Exploring Local Understandings of Child Sexual Abuse: Voices from an Informal Settlement in Nairobi, Kenya

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Human and Health Sciences
University of Huddersfield,

August 2016

Copyright Statement

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List of Diagrams

Word Count (including footnotes and excluding ancillary data): 87,854

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to the residents of Kijiji who so generously gave up their time to talk to me and welcomed me with such warmth.

Particular thanks are owed to my two gatekeepers, Pastor and Mrs O, both of whom bent over backwards to support my research. Without them, this thesis would not have been possible. Similarly, I have tremendous gratitude to the staff and Board of *Rescue Dada*, and, in particular, to Mary Njeri Gatitu whose support and friendship has left an indelible mark on my time in Kenya. Special thanks also to Winnie Wanjiru for her excellent work interpreting against a backdrop of distractions, including that noisy cockerel.

I would also like to thank the University of Nairobi for granting me affiliation.

I have been blessed to have three outstanding supervisors: Jo Woodiwiss, Dominic Pasura and Martin Manby. Each brought a unique perspective and expertise to my research, provided tremendous encouragement, and maintained a remarkable level of patience when unreliable skype connections disrupted our supervision calls. The support you all provided vastly outstripped my expectations, especially after my accident. Indeed, 'thank you' seems woefully insufficient.

Many thanks also to my two examiners, Professor Viv Cree and Professor Jeff Hearn, for their extremely useful feedback and suggestions.

I must also thank my husband, Wouter, for his patience and tireless support, even when I left the study looking as if something had exploded in it. Thanks, also, to my parents for all the lengthy phone calls and undertaking the tedious task of proof-reading.

And finally, I would like to pay homage to our cats, Winston and Mathilda, and dog, Geoffrey, who never left my side during the writing process and are probably sick of me reading sections to them out loud……

Abstract

Since the emergence of the global child rights movement in the late 1990s, there has been a notable increase in research and policy focusing on child sexual abuse (CSA) in African settings (Mildred & Plummer, 2009). My thesis contributes to this field by using a case study approach to examine how residents of an informal settlement define and respond to CSA. Studies in Tanzanian settings have started to explore communities' perceptions of CSA (Abeid, Muganyizi, Olsson, Darj, & Axemo, 2014; Kisanga, Nystrom, Hogan, & Emmelin, 2011). However, the thesis moves beyond questioning *what* types of sexual acts are understood to constitute CSA, instead asking *why* some acts are considered abusive and others not. Recognizing the culturally constructed nature of abuse, it examines how living within the informal settlement context affects residents' understandings of two prominent themes: consent and harm.

The thesis also examines local protective mechanisms for preventing and responding to acts of CSA. When considering CSA prevention, it notes that local prevention strategies typically utilize a risk avoidance approach; there is consequently inadequate emphasis on addressing social, economic and infrastructural factors perpetuating the risk of CSA within informal settlements. Moreover, in a research setting where statutory and community-based normative frameworks co-exist, the thesis analyses the impact of legal pluralism on decision-making relating to access to justice. Drawing on Moore's (1973) concept of semi-autonomous social fields, it argues that the co-existence of multiple systems allows for a high level of choice over which interventions to pursue. However, adults typically make decisions on victims' behalf, potentially choosing interventions that meet their own interests, rather than prioritizing the child's. The choice offered by co-existing normative systems can therefore disadvantage victims of CSA in their pursuit of justice.

List of Acronyms

ACRWC   African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CBO   Community-Based Organization

CDF   Constituency Development Fund

CHW   Community Health Worker

CRE   Christian Religious Education

CSA   Child Sexual Abuse

CSE   Child Sexual Exploitation

DCO   District Children's Officer

HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus

KCPE   Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education

KCSE   Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education

Ksh   Kenyan Shilling[1]

NCCS   National Council for Children's Services

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

SGBV   Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SMD   Sugar Mommy and Daddy (relationship)

STI   Sexually Transmitted Infection

UNCRC   United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

VCO   Volunteer Children's Officer

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[1] Shown against a US Dollar rate of 90ksh/$ (the most stable currency during my fieldwork).

Glossary of Local Terms

Baraza	Public meeting where local issues are deliberated.
Chairman	Lead elder in an informal settlement village.
Chang'aa	Illegally-brewed alcohol that can cause serious health issues, such as death or blindness.
Come-we-stay	Form of marriage in which a couple lives together without payment of bride price or a formal religious or civil marriage ceremony.
Kijiji	Village
Kitu Kidogo	Something small: a bribe
Luring	Cases where older men or women use treats to entice a child to a place of privacy, where he or she is then sexually abused.
Mabati	Iron sheeting, used for housing in informal settlements.
Mandazi	Donut-type snack.
Mzee	Older man
Ngono	Sex
Non-formal Schools	(Typically) fee-paying, these are run by non-profit organizations or private individuals and normally follow the State curriculum.
Tabia za kimapenzi	Behaviour of Love (sex)
Upcountry	Areas of Kenya outside the two urban centres of Nairobi and Mombasa.
Videos	Small huts that show pirated movies to paying residents.

NB: All Non-English terms are in Kiswahili. I have also included English terms that have been locally appropriated.

Points on Language

Abuse: All but two participants understood the term 'abuse' in either English or Kiswahili. In these two cases, I asked about sexual acts that were wrongful in childhood. Although, thematically, understandings of wrongful and abusive sexual acts were very similar, I highlight in a footnote where abuse was not used in the questioning.

Agency: I use the term agency to refer to an individual's capacity for independent action and decision-making.

Caregiver: Child participants in my research reported being dependent for their day-to-day needs on parents, step-parents, siblings or cousins (in child-headed households), uncles, aunts, grandparents and neighbours. The term 'caregiver' is used to highlight this diversity.

Child Participant: Recognizing that statutory (aged-based) understandings of childhood did not predominate in Kijiji, I use the term 'child participants' to refer to participants who self-identified as children. This category includes two participants who were over 18 years but identified as children due to their continued dependence on their caregivers. Similarly, I avoid the term 'child' when referring to three participants who were below the age of majority but self-identified as adults. Where self-identification contradicted the age of majority, this is highlighted in a footnote.

Child Sexual Abuse: Although CSA and CSE (child sexual exploitation) are increasingly being separated in western literature and policy, within my research, CSE was depicted as a form of CSA. I therefore use the term CSA to refer to acts which may also be understood as CSE.

Economic Vulnerability: Poverty is a highly contested term (Misturelli & Heffernan, 2011). I therefore use the term *economic vulnerability* to highlight that residents' socio-economic challenges derived not just from their low, unstable incomes, but also from their reduced access to formal economic safety nets, such as health insurance or bank credit. This lowered their resilience in the event of economic shocks (e.g. unexpected medical costs).

Victim: Burman (2003) argues that we need to move away from seeing children who are abused simply as victims and acknowledge their ability to survive. Whilst I agree with this viewpoint, the term *victim* was widely used by participants, reflecting their assumption of CSA-related harm. I have therefore mirrored participants' use of this term.

Part One

Introducing The Research

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Introducing the Research

Within this thesis, I explore how residents of an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya, understand the concept of child sexual abuse (CSA). Since the emergence of the global child rights movement in the late 1990s, interest in CSA in African settings has increased (Mildred & Plummer, 2009). In Kenya, for instance, ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) triggered a wave of policy and research focused on children's sexual rights. This culminated in the development of a new Children Act (2001) and a specialized Sexual Offences Act (2006), both of which drew on western-derived discourses of childhood and abuse. Indeed, when discussing the Sexual Offences Act, the Honourable Njoki Ndungu noted that legislators drew heavily on the UK Sexual Offences Act (2003) 'for the reason that having been a British colony, the framework of our legal system and laws is very similar to that of England' (Association for Women's Rights in Development, 2007: 149). Although modified to fit the Kenyan context, policy and legislation relating to CSA consequently borrowed heavily from the West.

However, I follow a growing number of scholars who are challenging the practice of uncritically exporting western-derived understandings of childhood and abuse to non-western settings (Aitken, 2001; Bass, 2010; Kjørholt, 2007; Montgomery, 2009b; Okoli & Cree, 2012; Robson, 2004). Certainly all children have a right to lives free from exploitation and abuse. Yet, the middle class, home-centred childhood espoused by the UNCRC arguably overlooks the strengths of alternative childhoods and fails to capture the challenges of many children's day-to-day realities. As explained by Lawrence:

> Realizing the ideal of human rights implementation without seeing the child *in* situ is a challenge for contemporary child welfare…The decontextualizing of children in this way ignores a host of other social, economic and political factors that need to be acknowledged when describing the 'real child' (Lawrence, 2004: 58).

I consequently suggest that rather than using western-derived discourses of childhood and abuse to understand CSA in non-western settings, it is important to first develop context-specific understandings. This will better enable child protection professionals to develop context-specific solutions. I am not calling for unbridled cultural relativism, but an acknowledgement of potential

dissonance between western-derived discourses and many non-western settings. Such dissonance needs to be recognized before core child rights principles of non-discrimination and equality have any chance of localized success. My research therefore aims to capture local discourses relating to childhood, sexual abuse and child protection.

1.1 Positioning the Research

Research on CSA in Sub-Saharan Africa is relatively new, with sexual violence involving children only gathering widespread interest in the last two decades. Reflecting this, when I designed my research in 2012, Kenyan CSA research was in its relative infancy. As such, a literature review by *Childline Kenya* (exploring CSA within the local context) was forced to draw heavily on western research to support the authors' conclusions (Childline Kenya, 2011). Nonetheless, increased interest in CSA at a policy level has both responded to and triggered a wave of research examining CSA in Kenyan contexts. In other words, the State and civil society have re-framed sexual abuse of children as a pertinent social problem, warranting exploration.

Much of this early research was predominantly quantitative, focusing on prevalence (e.g. Erulkar, 2004; Kenya National Bureau Of Statistics & ICF-Macro, 2010; Marston, Beguy, Kabiru, & Cleland, 2013; Njue, Askew, & Chege, 2005; Parkes & Heslop, 2011; Rassi & Nyamu, 2012; Ruto, 2009; UNICEF, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, & Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). However, despite variance in terms of the research settings and types of abuse being examined, conclusions were remarkably similar; concerning numbers of Kenyan children were being subjected to one or more forms of CSA. Indeed, in a study examining sexual abuse of school age children in ten districts with low socio-economic indices, one in four of the 1206 child participants reported that they had been forced to have sex (Ruto, 2009). Furthermore, although almost all the aforementioned studies acknowledged the possibility of boys being subjected to CSA, victims were found to be overwhelmingly female.

Prevalence studies have therefore been instrumental in re-framing CSA as a pertinent (female) concern. Yet, their quantitative nature has limitations, since concepts (like rape or forced sex) are frequently understood in subtly different ways, depending on the participant's subjective perceptions of childhood, sexuality and gender relations. As such, prevalence studies tell us how many participants understood their experience as matching a specific concept (e.g. rape, sexual harassment), but fail to clarify whether participants understand the concept in the same way as their peers, or indeed the researcher. Recognizing this limitation, Lalor (2004a) has called for more qualitative studies in East African settings that do not assume a universal understanding of CSA, but instead explore localized understandings.

South African researchers have led the way in using qualitative methods to explore culturally-situated understandings and experiences of CSA in African settings (e.g. Bhana & Pattman, 2011; Jewkes, 2005; Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, & Rose-Junius, 2005; Wood, Lambert, & Jewkes, 2007). However, there has also been a gradual increase in qualitative studies that recognize the socially and culturally constructed nature of sexual abuse in East Africa. These have explored community members' perceptions of child abuse and CSA (Kisanga et al., 2011; Kostelny, Wessells, Chabeda-Barthe, & Ondoro, 2013; Williams, Binagwaho, & Betancourt, 2012); child protection professionals' views of CSA (Kisanga et al., 2010; Murove, Forbes, Kean, Wamimbi, & Germann, 2010; Plummer & Njuguna, 2009); and victims' experiences of CSA (Abuya, Onsomu, Moore, & Sagwe, 2012a; Mekuria, Nigussie, & Abera, 2015; Ruto, 2009). My research will add to the first and second categories by exploring community members' and child protection professionals' perceptions of CSA, capturing both adults' and children's voices.

Furthermore, explorations of sexual violence against children in East Africa have tended to concentrate on clinical samples (Girgira, Tilahun, & Bacha, 2014; Nduati & Muita, 1992; Ng'ondi, 2015; Speight et al., 2006) or focus on educational settings (Abuya et al., 2012a; Gerver, 2013; Mekuria et al., 2015; Ruto, 2009). However, my research examines CSA within the community-based setting of an informal settlement. Found in all major Kenyan cities, informal settlements are characterized by overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, poor healthcare facilities, low household incomes and insecurity (Gulyani, Talukdar, & Potter, 2006). It is a pertinent setting since a study by CRADLE, the Chamber of Justice and CARE Kenya found informal settlements to have the highest reported levels of CSA in Nairobi (van Oudenhoven & Wazir, 2006).

However, despite this, only a limited number of qualitative studies have explored CSA within Kenyan informal settlements (Abuya et al., 2012a; Erulkar & Matheka, 2007; Kostelny et al., 2013; Zulu, Dodoo, & Chika-Ezeh, 2002). Of these, a rapid ethnographic study by Kostelny et al. (2013) is closest to my aims. This study sought to explore residents' perceptions of protection risks to children in two informal settlements in Mombasa, Kenya. It helpfully identified some context-specific forms of sexual abuse, such as *jig jig*, where boys have sex with older, single women in exchange for work or shelter. However, sexual abuse was not the study's primary focus. Moreover, it did not examine *why* certain acts were considered abusive or question the extent to which these views were shared amongst residents. Consideration for how the informal settlement setting impacts on understandings of (and responses to) CSA therefore remains limited. This is a gap my research will start to address.

1.2 Research Motivation

Although originally from the UK, my interest in the research topic developed during the five years I lived in Kenya (2009 to 2014). Drawing on my social work background[2], I found work with a local non-profit organization, *Rescue Dada*, which addresses the child protection needs of families living in informal settlements and the streets of Nairobi. During my three years with the organization, I witnessed many cases which I considered to be acts of CSA: teenagers who had been coerced into having sex with their fathers in return for school fees or girls sent out by their mothers to have sex with a shopkeeper in return for maize meal. These were acts which violated not just my own moral and professional values, but also contravened Kenyan legislation. However, I increasingly noticed that acts which violated the law did not always appear to be recognized as illegal acts of abuse by the child and/or their guardian. Instead, they were often framed as a 'part of life', seemingly warranting little or no protective intervention. As such, very few cases that I understood to be CSA resulted in statutory action being taken against the perpetrator. I therefore became keen to explore how informal settlement residents differentiated between abusive and non-abusive sexual acts involving children, and the extent to which these conceptualizations impacted upon the efficacy of local protection systems.

1.3 Research Aims

My research aims:

- To delineate the way(s) in which understandings of CSA are constructed by men, women, and children living within an informal settlement in Nairobi.
- To identify child protection mechanisms existing within informal settlements.
- To discuss the practice implications of community-based understandings of CSA and local child protection mechanisms.

1.4 Research Questions

My thesis addresses the following research questions:

1a). How is the concept of CSA understood by residents of an informal settlement in Nairobi?

1b) What informs these understandings?

2a). How do these understandings affect child protection, at the point of prevention and response?

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[2] I have a Masters in Social Work, and worked in the UK social care sector before moving to Kenya.

2b) What protection mechanisms exist within informal settlements for preventing and responding to CSA?

1.5 Thesis Structure

My thesis is separated into two parts. Part One introduces my research, exploring the research setting, literature framework and methodology.

Chapter One introduces my research, situating it within the current body of CSA research in Kenya and the wider East Africa region. Chapter Two considers relevant literature pertaining to cultural constructions of CSA. I highlight how the concept is subjectively understood, shaped by dominant cultural discourses relating to childhood, gender, sexuality and the consequences of abuse. I argue that rather than uncritically using western discourses to understand CSA in non-western settings, there is a need for researchers in the Global South to explore how sexual abuse is understood in different cultural settings.

With this in mind, Chapter Three introduces the research context. Alongside providing an overview of day-to-day living conditions, I argue that the stark distinction between informal settlements and the formal municipality conceals a more nuanced relationship. Informal settlements are therefore helpfully viewed through Moore's (1973) concept of semi-autonomous social fields, retaining their own social norms and governance mechanisms yet simultaneously existing alongside (and interacting with) municipal and State normative frameworks. Chapter Four provides justification for my chosen methodological approach: a case study approach. After explaining why this suited my research objectives, I reflect upon each stage of the research process: preparation, recruitment, data collection and data analysis.

Part Two presents my research findings. After a short introduction, Chapter Five explores the dominant depiction of CSA as 'forced' sexual acts. Although participants tended to initially allude to a simple consensual–non-consensual binary, understandings of CSA were built on a more complex conceptualization. Indeed, a child could explicitly agree to a sexual act, yet the act still be considered non-consensual if perceived to be coerced. Drawing on Klocker's (2007) conceptualization of children's agency (see section 2.3.4), I suggest that decisions about whether or not an act was abusive were underpinned by an assessment of the extent to which external structural and relational factors restricted the child's ability to *refuse* the sexual act.

Chapter Six explores a second predominant theme within my data: harm as a central feature of CSA. This shares similarities with western discourses that emphasize the inevitability of harm following an act of CSA. However, I argue that understandings of harm cannot be divorced from the context in

which the acts of abuse occur. By considering CSA as threat to a child's well-being in four areas (physical well-being, emotional well-being, sexual development and social development), the chapter thus explores how different acts of CSA were understood to affect children *when perpetrated within the social and cultural context of Kijiji*.

Chapter Seven explores four local strategies for preventing CSA: increasing awareness of CSA, impeding perpetrators' access to children, avoiding provocation and providing for children's basic needs. I note that responsibility for protection was understood to lie predominantly with children and their female caregivers. In addition to overlooking the potentially valuable role of the community, and downplaying the State's protective responsibilities, this increased the risk that victims and female caregivers would be blamed if a child was abused. Furthermore, with prevention strategies typically utilizing a risk avoidance approach, there was inadequate emphasis on addressing social, economic and infrastructural factors perpetuating the risk of CSA within Kijiji.

Chapter Eight considers responses to CSA. Against a backdrop of legal pluralism, issues relating to access, the risks of intervening and likely effectiveness of interventions influenced residents' decisions about which justice mechanism(s) to pursue. I conclude that the co-existence of often opposing systems may disadvantage child victims, potentially placing their interests in competition with those of the adults tasked with choosing a suitable course of action.

Finally, Chapter Nine discusses my research's contribution to knowledge, considering the implications for theory, policy, practice and future research. I also outline its limitations.

Chapter Two

Conceptualizing Child Sexual Abuse

2.0 Introduction

Chapter Two explores the culturally constructed nature of CSA. I argue that CSA is subjectively understood, shaped by dominant cultural discourses, especially discourses relating to childhood, gender, sexuality and the consequences of abuse. Recognizing that some discourses are more dominant than others, I examine the exportation of western-derived conceptualizations of CSA and childhood to non-western contexts, such as Kenya. The global child rights movement has had a positive impact by encouraging a greater interest in safeguarding children's interests. Nonetheless, I argue that this has simultaneously led to the often uncritical exportation of dominant discourses of child abuse built around a distinctly western, middle class view of childhood. This is a depiction of childhood in which children are assumed to be afforded a minimum degree of care and protection from their families and the State up to the age of 18 years, regardless of the context in which they live. This is certainly not an unworthy goal. Nonetheless, using this western-derived ideal childhood as the benchmark against which other childhoods are measured ignores the latter's strengths, such as the more collective, community-based childcare observed in many non-western settings. More so, this approach risks labelling children as abused, even if they have limited means to change their circumstances. It also downplays children's expressions of agency, especially with regards to choosing sexual practices that may be deemed abusive when judged against this ideal childhood (e.g. transactional sexual relationships).

Within this chapter, I consequently argue that western discourses of childhood and abuse should not be uncritically used to understand non-western settings. Instead, there is a need for researchers to explore how sexual abuse is understood in different cultural settings, viewing CSA through a social constructionist lens that recognizes and strives to understand the culturally-situated nature of abuse (Korbin, 1981). This is not a call for unbridled cultural relativism; it is instead an assertion that, in order to initiate meaningful changes in children's lives, it is necessary to first understand the context in which a phenomenon occurs and the current discourses that resonate locally. Levett (2003) asserts that dominant discourses in four areas (childhood, sexuality, gender and perceived consequences) are likely to be especially instrumental in constructing local understandings of CSA and (potentially) supporting abusive practices. As this assertion matches my own observations from the literature I reviewed, and indeed my own research findings, I consequently examine each area in

turn, questioning how they potentially inform understandings of CSA in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Literature Search Strategy

Mindful that international publication of research is currently less common in Kenya and the East African region than in the West, I explored multiple avenues for accessing relevant literature. Firstly, I searched established databases (including Scopus and Web of Science) for peer-reviewed literature relating to CSA and childhood. I supplemented this by attending local events on CSA and Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV), where researchers presented their work. Finally, I approached local and international NGOs to request access to relevant internally-published research. I am grateful to CRADLE, a local child rights-focused NGO, who granted me access to their extensive resource library on child rights issues, including CSA.

2.1 CSA: A Culturally Constructed Problem

As noted by Gough, 'child abuse is a familiar concept' (Gough, 1996: 993) that we can hold strong views about without necessarily considering exactly how and why we label some acts abusive and others not. However, perceptions about what constitutes abuse vary between cultures and are constantly changing, responding to social changes, such as moral panics, and shifting political rhetoric (Robinson, 2011). As such, child abuse is not a set of fixed behaviours, but instead a varying array of interactions, defined by changing classifications of abuse (Hacking, 1999). By simply increasing the age of consent, for instance, a plethora of sexual acts that were previously acceptable are re-constructed as abusive overnight.

In order to capture these complexities, Korbin (1981) developed a three-level framework for cross-culturally understanding child abuse. The first level incorporated acts that may be abusive within one culture, but not in another; for example, this could be culturally different understandings of when a child is capable of consenting to sex. The second level incorporates acts that represent a departure from cultural standards, contravening the sexual norms of the culture in which they take place. Finally, Korbin's third level includes societal abuse and acts of structural violence, such as inadequate State protection from the effects of war or poverty. The practice of survival sex[3] is arguably an example of this last level, triggered by inadequate social security mechanisms.

Applied specifically to sexual abuse, Korbin's model helpfully captures the diverse ways in which the same sexual practice may be interpreted within different cultures. For instance, within the UK, construction of genitalia as inherently sexual and private means that touching a child's genitals is

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[3] Sexual encounters where the primary motivation is fulfilment of subsistence needs.

likely to be constructed as CSA[4]. Yet, in a qualitative study examining child rape in South Africa and Namibia, Jewkes et al. (2005) observed that 'sex play', such as an older woman tickling a young boy's penis, is an accepted part of life, and not viewed through the lens of CSA. Furthermore, Korbin's identification of structural violence broadens conceptualizations of CSA from the typically narrower focus on interpersonal interactions between the victim and perpetrator. Responsibility for abuse can thus be designated to parties not directly interacting with the child. However, when applied to a legal pluralist society[5], such as my research setting, it is important to note that different sets of cultural norms co-exist, with individuals choosing which system to follow (Kamau, 2009). Consequently, although marriage before the age of 18 violates the State legislative framework, it could be considered a normal part of life when judged against community-based customs. Different constructions of abuse can therefore co-exist within one setting, depending upon which set of cultural norms are being used to judge the act.

Furthermore, even when individuals appear to be ascribing to the same norms and values, constructions of CSA remain subjective. A growing body of research in western contexts has used hypothetical cases to assess how respondents from seemingly similar cultural backgrounds perceive different forms of CSA (Ayala, Kotary, & Hetz, 2015; Davies, Josey, & Rogers, 2007; Esnard & Dumas, 2013; Giglio, Wolfteich, Gabrenya, & Sohn, 2011; Klein, Apple, & Kahn, 2011), finding that the same sexual act can be assessed in a plethora of ways depending on the characteristics of the onlooker and those involved. The gender of the person deciphering the sexual act has been found to have a particularly significant impact, with women less likely to attribute responsibility to the victim than male respondents (Davies et al., 2007; Esnard & Dumas, 2013; Hestick & Perrino, 2009). This potentially reflects women's and girls' greater likelihood of being a victim of sexual violence themselves, explaining their greater empathy.

However, whilst acknowledging that understandings of CSA can be highly subjective, the impact of dominant local discourses should not be overlooked. When considering how individuals construct meaning through telling sexual stories, Plummer (1995) and Woodiwiss (2014) note that certain stories are told more readily, such as those reinforcing the dominant heterosexual framework and traditional gender divisions. For instance, in a study examining 89 women's experiences of an act that could be considered rape, Kahn et al. (2003) found that women were more likely to define their experience as rape if physical force was used, the assault occurred in childhood and/or the perpetrator was a stranger. In other words, abusive experiences were understood to be those

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[4]https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/what-protecting-child-sexual-abuse-english.pdf (accessed 13.3.16)
[5] A society in which different legal systems co-exist (e.g. customary law, statutory law)

matching dominant discourses relating to definitions of rape. As such, it is important to recognize that some constructions of CSA will be more robustly supported by current dominant discourses than others, and thus easier to voice.

The challenges of capturing understandings of CSA in different cultural contexts are therefore significant, affected by a plethora of factors. Within this chapter, I consequently follow Levett in arguing that understandings of CSA are built around 'everyday talk and local practices' (Levett, 2003: 70) in four areas: understandings of childhood, sexuality, gender and the likely consequences of CSA. The importance of these four areas matched my own observations from the literature I reviewed. However, whilst Levett confined her observations predominantly to female sexuality and female subjects, I broaden the categories to consider male and female sexualities and male and female gendered experiences of abuse. After considering the dominant western discourses of CSA, deriving from the global child rights movement, I will consider each of these areas in turn, exploring their impact on constructions of CSA within Kenya and the wider Sub-Saharan African region.

2.2 Exporting Global Child Rights: The Impact on Local Constructions of Children's Sexual Rights

As asserted in Chapter One, the current conceptualization of CSA as a pertinent concern is relatively new in Kenya and the wider African region, with Levett noting in 2003 that:

> …it is conspicuous that there is almost no discussion of child sexual abuse
>
> in the non-English literature and very little on this phenomenon in non-
>
> English-speaking communities, particularly in Africa (Levett, 2003: 53).

To be clear, this is not to say that African communities have been without social norms regulating sexual practices involving children, or, indeed, have not experienced violations of these norms. For instance, in colonial Kenya, a handful of isolated (and often unsubstantiated) cases of sexual abuse of white settler women and children at the hands of black 'natives' triggered a moral panic amongst the settler community (Anderson, 2010). However, based on the limited evidence, the threat was arguably very low, underpinned by the settlers' broader fears of 'natives' and desire to subjugate them.

The current depiction of CSA as a noteworthy social problem is closely entwined with the western-driven global child rights movement. This has had a notable impact on constructions of CSA and sexual exploitation, with the UNCRC presenting a set of universal sexual rights that are afforded to all children:

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;

(c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials (UNCRC, 1989, Article 34) [6].

Protecting children's sexual rights has thus become a core responsibility of the State, requiring a comprehensive State-led child safeguarding strategy.

Since ratifying the UNCRC, the Government of Kenya has taken steps towards fulfilling its signatory obligations by re-producing the core values of the UNCRC in a number of key pieces of legislation, from the Children Act (2001) to the New Constitution (2010). The former, for instance, followed the UNCRC in using a purely chronological definition of childhood (below 18 years). This replaced the definition outlined by the Guardianship of Infants Act (1959), which drew on both age and the social marker of marriage to define a child[7]. The cultural significance assigned to marriage as a marker of adulthood was thus erased from legislative discourses. Furthermore, the Kenyan Sexual Offences Act (2006) followed the national Children Act (2001) in raising the age of consent to match the age of majority. As such, whilst section 143 of the Penal Code CAP 63[8] previously identified the age of consent as 16 years, the Sexual Offences Act re-constructed activity involving a person under the age of 18 years as 'defilement' (article 8). Thus, overnight, any sexual activity under the age of 18 years became framed as a violation of children's sexual rights, regardless of their degree of participation and choice.

However, in legal pluralist societies, such as Kenya, it is important not to assume that values implanted into legislation and policy are adopted by all citizens. When discussing more broadly how State imposition of statutory laws affects local systems of governance, Moore commented:

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[6]Came into force in 1990.

[7] Article 2: A person under eighteen years of age, but does not include a person who is or has been married.

[8] Originally from 1948.

> New laws are thrust upon going social arrangements in which there are complexes of binding obligations already in existence…The social arrangements are often effectively stronger than the new laws (Moore, 1973: 723).

Change is a process involving acknowledgement of new values, willingness to change and ability to change (Prochaska, Norcross, & DiClemente, 2013). So, although the Sexual Offences Act (2006) took steps to criminalize female circumcision, in a mixed-methods case study examining how 120 households in Nyamira County (Kenya) viewed this practice, Moranga (2014) found that girls' value in adulthood remained intrinsically tied to being circumcised. Consequently, despite being educated on their rights, girls continued to willingly subject themselves to the practice to avoid the local stigma of being an uncircumcised woman. Similarly, drawing on findings from a large mixed-methods study exploring local perceptions of child rights in two 'slum' areas of Accra, Ghana[9], Twum-Danso (2009a) found that the norms and values institutionalized in the ratified UNCRC at times conflicted with cultural beliefs. As such, the strong expectation that children will be obedient and respectful to adults arguably limited their space to express their opinions, one of the Charter's key underlying principles.

Recognizing the co-existence of multiple, and often competing, normative frameworks, there is consequently a need for greater exploration into how CSA is understood at a community level within Kenya and the wider Sub-Saharan African region. My thesis questions whether changes at Kenya's legislative and policy level have resonated at the community level, or if local discourses continue to dominate. With this in mind, I turn to the four areas which Levett (2003) identified as central to conceptualizations of CSA, considering how each contributes towards culturally-situated understandings of CSA.

2.3 The Impact of Childhood Discourses on Understandings of CSA

One of the most fundamental elements of CSA is that it is an act directed at a 'child'. Indeed, many acts frequently constructed as CSA are defined not by the sexual act *per se* but by the act occurring in childhood. These include child pornography or sex with a child. CSA is therefore intrinsically linked to notions of who is a child and what constitutes a good childhood (Pasura et al., 2013b; Scott, Jackson, & Backett-Milburn, 1998; Stainton Rogers, 2001). Noting this connection, Stainton Rogers writes that:

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[9] The study conducted focus groups with 291 children and approximately 10 adults, used questionnaires with 133 child participants and interviews with community leaders.

…adopting a particular *image* of childhood implies that we need to act

towards children in a particular way (Stainton Rogers, 2001: 29).

Different discourses of childhood therefore influence not only our views and expectations of children, but also the ways in which we behave towards them, maintaining and reinforcing a particular view of 'children' and 'childhood'. However, discourses are sets of meanings, images and representations which work together to (re)create a particular way of representing an event or phenomenon (Burr, 2003); the concept of childhood can thus be represented in many different ways, depending on the manner in which different meanings are combined (Jenks, 1996; Zhao, 2011). The discourse of childhood promoted by the global child rights movement consequently represents only one of many different childhood discourses (re)created across the globe. Within this section, I start by questioning the applicability of the UNCRC's 'ideal' childhood to Kenya and Sub-Saharan African settings, before considering three aspects of childhood that impact on understandings of CSA: the boundaries of childhood, children's position in society, and children's perceived capacity for agency.

2.3.1 Assessing the Applicability of the UNCRC's 'Ideal' Childhood to Kenyan settings

A key feature of the UNCRC has been the re-framing of children as a category of individuals who require specialized protection:

The vision of childhood enshrined within the UNCRC is one where

childhood is a separate space, protected from adulthood, in which children

are entitled to special protection, provision, and rights of participation

(Montgomery, 2009: 6).

Critically, children are assigned the same universal rights and civic responsibilities, regardless of their backgrounds. These include the right to grow up 'free from the burdens of work, care, and onerous responsibilities' (Robson, 2004: 230). The Convention thus projects an 'ideal' childhood against which other childhoods must be judged.

However, whilst I wholeheartedly welcome efforts to eradicate abuse and exploitation within children's lives, the 'ideal childhood' engrained within the UNCRC has nonetheless been increasingly challenged. In particular, a growing body of scholars have questioned the extent to which values embedded within the UNCRC should be uncritically applied to non-western contexts (Aitken, 2001; Bass, 2010; Kjørholt, 2007; Montgomery, 2009b; Robson, 2004). Wells (2009), for instance, notes that the Convention represents an arguably western, middle-class view of childhood which does not fit with non-western cultures, especially those without robust social security systems. This is clearly

illustrated in a paper by Kjørholt (2007) where she cites an example of a female child delegate who spoke out eloquently for children's rights. However, at the end of the speech the delegate broke down, disclosing that her family's reliance on her labour for survival impeded the realization of her educational ambitions. Having internalized the values promoted by global child right discourses, the delegate was forced to painfully confront the barriers impeding achievement of her own rights. She was labelled a victim without the tools to address her position. Aitken (2001) consequently argues that the dominance of western childhood discourses merely reflects a broader process of western-centrism in which developing countries are not appreciated for their own values or resources, but judged according to western values and practices.

Reflecting these concerns, in 1999 the Organization of African Unity[10] adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1990)[11] after identifying that the UNCRC did not satisfactorily represent the socio-economic and cultural realities facing African nations. Alongside upholding deep-rooted values of collectivism and intergenerational respect, the Charter included specific provisions for pertinent issues in African counties (e.g. extended family care, child soldiers, and continuation of education after child pregnancy). Thus, although founded on very similar principles to the UNCRC (e.g. non-discrimination and child participation), the Charter sent a clear message; African problems require an African-led solution that takes into account the cultural and social nuances of African cultures and societies. With this in mind, Kesby, Gwanzura-Ottemoller et al. (2006) have proposed that it is inadequate to transpose theories of childhood that derive from western settings and *uncritically* apply them to different cultural settings. I therefore consider three factors that affect constructions of childhood in Kenyan and Sub-Saharan Africa: understandings of the boundaries of childhood, children's position in society and children's space for agency.

