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Forgotten faces

A Qualitative Exploration of particular vulnerable girls' experiences with prostitution and child marriage in Kenya

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A heartfelt thank you to all women participating in this study. Your hard work, resilience and fearlessness in fighting for girl's right to safety and equality is truly inspiring. The impact of your initiatives and dedication has touched the lives of countless women and girls, and the world is a little bit better because of you. Thank you.

Abstract

This qualitative study examines the experiences of particularly vulnerable girls affected by child marriage and prostitution in Kenya, with the aim of exploring how social control mechanisms and gender inequality perpetuate these harmful practices. By using a thematic analysis approach within the theoretical framework of social control theory, primary and secondary deviance and dominance theory, the study presents empirical data collected through seven in-depth interviews from Kenya's capital, Nairobi. All participants were women affiliated with Kenyan organisations dedicated to rescuing and empowering women and children. Findings conclude that five overarching themes could be identified in the data, where gender based discrimination, poverty, social norms, distrust for the government and progressive work, were central for answering the research questions. Through an in-depth exploration of these themes, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of arranged marriages and prostitution in addition to how laws, culture and social control impact Kenya on a macro-meso and micro level. The findings highlights the urgent need for further interventions aimed at addressing the root causes of child marriage and prostitution in Kenya, in addition to combating gender inequality.

Key words: Arranged marriage, child prostitution, gender equality, girl child, social control.

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1. Introduction

Violence against young girls is a common practice around the world. It can manifest in form of femicide, sexual assault, forced marriages, abuse and harmful customs. In the country of Kenya, violence against young girls is a pervasive reality, echoing global trends of discrimination and harmful perceptions (Plan International, 2007). In order to combat child exploitation, Kenya ratified the Convention of the Right of the Child (CRC) in 1990 with a global hope of progressing children rights, with Article 2 specifically focusing on gender based discrimination (Convention of the Right of the Child, 1989). Global funding has also been provided to Kenya for addressing humanitarian issues, democracy, children's rights and gender equality, with the World Bank (2023) estimating 12 billion USD in support from the US, for the next upcoming three years. In addition, Kenya is one of the most funded countries by the EU and is currently considered the second wealthiest country in the East African region (European Commission, 2023). Despite the legal actions and monetary funding, Kenya is still home to more than 4 million child brides and an estimated 65,000 girl child prostitutes, making the country one of the most unsafe places for young girls in the world (United Nations Children's Fund, 2022; Jones, 2006). Young girls are frequently exposed to arranged marriages and prostitution, which is detrimental to their health, living quality, education, economical status and right to life. This study will explore the underlying social control mechanisms that perpetuate girl child marriage and girl child prostitution and examine how gender inequality contribute to girls' vulnerability in Kenya through a socio-legal lens.

2. Purpose and research questions

The aim of the study is to explore how different forms of social control and gender inequality contribute to the prevalence of girl child marriages and girl child prostitution in Nairobi. It aims to fill the research gap of how the two issues are interconnected and explore the root causes that perpetuate the practices. By examining the prevailing legal framework and social norms within families and communities surrounding these practices, the study intends to understand the formal and informal control mechanisms that work against the country's advancement in children matters. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the ways in which gender inequalities contribute to the persistence of girl child marriages and prostitution, within the framework of Article 2 in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Based on previous literature, the social norms currently at play in Kenya are harmful for young girls in terms of health and safety. With this research the study aims to expand the knowledge of girls' living situations in Kenya using a socio-legal approach. The following questions will be explored in order to adequately research the field of study:

- How do social control contribute to girl child prostitution and girl child marriage in Nairobi, based on Hirschi's social bond theory and Lemert's primary and secondary deviance theory?
- In what capacity do gender inequalities perpetuate girl child marriages and girl child prostitution in Nairobi?

3. Background to particular vulnerable girls' situation in Kenya

The following literature will present key findings in the research of gender inequality, children's rights and the girl child's current living situation in Kenya within the premises of prostitution and arranged marriage. It will give insight into the multifaceted nature of legal framework, culture and social norms in Kenya. Through previous research, the text will provide clarity in terms of harmful practices, health concerns, economic disparity, tradition and social dynamics associated with the engagement of arranged marriage and prostitution for underaged girls. The literature will underscore the urgent need for concerted efforts in addressing the situation of the girl child in Kenya as well as contribute to the study's aim of exploring the underlying nature of the issue on a macro-meso and micro level.

3.1. Gender inequality

The definition of the word "gender inequality" can have different outlooks (Otieno, 2020; Wamue-Ngare, 2023; United Nations Development Programme, 2014). It can be perceived in terms of statistics, such as the fact that over 100 million girls are missing due to female foeticide. Or that a majority of girls in developing countries endures malnutrition as a result of families choosing to primarily feed boys. It can also be perceived in terms of educational rights, such as the fact that 62 million girls lack an education (Plan International, 2007). The United Nation (UN) definition of the term equality is

"Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men." (United Nation, 2001, [no pagination]).

When deprived of these rights, girls will continue to hold low social positions in the community with the result being diminished opportunities, increased risk of sexual violence and low quality of life (United Nations Children's Fund , 2019). Furthermore, gender equality plays a significant role in a country's growth and development. It is linked to improved healthcare services, including education of reproductive health as well as overall better functioning communities (Wamue-Ngare, et al., 2023; Plan International, 2007). Findings also suggest that countries with a higher level of gender

equality are prone to less social conflict and are better at achieving development goals in terms of social justice and environmental sustainability in addition to having a higher BNP per capita (Wamue-Ngare, et al., 2023). By neglecting the girl child, societies will ultimately obstruct their own social and economic advances, with Plan International (2007) estimating that the underinvestment in girls will have far-reaching implications for the future in terms of reproduction, health and economy.

3.2 Children's rights in Kenya

As of 30 July 1990, Kenya officially adopted CRC and further endorsed the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed conflict in January 2002. Thus making sure that no child will be enrolled in the military before the age of 18, and implementing stronger protection for children in terms of armed conflict (United Nation, 2000). Additionally, Kenya became a party to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) the same year, which serves as a regional human rights instrument that specifically focuses on matters of interest and significance for children in Africa. The Kenyan Government however has not to date, ratified the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography as well as the third Optional Protocol from UN regarding Complaints Procedures for children. This means less protection for girls in arranged marriages and prostitution.

Moreover the number one safety net for children in Kenya presents itself in the form of the Children's Act, which is a parliamentary enactment made to address matters such as care and protection of children as well as parental responsibilities and guardianship. It also aligns with CRC and ACRWC, and acts as one of the main human rights laws (Kenya Gazette Supplements, 2022). It encompasses a number of different rights, such as cultural, social and economic rights and is considered to be a vital act of protection for the children in Kenya (Munongi & Pillay's, 2020). In accordance with the Children's Act, the government may give special protection and assistance to especially vulnerable groups of children in order for them to gain more advantages in life. These rights are reserved for children who are or have been suffering from abuse, HIV/AIDS, abandonment by parents due to incarceration or mental illness, disabilities, homelessness as well as for those who live in informal settlements. Through the Children's Act, the government has been able to establish institutions dedicated to the

rehabilitation and care of children, as well as create guidelines on appropriate treatment of children, as they are mandated to do (Kenya Gazette Supplements, 2022)

3.3 The Status and Effects of Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and The Girl Child

The UN defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 (United Nations Children’s Fund, 1989). In an African context, the term “girl child” refers to a female child and the challenges that they face in a patriarchal society structure (Nwozor & Okhillu, 2022). The term girl child has been used in a historical context to highlight the youth and vulnerability of girls in a way that will hinder objectification, instead associating them with something worthy to care for (Heidemann & Fergusson, 2009). In parts of Africa, where a girl in many instances is considered a woman when they undergo puberty, the term acts as a reminder that they are still children and ought to fall under the protection of society (Lowe et al., 2022; Plan International, 2007).

Article 2 of CRC was established by the United Nations Children’s Fund (1989) as a way to address the detrimental effects of discrimination against the child. In accordance to Article 2

“Every child has rights without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status” (Convention of the Rights of the Child, Article 2).

This article in the CRC is of particular interest for this study due to the fact that it highlights the issue of gender-based discrimination and how it impacts the safety of young girls. Article 2 explicitly prohibits sex discrimination and asserts that girls should have the rights outlined in the Convention, the same way their male counterparts do. It is described as one of the four general principles of the CRC and sets the foundation for addressing discrimination (United Nations Children’s Fund, 1989). It extends to various domains such as social status, health neglect, household responsibilities and protection from violence, as gender discrimination is currently the leading cause in girls’ death statistics in developing countries (Murembe, Kyomuhangi and Manalili, 2021; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2020; Plan International, 2007).

The countries which has ratified the CRC are under obligation to ensure that in accordance to Article 2, all rights under the CRC are given without the barrier of sex discrimination, whether direct or indirect (United Nations Children’s Fund, 1989). In terms of obligations for girls, state members must ensure the protection of girls from all forms of discrimination and punishment from family, community and society. This entails actions to diminish biases that perpetuate the belief in social inferiority, passed down from family to daughter. Moreover, the obligation to prevent sex discrimination requires nation members to identify particularly vulnerable groups of girls (United Nations Development Programme, 2014), such as those with disabilities, victims of abuse, child marriage and prostitution.

