies between latitude 0⁰ and 30⁰ South of equator and longitude 30⁰ and 34⁰ east. It borders Siaya and Busia sub Districts to the northwest, Kisumu County to the east and Homabay County across the lake on the southeast and south respectively. To the west lies the republic of Uganda (GOK, 2008). Wagusu beach lies on the Western part of Bondo Town, the nearest town to the beach. Currently it has a population of 10,876 of which 4,850 are male and 6,026 are female (Bondo DDO's statistics report, 2013).

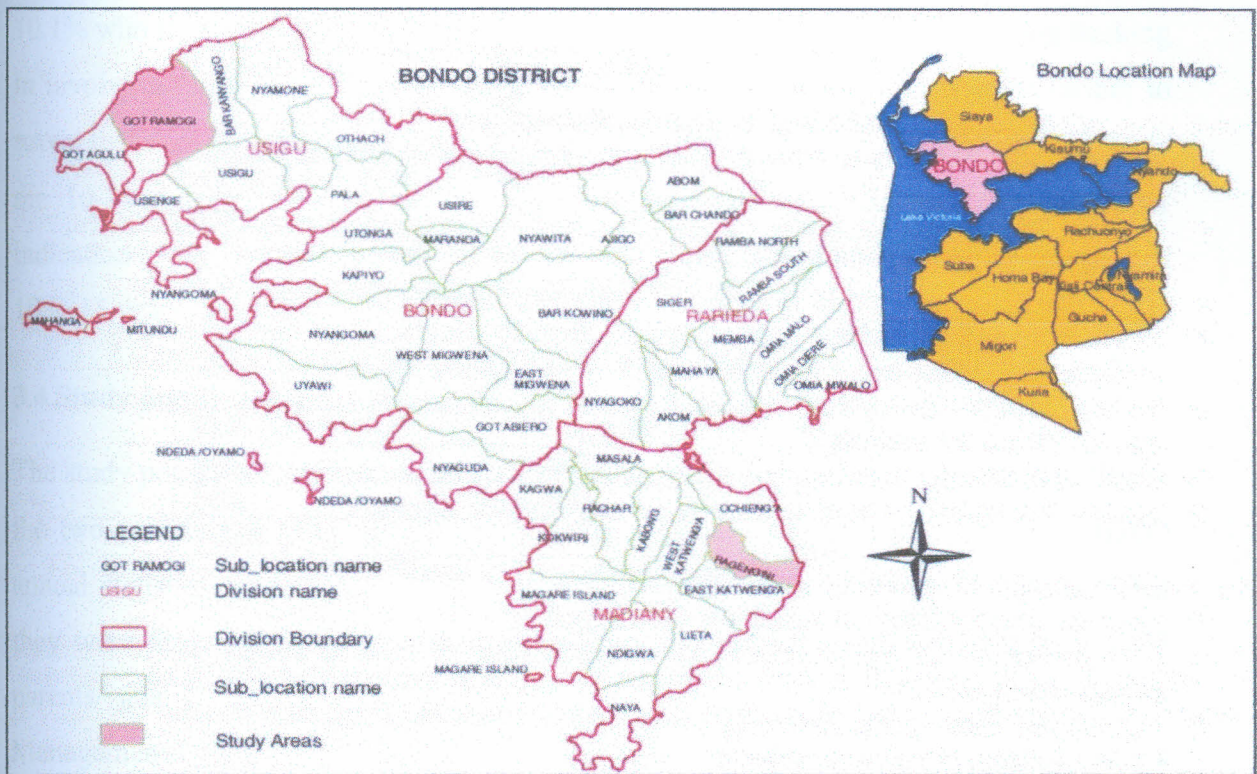


Fig 1: Map of Bondo, Nyangoma Division (DEO, 2007)

The study area is populated by the Luo speaking community whose main economic activity is fishing, alluvial gold mining and farming. The economic activities have attracted migrants from different parts of western Kenya and some from Uganda and Tanzania who settled here temporarily to engage in the economic activities. The study area was purposively selected because it has a cosmopolitan population and has a large number of children subjected to child labour in Bondo district currently estimated at 23% by the DDO's office Bondo Sub – District.

Wagusu beach was identified because unlike the other beaches which have fishing and farming as their main activities it has alluvial Gold Mining as an additional economic activity. This has attracted migrants who have settled either permanently or temporarily engaging in one activity or the other. Besides it is also the largest beach within Nyangoma Division. Children in school going ages are not spared in the, gold mining and fishing industry.

According to a study conducted by Ottolini (2012), of the children who were involved in child labour, 28.7% lived with their mothers or had only their mother alive compared to 10.1% who lived or had the father as the sole surviving parent. This gave a strong backing in involving more mothers compared to fathers in the study. The study went further to reveal that on the preferred starting age for work, 40% of the children in this area indicate the 10-14 age bracket, while 56.1 per cent of community leaders gave a broader indication (5-15 years). This was a major consideration on deciding to involve the girls of 10 to 15 years old.