2.3.2 Unpicking the Boundaries of Childhood(s)

One of the most contentious factors influencing constructions of CSA concerns perceptions about the boundaries of childhood: just who is a child? As noted earlier, Kenya has followed the UNCRC in raising the legislative age of majority to 18 years. Therefore, any sexual act occurring below this age (ostensibly within the confines of childhood) is now a sexual offence. However, the use of a purely age-based boundary has been criticized for implying too dramatic a 'rupture' between adulthood and childhood (Smith, 2009): for example, a girl who chooses to have sex with her boyfriend the day before turning 18 is considered a victim of CSA under the current Kenyan legal system, yet the following day is viewed as a consensual adult who is physically and emotionally mature enough to knowingly engage in sexual relations. Instead, the boundary between 'children' and 'adults' is

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[10] Became the African Union in 2001.
[11] Came into force in 1999.

arguably considerably more porous, allowing an individual to be considered a child in one context and an adult in another (Nieuwenhuys, 1996). In a small qualitative study exploring child-headed households in Tanzania and Uganda, Evans (2011) illustrated this point, observing that child carers shifted between being 'children' and 'adults'. As one child respondent explained:

> In the village, when it comes to participating in things, I don't get involved,
> I position myself as a child, a student who goes to school, I become young. I
> don't get involved with parents. I become like a child, although in our
> house I become like parents (Evans, 2011: 390-391).

The participants in Evans' study were therefore able to skilfully negotiate the boundary between childhood and adulthood, balancing their nuanced understandings of how their communities perceived their place in society with their own self perceptions. Stripped of their guardians, the stark child-adult binary had substantially less meaning.

Furthermore, chronological markers gravely ignore the heterogeneity of childhood experiences. When questioning the helpfulness of a universal age of majority, Watson noted:

> The guideline age of 18 is arguably much more in line with a Western
> notion of children being in full-time education, and thus at parental behest,
> until this time. For those children in the [Global] South who have been
> looking after siblings since they were seven, or who have been working
> since the age of 11 , the UNCRC's 'age of majority' is of little relevance
> (Watson, 2006: 231).

Reflecting this, in a country, like Kenya, where compulsory education ends at 14 years rather than 18 years, children are left in a relative no-man's land if they cannot access secondary education. Children are therefore often forced to work at a time when they are still legally children. Consequently, rather than being a homogenous group following a similar trajectory through childhood, the social constructionist lens espoused by the New Sociology of Childhood reminds us that children are instead an extremely diverse group of individuals due to social structures such as class, gender, and ethnicity (James & James, 2004; James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996). This contrasts sharply with earlier depictions of childhood, based on biological development, in which children were assumed to follow a set trajectory of maturation (e.g. Erikson, 1950; Kohlberg, 1981; Locke, 1836).

Against a backdrop of diverse social contexts, a number of scholars have consequently suggested that social markers are significantly more important than age for marking the transition from childhood to adulthood in African cultures (McNee, 2004; Twum-Danso, 2009a). Important markers have been found to include achieving financial independence, leaving the family home, getting married and having children (Beguy, Kabiru, Zulu, & Ezeh, 2011; Kesby, Gwanzura-Ottemoller, & Chizororo, 2006; Langevang, 2008; Renne, 2005; Twum-Danso, 2009a). However, despite these studies highlighting similar markers, it is important to recognize that markers are infused with different meanings, according to the social and cultural context. Thus, whilst leaving home in the UK may signal financial independence, Beguy et al. (2011) note that in Kenyan informal settlements this may be instigated simply by a lack of space to accommodate a household's growing family. Thus, external forces, such as economic vulnerability, can push a child from childhood, denying them the opportunity to be recognized as a victim of CSA.

On the other hand, scholars exploring childhoods in Zimbabwe and South Africa have highlighted that it is arguably becoming harder for individuals to achieve culturally-prized markers of adulthood (Kesby et al., 2006; Langevang, 2008; Seekings, 2006). External forces, such as globalization and weakening socio-economic conditions, are depicted as preventing many young people from making a successful transition to adulthood. In a situation sharing similarities with the UK (where rising living costs and high unemployment have arguably contributed to more young adults living with their parents[12]), adulthood is being postponed, extending the care and protection associated with childhood past the age of majority. Thus, whilst a young person may be earning enough to *contribute* to the household income, they are unable to demonstrate their independence through establishment of their own household. When assessed according to social markers, the social context can therefore either curtail or extend a person's time in childhood. As such, it is critical to consider how the boundaries of childhood are locally conceptualized in order to understand who may qualify as a victim of CSA.

2.3.3 The Impact of Intergenerational Power Inequalities on Children's Position in Society

A recurring theme within literature on childhoods in both Sub-Saharan and western contexts is recognition of the intergenerational power inequalities infused in the child-adult relationship. This is based upon a child's perceived structural dependency on their guardians and beliefs about a child's relative position within society:

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[12]http://www.theguardian.com/money/2014/jan/21/record-levels-young-adults-living-home-ons   (accessed 10.2.16)

> …children's participation…takes place within the constraints set by their
> subordinate location in relation to adults, where their own understanding
> of what it means to be a child has been shaped by their interaction with
> more powerful, adult, social actors with pre-existing, albeit renegotiable,
> ideas about childhood and children (Scott et al., 1998: 692).

Thus, although childhood is not a fixed concept, children are arguably socialised into a subordinate position through their early interactions with adults. Indeed, Meyer argues that children's structural dependency and vulnerability in relation to adults 'is a product of society' (Meyer, 2007: 90), created through innocence discourses of childhood which depict children as innately vulnerable and in need of adult protection.

Within research exploring the concept of childhood within African settings, intergenerational power differences between an adult and a child have been of particular interest. A strong theme has been the identification of what Stainton Rogers terms a 'discourse of control' that 'rests on the assumption that children lack self-control and hence need to be regulated' by adults (Stainton Rogers, 2001: 30). Thus, in a qualitative study examining parenting attitudes amongst the Luo ethnic group in Kenya[13], Oburu draws on a traditional Luo saying to illustrate the belief that children require discipline and direction from their elders in order to mould them into responsible adults:

> A tree is shaped while young, or when it grows up it breaks (Oburu, 2011: 155).

Likewise, the importance assigned to intergenerational respect is clearly visible in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1990), which assigns children the duty:

> …to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his [or her] parents,
> superiors and elders at all times and to assist them in case of need (Article
> 31, section a).

The Charter therefore positions children not just as structurally dependent on their guardians, but subordinate to all elders, with age directly linked to power and status.

Finkelhor (1984) has argued that despite intergenerational power inequalities, children *do* have the potential power to resist abuse, even when the perpetrator is an adult. However, this assertion was based on research conducted in western settings. In contrast, when considering CSA in non-western

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[13] Oburu interviewed mothers and fathers in 100 two-parent households. Whilst gendered comparisons could thus be drawn, this methodology overlooks the diversity of Kenyan caregiving, with households also headed by children, single women and extended family members.

settings, where intergenerational respect is so firmly engrained, there has been little focus on children's capacity for resistance. Instead, concerns are frequently raised that children may not feel able to refuse the sexual advances of an adult or a forced marriage, nor report abuse should it occur (Armstrong, 2000; Lalor, 2008). In her discussions of childhood in Ghana, for example, Twum-Danso writes:

> The socialization of children continues in the same way, leading to children who cannot question, cannot formulate their opinions and ask for help when they need it (Twum-Danso, 2009a: 422).

Since CSA is often committed by a person known to the victim, and thus someone within the child's social hierarchy, there is a real danger that internalized beliefs about the inappropriateness of questioning adults, or the importance of deferring to one's elders, may reduce the likelihood of children reporting abuse. Furthermore, noting that children are often expected to contribute towards the family workload in developing countries, Nieuwenhuys argues that:

> By legitimizing children's obligation to contribute to survival and denying them their right to seek personal gain, these hierarchies effectively constrain them to a position of inferiority within the family (Nieuwenhuys, 1996: 245).

Capturing this fear, in an ethnography examining child prostitution in Thailand, Montgomery (2009a) found that children did not perceive prostitution as work, instead conceptualizing it as part of the wider moral and reciprocal obligations to their families. When considering this in relation to child protection, there is consequently a danger that children may be exploited through a deeply entrenched sense of duty to their families.

Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that CSA is not just a feature of adult-child relationships, with a plethora of studies in Sub-Saharan contexts identifying the possibility of child perpetrators (Fineran, Bennett, & Sacco, 2001; Madu & Peltzer, 2000; Wood et al., 2007). Therefore, although there is little doubt that the implications of power differences between children and adults require serious consideration, depictions of childhood as a time of *innate* intergenerational power inequality potentially underplay children's capacity for resistance or, indeed, violence.

2.3.4 Unpicking Children's Agency

The final aspect of childhood I wish to consider is children's capacity for agency. The extent to which children can be active agents has been widely debated with Childhood Studies. In response to the

aforementioned depictions of childhood based on biological development, scholars writing within the New Sociology of Childhood have argued that although children may still be developing biologically and socially, they nonetheless have the capacity to exercise agency and make decisions (James & James, 2004; Jenks, 1996). Drawing on Berger and Luckmann's (1967) assertion that children are both constructed *and* have the agency to construct themselves, children are arguably in a state of 'being' and 'becoming' (Lee, 2001; Uprichard, 2008); in other words, in addition to appreciating children as human beings developing into adults, their *current* capacities and capabilities warrant recognition.

When considering children's agency in non-western settings, within the literature I reviewed two recurring themes appeared to influence local understandings of CSA. Firstly, understandings appeared to be influenced by the extent to which children are framed as exercising agency when they choose risky or dangerous sexual practices. Forming the backdrop to this debate, Bhana and Epstein note that children in the developing world often find themselves in 'unchildlike contexts' (Bhana & Epstein, 2007: 123) that are far-removed from the middle-class, home-centred depiction of childhood found within the UNCRC. They are therefore forced to enter abusive relationships or situations for their own survival. An example of this was observed early on in the on-going South Sudan conflict, with CARE (2014) reporting that girls were entering transactional sexual relationships to meet their basic needs after social support systems were destroyed by the conflict. Under the UNCRC guidelines, such relationships encapsulate sexual exploitation since the girls' unfulfilled needs were the driving force behind the relationship. However, whilst I am certainly not suggesting that it is acceptable for children to be forced into sexual relationship in this way, the label of sexual exploitation potentially masks the decision-making process they worked through before entering such a relationship. In other words, the label of victim, whilst important, overshadows their resilience in the face of adversity.

In order to bridge the gap between knowing agent and exploited victim, I find Klocker's (2007) notion of thinned and thickened agency especially helpful. Developed in relation to her work on child domestic workers in Tanzania, Klocker draws on a Foucauldian understanding of power, depicting it as relational; thus, even the apparently disempowered have agency. Applying this to child domestic workers, Klocker argues that agency falls on a continuum from thin to thick agency. Thin agency refers to 'decisions and everyday actions carried out within highly restrictive contexts, characterized by few viable alternatives' whilst thick agency refers to 'having the latitude to act within a broad range of options' (Klocker, 2007: 85). A person's agency may be thickened or thinned by structures, contexts or relationships. For instance, Klocker argues that intergenerational

responsibility and gender inequality greatly thins child domestic workers' agency. Relating this to my earlier discussions on transactional sex, the victims' agency can be viewed as vastly thinned, restricted by relative poverty, a lack of accessible social security measures and the presence of adults willing to exploit children's vulnerability. Yet, despite the victim's agency being significantly thinned, they are nonetheless making potentially life-changing decisions that warrant acknowledgement. I will return to this model for understanding children's agency later (Chapter Five), when considering the dominant conceptualization of CSA in my research setting as 'forced' sexual acts.

A second pertinent issue connecting children's capacity for agency with cultural constructions of CSA is the notion of sexual consent. Growing up in the West, I was socialized to view consent as a *personal choice* involving individuals directly involved in the act. However, in many African contexts a more collective view of consent also exists. Under Kenya's customary law, for instance, the extended family leads negotiations surrounding a couple's marriage, and thus their future sexual relations, ranging from bride price negotiations to picking an appropriate partner (Kamau, 2013). Underpinned by a *personal choice* conceptualization of consent, Wondie et al. therefore argue that 'consent is not a factor' in countries where arranged marriages are engrained in traditional cultures (Wondie, Zemene, Tafesse, Reschke, & Schröder, 2011: 2026). However, I would suggest that traditional practices highlight *different forms* of consent: *collective* consent, where unions are proposed by a couple but bride price negotiations involve extended family, and *proxy* consent, where couples are excluded from decisions, such as in arranged marriages. Thus, it is important to recognize that an arranged marriage may be viewed as a form of CSA when assessed from a *personal choice* perspective, yet a consensual union if assessed from a more *collective* or *proxy* understanding of consent.

2.4 Defining CSA according to Sexual Norms and Understandings of Children's Sexualities

A second important consideration when exploring local understandings of CSA is the cultural construction of sexuality and sexual practices. Specifically, it is necessary to examine the culturally-specific sexual scripts that regulate children's sexual development and subsequent sexual behaviours. Within this section, I consider two areas: cultural construction of sexual taboos and control of children's sexualities.

2.4.1 Unacceptable Sexual Practices

Incest is widely regarded as a universal feature of human societies (Hadreas, 2002). However, the types of relationship understood to constitute incest vary between, and within, cultures. In African

cultures where extended family networks hold greater significance than the nuclear family, conceptualizations of incest appear broad. For instance, in an older anthropological study examining rape in Gusiiland (Western Kenya), LeVine found that 'after circumcision at puberty, sexual activity was forbidden between members of the same clan' (LeVine, 1980: 152). So, the category of 'incestuous partner' was broadened to include not just immediate family but anyone from the same clan, underpinned by strong extended family ties. Similarly highlighting the culturally constructed nature of incest, a qualitative study examining perceptions of child rape in South Africa and Namibia[14] found that understandings of incest were shifting:

> It used to be [accepted for men to be attracted to girls within the family].
> Family men could even take their nieces as brides at an early age, but I do
> not think so any more (Jewkes et al., 2005: 1812).

Therefore, although incest remains a frequently mentioned taboo, the boundaries of what constitutes incest are arguably fluid, reflecting changing norms relating to the concept of family.

A further taboo frequently alluded to in literature on CSA relates to sex between an adult and a child. In his well-established conceptualization of CSA, Finkelhor (1984) cited the perpetrator's ability to overcome external impediments preventing sex with a child as one of four critical preconditions[15] for CSA. This position assumes that cultures have existing, and indeed strong, social norms prohibiting such relationships occurring. However, a number of studies have suggested that in some African cultures, sex with an infant may be encouraged, underpinned by the spiritual belief that sex with a virgin cures a person of HIV (Andersson et al., 2004; Petersen, Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Sossou & Yogtiba, 2009). The extent to which the virgin myth really influences perpetrators' behaviour has been questioned (Mtibo, Kennedy, & Umar, 2011)[16]. Nonetheless, the virgin myth serves to re-frame sex between an adult and infant as a remedy rather than a contravention of sexual norms.

Furthermore, in the aforementioned study on child rape in South Africa and Namibia, the researchers found that although most respondents deemed it 'unthinkable' or taboo, for an adult man to desire a child:

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[14] 77 interviews conducted with children (including abuse survivors), parents, male and female community members and key informants working with children.

[15] These are 1. Perpetrator having motivation to sexually abuse a child 2.Ability of the perpetrator to overcome internal inhibitions. 3. Ability of the perpetrator to overcome external impediments, and 4. Ability of the perpetrator to overcome possible resistance from the child

[16] None of the 58 CSA offenders interviewed cited the virgin myth as a motivation for offending, although their HIV status was unknown.

> …'teenagers' were not thought of as children in this respect. 'Teenage'
> girls' bodies were constructed in both settings as highly sensual and a
> 'natural' object of male desire (Jewkes et al., 2005: 1812).

By separating the category of 'child' into 'young child' and 'teenager', men were thus permitted to desire a much younger partner even though this person may be considered a child in other circumstances. This mirrors Jackson's (1999) observation that, within western cultures, men are not condemned for lusting after innocence or youth, provided the girls are not perceived to be *too young* or *too innocent*. These examples consequently highlight a critical problem with Finkelhor's conceptualization of CSA; namely, it assumes that sexual acts between a child and adult are universally forbidden, forcing the potential offender to make a conscious choice to break a sexual taboo.

Finally, it is important to note that a distinct characteristic of literature on CSA in African settings is the dominant backdrop of heteronormativity, with homosexual relations a strong taboo. In Kenya, for example, sexual acts between men carry a sentence of up to 14 years in prison[17]. Homosexuality is taught in school within the confines of CRE (Christian Religious Education), described as an 'irresponsible sexual behaviour' and placed in the same category as sexual acts including rape, bestiality and incest[18]. Furthermore, in a paper examining homosexual rights in Kenya, Finerty (2012) noted that the heteronormative discourse promoted by the State and religious leaders frequently translates into discriminatory action, with individuals believed to be homosexual reporting acute mistreatment, including gang-rape and police extortion. Such is the strength of the heteronormative framework in the region that countries are willing to lose financial assistance in order to uphold heteronormative values. In 2014, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) threatened to withhold financial assistance to Uganda following the government's elevation of homosexuality to a capital offence. Despite Uganda's reliance on American assistance to fund vital social services, the State refused to back down. They framed USAID's threats as an attempt at western cultural imperialism and aid was temporarily withdrawn. The taboo associated with homosexuality was therefore strong enough to risk losing a financial lifeline.

Reflecting the strength of heteronormative discourses across Sub-Saharan Africa, discussions around the experiences of victims of same-sex male rape are currently very limited. One notable exception is a paper by Pretorius (2009) which examines how male rape has been excluded from definitions of

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[17] Highlighting a male-focused construction of homosexuality that draws on biblical definitions of sodomy, same-sex relations between women are not criminalized.

[18] This is taken from a Form 4 state-approved CRE textbook for secondary schools.

rape in South Africa. The author notes that whilst feminism has been very influential in enhancing understandings of rape, it has nonetheless served to silence the voices of male rape victims. There is consequently a need to bring this issue to the forefront of discussions about sexual violence within African settings, allowing the voices of same-sex male rape victims to be heard.

2.4.2 Controlling Children's Sexualities

Turning specifically to cultural norms relating to sexuality in childhood, the ideal childhood outlined within the UNCRC arguably draws on what Stainton Rogers (2001) has called a 'romanticization of childhood' discourse, where children are viewed as inherently innocent and worthy of a 'happy childhood'. Underpinned by the work of Rousseau (1762), a innocence-based discourse presents childhood as a state in which children should be protected from the pollutants of adulthood, such as sex. As such:

> Children's sexuality within this discourse is read as nonexistent or immature at most. Thus sexual immaturity is equated with 'innocence' – considered inherent in the child. Consequently, sexuality becomes the exclusive realm of adults; a space in which children are constructed as the asexual, naïve, innocent 'other' (Robinson, 2011: 1169).

However, within literature on sexuality in African cultures, I observed that an alternative view was arguably more dominant, influenced by puritan notions of sexuality spread during colonialism. Children were not viewed as asexual, with a plethora of studies exploring children's sexual debut (first sexual intercourse) within Kenyan settings (Beguy, Kabiru, Nderu, & Ngware, 2009; Magadi & Agwanda, 2009; Okigbo, Kabiru, Mumah, Mojola, & Beguy, 2015). Thus, rather than emphasizing children's innocence, there was greater focus on policing children's developing sexualities.

When considering the impact of colonialism on 'African' sexualities, scholars have noted that sexualities themselves were colonized:

> By the 19th century…Africans were deemed innately biologically different and degenerate. And central to this essentialist belief were ideas about their distinctively pathological sexuality (Lewis, 2011: 200).

By creating a dominant discourse, depicting 'African' sexualities as dangerous, uncontrolled, and hyper-sexualized, the colonialists were able to justify discriminatory laws. In South Africa, for instance, local black men were banned from working in domestic service in a white person's household for fear that they may rape their white employers (Hearn, Morrell, Bhana, & Moletsane,

2007). African sexualities were therefore (re)constructed as a threat to the settlers' safety, necessitating control and restraint. This was further reinforced by South African missionaries who introduced the notion of sexual shame, forcing unmarried mothers to sit in separate areas when attending church and banning them from wearing white at their wedding (Delius & Glaser, 2005). Although forgiveness for unmarried mothers was still widely practised within families, highlighting that puritan discourses did not necessarily usurp family bonds, sexuality nevertheless became framed as something that needed to be controlled.

The enduring influence of puritan-influenced discourses is evident when considering Kenya's State policies relating to children's developing sexualities. This reflects what Hawkes and Egan refer to as the 'proper sexualization' of children (Hawkes & Egan, 2008: 198), or the socially sanctioned way in which children learn to become sexual beings. Within the national primary and secondary school curriculums in Kenya, for instance, sex and sexual health are taught within the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE), and abstinence (rather than safe sexual expression) is promoted (Wurzburg, 2011). Furthermore, sex is framed in terms of a morality-immorality dualism, with shame and disgrace tied to sexual agency outside marriage. Mirroring Scott, Jackson and Backett-Milburn's (1998) observation that attempts to regulate children's access to sexual knowledge reflect adults' fears about 'premature' sexual exposure, children are therefore given a highly restrictive picture of sex that precludes expressions of sexual agency in childhood. However, in many cultures, young people are surrounded by sex and sexuality on a day-to-day basis, be it by watching television or talking to their friends (Robinson, 2011). Children may therefore be *symbolically* excluded from sex and sexuality through norms and values that reinforce the 'proper' sexualization of children, yet nonetheless live in settings where exposure to sex is common.

In a study looking at 614 Kenyan young people's views on abortion, the authors found that young people frequently framed adolescent parenthood in terms of the 'sin' of sex (Mitchell, Halpern, Kamathi, & Owino, 2006). This study thus suggests that a puritan view of sexuality may resonate with students, or, at the very least, is understood as the 'correct' way of discussing sex with adult researchers. However, this is not to say that children are adhering to the dominant messages being projected about the discordance between sex and childhood. The 2008-09 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (Kenya National Bureau Of Statistics & ICF-Macro, 2010), for example, found that 11.5% of girls aged 15-19 years old and 22.3% of boys aged 15-19 years reported losing their virginity by the age of 15. Furthermore, in a study focused on informal settlements in Mombasa, Kenya, UNICEF and KNBS (2010) found that 4.2% of 15-19 year olds had 'married' before the age of 15 years. Although it is not clear what percentage of these children experienced the encounter as

consensual, the findings nonetheless suggest that children are exploring their developing sexualities. Child protection actors therefore need to recognize that dominant discourses relating to children's sexual development may not resonate for all children.

2.5 Gendered Understandings of CSA

Closely intertwined with sexuality is the impact of gender on cultural constructions of CSA. In particular, it is important to consider the development of children as gendered subjects, and the impact of this process on their understandings of CSA. Within this section, I will focus on three areas, directly relating to my research findings: gendered expectations relating to perpetrators and victims of CSA, the impact of gender on sexual scripts and the perceived association between thwarted fulfilment of male roles and CSA.

2.5.1 CSA as a Predominantly Female Issue

Across cultures, CSA typically involves a girl being abused by a (usually older) man:

> The inescapables generally glossed over are that it is usually older or adult
> males who sexually abuse children, mainly girls…and that this proclivity is
> tied in with social constructions of male sexuality, gendered identity and
> patriarchal power (Levett, 2003: 54).

This is reflected in prevalence studies conducted in Kenya, where girls have been found to be significantly more likely to report being sexual abused; for example, in a multi-country study looking at violence against children, Parkes and Heslop (2011) found that forced sex in Kenya was reported by 9.8% of girls, compared to 2.8% of boys. Similarly, Erulkar and Matheka (2007) found that 61.3% of boys living in a Nairobian informal settlement 'wanted' their first sexual experience, compared to 33.5% of girls. The predominance of male perpetrators has also been supported by a Childline Kenya study which noted that only 3% of calls to the helpline in a 13 month period related to a female perpetrator (Rassi & Nyamu, 2012).

However, when considering cultural constructions of CSA, it is important to question the extent to which alternative discourses of victimhood and offending are given space and credence within different settings. In strongly patriarchal cultures, such as Kenya, discourses relating to male victimhood sit in direct opposition to popular discourses depicting boys in a position of sexual dominance. To what extent can alternative discourses therefore be accommodated? Moreover, in cultures where dominant constructions of femininities are based on characteristics, such as nurturing and sexual passivity, how much credence is given to the possibility of female offending? Supporting the need for these questions, a study examining parents' perceptions of CSA in urban

Nigeria found that the notion of a non-male perpetrator was inconceivable for many parents, with 52.5% of the study's participants believing that female adults cannot sexually abuse a child (Ige & Fawole, 2011). This in turn creates an environment in which children abused by female perpetrators risk being denied the support offered to victims of male perpetrators. It is consequently important for researchers to not only identify dominant discourses relating to CSA, but consider the extent to which alternative discourses risk being downplayed and the impact this could have on victims' access to protective services.

2.5.2 The Impact of Gendered Sexual Scripts on Understandings of CSA

When considering sexual violence, and rape in particular, Jackson observed that despite rapists often being set apart as 'fiends', 'a close relationship coexists between rape and more conventional forms of sexual expression' (Jackson, 1999: 46). As such, she argues that the question should not be *why* some people commit rape, but, instead, *how* the possibility for rape is created. In particular, it is important to question how dominant sexual scripts perpetuate gender inequality in relation to male and female rights within a sexual encounter. Applying this to the literature I reviewed on CSA in Sub Saharan African contexts, a recurring theme was the expectation of male dominance within romantic heterosexual relationships, supporting the acceptance of limited sexual rights for women and girls (Wood & Jewkes, 1997; Wood, Maforah, & Jewkes, 1998). When exploring CSA in South African townships, for example, Wood et al. (2007) found widespread sexual abuse by peers within romantic relationships, with girls accepting that their boyfriends could force them to have sex as and when they wished. Similarly, in a large scale study examining living conditions within informal settlements in Mombasa, the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics (2010) found that 18.5% of girls aged 15-19 years believed that a husband is justified in beating his wife if the latter refuses to have sex. Romantic relationships therefore appear to be an arena where gender inequalities relating to sexual choice are routinely (re)created.

When considering the (re)creation of power inequalities within sexual relationships, feminist scholars have highlighted the role of gender socialization and patriarchy in supporting women's weakened position, with girls learning from an early age that theirs is a role of submission and reduced power in relation to that of men. Kangara, for instance, notes that the terminology used to describe men and women in the Kikuyu[19] vernacular language encapsulates power differentials based on gender:

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[19]Ethnic group, traditionally occupying the Central region of Kenya.

> ....the word for man *mundumurume* comes from the work *urume*, which
> means extremely courageous. In contrast, the word *mutumia*(woman)
> comes from the word *tumia,* which means to use (Kangara, Not given: 1).

Power inequalities, underpinned by patriarchal order, subsequently weaken girls' ability to exercise agency within sexual relations and have been identified as an underlying cause of CSA (Mweru, 2010). Evidence of these inequalities is clearly illustrated in a qualitative study looking at the sexual experiences of pregnant teenagers in a South African township which found that decisions about when to have sex were made predominantly by male partners (Wood & Jewkes, 1997). Furthermore, female respondents reported that male partners tore up their family planning cards, taking away their choice over pregnancy, and used rape as a way of punishing girlfriends suspected of being unfaithful. Nevertheless, the girls in the study appeared to accept this behaviour as a 'normal' part of a heterosexual relationship, constructing the violence as an expression of their romantic ties, or 'love', rather than CSA.

Likewise, in cultures underpinned by strong patriarchal values, boys tend to be socialized to value masculinities built around active heterosexuality and sexual dominance. This is highlighted in a Kenyan study by Nzioka (2001) that used focus groups with 90 adolescent boys (15-19 years) to explore their attitudes towards unwanted pregnancy and STIs. The study found that participants believed impregnating a girl and getting a treatable STI were markers of masculinity. Furthermore, Lewis observes that the trial of (now) South African president Jacob Zuma for alleged sexual assault demonstrated how sexual violence is constructed as a 'normal' expression of masculinity and sexuality within South African society:

> As revealed by the rape trail of Jacob Zuma in South Africa, rape, recast as
> 'aggressive male heterosexual behaviour' may sometimes by re-defined as
> the legitimate heterosexual response of 'normal' African men (Lewis, 2011:
> 212).

Returning to Jackson's (1999) assertion that there is a close association between rape and more conventional sexual relationships, rape thus becomes an extension of normal male sexual expression.

The impact of this is that even if girls do not desire sex with their partners, their voices may not be acknowledged. This is evidenced in a Kenyan-based study looking at the sexual experiences of young

people[20], in which Njue et al. (2005) found that a girl saying 'no' to sex was sometimes viewed as her doing what was expected to maintain her reputation; 'no' was consequently understood to mean 'yes'. Similarly, in a study looking at health sector responses to sexual violence in three districts of Kenya, Kilonzo et al. (2008) found that participants (including men, women and children) did not always see a clear line between forced, coerced and consensual sex:

> The complexities of consent (or lack of it) are also reflected in the women's perceived inability to assertively say no to sex…a female adolescent in Thika explained that some girls do not say 'no' clearly enough (Kilonzo et al., 2008: 189).

Indeed, so deep-rooted is this discourse within Kenyan society that a male MP felt able to publically state that 'women always say "no", even when they mean "yes"' (Shadle, 2008: 27). Against a strong patriarchal backdrop, girls consequently appear to be socialized to accept that their sexual choices will not be respected. This observation correlates with the findings of a study that used regular focus groups (over a period of 6 months) to ascertain the knowledge and coping strategies of 216 'adolescents' (12-22 years) living in an urban setting in Kenya:

> Sexual behaviour was regarded as a male domain initiated by boys, where girls were considered legitimate prey…Girls learned that sex was something that happened to them, not something that they could initiate, enjoy, or actively participate in…Males learned the converse: Sex was their preserve, to be initiated and pursued at will, and without consent (Balmer et al., 1997: 38).

Learnt gender roles within a romantic relationship thus serve to reinforce both male dominance and female submission within sexual relationships, depriving girls of opportunities to exercise their sexual agency.

2.5.3 The Impact of Failed Fulfilment of Gender Roles on Sexual Violence

Much of the literature considering the impact of gender roles and socialization on CSA focuses on females' innate power disadvantages, especially in cultures with strong patriarchal structures. Nonetheless, a smaller group of studies exploring why sexual violence occurs depicts an alternative view, in which sexual abuse is the result of men and boys experiencing a sense of powerlessness. When exploring multiple meanings of manhood amongst boys in Ghana, Ampofo and Boateng

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[20] Study focuses on experiences of Luhya youth, an ethnic group from Western Kenya.

(2011) note that colonialism created a powerful discourse of masculinity in which men were positioned as household providers, juxtaposed with the female 'homemaker'. As such, women who chose to move to cities to look for work, rather than staying upcountry with their family and working the land, lost respectability (Hungwe, 2006). Consequently, although men and women were both working to sustain their families, only men were cast as providers. A discourse of masculinity was thus created which linked men's self-respect to their ability to provide.

Ampofo and Boateng go on to note that the provider discourse continues to hold resonance in modern-day Ghana, with boys in their study aspiring to the provider role. This mirrors findings from a study examining the 'materiality' of love in a South African township in which Bhana and Pattman (2011) found that both boys and girls perceived provision to be a critical male role. In fact, such was its importance for achieving dominance within relationships that boys reported seeking virgins from their rural villages who were less demanding than township girls in terms of their material expectations. However, whilst the boys in Bhana and Pattman's study were able to find ways of fulfilling this gender role, despite their limited means, Ampofo and Boateng note that the boys in their Ghanaian study lamented that the current economic climate was reducing men's opportunities for income generation. The authors subsequently argue that this leads to men getting stressed and becoming violent. In a South African study examining teachers' perception of gender-based violence, Bhana et al. support this assertion, noting that a male participant said:

> We as men really need to feel that we are respected. So, if, if sometimes
> we feel not respected we tend to get violent (Bhana, de Lange, & Mitchell,
> 2009: 54).

Loss of respect, and avenues to accrue respect, were therefore used as both an explanation and excuse for violence.

Masculinities that reinforce men's power in relation to women may consequently contribute towards some cases of CSA. However, it is important not to overplay their significance, with Ampofo and Boateng (2011) acknowledging that not all the boys in their study ascribed to discourses of masculinity that depict men as powerful providers and decision-makers. Instead, some advocated that men should listen to their wives' opinions. This therefore highlights the importance of questioning the extent to which dominant patriarchal discourses hold resonance at a community level, and, where alternative discourses are being projected, why this is so.

2.6 Consequences of CSA

The final section of this chapter considers how perceived consequences of CSA impact on cultural constructions of CSA. I start by examining widely-appropriated western discourses relating to the inevitability of harm, questioning their application to non-western settings, before considering the possibility of socially and culturally-generated sigma.

2.6.1 Inevitability of Harm

Within the West, current prominent understandings of CSA have tended to be built around what O'Dell terms 'the highly singularized 'story' of psychological harm' (O'Dell, 2003: 131). From this perspective, CSA is understood as an inevitable, pathological disruption to the victim's psychological development, affecting their current and future psychosocial well-being (Doyle Peters, 1988; Woodiwiss, 2013). The abused child is therefore understood to be qualitatively different from the non-abused child. Such is the power of this story of psychological harm within the West that women who are abused are typically positioned as victims, regardless of whether they position themselves as such (Lamb, 1999). Women are consequently encouraged to re-frame current emotional or social difficulties in light of their past experiences of abuse, placing their victimhood at the centre of their current identity.

The 'singularized story of psychological harm' has, nonetheless, been justifiably criticized. Reavey (2003), for example, noted that automatically attributing a person's problems to past experiences of sexual abuse ignores the potential harm imposed by deep-rooted structural inequalities that women and girls encounter on a day-to-day basis, such as patriarchy. Furthermore, it overlooks the considerable resilience that children frequently display in the face of adversity. Indeed, in a study comparing the developmental outcomes of mothers who had experienced abuse as a child with those who had not, Leifer, Kilbane, and Kalick observed that abused mothers had:

> …achieved healthier developmental outcomes than might be expected for victims of CSA. These mothers did not report significantly greater trauma-related symptomatology than the non-abused mothers despite the existence of CSA as a risk factor for poor developmental outcome (Leifer, Kilbane, & Kalick, 2004: 88-89).

However, whilst the authors highlighted the victims' resilience, they were obviously analysing their findings from a position that expected a degree of damage. In contrast, in an effort to disrupt the 'singularized story of psychological harm', Woodiwiss (2014) has helpfully argued for harm to be separated from wrongfulness. This is a move that recognizes that not all victims will equate their

abuse with psychological harm, better enabling victims 'to tell their own stories which may, but may not, include psychological damage' (Woodiwiss, 2014: 139). A person consequently does not have to accept the position of 'damaged' in order to be recognized as a victim of CSA.