3.4 Arranged marriages in Kenya

Arranged marriages is the traditional practice of a family unit marrying off a daughter or son in exchange for payment or influence (Mikhail, 2002; Kok et al., 2023; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2017). Even though arranged marriages are traditionally viewed as respected and honourable by many sub-saharan communities, the circumstances of the marriages are often in direct opposition to the law in terms of age appropriateness, consent and safety for the girls (Mikhail, 2002; Lowe et al., 2022).

Globally, an estimated 15 million underage girls are currently married, with Kenya being known for having one of the highest prevalence rates of child marriages, at 25-30% of the female population (United Nations Children’s Fund, 2022). The practice is particularly prevalent in rural areas and is often seen as an honourable survival strategy by families, due to its deeply rooted customs (Lowe et al., 2022; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2017). In Kenya, the payment for the girl is commonly in the form of cattle, and the value is deemed by the girl's “marriageability”. This term generally refers to a girl's perceived value in the marriage market, which is often based on physical beauty, family status, obedience and religious faith (Melnikas et al., 2022). Age is also considered a key factor, as a girl's virginity is essential for her “purity” and marrying young is typically seen as beneficial in terms of the girl's ability to produce children (Westermarck, 1891; Lowe et al., 2022). A girl is generally considered of marriageable

age when she has her first menstrual bleeding. This may occur in girls between the age of nine-16 years.

Social norms regarding marriageability vary amongst different tribes (Kok et al., 2023; Westermarck, 1891). In the North Eastern province of Kenya, tribes such as the Samburu, Pokot, Rendile and the Maasai are upholding the old traditions in spite of the legislation, and the numbers of girl child marriages in the region are estimated to be 51-70 percent (United Nations Children's Fund, 2022; United Nations Children's Fund, 2007; Lowe et al., 2022). Other traditional practices interlinked with arranged marriage is also commonly found in the eastern part of Kenya. The act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is considered a purity rite that girls have to undergo in order to be eligible for marriage. The practice consists of removing the girl child's external female genitalia through cutting, and is considered a violation of human rights as it leads to suffering and in some instances death, due to haemorrhage and infections (United Nations Children's Fund, 2007).

Despite the recognized harmful consequences of child marriage, including health risks and limited educational and economic opportunities for girls, it remains prevalent due to traditional social norms and familiar practices. (Melnikas et al., 2022; Lowe et al., 2022). Efforts to address child marriage in Kenya include legislative measures to prohibit early marriage and betrothals, with the country having a minimum marriage age of 18 (Kenya Gazette Supplements, 2022). Although child marriage is not as commonly practiced as it used to be, Kenya is still facing significant challenges in addressing its root causes and upholding legal safety for the girl child (Murembe, Kyomuhangi and Manalili, 2021).

3.5 Girl child prostitution in Kenya

Child prostitution is a global issue, with an estimated one million children forced into sexual exploitation annually, and potentially up to 10 million children worldwide (Plan International, 2007). In Kenya specifically, research indicates that 10,000 to 30,000 children may be engaged in the act of selling sex, but due to the stigmatisation, researchers believe that the hidden statistics is much higher (Reproductive health matters, 2003; Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004). Furthermore, research

indicates that female sex workers who began sex work as minors, face greater risks of declining health due to mental health issues, physical and sexual abuse, honour killings, in addition to HIV/AIDS and substance abuse, thus shortening their life expectancy (Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004; United Nations Children's Fund, 2020). The pathways leading to sex work for girls in Kenya are multifaceted, with poverty and early sexual debuts being dominating factors (Cordova Pozo et al., 2023; Lalor, 2004). As a result of the stigmatised way of earning money, the child prostitutes are predisposed to economically marginal living conditions that makes continued sex work necessary in order to earn a living (Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004; Jones 2006). For those girls who have been sent out by parents, the pressure of earning an income for the family is keeping them in the industry, and further alienating them from society and earning an education (Mikhail, 2002; United Nations Children's Fund).

Children that are forced into prostitution will often be under the control of owners or employers once out on the streets, with their vulnerability and lack of education severely limiting their ability to choose whether to remain or leave (Reproductive health matters, 2003; Mikhail, 2002). This vulnerability may be expressed in terms of threats of violence or withholdment of material possessions. In the coastal regions of Kenya, sex tourism is thriving and organised networks supply young girls to hotels in big cities such as Mombasa, Watamu and Malindi in addition to Nairobi (Jones, 2006). Demands for sexual favors are also common on farms and in mining areas, and in many lake districts girls will engage in sex work in compensation for fish (United Nations Children's Fund, 2020). In other regions, girls may be offered monetary payments of 100 to 1,000 Kenyan shillings, which is approximately 0.7 to 7 USD. While some girls may escape the life of prostitution, limited education and work skills will leave them undesirable in society. Lack of viable alternative employment opportunities will diminish further life advances (Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004; Jones, 2006). According to qualitative research, Kenyan authorities have little regard for sex workers' circumstances due to the stigmatisation of the work. Findings conclude that there is very little protection from authorities or that hospitals may refuse to assist victims of physical abuse and rape if they are perceived as being sex workers, making them particularly vulnerable (Wangamati et al., 2019).

4. Literature in regards to child marriage and prostitution

A literature search and review has been conducted. The following chapter will demonstrate search method, a thematically organised rapid literature review in addition to a descriptive analysis.

4.1 Literature search

The study's ambition was to be as systematic as possible in its approach to undertake a literature search and review, and as a result an extensive search was conducted in order to clarify the research gap and explore existing literature (Bryman, 2018, p. 144). To identify potential gaps in knowledge and investigate the scope of the field, the keywords used were kenya, girl*, child* rights, marriage, child*, prostitution, gender equality, gender-based*, and sex work*. The study utilised the search instruments Lubcat, Google Scholar, Jstor, Sage Journals, Taylor & Francis online and sciencedirect. To assess the relevance of the literature, attention was directed toward publication year, research method, sampling, results, relevance to the research purpose, and authorship. The literature criteria for inclusion were the following; relevance to research question, publication on a research platform, authorship by researchers with expertise in the field, literature from between the years 2000-2024, being cited and being peer reviewed. The first search which included the search words "kenya" and "girl" resulted in 3.000 different types of literature which were then demarcated to 1056 when adding "child* rights" and then 600 when adding marriage. After adding the final search words "gender-based*" and "sex work*" there were 98 different articles that met the criteria. After screening through the top 50 articles, 21 articles were chosen based on their relevance to the criterias. One unpublished report was included due to limitations in child prostitution literature. The articles were read in full and the relationships and shortcomings within the various studies were examined. For the descriptives analysis see Appendix 1, a detailed summary of the literature is presented below.

4.2 Literature review

Children's rights and gender equality are important for young girls' safety in Kenya, particularly concerning issues such as child prostitution and arranged marriage. This review examines how social control intersects with gender inequalities and children's

rights in these contexts. The literature review will present three different themes identified in the literature. The central themes consist of arranged child marriages and child prostitution in addition to gender equality and children's rights. While research on arranged marriages is extensive, studies on child prostitution in Kenya are scarce due to inadequate data. Researchers like Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala (2004) and Jones (2006) provide insights, but gaps remain in understanding the scope of girl child prostitution. In the theme of gender inequalities and children's rights, an extensive study by Plan International (2007) highlights challenges faced by girls in education, healthcare and safety matters.

4.2.1 Arranged child marriages

Although extensive literature has been carried out on arranged marriages, inadequate research exists on child prostitution.

In the context of marriages, Westermarck (1894) contributed with extensive knowledge in regards to the origin of marriage and its evolution and were applicable in order to fully grasp the concept of marriage. Despite the comprehensiveness of the literature, it was limited to primarily primitive western societies. Melnikas et al. (2022) stood out amongst the arranged marriages literature by defining the meaning of marriageability in the context of African traditions, in addition to supporting their theories with substantial data within the theoretical framework of grounding theory. Findings made by Kok et al. (2023) presented a similar inductive approach but were distinctive in their aim of examining latent factors of arranged marriages, with specific geographical locations. An in depth study carried out by Lowe et al. (2022) brought a tribal perspective on the issue of arranged marriages by conducting interviews by nomadic elders in pastoral communities in Kenya. Cordova Pozo et al., (2023) contributed with extensive quantitative data by using a trend analysis approach on World Bank datasets going back 30 years, in regards to arranged marriages and sexual violence. The study revealed that there was a decrease in marriages but confirmed that many African countries have limited data on the subject.

4.2.2 Child prostitution

Literature on child prostitution in Kenya was limited. One study made by Lalor (2004) touches on the subject, but fails to give specifics. The study was included however due to its conclusions that trickery and monetary transactions act as a gateway into prostitution. More insight on the topic was provided by a segment from the Reproductive health matters report (2003) who offered statistical data for the estimation of child prostitutes in Kenya in addition to the organised methodology of pimps. An extensive study was carried out by Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala (2004) by interviewing a total of 475 female sex workers. Although the study encompassed adult sexworkers, the study was found to be appropriate due to the participant age requirement of 15 years old. For sex work in the tourism sector, Jones's (2006) unpublished report written by initiatives of UNICEF and the Kenya Government, contributed by mapping out different geographical hot spots for child sex tourism in Kenya. The report provides knowledge in terms of scope, community acceptance, initiation processes as well as nationality of clients. Moreover, the sole finding of discovery that addressed both child prostitution and arranged marriages was a study carried out by Mikhail (2002). The article highlights the similarities and differences between the two types of exploitation, in addition to discussing traditional influences.

4.2.3 Gender inequality and children's rights

The scope of gender equality policies and children's rights research, are presented in the following literature section.