3.4 Study population

The study population comprised all female pupils of 10 to 15 years who were enrolled in the two primary schools around Wagusu Beach. They were a total of 84 girls (DEO annual statistics report, 2013). These respondents were chosen because of the fact that they were the girls in the two primary schools along Wagusu beach. In addition, 72 parents/ guardians of the girls aged between 10 – 15 years, the area Chief, 5 Beach Management Unit (BMU) officials and 2 head teachers of the two primary schools were a part of the study population. Teachers were involved because they could provide relevant information on truancy and discipline issues within their student's fraternity. The parents were important because of the direct contact with the girls and their input contributed majorly to the perceptions of the community to child labour. The BMU leaders were relevant to the study because they directly manage the beaches where some of the girls could have been engaged in. One area chief was also engaged in the informant interview since he is an opinion leader at the most local level in the area.

3.5 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

A sample is a sub-set of population or items used make conclusions about the whole population. Therefore, sampling is necessary because a survey of the entire population is not practicable and besides, budget and time constraints may restrict data collection.

The ideal sample size should adequately represent a population about which the researcher wishes to generalize and small enough to be selected economically in terms of subject availability, expenses in both time and money (Amin, 2005).

The population distribution of children in the two schools was as indicated below;

Table 1: Source; Bondo DEO statistics report, 2013

Name of School	Male students	Female students	Female students (10 – 15 years)
Luore Primary	114	76	36
Mbeka Primary	367	120	48
Total	481	196	84

Table 2: Source; Bondo DEO statistics report, 2013

Name of school	Female students age (10-15) Enrolment as at January 2013	No. as at May 2013	No. missing school once in a week for other reasons	No. missing school more than once a week for other reasons
Luore Primary	36	30	10	3
Mbeka Primary	48	42	12	4
Total	84	72	22	7

*Other reason here means reasons that are away from being sick, hospitalised, school levies or indiscipline.

The study employed purposive sampling technique to sample the teachers and area leaders. Sampling is a process used by researcher to identify people, places or things to study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that allows the researcher to use his/her knowledge of the population to not only choose but include in the sample particular respondents whom he/she feels have required characteristics and relevant information for the study as justified by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

Two schools were purposively selected, namely Luore and Mbeka Primary since they were closest to the beach and were also more affected by school drop outs and irregular attendance (DEO, 2013). Consultations with the school head teachers together with the class registers gave an insight into the girls who were missing school often for one reason or the other. Out of 84, 22 girls who missed school because of other engagements at home were selected to participate in the study. Head teachers from the 2 schools within the beach, were purposively identified, the 2 head teachers from Mbeka and Luore primary were selected because as mentioned above they had their schools closest to the lake and their students had been identified to participate in the study. Out of the 5 officials, 2 BMU officials were purposively selected, the two were the organising secretary and the treasurer who were available and had been residents in the area for a longer time. Further, one parent or guardian of the 22 girls were selected. 2 girls were coming from child headed households and because of this I worked with the 20 available guardians and parents.

The head teachers of 2 schools Luore and Mbeka were purposively selected to participate in the in depth interviews. The 2 BMU officials were also purposively selected to participate in the in-depth interviews due to their availability and the duration of time they had stayed in that community. Additionally the area chief was also purposively sampled given his direct contact with the community and the authority he may have within the community. He was involved in an in depth interview. A total of 20 parents were also purposively selected and involved in depth interviews. Eight were male parents while 12 were female parents. The 22 girls were purposively selected to participate in FGD discussions.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

To collect qualitative data the study used focused group discussions with the female pupils, interview schedules with the parents, teachers, the area chief and beach management unit leaders.

3.6.1: Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion is a small-group discussion of 6 to 12 people guided by a trained leader. It is used to learn more about opinions on a designated topic, and then to guide future action (Nachmias, 1996). Two focus group discussions were held one in Mbeka with 12 girls and another in Luore primary with 10 girls.

Earlier arrangement was made with the teachers on the time when the researcher could go to have a discussion with the girls. Based on these times agreed upon, the guardians and parents of the girls were approached in advance to get their parental consent with the parental consent form attached. On the specific days and time agreed, the data collector went into each school and had a focus group discussion with the girls guided by the FGD guide attached. Before starting the discussion, the consent of the children were sought to allow the discussions go on along with recording of the respondents voices. Clarifications were made to the respondents to be as open as possible since what was going to be discussed was confidential. During the focus group discussions emphasis was made to establish the impact that child labour had on school attendance of children in Wagusu beach.

3.6.2 Key informant interviews

Key Informant Interviews are either oral or written questions conducted on a face-to-face encounter with key individuals within the community with an aim of providing detailed information or impression or experiences about a research question (Kombo and Tromp, 2008). The study conducted key informant interviews with 2 head teachers, 20 parents, 2 beach management unit officers and one area chief. Prior appointments were sought with each of the participants before they were interviewed. The head teachers, the area chief and BMU officials were interviewed in their respective offices while the parents were found at home. Informed consent of each person was sought at the beginning of the



session then the interview guides attached were used to guide the interviews and an audio recorder was used to record the discussions as they were going on.