Despite these concerns, the 'singularized story of psychological harm' appears to have had some influence on the research culture in Kenya and the wider Sub-Saharan region. In a small-scale qualitative study examining parents' perceptions of CSA in Botswana and Swaziland (18 respondents), Mathoma et al. started their article by stating:

> Child sexual abuse…is just one of the worst forms of child abuse…is a devastating problem that poses a serious threat to the emotional and mental well-being of the victims (Mathoma, Maripe-Perera, Khumalo, Mbayi, & Seloilwe, 2006: 67-68).

The authors therefore strongly emphasized the threat of CSA to a child's psychological well-being. However, more commonly, I noted a significantly lower emphasis on the psychological impact of CSA, with studies focusing more on the social (e.g. stigma, discussed below) and physical effects (e.g. injury, HIV). For instance, reflecting the relatively high levels of HIV across many sub-Saharan countries, CSA is frequently framed in terms of the potential transmission risks associated with forced sexual intercourse (Abuya, Onsomu, & Moore, 2012b; Kilonzo et al., 2008; Njue, Voeten, & Remes, 2009, 2011; Speight et al., 2006). CSA is thus transformed from a threat to the well-being of the victim, to a wider public health risk.

The lower emphasis on psychological risks is possibly explained by the relatively recent exportation of western-derived bio-medical discourses of mental health to the East African region through international health organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO). As such, spiritualist models of mental health still hold considerable resonance. Indeed, a study examining the use of traditional healers in two informal settlements in Nairobi found that traditional healers were widely consulted for a wide range of mental health issues, ranging from diagnosis of madness to 'thinking too much' (Ndetei, Mbwayo, Mutiso, Khasakhala, & Chege, 2013: 19). Critically, satisfaction with healers appeared high, providing little incentive for residents to use western mental healthcare. Therefore, although the centrality of harm was certainly a key feature in much of the African literature I reviewed, the types of harms discussed varied noticeably from western literature.

2.6.2 The Potential for Stigma and Blame following CSA

The possibility for stigma following CSA was a strong theme in both western and non-western literature, particularly in relation to assigning responsibility or blame to a victim, especially girls. A

Canadian study by Walker (2011), for instance, found that some caregivers thought that it was acceptable to ask a child why they let themselves be sexually abused. The authors concluded that preventative CSA programmes need to inform parents that children should not be blamed for experiencing CSA. Similarly, in a study exploring CSA in Kenya, Rassi and Nyamu (2012) reported that one girl had not just been blamed by her parents for being sexually abused, but also beaten by her mother as punishment. Stigma and blame therefore represent 'secondary victimization' in which further harm derives from reactions to the abuse (Williams, 1984).

The following quotes from two qualitative studies examining sexual violence in Sub-Saharan African settings suggest that children accept the possibility that victims of sexual abuse may be blamed. In a study examining sexual abuse of school children in Kenya, a pupil commented:

> 'Some fathers can rape their children but sometimes it is their children's fault because some girls wear mini-skirts and they pass in front of their fathers. Some fathers are filled with lust so they can immediately rape their children' (Ruto, 2009: 186).

Similarly, in study examining child rape in South Africa and Namibia, a girl said:

> 'When my father, my uncle or my brother is there, I don't wear them [tight trousers] because if they rape me, I can't blame them' (Jewkes et al., 2005: 1813).

Critically, these two quotations highlight that children believe blame to be justifiable, with the naturalness of men's lust contrasted with the inappropriateness and danger of girls expressing their sexuality.

Victim-blaming can also be underpinned by puritan discourses of sexuality, discussed earlier. Wurzburg (2011) found that a State-sanctioned CRE textbook for 17-18 year olds stated that:

> It is important to learn how to minimize the risk of rape…Timidity tends to encourage aggressors to strike since it gives them a chance to convince themselves that they are powerful…Girls should dress modestly to avoid arousing people who have such tendencies, They should also avoid dark and lonely places…Christianity teaches against rape as irresponsible sexual behaviour [from God's people, Oxford Press] (Wurzburg, 2011: 23)

By suggesting that rape is something girls should 'learn' to avoid, especially through the avoidance of arousing potential perpetrators' sexual desires, children are being taught that they have some control over whether they become victims. However, whilst this could be a positive message, highlighting children's potential ability to resist CSA, Wurzburg notes that the textbook fails to acknowledge that rape is a crime, instead constructing it as an 'immoral behaviour' that girls have a responsibility to avoid. The conditions for victim-blaming are consequently established through socialization and the formal State curriculum. Interestingly, the textbook also constructs rape as an innately female problem; drawing on the earlier discussions around gender, it places the responsibility for avoiding rape solely in the hands of girls, ignoring the experiences of boys who have experienced rape.

However, this is not to say that *all* adults and children believe that children can be culpable for acts of CSA. Indeed, in a study looking at parents' perceptions and practices relating to CSA in urban Nigeria, 89.9% of parents believed that a child who is sexually abused is not to blame (Ige & Fawole, 2011). Furthermore, in the earlier mentioned study examining parents' perceptions of CSA in Botswana and Swaziland, Mathoma et al. (2006) found that parents blamed western dress for increasing a child's risk of CSA. Yet, the authors challenged this construction of 'revealing' clothes as a justification for CSA, noting that many of the traditional clothes worn in African countries exposed more flesh than the western styles worn by the current generation. Drawing on my earlier discussion on the challenges of defining CSA, Mathoma et al. consequently illustrate that showing flesh is not *per se* 'sexy' but rather it is the connotations attributed to certain styles of clothing that makes them 'sexual'; in other words, the concept of 'sexiness' is culturally constructed. Nevertheless, it is especially concerning that the theme of victim-blaming dominates Sub-Saharan African literature since this reduces the likelihood that victims will seek assistance in the event of CSA, and thus be unable to prevent long-term harms, such as impeding HIV seroconversion through the use of post-exposure prophylaxis.

2.7 Conclusion

Within this chapter, I have followed Lalor (2004a) in arguing the case for research in non-western settings that does not assume a universal understanding of the term CSA and that challenges the uncritical application of western discourses relating to CSA and childhood to the Global South. The chapter calls for a research approach that recognizes 'the need to destabilize the dominant discourses…which are unconsciously ethnocentric, rooted in European cultures and reflective of a dominant Western world view' (McEwan, 2008: 124-125). As such, my research makes a distinctive contribution to Kenyan CSA research by interrogating the way in which western-derived models of

CSA have been used as an ideal type against which other children's experiences are judged. In doing so, I draw on social constructionist perspectives to argue that CSA is not a set of fixed, universally-understood actions. Instead, it is a socially constructed phenomenon that can be conceptualized in many different ways, depending on the social setting and impact of culturally-specific discourses relating to concepts such as gender and sexuality. With this in mind, I now turn to the research setting, exploring social and cultural features of the context that appeared to influence understandings of CSA and protection.

Chapter Three

Life on the Margins of the Formal Municipality: Introducing the Research Context

3.0 Introduction

Lying on the east coast of Africa, Kenya was under British colonial rule for almost seven decades until becoming an independent state in 1963. Since independence, Kenya has achieved one of the region's most advanced economies, showcased in the capital city, Nairobi, where a rapidly developing infrastructure accompanies brand new estates and luxury shopping malls. However, despite this veneer of developing affluence, Kenya nonetheless remains in the bottom 25% of least developed states in the world (UNDP, 2013); indeed, 53.8% of its 47.8 million population are

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[21] Photo is indicative, taken from another settlement. Providing visual evidence from my site risked compromising the identity of non-resident key informants whose roles were geographically defined. Taken from http://mediadsm.lithodyne.net/gallery/index.php/Slums-of-Nairobi/1-Kibera-Slum.

believed to be living on less than $2 per day (Oburu, 2011). Against this backdrop, Nairobi's economic growth and subsequent urbanization has been 'largely characterized by deepening disparities between the wealthy and the urban poor' (Lamba, 1994: 165), with the more affluent echelons of society controlling disproportionate amounts of the city's resources. The urban landscape is thus characterized by planned estates that directly adjoin informal settlements, with the latter housing around 60% of the city's three million population (Sheenhan, 2005) on approximately 5% of the city's residential land (Muraguri, 2011).

As noted in Chapter One, my research is set in one of these informal settlements. Known colloquially as 'slums' by residents and non-residents alike, informal settlements are defined by UN Habitat as:

> 1. areas where groups of housing units have been constructed on land that
> the occupants have no legal claim to, or occupy illegally; 2. unplanned
> settlements and areas where housing is not in compliance with current
> planning and building regulations (UN Habitat, 2003: 12).

Under this definition, the settlements are constructed predominantly in terms of their illegality, creating a stark binary between the planned and unplanned areas of the city. However, this overly simplistic and static conceptualization fails to take into account the State's purported efforts to integrate informal settlements into the formal municipality through 'slum' upgrading programmes. Informal settlements are thus positioned on the cusp of the formal municipality, ostensibly embraced by the State in policies and rhetoric, whilst still excluded from many services and rights afforded to residents of formally-planned estates. Drawing on work by Moore (1973), I consequently suggest that a more helpful way of understanding informal settlements is through her concept of semi-autonomous social fields. Through this conceptual lens, informal settlements can be seen to be affected by central State mechanisms whilst simultaneously drawing on locally-derived social norms and customs to regulate everyday life and respond to residents' continuing exclusion from municipal support.

Underpinned by this more nuanced conceptualization of informal settlements, Chapter Three has two aims: to introduce life in the research context and to make a case for conceptualizing the research setting as a semi-autonomous social field. I start with a brief historical overview of Kenya's informal settlements, before introducing Moore's concept of semi-autonomous social fields. The remainder of the chapter introduces the research setting through consideration of six aspects of day-to-day life relevant to my later findings: governance and protection, household composition, housing, access to services, livelihoods, and insecurity.

3.1 The Emergence of Informal Settlements in Kenya

Informal settlements have become synonymous with African urban settings, tracing their roots back to widespread colonialism and the influence of neo-liberalism that swept across the continent from the 1970s onwards. The first settlements emerged in Nairobi at the end of the 19th Century, following the British Government's declaration of an East African Protectorate[22]. As part of the Protectorate's creation, the administrative capital moved from Mombasa to Nairobi, initiating a demand for surplus local labour and leading to increased urban internal migration (K'Akumu & Olima, 2007). Underpinned by racist discourses extolling the danger of 'natives', the Protectorate, and subsequent Colonial Administration, sought to tightly control local workers' access to Nairobi. Segregation policies were subsequently imposed across the territory; measures ranged from the creation of 14 Native reserves, where whole ethnic groups were removed *en masse* from areas favoured by the settlers (Okoth-Ogendo, 1984), to the imposition of exclusionary housing policies that only allowed local men employed by settlers to (temporarily) reside in Nairobi in migrant housing (Hay & Harris, 2007). Colonial urban centres were thus constructed, both physically and socially, as 'white spaces' which African men were only allowed to infiltrate in order to support the development of the colonial economy.

However, whilst The Employment of Servants Ordinance (1906) decreed that all Asian and European employers had a responsibility to provide migrant housing to local workers, many reneged on this responsibility (Hay & Harris, 2007). Temporary workers were thus forced to develop informal settlements on the outskirts of the city, which grew in size and number during the Administration's governance. Stigmatized by the Administration, settlements were framed in terms of their illegality and threat to order, and under constant threat of demolition. However, residents resisted the Administration's attempts to purge them from the city, and no sooner had a settlement been demolished than a new one emerged (Hay & Harris, 2007; Hendriks, 2010; K'Akumu & Olima, 2007).

In 1963, Kenya achieved independence and restrictions on movement and residency were relaxed, leading to accelerated internal urban migration (Maxon, 1995); dwellings in Nairobi's informal settlements alone rose from an estimated 500 in 1952 to 11,000 in 1979 (K'Akumu & Olima, 2007). The settlements were filled, predominantly, by Kenyan nationals, including a growing number of women[23]. However, policies relating to informal settlements saw little substantive change. After claiming the land on which many settlements were built, the Jomo Kenyatta Government made clear its intentions to continue demolishing informal settlements and withholding state services (Ekdale,

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[22]Became a British Colony in 1920.

[23] This contrasted with Southern Africa, where urban migration was largely regional rather than internal.

2011). The settlements therefore remained constructed as 'dangerous' by the State, and residents found themselves at continued odds with the ruling authority[24]. Nonetheless, political opposition prevented the State from exercising mass demolition (Hendriks, 2010), and by the late 1970s, the sheer size of the population occupying the settlements forced the State to adopt what K'Akumu and Olima term a position of *tacit acceptance* (K'Akumu & Olima, 2007: 92); the settlements were allowed to remain but denied access to municipal services. However, from the 1970s, neo-liberal structural adjustment polices swept across the continent (pushed by the West). These brought greater hardship to more economically-vulnerable members of Kenyan society due to decreased welfare spending and high unemployment. Indeed, by the 1990s, the gap between the rich and poor had significantly increased (Rono, 2002).

Under President Kibaki's tenure (2002-2013), and following pressure from western development organizations (e.g. UN and World Bank), tacit acceptance was replaced by a vocalized commitment to upgrade the settlements and ensure provision of basic municipal services. In 2003, a Memorandum was signed by the Kenyan Government and UN-Habitat, outlining the 'Kenyan Slum Upgrading Programme' that sought to enhance inhabitants' living standards (UN-Habitat, 2008). A pivotal element of the programme was the relocation of families to temporary housing to allow upgrading to start. Nevertheless, impeded by a paternalist rather than participatory approach (MacPherson, 2013), the initiative struggled to gain local traction. Reasons included concerns about the temporary housing's distance from residents' livelihoods and allegations of corruption (Amnesty International, 2009). Fears were also raised that improving infrastructure could lead to rent increases (Huchzermeyer, 2008), forcing low income households to develop new settlements. Progress has since been slow. Moreover, despite this focus on 'slum upgrading', I found that settlements remain stigmatized: for instance, State employee Emma (26-30, hospital social worker) commented that the police are scared of 'those people' (living in informal settlements), evoking a derogatory 'them' and 'us' distinction.

Informal settlements are therefore in a precarious position, ostensibly embraced whilst simultaneously distanced by actors from the formal municipality. Responding to the State's failure to extend full municipal support to the settlements, the non-profit sector has developed an indelible presence in informal settlements across Kenya, providing basic social services (Mohamed, 2010). However, although residents I spoke with appeared appreciative of non-profit sector investment, lingering suspicions were evident regarding transparency: for example, a health-focused NGO had

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[24] This mirrored the situation in other ex-colonial states, such as Zimbabwe, where "Operation Murambatsvina" led to the forcible clearance of informal settlements under the guise of restoring order (Potts, 2006).

been chased away from the research settlement following concerns that the organization was profiteering from its work. NGOs consequently play a critical role in informal settlements' continuing development, although this assistance appears founded on potentially uneasy power dynamics with communities, a tension between reliance and suspicion.

3.2 Semi-Autonomous Social Fields

As noted in the introduction, the term 'informal settlement' encourages a dichotomous view of Kenya's urban centres in which legally-planned areas of the city are positioned in direct contrast to the informal settlements. This depiction can be used as a powerful advocacy tool to highlight the continuing exclusion of informal settlements from State resources and services. However, it nonetheless creates an over-simplistic, outdated, dichotomy between the formal and informal. A more nuanced way of understanding informal settlements' changing position within the urban landscape is required.

I suggest that Moore's (1973) concept of semi-autonomous social fields offers an alternative means to conceptualize the complex internal and external social dynamics of informal settlements. Developed in relation to discussions around legal pluralism, Moore argues that semi-autonomous social fields are characterized by their ability to 'generate rules and coerce or induce compliance to them' (Moore, 1973: 722). However, semi-autonomous social fields do not exist in a vacuum:

> …[semi-autonomous social fields] generate rules and customs and symbols internally, but…it is also vulnerable to rules and decisions and other forces emanating from the larger world by which it is surrounded. The semi-autonomous field has rule-making capacities, and the means to induce or coerce compliance; but it is simultaneously set in a larger social matrix which can, and does, affect and invade it, sometimes at the invitation of persons inside it, sometimes at its own instance (Moore, 1973: 720).

Semi-autonomous social fields are consequently social organizations or domains that generate their own norms and values, whilst concurrently existing alongside, and interacting with, State laws and systems. This is clearly illustrated in Razzaz's (1992) application of Moore's concept when exploring the relationship between the State and residents of an illegal urban settlement in the Yajouz area of Jordan. Living on land claimed by both the State and the Bani Hassan ethnic group, a community-based mechanism for selling land to kinsman or new settlers developed called *hujja*, in which the seller had an obligation to guarantee the land would not be grabbed by neighbours and community members. This did not stop State intrusion, with clauses later added to *hujja* which protected the

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sellers' honour against this threat. Thus, the semi-autonomy of Yajouz meant that internal norms and expectations co-existed alongside, and interacted with, external threats, such as State intervention.

Within this chapter, I follow Razzaz in arguing that the concept of semi-autonomous social fields is helpful for understanding the complex dynamics between informal settlements and the State. However, whilst he focused predominately on land ownership, I argue that informal settlements' semi-autonomy can be seen in all facets of life, including child protection. With informal settlements separated into administrative units, known as *villages,* I argue that villages operate as semi-autonomous social fields, displaying both an ability to generate and enforce social norms within their boundaries, whilst being simultaneously affected by wider State law and social policy. By exploring everyday life within the village where I conducted my research, I demonstrate how villages operate according to locally-derived social norms, regulated by a committee of village elders and community-driven social norms. However, positioned within the municipality, they are not fully autonomous entities but simultaneously affected by State policies, such as land-clearing and taxation on basic commodities. Indeed, as informal settlements are further embraced by the State, the invasion of State law and policy is also arguably increasing, although this simultaneously creates greater space for villages to attempt to mobilize State policies to their advantage.

It is important to note that discussions on legal pluralism have frequently occurred in relation to the introduction of statutory law in settings where customary norms and values pre-existed. This is illustrated by Moore in her discussion of semi-autonomous social fields, in which she considers the Chagga tribe from Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania). She explores how new State laws relating to land ownership were usurped by the community's existing customary norms and practices. An implicit tension is consequently evident between tradition and modernity. In contrast, when considering dynamics in Yajouz, Razzaz argues that:

> ...it is important to dispel misconceptions of a social field representing tradition in the face of modernity. Yajouz as a social field is essentially a "modern" response to equally "modern" phenomena: the nation state actively seeking to control the allocation of resources in society by bestowing legitimacy over certain social claims and illegitimacy over others. Indeed, Yajouz came in response to, more than anything else, contemporary threats of dispossession, opportunities for profit, and basic needs for housing (Razzaz, 1992: 47).

This shares many similarities to my own research setting. However, I would argue that the norms and practices evident in informal settlements have two roots: traditional customs exported from rural areas through the process of urban migration, and social norms and practices that have developed in response to residents' exclusion from the formal municipality. Thus, *two* tensions exist: one between tradition and the changing practices of urban life, and the second between inclusion and exclusion in relation to municipal services. Both tensions help shape the social and cultural dynamics of life in Kijiji.

3.3 Introducing the Research Setting

Established over half a century ago, the informal settlement where I conducted my research is home to up to 200,000 people[25] on an area of less than 1km^2. It is divided into over a dozen administrative units, referred to as *villages,* using geographical markers (e.g. pathways or rivers)*.* I conducted my research in one specific village. In order to disrupt the image of informal settlements as sprawling entities with little structure, I chose the Kiswahili word for village - *Kijiji-* as its pseudonym[26].

 Kijiji is a mid-sized village, covering an area of approximately 60,000m^2. The 2009 Census reported that just under 6000 people resided in Kijiji[27]. However, supporting Gulyani and Talukdar's (2008) observation that efforts to understand informal settlements are thwarted by a lack of reliable statistical data, this figure is believed to be overly conservative, representing low participation in the Census rather than the actual population. Instead, NGO-funded studies, conducted with the local community's assistance, have estimated the population to be closer to 12,000 people, with men and women evenly represented. Since most structures are single-storey, open space is scarce. A main untarmacked thoroughfare and square act as commercial hubs, lined with water points, communal washrooms, schools, and a plethora of small businesses. These include metal kiosks selling groceries; wooden tables laden with vegetables or dried fish; and mobile phone charging stands[28]. Feeding off the main thoroughfare are scores of extremely narrow alleyways (termed *corridors*) where residential houses are located.

3.4 Life on the Margins: Day-to Day Life in Kijiji

Within the remainder of this chapter, I provide insight into life in Kijiji, exploring 6 aspects of everyday life: governance and protection, household composition, housing, access to services, livelihoods and insecurity. Whilst many of these categories support my case for Kijiji's

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[25]Figure based on a population count, conducted by an NGO, in 2012, although some estimates have suggested the population may be as high as 500,000.
[26] A pseudonym was necessary to protect the identity of key informants of geographically-defined roles.
[27]Exact figures withheld to protect Kijiji's identity.
[28] Used by households without electricity.

conceptualization as a semi-autonomous social field, they were also chosen for their direct relevance to my discussions regarding CSA and protective responses in Part Two of the thesis.

3.4.1 Governance and Protection

Local Governance

Perhaps the clearest indication of Kijiji as a semi-autonomous social field is the co-existence of two, often opposing, systems of justice: statutory law and community-based justice. This legal pluralism traces its roots back to colonialism, where the Colonial Administration introduced a dual legal system in which traditional (customary) and colonial governance systems operated side-by-side (Thornberry, 2011). Thus,

> Native Tribunals were established and run by ostensible traditional authorities, to apply "native law and custom" (or customary law) to Africans while English-type courts run by British magistrates and judges administered the received English law to govern non-Africans (Kamau, 2014: 4).

Customary law was traditionally associated with a specific ethnic group, reflecting the lived cultural practices and governance mechanisms verbally passed down over many generations. The dawn of Native Tribunals saw the codification of customary law. However, Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) argue was this represents colonial constructs of customary law rather than a reflection of the everyday cultural dynamics of a specific group. Given this disjuncture between codified customary law and living customary law, and the shifting nature of cultural norms underpinning the latter, multiple interpretations of customary law consequently exist.

Despite this lack of clarity, the community-based justice system evident in Kijiji arguably derives from this more traditional form of governance. This is evident through the use of collective restoration and non-statutory interventions, such as compensation and corporal punishment. However, noting that urban migration has disrupted the ethnically-homogenous communities traditionally associated with customary law, Kariuki (2007) argues that a distinction is needed between 'pure' customary law (traditionally founded on ethnicity and culture) and informal justice systems based on collective interests (e.g. shared experiences or challenges). Thus, within my research, I refer to the two governance systems found in Kijiji as statutory law and community-based justice. Drawing on Kamau, the latter is understood as the 'informal justice forums [that] persist despite the presence of the state judicial system…which apply popular localized norms' (Kamau, 2014:3).

Central to the administration of community-based justice is the Village Chairman and his team of elders. Reflecting the strong patriarchal structures underpinning traditional governance systems, at the time of research, Kijiji's elders were predominantly male and from the two largest ethnic groups within the village (Luo and Luhya). Three residents from other ethnic groups consequently complained that their lack of ethnic solidarity with local leaders reduced their access to social support and leverage. Despite occupying voluntary positions, village elders wield considerable power, maintaining order through community forums. Here, residents bring disputes or complaints, ranging from arguments about noise to cases of theft. Sanctions associated with community-based justice may then be imposed, such as flogging or ostracization.

However, illustrating the growing push to integrate informal settlements into State governance mechanisms, the Chairman can also refer cases to State officials, such as the police or Chief, to be handled through the statutory legal system. This reflects the fact that the Chairman's appointment is sanctioned not just by the village but also by the Area Chief, the State's representative for the settlement. As such, the Chairman is anointed as both the villagers' chosen leader and the State's unpaid representative in the village. Moore notes that:

> …the social field is semi-autonomous not only because it can be affected by
> the direction of outside forces impinging upon it, but because persons
> inside the social field can mobilize those outside forces, or threaten to do
> so, in their bargaining with each other (Moore, 1973: 729).

Thus, whilst the State uses the Chairman as an entry point to extend statutory governance to the village (offering regular training on law and social policy to him and his elders), he is rewarded with direct links to statutory mechanisms which he can mobilize on request. He can choose to initiate State or community-based justice. A tension subsequently exists between the State's desire for total control and its reliance on local actors to give legitimacy to its governance mechanisms in Kijiji and the wider settlement.

Child Protection Mechanisms

Reflecting this legal pluralism, child protection mechanisms within Kijiji draw on both statutory and community-based justice systems. Following the introduction of the Children Act (2001), Kenya developed a National Child Protection System (Figure 3.2). Collaboration is especially important between the seventeen actors at the centre of the diagram. Mirroring a public health model of

protection[29], the system aims to promote a holistic and co-ordinated approach to child protection in three areas: primary (universal prevention), secondary (targeted prevention) and tertiary (response) protection.
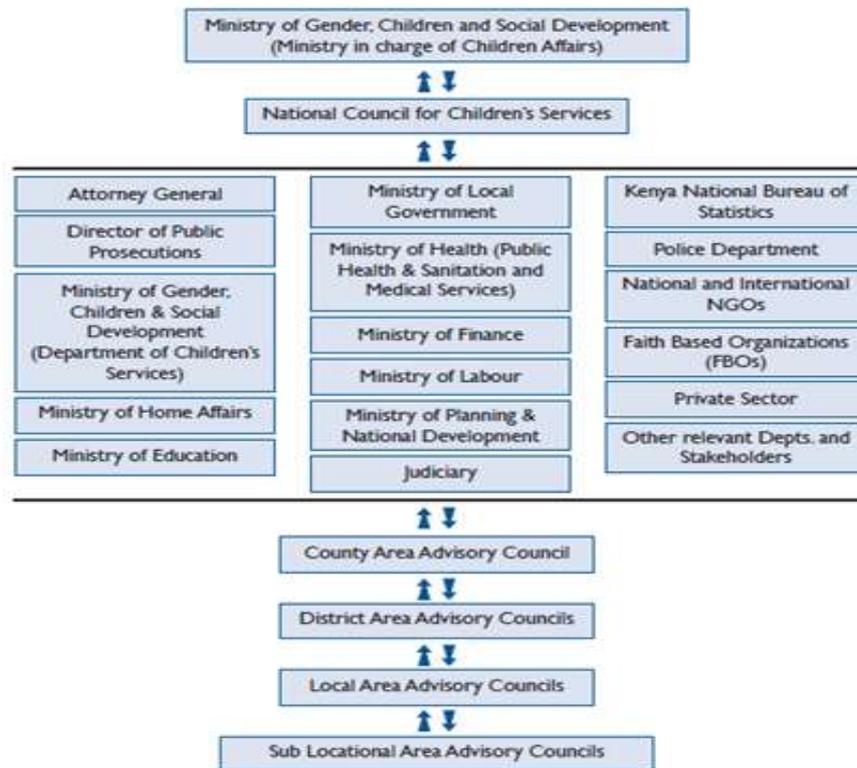
Figure 3.2: National Child Protection System (taken from National Council for Children's Services, 2011)

This model represents a conceptual shift from a fragmented focus on individual child protection issues (e.g. child trafficking, HIV/AIDS) to a more systemic approach to safeguarding.

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[29]This approach draws upon a three-tier classification system (universal, selective and indicative prevention), originally used within the disease prevention sector, that has now been adopted by the child welfare sector (Stagner & Lansing, 2009).

Efforts have been made to integrate informal settlements into the National Child Protection System:
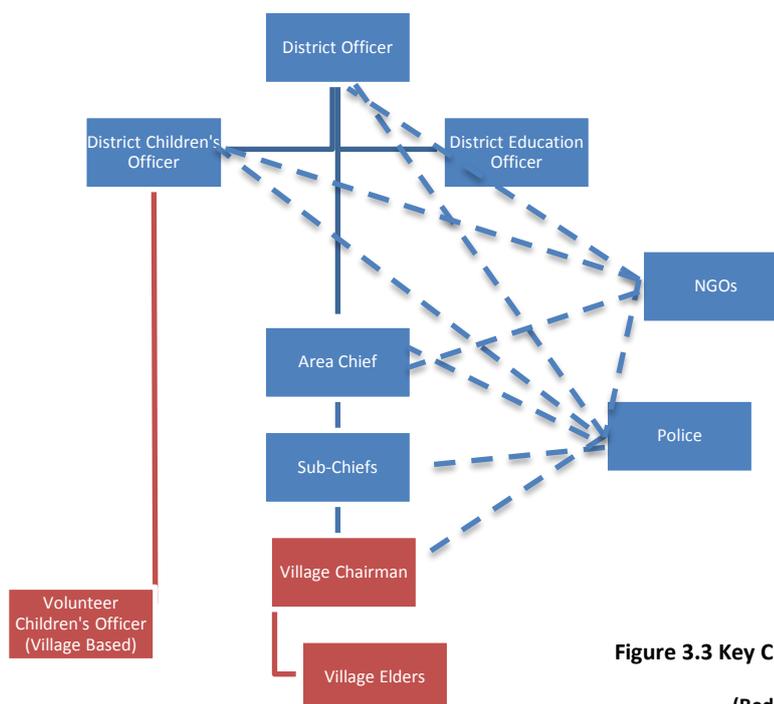
Figure 3.3 Key Child Protection Actors in Kijiji.

(Red Represents Unsalaried Positions)

However, whilst the National Child Protection System *potentially* offers an effective and holistic framework for protecting children within Kijiji, the reality is rather different. The system has been criticized for being grossly under-resourced (National Council For Children's Services, 2010) and for weak linkages between actors (Kilonzo et al., 2009; National Council For Children's Services, 2010). As such, many cases of child rights violations do not reach the attention of statutory actors primarily concerned with children's welfare, such as the District Children's Officers (DCOs)[30], with local actors, such as the Village Chairman and Area Chief, choosing to handle cases locally, through community-based justice mechanisms.

3.4.2 Household Composition

Kijiji continues the historical trend of attracting temporary, migrant workers, typically single men who have left their family upcountry and moved to Nairobi for work. Wycliffe (31-35 years), for example, had moved to Kijiji to find more profitable work as a carpenter, sending money home to his wife and two children who remained at their rural homestead. However, many households are now permanently located in Kijiji, with 46% of my child participants living there since birth. Household composition is therefore diverse, ranging from single male-headed households to two-parent households bound by marriage.

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[30]Statutory social workers.

Without exception, unmarried participants in my research were aiming for marriage. In addition to affording the female partner greater respectability, marriage was understood to increase the chance of two adult earners, deemed important for more comfortably meeting subsistence needs. Furthermore, reflecting more traditional gender divisions of labour, marriage ensures at least one female household member to undertake domestic work, from cleaning to child-rearing. This increases household productivity and reduces the shame attributed to men taking on 'female' roles. Highlighting Kijiji's legal pluralism, marriage has multiple local meanings, ranging from a formalized civil union or traditional ceremony (according to customary law), to the locally-derived notion of *come-we-stay* marriages, similar to the western notion of 'living together'. Interestingly, the latter appears to be gaining increasing legitimacy in light of the high cost of getting formally married; Josephine (46-50, chapatti stall owner) therefore remarked 'we just say they are married' when a couple enter a *come-we-stay* marriage. Thus, the roles associated with marriage (e.g. living together and procreation) appear more important than legal and customary practices for defining marital status in the current economic climate. The semi-autonomous nature of Kijiji is therefore evident in the way in which residents embrace both tradition and social change in relation to the concept of marriage.

Despite girls and unmarried women aspiring to get married, gender dynamics at a household level are firmly founded on patriarchal structures which position men as the head of household. Indeed, western-derived gender equality discourses (promoted by NGOs) appear to have struggled to garner widespread local legitimacy, especially amongst men, whose powerbase they challenge:

> …there's what we call equality but…from the beginning it was not so because God created man and then created lady…There must be someone who is bigger than the other in order for the chain of command to function well (Moses, aged 46-50, sub-chief).

Supported by these deep-rooted patriarchal structures, men tend to assume primary responsibility for household decisions, such as financial prioritization, although women are often given a household budget to cover domestic expenditure. I did not witness any domestic violence first-hand, but it was reportedly common. In an informal conversation with Susan (aged 31-35, teacher), for instance, she discussed how many of her friends were fearful of their husbands since they could beat their wives for small transgressions, such as cooking mistakes. Supporting this observation, the 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics et al., 2015) found that over 25% of the 4023 ever-married women surveyed reported experiencing sexual or physical

violence at the hands of their spouse or partner in the past twelve months. Marriage, whilst offering financial stability, consequently places women at significant risk of violence.

However, although 46% of participants in my research were living in households headed by a married couple, 25% lived in a single male-headed household and 24% lived in a female-headed household. Also, three young men (James, Bannister and William) lived with friends, fulfilling the expectation that upon leaving school, boys will form their own households. This mirrors rural practices where post-pubescent males build their own home within the family compound. Female school-leavers (Judith, Purity and Tabitha) were treated markedly differently, with the latter remaining with their caregivers. This highlights the gendered nature of child protection and childhood. Moreover, despite the Second Nairobi Cross-Sectional Slum Survey (APHRC, 2014) concluding that residents of informal settlements are less likely to foster non-biological children than residents of other urban and rural areas, 19% of my child participants were living with a relative other than their biological parents, suggesting extended family ties hold strong cultural significance. There were also reports of child-headed households in the village. Mirroring Mabala's (2006) observations in South African informal settlements, these were understood to have predominantly been formed following caregivers' death(s) from AIDS.

3.4.3 Housing

Amongst the residents I spoke with, two concerns were raised in relation to housing: curtailed rights and poor quality. In terms of housing rights, dwellings within Kijiji are predominantly rented. However, since much of the village is built on land claimed by the State following Independence, a tenancy system has developed where residents pay rent to structure owners who have no legal claim on the land. Living in housing constructed on land that is not owned by the 'landlord' severely curtails residents' housing rights, increasing their vulnerability to unplanned social and economic shocks, such as illegal evictions and rent hikes. This is a situation that Amnesty International (2009) notes is common across many of the settlements in Nairobi. Moreover, if the State wishes to clear the land, houses can be demolished with little warning. Since the local rental system is based on structure rather than land ownership, tenants remain susceptible to intervention from the State at any time.