A report carried out by Plan International (2007) is acknowledging the global gender inequalities that girls face in different stages of their lives. In addition to offering insight into the lives of girls, the report highlights legislative work and children acts. The report contribute with data in terms of education, female foeticide, domestic work, sexual abuse and prevalence of STDS in young girls. A mixed method research study by Wamue-Ngare et al. (2023) examines the economical impact of gender-based violence, revealing a substantial monetary cost for the society as well as for the survivors. The findings of national economic loss linked to insufficient gender-based policies, provide an additional perspective into the intricate nature of the issue. Munongi & Pillay's (2020) study on the protection of girl children's rights contributed to the study by

focusing on the girl child, in contrast to Wamue-Ngare et al. (2023) who is primarily focusing on the close social circle of girls. The study concluded that family members, peers and teachers were hindering the girl children's right to safety and freedom. A report by Otieno (2020) highlights gender-based discrimination and the importance of the CRC in her study about gender-based violence in primary schools in Kenya. One of the study's strengths are the in-depth examination of the school as a place for gender-based violence and sexual abuse. It challenges the perception of schools and education as a salvation for young girls, as data suggests that it can be a place of defilement.

Findings of literature in regard to particular vulnerable groups of girls, consisted of United Nations Development Programmes' (2014) report about vulnerable groups of women in Cambodia in addition to a study by Murembe, Kyomuhangi and Manalili (2021) on the context of vulnerability, carried out in Uganda. Both highlight the extent of vulnerability amongst different groups of girls, but while the United Nations Development Programme (2014) is applying a legal framework, Murembe, Kyomuhangi and Manalili (2021) has chosen to focus on the emotional and contextual part of vulnerability in girls with the use of focus groups. For a nuanced perspective on policies and laws in a Kenyan context, a review by Wangamati et al. (2019) about sexual violence of children were included in the study. The review contributes to the perception of law in books versus law in action, and gives context to child policies in Kenya.

To summarise, the central parts of the review was analysed through the intersection of children's rights, gender equality, in addition to social control dynamics concerning the issues of child prostitution and marriage in Kenya. After having made a demarcation of the literature and identification of themes, the following were presented as being most central; arranged child marriages, child prostitution, gender equality and children's rights.

4.3 Descriptive analysis

The top rows represent the literature that has been chosen and categorise them according to number, author, country where the study took place, theoretical and/or empirical background, use of methodology, and whether the study has been peer-reviewed and/or cited (Appendix 1). The word “Global” has been used to describe literature that hasn't been connected to a single country, but multiple. The literature that met the criteria consisted of publications from 2002 to 2023. This indicates that the problem area has gained attention in the last two decades, probably as a result of the urbanisation, UN attention and tourist activity in Kenya. This is underscored by the number of countries that have studied the area, with studies conducted in Sweden, France, UK and Nigeria as well as Kenya. The study only searched for literature written in English and Swedish, and as a result other non-English-speaking countries may not have been captured. It is however plausible that research has been published from surrounding countries, in languages such as swahili and french.

5. Theoretical approach

Travis Hirschi's (1969) social control theory, also known as social bond theory, is a criminological theory that seeks to explain why individuals conform to societal norms and laws. Even though Hirschi's theory (1969) is primarily aimed at explaining criminal and deviant behaviour in individuals, this study will instead use the theory as a socio-legal framework for understanding how laws and cultural norms interact to regulate behaviour within a society. The study will also include elements of Lemert's (1951) theory on primary and secondary deviance to complement social control theory by highlighting the reactive aspects of societal labelling. Additionally, the study will integrate MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory in order to get a socio-legal gender perspective on the issue of girl child marriage and girl child prostitution.

5.1 Hirschi's social control/bond theory

By using social control theory as a framework, the study aims to understand how different types of social control mechanisms within the family structure, the community and the Kenyan society might influence the lives of girls in addition to rendering a new perspective on why they end up in arranged marriages and prostitution. The theory will not be applicable on the girls themselves as their actions are not considered deviant, but instead how community, culture and legislation act in a manner suggestive of perpetration.

According to Hirschi (1969) the most instrumental parts of social control are the social bonds individuals create to their prosocial environment. He argued that these social bonds indirectly control behaviour, even unconsciously, through informal social control rather than the formal control of the law. According to the theory the bonds are characterised by the following four key elements.

- Attachment is characterised by the emotional connection individuals have with people and institutions, such as parents, friends and school. Strong prosocial bonds foster a good sense of social control as individuals are unwilling to disappoint someone they are attached to.

- Commitment focuses on the value of social relationships and the fear of losing respect from someone they consider important.
- Involvement pertains to the quality of leisure time, with Hirschi (1969) arguing that prosocial activities reduce the likelihood of antisocial behaviour. For example, children involved in education and school-related activities will be less likely to engage in delinquent acts during those times.
- Belief is described as the attitude towards lawful behaviour. Those who value the law are less likely to engage in criminal behaviour as their beliefs of right and wrong act as a constraint.

In addition to the social bonds, Hirschi (1969) also posited that there are different forms of social control. Informal social control, according to the theory, refers to the mechanisms of control that are primarily based on social norms rather than formal laws and regulations. These control mechanisms include the influence of family, friends and community values on an individual's behaviour. It serves as a way to put pressure on an individual in order to conform to societal expectations, such as obeying parental guidance or adhering to community standards and is a way to regulate unwanted behaviour. In contrast, formal social control refers to the mechanisms of control that are ratified in laws, regulations, and formal criminal justice institutions. These controls are enforced through legal sanctions instead of social sanctions, even though they commonly coexist. Formal control is the outermost form of social control and is administered by government agencies and institutions responsible for creating and maintaining the law (Hirschi, 1969).

5.2 Primary and secondary deviance

Lemert's (1951) theory on primary and secondary deviance is another approach to the concept of deviance but is still within the framework of social control theory. Lemert's (1951) theoretical approach takes inspiration mainly from labelling theory and highlights how being labelled as deviant by society, will affect the individuals self-image and subsequent behaviour. While social control theory is within the context of preventive aspects of deviance, Lemert (1951) focuses on the reactive aspects of the term. According to Lemert (1951) primary deviance is characterised by early stages of norm violations that may be sanctioned with minor corrective societal reactions.

Primary deviance may however develop into secondary deviance if norm violations escalate, and the individual's behaviour becomes stigmatised. The result will likely be a deviance label being put upon the individual, which will eventually be internalised. Reactive and continued deviant behaviour will follow. Social control mechanisms influence whether the societal sanctions will push the individual into secondary deviance. In this case, prosocial bonds would be the preventive measure from internalising the deviant label, however if the key social bonds are weak or the social control is ineffective, it will accelerate the deviance. This element of social control theory adds depth to the theoretical framework by also taking into consideration the reactive part of norm violation in addition to highlighting the way society and community impacts the full circle of deviance.

5.3 Feminist Legal Theory - Dominance model

The dominance model, also known as dominance theory, was first introduced by Catharine MacKinnon (1989) as part of the feminist jurisprudence movement within the field of legal research. The theory is defined as having a radical feminist approach, in the way that it advocates for a society without male supremacy, particularly within social, legal and economic contexts. The theory is heavily influenced by the marxist view of power structure, class oppression and the use of the law as a tool for the ruling class to control the subordinate class. The difference is that MacKinnon (1989) divides classes into genders, thus focusing on the systemic power imbalances between men and women, arguing that societal structures, including legal systems, perpetuate male dominance and female subordination. The theory highlights how male dominance is supported by cultural norms, societal institutions as well as the legal system and examines how it contributes to gender inequality and oppression against women.

The theory has had socio-legal relevance in the way it has critiqued the role of legal systems in maintaining societal power structures and argued that laws and societal norms often fail to protect women. Dominance theory has also influenced how violence against women is understood and addressed in legal contexts in addition to shaping legal approaches to issues like sexual violence, reproductive rights and pornography (MacKinnon, 1989). It challenges traditional legal perspectives that overlook the power dynamics inherent in gender relations and has been instrumental in examining how

legal systems both reflect and reinforce societal norms that perpetuate gender inequalities. It has been criticised in terms of gender essentialism, as critics suggest that it assumes a universal experience of oppression, not fully accounting for intersectional differences such as race, class and ethnicity. This has been taken into consideration during the study.

5.4 Delimitations

The study has chosen to focus solely on girl children's experiences of arranged marriage and prostitution in Kenya due to the significance of the patriarchal structure of the country and the gender-based discrimination that devalues girls' position in society. Girls are seen as a particularly vulnerable group in terms of risk assessment for being subjected to arranged marriage and prostitution. Delimitations were also made in terms of geography; since the data was personally accumulated, the interviews mainly took place in the Nairobi area as it was the most accessible area to the interviewer. The qualitative method used brought in-depth knowledge of lived experiences of young girls in Nairobi, and added to the substantial amount of quantitative data already published on the topic. The study could have chosen to use interpretative phenomenological analysis in favour of a thematic analysis, but chose not to since the focus was on exploring a broad range of perspectives rather than focusing on particular subjective experiences.

6. Method

The following chapter will present the methodology used. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were personally conducted in the area of Nairobi, Kenya. Participants consisted of women with expertise in the field of women empowerment, children's rights and Kenyan legislation and questions were based on the issue of arranged marriage and child prostitution in Kenya. Ethical guidelines and limitations are also presented in this chapter.