3.7 Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the respondents were from study's non-metric, open-ended responses and were analysed using thematic analysis procedure. This is a form of analysis which majorly emphasizes pinpoints, examines, and records patterns (or "themes") within data. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated to a specific research question (Brown, 2001). Codes were generated from the responses and grouped into themes. The researcher then reviewed the emerging themes in line with the set objectives. Further to this, each theme was reviewed with a background insight from the social exclusion theory adopted in the study. Following the major tenet of the theory poverty was looked at beyond the material deprivations of life but also to include insufficient access to social rights and a lack of cultural integration. Additional risks factors that may have led to current state were also put into context. The themes were then named and this was used to generate the final report.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations were to safeguard the research as a scientific process and also the research subjects. For the research process, all efforts were made to safeguard it from plagiarism and fraud as well as misuse of the privileges bestowed upon the researcher. After having been cleared by the department of Sociology and Anthropology to collect data permission was sought from community leadership. To safeguard the participants, participation in the research process was voluntary and informed consent was obtained from the guardians of the children and the researchers maintained respect confidentiality, dignity in dealing with the respondents. The study also obtained written permission to engage the schools from the County Education office. Physical and emotional protection of the participants was provided through debriefing sessions after the interviews as the process was draining for some participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to present, discuss and argue the findings of the study. The findings were entirely the views of the children, parents and community leaders derived from interviews conducted as well as Focus Group Discussions. The main findings of the research included children's views on girl child labour forms of child labour, the push and pull factors behind the phenomenon in the study area and the relationship between girl child labour and academic performance. The parents, teachers and community leaders also contributed on aspect of the perception of the community towards girl child labour. .

4.2 Types of Labour That Girls Are Engaged in Wagusu Beach Nyangoma Division

The respondents had varied views in regard to the types of labour that most of the girls of school going age were engaged in. Finding this information was imperative in order to find out the dominating chores and labour that majority of girl child engaged in and how these engagements influenced their school attendance. Responses were obtained from FGDs with the female pupils and interview session with the teachers. When probed on which activities they were mostly engaged in, two of them said:

“We are mostly engaged in house work such as collecting firewood, taking care of our younger brothers, fetching water and helping with cooking. Sometimes, we help our parents in carrying items like wash basins, soap and other materials when coming from the lake. Most of the times the boys just play football or rest” [Focus Group Discussion].

“I help my mum with washing clothes, we are many in our family and when the dirty clothes have piled I go with her to the lake and help with washing clothes and the utensils that were dirty for that day” [Focus Group discussion]

“I have to clean our house, the chicken house and the whole compound before I go to school. Sometimes I am late for school because of this” [Focus Group Discussion]

These responses imply that some of the girls in Wagusu beach are engaged in household tasks. This findings are in line with the ILO (2013) report which clearly states that household chores engage more girls than boys, In the rural areas girls are mainly involved in performing household tasks such as cleaning, collecting firewood and taking care of the younger siblings. The case in Wagusu beach may differ in that the household chores are not restricted to the home set up but they are done even at the beach. A discussant in the FGD clearly pointed this out when she said

“ My mother spends most of her time in the lake buying fish from the fishermen, cleaning and selling, I usually accompany her to help with washing clothes and utensils while she is busy negotiating for fish, this I do sometimes during school hours” [Focus Group discussion]

In a similar vein, one of the head teachers when probed on the types of labour that girls were engaged in shared that;

“Our society is made in a way that there are specific chores that the girl child should perform while at home, and these duties are comparatively more than those of their male siblings. For instance, girls are expected to clean the homes, help with cooking, fetching water and firewood. I have also found some girls in different homes selling grocery which their parents stock at home during school hours, of course when they see me the shy off, I have also seen girls cleaning fish, cleaning wash basins and utensils at the lake during school hours” [Key Informant]

Evidently, school going age female children are involved in many activities of both economic and none economic value, to an extent that it may affect their school attendance. Girls are more affected in this, it is widely believed that in any child's education, absenteeism highly affect the end product. These findings supports the findings of Dachi & Garrett (2002) in their study carried out in Tanzania on child labour and its impact on children's access to and participation in primary education, where they also found that labour and low school attendance is a pervasive problem throughout the world, especially in developing countries. They also found that children involved themselves in various tasks such as being house helps, who practically do all the work in

the house like cooking, fetching firewood, cleaning, taking care of young children, running errands, and a lot more. They further maintained that this was not a good way of preparing a child for future employment. However among the forms of child labour identified along the beach, girls working as house helps was never mentioned.