Housing quality varies considerably, from simple *mabati* (iron sheet) dwellings to more expensive permanent, stone builds:

Type of Structure	Location	Approximate Monthly Rent (Ksh)
Mabati (Iron sheet walls and roof, one room, 10ft x9 ft, dirt floor)	Next to river (high flood risk, far from communal washrooms and communal lighting),	500 ($5.56)
	Corridors off main access road (close to water points, communal washrooms and lighting)	2000 ($20.22)
Semi-Permanent (Mud walls, iron sheet roof, one room, 10ft x 9 ft., dirt or concrete floor)	Corridors not attached to main access road	2000 ($20.22)
	Corridors off main access road	2500 ($27.78)
Permanent (Breeze block walls, iron sheet roof).	Close to main access road	3000 ($30.33)

Figure 3.4 Types of Available Housing

Household income greatly affects residents' housing quality, with families on the lowest incomes most likely to live in the least desirable *mabati* houses near the river. Since the iron sheeting used to construct *mabati* dwellings is not made to measure, gaps between panels also compromise residents' privacy and ability to reduce noise pollution. However, longer-term residents, who have proved themselves trustworthy tenants, can negotiate substantial discounts, mobilizing their social capital to upgrade their type and position of housing without requiring an increase in income.

With most plots measuring ten by nine feet, living standards are also affected by household size. The Second Nairobi Cross-Sectional Slum Survey (APHRC, 2014) found that informal settlements had an average household size of 3.1 people, a figure affected by the high proportion of single person households. However, Hellen (aged 13-14, primary school), for instance, lived with her father, stepmother and seven brothers. With plots typically around 8.1 m^2, this equates to less than 1m^2/person, significantly lower than the minimum 3.5 m^2/person of covered living space recommended for temporary shelters for emergency-affected populations[31]. Over-crowding increases the risk of health complaints, such as acute respiratory infections (Islam, Sarma, Debroy, Kar, & Pal, 2013; Kumar S G et al., 2015), and severely limits privacy. As such, mirroring findings from a study exploring sexual privacy in Nairobi's informal settlements (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Magadi, 2006), I observed that houses were frequently partitioned, using curtains to limit children's exposure to their caregivers' sexual behaviour.

3.4.4 Access to Services

Reflecting its position on the periphery of the formal municipality, Kijiji has very limited municipal services. The community has tried to fill the gaps, with interventions ranging from community clean-ups to social work services offered by churches. Here, I consider four areas of service provision that

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[31]http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/shelter-and-settlement-standard-3-covered-living-space/(accessed 10.2.16)

highlight Kijiji's exclusion from municipal services: water and sanitation, health, education, and leisure.

i) Water and Sanitation

In the absence of city council water provision, a system of unregulated water provision has developed in Kijiji. Local gangs operate communal standpipes, tapping into the city council mains. Despite offering low quality water (Kimani-Murage & Ngindu, 2007), vendors exploit residents' reliance by charging seven times the rates paid for water in high-income estates (UNDP, 2006: 38), with prices rising during water shortages. Yet, reflecting the influence of municipal water policies, vendors' reliance on city council water means that residents are simultaneously affected by municipal water rationing (a system in which different areas of the city are given water on different days). Water rationing makes water collection highly time-consuming, with long queues experienced when water is released, frequently at night. In a study examining water access in Nairobi's informal settlements, Crow and Odaba (2010) note that households who can afford surplus jerry cans have developed water collection strategies to suit the supply, collecting water in bulk during more convenient delivery times. With responsibility for water collection falling predominantly to female household members, this reduces the need for them to risk venturing out after dark for water. However, residents without this safety net must venture out, regardless of the perceived crime risk.

With no regulated solid waste management and drainage, Kijiji also experiences significant sanitation concerns. Sewers are open, leading to flooding during the rainy seasons, increasing the risk of water-borne diseases. However, highlighting the community's ability to mobilize outside forces, State funding (Constituency Development Fund) has been acquired to build communal washrooms, offering toilet and showering facilities. Since the community must meet the running costs, a locally derived pay-per-use system has developed, with residents charged the relatively substantive cost of Ksh.5 per visit ($0.06), or Ksh.2 if they carry their own water[32]. Supporting a study which found that only 83% of residents of Mathare[33] could afford to use the communal washrooms (Darkey & Kariuki, 2013), it is therefore unsurprising that I frequently observed public defecation and urination. Female residents also reported that even if money was available, women and girls avoided using the washrooms after dark for fear of being sexually assaulted, a risk that has been well-documented in informal settlements across Kenya (Amnesty International, 2010). They consequently use containers that are emptied at the washrooms the following day or *flying toilets* (plastic bags used for defecation, then discarded in the streets).

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[32] Discounted rates are available for families.
[33] The second largest settlement in Nairobi.

ii) Education

Evidencing the impinging reach of State policy, Kenya has a centralized education system, with all children expected to sit the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) at 14/15 years. This qualification then acts as entry to either secondary education or formal employment. However, despite children in informal settlements being judged according to the State system of qualifications, Kijiji's settlement had just two State primary schools at the time of research, with space for less than 2500 children. This is a fraction of the thousands requiring primary education. In response to this deficit, a non-formal education system has developed, with individual entrepreneurs or community-based organizations (CBOs) opening 14 non-formal primary schools which follow the State curriculum. However, in contrast to State primary schools, monthly fees are charged. At the time of research, these ranged from Ksh.150-250 ($1.67-2.78) for lower classes (1-4), to Ksh.250-500 ($2.78-5.56) for upper classes (5-8). For families living on as little as Ksh.2-3000/month, these fees represent a substantial, and possibly unaffordable, cost. Thus, through necessary commercialization, the local education system is not open to all children.

Even where children complete their KCPE, their chance of continuing to secondary school is statistically lower than the municipal average. A large-scale cross-sectional survey conducted in the city's informal settlements found boys and girls from informal settlements to be, respectively, 18.1% and 13.2% less likely to transition to secondary school than their counterparts living in formally-planned parts of Nairobi[34] (APHRC, 2014: 149). Teachers I spoke with attributed this to the lower state subsidies, and subsequent higher costs, associated with secondary school: Ksh.12,000 ($133) per year for day schools and up to Ksh.80,000 ($889) per year for high-performing public boarding schools. Secondary education therefore remains unaffordable for many residents, thrusting their children into work or early marriage upon completion of primary school at 14/15 years.

iii) Healthcare

Residents experience significant public health concerns, ranging from sporadic outbreaks of cholera to disproportionately high levels of HIV. Indeed, one study suggested that 12% of Kenya's informal settlement population may be living with HIV (Madise et al., 2012). There are State-run hospitals outside the settlement. However, on-site State healthcare provision remains very limited, mainly comprising state-trained volunteer Community Health Workers (CHWs) who refer villagers to relevant services. State healthcare services are also perceived to be very expensive.

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[34] As this study compared two separate studies to present its findings, the percentage difference should be treated with caution, although the trend mirrors other studies (e.g. Mugisha, 2006).

Non-profit organizations subsequently play a key role in providing subsidized healthcare in the settlement, with many villagers using a simple hospital in a nearby village, run by an International NGO. At the time of data collection, this charged as little as Ksh.50 ($0.44) per consultation, although more complex cases still required referral to better-equipped State facilities. Finally, reflecting a disjuncture between State healthcare and local beliefs and practices, traditional healers remain popular in informal settlements (Ndetei et al., 2013), reflecting a spiritual rather than biomedical understanding of healthcare.

iv) Religious Organizations

Churches are a dominant presence in Kijiji. On the main thoroughfare alone, I counted three Christian churches, typically simple *mabati* huts capable of accommodating 30 or 40 worshippers. Reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, these are typically unregulated organizations, started by residents and unaffiliated to registered religious organizations, such as the Catholic and Anglican Churches. Residents wishing to worship at these more established religious organizations must travel outside the settlement. Almost every resident I met identified as a church-goer. Indeed, church attendance was cited as an important facet of a 'good childhood' by six adult participants and one child participant due to its perceived role in enhancing children's moral characters. Alongside spiritual support, churches offer social services (e.g. savings groups), informal education programmes and life skills seminars. Critically, they expand residents' social networks, providing a further group to approach for support following an economic shock, such as sudden bereavement.

v) Leisure

Despite being a low socio-economic area, Kijiji has an active local leisure industry that shares many similarities with entertainment trends found in formally-planned parts of the city; western football and media, for instance, are extremely popular, highlighting the broad reach of cultural globalization. The leisure industry uses a micro-economy model that allows users to consume services in small quantities, suiting Kijiji's cash economy. Services range from stalls charging customers to access the internet on a pay-per-minute basis, to simple bars, selling *chang'aa*, an illegal drink openly brewed in the settlement; significantly cheaper than commercially produced alcohol, chang'aa has been linked to death and blindness, due to brewers' penchant for mixing in poisonous substances like methanol (Mugisha, Arinaitwe-Mugisha, & Hagembe, 2003). *Mabati* huts, known as *videos,* also stream television and movies, charging around Ksh.5 ($0.06) per showing. These offer residents without televisions a chance to enjoy English Premier League football, streamed through illegal satellite and electrical connections, as well as movies and

pornography. Mirroring Wurzburg's (2011) study exploring pornography in Kibera[35], I observed weak safeguards for preventing children from accessing *videos*, with children as young as four years being admitted if they paid the Ksh.5 entry fee. Consequently, although State safeguards (such as statutory viewing age limits) purportedly extend to the settlement, a local system of bribes encourages officials to turn a blind eye.

3.4.5 Livelihoods and Economic Resilience

Informal settlements have some of the lowest income households in Nairobi, with average monthly incomes of $49 (Ksh.4410) per capita (World Bank, 2006: 24). Residents identified Kijiji as a low socio-economic area. However, mirroring Jones' assertion that urban poor 'can often make considerable distinctions among poor people in their localities' (Jones, 1999: 13), residents highlighted significant differences between villagers' *economic vulnerability*. This was discussed with reference to income patterns, expenditure and economic resilience.

Starting with income, households generate varying incomes, depending on the number of earners and type of livelihoods. As noted in section 3.4.2, a two-earner household is generally considered the minimum requirement for comfortably meeting basic subsistence needs. With income generation typically constructed as 'adult work', children are expected to indirectly contribute through domestic work. This frees up their caregivers' time for income-generating activities, ranging from salaried jobs paying above the minimum wage (e.g. security guards who earn up to Ksh.15,000 ($166.67) per month) to work in the informal sector (e.g. washing clothes or manual labour). Informal sector work allows employees to escape the reach of State polices, such as taxation of income. However, it also precludes the advantages of contractual employment, such as medical and social security insurance. At one end of the spectrum, informal sector workers include regularly employed workers, like domestic staff, who work daily for the same employer but have no contract. This group may utilize their relationship with their employer to solicit personal loans at times of economic difficulty. At the other end of the informal work spectrum, *jua kali* workers (e.g. casual labourers) make as little as Ksh.2000-3000 ($22.22-33.33) per month. Their position is particularly financially precarious since workers are not linked to a specific employer but are forced to search for work each day.

Against a nationwide problem of high unemployment, micro-enterprises are also popular, ranging from *chapatti* stalls to greengrocers. However, incomes are again dependent on daily demand within the local market, and many micro-enterprises make just enough to meet a person's daily living expenses. Highlighting Kijiji's semi-autonomy, micro-enterprises are typically un-registered,

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[35]The largest informal settlement in Kenya.

operating outside State commercial law by paying no tax or insurance. However, they are nonetheless susceptible to the reach of the municipality, with traders frequently forced to pay bribes to city council workers to allow them to operate without a business licence. It was also noticeable that micro-enterprises were predominantly staffed by women. This potentially supports Gulyani and Talukdar's (2010) observation that women living in Nairobi's informal settlements are eight times more likely to be informally employed than men, a trend the authors attribute to gender discrimination in the workplace. However, another factor seemingly contributing to this trend is gendered labour divisions, with women expected to earn money alongside their time-intensive domestic work; village-based businesses thus allow them to concurrently do both.

When judging a household's economic vulnerability, basic outlays also require consideration. In the absence of accessible State-funded social support, households with school-going children or sick family members (either *in situ* or upcountry) require extra income to meet the costs associated with healthcare and education. Moreover, residents living on lower, insecure incomes typically pay relatively higher costs for basic commodities due to a micro-economy that has emerged within Kijiji in response to many residents living on a daily wage. Food products, for instance, are sold in smaller weights than the formal supermarkets, allowing residents to buy just enough produce for one day. However, this works out relatively more expensive than buying in standard measures. Residents are also still largely influenced by State economic policies. During my fieldwork, for instance, the State introduced a bill that subjected most basic commodities to 16% VAT; since Kijiji is almost solely reliant on external suppliers for its commodities, with over-crowding curtailing opportunities for local production, this cost was automatically passed to local businesses and residents, devaluing their income overnight.

Alongside varying income patterns, residents also discussed households' economic health in terms of economic resilience: in the event of a sudden drop in income or unexpected expenditure (e.g. medical bills), can a household meet these costs without cutting back on priority expenditure, such as water or food? Kenya, like many other developing countries, lacks extensive public safety nets to mitigate personal crises (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Ezeh, 2005). Furthermore, informal work severely limits residents' access to formal credit or insurances. Residents have therefore developed their own community-derived social safety nets. These include informal credit agreements with store owners and community-based savings and credit groups, such as *merry-go-round* saving schemes. In the latter, members save a set amount each week with friends or neighbours, or through community organizations, taking turns to withdraw a lump sum, or requesting their money early in a crisis.

However, as support systems are based on reciprocity, households without the resources to enter support arrangements risk being further disadvantaged in the event of an economic shock.

3.4.6 Insecurity and Crime

Supporting a wealth of research suggesting that informal settlements across Africa are plagued by crime and insecurity (LeBas, 2013; Mutahi, 2011), Kijiji's settlement has a reputation amongst outsiders for insecurity and gang crime. Ndikaru Wa Teresia (2011) correctly notes that despite informal settlements being stereotypically associated with crime, this is not always the case; reminiscent of Cohen's (1972) notion of moral panics, it is important not to assess social problems by fear levels. However, Kijiji's negative image has been fuelled by very public incidences of violence. During the 2008 post-election violence, for instance, tensions erupted between Kijiji and neighbouring villages which supported the rival political party. Residents subsequently secured Kijiji by putting electric currents through pipes laid along the perimeters, killing anyone from ethnic groups associated with the rival party who tried to pass. Participants in my research also frequently complained about violence within Kijiji and the surrounding settlement:

> …within [the settlement] we…miss around 4 to 5 people monthly [through murder] (Peter, 26-30, small business owner).

Whilst I could not verify these statistics[36], crime was a central part of residents' day-to-day lives.

Gangs are also part of Kijiji's security structure, exercising considerable power within the settlement. They charge compulsory monthly protection fees of upwards of Ksh.100 (1.11 USD) per household. This fits with Mutahi's observation that:

> Kenya can be termed a "hybrid state" where state and non-state actors share the public goods of security…In a day, a citizen can therefore encounter both formal and informal policing' (Mutahi, 2011: 12-13).

Security payments have become normalized expenditure. Nonetheless, their legitimacy lies in fear, with failure to pay potentially resulting in assault or household items being 'claimed'. Extortion has thus been reconstructed as a social service.

Nevertheless, despite depicting crime as a pertinent problem, residents also demonstrated comparatively high levels of resilience, built on local contextual knowledge: for example, following

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[36] I requested crime statistics on Kijiji and the settlement from the Police. However, crime was recorded in districts, with no summaries available for my specific setting. As records are kept by hand, collating this data would have meant a police officer spending many hours analysing the 'OB' books where all reported crimes are recorded, which, understandably, was not feasible.

inter-villages fights (described in section 4.4.5), my male gatekeeper called to say it was safe to resume my fieldwork since he had crossed the adjoining bridge and no-one had tried to stab him. Using his long institutional memory of inter-village fights, he understood safety on the bridge to be a sign of restored order. In contrast, from my more risk adverse, outsider viewpoint, I insisted on waiting to ensure this was not a temporary hiatus in the violence.

3.5 Conclusion

Within this chapter, I have provided an overview of life in the research setting, highlighting the complex relationship between the settlement and the State. I argue that the formal-informal binary needs to be challenged. Instead, I suggest viewing informal settlements in terms of their semi-autonomy, generating their own social norms and values whilst concurrently existing alongside, and interacting with, State laws and systems. Such a position captures the social change that is occurring in Kenya in relation to informal settlements, illustrating their growing integration into formal State structures.

The depiction of Kijiji as a semi-autonomous social field also encourages greater consideration for the ways in which informal settlements and the State affect one another. Although some of Kijiji's dominant social norms and practices appear to have been transported from rural settings (e.g. local governance structures), others have developed in direct response to the combined effect of Kijiji's continued exclusion from municipal services alongside growing infiltration of State policies. The absence of sufficient primary schools, for instance, has forced villagers to develop a system of informal education to enable their children to compete in a society where State-ratified qualifications are recognized as essential for achieving employment.

Drawing on the theoretical and empirical ideas highlighted in Chapters Two and Three, my thesis addresses the research questions, outlined in section 1.4.

Chapter Four

Methodology

4.0 Introduction

Drawing on a constructionist ontology and interpretivist epistemology, my research uses a case study approach to explore the different ways in which residents of an informal settlement understand and respond to CSA. Within this chapter, I delineate my methodological decisions. Starting with an explanation for my chosen case study approach, I then discuss the different stages of my research process: preparation, recruitment, data collection and data analysis. I end by reflecting on my 'outsider' position within the research setting.

4.1 Case Study Research

When considering different ontological and epistemological stances, it was important to choose a position that suited my research aims. As highlighted in Chapter Two, my research is based on the premise that CSA is not a fixed concept, but is instead socially and culturally constructed. I therefore drew on an interpretivist epistemology, which highlights the subjective meaning of social action and a constructionist ontology, which depicts social phenomena as (re)created through social interactions (Bryman, 2012).

When considering relevant methodology, I sought an approach that did not just examine how CSA was understood by residents, but also explored the setting in which these understandings were (re)produced. I therefore chose a case study approach, described by Yin as an empirical inquiry that:

> ...investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context;
> when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly
> evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984: 23).

Case study research is suited to projects, such as my own, where the researcher is interested in both the phenomenon and context in which it naturally occurs (Salminen, Harra, & Lautamo, 2006: 4). Early case study research was influenced by positivism, resulting in optimism about its potential for producing generalizable findings. However, more recently, interpretive case study research has emerged that recognizes the constructed nature of the reality being studied and uses qualitative methods (De Vries, 2005). Although quantitative methods have significant value for providing measurements and offering greater potential for representativeness, the meanings assigned to complex concepts, such as CSA, may be lost (Nyanzi, 2011) and dominant discourses replicated

rather than questioned. I therefore chose an interpretive case study approach, since qualitative methods are better suited to emic enquiry, given their power to elicit multi-layered, context-specific topics or events (Gillham, 2000). This allowed for an inductive exploration of a range of understandings of CSA that both supported and challenged dominant CSA discourses evident at a national and international policy level.

When I first started my research, little was known about CSA and local protection mechanisms within informal settlements. Since focusing on a particular case also allows for deeper contextual understandings to be achieved (Woodside, 2010), case study research is appropriate for studying a phenomenon where research and/or theory are at formative stages (Benbasat, Goldstein, & Mead, 1987), as was the case for my research topic. I was also drawn to the use of multiple methods in case study research, with Salminen, Harra et al. noting that it:

> …aims to investigate a particular topic in its context from multiple
> viewpoints and it uses multiple methods and multiple data sources for its
> data collection (Salminen, Harra et al. 2006: 4).

Multiple understandings of CSA were likely within my chosen case, Kijiji. A case study approach therefore allowed me to explore these different viewpoints, choosing appropriate methods from its wide tool kit. Consequently, although I used interviews with adult participants, I felt focus groups were more appropriate and ethical with child participants since they allowed children to switch between participant and observer roles, thereby putting them under less individual pressure. A multi-methods approach also supports methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978), where different methods are used to investigate the same phenomenon. I was therefore able to analyse whether depictions of childhood and protection provided within the interviews and focus groups reflected what I observed in the field.

Nonetheless, the in-depth focus of case study research is not without limitations. By only focusing on one or a handful of cases, findings may lack external validity. However, Stake (1995) nonetheless argues that the singularity of a case allows for in-depth analysis of a topic or phenomenon within a specific context. As such, case study research lends itself to 'naturalistic generalization', where readers make their own associations from one context to another. My decision to provide a detailed context chapter (Chapter Three) was consequently driven by a wish to enhance the potential transferability of my findings.

4.1.1 Choosing my Case

As noted by Swanborn (2010), cases are social systems, ranging from people or communities to particular events or places. Given the reported high levels of CSA in informal settlements, I wanted to explore the phenomenon of CSA in a social system where levels are reported to be the highest in Nairobi. However, with settlements housing up to a million or more people, I felt focusing on a whole settlement would impede me developing a strong understanding of local contextual dynamics. I therefore used a village as my case to provide the focus I desired.

I started by selecting a settlement from which to pick my village. The settlement I chose was not an obvious choice given its reputation as one of the city's more dangerous settlements for outsiders. However, I had connections with well-respected community-based organizations (CBOs) who were willing to facilitate access. Furthermore, the settlement appeared to be less researched than other settlements, such as Kibera (Nairobi's largest settlement). Indeed, a local interpreter warned me that Kibera's popularity meant that I would have to bribe local officials and pay participants the 'going rate' for research participation. Given the sensitive research topic, I felt payment was unethical. Consequently, since I had solid local connections and could work in Kijiji's settlement without paying bribes or compensation, I decided that this settlement would better enable me to adhere to my ethical obligations.

Influenced by Stake's (1995) classification of case studies[37], I aimed for an instrumental case study which would allow me to explore how insights from my research could be used to understand CSA within different informal settlements. I therefore did not want an extreme case, so conducted a small situational analysis, talking to key informants and using NGO reports to identify and eliminate possible outliers[38]. These included villages that had received a disproportionate amount of development aid and villages with logistical concerns that could affect the project's feasibility (e.g. two villages where local gangs reportedly solicited protection money from outsiders). Of the remaining villages, Kijiji was chosen after establishing cooperation from two organizations who could facilitate access to both adult and child participants. By excluding outlier villages, I am not suggesting that Kijiji is representative of all villages in the settlement. With differences remaining in terms of size, physical position, and ethnic composition, this is undoubtedly a limitation. However, by providing adequate context, I believe my findings lend themselves to varying degrees of careful transferability.

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[37] Stake identified three possible types of case study: 1) Intrinsic, where the researcher is aiming for an in-depth knowledge of a specific case. 2) Instrumental, where the researcher attempts to use a case to gain insight into a wider phenomenon. 3) Collective, where the researcher compares different cases.

[38] I avoid citing the studies to protect the settlement's identity. Key informants working in the settlement included 2 social workers, a religious leader, and an NGO director.

4.2 Preparation

After securing affiliation with the University of Nairobi, I was granted a research permit by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in October 2012. In October, I was also granted SREP (ethical) approval by the University of Huddersfield. Finally, I drew up an agreement with *Rescue Dada*, an NGO with whom I had worked for three years. They agreed to introduce me to potential gatekeepers, and provide logistical support (e.g. transportation) in return for my support in developing a CSA training module based on my (anonymized) findings. My independence as a researcher was clearly stipulated.

4.2.1 Cross-Language Preparation

Although I had been learning Kiswahili, my comprehension progressed well but my spoken skills were not strong enough to lead the interviews and focus groups. This created a dilemma; should I only speak to English-speaking participants or use an interpreter? Despite English being the educational medium of Kenya, I was concerned that lower-than-average education levels in informal settlements meant that not all residents could conduct interviews in English. This would restrict my sample to residents who had had greater educational opportunities, affecting the transferability of my findings. Nonetheless, an interpreter introduces significant threats to the trustworthiness of research, most notably since interpreted texts are a 're-presentation of the interviewees' perspectives through the translators' construction of the transcripts' (Hsin-Chun Tsai, Choe et al. 2008: 10).

Furthermore, language plays a critical role in creating social realities, yet not all concepts have an English equivalent (Kapborg & Berterö, 2002); meanings can therefore be lost or altered. However, after substantive consideration, I decided the benefits of accessing non-English speaking participants outweighed the challenges of interpretation. I consequently follow a growing body of literature which calls for researchers to be more transparent about interpreter use so that my data's validity can be assessed (Croot, Lees, & Grant, 2011; Shimpuku & Norr, 2012; Squires, 2009; Temple & Edwards, 2008; Wallin & Ahlström, 2006), clarifying my interpreter's role throughout the data collection process.

Mindful that my interpreter would be directly interacting with participants on a potentially sensitive topic, I sought an interpreter with solid language *and* interpersonal skills. Since first impressions may prove critical in gaining access to participants, I also ideally wanted someone at ease in informal settlements. After interviewing four applicants, I recruited a 23 year old woman, Winnie, who had

excellent Kiswahili and Sheng[39], exceptional interpersonal skills and had worked in informal settlements as a social worker. I sent samples of her early interpretation to an accredited translator for verification[40], who confirmed it was of high quality. Participants also validated her interpretation. Josephine (46-50, chapatti stall owner) who spoke English but preferred to speak in Kiswahili commented, unprompted, 'the translator is translating well'. I followed Williamson et al. (2011) in training Winnie on the research objectives and methods, and my ethical expectations. In particular, I stressed the importance of creating a non-judgemental, confidential environment for participants. I also clarified my interpretation expectations, in terms of not sanitizing swearing or controversial statements, and providing direct translations of metaphors.

4.2.2 Pilot

In October 2012, I conducted 4 pilot interviews[41] and 1 pilot focus group to evaluate the interview and focus group schedules, and practise interpretation. Participants for the pilot phase were beneficiaries of *Rescue Dada* from nearby informal settlements, thus sharing similarities with my sample. In addition to fine-tuning my questions, the pilot phase provided unexpected lessons. I was surprised, for instance, when two adult participants queried my plan to use pseudonyms in written reports; they were unaware that research findings may enter the public domain, with one woman commenting that researchers 'just take their findings back to their own country'. This therefore highlighted the importance of guiding participants through the consent form, explaining my rationale for each clause so that they fully understood what participation entailed. Furthermore, although the Kiswahili for sex, *ngono,* was widely understood, two adult participants found the term very direct, preferring more colloquial phrases, such as *tabia za kimapenzi* (behaviour of love). To balance coherence of meaning with minimizing participant discomfort, I asked Winnie to start with *ngono* but then mirror any alternative terminology used by participants after confirming that they understood the meaning to be the same.

4.2.3 Negotiating Access

The importance of trustworthy gatekeepers when conducting research in insecure settings warrants particular acknowledgement, since they assist in both access and risk negation. Indeed, when violent fighting broke out in an adjacent village, decisions regarding when it was safe to resume my fieldwork were primarily based on the gatekeepers' on-the-ground knowledge. I was introduced to two excellent gatekeepers by *Rescue Dada*. The first was a woman who ran various schools, churches and development initiatives in the settlement. The second was a male pastor who also ran

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[39] Slang dialect, popular amongst young people.
[40] Winnie and the accredited translator both signed non-disclosure agreements
[41] Much shorter than the main interviews, focusing on terminology and practising interpretation.

a school, had lived in the settlement for 24 years, and was active on various village committees. The advantages of using respected individuals or organizations to vouch for researchers have been highlighted (Gwanzura-Ottemöller & Kesby, 2005). The two gatekeepers' initial agreement to support me was undoubtedly based on their trust of *Rescue Dada*. However, developing trust in me personally took time; for example, having identified children within one of her project's primary schools who likely met my sampling criteria, the female gatekeeper requested I spend three weeks volunteering at the school so that she could observe me interacting with children. As part of initial negotiations, I stressed that my project was research rather than a funding opportunity. Despite this, both were keen for the research to benefit the settlement, so I agreed to work with *Rescue Dada* to develop a simple CSA training module upon completion of the thesis.

4.3 Recruitment

Albeit with a few exceptions (Kenya National Bureau Of Statistics, 2010; Kostelny et al., 2013), Kenyan CSA research has tended to focus on either children *or* adult samples. However, drawing on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, I felt that only considering understandings of CSA within one part of children's systems risked overlooking barriers to protection. For example, even if children recognize they have been abused, the State child protection system relies on adult gatekeepers, making it imperative that adults *also* understand the child's experience as abusive. Moreover, in order for action to be taken, actors in both the formal and community-level child protection systems must identify a sexual act as abusive and worthy of intervention. Drawing on this systemic view of child protection, I therefore sought a sample consisting of key actors within Kijiji's child protection systems: child residents (aged 13-17[42]), adult residents, actors in community-level child protection roles (e.g. village elders, teachers, CHWs), and actors in the formal state protection system (e.g. police, children's officers, chiefs). Since gender has been found to influence individuals' understanding of sexual violence (Bhana et al., 2009; Jewkes et al., 2005; Ouattara, Sen, & Thomson, 1998; Tzeng & Schwarzin, 1990), I sought male and female participants. My case study approach supported this diverse sample, rooting participants' differing social positions within a common context.

My primary sampling strategy was opt-in purposive sampling. Whilst this potentially reduces the generalizability of findings, I felt it more ethical, given the potentially sensitive subject. With the gatekeepers' support, I arranged a meeting in Kijiji for potential adult participants where I explained my research objectives and what participation would entail. Seventeen men and women attended,

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[42] Schools reported that sex education starts around 12 years, similar to the age at which 3/4 adults in the pilot stated that children typically start learning about sex. As my focus group schedule required prior knowledge of sex, I targeted child participants from aged 13 years and above.

with all but one later participating. However, since the adult meeting was advertised through local community-based organizations, this potentially restricted my sample to people accessing formal institutions. I therefore also used snowball sampling (a sampling method Bryman (2001) argues is suited to researching hard-to-reach populations) to access more marginalized residents, such as single mothers and older residents. This proved successful, eliciting four single mothers and two 'older'[43] residents (female aged 50 and male over 60 years). In terms of key informants, I identified child protection-focused institutions working in Kijiji, including the police, Children's Department and NGOs. Since it may be difficult for an employee to refuse consent once their employer has given approval, I first approached relevant actors from these institutions, and if they were interested in participating, then sought necessary institutional approvals.

Likewise, when sampling children, an important consideration was whether to approach guardians or children first. On this point, Kennan (2015) notes that most ethical guidelines suggest approaching guardians first. This can save children's disappointment if parental consent is refused. However, Coyne (2010) argues that:

> Children may feel unable to refuse once they know that all the significant
> adults have consented to their potential participation. Thus consent
> becomes a 'fait accompli' instead of a free choice (Coyne, 2010: 453).

Mindful of the culture of intergenerational obedience in Kenya, Coyne's concerns resonated with me. I felt it critical that children did not feel obliged to take part, especially since the often hidden nature of CSA means guardians could give consent without being aware that their child had actually been sexually abused. I therefore first sought *expressions of interest* from children, before seeking parental consent and then individual child consent.

When identifying school-going children, I arranged meetings at two schools (primary and secondary) with children who met my age criteria (13-17 years) and were from the case study village[44]. Here, I explained what participation would entail, asking for potential expressions of interest but stressing the need for parental consent. Fourteen children from the primary school and eight from the secondary school expressed interest. The head teachers then contacted their guardians to explain that they had the opportunity to take part in a research project and would be bringing home an information sheet and parental consent form. I was initially concerned that guardians might feel obliged to sign the consent form when introduced by the head teachers. However, when I raised this

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[43]Relative to Kenya's mean life expectancy of 62 years (http://www.prb.org/pdf14/2014-world-population-data-sheet_eng.pdf, accessed 14.3.16)

[44] Kijiji has no secondary school; pupils travel to an adjacent village for secondary education.

point, it emerged that both head teachers wanted to stress the guardians' right to refuse consent, given the culturally sensitive nature of the research. Reflecting this, one primary school parent and two secondary school parents refused consent. Regretfully, these three children may have felt disappointed. However, I felt this was outweighed by the risk of children feeling obliged to participate. Since non-school-going children may have a different perspective on CSA, I used snowball sampling to recruit seven participants who were currently out of school. Three were living independently and considered themselves adults due to their economic self-reliance. However, not wanting to assume that premature eviction into the world of work aligns with the power to give informed consent, I still sought parental consent as they were under the age of majority.

4.3.1 Final Sample

My sample comprised 64 participants. Reflecting the pre-election ethnic shift[45], 55/64 of participants were from ethnic groups originating from western regions of Kenya, such as Luo and Luhya, although 11 different ethnicities were recorded.

Type of Participant	No. of Male Participants	No. of Female Participants
Adult Residents (18 years to 61+)	11	16
Child Residents[46] (13-17 years)	13	13
Resident Key Informants	3	3
Non-resident Key Informants.	1	4
Total	**28**	**36**

Figure 4.1 Overview of Sample

NB: Within this table I have referred to adults and child residents based on the age of majority. However, in Chapters 5-8 I highlight where participants' self-definitions deviated from this.

Whilst, here, I provide an overview of the sample's characteristics, Appendix A (p.242) includes a full participant list, providing details of participants' age, gender, ethnicity, occupation and residency length.

Adult Residents

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[45] The 2008-9 presidential election triggered high levels of ethnically-motivated violence. My male gatekeeper informed me that in the run-up to the 2013 election, residents were moving to villages highly populated by their ethnic group in case violence was repeated.

[46] For the purpose of designing my study, I defined a 'child' participant in accordance with the legal age of majority (i.e. individuals under the age of 18 years). However, in Chapters 5-8 I highlight where participants' self-definitions deviated from this. I have also continued to use the term 'child' in the remainder of my thesis, since participants who self-identified as children chose to use this term. This reflects the fact that the term 'child' was understood positively, associated with continued dependency. In particular, it was associated with opportunities for education (linked to continued caregiver investment), increasing an individual's future life chances.

The twenty seven adult participants ranged from 18-60+ years old. Around a third were reliant on family members for their day-to-day needs, with two men and four women not working due to either being full-time mothers, recently graduated students or retirees. Three women were undertaking vocational training. Of those working, most were in low paid, informal work with no guaranteed income: two men and four women were engaged in small businesses (such as selling chapatti or vegetables); one man and three women worked as casual labourers (e.g. washing clothes); and three men worked as artisans (e.g. carpenters). Only three men and three women had contractual employment, thus guaranteeing an, albeit low, monthly income and, possibly, basic medical insurance and social security. These worked in the security, manufacturing and service industries. In terms of household composition, over half the participants (fifteen) were married with children and six were in female-headed households. Of the remainder, three women and one man lived with relatives other than their parents, and two men lived alone or with friends. The mean household family size was 3.88 members. Residence in the village ranged from less than a year to over thirty years.