6.1 Study participants

In order to get access to the field of girl advocates in Nairobi, invitations were sent out to women and children's organisations who actively worked with particularly vulnerable girls, either due to economic status or history of abuse, child marriage or prostitution. Some invitations were sent out through emails or WhatsApp while others were invited to join the study in person, during visits to different organisations in Nairobi. The participants were selected based on previous work history on a local, national and international level in addition to advocacy initiatives and knowledge of women and children's rights in Kenya. Delimitations were made in regards to age, with a requirement of 18 being set for ethical reasons. A total of seven female participants were selected, ranging in age from 22 to 49. There was no set limit of work experience, however the participants had all been actively advocating and working with girls between five - 25+ years. In total the participants represented four different women and rescue organisations, and one children's organisation. The sample was based on a non-probability approach which has its disadvantages (Bryman, 2018, p. 243), but based on the topic of research questions it was a necessity in order to adequately recruit knowledgeable participants.

6.2 Procedure/Data collecting

The data collection was compiled and recorded through qualitative interviews in the Nairobi area of Kenya. Six of the interviews were conducted in person with the remaining one being conducted virtually due to distance. The interviews were carried out by a single interviewer and used a semi-structured approach in order to incorporate both structure and flexibility. The majority of the interviews lasted for 20-30 min but in

some instances extended up to 1h and 20 min. The advantages of conducting interviews is that they provide an opportunity for an in-depth and detailed exploration of a participant's narrative (Bryman, 2018, p. 273). The questionnaire was a series of open-ended questions related to the main research topic. There was a set questionnaire consisting of 18 questions (See appendix 2), however due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, relevant follow-up questions were at times asked, which were not included in the original questionnaire. The aim of the questions was to attain as much in depth data about the lives and rights of girls in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi, as possible, in addition to gathering data on lived experiences, legislation, social norms and inequality. The study aimed to make participants feel comfortable with sharing their stories and the interviews were carried out in a manner of conscious effort to elicit the least amount of negative emotions possible.

6.3 Data analysis process

The study followed the six step guide of Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. Reading and re-reading the data, that was manually transcribed, was the initial part of the procedure in order to get familiarised with the data. The generating of codes was done in the analysis program MAXQDA, where relevant semantic codes could be identified and organised according to a colour scheme. All the data extracts were coded into different colours based on their meaning and relationship to one another and were later given names in order to further distinguish them from one another. The coloured codes were then pieced together to create sub-themes, and then overarching themes. At this stage a thematic map was created to map the different codes and where they belonged, in order to clarify the data (Appendix 4). The different themes were then reviewed and some were discarded based on being too diffuse or too interconnected with other themes, such as "lack of sanitary kits". The sub-themes were also distinguished as to not cause confusion with the overarching themes. After being defined, the sub-themes and overarching themes were given names according to their content and meaning. With five distinctive overarching themes, the data set could be connected to previous literature as well as to the theoretical framework. As a result of the analysis, a total of 30 codes were defined into 14 sub-themes and five overarching themes.

6.4 Ethics

The study was conducted within the ethical guidelines provided by the Swedish Research Council (2002). All participants were given a consent form (Appendix 3) where full disclosure in regards to the study's layout and its purpose was presented as well as their ethical rights during the interviews. Consent was accumulated separately for the use of voice recordings before the start of the interviews, thus fulfilling the requirement for information and the requirement for consent in full. With regards to the confidentiality principle, the participants stayed anonymous during all handling of data after the interviews were conducted, and their respective organisations were not published due to risk of identification. The sensitive nature of the data was handled with care and confidentiality and were used only to answer current research questions. The data will only be used for research purposes thus fulfilling the final requirement of usage. Moreover, negative emotional impacts were taken into consideration during the creation of the questionnaire, and no questions were directly related to own experiences of violence or discrimination. As the interviews were researching children's lived experiences through the words of adults, it was of utmost importance to the study that the narrative was used in a way that aligns with the best interest of the children as to not exploit them further. No identifiable information was transcribed and audio tapes were deleted in order to ensure the anonymity of both the participants and the children whose stories were told. Care was also taken as to not impose cultural assumptions and be respectful of their traditions, religious beliefs and efforts in advocating for girl's rights. The questionnaire was cross-checked by having the supervisor review the questions before interviews were carried out. No minors were included in the study.

6.5 Reliability and validity

In terms of reliability (Bryman, 2018, p. 465) the study managed to remain consistent in most parts of the research process. All interviews were done under similar circumstances apart from one virtual interview and all participants were given the same questions. In terms of consistent data, it may differentiate slightly depending on the experience and geographic location of the participating organisation. Some of the participants worked on a national level and/or international level, however it is possible that the scope of the issues may not have been fully encompassed or that some participants may have lacked certain expertise in some areas. All proceedings and

findings were transcribed in detail, according to Brymans (2018, p. 579) suggestion. Since the data collecting and analysis were done by a single researcher, extra focus was put on reflexivity and discussions with the supervisor in order to increase the internal reliability. In terms of reflexivity, one limitation to the study would be the ethnical and cultural differences between the researcher and the participants. It's plausible that participants may have felt a subtle pressure explaining the complexities of their work, culture and socio-legal dynamics to an outsider, potentially influencing the data. In order to combat this the researcher strived to create a respectful and open environment where the participants felt safe and valued. Their expertise and insights were respected throughout the process and they were allowed to guide the conversation and share as much or as little as they were comfortable with. For validity testing, the questionnaire was constructed to accurately answer the research objectives within the theoretical framework, thus ensuring a higher construct validity. To guarantee internal validity and transferability a thorough and descriptive data analysis was made. However, because of the qualitative nature of the study, findings will not be directly applicable to other settings outside of mentioned communities, or for other groups of girls.

7. Results and analysis

In this chapter, the collected data from the conducted interviews will be presented in terms of content and category. The interviews were conducted with seven female participants from organisations working with rescuing, housing and empowering women and children. Based on the interviews, five overarching themes could be categorised in terms of underlying mechanisms influencing and perpetrating child arranged marriage and child prostitution. Gender-based discrimination - Limited economics - Social norms - Distrust for the government - Progressive work. This chapter will present the results of the interviews followed by an analysis section after each sub-theme in order to interpret the data using the theoretical framework of Hirschi's (1969) social control/bond theory, Lemert's (1951) primary and secondary deviance theory and MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory. The study used a semantic deductive approach in order to conduct the analysis.

7.1 Gender-based discrimination

This theme was identified due to an extensive amount of data which touched on subjects such as discrimination, physical and emotional violence, threats against women and traditional harmful practices. The presence of gender-based discrimination was evident in all gathered data, with multiple scenarios detailing atrocities against young girls. Particularly in the context of arranged marriages and prostitution even though rape and interpartner violence was also discussed. Through the qualitative analysis, three distinct sub-themes emerged, highlighting various dimensions of gender-based discrimination.

Sub-theme 1: Violence

Participants described instances of physical, emotional, and sexual violence perpetuated against girls within the framework of arranged marriages and prostitution. The data revealed different forms of sexual and physical abuse, femicide and exploitation. Most of the violence was directed towards girls in prostitution or girls that spoke against the family or community. The violence was usually performed by a single man, a group of men or a whole community. One participant details the violence towards young girls by stating that

“About 80% of what we do is collecting body bags.” (Cited from interview 3)

Violence against women is a central element in MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory, as it highlights the ways in which violence perpetuates and reinforces male dominance over women. In line with the participants' statements, MacKinnon (1989) argues that violence is not just an individual act but a systemic tool used to instil fear, social control and ensure compliance with patriarchal norms. By subjecting women to femicide in addition to physical, emotional and sexual violence, men are able to maintain power and authority over them. MacKinnon (1989) also highlights how societal norms and legal systems often normalise and legitimise violence against women, which is true for Kenya based on the data from the interviews. Laws and institutions does not protect Kenyan women from domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment, and fail to hold perpetrators accountable even in the case of femicide.

Sub-theme 2: Traditional Practices

Traditional customs and harmful practices were identified as significant contributors to gender-based discrimination. All interviews contained a depiction of various degrees of female genital mutilation/cutting in addition to arranged marriages and how it affects young girls. Some cultural norms mentioned within the data perpetuate inequalities, reinforce oppressive gender roles and are life threatening to girls. The customs were usually interlinked with the act of marriage, such as FGM, where mothers and aunts are usually the ones acting on the order of the family patriarch. One of the data sets describe the age and circumstances wherein girls in some instances are being subjected to cultural violence.

“But I will tell you, one time I came too late. I was going there [maasai village] to rescue a 8 year old gal, she had been cut at the age of 6 and now she was married at 8. When I got there they told me that she had died. She died from the FGM and the rape.” (Cited from interview 1)

Both girl child arranged marriages and FGM are examples of patriarchal control over girls' bodies, as their purpose are to regulate girls' sexuality and autonomy. MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory emphasises how these practises act as a way to normalise the underlying power dynamics that oppress women and makes subordination culturally acceptable. It reinforces male control over women's bodies and affects not only the girl

but the whole family and community. Women and mothers are forced to comply and engage in harmful traditions based on male-defined standards of purity and honour at the expense of young girls' right to life and safety. According to Hirschi's (1969) social bond theory, these harmful practices are made possible by the social bonds that the girls hold to family and community. When girls internalise these beliefs as something righteous, they are less likely to see arranged marriages and FGM as problematic. In order to change, stronger bonds of attachments have to be made to supportive networks that challenge harmful traditions, in order for the normalisation process to stop.

Sub-theme 3: No Voice

The third sub-theme, had similarities with the previously mentioned "traditional practices" but were identified as being part of a broader context. Participants discussed the systemic silencing of women's voices, their discrimination in the community and their limited decision-making power. This sub-theme was a recurring theme throughout the data, and participants concluded that speaking up can result in being exiled from the community or being abused and killed.