Moreover, Orazem, & Gunnarsson (2004) and Hassan & Dehnath (2000) in their study report that socially, children who engage in various tasks for economic gain at the expense of their education were found to experience negative consequences in their educational development and performance. They further found that the prevalence of illiteracy, low school attendance and low enrolment is attributed to children's economic participation. According to Orazem, & Gunnarsson (2004), Bass (2004), girls bear much of the burden of household tasks at home as compared to their male counterparts. In conclusion, global phenomenon of child labour can be attributed to several factors. The rapid population growth of many less developed countries, high rates of unemployment, inflation and low wages are some of the factors contributing to the occurrence and necessity for children to engage in economic activity.

The girls therefore bearing more of the household tasks at home as compared to the boy child is secluded and misses out on social interactions, networking and opportunities that can improve their lives. Social Exclusion theorists explain that beyond poverty, the inability to access social, political and economic opportunities is a manifestation of seclusion in the society.

The other form of labour that emerged was support with fish processing activities. This came out clearly during the FGD discussion with the girls when they said the following;

“When I need some money and it is the omena (sardines) season, I approach any of those women at the beach who buy large quantities of fish and need help with airing them on the nets. This happens mostly in the morning hours, when I do this they give me 50 shillings that I can use to buy a pen and a book” [Focus Group discussion]

“Sometimes those omena (women who trade in sardines) women come with so many basins that they use for selling and weighing, if I get a chance and wash 5 basins they can give me something small [Focus Group Discussion]

“I know how to wash fish including the gills and cut them into pieces, during the time when we have a lot of fish in the lake I always go and help those women and in return they give me fish that I take home. This happens in the morning up to around midday [Focus Group Discussion]

These findings clearly show that the girls also participate in the fish processing activities for economic gain or to get food to take home. The work is more attractive and more engaging during the season when Sardine fish is in plenty. Poverty as indicated in the ILO (2012) report is a major driver here to the child labour. It is evident that even the women who trade in sardines do not mind employing such children irrespective of the fact that it is school time. It points to the ruptures of the social norms, which Silver (1994) in his theory social exclusion talks about. In the past, among the Luo and Akamba of Kenya, children were regarded as belonging to the community and would be provided for irrespective of the backgrounds (Kayongo-Male & Onyango, 1984).

In trying to explore further on the types of activities the girls are engaged in along the beaches some the girls shared the following;

“I help pack omena that is going to Nairobi in sacks, there are Lorries that come to pick the omena in bulk every week, sometimes I do this and I am given 20 shillings [Focus Group Discussion]

“When the women in the beach are cleaning fish I always stay around to help with fetching water and disposing the wastes. Sometimes they allow me to wash omena” [Focus Group Discussion]

The kind of work they are engaged in is based at the lake and there was no indication at all of the children migrating with the parents as was indicated by Njock & Westlund (2010) from their study findings in East and Central Africa. However Poverty is coming up as a major driver of girl child labour where girls have to work to get some money to support at home. According to ILO (2010) Poverty and Social Inequalities are the main causes behind child labour in fisheries and aquaculture, but at the same time child labour perpetuates poverty. These sentiments are confirmed in Wagusu beach. The social exclusion theory adopted in this study helps us understand how due to poverty the girl has to work to supplement the meagre income that the parent is getting or to meet her

personal needs. Children have a right to education and need to work for money but because the poor are excluded in terms of lack of access to economic, social and political opportunities they have to work,

In addition to his, the sentiments of the girls in regard to their work along the beach generally showed that most of their employers were women. This is a reverse of the situation as reported by MACRO (2011) where men who are the boat owners are the main employers of child labourers.

On the same question, two parents shared the following;

“Our children are very fast with their hands, I think they have learnt from us. They can do everything we do at the beach including cleaning fish, cleaning nets, airing fish and help with packing as they are weighed”[Key Informant]

“When the harvest is plenty, the girls usually go to the lake to work and get some money for their basic needs. They can wash fish, help in airing omena or clean the dishes in the hotels by the beach. You know as a parent you can never meet all the needs of your children, they are helping the parents by doing that” [Key informant]

These findings are reflective of the findings shared by Ololtuaa (2012) in his study in Suba where he highlights that 94% of the head teachers considered fishing to be the most common Child labour Activity in Mbita district. Additional information on this matter was shared by a girl in the Focus Group discussion when she said;

“When I and my girlfriends go to the beach during break time, it is very difficult for us to go back to school because when we get work like watching over Omena to prevent birds from eating them, we will be required to sit there until the omena is collected for storage or bought by other buyers which usually happens in the evening, the boys come later in the evening when the fisher men are preparing to go to the lake” [Focus Group Discussion]

From these sentiment it is clear that girls spend most of their time during the day in fish processing activities unlike boys who engaged in fishing later in the evening or very early in the morning which were away from the school hours. As indicated in the ILO (2013)

report, girls are more affected since the activities they involve themselves in are conducted throughout the day when they are supposed to be in school. It is evident that the girls who were involved in the fish processing activities, had to miss school because of this engagement.