Residents under 18 Years

The twenty six child participants ranged from 13-17 years old. Thirteen attended primary school, six attended secondary school, and seven had left school due to economic constraints or, in one case, motherhood. Whilst the three female non-school-going children were economically supported by their guardians, three of the male non-school-going participants supported themselves and their families selling scrap metals, and lived with friends away from the family home. Three girls and two boys were living with a family member other than their parents, including older siblings and grandparents. Although two participants had lived in Kijiji less than a year, twelve had been born in the village, highlighting the shift from informal settlements providing temporary housing during the colonial years, to a more permanent settlement.

Key Informants

The resident key informants all held safeguarding roles in Kijiji. The three female resident key informants worked as teachers. Reflecting the tendency for positions of power to go to men in the village, the three male resident key informants worked as a head teacher/pastor, the village Chairman and a community health worker (CHW). The CHW and Chairman were voluntary positions. In contrast, the non-resident key informants all held relatively well-paid salaried positions overseeing protection of children in the settlement. These included a female NGO director, a female police officer specializing in gender and protection, the District Children's Officer (female), a female

hospital social worker and one of the settlement's sub-chiefs (male). The hospital social worker had worked in the settlement the least time, having held her current position for three years, whilst the NGO director had over 20 years' experience working on local child protection issues.

4.4 Data Collection

I collected the data over a period of 9 months:

- Observation (October 2012 - February 2013; May – June 2013)

- Adult Interviews (November, December 2012)

- Adult and Key Informant Interviews (January, February 2013)

- Children's Focus Groups, Key Informant Interviews (May, June 2013)

During this period, two incidences of inter-village violence led to unplanned fieldwork suspensions of a few days. Furthermore, I was mindful that widespread violence had occurred within the settlement after the 2007-8 General Election, leaving hundreds of residents killed and injured. I therefore suspended fieldwork for two months around the 2013 General Election as a precaution.

Over half the data was collected fully or partially in Kiswahili (Table 4.2); the partial Kiswahili interviews tended to start in Kiswahili then switch to English, once participants felt more confident.

	Kiswahili	**Kiswahili & English**	**English**
Adult Resident Interviews	17	2	8
Key Informant Interviews	1	2	8
Focus Groups with Child Residents[47]	4 groups (incorporating 7 female and 6 male participants)	1 group (incorporating 3 female participants)	3 groups (incorporating 3 female and 7 male participants)
Total Interviews and Focus Groups	**22**	**5**	**19**

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Language in Interviews and Focus Groups

Within this section, I will discuss my three methods, before reflecting on two ethical dilemmas and the challenges of conducting fieldwork in an insecure setting.

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[47] As noted in footnote 46, for the purpose of the research design, the term 'child' was used to refer to individuals under the age of 18 years (specifically 13-17 years). In the remaining chapters, I highlight where participants' self-definitions deviated from the age of majority. I was initially surprised that even some of the 16 and 17 year old participants chose to describe themselves as 'children'. As a teenager growing up in the UK, I would certainly not have wanted to be described this way since I felt the term 'child' downplayed my developing capacities. However, in Kijiji, the term had positive connotations, associated with continued investment from caregivers and prolonged educational opportunities. Thus, it was desirable to be considered a 'child' for as long as possible. Recognizing this, I have followed participants in using the term 'child' throughout the thesis.

4.4.1 Observation

With a long history in social anthropology (Bryman, 2012), observation allows researchers to glimpse into the *ordinary* facets of participants' lives, uncovering the normalized practices and social dynamics that participants may not feel warrant discussion within an interview or focus group. With this in mind, I chose this method in the hope it would enhance my understanding of gender relations and intergenerational dynamics in Kijiji, and the impact of social exclusion on residents' day-to-day lives. Nonetheless, observation carries a high risk of participant reactivity (Hume, 2007; Schwartz & Schwartz, 1955). Consequently, it was important to remain reflexive about the impact of my presence.

Expecting it would take time to access local associations, such as youth clubs, I originally planned to start with what Bryman terms 'non-participating observation' (Bryman, 2012: 273), recording my observations of the context and its social dynamics during field visits to arrange the interviews and focus groups. However, my female gatekeeper's request that I volunteer at one of Kijiji's largest primary schools for three weeks provided an early opportunity to spend time in a local school, recording my observations about children's interactions with each another and adult authority figures[48]. During this period, I switched between *participating observer* (teaching English classes, playing) and *non-participating observation* (observing child-child interactions during play times and teacher-pupil interactions during classes). There is little doubt, though, that my presence changed behaviour; as a white foreigner, I found myself the centre of attention during the first week. However, mirroring the experience of Schwartz and Schwartz (1955), by the second week I garnered less attention, allowing me to better observe the social dynamics. Indeed, the information gathered during the latter half of this three week period shed helpful light on cultural expectations of intergenerational obedience and children's use of impression management around adults.

Aside from the school, I kept detailed notes of observations made whilst in the field site. Although it is not feasible to seek the consent of everyone observed in busy settings, where possible, I was transparent about my status as a researcher to avoid deception. In fact, I found that after the first few weeks, the reason for my presence was well-known. My field notes were initially based on observations of the physical infrastructure and incidents that occurred as I walked in and out of the village, such as an early occasion where an intoxicated man lurched to grab the breasts of my female companion. However, as I had hoped, once people got to know me, opportunities arose for closer interaction with residents outside the interviews. For instance, an invitation to sit with a female resident as she cooked lunch in her house provided not just insight into her day-to-day life, but also

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[48] We agreed that I could use relevant observations, so I followed Reeves (2010) and Hett and Hett (2013) in being transparent about my research agenda with staff and pupils to avoid deception.

highlighted the unregulated nature of media, with her children watching a Nigerian movie about necrophilia. These unstructured interactions provided thought-provoking insights into the challenges of day-to-day life in Kijiji, especially in relation to economic vulnerability, overcrowding, children's roles within the household and family-level gender relations.

4.4.2 Interviews

Suiting my research objectives, qualitative interviews allow researchers to delve into the perspectives of other people (Patton, 1990). For reasons discussed shortly, I used focus groups with children. I was nonetheless concerned that groups might dilute the depth of information elicited from research participants (Morgan, 1997), so used semi-structured interviews with adult residents and key informants. This proved successful, with most interviews producing rich data, especially in relation to adults' knowledge and opinions of CSA. Happily, this was the case for both the English and Kiswahili interviews, although, in the latter, participants occasionally spoke in overly long chunks, preventing Winnie from providing a detailed interpretation. On such occasions, she transmitted what information she could, before providing a detailed translation from the recording, although this affected possibilities for probing questions. However, overall, a similar depth of data was achieved in the Kiswahili and English interviews.

With the exception of three participants who chose to be interviewed at *Rescue Dada* when security issues prevented me entering the settlement, resident interviews were conducted in Kijiji. I used a spare room in a row of mud wall housing, provided by my male gatekeeper. Unlike corrugated iron housing, this type of structure afforded participants' privacy. Since key informants' interviews were conducted during working hours, all but one chose to be interviewed in their offices. The District Children's Officer asked to conduct the interview at *Rescue Dada* since her office was open to the public. Once participants' preferred language had been established, the information sheet and consent form were explained in depth. I also provided a discreet information slip containing details of organisations who offered free counselling and GBV/CSA support.

On average, the Kiswahili interview recordings lasted 98 minutes (ranging from 68 to 144 minutes), whilst those in English lasted 54 minutes (ranging from 30 to 77 minutes). My interview guide covered four topics: childhood within Kijiji; understandings of children's sexual development; understandings of CSA; and local child protection systems (Appendix B). To facilitate rapport, I purposefully left potentially more sensitive topics relating to abuse and protective responses till later in the interview when participants were hopefully more at ease. However, influenced by Price's

(2002) notion of laddered questioning[49], I maintained a list of simple probing questions, based on actions or knowledge, that I could return to if participants appeared to be struggling with a question. Alongside this, I used what Patton (1990) describes as reinforcement and feedback, where researchers project the value of participants' contributions through on-going reassurance using verbal and non-verbal gestures; for instance, since Wycliffe (31-35, carpenter) appeared to perceive my note-taking as validation that his information was helpful, I found myself writing more to provide reassurance.

As interviews arguably work best when there is a non-hierarchical relationship between participant and interviewer (Oakley, 1981), I was worried that my status as a significantly more affluent, white researcher represented a significant power imbalance. Whilst some participants seemed nervous on arrival, most appeared to relax and enjoy the interview process. Indeed, whilst everyone offered a simple handshake on arrival, when departing, six women gave me a hug, and five men switched to a more complex handshake that denotes a closer relationship. Many also recounted intimately personal stories, exhibiting a level of trust that I found humbling. However, whilst my attempts to put participants at ease appeared successful, it would be naive to suggest this in any way negated the power imbalance.

Possibly reflecting the generally male-dominated local governance systems, it was noticeable that female, Kiswahili-speaking participants appeared to derive particular benefit from the process, with Josephine (46-50, chapatti stall owner) thanking me for the opportunity to express her views. It seemed such opportunities normally went to the more educated, better-connected members of Kijiji. This highlighted that research can empower more marginalized individuals or communities by giving voices to those on the periphery. Nonetheless, some interviews did not go so smoothly. Nicholas (26-30, security guard), for instance, appeared tired after working a night shift, but refused my offer to re-schedule the interview. However, when he started hitting his leg to stay awake, I skipped the remaining probing questions and ended the interview. In hindsight, scheduling his interview in the morning was a mistake.

4.4.3 Focus Group Discussions

Ideally, I would have used individual interviews with all participants. In addition to reducing the risk of *group think* (Wellings, Branigan, & Mitchell, 2000), I found interviews produced the most in-depth insights since I could ask multiple follow-up questions without worrying about losing other group

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[49] Price identified three levels of questions: action questions (least threatening), knowledge questions and belief questions (most intrusive). He suggested it is more ethical to shift between the three levels, switching to a less intrusive level when participants appear to be struggling. I followed this, but was careful to stress participants' right to skip questions before introducing more sensitive topics.

members' interest. However, the suitability of individual interviews for research on sensitive topics with children has been questioned. Leach (2006), for instance, observed that unequal power relations between the participant and interviewer may cause a child to feel pressured into responding to questions they are uncomfortable answering. This concern resonated with my own experiences working with children at *Rescue Dada*. Mindful of the strong intergenerational power inequalities in Kenyan cultures, I therefore decided to use focus groups with child participants. I hoped this method would create less pressure, allowing them to choose which questions to answer (Basch, 1987; Leach, 2006) and shift between being active participants and passive observers (Oliveira, 2011).

The eight focus groups were all single sex, involving three or four participants of a similar age, where possible. They were conducted in private rooms within two local schools or, in the case of children not attending school, the adult resident interview room. Six of the groups involved children enrolled in primary or secondary school, whilst the remaining two groups were 3 girls and 4 boys not attending school. Since research in South Africa has linked CSA to gender-based power inequalities, especially between peers (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana et al. 2005; Wood, Lambert et al. 2007), I hoped single sex groups would allow female participants potentially greater freedom to express their views. Furthermore, although Heary and Hennessy (2002) have argued that child focus groups should ideally have 4-6 participants, the pilot exercises highlighted that slightly smaller groups of 3-4 worked better if interpretation was needed. Indeed, I found this group size also worked well in the English-speaking groups since the groups were small enough not to overly dilute my insight into individual participants' views, yet big enough to allow participants to slip into an observer role.

Similar to the adult interviews, I went through the child-friendly consent form (Appendix C) in detail with the children before the focus groups, giving them ample opportunities for questions, and provided them with contact details for helpful organizations. Whilst the difficulties of ensuring informed consent with children have been widely discussed (Gallagher, Haywood, Jones, & Milne, 2010; Parsons, Sherwood, & Abbott, 2016), I was pleasantly surprised by how much clarification the children sought before signing, an indication of their capability for informed consent. Although Oliveira (2011) argued that the mutual sharing of sensitive topics during her research was actually a factor that promoted confidentiality, I was nonetheless mindful that focus groups carried a risk of potential confidentiality breaches. Prior to the focus groups, I therefore followed Hoppe, Wells et al. (1995) in supporting participants to develop group rules, a process that encouraged them to think about confidentiality and respect for other participants. Once a list of rules had been agreed, I displayed them throughout the focus group sessions.

The focus groups covered the same topics as the interviews (Appendix D), lasting an average of 64 minutes and ranging from 50 to 78 minutes. I gave participants time to ask questions, or debrief, following completion of the session. Having met the school-going participants on multiple occasions before the focus group, I found these went especially smoothly, with the children relaxed and often excited, surprising me with how comfortable they appeared talking about sex and sexuality. I had been concerned that peer pressure may encourage *group think*, but although similar views were often expressed, children nonetheless engaged in lively debates on issues such as abstinence or blame, questioning each other's reasoning. However, in the four Kiswahili-speaking groups, these debates made interpretation more difficult. For instance, although the children generally took turns to speak, when they started to speak over one another, Winnie had to occasionally interject, breaking the flow. A further concern was that since the non-school-going participants were almost all engaged in full-time paid or domestic work, it was not possible to develop the same rapport before the focus groups. It is difficult to gauge how much this affected data collection, since the male group proved the most candid whilst the female group was very quiet. Although the latter group may have just been naturally shyer, more extensive prior engagement may have helped.

4.4.4 Ethical Challenges

Keenly aware of the ethical responsibilities that accompany potentially sensitive research topics, I took as comprehensive measures as possible to ensure participants' well-being. Nonetheless, ethical dilemmas arose, two of which I will briefly discuss. Firstly, when conducting research in very low income settings, Save the Children (2004) argues that researchers should consider whether compensation is needed. Given that many adult and non-school-going child participants were surviving on daily earnings, spending two hours in an interview potentially impeded their ability to meet their household's basic needs. Nonetheless, I felt it unethical to entice participants with cash payments. I therefore stated during recruitment that no compensation would be given, but then followed Kiragu and Warrington (2013) and Kawulich (2011) in offering small thank you gifts (food[50] and/or school stationary).

A second dilemma related to a potential disclosure. As part of the consent process, I stressed that I would report specific, identifiable disclosures. Despite this, in one focus group, participants alluded to rumours that a village elder was sexually exploiting children. However, when I asked further questions after I stopped recording, they said that I had misunderstood; the elder was not a current position holder and had left the settlement some time ago. They would not give me a name, and said that they had just heard rumours. I had confidential discussions with my supervisors and a

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[50]A small quantity of flour, fat and sugar.

member of the Area Advisory Council for child protection[51] who had agreed to advise if such cases arose. Following these discussions, I reluctantly decided that as the children were adamant I had misunderstood, and given the weak local protection systems, reporting their vague allegation could place them at risk of harm. Nonetheless, whilst my head recognized this was in the participants' best interests, given the lack of concrete facts, the social worker in me wanted to investigate further.

4.4.5 The Experience of Collecting Data in Kijiji

Mindful of the safety risks of conducting research in an insecure setting, I developed a stringent risk management plan (Appendix E) which covered the risks of day-to-day crime, as well as unexpected bursts of violence. Nonetheless, during my time in Kenya, I witnessed multiple times that the best security protocols can be rendered tragically obsolete by poor relations with those charged with protecting one's safety. Therefore, whilst the measures I outlined in my risk management plan were certainly important, I would not have contemplated the research had I not developed strong, trusting relationships with my gatekeepers. Without their support, the research would have been impossible.

I was also aware that immersion in the research setting could affect my emotional well-being. The emotional challenges facing researchers conducting research in insecure settings has been well-documented (Diphoorn, 2013; Hume, 2007). Compounding this, I was researching a sensitive topic in a context characterized by visible economic deprivation. Although I had worked with *Rescue Dada* in informal settlements for three years prior to the research, my initial feelings of guilt at my own privileged social and economic position never went away. I therefore identified a counsellor who could provide confidential opportunities to discuss my feelings, although this was ultimately not needed.

My data collection was interrupted by three security issues: two instances of ethnically-motivated inter-village violence (that left 7 dead and over 100 houses destroyed) and a series of grenade attacks on one of the access roads. Reflecting this, the series of inter-village disputes with the neighbouring village undoubtedly upset me. Having grown attached to the community, it was therefore extremely difficult sitting in safety knowing that residents were being burned alive in their homes. The juxtaposition between my privileged position and the excluded residents of Kijiji never felt starker.

However, on the whole, I was lucky that my fieldwork experience was not blighted by the fear Hume (2007) describes during her research on interpersonal violence in an insecure community in El

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[51] An extended arm of the National Council for Children's Services who supervise and coordinate children's rights at a local level.

Salvador. I certainly had moments of anxiety. On one such occasion I was using the female communal toilets when I realized a man was watching me over the cubical door. This gave me a momentary shock, followed by anger that he was so nonchalantly violating my privacy. Furthermore, in a context where petty theft is rife, I was also acutely aware of my responsibility to keep the sensitive data safe when leaving the settlement. Getting the data safely out of Kijiji therefore triggered a sense of relief each day.

Nonetheless, I greatly enjoyed my time in Kijiji, especially as I got to know people. Despite the sensitive research topic, the focus groups and interviews incorporated a surprising amount of laughter and good humour. Indeed, from a psychological perspective, what I found hardest was meeting young people whose opportunities had been severely curtailed. In particular, the boys from the sixth focus group (who had dropped out of school) were some of the most articulate young people I met in Kenya. At the end of the group, I suggested organizations which they could contact for support. Yet, the social worker in me wanted to get more involved. I felt angry that such potential was being wasted, with education replaced by scrap metal collection. Nevertheless, I was aware that picking out a few participants to support would be unethical and potentially risky, jeopardizing the safety of my gatekeepers, who could face complaints about unfair treatment.

However, in the last week of fieldwork, I suddenly started to experience anxiety. I was conducting the focus groups in the secondary school in an adjacent village and, without the familiar faces of Kijiji, the protective social capital I had built disappeared, increasing the security risks. Indeed, the exhaustion I felt on completing the last focus group was perhaps an indicator that my anxieties had been suppressed. Moreover, eleven months later I moved to Amman, Jordan, a city with extremely low crime rates. This highlighted the extent to which living in Nairobi for five years had affected my reaction to insecurity and violence. Nairobi is a city where the threat of sexual violence, crime and terrorism extends indiscriminately across all neighbourhoods, albeit to differing degrees. In fact, whilst I have witnessed multiple lynchings during my time in Kenya, these have been in middle class neighbourhoods rather than the informal settlements, with well-dressed men in suits leading the assaults. Certainly, witnessing such violence sickened me. But violence and the threat of insecurity became a part of life, preparing me for the stories I heard during my fieldwork.

4.5 Data Analysis

4.5.1 Transcript Preparation

With the exception of one key informant who requested that I take notes, all focus groups and interviews were recorded and then I transcribed them verbatim. In total there were approximately

60 hours of recordings. After capturing the text, I added observations about body language and Kiswahili terminology, and allocated pseudonyms. Since almost all participants introduced themselves using their forenames[52], I used popular forenames as pseudonyms. I also instructed Winnie to listen to the recordings alongside the transcripts, double-checking the interpretation; two errors where she had misheard and clearly changed the meaning of an answer were identified.

4.5.2 Analysis Process

Thematic analysis suited the inductive aims of my project by allowing the data to speak for itself rather than imposing predesigned themes (Grbich, 2007). After weeks of transcription, I had looked forward to engaging with the data. However, without warning, I was suddenly hit by the horrors of what I was reading: a two year old who had been raped the previous day, a child who two weeks earlier had been stabbed to death, a girl who had been raped with a bottle and then strangled to death. Seeing the text in black and white, I suddenly felt sickened, not just by the stories, but by how I had not been affected earlier. For two days, I tried to read the transcripts but invariably got angry or upset. I took a week off after recognizing that my feelings might constitute 'secondary traumatic stress' (Coles & Mudaly, 2010: 59), where researchers experience increased levels of emotional stress after empathizing with participants. This gave me space to recognize that my seeming detachment was a coping strategy for dealing with the difficult stories, not heartlessness.

I inputted my data into Nvivo 10 before starting coding. Since I wanted to avoid having overly detailed coding schemes (Boeije, 2010), I merged codes into broader sub-themes, where appropriate: for example, "immodest dress" and "girls' love of money" were combined into the sub-theme "gendered blame". I also used methodological triangulation, comparing what was said in the interviews with what I observed, as well as comparing knowledge-based statements with accounts of actions. This highlighted a clear disjuncture between accounts of what *should* happen in the event of abuse, and what *actually* happens.

However, I was very surprised by the high level of thematic coherence between the child and adult transcripts, especially in relation to understandings of what constitutes CSA. As I suggest in Chapter Six, this may be due to children witnessing similar CSA cases to adults due to the setting's over-crowding. It may also be due to the dominant learning style I observed within schools and homes, in which children were expected to simply absorb and reproduce information provided by adults. However, there were areas where children's views differed quite considerably (say, in relation to

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[52]Kenyans typically have three names: forename (Baptismal) name, traditional name (common to their ethnic group) and family name: e.g. Mary Njeri Kariuki

sexuality or child prostitution). In Chapters 5-8, I have consequently been careful to highlight these areas so that children's voices are clearly projected.

My analysis process was ultimately quite 'messy'. This was due to my being involved in a car accident shortly after finishing the analysis. I sustained a head injury that badly affected my balance and light sensitivity, and left me with very blurred and double vision. Unable to see to work, I applied for a suspension of studies that lasted almost a year. At the end of this period, I was happily able to resume my studies, although it was another 6 months until I was able to work full-time. Whilst this was definitely an incident I would have preferred to avoid, on reflection, the time out had a positive effect on my analysis. I noticed, for example, that some of the linkages between sub-themes were weak, likely guided by my literature search rather than the strength of the actual data. This highlights the importance of constant reflection since researcher bias can enter the research process through what the researcher decides is noteworthy (Stein & Mankowski, 2004). I therefore spent a number of weeks re-visiting my analysis. Whilst I ended up with the same broad themes as my pre-accident analysis, my grouping of sub-themes changed. I also created new sub-themes, such as *tension between informal and formal protective mechanisms*, after recognizing that this was a unique characteristic of my research.

My final analysis identified the following 7 main themes:

- Childhood in Kijiji
- CSA as Forced Sex
- CSA as Inherently Harmful
- Children as Sexual Actors
- Protective Responsibilities
- Competing Justice Systems
- Kijiji as a Dangerous Place for Children

Within each of these themes were a number of sub-themes, a full overview of which can be viewed in Appendix F. Although there was some overlap between themes, within this thesis, I have chosen to focus on the four which best address my research questions, using each as the basis for a chapter. In terms of exploring how CSA is understood, Chapters Five and Six will focus on the themes *CSA as Forced Sex* and *CSA as Inherently Harmful.* In Chapters Seven and Eight, I then consider how understandings of CSA impact on child protection through discussion of the themes *Protective Responsibilities* and *Competing Justice Systems*.

4.6 Reflection on Outsider Dynamics

As a white, British woman with no personal experience of poverty, my world view was very different to that of the participants in my research. As such, I almost certainly missed some cultural nuances. Moreover, my background affected what questions I asked and what information I deemed to be relevant. One such example was the impact of my social work background which made me quick to note the limited psychosocial services available for children. However, Long and Johnson asserted that 'simply being in the respondent's environment enhances the likelihood of their meaning emerging and being recognized' (Long & Johnson, 2000: 34). Supporting this, as the fieldwork progressed I recognized that a spiritual model of mental health held more resonance than a western medical one. It was therefore critical to keep asking myself *why* I had deemed an event or statement important and question whether residents likely shared this view.

Similar to Harrington's (2003) observation, my outsider status also created challenges relating to building initial rapport, with some adult residents suspecting I was another foreign 'slum tourist'. I consequently endeavoured to portray myself as a *knowledgeable* outsider through simple actions, like removing my shoes when entering a house or responding to Kiswahili greetings. This was certainly helped by my familiarity with informal settlements, through my earlier three years' work with *Rescue Dada*. Without this preparation, I suspect my chances of being accepted would have been very slim. Indeed, when I reflect back on my first experiences of informal settlements when we moved to Kenya, I felt disbelief that so many people were living in such challenging conditions, and I suspect my shock was clearly visible. Since residents are used to 'slum tourists' visiting the settlement[53], reacting in this way when trying to gain access for my fieldwork would have risked positioning me as yet another foreign voyeur.

However, whilst my familiarity with informal settlement life certainly helped me build rapport, what appeared to win people's trust more than anything else was being open about my research motivations, alongside acknowledgment of my outsider status (expressing a willingness to learn). Indeed, over time, I noticed that residents started highlighting similarities between us, such as my marital status or likely mutual experience of corruption. Admittedly, they sometimes saw similarities that were not there. In the case of four participants who wished to start the interview with a prayer, for instance, they appeared to assume that I shared *Rescue Dada's* Catholic roots. In such circumstances, I was respectful of participants' practices, whilst being honest if directly questioned.

Nonetheless, like other researchers (e.g. Grahame & Grahame, 2009), I found my outsider position had advantages, allowing me greater freedom to ask questions, especially relating to more culturally

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[53] Tourists pay for organized tours around informal settlements.

sensitive issues, such as sex. Some of this freedom came from my position as a 'westerner'. This was evident when I commented how openly a group of female primary school students talked about sex. The girls laughed, saying that it was easy to talk to me as 'westerners are free [about sex], not like Kenyans'. The perception that I had been socialized into a more permissive culture therefore appeared to shield me from the shame of initiating conversations about sex.

I also found many residents keen to assist an outsider to understand the informal settlement setting. Indeed, given the insecure reputation of Kijiji's settlement, my prior work with *Rescue Dada* and decision to leave the leafy suburbs and conduct research in Kijiji was frequently taken to show my genuine interest in their lives: as noted by Schwartz and Schwartz:

> When the observed become convinced that the observer's attitude toward
> them is one of respect and interest in them as human beings as well as
> research subjects, they will feel less need for concealing, withholding, or
> distorting data (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1955: 347).

Furthermore, I noted that Winnie was frequently constructed as an insider, with comments such as 'You are Kenyan – you can understand this'. However, the distinction between insiders and outsiders is often more complicated than it first appears (Erdemir & Ergun, 2010; Sherif, 2001). For instance, there were occasions where Winnie was visibly surprised by participants' information, despite their assumption of her prior knowledge. I suspect my status as a foreigner meant that some participants offered more detailed explanations than they would have offered to a Kenyan researcher. With appropriate levels of reflection, outsider research can thus offer an alternative, but equally valid, view of a context.

Part Two

Understandings of CSA and CSA Protection in Kijiji

Introducing Part Two

Part Two presents my findings relating to local understandings of CSA and the impact of these understandings on protective mechanisms. As noted in Chapter Three, the Sexual Offences Act (2006) broadened the types of acts that legally constitute CSA, including new offences, such as involvement in child sex tourism. However, amongst non-resident key informants, there was an over-riding perception that the new laws had not resonated with residents of informal settlements:

> …there's a lot [of CSA] that is not reported. Unless these people are
> empowered and they are told what has been happening is wrong…they just
> take it as part of their life (Emma, 26-30, hospital social worker).

Emma clearly linked knowledge and action, with failure to report cases of CSA taken as evidence that residents do not understand what constitutes CSA.

However, as the following table highlights, participants actually had very detailed understandings of acts that constitute CSA:

Contact Acts That May Constitute CSA	Non-Contact Acts That May Constitute CSA
• Rape (female victim, male perpetrators(s)) • Rape (male victim, female perpetrator(s))[54] • Rape (male victim, male perpetrator(s)) • Attempted Rape • Unwanted touching of sexual organs • Engaging a child to have sexual intercourse for money (e.g. luring, sugar mommy and daddy relationships) • Engaging a child to have sex through the use of threats • Impregnating a child • Transmitting HIV to a child. • Engaging a pre-pubescent child in sex	• Having sex in front of a child • Exposing a child to pornography • Using sexual language in front of a child

Figure 5.1: Acts of CSA

Indeed, the breadth of contact and non-contact acts discussed within each interview and focus group was strikingly similar to the types of acts criminalized in the Sexual Offences Act (2006). Nonetheless, legislative knowledge was extremely low, with only thirteen adults having heard of the Sexual Offences Act. Of these, four had some idea of its content. Hence, although it was clear that statutory definitions did not underpin participants' understandings of CSA, local normative frameworks did not appear to be so different.

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[54] Mirroring findings from prevalence studies, outlined in Chapter One, victims were understood to be predominantly female, although male victimhood was also recognized as a possibility.

Similarly, understandings of who is a child (and thus a potential CSA victim) shared *similarities* with statutory definitions, without necessarily signalling that statutory definitions had been internalized at a community-level. Twenty five participants, for example, initially defined a child as someone under the age of 18 years. However, although this mirrored the age of majority in Kenyan legislation, only five participants used legislative frameworks to *justify* their opinion:

> (Kiswahili) In Kenya, according to our laws, [a boy is] below 18 (Peter, 26-30, businessman).

These participants tended to be residents who had either recently completed secondary school, and thus had been taught about the new legalisation, or individuals working in the protection sector who had received child rights training. The remaining twenty one participants used 18 years as an approximate indication of adulthood, explaining it in terms of the social and biological markers that a person would likely have achieved by this age. Age was thus an *indicative* rather than *absolute* marker of childhood, as it is in legislative definitions.

Across the fifty four participants who did not use legislation to solely explain the boundaries of childhood, there were striking similarities in terms of the significance assigned to specific biological and social markers. Similar to Langevang's (2008) observations on the transition to adulthood in Ghana, social markers (including marriage, parenthood and finding work) were mentioned as indicators that a person was moving towards adulthood. However, one marker was assigned particular significance by adult and child participants alike, discussed as a sign that childhood had ended: loss of dependency:

> …we take ourselves as children because we are under care of our parent. Now we are depending on them (Frederick, 16-17, secondary school).

> I'm also a child because I'm under my parents' care and protection (Purity, 16-17, unemployed).

In other words, a child was understood to be a person who is dependent on his or her caregivers.

Such was the strength of the social marker of dependency that children could become parents and still retain their position in childhood. Purity (16-17, unemployed), for example, was a mother. However, her parents had agreed (and could afford) to continue fully supporting her and her child, rather than forcing Purity to find work. Her continued dependency therefore allowed her to remain in childhood. However, as I explore further in Chapter Six, the use of social markers to define

childhood also meant that children risked being prematurely pushed into adulthood if forced to become independent. Thus, if their caregivers were unable to find the money to sustain them in school, children would be pushed to find work, making the conceptual shift to adulthood and losing the protective rights associated with childhood. As captured by Alex, this was perceived to be a big difference between children in informal settlements and those in formally-planned parts of the city:

> …children in this society are not like the other children…Because here they start catering for themselves at an early age...that gives us another definition of a child compared to that one of the UN - that a child is someone below 18 years. So, in (the settlement)…[if] the parents stop caring for you at ten, then you're a grown up (Alex, 13-14, out of school).

With 'caring' closely associated with material provision, childhood did not automatically extend to 18 years. Instead, reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, definitions of a child espoused by the UNCRC failed to garner widespread legitimacy since many families financially struggled to extend childhood dependency for 18 years.

A second prominent marker was the onset of puberty. For a few adult participants, this was understood to signal the end of childhood:

> …she's mature now because…she can carry out most things that adults can carry [out]. So we just categorize her under the adults (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

Interestingly, Simon initially drew on his NGO training to define a child as someone under the legal age of majority. However, as the interview progressed, he drew considerably more on local discourses of childhood, suggesting that his earlier comments may have been an attempt to demonstrate his competency against a normative framework he assumed I followed. A post-puberty-based understanding of adulthood appeared to be rooted in an implicit connection between adulthood and parenthood. Noticeably, though, it was not evident amongst child participants, who explained post-puberty as a period of adolescence, rather than adulthood, due to their on-going dependency. Their bodies may therefore be ready for adult roles, but they were not socially ready. This distinction between different stages of childhood reflects Mayall's (2002) observation that children do not see themselves as a homogenous group, but instead differentiate between stages, such as baby, toddler and teenager.

Whilst dependency was understood to demark the boundary between childhood and adulthood,

puberty was therefore typically used to differentiate between different stages of childhood, such as infanthood and adolescence. Of course, the onset of puberty is a very subjective marker. Does a girl for example, enter puberty when she starts to develop breasts or when she starts menstruating? As such, a ten year old girl could fall into either category, depending on the onlooker's perception of her development. Nonetheless, as I explore further in Chapters Five and Six, this distinction proved very powerful for differentiating between different forms of CSA, with pre-pubescent children assumed to lack sufficient knowledge to consent to a sexual act. With sex understood to be incongruent with early childhood, pre-pubescent children were almost always automatically constructed as victims if they engaged in a sexual act. This supports Jones' and Trotman Jemmott's (2013) assertion that understandings of CSA are tied to conceptualizations of childhood.

With these distinctions in mind, Chapters Five and Six consider how residents drew on local discourses relating to childhood, gender and sexuality to differentiate an abusive sexual act from a non-abusive one. When I asked participants why they understood specific acts to be abusive, two themes were dominant, regardless of the age, gender or social background of the participant: the use of force and the expectation of resultant harm. Chapter Five consequently considers participants' understandings of force and consent, whilst Chapter Six examines the impact of the Kijiji context on understandings of CSA-related harm. Within Chapters Seven and Eight, I turn to my second research question: to what extent did understandings of CSA impact upon protection? Chapter Seven considers residents' understandings and application of CSA prevention strategies, whilst Chapter Eight examines the impact of legal pluralism on the pursuit of justice in Kijiji.

Chapter Five

'Circumstances Can Force You'

Blurring the Line Between Consensual and Non-Consensual Sex

5.0 Introduction

Across participants of all ages, genders and backgrounds, the primary factor distinguishing a non-abusive sexual act involving a child from an abusive one was the perception that the latter involves the child being *forced* into the act. This was illustrated by Fred, who asserted that in order for a sexual act to be considered non-abusive, the girl would need to signal her acceptance:

> …we have sexual abuse, we have sexual relation…where I come to you as a girl, I talk to you, I convince you, we go and play sex. That is different from sexual abuse because…you accepted (Fred, 41-45, village chairman).

Although drawing on a locally dominant discourse of masculinity, in which sexual activity was assumed to be initiated by men, Fred clearly depicted abusive acts as those taking place without the victim's consent. Similarly, Josephine said:

> (Kiswahili)…by sexual abuse I mean that…someone just attacked and raped them…the victim wasn't willing. You know there's a difference between something that one does willingly and [an] act that is done without the consent of a person (Josephine, 46-50, chapatti stall owner).