"I was doing group sessions with the girls and I could tell they were pulling back. But this was because someone from the community was within the group, so they couldn't speak fully... And she rose up and was like "nobody is supposed to push back to you, you have already been a victim once, don't be a victim to silence."" (Cited from interview 2)

Having no voice, as the participants describe it, is according to MacKinnon (1989) the process of systematic silencing of women. According to dominance theory it is described as an intimidation and harassment technique in order to keep girls and women subordinate. It ensures that girls' voices, experiences, and perspectives are excluded from public discourse and decision-making processes. This silencing reinforces male control over political, economic, and social situations and any protests will be retaliated with exclusion, abuse or harassment. The violence is both a cause and a consequence of the structural power imbalances that dominance theory highlights. Lemert's (1951) theory on primary and secondary deviance is also applicable in this context as it explains the process by which girls who speak out against patriarchal norms and harmful practices become labelled and treated as deviants. The impact of being labelled

as deviant in the community will alter how the girl is viewed by society and how she views herself. It will make it difficult to create prosocial bonds to her environment.

7.2 Poverty

Poverty emerges as a central theme with participants referencing the lack of monetary resources as one of the leading causes to deprived behaviour. It drives families and orphaned children towards harmful financially-driven actions and desperate measures such as engagement in prostitution or acceptance of arranged marriages.

Sub-theme 1: Financially-driven actions

This theme was characterised by the different financially-driven actions that were presented in the data. Participants frequently highlighted how economic deprivation would drive families to sell their daughters in marriage, and take undignified measures to ensure an income for the family. Starvation, limited access to sanitary kits, and having to pay for younger siblings' education were considered the main reasons for girls engaging in prostitution and escorting. This sub-theme underscores the pressure for girls to provide for themselves and others, by selling their bodies and dignity.

“I met a 16 year old gal with two kids, one is 4 and I’m like “when did you give birth?”. And I asked her how did it happen and she told me “ My Daddy was given some cows and goats and that is how I had to go and live with this man” (Cited from interview 1)

MacKinnon (1989) highlights how in patriarchal societies, economic systems often perpetuate and reinforce gender inequality by benefiting men at the expense of women. Economic resources, opportunities, and decision-making power tend to be controlled by men, while women face barriers to economic advancement and financial independence. MacKinnon (1989) also highlights the way inequality severely limits girls' opportunities for high paying jobs in addition to them earning substantially less than their male counterparts. The economic aspect of inequality is therefore of great importance in analyzing how gender inequality perpetuate girl child marriage and prostitution. Moreover, girls from poor socio-economic backgrounds are particularly susceptible to various forms of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation, harassment, and trafficking (United Nations Children's Fund, 2020). Economic deprivation can compel

girls to endure oppressive conditions and accept exploitative situations out of necessity. This touches on Hirschi's (1969) third element of involvement as well as commitment. In the context of poverty, participants reveal that girls may not be able to engage in prosocial activities or education due to families choosing not to fund girls' education. When girls perceive limited prospects for upward mobility through legitimate means, their commitment to conventional goals and norms diminishes. This lack of commitment makes alternative paths, such as arranged marriages and prostitution more common and acceptable.

Sub-theme 2: Economic desperation

The second sub-theme is closely intertwined with the previous, but characterises itself based on an emotional instead of practical level. Desperation in this context is defined as a feeling of hopelessness and urgency due to poverty. Participants described how the emotional desperation for basic necessities in addition to peer- and family pressure created a gateway to prostitution. The emotional toll and desperation of having to provide, put girls in particularly vulnerable situations where they would agree to anything.

“We see trends in the sex work in the coastal cities, like Mombasa. There is a new wave of tourists coming in, so it started with the animals. They want them to have sex with animals, they have a lot of weird fetishes. As long as there is a demand they have to supply” (Cited from interview 3).

In terms of the emotional aspect of poverty, the feeling of economic desperation is, according to Hirschi's (1969) social bond theory, an important factor in the deviance process, touching on all four key elements of the theory. For attachment, economic desperation can strain relationships within families and communities. Parents preoccupied with financial struggles might not be able to provide the necessary support, instead viewing the girls as liabilities and forcing them to contribute by any means necessary. In terms of commitment, economic desperation can hinder girls' ability to pursue and achieve goals and education. Additionally, the need to work multiple jobs or long hours to support themselves or their families can leave little time for involvement in pro-social activities. The last element of belief can be weakened due to economic desperation as girls' belief in the fairness and legitimacy of societal norms and

institutions may weaken. If girls perceive that society is unjust, they may question the validity of these norms and values. Lemert (1951) would also argue that a girl in economic desperation might commit an initial act of desperation, such as selling sex, to survive or support their family. If it would be detected, society would immediately label the individual as a deviant or criminal, which would later be internalised.

7.3 Social norms

In Kenya, strict social norms for girls strongly influence their lives and human right choices, particularly concerning gender roles, and is therefore considered a central theme. According to the literature and confirmed by the data, traditional values and expectations upheld by society emphasise girls' obedience and conformity to social norms. Conformity is valued and deviation is highly discouraged to the extent that it may result in the death of the girl.

Sub-theme 1: Family and Community Pressure:

The participants highlighted the strong influence of family and community expectations on girls from a young age. They are supposed to conform to traditional practices and accept their submissive role in the family and community. Showing resistance is met with social stigma and being exiled from the community. The data confirms that changing social norms and attitudes in the community is one of the primary challenges in the fight for gender equality. It also reveals that family pressure is one of the main reasons for accepting arranged marriages in contrast to prostitution where the main reason is ostracization from family members.

“Because in those communities women and gals dont speak up but now I see her standing in front of her father and her fathers friends and she is speaking up... it was very scary because you know it can lead to death for them, sometimes it can lead to exilation from the community.” (Cited from interview 2)

“I'm not even 18, but I'm old enough as long as I have breasts and I sort of look mature. I am told to go look for money and I will feel the pressure because now there's no money so I will have to drop out of school and will be forced to date these men who have fast cash. “ (Cited by interview 4)

Based on the findings, the values upheld by families and communities wield considerable influence over girls' behaviour through informal control mechanisms. The fear of exclusion or abuse from family and community as a result of norm deviation is something that regulates behaviour (Hirschi, 1969). According to MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory, gender inequalities within families and communities mirror those in societal structures, as families are fundamentally patriarchal, perpetuating male dominance and female subordination. In the context of Hirschi's (1969) social bond theory, gender inequality in families and communities erodes the crucial social bonds that protect against deviant behaviours. The lack of attachment that comes from gender oppression within families and communities will lessen the social bonds of attachment. This can also be interlinked with Lemert's (1951) theory of primary and secondary deviance. If a girl goes against family or community expectations, primary deviance could occur but could quickly escalate to secondary deviance if the norm violations continue. Continuously speaking up could result in girls being labelled as troublesome or deviant, which would explain the harsh societal sanctions.

Sub-theme 2: Geographic Location

According to a number of participants, social norms vary greatly depending on geographic location in Kenya. The patriarchal system is said to be strict in all areas of Kenya, but in urban areas it is more common with a "modern" perspective, where girls are experiencing more freedom and less pressure to adhere to harmful traditional norms. Child prostitution numbers are however said to be peaking in large cities, like Nairobi and Mombasa. In the rural areas of Kenya, particularly the eastern part, social norms are more tied to tradition and hierarchical family structures. Data confirm that in the coastal regions, social norms and practises such as FGM and arranged marriages is still common and prostitution is shunned. In the larger cities, social norms in regards to marriage are slowly dying, with traditional practices commonly seen as "dated", however an increase in femicide against sex workers is reaching unprecedented levels, with little sympathy from the communities and government.

"Then there are more modern tribes, especially in the urban areas it is not very common with FGM and marriages. But sometimes on holidays in school the families will take the girls away to the

country and they will be cut and then sent back to the city or will be married. It happens. “ (Cited from interview 1)

In this context the patriarch of the community holds more power than the policymakers of the country. As previously mentioned, Kenya is a diverse country with many different communities and social customs, and differentiate mainly based on geographic location (Kok et al., 2023; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2022). Some social norms that are nationwide are the patriarchal structure of the family and community and a collectivistic way of living. With the diversity of informal control between communities, social norms in this context will not be applicable to the country as a whole, but will instead be broken down to community and family traditions and values. Hirschi’s (1969) key element of attachment is central in explaining the informal control that is put upon girls in these communities. If an arranged marriage has been decided by the patriarch of the family, young girls would not risk ostracization by disappointing the family. The attachment to family would highly influence their emotions and act as a driving force in choosing to accept the marriage. The same could be said for urban areas such as Nairobi and Mombasa, in the context of girl child prostitution. If the family is economically dependent on the girl, the likelihood of her having to engaging in sex work in order to not disappoint the family is high.