4.2.1 Reasons for Girls Engaging In Child Labour

Besides the different forms of girl child labour the study also captured some information on reasons for engaging in these various types of labour. Firstly, poverty emerged as a major push factor behind girl child involvement in various forms of labour. This came out clearly during the discussion held with the girls and some of the community leaders. Two discussants in the Focus Group discussion shared the following;

“Sometimes I help my parents with selling the fish at the beach or help in various errands in the neighbourhood to get some money to buy food or something that I need in school. What my parents get when combined cannot sustain and provide for us some of the school requirements such as text books, sets, pens, leave alone the provision of sanitary pads” [Focus Group discussion]

“I have to support my mother, my father died a long time ago. If I don’t work to help my mother in getting some money, my younger brothers will go hungry” [Focus Group Discussion]

The chief also responded to this question by saying;

“What I know and is a fact is that they do it because they don’t have any choice. If you look around you will mostly see grass thatched houses, most of the people here are poor, and they cannot afford basic necessities. This children have to work to make some money even to buy a doughnut or chips you see along the road here, because they go hungry at home sometimes [Key Informant)

These sentiments were also supported by one of the teachers during the interview, when asked to comment on the major factors contributing to girl child involvement in child labour.

The teachers had this to say;

“Many of our pupils comes from humble family background, where even affording a simple meal is a problem, this do compel the pupils to engage in various activities especially at the beach, to supplement the family income, worse still is if the child is an orphan, she has to take care of her younger siblings including fending for them” [Key Informant].

These findings illustrate that poverty is one of the major contributing factors to girl child involvement in various kinds of labour for economic gain. Wagusu beach being one of the centres for fish trading, many girls engage in activities at the beach to supplement their families' income. These findings concur with the observation made by Odundo & Owino (2004) in their study in Nyanza Province which revealed that Poverty and orphan hood have reduced the rates of school enrolment and completion. Many children resort to Child Labour to fend for themselves and siblings and in some cases, the elderly grandparents, whom most of them stay with.

Similarly, ILO (2004) indicated that poverty was a major cause of Child Labour. Child labour has a negative impact on literacy rates and school attendance and limits children's mental and physical health and development, reinforcing poverty and marginalization. Not only is child labour potentially harmful for the child as an individual, children are paid less, child labour allows fishing to continue in situations where it would otherwise have stopped because of poor profits. As a consequence, overfishing and unsustainable resource utilization persists reinforcing the vicious cycle (ILO, 2004). This clearly relates fishing and fish processing activities to promotion of the vicious cycle of poverty. Social exclusion theory adopted in this study depicts a situation where the socially secluded continue to remain in that cycle since they don't have access to resources that can help them break the cycle.

Secondly, gender role also emerged as a factor leading to girl child labour in Wagusu beach. See the following excerpt from an FGD and key informant interviews with teachers.

“When my mother leaves for work, she leaves us duties to accomplish. I do most of the work in the house; my brother only takes care of our cattle” [Focus Group discussion].

“Majority of the absentees and truants are female children, and this can be attributed to the airing and packing of fish which comes with some pay at the beach, sometimes they also go home to take care of their younger siblings, cook food and fetch water for her family’ [Key Informant].

This implies that gender roles in the society were some of the reasons explaining why the girl child worked while at home. According to Moyi (2011) in his study to explore more on Child labour and school attendance in Kenya, between 56% and 84% of the children involved in the study reported to help with household chores. Girls were most active in

the household, about 77% helped in the household compared to 64% of boys. The findings on Wagusu present a similar situation where girls because of their gender expectations are engaged more in household chores as compared to boys.

Maitra and Ray (2002) also concurred with these statements when they report that girls frequently drop out of school to look after their younger siblings. Maitra and Ray made several references to interviews with street children in Tanzania where some respondents described how changes in household circumstances such as death of a parent and abandonment by a parent had forced children to leave school and earn some sort of a living. Similarly ILO (2004) report indicated that poverty was a major cause of Child Labour. Child labour has a negative impact on literacy rates and school attendance and limits children's mental and physical health and development, reinforcing poverty and marginalization. Not only is child labour potentially harmful for the child as an individual, children are paid less, child labour allows fishing to continue in situations where it would otherwise have stopped because of poor profits. As a consequence, overfishing and unsustainable resource utilization persists reinforcing the vicious cycle (ILO, 2004). This clearly relates fishing and fish processing activities to promotion of the vicious cycle of poverty. Social exclusion theory adopted in this study depicts a situation where the socially secluded continue to remain in that cycle since they don't have access to resources that can help them break the cycle.

However, in the study area, there were not sentiments in that highlighted cultural identity as reported by Afenyadu (2008) In Ghana and involvement of child labour to prepare the child to inherit parental assets as reported by Kufogbe, Awadey & Appeteng (2003), as reasons behind girl child labour. Lack of schools and therefore seeing fishing as the only viable option for professional training as indicated by Njock & Westlund (2010) in their report is also not contributing factor to girl child labour in Wagusu Beach. Here the two major factors identified as push factors to the girl were poverty and gender roles expectations. Gender roles expectations was a stronger reason in the household chores while poverty was a major push factor to the girl working at the beach.