Within many participants' *initial* descriptions of CSA, a clear distinction was consequently implied between consensual and non-consensual sex.

However, as discussions progressed, more complex constructions emerged in which the line between consensual and non-consensual sex was blurred, incorporating consideration for the child's level of agency and motivations. For instance, transactional sexual encounters perceived to be motivated by a child's desire to meet their basic needs were frequently constructed as 'forced' sex, despite the child agreeing to the sexual act. As such, the category of abusive sexual acts was expanded to include acts which children consented to whilst perceived to be under pressure from underlying relational and structural forces, such as parental pressure and economic vulnerability. The pertinent question when distinguishing an act of CSA from a non-abusive sexual act

consequently shifted from whether the child signalled agreement to the act to whether the child felt free to refuse it.

Yet, there was nonetheless a lack of consensus about the extent to which different external factors impact upon a child's ability to refuse sexual advances. For instance, child participants tended to construct child prostitution as an act of CSA, explaining the victim's participation in terms of their economic vulnerability. In contrast, adult participants were more likely to downplay economic pressures, depicting prostitution as a consensual, non-abusive act driven by the child's pursuit of sexual pleasure (section 5.2.4). Within this chapter, I therefore explore why some sexual acts were considered non-consensual, or abusive, and others not. In particular, I focus on the four most widely discussed factors that were understood to affect a child's agency:

- Physical force

- Manipulation of a child's developing sexual knowledge

- Intergenerational power disparities

- Economic Vulnerability

I also consider a fifth factor:

- Gender inequality in sexual relationships

This was rarely explicitly identified as a factor thinning children's agency, with girls' reduced ability to exercise power in sexual relationships tending to be normalized. Nonetheless, it appeared to have a substantive effect on girls' sexual decision-making. However, underpinned by my aim to disrupt dominant western discourses relating to CSA, I start by questioning how the concept of sexual consent was locally understood.

5.1 Developing Local Understandings of Sexual Consent

As highlighted in Chapter Two, although consent is predominantly understood as a *personal choice* in western settings, a number of alternative conceptualizations co-exist in African cultures. These range from consent as a *personal choice* to *collective* or *proxy* decision-making (Wondie, Zemene, Reschke, & Schröder, 2011). I therefore start by questioning which understandings of consent resonated locally, before examining conceptualizations of children's sexual choices within the Kijiji context.

5.1.1 Who Decides?

The dominant understanding of consent (projected by participants of all ages, genders and backgrounds) was a conceptualization based on *personal choice*, with the power to make decisions

placed primarily with the intimate parties. Indeed, a common theme amongst school-going participants, such as Frederick, was the expectation that they would choose when and how they had sex:

> …you may discuss [sex] with [your partner]. Maybe he will tell you after you have got married. Maybe it will be the right time. It depend on the partners (Frederick, 16-17, secondary school).

Frederick's depiction of equal negotiations arguably overlooks the gendered power inequalities evident in sexual relationships that potentially restrict females' scope for decision-making (discussed in section 5.2.5). Given his socialization into a strongly patriarchal society, this is perhaps unsurprising. Nonetheless, Frederick's comment captures the dominant portrayal of consent as a private negotiation between two parties. This was especially evident amongst child participants, who equated relaxed sexual regulations with a greater alignment with western cultures: a sign of 'development':

> …we get like the UK. Kenya is going digital (laughs)[55]. You know, we have (sexual) choices (Monica, 13-14, primary school).

Having grown up in a post-colonial globalized world, Monica's generation had far greater opportunities to compare their lifestyles with other cultures than their parents or grandparents. From the Hollywood movies shown in the *videos*, to the well-heeled tourists who visited Kijiji and talked about their (middle-class) lives in Europe and America, children appeared to have an overly glossy view of the West, characterized by progress and affluence. They consequently internalized this glossy image, equating 'development' with sexual freedoms.

Nonetheless, alternative understandings of consent were also evident. This was especially true amongst adult participants who had spent their childhoods upcountry in areas where *proxy consent* was popular. Marianne, for instance, originated from the coast, where arranged marriages are still common. She explained how her first sexual encounter occurred within an arranged marriage, with her family effectively giving *proxy consent* for the encounter:

> (Kiswahili)]…you don't know who is marrying you. Someone just comes to take your hand in marriage and your grandmother is the one who ties the

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[55] Joke based on the campaign promises of the Jubilee Alliance, who equated going digital with development. Comment hand-recorded after group, and verbal permission obtained.

band on your wrist [symbolizing betrothal]…that is how I got married (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

Marianne framed her experiences in terms of customary practices linked to her cultural background. As such, she avoided constructing her first sexual encounter as abusive, despite having had no input in the decision-making process.

However, against a backdrop of arguably greater sexual autonomy (evidenced by the growing legitimacy of *come-we-stay* marriages), the majority of participants understood consent as a *personal choice*. Alongside the impact of a globalized media, this was potentially influenced by western NGOs who were widely promoting sexual choice within the settlement. Arranged marriages were therefore predominantly framed as a form of CSA, due to the child's exclusion from the decision-making process and their caregivers' exploitation of the intergenerational power disparities underpinning the child-caregiver relationship:

> (Kiswahili)…there are some girls whose fathers own small hotels around here…a man who has been interested with the girl comes to the hotel, they negotiate with the father about maybe marrying her…since the father wants money, he gives out his daughter to the man (Samuel, 13-14, primary school).

> …before the child is mature enough to be married, the child might be forced by the parent or guardian to get into an engagement with somebody (Luke, 16-17, secondary school).

From this perspective, arranged marriages become non-consensual acts of sexual abuse, since an implied sexual relationship is being imposed on the child by a third party.

Yet, despite the majority of participants conceptualizing consent in terms of *personal choice*, not one person suggested that these choices were free from external pressures. Instead, a more nuanced account of sexual decision-making was presented in which individuals' sexual choices were understood to be affected by a variety of structural and relational factors. In light of this, I will now consider the impact of external factors on children's agency within sexual encounters.

5.1.2 Impeded Choices: Conceptualizing the Scope of Children's Sexual Agency

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, participants initially tended to draw on a binary depicting sexual acts as either willingly entered (consensual) or forced (non-consensual). However,

as participants further explained their understandings of CSA, more complex accounts emerged which recognized that sexual encounters are often subject to different types and degrees of coercion (Erulkar, 2004; Wood & Jewkes, 1997). For example, a child's agreement to participate in a transactional sexual relationship was frequently understood to be underpinned by a need for basic subsistence commodities. The child's explicit agreement was thus overshadowed by the significant external coercion deriving from their unmet needs, and they were re-framed as a victim of CSA whose decision to participate had been made within a highly restrictive context.

I find it helpful to return to Klocker's (2007) work on children's agency (discussed in Chapter Two) in which she argues that children's capacity to exercise agency falls on a continuum, thickened or thinned by contextual structures and relational factors. Within my data, a similar depiction was evident, with a child's sexual agency understood to be thickened or thinned to varying degrees by a plethora of structural and relational factors (figure 5.2, overleaf). Indeed, most participants explained their rationale for labelling an act as abusive in terms of the various structural and relational factors thinning the child's sexual agency: for example, Alice (whose centrally-situated grocery business provided an excellent vantage point for observing interactions within Kijiji) explained why child transactional sex occurs:

> (Kiswahili)…it is because of poverty…maybe the child slept hungry…she finds a man who is willing to give her Ksh.50 or buy her chips. So she sees it's better to have the chips then go with the man (Alice, 26-30, grocer).

Similarly, Judith noted:

> (Kiswahili)…if [a girl] is in need of some personal effects which she is not getting at home, she will accept to have sex with a man so that she can at least get some money to go and buy whatever she wants (Judith, 16-17, unemployed).

Acts of CSA were therefore not just defined in terms of an interpersonal power struggle between the perpetrator and the child. Instead, they were also defined by the relationship between the child and different structural and relational forces impeding the child's agency, such as economic deprivation. As highlighted in figure 5.2 (overleaf), the thinner the child's perceived agency, the more likely the sexual encounter would be interpreted as a non-consensual act of CSA, even if the child explicitly agreed to participate.
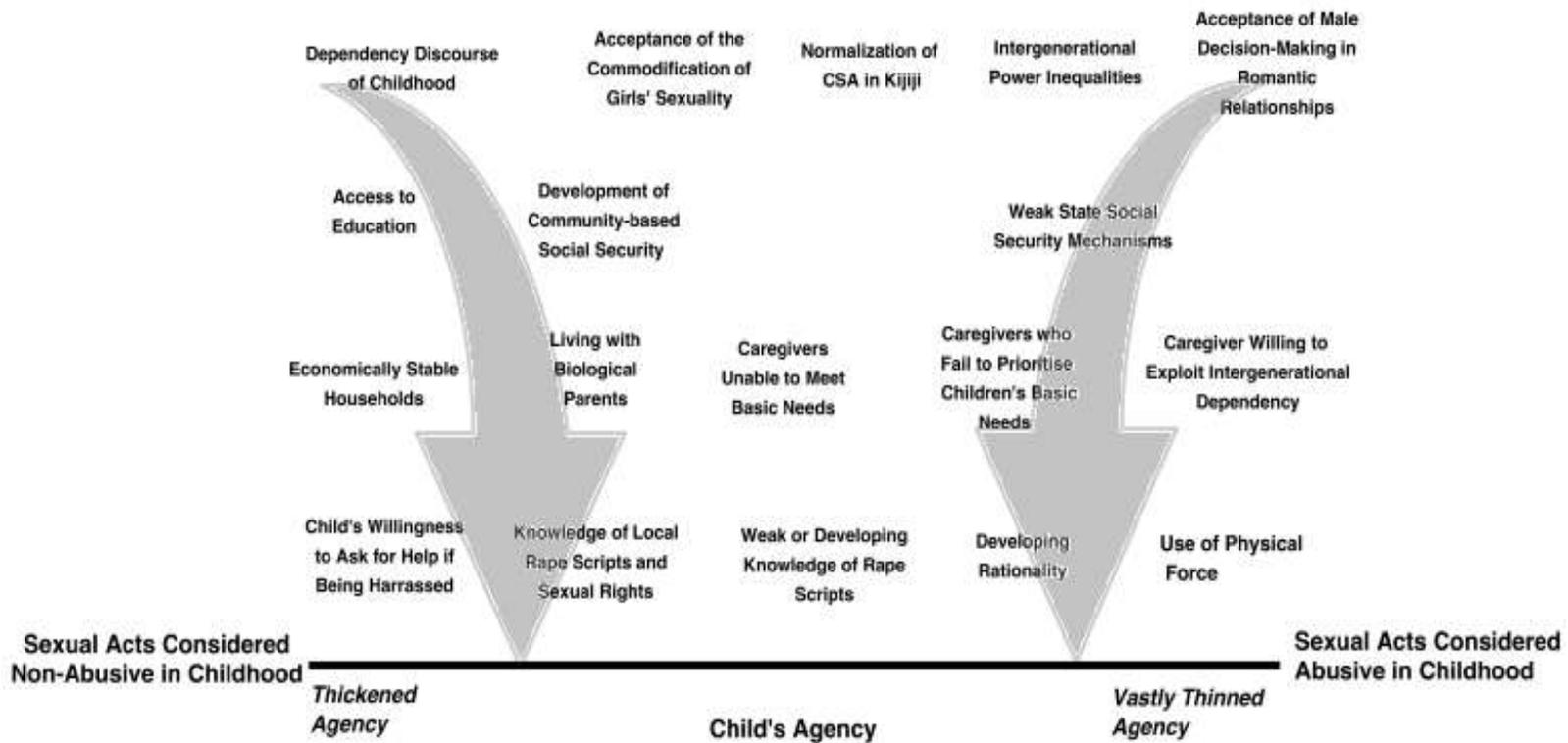
Figure 5.2: Factors Affecting Children's Agency

When deciding whether a sexual act was abusive, participants therefore analysed the different factors thinning a child's power to refuse participation. However, by moving away from a simple binary based on whether the child agreed to the sexual act or not, decisions regarding whether an act constitutes abuse became considerably more subjective. Indeed, participants appeared to tolerate different degrees of coercion before a child's agency was understood to be sufficiently thinned for any explicit consent to be overshadowed. It was also noticeable that different social groups attributed greater significance to certain factors; for example, child participants were more likely to assess a child's agency as being highly thinned if the act was driven by fear of losing the safeguards associated with the adult-child dependent relationship (section 5.2.3). Some factors, such as gender inequality in sexual relationships, also received considerably less attention than others. This subsequently affected the types of acts constructed as abusive, with coercion in romantic relationships frequently overlooked (section 5.2.5).

5.2 Factors Affecting Children's Choice Related to Sexual Encounters

Drawing on my observations from the previous section, the remainder of this chapter questions why participants treated certain acts as non-consensual (and thus abusive), and other not. I focus on the four most frequently discussed factors understood to thin a child's agency, evaluating their differing perceived impacts. I end by considering a fifth factor: gender inequalities in romantic relationships. Although this factor was not as widely mentioned as the other four, it highlights the varying degrees of emphasis given to different structural and relational factors.

5.2.1 The Impact of Physical Force on Victims' Agency

The factor understood to thin children's sexual agency to the greatest degree was physical force. Critically, this was understood to thin a victim's agency to the point where refusal was impossible, placing the child at the perpetrators' will:

> …[a] person just comes and scares you, or [they] just come and do that
> thing [rape] in a way he wants (Lilian, 18-25, trainee tailor).

Highlighting the fear accompanying the child's helplessness, Lilian's comment captures the over-riding perception that physical force enables perpetrators to fulfil their own wishes, with little consideration for the child's feelings. Similarly, when explaining what constitutes an act of CSA, Wycliffe said:

> (Kiswahili)…an older person will get hold of a small child and rape them
> (Wycliffe, 31-35, carpenter).

With the power perceived to lie in the hands of the perpetrator, physically forced acts were treated especially seriously in Kijiji, with rapists facing the possibility of being killed if they were caught (discussed in Chapter Eight).

The seriousness with which physically forced acts of CSA were perceived was also evident in the way they were discussed by residents. Within western awareness-raising literature on CSA, for instance, children are frequently portrayed as innately vulnerable to CSA due to their growing physical stature, or smaller size (e.g. Cruise, 2004). However, within Kijiji, participants of all ages, genders and backgrounds tended to focus on how perpetrators enhanced their own physical strength in order to create the physical strength disparity needed to abuse. For instance, when discussing heterosexual rape (understood to be sexual intercourse coerced through physical violence), Esther explained how perpetrators operate in groups:

> (Kiswahili)…maybe the girl has been sent out and then she finds a group of young men walking and then they grab her…rape her (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

Research in South Africa found that men engaged in gang rape for fun or due to peer pressure (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2010). However, in contrast, Leonard (18-25, security guard) suggested that raping in groups provided a greater sense of security for perpetrators, reducing their chance of being overpowered by the victim:

> (Kiswahili)…if it is one person, he is not going to rape the girl because he is going to fear…if the young man is alone, the girl might even overcome him…through this people are going to easily come because the girl is going to call for help…But if there are two or three it is not going to be easy for the girl. She is not even going to be able to scream for help (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

As I discuss further in Chapter Eight, Leonard had witnessed a girl being gang-raped but as he was alone, he had felt unable to stop the attack. Thus, his focus on the power of collective action during rape may have been influenced by his own experiences of feeling powerless when faced with multiple perpetrators. Furthermore, it is important to note that not all local rapes occurred in groups. Instead, in the majority of discussed cases, perpetrators appeared to use surprise, fear and their greater physical stature to overcome their victims. However, by conceptualizing physically forced acts in terms of perpetrators' concerted efforts to *actively increase their strength*, participants were able to emphasize victims' perceived helplessness and the wrongfulness of the act.

Physical force was consequently understood to thin a child's agency within a sexual encounter to such a degree that negotiation or resistance were given little consideration. Indeed, only Lilian suggested the possibility of resistance, noting that:

> …if the eyes [of a man] have turned red, know there is something coming…that's why there are some schools that train in karate. And [how to] defend yourself (Lilian, 18-25, tailor).

However, having lived in Kijiji for just three years (thus in the bottom quartile of participants' lengths of residency), Lilian only discussed one case of rape that she had observed. Her optimism regarding children's capacity for resistance may therefore have been higher than residents who had lived in Kijiji longer and witnessed multiple cases.

The limited focus on resistance contrasts with the findings of a qualitative study examining attitudes to rape in Kenya[56] in which the authors found that a 'true' victim was expected to scream (Tavrow, Wu, Obbuyi, Withers, & Omollo, 2013). Yet, in Kijiji, resistance was not expected. Instead, victims of physically forced sex were depicted as helpless. When exploring why this was, it is helpful to consider James' association between children's inability to resist unwanted touching and the spatial restrictions of Kijiji's corridors:

> …When somebody's coming the other side and you're coming this way, it's either one of you to stand and the other to pass…so in this society you find a child is really small, he meets the old person. They just touch...his body (James, 16-17, unemployed).

Within James' explanation, the congestion deriving from residents' economic deprivation was understood to work alongside physical force to curtail children's agency, forcing settlement-dwelling children to frequent locations where it may be harder to resist physical attacks. Residents' recognition of the multiple factors thinning victims' agency therefore arguably overlooked the latter's capacity for resistance, even in subtle ways, such as a child stiffening their body (Driver, 1989). Nonetheless, it co-currently reduced the likelihood that victims would be blamed if they did not demonstrate active resistance.

It is important to note that one type of CSA did not fit this pattern: same-sex male rape. Whilst considered abusive by all who mentioned it, Bannister noted that resistance was nonetheless expected:

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[56] The study used focus groups with 310 male and female participants, aged 12 years and above.

> …people will take you as a weak link because you did not fight back
> (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

Bannister's comments about same-sex male rape should be understood within the context of Kenya's powerful heteronormative framework. Framing cases of same-sex male rape against this heteronormative backdrop, it appeared that although physical force was perceived to thin a boy's agency, a concurrent expectation existed that victims would draw on their own [assumed] internalized aversion to find the strength to resist. This consequently threatened victims' opportunities to seek support following an attack.

Whilst participants' discussions about the impact of physical force had many thematic similarities, a number of differences were apparent when focusing on the use of physical force by female perpetrators. Firstly, female-perpetrated rape was not discussed by child participants. Turton (2010) asserted that feminine traits of mothering and nurturing make female abusing difficult to perceive. With almost all child participants reliant on adult females for their day-to-day care, it is possible that they were unable, or unwilling, to conceptualize women in the role of violent perpetrator. Yet, contrary to Gannon and Rose's (2008) observation that cases of female offending are frequently unrecognized, within adult narratives, female offending was framed as a pertinent problem. Indeed, twelve of the adult participants referred to female-perpetrated rape of boys[57].

Nonetheless, when considering how female perpetrators used physical force, gendered differences emerged. Male adult participants typically reframed female perpetrators in terms of masculine traits of aggression and insatiable sexual appetites, actively working to enhance their power over their victims and fulfil their sexual urges by operating in groups and using weapons:

> (Kiswahili)…you may find a group of big girls raping a boy and they are
> usually many in number…they threaten him with an object…That's how
> they rape him (David, 18-25, casual labourer).

> (Kiswahili)…[the group of women] are all going to attack him and force him
> to have sex with them (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

In contrast, an alternative viewpoint was offered by adult females, with Jane and Violet suggesting that women use stimulation to physically disable boys. When discussing female-perpetrated rape, Jane commented:

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[57] No same-sex female perpetrated forms of CSA were mentioned. This arguably reflects Kenya's heteronormative framework, with the Sexual Offences Act (2006) failing to mention same-sex abuses. Same-sex male sexual abuses were mentioned, though, using the biblical term 'sodomy', possibly reflecting their prominence in Christian teaching at school and church.

> (Kiswahili)…she'll just start cuddling the boy…stimulating him so that he can agree…if he refuses, that's when she'll use force (Jane, 18-25, factory worker).

Similarly, when considering how women rape young boys, Violet explained:

> Actually you are not willing but what she does actually drives you to do it….Remove your clothes, kissing and all that. And you feel like having it, although it's against your wish (Violet, 18-25, Child Development Student).

Female perpetrators were thus portrayed as utilizing their feminine sexuality, using sexual stimulation rather than brute force to enhance their physical control over a boy. Notably, though, both women discussed female rapists in the third person. Thus, whilst they recognized the potential for women to sexually abuse children, they concurrently distanced themselves from this behaviour.

These different perspectives arguably reflect gendered understandings of sexuality within Kijiji, a culture where male sexuality was dominantly associated with assertiveness and female sexuality with passivity. Male participants therefore firmly reinforced this binary, attempting to reconcile female abusing by stripping female perpetrators of their femininity and constructing them in terms of masculine characteristics, such as aggression. This mirrors findings from a UK study examining child protection professionals' views of female perpetrators which found that most professionals re-frame female CSA perpetrators as more masculine than 'normal' women (Hetherton & Beardsall, 1998).

 In contrast, as women (at least one of whom was sexually active), Violet and Jane were better placed to understand the more subtle ways in which women exercise power through their sexuality. Violet, for instance, drew on sexual scripts that denote boys as unable to stop once sexually stimulated to explain how female perpetrators use their sexual knowledge to thin boys' agency. Ironically, these sexual scripts are more typically re-framed as rape myths to explain male offending (Ryan, 2011). This consequently broadens understandings of what constitutes forced sex, with non-violent means of curtailing consent also potentially constructed as acts of rape. Nonetheless, further research would be needed to explore whether men would construct this more gentle physical coercion as physically forced sex.

5.2.2 Manipulation of A Child's Developing Sexual Knowledge

A second factor understood to vastly thin children's agency was perpetrators' manipulation of gaps in children's developing sexual knowledge. When describing why a young child would willingly go with an older person to their house, Jane and Stella said:

> …he'll just tell the girl, please come…I'll buy you chips, sweets…The girl will
> just run. So at that point when she just reaches the house, the man will just
> close the door tightly, do what he wants, then he just throws the child out
> (Jane, 18-25, factory worker).

> [the man] lied to her that they are going to just watch cars…they got to his
> home and raped her (Stella, 18-25, runs a grocery business).

Underpinned by a 'becoming' conceptualization of childhood, dominant across the interviews and focus groups, children were understood to be slowly accruing the knowledge needed to successfully negotiate sexual relations and recognize attempts at manipulation. This included knowledge about what different sexual acts entail and how to recognize potentially abusive situations, such as instances where a person may be lying about their intentions.

There was also an implicit assumption that the child would need sufficient rationality to operationalize this knowledge. Particular terms (*luring or cheating)* were used to describe sexual acts based on manipulation of a child's developing sexual knowledge. When discussing why a child may have sex with an adult, Timothy and Damaris commented:

> …most of them they are being lured…[a neighbour] can even send the
> child…'go and buy for me something. After you bring, you keep the
> change'…[but] when you come, he rapes you (Timothy, 41-45, Director of
> CBO).

> ….you will find somebody wanting to cheat [a girl] with sweets (Damaris,
> 18-25, teacher).

Isaac drew on cases he had witnessed in his two decades living in Kijiji to explain luring as a systematic process:

> ...they can use this system of giving [girls] sweets and then they have sex
> with them (Isaac, 36-40, businessman).

Luring was thus framed as a systematic (albeit abusive) local practice, easily achieved in an economically-deprived context where treats are a rare occurrence. Characterized by grooming, perpetrators were understood to manipulate the child's developing points of reference to draw them away from places of safety. In such cases, the child's agency was depicted as vastly thinned

due to their insufficient knowledge about what was likely to happen, and consequently positioned towards the abusive end of the spectrum.

Surprisingly, there was a high level of agreement across the interviews and focus groups about what knowledge children required in order to avoid becoming a victim of luring or cheating. Indeed, understandings of *local rape scripts* (Ryan, 2011) were remarkably similar. First and foremost, children were expected to recognize that sexual perpetrators were part of the community, using their local knowledge to their advantage. Highlighting the familiarity that accompanies the congested living associated with informal settlements, Pauline observed:

> …[neighbours] know well the situation in your house. He can lure your girl
>
> child with maybe money or food and then he sleeps with her (Pauline, 41-
>
> 45, teacher).

With a household's socio-economic status easily visible to neighbours through, say, their water collection patterns, the threat of abuse was understood to derive from exploitation of this familiarity. In fact, only eight participants discussed the possibility of stranger rape. This sharply contrasts with Ryan's (2011) examination of western rape script literature, in which she argued that concerted efforts to highlight acquaintance rape have failed to overthrow the 'Real Rape Script' (a blitz attack involving a stranger). However, the vast majority of CSA cases discussed by participants in my research involved a perpetrator known to the child. With the community's lived experiences of CSA involving relatives, friends and neighbours, participants could therefore not escape the threat from within, a reality reflected in the local rape scripts.

Furthermore, when discussing the practice of luring, Martin commented:

> Children abuse normally takes place in the community…those who are in
>
> grade 3, 2 (aged 7-9 years)…because they are people who can be sent by us
>
> and then they're lured into [a] trap (Martin, 41-45, Community Health
>
> Worker).

By using the term 'us', Martin identified a second frequent feature of local rape scripts: the depiction of sexual perpetrators as not just members of the community but ordinary people who happen to abuse. This directly opposes dominant discourses of paedophilia in the West which, although focused on teaching children to mistrust adults they do not know (Furedi, 2016), distinguish perpetrators as qualitatively different from the rest of the population, or 'sick' (Chenier, 2012; Tzeng & Schwarzin, 1990). However, with most participants citing at least two cases of CSA that they had

either witnessed or heard detailed accounts of, the western depiction of paedophiles as a minority group of sick individuals held little resonance.

Residents therefore looked for ways of explaining the settlement's perceived high levels of abusive behaviour. This was evidenced by a mother I spoke with, who recalled that her church taught her never to leave her daughter alone with her husband in case he raped her[58]. When I dug deeper, it became clear that she did not view her husband as sick or a rapist. However, she framed the potential threat he posed to their daughter in terms of the dominant view of masculinity in Kijiji, in which men's sexual appetites were understood to be naturally insatiable once triggered:

> (Kiswahili)…the man sees [the girl], has the urge to have sex. So he rapes the girl…men cannot hold back (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

> (Kiswahili)…after drinking, [men] get sexually aroused. So they get hold of any girl they come across and rape them since they don't have time to approach them well and [negotiate] a sexual relationship (Stephen, 41-45, carpenter).

Rape was thus depicted as an extension of 'normal' masculinity rather than the act of a depraved individual, a depiction that explained, if not necessarily excused, men's violence. This perspective therefore meant that children needed to be warned about the risks of being lured by men *per se*, rather than just strangers.

However, despite participants tending to offer similar suggestions about the types of knowledge required to avoid manipulation, as noted earlier, there was considerable discrepancy about *when* children were likely to have acquired this knowledge. Reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, statutory understandings of when children have the knowledge and maturity to consent (18 years) were usurped by local understandings of children's sexual development. However, these also varied between participants. So, although puberty was frequently mentioned as a possible marker, differing views were presented around exactly when in puberty adequate knowledge was expected. Agnes, for instance, argued that a girl who had just started menstruating may still be ignorant about what sex entails:

> (Kiswahili) another [sexual abuse] is that maybe there's a girl who has just started her monthly periods, so she'll go and have sex and she'll become pregnant because she doesn't know that now she's fertile because she has started her monthly periods (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

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[58] Taken from field-notes during discussions following introductory meeting.

In contrast, in a case discussed in Chapter Eight, Geoffrey (26-30, village committee advisor) assessed a girl of 8-9 years as possessing adequate knowledge to successfully negotiate a sexual relationship.

When considering these differences, it was noticeable that adult participants who had sustained contact with children outside the home, such as teachers or community elders, tended to construct children as sexually knowledgeable from an earlier point in childhood. Pauline, for example, drew on her two decades of teaching, saying:

> …you can see a child [of 6 years] bringing for you a packet of [discarded] condoms and he's saying in our language that 'this is a thing for doing bad manners' [colloquial for sex]. So…even if he is not doing it, he has known about…sex existing (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

Also a teacher, Martin suggested that his colleagues' insight derived from having contact with children away from their caregivers:

> …when their parents are not there, when [children] talk they talk differently…they talk about sex and you wonder where have they learned those [things]…but when the parents are there they tend to be very good children (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

Martin argued that caregivers did not get a true picture of their child's sexual knowledge, since children understood the cultural importance of downplaying their developing knowledge around caregivers. However, as a teacher, he was privy to moments where children let down their guard, such as when they played with friends or gossiped in class. Although schools were undoubtedly arenas where intergenerational power lay with teachers, the teaching role subsequently provided opportunities to observe children projecting their developing sexualities to their peers, away from the parental gaze.

This observation was validated by Hellen, who explained how children tried to conceal their trips to 'adult' spaces, such as the *videos* that showed pornography:

> …If [parents] ask, you will start pretending that you were just watching football (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

Knowing their caregivers could impose discipline, children therefore understood the advantages of employing what Goffman (1959) termed *impression management* to maintain the presentation of a *good child*, or one who was focused on school and the future. This enabled them to avoid the

physical or verbal chastisement associated with unsanctioned sexual behaviour. Furthermore, by downplaying their developing sexual knowledge, they potentially extended the period by which their caregivers could consider them a potential victim of luring if they were caught having transactional sex. However, it was noticeable that child participants mainly talked about *luring* in relation to young pre-pubescent infants. Seemingly drawing on their own experiences of sexual knowledge accrual in Kijiji, they assumed a much shorter period in which a child's agency could be thinned by a perpetrator manipulating their developing sexual knowledge. A peer (13+ years) found to be engaging in sex would therefore be unlikely to be viewed as a victim of manipulation, or *luring*.

5.2.3 The Impact of Intergenerational Power Disparities

Mirroring my observations in Chapter Two, amongst adult participants, the elevated status ascribed to older people was frequently discussed as a factor thinning children's agency within a sexual encounter. Critically, the intergenerational power disparity between adults and children was understood to potentially impede the latter's capacity to report an act of abuse, such as indecent touching:

> ...maybe because he's elderly or older, the child might keep quiet but
> actually that is an abuse (Marietta, 51-55, Director, child-focused NGO).

The elevated social standing that accompanies age, alongside the enduring cultural value placed on childhood deference to elders that has been noted in many other African cultures (Bornstein, Putnick, & Lansford, 2011; Oburu, 2011; Twum-Danso, 2009b; Whiting, 1996), was therefore perceived to impede a child challenging an adult's behaviour, even if it violated their rights.

The impact of intergenerational power disparities on children's opportunities to report abuse was also noted by child participants:

> (Kiswahili)…maybe a girl has been engaged in some sort of bad behaviour
> and the parents don't know yet but only [the elder] knows about it. He will
> force the girl to have sex so that she is not reported to her parents
> (Rebecca, 13-14, primary school).

However, as highlighted by Rebecca, child participants were more likely to focus on the impact of adults *misusing their power advantage*[59]. Similarly, a group of thirteen year old girls at the primary school where I undertook observation explained how their male teacher had made them feel uncomfortable by making fun of their developing physiques. However, when I asked if they reported

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[59] Her sensitivity to abuses of power was likely heightened by the fact that she had heard stories of a local elder using his position to sexually abuse girls (discussed in section 4.4.4).

him, they declared this impossible since he would find an excuse to cane them. Child participants were therefore more likely to explain children's thinned agency in terms of the cultural positioning of adults as disciplinarians over children. In other words, returning to Stainton Rogers' (2001) 'control' discourse of childhood, children's agency was understood to be thinned by the misuse of power that derives from an adult's legitimized position as a regulator of children's behaviour rather than adults' elevated position *per se*.

Adult partipicants consequently tended to draw on more traditional views of child-rearing (still found in rural settings), where members of the community exercise legitimate power over children, purely by virtue of their older age. In contrast, child participants suggested a more family-focused perspective on child-rearing and protection, in which intergenerational power lay predominantly with the immediate family and a few select professionals. When considering why this was, it is worth noting that in rural communities, families live in close proximity to extended family members. Thus, the community has strong kinship ties. However, urban migration has meant that informal settlements are considerably more diverse, with neighbours not only often unrelated but potentially from different ethnic groups. This has potentially disrupted the legitimacy of traditional child-rearing practices, based on collective responsibilities and kinship ties.

Reflecting a more family-focused view of child-rearing, intergenerational power disparities that occur within the caregiver-child relationship received particular attention across both the interviews and focus groups. This was especially so during discussions of two specific forms of CSA: early marriage[60] and cases of transactional sex where caregivers forced girls' participation. When discussed by adult participants, children's agency during these types of CSA was typically depicted as being thinned by caregivers exercising their intergenerational power advantage, 'sending' the child to participate:

> (Kiswahili)…if they've lacked food at home the parents will just send them
>
> [to engage in transactional sex] (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

Similarly, when considering early marriage, children in Kijiji were understood to be pressured into marriage by their caregivers for a minimal economic exchange:

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[60] Understood as marriage between a girl and adult man. The recognition of come-we-stay marriages broadened understandings of early marriage to include cases where a girl lived with her partner without undergoing a formal civil, traditional or religious ceremony.

> …[parents] give [their daughters] for dowry[61]…they are forced to be
> married by their parents (Martin, 41-45, community health worker).

Returning to my earlier discussion around consent, caregivers were therefore perceived to be exercising *proxy consent*, taking away girls' opportunities to exercise *personal consent*. Moreover, echoing findings from Tanzania (Wamoyi, Fenwick, Urassa, Zaba, & Stones, 2011), a girl's sexuality was positioned as an economic resource to be exploited by the people around her. Intergenerational power disparities were consequently understood to interact with economic vulnerability and a cultural acceptance of the commodification of girls' sexuality to vastly thin the latter groups' agency.

When considering why caregivers' ability to exercise power over their children received such widespread attention, child participants provided the most detailed analysis. Likely deriving from their current status as dependents, they noted that girls' thinned agency (in cases of early marriage and forced transactional sex) derived not just from caregivers exploiting their intergenerational power advantage but from them exploiting children's intergenerational dependency. This was evidenced by Samuel and Martha during discussions about why girls engage in transactional sexual relationships:

> …because their mothers are controlling them (Martha, 13-14, primary
> school).
>
> (Kiswahili)…if you are an orphan, the person who takes you in will first
> treat you well but when he starts running out of money…you will be left
> with no choice: either do what they want or leave the house (Samuel, 13-
> 14, primary school).

Girls may therefore consent to sex, but their consent was constructed as 'giving in' under pressure from their caregivers.