Sub-theme 3: Tradition

Tradition is according to the data the most influential of social norms in Kenya, and is therefore a central sub-theme, even though it shares similarities with the previous sub-theme. Participants described a strong attachment to cultural traditions, with harmful customs mostly being rejected and prosocial traditions revered. Religious ties were also said to have strong social control over the way people behave, dress and value others. Christianity and Islam were said to be the most influential religions. Participants vocalised that traditional values and customs are deeply ingrained in societal norms, impacting girls' upbringing and role in society. Tradition was according to data, difficult to change perspective on, in particular for the older generation. Harmful traditions in the Kenyan society were proclaimed to be arranged marriages, FGM, domestic abuse, and gender-based discrimination. This is shown by the data extracts below;

“There are a lot of gender-based violence. In some tribes the women are not allowed to speak if a man is present. In the Maasai land, women are not allowed to sit with the men.” (Cited from interview 1)

“...and since it's more of a Christian based country you will find that there are conversations that are not welcomed. For arranged marriages in some cultures in Kenya, it is something that's been done for a long time and its ongoing however in some it is due to cases like rape and you will find people who don't like talking about rape so much. So a child is married to the one who is the perpetrator, instead of solving the case.” (Cited by interview 6)

According to participants, traditions in Kenya vary in terms of geographical location and religious and cultural background. According to Hirschi's theory (1969), tradition is societal values and norms that have been passed down for generations, and in a homogenic community the belief in old traditions and norms will be strong. In terms of perpetuation of arranged marriage and child girl prostitution, participants state that religion has a strong influence in the stigmatisation of these issues. As the country has strong ties to Christianity and Islam, many social norms are built on religious norms such as the importance of marriage, virtue, dress codes, gender segregation and roles and responsibilities within the family. MacKinnon's (1989) theory would in this context suggest that the patriarchal structures of religion further endorse male dominance over females as religious leaders often hold significant influence over social norms and moral values, shaping societal views on gender roles in ways that favour male dominance. Lemert's (1951) theory posits that being labelled as deviant or a prostitute by the community will have substantial impact on the girl, as they will not be welcomed into the community or the church/mosque again.

7.4 Distrust for the Government

The overarching theme of distrust for the government was influencing a number of data sets, with distrust against government institutions being widespread in Kenya. Distrust for the head of state will severely lower the sense of security in a country, with participants relying that they put little faith in changing attitudes and legislation. With the current people in power abusing their position for personal gain, many Kenyans believe that politicians are hindering the country's advancement.

Sub-theme 1: Corruption

Participants expressed distrust in the government and government institutions such as police, military and health care sectors due to pervasive corruption at various levels of administration. According to the gathered data, bribery in addition to embezzlement and hypocrisy were main contributors to the mistrust of government institutions. The majority of participants recounted personal experiences of encountering corrupt police workers, paid off medical workers that would refuse aid to sex workers and rape victims, as well as selfish politicians and legal workers. The data also reveals that a substantial number of underage pregnancies are due to teachers defiling students, seemingly without consequences.

“Our government doesn't have progressive leaders... they do not care for gender-based violence. We have politicians, I will tell you, they are actually using young girls. We have politicians using young boys.” (Cited from interview 3).

“A girl will come into the station after being raped and abused, and the police will ask “Did you enjoy it?”” (Cited by interview 5).

Corrupt lawmakers and police will inevitably result in low faith in the legal system. And with low belief in the legal system, the formal control in a country will not hold enough power to regulate deviant behaviour (Hirschi's, 1969). Due to corruption and women's low standing position in Kenyan society, they are excluded from influential positions of leadership. This means that they have little to no say in politics, economy, courtrooms and society, and are therefore reduced primarily to roles such as housewives or sex workers. According to Hirschi's (1969) social bond theory, the key elements of attachment play a central role. With systematic oppression from the government based on gender, Kenyan women and girls are more likely to develop weaker attachment to social institutions such as the government, police, health care and work places. This will ultimately affect the element of belief, as women and girls will feel that they can't trust the legal system to do them justice.

Sub-theme 2: Lack of Support

All participants highlighted the government's failure to provide any type of monetary support to organisations working with children and women's rights. It was revealed that they may give praise to some organisations but that no other types of support were being offered. The advocacy for more inclusive policies and initiatives in addition to more efforts of implementing existing laws, are in most cases disregarded. According to participants, the government prioritises other matters such as the sugar cane industry above the matters of women and children. There had been some progressive work done in terms of healthcare for rape victims, but under the newly elected presidents rule, such work had once more been abolished.

“Uh, the government is the government. It doesn't support its people, so I don't think they support any organisations that helps or works with women in any prostitution or sex work or sex trafficking”
(Cited from interview 2)

“Support from the government? No. Nothing.” (Cited from interview 7)

According to participants, women and girls consistently experience discrimination and lack of support from the government. In patriarchal societies, gender discrimination becomes normalised and institutionalised. MacKinnon's (1989) theory suggests that government institutions, as part of the broader patriarchal system, perpetuate and legitimise this discrimination. Support for women and children's issues may be viewed as less critical or as secondary to more “traditional” male concerns according to the theory, which is supported by the participants' statement of the Kenyan Government prioritising the sugar cane industry. The lack of support towards women's and children's organisations, limited employment opportunities and the high cost of education, results in girls being economically dependent on men. According to dominance theory, economic dependency is a form of social control that perpetuates women's subordination and mens dominance. Lack of support from the government also diminishes the belief of the policymakers and the formal laws of the country. If organisations working to uphold the country's legislation are met with little to no support, it sends a message that the legislation is not important enough to implement. Participants suggest this could be said for the CRC in Kenya.

Sub-theme 3: Insufficient Laws

The sub-theme that was identified to cause legal distrust was defined as insufficient laws and policies. The participants criticised the existing laws and regulations for being vague and discriminating towards children, women and the LGBTQ+ community. Advocating for new regulations were said to be extremely challenging, mainly due to policy makers' aversion for progressive rights for women in terms of health and abortion rights. Data disclosed legal policies to strengthen accountability, protect human rights, and promote social justice were not being implemented. Moreover the government's commitment to enacting meaningful change was regarded as futile by a majority of the participants. As the data suggest, participants have already lost belief in the legal system as a result of insufficient laws and resistance from the policymakers in reviewing new policies.

“We are fighting everyday for policies that will protect children and women, but they need to be reviewed. They will need review or they are not being implemented and for the longest time they have required review but for some reason, it never happens. Kenya has signed so many declarations in regards to women and girls, but none of them are being implemented.” (Cited from interview 7)

Insufficient and gender discriminatory laws and policies are central to dominance theory as they embody the structural mechanisms through which patriarchy maintains and perpetuates male dominance and female subordination. MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory argues that systemic gender inequality is not only a social phenomenon but is entrenched and perpetuated through legal and institutional frameworks. As participants have stated, Kenyan laws reflect the patriarchal norms and values in Kenyan society. The theory suggests that by ignoring or inadequately addressing women and children issues, the legal system marginalises the experiences and needs of girls. Even though the CRC were ratified in order to protect children (United Nations Children's Fund, 1989), structural barriers such as lack of access to legal resources, biased law enforcement, and judicial systems prevent them from effectively using these laws and policies. They are ultimately victims to further exploitation by the insufficiency of the laws. According to Hirschi (1989), these insufficient or unimplemented laws will also weaken the social control mechanisms as

they undermine individuals' belief in the legitimacy of the legal system. The result may be that individuals are more susceptible to engaging in deviant behaviour without regard for the consequences, such as organise arranged marriages or forcing girls into sex work.

7.5 Progressive Work

The theme regarded with the most enthusiasm was the topic of progressive work being done to elevate girl children's rights in Kenya. According to participants, the proactive work of different women and children's organisations involves various strategies such as victim care, education, and advocacy, which collectively contribute to the rights of children and gender equality. Through concerted efforts in these areas the participants expressed hopes of advancement in legal policies and projects in regards to the empowerment of girls in Kenya. The goals and aspirations of their work were disclosed to be more inclusive and equal communities in Kenya, and for girls to be free from exploitation and abuse.

Sub-theme 1: Victim Care

This sub-theme highlights the emphasis on providing victim care for girls who've been affected by gender-based violence and exploitation. The majority of participants agree that love is of most importance in victim care, followed by counselling, independence, learning work-related skills and opportunities to speak about experiences with other survivors. Victim care is essential in the healing of girls, families and communities alike, and was according to data one of the main things the participants had spent the most work on.

“I think It's important to protect their dignity, after being victimised and after surviving some things, they lose their dignity, their human dignity. I mean they have taken away their physical dignity, let's not take away their societal dignity,” (Cited by interview 5)

Victim care may contribute to amend broken social bonds according to Hirschi's (1969) theory as support from the community may reinforce their sense of belonging. By providing effective victim care, organisations send a message that the community is

committed to upholding justice and protecting its members from harm. This commitment to supporting survivors and holding perpetrators accountable will reinforce girls' belief in the legitimacy and efficacy of societal rules and norms. Lemert's (1951) theory on primary and secondary deviance is also applicable as providing support and assistance to girls who have been labelled as deviant and experienced victimisation, will help them diminish the negative effects of social labelling and stigmatisation. With the help of counselling, rehabilitation, and reintegration services that all the participants offer, girls can reintegrate into society and transition away from their former lifestyle. According to participants, it is important that the girls do not remain alone and forgotten.

Sub-theme 2: Education

Education was frequently referenced in the context of progressive work, with participants disclosing education as the top priority in terms of fighting gender based discrimination and harmful practices. By educating communities and policy makers on the rights of girls and their importance to society, they hope to eradicate gender based violence. According to data the most effective initiatives have been educational excursions to rural communities, training programs for boys and girls in a school context and discussions with policy makers and politicians. Data also reveal that one of the main educational barriers is the country's religious influence, which makes sex related matters taboo to speak about.