4.3 Effects of Child Labour on the School Attendance of Girls

To assess effects of child labour on girl child school performance, respondents (parents and girls) were asked to comment on the girl child academic performance, school attendance and other indicators of education achievement.

4.3.1 Girl Child Labour and Academic Performance

Academic performance meant how pupils or students deal with their studies and how regular they attended school and any other tasks assigned by the teachers. In Wagusu Beach most primary school female children recorded low grades in their academic performance scores, from the record of Siaya County Education office.

One of the parents offered to say this during the interview:

“Our daughters perform low in school because most of their time they are out of school involved in different activities such as domestic activities, in fishing activities such as cleaning fish, hawking fish, drying and storing fish at the expense of their study. In fact, some of them would consider dropping out of school to embark fully on performing different tasks since the social pressure such as poverty would push them to do so” [Key informant].

These sentiments were also echoed by the girls during the focused group discussion, where two of them said that:

“Most of us perform poorly in academic activities due to a lot of distractions at home such as household duties, which we sometimes perform up to late hours, when we don’t have food and have to work at the beach instead, we spend a lot of time there. This interferes with our concentration in class because we go to school sometimes very tired” [FGD respondent].

“My academic performance been going down because I miss going to school a lot. For instance, whenever my parents are not around, I take full responsibility of the domestic chores which sometimes eat into my school time” [Focus Group Discussion].

Similarly, in an interview with the head teachers, one of them offered that:

“Girls who absent themselves from school quite often are as a result of engaging in different tasks and labour in the community, these girls don’t perform well in class” [Key informant].

From these responses, it is clear that due to engagement in activities at the beach and at home the girls miss school and this affects their performance. These responses agree with the observation made by Hassan & Dehnath (2000) in their study in India who reported that socially, children who engage in various tasks for economic gain at the expense of their education were found to experience negative consequences in their educational development and performance. Maitra & Ray (2002) also reported that child labour may impede school attendance and the quality of learning achievements of children. Access to school and quality education are some of the factors that can empower the girl and assure her a bright future. If this is not possible the girl is therefore denied by extension the possible opportunities in life and as explained by the social exclusion theory this is a form of exclusion.

4.3.2 Girl Child Labour and School Attendance



The study further investigated the effect of girl child labour on school attendance, in order to find out the rate of school attendance of female students or pupils in Wagusu beach. During the discussion with the female children, some of them revealed that:

“It is very rare to attend to school every day given that in most cases, I involve myself in fishing activities such as fish drying and selling at the beach. Sometimes I absent myself for two to three days a week, because of the commitments at home and at the beach” [Focus Group discussion].

“I don’t like going to school because it is at the beach that I get quick cash, unlike school which is long term investment and am not sure whether all get its return” [Focus group discussion].

“When my mother comes with fish from the lake early in the morning, I help clean the fish and cut them into pieces. If she has something else to do I also help with lighting the fire for her to fry the fish. Because of this I usually go to school late or only attend in the afternoon” [Focus Group discussion]

“When it is the season for omena, I and my brothers have to go very early to the lake to help my mother get the omena. If we get we have to carry them home spread the nets and watch over them so that birds and other predators don’t eat them, during this period we don’t have to go to school” [Focus Group discussion]

From the above finding, it can be deduced that girls engage in different kinds of work for a long period and because of this they fail to attend school regularly. As shared above sometimes they are either exhausted or even if they attend school they got late. The perception that labour has immediate economic benefits unlike the long term benefits of education which are not also assured is expressed here. These findings are in line with the finding by Orazem & Gunnarson, (2004) who found that younger students working long hours performed more poorly than did working older students. Though in Wagusu beach, given the study population a comparison cannot be established between the young girls who were engaged in the study and the older girls.

The study also found strong evidence of adverse consequences of child labour on academic performance that is linked to irregular school attendance. For instance, in an interview with one of the teachers, one of them said:

“Children who are truants or excessively absent themselves from school miss lessons, which ultimately affect their general academic performance. For example, in this area, owing to availability of natural resources such as the lake and fish, most of the female pupils get some work at the beach and therefore absent themselves from school, this finally gives us poor results”. [Key informant].

These findings concur with those reported by Tietjen, (2007) who also said that working long hours while in school did hurt standardized test scores and grades, although the effect was quite low. Similarly, Boozer, &Suri, (2001) found that working more than fifteen (15) hours per week while in school led to lower grades, less time spent on homework, increased likelihood of dropout and lower likelihood of proceeding with school education.

Further information gathered from the girls and community leaders indicted that the school attendance of the girls are affected more during the period when there is a lot of fish being caught at the lake. This period is usually between October and April of every year. This came out clearly as shared in the sentiments shared below;

“During the season when omena is in plenty there is a lot of money at the beach, after reporting to school in January, before the exam time me and my friends

usually spend some time every week at the beach doing some work to get some pocket money” (Focus Group Discussion)

“I can’t really say I work so much because I only help my mother when she has a lot of work early in the year, after that I go to school until the end of the term” (Focus Group Discussion)

The area chief also echoed these sentiments by saying

“ When you go to the beach in the middle of the year you will not know that there people flock that place because there is no fish, but as the year ends and even early in the year you will get women, old people, children, dogs and cats flocking at the beach”[Key informant]

This clearly shows that the school attendance of the girls is most affected during the period when there is a lot of fish at the lake. Therefore girl child labour may play a role in the poor performance in the schools but it is not entirely to blame.