Similarly, when describing how mothers force their daughters to have sex for money, Charity lamented that a child's position as a dependent curtails their bargaining position if their caregiver decides to withhold basic provisions:

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[61]The term dowry (transfer of assets from the bride's family to the groom's family) is frequently used in Kenya to refer to what are technically bride price exchanges (transfer of assets from the groom's family to that of his bride). Although Martin described the exchange as a 'dowry' (technically a bride price), the cultural ceremonies normally accompanying the exchange (e.g. extended family of the groom visiting the prospective in-laws) were missing. Cultural traditions relating to exchanges before a marriage were therefore diluted, stripping away the traditional gestures of respect to both the girl and her family.

> [mothers say] 'you have to do it for us to get that money. You want to eat,
>
> you want to be fed? You want clothes? You want to go to school? You have
>
> to do that in order for us to get this'. So this kid will not have any option
>
> but to adhere to the rules…if I pack and leave, where will I head to?
>
> (Charity, 18-25, unemployed).

Given Kenya's weak social security systems, few safety nets existed for children whose caregivers withdrew material support. Indeed, although the State Remand Home and a number of NGOs operated in the settlement, offering shelter to abandoned children, spaces were limited and support often time-limited; orphans and neglected children were therefore understood to be at risk of joining Nairobi's estimated 60,000 street children (Consortium for Street Children, 2002)[62] .

Against this backdrop, the dependent relationship between children and their caregivers consequently held particular gravitas in Kijiji, defining the parameters of childhood:

> (Kiswahili) But once…the parents stop caring for you…then you're a grown
>
> up (Alex, 13-14, out of school).

I was initially surprised by teenagers' willingness to describe themselves as dependent since, at a similar age, I was actively projecting my growing independence. However, I never felt my needs would not be met. In contrast, in a context with limited safety nets for children who lose their dependent status, dependency was understood to be a symbol of privilege, signalling continued security and opportunities for childhood investment (discussed further in section 6.4.1). In the case of Alex, for example, his father had entered a polygamous marriage, stretching the family income to cover the expenses of two households. Money became extremely tight, forcing Alex to drop out of school. At the time of the focus group, he was still living at home, yet hoped to return to school. He therefore clung to a definition of himself as a dependent child, acutely aware that his albeit depleted material support could be withdrawn if his family's socio-economic position did not improve.

To borrow Aretxaga's (1997) term 'choiceless decision' (in Burnet, 2012), child participants therefore depicted caregivers' exploitation of intergenerational dependency as offering children a 'choiceless decision', with refusal potentially stripping them of their material support and the key childhood marker of dependency. As such, within child participants' discussions, responsibility was firmly placed with caregivers for violating the dependent bond between a child and their caregiver. However, this concurrently meant that the sexual partner was rendered barely visible.

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[62] Reflecting the difficulties of quantifying street children, this number is out-dated but still the most widely used.

5.2.4 The Impact of Economic Vulnerability

The most frequently discussed factor perceived to thin children's capacity for agency within a sexual encounter was economic vulnerability. This was not especially surprising; despite varying living conditions, the settlement was one of Nairobi's lowest income areas. Within this section, I consider how economic vulnerability was understood to affect three forms of (potential) CSA: subsistence sex, sugar mommy and daddy relationships (SMD relationships) and child prostitution. I am aware that categorizing acts of transactional sex can be problematic, given the contested nature of categories such as 'prostitute' (Jewkes, Morrell, Sikweyiya, Dunkle, & Penn-Kekana, 2012). Indeed, transactional sex arguably falls along a continuum, from commodity-based relationships to provision within a romantic relationship (Jewkes et al., 2012). However, since I wish to capture participants' understandings of transactional sex, I have followed their use of these three categories. I nonetheless highlight differing understandings of the boundaries of each category.

The Pursuit of Basic Needs: Subsistence Sex

Starting with disparities between the child's economic means and perceived needs, I use the term subsistence sex to refer to sex which girls engaged in in order to fulfil unmet basic needs. Boys also certainly experienced unmet needs. Indeed, I observed scores of school-age boys out of uniform during term-time, suggesting their right to education was not being met. However, the perceived prevalence of female victims across the interviews and focus groups was explained by the fact that boys had greater opportunities to bridge the gap between provision and basic needs. Esther, for example, noted that boys could make money by collecting scrap metals or plastics:

> (Kiswahili)…for the boy, the way they do it here, going and collecting
>
> metals and going to sell (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

Esther's comment mirrors my own observations, with the dumping sites to the north of the village (where children searched for scrap metals) frequented by considerably more boys than girls.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that I did see some girls sifting through garbage heaps. When Timothy (41-45, Director of CBO) saw me observing them, he dismissed the girls as deviants, explaining that they should be at home helping their mothers. Thus, collecting metals and plastics was understood to contravene local gender norms, which situated girls within the domestic sphere. Against this backdrop, girls whose needs were unmet were framed as having little choice but to engage in subsistence sex:

> (Kiswahili)…if the parents don't have money the girls are just forced to
>
> have sex with the men. So it's not their fault – it's the situation they're in
>
> (Daniel, 13-14, primary school).

Reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, the commodification of girls' sexuality appeared tacitly accepted, despite being illegal under statutory law. However, I would argue that the normalization of subsistence sex as a means of female income generation also reflects the greater demand for, and commodified value of, girls' sexuality. In other words, girls' sexuality could be mobilized for rapid economic gains.

Subsistence sex was, without exception, discussed sympathetically and framed as a form of CSA. For instance, rather than distancing herself from girls who engaged in subsistence sex, Schola used the term 'you' when discussing why it occurred:

> …they can give them [Ksh.]100. When you feel hungry, you can take it
> quickly because you don't have something to eat (Schola, 13-14, primary
> school).

Schola was clearly aware that she too could find herself forced into such a situation. In cases of subsistence sex, the girls' agency therefore tended to be acknowledged in terms of their decision to engage in sex for food. However, it was simultaneously depicted as vastly thinned, with hunger their driving motivation. Similarly, when describing a seventeen year old friend's engagement in subsistence sex after her father left the village, Simon noted:

> …she was telling me that she had to sleep with a friend…even told me that
> she did not want to engage in it…she could not get the basic needs so it
> was the only option for her (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

Despite his friend's explicit decision to enter a sexual relationship for money and shelter, Simon constructed her as a victim whose agency had been vastly thinned due to her desperation and lack of alternative options. Returning to Aretxaga's (1997) notion of 'choiceless decisions' (in Burnet, 2012), children engaging in subsistence sex were consequently understood to have extremely limited choice over whether to participate.

However, echoing my earlier observations in relation to caregiver exploitation, the sexual partners engaging children in subsistence sex were rendered barely visible in participants' accounts. For instance, in the following comment, Damaris presented the adult *passively*, as a man willing to provide money for sex, or a person whom *the child actively sought for sex*:

> There was this girl who would get up very early in the morning…at around
> 5 before she goes to school. [She] passes at a man's house and engages in
> sex maybe for the two hours before she goes to class. She does this
> because she knows that afterwards she's going to be given money, so that

she can go buy food or *mandazi* which she can't resist because of the poverty situation at home (Damaris, 18-25, teacher).

Adults engaging children in subsistence sex were therefore not described as manipulators or aggressors, but depicted as facilitators in the child's battle against the context. Indeed the context of economic deprivation was used to explain perpetrators' actions. Moreover, with perpetrators perceived to be predominately male, subsistence sex elevated them to the much-desired masculine role of provider. Yet, this was despite men exchanging as little as Ksh.50 ($0.55) or a bag of chips for sex, significantly less than the Ksh.1000 ($11.11) or more reportedly paid within more formalized prostitute-client relationships.

The perpetrator's role was downplayed so significantly that the context of economic vulnerability and deprivation frequently shifted from being a *contributory structural factor* thinning the child's agency to becoming the *primary perpetrator*, forcing the child into a sexual relationship they would not normally choose; for example, when explaining why girls have sex for money, Martin said:

> …it's because of poverty… poverty is what lured them into this act (Martin, 41-45. Community Health Worker).

Similarly, in the following exchange, Winifred personified economic deprivation as the child's perpetrator:

> …you will take the money remembering what your siblings may eat...and you know you're going to have sex but you're not willing to have it. It is sexual abuse (Deborah, 16-17, secondary school).
>
> But why must you have when you're not willing?[63] (Triza, 16-17, secondary school)
>
> Circumstances can force you to (Winifred, 16-17, secondary school).

Drawing on Korbin's (1981) cross-cultural model for understanding child abuse, subsistence sex was primarily framed as an act of *structural violence.* This diminished the responsibility assigned to the adult partners, reducing the likelihood that they would face punitive action. I consequently suggest that Jones' and Trotman Jemmott's concept of 'transactional child sexual abuse' (Jones & Trotman

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[63]Triza was the only participant to question whether subsistence sex was abuse, although her plans for university suggested she came from a less-deprived background and likely had less first-hand experience of unmet needs.

Jemmott, 2013: 191) is more effective for describing such relationships, not only capturing the exploitation of the victim, but firmly positioning the procurer as a perpetrator.

The assumption that unmet basic needs vastly reduced children's ability to refuse unwanted sex meant that almost all participants constructed subsistence sex as a form of CSA. However, Slater et al. observe that the concept of basic needs is highly contested:

> People starve to death in their own culturally specific ways…And even if a breaking point comes at some degree of human existence at which 'basic need' emerges, this is surely no basis on which to define human need, for what we observe in these catastrophic conditions is not the 'truth' of need, but the extremes of social failure (Slater, Andrews, & Laven, 1997: 134-135).

Indeed, although not a subsistence, or what Maslow (1943) terms a physiological, need, child and adult participants alike frequently constructed education as a basic need, representing the perceived cultural importance assigned to education as the basis for successful futures:

> Education is the key to success and for the coming generation...we cannot get a job without [education] (Anita, 13-14, primary school).

> (Kiswahili)…education is important because…those people who have not undergone education don't have jobs. (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

Furthermore, the socio-economic background of residents appeared to influence distinctions between basic needs and more luxurious commodities; for example, at the school where I undertook observation, two teachers ordered *mandazi* (type of donut) every morning for breakfast. In contrast, residents I met who were not in salaried work constructed *mandazi* as a treat. Thus, a girl having sex in return for *mandazi* may be viewed as either someone fulfilling her basic need for food, or someone desiring more luxury food stuffs, depending on the socio-economic background of the onlooker.

Moreover, in interviews with younger adults actively involved in the Kijiji dating scene, such as David, girls were perceived to have more basic needs than boys. This view derived from an expectation that girls needed to be well-presented in order to compete with their peers for romantic partners:

> (Kiswahili)…[girls] should have so many clothes to change…lotions, even hair food (laughs). If she's not being provided for these good stuff like her

friends, that's when she ventures into other ways of acquiring them which

could be harmful and dangerous to her (David, 18-25, casual labourer).

A number of recent studies have suggested that despite occurring against the backdrop of economically-vulnerable settings, it is overly simplistic to assume young people's consent to transactional relationships is based purely on economic need. Instead, other factors, such as a desire for status and modern commodities, also play a key role (Hunter, 2002; Masvawure, 2010; Wamoyi et al., 2011). However, whilst there was undoubtedly a consumer culture in Kijiji, the gendered depiction of needs to emerge in my data resonated more with regional findings by Wamoyi, Wight, Plummer, Mshana, and Ross (2010b), Zembe, Townsend, Thorson, and Ekström (2013) and Iversen (2005). These researchers argued that seemingly luxury items, such as body lotions, are basic needs since young women are reliant on them to attract partners, often pitched in competition against their peers. Reflecting the feminisation of poverty, where women and girls are often financially dependent on their male relatives (Pasura et al., 2013b), this is especially important in patrilineal societies, like Kijiji, where girls' future economic stability typically comes from their partner. Thus, seemingly luxury items become basic needs, necessary for securing a stable future.

Relative Economic Deprivation: Sugar Mommy and Daddy Relationships

Economic deprivation was not only understood in relation to basic needs. Reflecting Kijiji's adjacent positioning to formally-planned estates, it was also understood in relation to lifestyles experienced outside the settlement. This was clearly evident in discussions about sugar mommy and daddy relationships (SMD relationships), where both boys and girls engaged in longer-term heterosexual relationships with an older and more affluent adult partner from outside the settlement.

Growing up in an economically deprived setting, child participants certainly recognized the draw of SMD relationships:

...we have lust for money and when we see money (Luke, 16-17, secondary school)

...we can do everything (Austin, 16-17, secondary school).

With the exchanges associated with SMD relationships extending to new clothes and mobile phones, the rewards on offer were understood to be extremely difficult for a child from Kijiji to turn down:

...due to jobless[ness]...you will find ladies with sugar daddies because those big peoples, godfathers, they have money...he's just using the one

who is down to have a relationship because he's just providing her with the

money (Geoffrey, 26-30, village committee advisor).

By depicting socio-economic status as hierarchical, Geoffrey clearly highlighted the power disparities in SMD relationships, positioning the child as 'down' in relation to the significantly more affluent sugar daddy. Similarly, Schola argued that once a child has started a SMD relationship, her growing accustom to the lifestyle it offered made it very difficult to leave the relationship:

(Kiswahili)…it's hard to say no because the girl has gotten so much money

before…she cannot say no (Schola, 13-14, primary school).

The rewards on offer were understood to blind the child, diminishing his or her capacity to reject the sexual relationship. In SMD relationships, the child's agency was therefore framed as severely thinned by their *relative economic deprivation* when compared with their sexual partner's vastly higher economic status.

To an outsider, children's engagement in (and subsequent failure to disengage from) SMD relationships could be perceived as signalling their growing internalized desire for nicer commodities and lifestyles. However, to coin Lundborg et al.'s concept of 'poverty of opportunity' (Lundborg et al., 2010: 381), children engaged in SMD relationships were locally understood to be experiencing not just economic deprivation, but also 'poverty of opportunity' in terms of their access to adequate employment opportunities and social safety nets. In other words, children's opportunities to improve their life chances were very slim. By emphasizing children's 'poverty of opportunity', rather than their growing taste for nicer commodities, participants therefore drew on their own experiences of exclusion to depict SMD relationships as extremely difficult to refuse. Sugar mommies and daddies were consequently understood as privileged outsiders, threatening children's well-being.

Reinforcing this, in contrast to adult partners engaging children in subsistence sex, sugar mommies and daddies were not portrayed as helpers, but as perpetrators, compelling children to enter high risk relationships for their own sexual gratification:

These [sugar] mommies…They use their cunning. They look for young boys

(Boniface, 13-14 primary school).

 [Sugar mommies'] aim is to make fun with boys [have sex] (Isaac, 36-40,

businessman).

As highlighted by these comments, this depiction was especially prominent within male participants' accounts of sugar mommies. This possibly reflected sugar mommies being perceived as trespassing into the typically male roles of sexual pursuer and provider; they arguably displayed a masculinized sexuality, using their money to ensure fulfilment of their sexual desires and an outlet for exerting relational power. Consequently, whilst sugar daddies were understood to violate intergenerational sexual norms, sugar mommies were also seen to be violating gender norms.

Although there was little variance in how SMD relationships were depicted amongst participants in my research, my findings contrast with expanding literature on exchange-based sex within Africa settings. This has started to differentiate between survival sex and transactional sex linked to consumption (Hunter, 2002), a differentiation that allows transactional sex to be explored as a site of potential agency and empowerment (Wamoyi, Fenwick, Urassa, Zaba, & Stones, 2010a). Whilst this shares similarities with the exchanges that occurred in romantic relationships between peers (discussed in section 5.2.5), SMD relationships were framed very differently in Kijiji, as a site of exploitation. With this in mind, participants in my research may have under-estimated the power held by children in SMD relationships. However, it is also worth noting that SMD relationships have been associated with high rates of unprotected sex (Luke, 2005), with material gain potentially coming at the expense of children's reproductive health. The broad umbrella term of 'transactional sex' may therefore dilute the differences in power exercised in different types of transactional relationship linked to consumption. As such, further research would be beneficial with children openly engaged in SMD relationships in order to compare community members' assumptions about children's agency within these relationships with the views of children actually engaged in them.

Overlooked Economic Vulnerability: Child Prostitution

Within Kijiji, child prostitution was typically framed as a specific form of transactional sex:

> (Kiswahili) here, there is no prostitution, unless they live here and then
> they are going somewhere else…it doesn't happen within the village
> (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

As highlighted by Esther, prostitution was not just defined by the act of exchanging sex for money, but also (especially amongst adult participants) by prostitutes' physical movement from the village. It was also a female activity, with no participants referring to male prostitution.

However, there was considerable disparity over whether prostitution should be considered an act of CSA. Amongst child participants and young adults (22 and below), child prostitution was widely presented as an abusive activity that girls felt compelled to enter due to economic vulnerability and/or exploitation within dependent relationships:

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> …it is abuseful [sic]….because the person who is paying that
> money…is…older than you, and he just sees that you're a child and because
> you want money, he wants to have sex with you (Deborah, 16-17,
> secondary school).

Furthermore, Frederick commented:

> …you may work in a restaurant and the owner may tell you that he will
> reduce your money. But if you want…the money to be increased, you may
> work…as a prostitute. And at home you are having difficult time to have
> money…it will force to work as a prostitute (Frederick, 16-17, secondary
> school).

Again, Frederick glossed over the girl's explicit consent to engage in sex, instead emphasizing the way in which her economic vulnerability and dependency on the restaurant owner vastly thinned her agency. This depiction of child prostitution is supported by research in East African settings, where child prostitution has been frequently linked to economic vulnerability and/or violent pressure from relatives (Dodoo, Zulu, & Ezeh, 2007; Kamala et al., 2001; Mikhail, 2002; Perschler-Desai, 2001). From this perspective, child prostitution represents a vastly constricted 'choice', associated with potential loss of liberty alongside a high risk of violence and poor sexual health outcomes (Hampanda, 2013; Perschler-Desai, 2001).

However, when discussed in adult interviews, a much starker distinction was drawn between subsistence sex and prostitution, with prostitution more likely to be framed as a *personal choice*. Simon, for instance, argued that the decision to enter prostitution was much easier than the decision to engage in subsistence sex:

> …in [subsistence sex] you are not generally selling your body but somebody
> is coming to entice you in a way that he challenges your mental thinking.
> But you see in prostitution…you can't challenge…the mind of the person.
> You just directly give the money and then engage in the sexual intercourse
> (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

During an act of prostitution, Simon therefore understood children to be actively selling their sexuality rather than merely tempted by the spoils on offer. Furthermore, Marianne and Joyce argued that children enter prostitution primarily to have their sexual desires fulfilled:

(Kiswahili) There are those who [have transactional sex] because they want to meet the unmet needs in their homes…But there are those who engage in prostitution because they take pleasure in doing so (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

(Kiswahili)…in my opinion, it is the point where a child engages in sex with different men for pleasure. It's not necessarily the lack of needs that lead her to engage in prostitution (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

In contrast with this view, Barry argues that during sexual encounters, prostitutes protect themselves through dissociation, reconstructing a 'subordinated, dehumanized self' that is embodied by 'acting sexual' (Barry, 1997: 35). However, as highlighted by Joyce and Marianne, many adult partipicants understood prostitutes' consent to be driven primarily by desire, portraying them as hyper-sexualized individuals who use exchange-associated sex as a means of satisfying excessive sexual appetites. Child prostitutes' agency was therefore perceived to be significantly thickened in comparison to, say, children engaging in subsistence sex, with the former's perceived sexual desires overshadowing structural factors encouraging their participation.

When considering why child prostitution was, at times, constructed by adult partipicants in terms of prostitutes' free will rather than economic vulnerability, the child's geographical location appeared significant. For instance, adult participants were more likely to distinguish between exchange-based sex in the village and exchange-based sex in Koinange Street, an area of Nairobi synonymous with formal prostitution:

…in slums it's not done like prostitution, it's just done as friendship (Moses, 46- 50, sub-chief).

Moses therefore drew a clear distinction between village-based exchanges and those that occur in the city centre, with the former tacitly legitimized by his use of the term 'friendship'. Similarly, when discussing the difference between exchange-based sex that occurs in Kijiji and prostitution in Koinange Street, Lilian commented:

There's a difference...the people in here can't offer you big money…but if you go to Koinange, there's [even] some Ministers…who goes there. They can offer you even up to ten thousand…just for a night (Lilian, 18-25, tailor).

By physically moving from the village to the adult space (and more lucrative marketplace) of Koinange Street, the girl's identity was understood to shift from girlfriend to prostitute, with her perceived agency becoming more pronounced.

Moreover, whilst a girl engaging in subsistence sex may exchange her sexuality for as little as Ksh.50 ($0.55), signalling her desperation and lack of marketplace knowledge, amongst adult participants child prostitutes were perceived to bargain:

> …if you don't want to use [a condom] you pay higher charge for sex and if
>
> you want to use condom you pay between Ksh.200-100 ($2.22-1.11)
>
> (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

It is important to note that in Martin's comment, the customer was depicted as deciding whether condoms are used, highlighting gender power imbalances and increasing the child's reproductive health risks (Luke, 2006). However, as noted by Pearce:

> If the young people are using sexual activity for financial support, and are
>
> being aggressive, manipulative and rejecting in the process, it is hard to
>
> hold the image of them as victims of abuse (Pearce, 2009: 23).

Child prostitutes' competent commodification of the risks of unprotected sex was therefore understood by many male and female adult residents as further proof of their sexual marketplace prowess. Indeed, in contrary to the expectation that children will use impression management to project a respectable identity, by entering a marketplace where negotiation is the norm, child prostitutes were unable to conceal their sexual knowledge, inviting judgement. The sex industry is undoubtedly rife with exploitation, calling into question a child's *actual* autonomy. Yet, Pearce's observation illustrates that if children are *perceived* as being able to negotiate and exert their agency within the sexual marketplace, structural and relational constraints that may have driven them towards prostitution become less visible. As such, a child prostitute may be viewed as a victim or a knowing consumer, depending on the onlooker, in turn affecting their potential access to protective services.

Davidson (2005) observed that children engaging in transactional sexual relationships consequently risk being positioned as active consumers and service contractors. Mirroring this, adult partipicants were more likely to frame child prostitutes as competent consumers actively seeking partners in the more profitable arena of Koinange Street, their agency thickened by their knowledge of the sexual marketplace. Adult residents consequently tended to place greater significance on girls' movement from Kijiji to the city centre, movement that disrupted the distinction between child and adult

spaces. In contrast, child participants placed less emphasis on the geographical shift, noting little discernible difference between village-based subsistence sex and city-based prostitution:

> (Kiswahili)…it's the same because the children still get the enticements and they later on sleep with the man and have sex (Monica, 13-14, primary school).
>
> …and will continue (Schola, 13-14, primary school).

By retaining focus on the structural and relational factors pushing a child to act, child partipicants were therefore able to frame subsistence sex and prostitution as comparative acts of abuse. This was perhaps due to them more closely associating with children who had been forced to enter prostitution or because they placed less emphasis on the trespassing of adult spaces.

Nevertheless, I should note that since I did not speak to any child prostitutes, their voices are missing within this section. In light of the conflicting views about why girls engage in prostitution, and their experiences of doing so, further research that directly engages child prostitutes would be helpful.

5.2.5 The Impact of Gender Inequalities within Romantic Relationships

To finish, I consider a fifth factor that was not widely discussed, but appeared to have a significant impact on girls' freedom to exercise agency within a sexual relationship: the impact of a local normative framework supporting gender inequality within 'romantic' relationships.

As noted earlier, within Kijiji CSA was frequently constructed in terms of a child-adult relationship, with intergenerational power disparities depicted as a central feature of CSA. Supporting this, sexual relations between age mates were almost predominantly described as non-abusive. Indeed, girls were depicted as exercising significant power in sexual relationships with male peers, capitalizing on the local expectation that boyfriends would provide regular pocket money or personal effects for their girlfriends:

> (Kiswahili)…If one man doesn't give her the money she wants, she looks for another one who will pay her better (Stephen, 41-45, carpenter).

Citing a scenario that she had observed two weeks earlier, Josephine stated:

> (Kiswahili)…one [boy]…was giving [the girl] like [Ksh.]100 and 200 ($1.11-2.22), another one was giving her 500 bob. So she saw that she would leave

> this one who's giving her 200 bob and start having a relationship with the
>
> one who's giving her 500 bob (Josephine, 46-50, runs chapatti stand).

In both Josephine's and Stephen's comments, girls were perceived to exercise considerable power at the point of selecting their sexual partner, switching partners when a better provider came along. A cultural acceptance of exchanges within romantic relationships appeared to thicken their agency, allowing them to openly negotiate. Add to this the potential pressures associated with fulfilling the masculine provider role in low incomes settings (discussed in Chapter Two), and girls appeared to wield considerable power.

However, there seemed to be a fine line between negotiation and perceived exploitation. For example, in the case cited by Josephine, a fight broke out between the two boys when they learned they were being pitted against each other for the girl's affections. Tragically, this resulted in one of the boys stabbing the other to death. As Josephine explains, the girl was subsequently perceived to have acted dishonourably:

> (Kiswahili)…the girl's mother just cried and also has been saying that the
>
> child is now going to have this bad blood…it's going to follow her…you
>
> know in most cases it's known that if someone…is killed because of you,
>
> the blood of that person will follow you (Josephine, 46-50, runs chapatti
>
> stand).

Despite the girl engaging in behaviour that was reportedly common in Kijiji, blame was not assigned to the boy who killed his rival. Instead, the girl was understood to face an enduring punishment for orchestrating the situation. Girls' ability to exercise power at the point of negotiation therefore carried substantive risks.

Furthermore, amongst nine of the younger female participants (13-25 years), a different picture emerged of girls' agency within peer relationships. Mirroring the literature discussed in Chapter Two (section 2.5.2), once in the relationship, they argued that girls were expected to follow a sexual script based on what I term *intimate relational exchanges*. These were the regular payments given to a girlfriend by her boyfriend (sometimes termed 'pocket money') in the expectation of sexual access. So, having chosen a partner and accepted an *intimate relational exchange*, girls were expected to passively succumb to their boyfriend's sexual wishes, regardless of their own. Failure to do so could result in them being physically forced to have sex:

> (Kiswahili) when the girl goes to a male friend...they've been having sex but
> it reaches at a point that this man wants to have sex at that time and the
> girl doesn't want, so she's raped (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

> [explaining why 12 year olds have sex]...if this is my boyfriend, then he will
> insist then we [have sex]...then they surely engage in it (Anita, 13-14,
> primary school).

The power to initiate sex was therefore understood to lie with the male partner, regardless of the girl's wishes. Consequently, whilst girls' consent to enter romantic relationships was understood as a *personal choice*, their consent was concurrently understood as open-ended, signalling agreement to *all further sexual acts* desired by their male partner.

Moreover, in addition to dictating when they will have sex, Joyce noted that male partners often controlled the mode of sex:

> (Kiswahili)...the guys usually think that when the girls insist on using
> condoms, they do not trust them...it is obvious the guy will be furious
> (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

In order to avoid angering their partner, and the possible violence that could follow, girls were therefore expected to put their sexual health at risk. This correlates with my observations from South African literature in Chapter Two; indeed, Jewkes and Morrell suggest that despite appearing to have agency at the point of choosing a sexual partner, young women's power *within* romantic relationships is curtailed by an 'overarching narrative of patriarchy' (Jewkes & Morrell, 2012: 1733), with male partners deciding on the sexual practices.

Why, though, was sexual abuse within romantic relationships only mentioned by nine female participants? When considering this question, it is helpful to note that patriarchal structures constraining women's sexual agency within relationships are deeply engrained within Kenya's social and legal structures. A clear example of this is the Sexual Offences Act (2006), which includes a clause precluding rape in marriage, conflating marriage with enduring consent. Furthermore, Kamau notes that within customary law:

> Payment of dowry [bride price] is seen as a way of validating a man's right
> to "own" his wife and may in many instances be used as a justification of
> perpetrating spousal rape (Kamau, 2013: 18).

Indeed, in a qualitative study examining health sector responses to sexual violence, Kilonzo et al. (2008) found that forced sex within a marriage may be deemed 'an argument' rather than rape. Highlighting a tension between modern and traditional practices, the payment of *intimate relational exchanges,* or regular 'pocket money', therefore worked as a temporary, informal bride price, allowing boyfriends sexual access as long as payments were maintained. As such, girls' agency appeared to be vastly thinned by patriarchal structures, normalizing the sexual abuse of women and girls within relationships. Indeed, this normalization may explain why it was only younger female participants who depicted forced sex within a romantic relationship as CSA, with older adult females having accepted the patriarchal narrative.

There is consequently a need for further research that analyses the content of CSA education programmes to see whether they are addressing underlying factors that potentially increase a girl's susceptibility to abuse (e.g. cultural notions about gender roles and appropriate ways of expressing one's sexualities). Nonetheless, although the aforementioned nine younger female participants appeared to have internalized dominant sexual scripts, depicting girls as helpless in the face of their boyfriends' demands, it is encouraging that they still described forced sex within a relationship as rape. Indeed, by framing it as CSA, they offered some resistance against the patriarchal structures normalizing rape within a relationship. Whether they will continue to challenge this narrative once engaged in a regular sexual relationship, though, remains to be seen.

5.3 Conclusion

Across the interviews and focus groups, CSA was understood as a forced sexual act. Most partipicants initially alluded to a simple binary between consensual and non-consensual sex. However, as discussions progressed, a more complex conceptualization emerged in which children could agree to a sexual act yet their participation still be considered forced if they were understood to be experiencing a significant degree of coercion. By shifting understandings of CSA from specific sexual acts to the *consensual dynamics* of sexual acts, the scope of CSA was therefore broadened to include acts which children agreed to but would not choose to participate in were it not for structural and relational factors pressuring them to engage. Drawing on Klocker's (2007) work on children's agency, I therefore suggest that decisions about whether an act was abusive were based on an assessment of how thinned the child's sexual agency was perceived to be at the time of the act.

However, despite broad thematic coherence with my data, there was nonetheless considerable variance amongst participants about the extent to which different factors thickened or thinned a child's agency. This was affected to a significant degree by participants' personal characteristics (e.g. gender, age, work and socio-economic status). The case of relationship-based rape, for instance,

highlighted how normalization of patriarchal structures relating to men's sexual rights within relationships meant that only a small subgroup of female participants recognized intimate partner violence as a form of CSA. Consequently, as noted by Beres (2007), even if one accepts that coercive forces may negate consent, there is not necessarily consensus about what forces count. The same sexual act can thus be viewed from different perspectives, leading to differing conclusions about the extent to which a child's agency is thinned and, hence, whether they are a victim of abuse.

Moreover, participants focused not just on the relationship between the child and the perpetrator, but also considered contextual factors constraining children's agency. The context was therefore elevated to the potential status of perpetrator, rendering adult sexual partners barely visible. A lack of systematic engagement with consumers of child exchange-based sex in protection programmes means that their actions become normalized rather than constructed as a child rights abuse. Consequently, acknowledgement of the role of structural forces in the perpetuation of exchange-based acts of CSA is important for the development of holistic protection programmes. Yet, it is also critical that adult consumers are not overlooked or absolved of responsibility. It was also notable that children's capacity for resistance during acts of CSA was barely mentioned. This increases the chance that children will be positioned as victims, thus supporting their access to protective interventions. However, there remains a danger that children's capacity for resistance *in spite* of the substantial structural and relational forces thinning their agency is downplayed. Further research with children who have actually experienced sexual abuse would therefore be helpful.

Chapter Six

'It's obvious that the girl is harmed through such an act'

The Impact of the Sociocultural Context on Understandings of CSA-Related Harm.

6.0 Introduction

CSA was depicted by participants of all ages as inherently harmful. As captured by Agnes, harm was an expectation rather than a possibility following an act of CSA:

> (Kiswahili)…I have sent a child to go somewhere and buy something…and she finds a group of boys who are going to attack her and rape her. It's obvious that the girl is harmed through such an act (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

Whilst Agnes used rape as an example, all forms of CSA discussed by participants were associated with some degree of harm, from the pain expected to derive from unwanted touching to the stigma frequently attached to prostitution. As such, a broad spectrum of CSA-related harms was suggested, threatening a child's physical, emotional, sexual and social well-being (Figure 6.1).

Physical Effects	Pain from early developing breasts being squeezed
	Rupturing of the vagina or anus
	Injuries caused by restraining a child (bruising, drugging)
	Contracting HIV & STIs
	Pregnancy
	Death
Emotional Effects	**Bad memories and distress following rape (possibly leading to suicide)**
	Lack of concentration following rape
	Fear of opposite sex following rape
	Feelings of inferiority following male rape
Impact on Sexual Development	**Unable to control 'awakened' sexual urges**
Social Effects	**Curtailment of education**
	Gossip following rape or transactional sex
	Difficulties finding a suitable marital match due to stigma of rape
	Forced into marriage before child is ready
	Stigma (especially associated with male rape and prostitution)
	Reduced social security for caregivers
	Increased community fear regarding the risk of CSA
	Presumed Infertility

Figure 6.1 Types of CSA-Related Harm (most frequently discussed in bold)

Thus, whilst restricted, or thinned agency, was understood to differentiate an abusive act from a non-abusive one, harm was co-currently an expected, and potentially far-reaching, consequence of

CSA. Indeed, although I planned a question about the effects of CSA, harm was always discussed before I reached this question.

This chapter explores residents' depiction of CSA as inherently harmful. Such an association is certainly not new. As highlighted in Chapter Two, western CSA discourses have long-focused on the harm inflicted by sexual abuse on children's immediate and longer-term well-being, particularly in terms of the negative psychological impacts. However, within this chapter, I build on my assertion that it is important to develop context-specific understandings of CSA rather than uncritically importing western-derived conceptualizations to non-western settings. Specifically, I acknowledge that understandings of harm within Kijiji share similarities with western CSA discourses. Yet, these understandings are nonetheless rooted in a unique social and cultural context that affects residents' perceptions of harm, influenced by a plethora of localized cultural and social factors (figure 6.2 overleaf). In other words, the types of harm associated with specific forms of CSA, and their perceived severity, are influenced by the setting in which the abuse occurs.

This chapter consequently questions how different acts of CSA were understood to affect children when perpetrated within the specific social and cultural context of Kijiji. Drawing on the four areas of harm, identified in figure 6.1 (physical, emotional, sexual development and social), I consider the most frequently discussed ways in which CSA was understood to threaten a victim's immediate and longer-term well-being.