"I would like all the gals to be given a chance to be themselves, let them be. Do not cut the gals, do not abuse the gals, give them the rights that they are supposed to have, education is the biggest right I would fight for, because once you are educated you are liberated." (Cited by interview 1)

Through education, it is possible to challenge gender inequality and power dynamics in society, stated by the participants. According to MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory education can serve as a tool for challenging and deconstructing patriarchal norms in addition to empowering girls to critically analyse and question existing power structures, including those within educational institutions. Through feminist education, boys and girls can work to dismantle systems of dominance and promote gender equality in society. It is also important to note, that the theory also highlights that

gender discrimination that can occur in educational environments, such as sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and the objectification of female students. It is therefore important to protect not only girls' right to education but also their safety within educational institutions. According to Lemert (1951) education is also important in terms of secondary deviance where educational opportunities and support systems may diffuse negative effects of labelling and provide girls with finding a new sense of self.

Sub-theme 3: Advocacy

Data revealed that advocacy efforts focused on promoting policy change, legal reforms, and social interventions were highly regarded by the participants. The sub-theme of advocacy underscores the importance of collective efforts and connections in order to advance within systemic change and create a safer and more equal society. Participants expressed a strong bond between the different women/children empowerment organisations in Nairobi and surrounding areas. Based on the data, organisations offer substantially more support amongst themselves than they receive from the government. Advocating is seen as a progressive way to break the silence surrounding gender-based violence.

"I have been in the position of feeling like I have not been advocated for enough. I would love to advocate for that girl or that woman who feels like they have no one on their team." (Cited by interview 2)

Advocacy is, according to participants, an important part of education as it plays a key role in holding authorities accountable for protecting girls and children's rights. It's also necessary in bringing attention to the issues of girl child arranged marriage and prostitution and changing harmful social norms and traditions. Advocating and protesting against social norms in society, will according to Hirschi's (1969) key elements at first be in opposition to the elements of attachment, commitment and belief in the existing norms and hierarchies, but if new norms are being created as a result to the extent where it becomes the new normal, old norms will be disregarded in favour of the new ones. This cultural change is also supported by MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory, which confronts the structures of male dominance in society, and advocates for

laws, policies and social norms to change. According to dominance theory, it is important to highlight the fundamental issues of gender inequality which, according to the theory, is the fact that all aspects of life are built for and around men. Through advocacy the recognition of systematic gender oppression would be highlighted and act as a first step toward equality, and is therefore important in terms of the theory's goal.

8. Conclusion

The thematic analysis revealed significant insights into five overarching themes: gender-based discrimination, poverty, social norms, and distrust for the government within a Kenyan context. Gender-based discrimination encompassed violence, traditional practices, and silencing women's voices. Poverty underscored economic pressures driving girls into prostitution and arranged marriages. Social norms, including family and community pressure, fueled harmful traditional practices. Geographic location and tradition highlighted gender roles and social hierarchy. Distrust of the government revealed corruption, lack of support, and insufficient laws hindering gender equality. In contrast, initiatives in victim care, education, and advocacy offered hope for change and empowerment for young girls in Kenya. These findings were analysed through social control theory, primary and secondary deviance theory, and dominance theory, highlighting the complex social control mechanisms and gender inequalities in Kenyan society. To answer the first research question (1) How do social control contribute to girl child prostitution and girl child marriage in Nairobi, based on Hirschi's social bond theory and Lemert's primary and secondary deviance theory? The study found that informal social control mechanisms such as violence, traditional practices, the silencing of women's voices, poverty and family and community pressure were the main contributors to the perpetuation of girl child marriage and girls child prostitution in Nairobi in a informal context. The formal control mechanisms that contributed were government corruption, lack of support, and insufficient laws. The second research question (2) In what capacity do gender inequalities perpetuate girl child marriages and girl child prostitution in Nairobi? Could be understood by using MacKinnon' (1989) dominance theory and Article 2 in CRC, as it highlights the intersection of gender, power and sexuality. The study found that girl child marriage and girl child prostitution could be explained and were perpetuated by the patriarchal

structure in Kenya and the total subordination of girls and women. With the existing gender norms and patriarchal power structures, girls will be exploited by men until both social and legal structures are made truly equal.

9. Discussion

With the ratification of CRC as early as 1990, and the substantial amount of economic support that has been provided, Kenya should arguably be in a position of accomplishment in terms of children's rights matters (Kenya Gazette Supplements, 2022; World Bank, 2023; European commission, 2023). However, findings suggest that Kenya is still one of the leading countries in the world in terms of child brides and girl child sex workers (UNICEF, 2022; Jones, 2006). Adequate statistics seems to be withheld in the case of child prostitution and there appears to be a gap in literature.

This chapter will outline and discuss findings in literature, data and analysis in regards to social control mechanisms and gender inequality that perpetuate arranged marriage and girl child prostitution in Nairobi, and in Kenyan society as a whole. Interconnections between the two practices will be discussed in order to outline the nature of the problem area and then subsequently examine the five overarching themes that were found to contribute to the perpetuation of the problem within the theoretical framework. Thoughts on future research will also be presented.

9.1 Interconnection between Arranged marriage and Child prostitution

Through literature and self-gathered data, arranged marriages and child prostitution have been found to be interlinked. They differ in law and customs but are similar in their exploitation of vulnerability (Mikhail, 2002). Both are seen as transactional, with young girls lacking consent and facing pressure from a third party. Girls subjected to arranged marriages and prostitution are typically low in the decision-making hierarchy and are viewed as property of a family/husband or employer (Ibid.). They are expected to be submissive and provide sexual favours, having limited rights over their own bodies (Kok et al., 2023). They are also at heightened risk of gender-based violence. Societal acceptance influences both practices, making protective laws difficult to implement.

The disparity is mainly due to differences in societal perceptions. Arranged marriages are deemed traditional and honourable in some regions of Kenya, while child prostitution is seen as highly disdainful nationwide (Ibid.). From Hirschi's (1969) social control perspective, a girl entering into an arranged marriage aligns with family and community values, unlike sex work. This perception is influenced by the number of men involved: one in arranged marriages versus many in prostitution, thus affecting the girl's perceived virtue and integrity (Melnikas et al., 2022). Prostitution is also stigmatised due to its association with criminality and exploitation and they are often condemned by society, receiving no empathy from the surrounding community. Girls in arranged marriages also face similar violence, but social norms usually justify husbands physically disciplining their wives, making it something expected.

Legally, both marriages and sex with children under 18 are prohibited by Kenyan law (Kenya Gazette Supplements, 2022). However, the study suggests that these laws are not sufficiently implemented, and that various informal social control mechanisms are active in the country.

9.2 Social control dynamics in Kenyan Society

From a macro-perspective, child prostitution and arranged marriages serve as a significant challenge in the work towards child rights and child protection in Kenya. The country's legal framework and unsuccessfully implemented policies fail to adequately protect the rights of young girls, proven by the significant number of child sex workers and child brides in the country (United Nations Children's Fund, 2022). In accordance with the first research question aimed at exploring how social control perpetuate girl child marriage and prostitution, the study's data confirms that three out of the five overarching themes are related to social control dynamics on a macro scale; distrust for the government, poverty and gender-based discrimination. The distrust for the government stems from high levels of corruption, with participants relaying how politicians and policy makers use child sex workers for pleasure, utilise monetary funding for personal gain, provide no support to women and children organisations in addition to expressing no political will in progressing girl children's rights in society.

In terms of insufficient laws, the study's data highly suggests that by not enforcing child protection, prostitution policies, and marriage age requirements, old cultural and social values of the country are being upheld. The result being that much of the progressive work done by CRC and other policies are being disregarded. Particularly in regards to Article 2, where gender based discrimination are said to be a prominent factor in the government's resistance to implement policies that will give women and children more influence in Kenyan society. By advancing female representation in positions of power, the country could advance in its progression towards gender equality, but is being hindered by the strong cultural bonds that promote discrimination against the female sex. According to MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory this is a result of an unequal power dynamic inherent in patriarchal societies. However, the laws and CRC are still beneficial to organisations and civilians, particularly when pushing for sanctions and progression. Nevertheless, according to Hydén (2023) there has to be a political will in order to properly implement new legislation, which is not currently being expressed in the country. The theme of poverty may be interconnected to distrust in the government, in terms of the country's economic status. The economic mismanagement results in more limited resources available for public services, infrastructure development, and social welfare programs which ultimately has an impact on girl's right to healthcare, support and education (Lowe et al., 2022; United Nations Children's Fund, 2017).

Gender-based discrimination correlates to the second research question of how gender inequalities contribute to the perpetuation of child marriages and prostitution. According to the study's data, the patriarchal social norms in the Kenyan society normalise practices such as child marriage and child prostitution as acceptable means of asserting control over girls' bodies and sexuality. This is supported by MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory that argues that women are often objectified and their bodies controlled by men, both socially and legally, as part of the patriarchal system that benefits men. From a social control perspective, societal views on gender play a vital role in shaping social norms and behaviours related to girls. According to Hirschi's (1969) theory, individuals conform to societal norms and expectations due to the threat of sanctions. The data reinforce this perspective with participants revealing that advocating for girls' rights is often sanctioned with ostracization or abuse, particularly in rural communities where informal social control is said to be the strictest. The

repercussions being that the girls are being labelled as deviant, in accordance to Lemert's (1951) theory. The study's data addressed the government's non committed attempts at gender equality by referencing the lack of support, lack of efforts in reviewing policies in addition to lack of interest in women and sex related matters. This strongly impedes the legal security net for young girls in the country, making the themes of distrust in the government, poverty and gender-based discrimination interlinked.