4.4 The Perceptions of Wagusu Beach Community on Child Labour

The second theme that emerged from the second research objective was perception of the Wagusu beach community on child labour. Under perception, respondents (parents and administration leaders) were asked to indicate whether they were aware of girl child labour, and how they felt it should be addressed.

4.4.1 Awareness on Girl Child Labour

The practice of girl child labour was very much pronounced in the study area, owing to various reasons such as the need to supplement the family income, poverty in the area, existence of the fishing industry in the region and affordability of some of the basic requirement for a girl child such as sanitary pads. During the interviews, one of the beach management officers in the area pointed out that:

“Many girls as young as the age of 10 years are involved in fish processing activities in this area and some of the contributing factors is the socio economic background of their families, where their parents subject them to work to supplement the family income, the need to have their own money to help them

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take care of some of their basic necessities such as clothes and sanitary pads” [Key informant].

These sentiments were also echoed by one of the parents during the interview. The parent offered that:

“Most of our daughters here engage in various kinds of work just to earn some cash for themselves and support us as their parents. This interferes with their schooling as some of them involve themselves so much into money making activities at the expense of their education, while some of them completely drop out of school to participate fully in different kinds of tasks to earn a living” [Key informant].

Similarly in an interview with the area chief, he also offered that:

“I am aware of the high rate of school dropout among the girls in this region, who then join different economic activities at their tender age. Some of them are trafficked to other areas especially the urban cities to take care of household duties for their relatives in exchange of money for their parents” [Key informant]

What is evident from the above findings is that parents and administration officers were aware of girl child labour in the region. The poverty in the community for them was acted as a justification as to why the children worked. These responses also support the findings in the report made by Omokhodion & Uchendu (2010) in evaluating the perception of parents towards child labour in Nigeria. According to their findings, most parents wanted their children to work to supplement family income, to gain experience and to help in family business. However the specific reason behind girl child labour in Wagusu beach was to supplement family income, there was no information linking the girls working with family business since most of the ones working came from poor backgrounds.

4.4.2 Perception of the Community on Girl Child Labour

The researcher made further inquiries on how the community perceived girl child labour in the region. In one of the interviews with the parents, one of them offered that:

“I am not satisfied with my daughter’s work conditions because sometimes she is engaged for long working hours during the school days and environment around the lake is also not safe for a girl. It also pains me when my daughter instead of

being in school involves herself in other activities to make money for the family, but sometimes I have no choice” [Key informant].

These sentiments reflect the ILO (2002) report which indicates that parents despite the fact that they need the additional income, they worry a lot about the dangers their girls are exposed to along the beaches. The support activities that girls perform usually expose them to cuts and bruises, long durations of time exposed to the sun and the possibility of them getting involved with the fishermen sexually (ILO, 2002). This parent obviously is worried about the fact that her child is working around the beach where she could be exploited by men among many other dangers, but she equally feels that she needs the money.

Community leaders on the other hand seem to look at the bigger picture. This is seen clearly in the sentiments of the BMU official who said the following;

“Girl child labour is impeding the growth and development of girls in this region especially the education and socio-economic well-being. This is because they waste their time doing the odd jobs and errands in exchange of peanut payment, while they should be in school studying for bigger rewards”. [Key informant].

Teachers also felt that involving the girls in child labour was wrong. This came out clearly in when one of the head Teachers shared this during the interview;

“Child labour is wrong, as a country there are laws that have been put in place to protect the children, the best I can do is report to the education office but still little is being done to stop it” [Key informant]

It is clear that the parents, teacher and community leaders know that girl child labour is wrong. They are supposed to champion for the rights of their children, students and community members as a whole yet the teachers are doing little and the Area chief and parents are doing nothing at all about it.

Child labour is destructive and exploitative as it directly interferes with the development of the child (Globalmarch, 1998). This is a sentiment that supports the feelings shared by some of the community leaders. However there was no indication of any initiative taken by their office to stop the vice. The community leaders like the Area Chief, BMU

officials and the Chief are people with power who are supposed to protect the girl child. We see for a fact that they are not taking the action they ought to given the different positions they have in the community. In a way they are perpetuating social exclusion of the girl child by not taking action to protect her. According to social exclusion theory, those in power exclude others by their actions or in actions. This is a true reflection of the situation in Wagusu beach.

However, some of the parents believed that girls who were willing to perform different tasks in exchange of money should not be discouraged, as this inculcated the spirit of hard work among them and helped them to become constructive members of the society. For instance some parents had this to share:

“If my daughter is strong and mature enough to carry herself responsibly and participate gainfully in different tasks, I will not stop her because after all, money is what people look for” [Key informant].