9.3 Family and Community influence

Within the context of family and community influence over arranged marriages and prostitution, the study found that social control in the form of social norms contribute the most to the perpetuation of these practices. With rural families acceptance and engagement in harmful practises such as FGM and arranged marriages in addition to religious perceptions such as marriageability and virtue, girls have difficulty speaking up. In reference to the key element of attachment in Hirchi's (1969) social bond theory, attachment to family members could hold enough influence over a girl to undergo an arranged marriage, in fear of disappointing her parents. Gathered data also insinuates that this may be applicable for prostitution in poorer families, with participants relying that parents will send out their girls on the streets with the purpose of bringing back money. However data also shows that ostracization from family as a result of being labelled deviant or promiscuous, is usually a more common factor in underage prostitution.

Being exiled from the family unit due to norm violations would, according to Hirschi's (1969) theory, influence the social control mechanism that hinders engagement in delinquent/stigmatised behaviour. Key elements of attachment and commitment may be disregarded if the girl is experiencing abandonment and poverty, and the element of involvement would instead hold more influence. The issue being that leisure time or education will not result in instant income, and with low belief in unsuccessfully implemented laws, there are few things that would hinder an ostracised girl from engaging in prostitution. This is reinforced by MacKinnon's (1989) dominance theory which suggests that economic subjugation of girls serves to maintain and perpetuate the dominance of men over women. Moreover, according to data, once a girl engages in prostitution, the sanctions from the community will be imminent and they will no longer be considered a part of proper society. Secondary deviance may unfold as a result

of being labelled by the community as a sex worker and the stigmatisation that follows (Lemert, 1951). Once a child is perceived as being a sex worker, no family or community will give them support further exacerbating the girl's vulnerability and marginalisation.

In reference to the second research question, the social norms that perpetuate gender inequality in the family and community greatly influences the lives of the girls. According to participants, women are in some communities considered equal to cattle, and are easily disposable as they do not hold value for the community outside of reproduction. The discrimination influencing these communities perpetuate child arranged marriage and prostitution by undermining their value in society and upholding harmful traditions and male dominance (MacKinnon, 1989). Without the opportunity to access high income jobs, positions of power and adequate health, girls are being forced into accepting positions as sex workers and child brides in order to survive (Kok et al., 2023).

9.4 Impact on the Girl Child

The final theme of progressive work is related to the impact on the girl child along with victim care and education. In terms of effects on the girl child, findings reveal that a majority of underage girls suffer from health complication as a result of FGM, abuse, sexual violence and early child bearing, all related to arranged marriages and sex work (Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004). For marriages, the girls in traditional communities are being sold when signs of puberty show. Physical and sexual abuse are accepted ways of disciplining the wife within the marriage, and total control over the wife and family matters are given to the man. These cultural norms support a social structure where men feel entitled to make decisions on behalf of women according to MacKinnon (1989). Participants working with young girls and women also state that many of the survivors exhibit mental health related issues such as depression and low self-esteem due to the oppression caused by men in their family and community.

For girls engaging in prostitution, the safety issues are according to data even more prominent, with sex workers exhibiting high risk of HIV/aids infections, sexual abuse, public violence and discrimination, in addition to femicide due to the stigmatization of the work (Elmore-Meegan, Conroy and Agala, 2004). The gathered data also suggest that

child prostitutes are forced to engage in sex trends such as having sexual relations with animals and sodomization. According to data they are also subjected to public stoning and whippings, and are highly discriminated against by the police- and health care sectors. This societal reaction will, according to Lemert (1951) increase the risk of secondary deviance, with the girls being stigmatised and labelled as not being a part of proper society. Once the girls internalise the society's perceptions of them, they may create a self-concept of not being worthy, hence keeping them in the same harmful circles.

Participants rely that victim care and advocacy are important in terms of healing the girls and mending severed social bonds to family and community. With girls gaining more independence and skills with the help of local organisations, the advocacy for equal rights keeps growing in the communities, empowering young girls to step forward and fight for their rights.

9.5 The study's contribution and future research

The ambition of the study was to provide in-depth insights into multifaceted challenges faced by particularly vulnerable girls within the context of arranged marriages and prostitution. By gathering new data in the setting of Nairobi and interviewing women involved with girl children's rights and challenges in Kenya, the study offered a new perspective on how arranged marriages and child prostitution are interconnected in terms of characteristics and exploitation. Through thematic analysis, the study outlined current socio-legal mechanisms hindering Kenya in its work towards successful implementation of girl children's rights. Moreover, utilising the framework of social control theory, primary and secondary deviance and dominance theory, the study allowed for a deeper exploration of different forms of social control and gender inequality perpetuating arranged marriage and girl child prostitution. Additionally, the study shed light on the lives of girls in Nairobi, expanding the limited field of knowledge in terms of child prostitution. Finally, by emphasising the regressive work undertaken by the Kenyan government concerning the rights of girl children, the study hopes to exert pressure on stakeholders to ensure the fulfilment of anticipated obligations. In terms of future research, efforts to combat child prostitution and arranged marriages should encompass comprehensive strategies addressing root causes. Additionally,

interventions should focus on empowering vulnerable girls and local organisations by providing them with access to monetary funding, education, healthcare, work skills, social support and most importantly, love.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Literature used to study girls experiences with arranged marriage and prostitution

#	Author	Publication year	Country of publication	Empirical	Theoretical	Method	Peer reviewed	Cited
1.	Baier et at.	2018	Sweden	x	x	Educational	x	x
2.	Braun & Clarke	2006	UK	x		Educational	x	x
3.	Cordova- Porso et al.	2023	Sub-sahara	x	x	Data analysis	x	x
4.	Elmore -Meegan et al.	2004	Kenya	x	x	Mixed Method	x	x
5.	Heidemann & Fergusson	2009	Global	x	x	Literature review	x	x
6.	Jones	2006	Kenya	x	x	Qualitative interviews/focus group	x	x
7.	Kok et al.	2023	Global	x	x	Mixed method	x	x
8.	Lalor	2004	Kenya & Tanzania	x	x	Qualitative Interviews	x	x

9.	Lowe et al.	2022	Kenya	x	x	Qualitative Interviews	x	x
10.	Melnikas et al.	2022	Global	x	x	Case study	x	x
11.	Mikhail	2002	Global	x	x	Mixed study	x	x
12.	Munongi & Pillay	2020	South Africa	x	x	Qualitative questionnaire	x	x
13.	Murembe, Kyomuhangi and Manalili.	2021	Uganda	x	x	Qualitative interviews/focus groups	x	x
14.	Nwozor & Okhillu	2022	Nigeria	x	x	Literature review	x	x
15.	Otieno	2020	Kenya	x	x	Mixed method	x	x
16.	Plan international	2007	Global	x		Educational	x	x
17.	Reproductive health matters	2003	Global	x	x	Educational	x	x
18.	United Nations (UN)	2000	Global	x		Quantitative		x
19.	Wamue-Ngare et al.	2023	Kenya	x	x	Mixed Method	x	x

20.	Wangamati et al.	2019	Kenya	x	x	Literature review	x	x
21.	Westermarck	1891	Finland	x	x	Educational		

Appendix 2. Interview questionnaire.

Interview guide

Questionnaire

1. What has made you interested in the rights and well-being of young girls in Kenya?
2. How did your work to help vulnerable girls begin? How long have you been doing it?
3. What aspects of your work have been the most challenging?
4. What is your strongest memory from your work?
5. How do you experience Kenya's laws regarding sex trafficking and prostitution?
6. In what ways do you believe the law could change in terms of girls and children's rights?
7. In what ways do you believe that social norms could change?
8. How do you perceive the scope of prostitution in Nairobi for young girls?
9. How has your experience been of support from the government and/or organizations?
10. Why do you think young girls are subjected to arranged marriages and prostitution?
11. What similarities/differences do you see between arranged marriages and prostitution?
12. What do you think about getting married before the age of 18?
13. How common is it for young girls to be married off in Kenya?
14. Why do you think families choose to marry off their daughters?
15. How do you think culture and religion affect marriage for young girls?
16. In your experience, what different approaches do you think different tribes have towards the marriage and prostitution of girls?
17. What do you think is important in terms of girls' well-being after being subjected to prostitution or arranged marriages?
18. What types of support do you believe other countries can provide to help young girls in Kenya?

Appendix 3. Consent form based on ethical guidelines from the Swedish research council.

Research Consent form

Thank you for choosing to participate in this research study!

This study is aimed at understanding the experiences of vulnerable girls who have been affected by child prostitution and forced marriage in Kenya. Through these interviews the aim is to give you a space where your voice can be heard and your experiences validated. Your participation in this study is invaluable, as it will help in developing a deeper understanding of the underlying factors that perpetuate child prostitution and forced marriage in Kenya. It is important that you feel respected and empowered throughout the research process. Your confidentiality and privacy will remain anonymous throughout the whole process and you will have the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion.

By sharing your experiences, you are contributing to a larger effort to advocate for change and support for vulnerable girls in Kenya. Your efforts will be aimed toward addressing the root causes of exploitation and abuse. Your following rights throughout the project will be listed down below in accordance with the Swedish research council's ethical guidelines.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study and for your courage in sharing your experiences.

Ethical rights

The requirement for information

The researcher shall inform those affected by the research about the purpose of the current research task.

Rule 1

The researcher shall inform informants and research participants about their role in the project and the conditions that apply to their participation. They shall be informed that participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw their participation. The information shall include all elements of the current study that could reasonably affect their willingness to participate.

The requirement for consent

Participants in a study have the right to decide for themselves about their participation.

Rule 2

Appendix 4. Thematic mind map, made during data analysis.