“As much as she has to go to school, she will soon develop into a woman who will manage her own house, if I don’t allow her to work now she will not be able to manage in future” [Key informant]

Similarly, in evaluating the perception of parents towards child labour in Nigeria Omokhodion & Uchendu (2010) report in their study that most parents would want their children to work to supplement family income, to gain experience and to help in family business. According to Auma (2013) a large number of parents feel that child labour instilled a sense of responsibility in children making them responsible adults. The findings above however do not indicate support for the family business as a reason behind parents allowing their girls to work, likely because the parents who allowed their children to work were from humble backgrounds as indicated by one of the community leaders above and therefore they had no businesses to manage. Poor families therefore having been secluded from power and access to some basic human needs are pushed to limits such as using their children to work to earn an income. Poor family backgrounds as explained by the social exclusion theory is a major contributing factor to perpetuating the cycle of poverty within the family.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study in the following order; purpose of the study, objectives, methodology, major findings and conclusions.

5.2 Summary

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The purpose of the study was to understand the implications of girl child labour on primary school attendance in Wagusu Beach of Nyangoma Division, Siaya County. In terms of forms of labour, the findings showed that the girl child was involved in different kinds of work along Wagusu beach. Specifically, girls were mainly taking part in fishing processing activities such as cleaning fish, scaling of fish, drying and watching over aired fish to stop birds from eating them and packing of dried fish. Alongside fish processing activities, girls also assisted with drawing water for washing fish. It also emerged that girls were more preferred by most fish mongers in the fish processing activities because of trust. In addition, the study also found that some of the girls were attending to household tasks such as cooking, taking care of their younger siblings, attending to garden activities. Girls assisting with family owned shops also came up.

Some of the contributing factors to girl child labour that came out clearly in the study included poverty and gender role expectations. For instance, the study found that most girls performed various tasks in the beach to supplement their family income, afford other basic requirement such as sanitary pads and take care of their siblings in case they were orphans.

The second objective examined how involvement in fish processing activities affected the girl child's school attendance. It emerged that girls' involvement in fish activities affected their school attendance and performance. It was clear that girls worked along the beach supporting women with different activities during the day for some pay. This took some of their school hours or even days. The time spent away from school also depended on the seasons of fish in the lake where when there was a lot of fish the girl stayed away from school more because their services were needed at the lake. Secondly, household chores also took them away from school or made them get to school late. After taking a lot of

time working, the children feel tired and not able to concentrate in class. Consequently, their class performance reduces and school dropout increases.

The third objective addressed community perception about girl child labour. The study found that most of the community members especially the area leaders and majority of the parents were not in support of child labour. However, some parents felt that the practise is acceptable. Some parents felt that even if it was wrong the financial support that the girls brought was needed at home and for them therefore the end justified the means. The area leaders were aware that girl child labour was happening and that it was wrong, but they could do little to stop it because these families needed support from these children's support. In the child headed households there was no way they could be stopped from working because they had to support themselves.

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, in Wagusu beach, the girl child engaged at the beach in fish processing activities such as cleaning fish, drying and packing fish, watching over aired fish to stop birds from eating them, cleaning wash basins and assisting with drawing water for washing fish. They also engaged household chores but this was overshadowed by the activities at the beach. Two major factors contributed to girl child labour in Wagusu beach namely poverty and gender roles.

In relation to their school attendance, the girls missed school more frequently during the peak seasons when omena was caught in large numbers. Their school attendance was affected more during this very busy season at the beach. Therefore the fish processing activities that engaged them at the lake affected their school attendance.

In regard to the perception of the community on girl child labour, the study concludes that parents who were aware about the negative effects of child labour allow their children to work all the same because they need the money. If they had other choices then they would prefer to have their girls in school. The community leaders were aware that girl child labour is wrong but they justify their lack of action by the poverty situation in the homes where these girls come from.

5.4 Recommendation

The problems concerning the girl child involved in different forms of child labour around Wagusu beach of Nyangoma division as observed cut across all aspects of activities ranging from economic, social and cultural. Its combat and prevention can only be successful if the various factors involved are well addressed at the same time. The study makes the following recommendations;

- There is need for community awareness on the dangers of involving children in child labour and specifically in fish processing activities.
- There is need for community awareness on the effects of girl child labour around Wagusu beach and poor school attendance.
- There is a need to create awareness on children's rights in Wagusu Community and to ensure that the local community leaders take a lead role in ensuring that these rights are respected.
- The policies protecting the child at National level may not be implemented to the letter on the ground due the fact that there are child headed households as well as other poor single parent families who have now to fend for themselves. Therefore the government should scale up assistance to the vulnerable families in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations.

5.5 Suggestions for Further research

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, research should be conducted on the following topics:

1. More researches need to be conducted in the same area of fish processing activities in the fish landing beaches to ascertain these findings to warrant policy actions.
2. Strategies to reduce or eradicate child labour in primary schools in fishing areas in the country.

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