Access to Tertiary Interventions (Availability, Speed)

Cultural Discourses that Stigmatize Overt Expressions of Female Sexuality (Linked to Victim Blaming)

Extent to which the Victim felt their Agency was Thinned During the Sexual Act

The Victim's Physical Development

HIV Status of the Perpetrator

Degree of Physical Force Used

Physical Size of the Perpetrator

Gender of the Victim and Perpetrator

Factors Perceived to Contribute to Harm Following an Act of CSA

Victim's Sexual History

Inadequate and/or Poorly-Implemented Harm Minimization Policies

Adult Stakeholders' Willingness to Support the Victim to Access Harm Minimization Services

Kijiji's Heteronormative Culture

Socio-economic Status of the Victim's Family

Misconceptions Regarding the Inevitability of Infertility following Violent Rape

Type of Sexual Act

Figure 6.2: Factors Perceived to Contribute to Harm Following an Act of CSA

6.1 CSA as a Threat to Children's Physical Well-being

When discussing penetrative forms of CSA (rape, all forms of transactional sex), the child's physical well-being was understood to be threatened in two main ways: through the risk of HIV transmission and the risk of injury.

6.1.1 CSA as a Threat to Children's Long-Term Sexual Health

Considerable emphasis was given to the threat posed by penetrative forms of CSA to a victim's sexual health, with particular focus on the threat of HIV transmission:

> (Kiswahili)…when you are raped, they give you HIV and AIDS (Monica, 13-14, primary school).

Similarly, when discussing cross-generational relationships, Agnes commented:

> (Kiswahili)...maybe the man is infected with some disease – the girl would contract the disease (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

Although the threat of HIV is not unique to the Kijiji context, it was often the first harm to be discussed. Moreover, as highlighted by Monica and Agnes, contracting HIV was frequently framed as an *expectation* rather than a *possibility*. Within this section, I therefore question why HIV was given such emphasis, exploring the fears associated with contracting the virus.

Around 12% of Kenya's informal settlement population are estimated to be living with HIV (Madise et al., 2012); assuming Kijiji fits this trend, almost 1 in 8 residents may be HIV positive. Participants' focus on the threat of the virus was therefore not so surprising. Indeed, they certainly depicted HIV as extremely prevalent in the village, with Geoffrey commenting:

> …There's that giant called AIDS. So when you come across [gang rape], you don't know how that [perpetrator] is so you must act to help her [access medical assistance] (Geoffrey, 26-30, village committee advisor).

By using the term *giant*, Geoffrey captures the perceived magnitude of the local threat of HIV, elevating it from an abstract social problem to a powerful, personified force. Furthermore, during a discussion about HIV in a class at the primary school[64], every child was aware of at least one household affected by HIV/AIDS in the village. HIV was therefore not just an abstract concept appearing on the sexual health awareness posters lining the communal bathrooms, but a present and familiar part of children's day-to-day realities.

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[64] Where I spent three weeks engaged in observation.

However, a side effect of the high rates of HIV was the proliferation of targeted campaigns promoting the State's 'living positively' message[65]. These campaigns taught that, with proper management (medication, nutrition, regular check-ups), individuals living with HIV can have a healthy, 'normal' life. Against this backdrop, one would hope that the virus would no longer be viewed as a death sentence. Yet, reflecting the village's status as a semi-autonomous social field, 'living positively' campaigns appeared to have achieved little local resonance:

> (Kiswahili)…the other [STIs] you call them minor diseases…gonorrhea - that
> one you can maybe go to the hospital and get this medication…But for AIDS
> there is no cure (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

> …And that HIV can even do what? Can kill you (Timothy, 41-45, Director of
> CBO).

Despite widespread educational campaigns, discourses built around fear and stigma continued to dominate, with HIV locally depicted as a threat to life.

I discussed the strong association between HIV and death with Susan (31-35, teacher) when she invited me to her home. Whilst agreeing that 'living positively' messages had failed to fully resonate with the community, she argued that it was not necessarily due to a lack of understanding about the effectiveness of HIV management. Instead, she explained that successful management requires medication, a nutritious diet and prompt medical care in the event of illness. The State provides anti-retroviral therapy. However, fresh produce and medical care for illnesses associated with low immunity are often beyond the means of affected households:

> …many families live hand-to-mouth. Finding those extra 'bob' [Ksh] for
> fresh vegetables and milk – it's a challenge (Susan, 31-35, teacher)[66].

Recognizing this, local NGOs were providing food aid or cash assistance to HIV-affected households within the settlement. However, the enduring stigma associated with HIV, discussed shortly, prevented many residents from being tested. Susan consequently agreed that although HIV should not signal premature demise, this assumption was being fuelled by residents' fears that their economic vulnerability would likely impede successful management of the condition.

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[65]Organized by the State, NGOs and CBOs.
[66]From field notes 24.11.13.

HIV was also associated with negative social and emotional effects. This was especially emphasized by young male participants[67], who equated HIV with an inevitable escalation of harm, ranging from impeded educational attainment to reduced opportunities to form relationships:

> Getting those diseases. Maybe you cannot concentrate on your studies – maybe you can drop out of school (Austin, 16-17, secondary school).

> No-one will want them now [after being infected] (William, 16-17, unemployed)[68].

As part of 'living positively' campaigns, the State has repeatedly stressed the possibility that discordant couples can enjoy healthy and safe sexual relationships. However, this message appeared to have garnered little resonance within Kijiji. Instead, the harms associated with HIV were understood to not come just from the physical effects of the virus, but also from stigmatizing reactions to the victim's positive status. With many culturally important life experiences yet to be experienced, such as marriage and parenthood, HIV was therefore widely understood to represent a potential barrier to young men's dreams and ambitions.

The heavy emphasis on HIV within participants' discussions on CSA-related harm therefore likely reflected the high prevalence of HIV in the settlement and the strong fears associated with acquiring the virus. However, whilst these fears could also be applied to non-abusive sexual encounters, certain sexually abusive encounters were understood to pose an elevated threat of transmission. For instance, when describing the sexual health risks associated with rape, David observed:

> (Kiswahili)…you find that the person who raped this child was infected with [HIV] and they did not use a protection… they infect the child (David, 18-25, casual labourer).

Recognizing children's vastly thinned agency during acts of rape, David assumed that their ability to negotiate safe sex would be obliterated, with decisions around whether to wear a condom lying solely with the rapist. Similarly, when discussing the risk of HIV transmission during subsistence sex, Peter commented:

> …[the child] doesn't really care who they have sex with. So long as you can give them something…you can [have sex] (Peter, 26-30, small business owner).

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[67] Girls also highlighted the threat of HIV, although tended to place greater emphasis on the threat of pregnancy when discussing penetrative forms of CSA, likely due to the latter's more direct, gendered impact.
[68] From comments after interview. Permission obtained to use field notes.

In such relationships, the child's choice of partner was therefore understood to be driven by their immediate unmet needs rather than a rational decision about how best to protect their long-term sexual health. As highlighted in the previous chapter, this argument perhaps overstates the extent to which women and girls were able to negotiate barrier contraceptive use in relationships understood as non-abusive. Nonetheless, it is an important observation, highlighting that during acts of CSA, children's thinned agency was understood to impede not just their space to make decisions about participation, but also their ability to minimize the resultant harms. In a context where the threat of HIV is perceived to be high, a reduced ability to self-protect consequently supports an association between CSA and likely, or inevitable, transmission.

The strong association between penetrative forms of CSA and a high threat of HIV transmission was also fuelled by an assumption that perpetrators of penetrative forms of CSA were more likely to be HIV positive:

> …most of rapists…are sick so you know…when he [rapes you]…he will leave
> you…with the disease [AIDS] (Violet, 18-25, Child Development Student).

Although there is no empirical evidence to support Violet's assertion, it was a view shared by Lilian and Sophia, who argued that perpetrators of penetrative forms of CSA are frequently motivated by a desire to spread HIV:

> …So the man sometimes he's sick – he has that disease. So he wants to
> spread it or revenge. So he will…immediately go for these…small kids
> (Lilian, 18-25, tailor).

> (Kiswahili)…the man could be infected with a disease which he would want
> to pass it to the child…because of revenge or something…the man
> could…not be relating well with the neighbour. So he could use the
> neighbour's child as revenge (Sophia, 31-35, unemployed).

Although not explicitly stated, Violet, Sophia and Lilian drew implicit links between sexual deviance and HIV, reinforcing the stigma attached to the virus. Moreover, they depicted it as a tool of revenge that could be wielded by perpetrators to inflict long-term, substantive harm on their victims. From this perspective, transmission of the virus was not just a likely consequence, but the primary purpose. It is important to note, though, that no actual cases of revenge-motivated CSA were cited. Nonetheless, Lilian's and Sophia's comments reinforce, and were perhaps fuelled by, an implicit link between sexual deviance and HIV. The depiction of CSA as revenge-driven thus supports local stigmas relating to HIV and increases the perception that rape inevitably leads to HIV transmission.

6.1.2 CSA as an Immediate Threat to Life

Whilst HIV was understood to pose a long-term threat to a child's survival, certain forms of rape were understood to pose an immediate threat to life, due to the physical harm inflicted on the victim. All acts of CSA accompanied by physical violence were understood to carry a high threat of pain or injury; for example, when discussing her own experiences of unwanted touching, Charity said:

> You get this man in a corridor trying to…touch the breasts…when the breasts tend to grow at the first stage they're so painful…So you get at this point, somebody just squeezing that thing and you know - the pain (Charity, 18-25, unemployed).

Although this incident had occurred a decade earlier, Charity winced as she described the pain, highlighting the enduring nature of this memory. Similarly, when discussing the rape of a pre-pubescent child by an adult man, Leonard argued that injuries were to be expected:

> (Kiswahili)…she is going to be hurt…because she is small, she has a small vagina and the man has a long penis (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

Linking his expectations of harm to the size disparity between adults and children, Leonard suggested that pre-pubescent children were at greater risk of physical injury due to their developing physiques.

However, for eight of my female participants (ranging from 13-50 years), rape of a female victim[69], where high levels of violence and/or an object were used, was understood to pose not just a *threat of injury* but a *threat to the victim's life*: the threat of being *raped to death*:

> (Kiswahili)…the man raped the daughter…he went home and found that his wife was not in so he [took] the daughter and raped her until she died (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

Similarly, when explaining why she felt rape to be the most serious form of CSA, Regina, said:

> (Kiswahili)…you can die (Regina, 13-primary school).

When asked to elaborate how rape contributes to death, it became clear that for these eight participants, violent intercourse, with either a penis or an object, was understood to lead to the

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[69] Same-sex male rape victims were assumed to experience some form of injury due to anal sex being 'unnatural'. However, boys were not expected to die from their injuries, possibility reflecting the greater fragility associated with female genitalia.

potentially fatal condition of traumatic fistula (rupturing between the vaginal wall, bladder and/or rectum):

> (Kiswahili)…you may find that a girl has been raped so badly that her vagina
> is ruptured (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

> (Kiswahili)…When the bottle is inserted and the vagina is ruptured, you'll
> definitely die (Josephine, 46-50, chapatti stall owner).

Capturing the perceived inevitability of harm, the possibility of recovery was given little consideration by Josephine or the other seven female participants. The act of rape and the resultant injuries therefore became conflated, allowing death to be constructed as a direct effect of rape.

As I will discuss further in section 6.4.2, fertility has high cultural value within Kenyan culture, likely increasing female participants' sensitivity to the risk of injuries to their genitals. However, whilst traumatic fistula can undoubtedly be life-threatening, there are nonetheless well-established treatments, especially in post-conflict African countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, where sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war (Longombe, Claude, & Ruminjo, 2008). This poses the question as to why these eight female participants understood the escalation from traumatic fistula to death to be highly likely, or even inevitable.

When considering this point, it is important to note that Kijiji's overcrowding arguably blurred the boundaries between public and private, with residents not just *hearing* stories of violent abuse but also witnessing the attack or aftermath. Highlighting this, Marianne discussed a recent rape case where the victim had screamed for help, attracting the attention of her peers:

> (Kiswahili)…the children heard the girl screaming so they were the ones
> who went to see (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

The risk of witnessing either an abusive act, or the aftermath of one, was especially acute for women and children who worked in the village or attended local schools[70], both of which placed them *in situ* for witnessing local disturbances. Ironically, whilst dominant social norms reinforced the view that *sex* should ideally be confined to adult spaces (e.g. behind the concealment of a curtain within a one-room house), children were consequently not prevented from witnessing the aftermath of *sexual abuse*. Indeed, in the case of the eight female participants who associated traumatic fistula with death, each drew on a different fatal case that they had personally witnessed within the

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[70] Only Violet (18-25, Child Development Student) said that rape did not occur in Kijiji. However, in addition to only living there a year, she attended college outside the settlement, potentially distancing her from community life.

settlement. Lilian, for example, discussed a case of a pastor who, three years earlier, had been caught raping a three year old girl, resulting in her death. Lilian had been part of the crowd who had gathered at the scene, witnessing the child's body being removed:

> …the policemen came and rescued [the rapist] from the hands of the
> villagers who wanted to stone him to death…The baby was just taken home
> (Lilian, 18-25, trainee tailor).

Given the level of violence attached to such cases, it is perhaps unsurprising that some residents failed to equate internal injuries with possible survival.

Furthermore, when I dug deeper into fatal cases that were reported to have occurred locally, it emerged that around half the victims had reportedly died within the settlement rather than being taken to a nearby hospital. In addition to meaning that half the cases were accompanied by the stark visual image of a dead body, this observation raises questions about why the victims were not taken for immediate medical treatment. In one case, the victim's body was not found till the following morning, negating the possibility for treatment. However, in the other fatal cases, it appeared that lives were potentially lost due to substantial contextual factors impeding victims' timely access of emergency medical treatment[71]. For instance, although Article 43-2 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) states that 'a person shall not be denied emergency medical treatment', State emergency healthcare remains underdeveloped. Private ambulances are beyond the means of most Kenyans, and St John's Ambulance Services' free emergency transportation is vastly under-resourced, with only ten ambulances countrywide. As such, most citizens access A&E services using a private car or taxi (Wachira & Martin, 2011), increasing the time between injury and medical care.

However, given the settlement's spatial overcrowding and poor infrastructure, *in situ* vehicles are few and far between; a car with a driver who is willing to carry a badly injured person must therefore be sent for. As I observed in the rainy seasons, getting a vehicle into Kijiji when the steep, untarmacked access thoroughfare is flooded or thick with mud is also a significant challenge. Furthermore, even if a car is found quickly, Kenya operates a point of care payment system. The patient's social support network therefore requires readily available capital to pay for transport and hospital bills. However, such capital is not necessarily available in households paying into already stretched informal social security networks or those without the basic State medical insurance that accompanies formal employment[72]. This may result in the child being taken to a cheaper hospital

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[71] Children were not excluded from medical care *per se* following CSA, taken to hospital to address injuries or to access Post –Exposure Prophylaxis.
[72] National Hospital Insurance Fund.

that is ill-equipped to handle emergency cases, or treatment being delayed whilst the child's support network looks for money.

These delays may not necessarily cost a child their life, but could arguably increase the risk of demise. Yet, residents' exclusion from timely emergency treatment appeared to have become normalized, with the escalation from traumatic fistula to death depicted as something to be expected rather than challenged. In other words, residents constructed their exclusion from timely and effective emergency care as part of informal settlement life, rather than expressing outrage at the State's failure to extend life-saving services to all citizens. Whilst there is consequently an urgent need for improved, subsidized emergency healthcare in Kenya, such a change requires substantial investment. There is therefore a co-current need for greater sensitization about the support provided by NGOs working in the area. Clearly evidencing this, an international NGO offered round-the-clock support to SGBV victims (including transport and medical care), yet few residents had heard of this service.

6.2 CSA as a Threat to a Child's Emotional Well-Being

CSA was also understood to pose a threat to a victim's emotional well-being. The threat of emotional harm was discussed predominantly in relation to rape, with 44% of resident participants suggesting that children may experience some emotional disturbance following this type of abuse. Reflecting the relative infancy of a bio-medical model for mental health care in Kenya, mentioned in Chapter Two, harm tended to be described in terms of feelings (e.g. fear) rather than medical terminology (e.g. anxiety). I have therefore ignored my original (western) instinct to call this psychological harm, framing it instead as participants did: harm to the victims' emotions or feelings.

Amongst women and girls (the most likely victims), rape was most commonly associated with powerlessness:

> ...anywhere you go you'll think that I...will be raped again. So you don't
> have a freedom (Gladys, 18-25, house girl).

Having been unable to exercise sufficient agency to stop the first rape, victims were expected to live in fear of a further assault. Similarly, in Triza and Winfred's exchange, the memory of the rape was understood to haunt the victim leaving them with an indelible mark:

> ...[rape] will remain in her mind forever...it will keep on... disturbing
> (Winifred, 16-17, secondary school).
>
> ...the memory (Triza, 16-17, secondary school).

Elaborating on the power of memories, both Juliana and Francis suggested that female rape victims may find it difficult to form future relationships with male figures, transferring fear of the perpetrator to the wider male population:

> …the girl tends to isolate herself and she becomes lonely because she does not want to interact with the other boys (Juliana, 26-30, unemployed).

> (Kiswahili) When they see any adult, they remember the person who raped them and they hate to be around them (Francis, 61+, retired).

Rape was consequently expected to inflict long-term, inevitable damage on the victim, polluting not just their memories but also affecting their future sense of security.

In many ways, this construction of rape shares similarities with the western-derived 'singularized story of psychological harm', with the intrinsic psychosocial changes extending into adulthood and casting doubt on victims' subsequent ability to undertake 'normal' tasks, such as successfully forming relationships. However, whilst western CSA discourses tend to emphasize psychological harm, within Kijiji, this was typically mentioned in passing. In contrast, echoing my literature review findings from research conducted in Sub-Saharan contexts (section 2.6.1) physical and social harms were discussed in far greater detail, reflecting the subjective severity assigned to different types of harm. Furthermore, western discourses of harm assume a certain degree of psychological disturbance, regardless of the type of sexual abuse. However, within Kijiji, discussions around emotional harm focused almost solely on rape. It is possible that rape was understood to inflict the most emotional harm, so became the focus of discussions. Nonetheless, further research would be helpful to explore whether other forms of CSA (such as subsistence sex, where the child's agency was also greatly thinned) were also understood to inflict significant emotional harm.

Also, whilst the 'singularized story of psychological harm' casts all children as damaged, Woodiwiss (2009) highlights that responses to CSA are nonetheless mediated by the gender of the child. Reflecting this, within Kijiji, the emotional harm associated with rape was predominantly understood in terms of *female harm*, with only five residents arguing that rape posed a threat to boys' emotional well-being. This could reflect the generally lower awareness of CSA perpetrated against males, with CSA typically associated with female victims. However, three younger male participants[73] suggested that cultural and social norms potentially impeded the visibility of male emotional harm. For instance, Bannister and William highlighted the shame associated with same-sex male rape, with William arguing that boys lack girls' cultural freedom to express their distress:

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[73] Under the age of majority but considered themselves adults.

> …people will take you as a weak link because you did not fight back – what type of a man are you? So you really feel inferior (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

> …the [boy] who has been [raped] is embarrassed. And it's also done in secret - you know when a girl is raped, she can show off [her distress], but for a man it's very different. He won't cry, he'll just go somewhere, sit alone just wondering until the day he'll just decide it's enough, then he'll just keep quiet then continue with life (William, 16-17, unemployed).

Reflecting strong patriarchal structures evident in Kenya and the wider East African region, William's comment highlights distinct differences between dominant discourses of femininity and masculinity within Kijiji.

These dominant discourses were captured by Stella and Marianne, who appeared to have internalized the association of fragility with femininity and the association of the power to protect with masculinity:

> (Kiswahili)…as a mother…I can be safe because the boy is there…it could be easy for a person to come and beat me up [if] I'm only living with a girl. But if there's a boy, at least I am safe (Stella, 18-25, runs a grocery business).

> (Kiswahili)…a boy child? - I understand it's one who protects (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

Such is the strength of these discourses of femininity and masculinity that Stella disrupted the frequent depiction of caregivers as protectors, arguing that mothers should be protected by their sons. This likely derived from my earlier observation that women living in informal settlements were also understood to be at high risk of sexual and physical violence. Overt displays of emotional distress by male victims of CSA therefore sat in direct conflict with the protector role locally associated with masculinity. Moreover, as highlighted by Bannister's earlier comment, failure to protect oneself also has the potential to devalue a boy's self-worth. This potentially leaves male victims with less space to expose their fragility without threatening their sense of masculinity. As such, rape poses competing threats to a boy's emotional well-being and his masculinity.

However, supporting the feminist position that women are best placed to understand the challenges faced by other women, participants from three of the four female focus groups offered views which

challenged William's perception that girls can 'show off' their distress. Specifically, they argued that girls may feel forced to conceal rape for fear of being blamed or ridiculed if the attack became public knowledge (discussed in section 7.3.1); they thus feared a process of *secondary victimization* that could deepen victims' distress:

> ...when you pass, communities will say this one was raped, and you'll just
> feel lonely (Winifred, 16-17, secondary school).

> ...So if you pass near the people who are gossiping, they'll talk bad about
> you (Deborah, 16-17, secondary school).

William consequently drew on his lived experience of developing a respected masculinity in Kijiji to explain how male displays of emotion competed with dominant discourses of masculinity. However, the girls highlighted that female victims may also be forced to handle the emotional effects of rape alone in order to preserve their reputation as a 'good', untainted girl. Hiding distress was thus depicted as a strategy to avoid damaging stigma and further emotional harm. A person's gender and social positioning within the community consequently appeared to influence the types of harm visible to them, amplifying some and hiding others.

Even if a child opened up about their abuse, there appeared to be few formal mechanisms available to support them address any associated emotional harm. Indeed, only Marietta could think of a specific way in which a victim's emotional distress may be minimized:

> ...the social workers would take that child and talk with them and try to
> show them that they are still loved...it doesn't mean that everybody hates
> you and everybody laughs at you (Marietta, 51-55, Director, child-focused
> NGO).

With a bio-medical model of mental health in its relative infancy in Kijiji, it is perhaps unsurprising that formal counselling was not more widely discussed. However, despite Deborah's and Winifred's assumption that the community would 'talk bad' about a rape victim, almost all participants discussed rape with significant sympathy and empathy, with their body language mirroring their words[74]. It might be that more informal methods of emotional support, such as offering comfort to victims within one's social circle, had been overlooked. Further research with victims of CSA is needed to confirm or disprove this hunch. Nonetheless, the lack of an effective centralized child protection system means that victims were not automatically offered access to emotional support, if required.

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[74] For example, when discussing rape, participants tended to shake their heads or lower their voices.

Finally, emphasizing the impact of CSA on the child's wider social systems, five adult participants (four of whom were parents) acknowledged the emotional effect that CSA cases had on the community. Sophia, for example, drew on her own parental fears regarding the difficulties of safeguarding her children, commenting:

> (Kiswahili)…you also have a child but you've heard of another child was has been lied to [lured]…You can also be fearful…that such a thing could also happen to your daughter[75] (Sophia, 31-35, unemployed).

Having lived in the settlement for over fifteen years, Sophia reported witnessing multiple cases of CSA. The demonstrated potential for CSA within the locality therefore appeared to stoke community members' fears that their child could be the next victim. This is arguably an example of what Douglas and Hughes refer to as 'anticipatory fear' of rape (Douglas & Hughes, 2013: 443).

Similarly, when discussing fatal cases of rape (touched upon in the previous section), I noticed that participants' body language changed, with women lowering their voices and breaking eye contact. These were not distant cases, but cases that illustrated the extreme violence that men in the village and wider settlement were capable of imposing on both women and children. Therefore, these examples highlighted the way in which the emotional impact of CSA penetrated deep into the community, with harm understood as systemic. As I later explore in Chapter 8, this impacted on the ways in which perpetrators of rape were treated by residents, with lynching arguably an outlet to address the long-term fears experienced by residents.

6.3 CSA as a Threat to a Child's Sexual Development

As noted above, harm was predominantly discussed in relation to penetrative forms of CSA. However, non-contact acts of CSA (e.g. exposing children to parental sex or pornography) and non-penetrative acts of CSA (e.g. genital touching) were also considered harmful, especially in cases where the victim had yet to engage in sexual activity. When discussing why it was harmful for caregivers to have sex in front of their children, Gladys said:

> …that child will learn that this thing is good…in an early time (Gladys, 18-25, house girl).

Furthermore, when discussing why pre-pubescent children should be protected from residents' use of sexual words around children, Daisy said:

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[75] Sophia was unfamiliar with the term 'abuse'. Luring was therefore discussed as a wrongful act that warranted protective intervention.

> …you know when they hear such words…they are still young, I'm sure
> when they reach the age of 16….they'll exhibit worse [behaviour] (Daisy,
> 18-25, works in hotel).

In both these comments, the harm was understood to derive from the child being prematurely exposed to sex. In other words, witnessing parental sex or hearing sexual language meant they acquired knowledge that was only considered appropriate later on in their sexual development.

At this point, it is important to note that in contrast to Innocence Discourses of Childhood (discussed in Chapter Two), children living in Kijiji were not assumed to be sexually innocent. Instead, child and adult participants alike depicted children as *sexually developing individuals*, gradually gathering the knowledge and skills to safely negotiate sexual relationships. Sex may therefore have been understood as (ideally) part of adulthood, once an individual was self-sufficient, but the development of sexual feelings and knowledge were depicted as part of childhood. This was particularly evident in the focus groups, where children openly discussed their own growing (heterosexual) sexualities[76]. For instance, primary school students Schola and Rebecca commented:

> [you are] attracted to opposite [sex]….(Schola, 13-14, primary school).
>
> …[you] feel like you don't want to play with girls, you just want to play with
> boys only (Rebecca, 13-14, primary school).

Childhood was understood as a forward-driven, linear process in which children first become aware of their sexuality and then learn to control it before entering adulthood. Thus, in contrast to Innocence Discourses of Childhood that position sexuality and sexual expression as part of adulthood, children in Kijiji were seen as developing sexual beings in childhood.

Children's sexual development was nonetheless understood to be fraught with risk. Sexual debut occurring before a child had acquired the required knowledge, skills and maturity was understood by participants of all ages to place the child at risk of social and physical harms (e.g. unplanned pregnancies, contraction of STIs, and reduced focus on education):

> Like when you're not in control yourself, you may do sex with a girl and she
> may get pregnant. (Boniface, 13-14, primary school).

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[76]The girls' openness was possibly assisted by them choosing their own group members.

> In school you should concentrate on whatever you're doing but you cannot
> serve two masters [education and sex] at a time (Fred, 41-45, village
> chairman).

With education viewed as a fundamental part of a successful childhood, leaving school was often used as an indication of a person exiting childhood (discussed further in section 6.4.1). To adopt Fred's phrase, sex was therefore framed as a *powerful master,* drawing children away from good childhoods.

Within the Kijiji context, sex was also perceived to be particularly risky in childhood for girls, especially amongst younger female participants. Drawing on cases of friends who had become pregnant, and reflecting the aforementioned theme of gendered power disparities within romantic relationships (section 5.2.5), they claimed that male residents of Kijiji often deserted unmarried girls if they fell pregnant:

> (Kiswahili) Sometimes you find that a girl for example has had sex with a
> man who impregnated her then dumped her. Unfortunately, the man
> denies that he is responsible for that pregnancy so the girl is left alone
> (Regina, 13-14, primary school).

> Around this place…we have a lot of men…they see just these kids like – will
> I say tissue papers [toilet paper]? Be used and thrown away (Charity, 18-25,
> unemployed).

In addition to depicting girls as disposable, Charity's choice of the term 'tissue paper' suggests she felt girls tended to be given little value in sexual relationships. It should nevertheless be noted that there was evidence to suggest that not all men behaved this way. Marianne (36-40, casual work), for instance, noted with relief that after her unmarried teenage daughter became pregnant, the baby's father provided material support. However, there was little doubt that girls felt *especially vulnerable* to the risks of sex, likely due to their learned or observed experiences that pregnancy was a female problem.

Against this backdrop, child and adult residents alike depicted non-contact and non-penetrative forms of CSA as a disruption to the ideal trajectory of a child's sexual development, igniting the victim's sexual curiosity before they had the skills to mitigate associated risks:

James (16-17, unemployed): another [form of CSA] is showing pornography to children…it makes them very curious and you know, curiosity killed the cat…makes them engage in sexual activities at a very tender age.

[seeing parents having sex]…can affect the child. Coz he or she will be curious to know what's going on (Daisy, 18-25, works in hotel).

Indeed, for two participants, Josephine and Pauline, this temptation was understood to derive from hormonal changes that occurred as a result of premature exposure to sexual contact:

..somebody starts touching [an adolescent girl] in the private part and in the breast…it's like awakening the hormones (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

(Kiswahili) [following sex between a girl and an adult man]…the hormones will rise up quickly and even she could start her periods (Josephine, 46-50, chapatti stall owner).

Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that having sex triggers the onset of menses, Josephine's comment highlights a clear perceived association between premature exposure to sex and an unplanned 'leap' in sexual development. The comments also highlight that despite insatiable sexual desire being typically associated with masculinity, girls were also depicted as being susceptible to premature provocation. Reflecting a depiction of childhood based on control, children's sexuality was therefore understood as being collectively untamed before social roles and behaviours relating to masculinity and femininity became learned behaviours. Nonetheless, whilst this represented an *acknowledgement* of female sexual desire, it should not be confused with an *acceptance* of active female sexuality; indeed, girls perceived to act without adequate sexual restraint risked the label of prostitute or whore[77].

Premature exposure to sex, through direct contact or exposure to sexual imagery, was consequently viewed as akin to forcing children to eat forbidden fruit: something irresistible but harmful since it encouraged sexual debut before children had the skills and maturity to mitigate possible risks. In fact, for many adult participants, premature exposure to sex was understood to inflict inevitable and lasting damage on the victim's sexual development, predominately in the form of premature sexual debut. This was illustrated by Jane and Wycliffe when discussing the harms associated with exposure to parental sex or pornographic movies:

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[77] The term 'trench' was used to describe girls who had had multiple sexual partners, implying their vaginas became stretched.

> ...I can't [have sex in front of my step-daughter] 'coz I will just automatically...send her to do the same thing which she sees (Jane, 18-25, factory worker).

> (Kiswahili)...with such kind of movies...you're making the children to start engaging in bad behaviour [having sex] (Wycliffe, 31-35, carpenter).

As highlighted by the terminology used by Jane, sexual experimentation following premature exposure was not simply seen as a possibility but assumed to be automatic. Or to coin Wycliffe, the disruption to the child's sexuality was expected to be so great that the child was effectively *made* to start engaging in sex.

The depiction of premature sexual exposure as inflicting inevitable harm on a child's sexual development was evident amongst adult residents and non-residents alike. Indeed, such was the perceived strength of premature exposure for awakening a child's sexual feelings that Carol suggested more violent acts of CSA, such as defilement, would ignite a child's sexual curiosity.

> Let's say [a girl] was defiled at that age [primary school]...she will want to know what happens with this thing – I was done this, I may try it again (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

In direct contrast to feminist accounts of sexual abuse in both western and African contexts, which emphasize power and control (Jewkes & Morrell, 2012; Lancaster & Lumb, 1999; Purvis & Ward, 2006), Carol's comment illustrates an alternative construction of sexual abuse, evident in my earlier discussions around child prostitution (section 5.2.4). This construction assumes that children experience abuse, at least in part, as a sexual act. Mirroring western CSA discourses that associate CSA with over-sexualization and promiscuity (for example, Sanderson, 2006), this depiction of CSA places the victim at risk of being labelled 'damaged'; he or she is framed as a person incapable of controlling their sexuality due to the intrinsic changes inflicted by sexual exposure on their psychosexual development.

Amongst younger participants[78], premature exposure through non-contact and non-penetrative forms of CSA was also certainly understood to put pressure on the victim to engage in sex by awakening their curiosity. Luke, for instance, drew on his own developing sexual feelings to argue that exposing children to pornography is abusive:

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[78] Who currently or recently identified as children.

I'm not matured enough to have sex, and if the parent gives me these pornographic movies to watch, I think that's a way of temptation. Putting me into pressure (Luke, 16-17 secondary school).

Concerned that he may not possess sufficient self-control, Luke consequently viewed pornography as a threat to his sexual development, encouraging him to sexually experiment before he had finished secondary school.

However, whilst depicting premature exposure as a threat to their sexual development, younger participants tended to challenge the *inevitability* of harm, arguing that victims of premature exposure did not automatically act on resultant sexual feelings. They presented a depiction of life in Kijiji in which children were confronted by sex on a regular basis due to the spatial restrictions of settlement living:

You find the father and the mother sleeping in the same room as the children…so the set ups…you know that children are exposed to sex at an early age (James, 16-17, unemployed).

Our houses basically are like this [gestures around room]…[parents] have their bed and they only have their curtain…that is how people grow up in this society (Bannister, 16-17 unemployed).

Interestingly, adult participants tended to place significant emphasis on the need for curtains to shield their children from sex, castigating caregivers who failed to use this safeguard:

…a certain parent tells me he cannot put a curtain in his room…Because that's a lot of work…I tried to tell him, 'yes, let's accept we have problem but…children have their right to privacy [from seeing their parents have sex]' (Damaris, 18-25, teacher).

Yet, as highlighted by Bannister and James, in reality, a curtain provides little protection. The emphasis placed on installing curtains by adult participants therefore perhaps served to excuse their continued sexual practices whilst in the vicinity of their children. As such, curtains arguably acted as *symbols* of their continued commitment to protecting their children within the challenging and congested context of Kijiji.

With almost every focus group discussing the prevalence of exposure to sex within Kijiji, it was clear that many child participants were used to hearing, or even seeing, their parents having sex. Therefore, if the adult fears associated with premature exposure were accurate, one would expect

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most children to be engaging in sex. Yet, although the majority of child participants did describe childhood sex as very common within Kijiji, restraint was understood to be possible. William (16-17, unemployed), for example, was adamant that he was waiting for marriage before he had sex. Furthermore, Samuel noted that children did not always give in to temptations:

> (Kiswahili)…when temptations come your way and you find yourself in a situation that you are not supposed to be…you find yourself debating whether to engage [sex] or not. Then you start relating this to what you have been taught about such encounters and conclude that there's need for self-control (Samuel, 13-14, primary school).

Samuel's comment acknowledges the dilemmas facing children prematurely exposed to sex. However, he recognized that even when exposed to temptation, self-governance was possible.

Admittedly, these could be examples of impression management. However, in the case of William, for instance, his viewpoint starkly contrasted with his peers', who emphasized the need for pre-marital sexual experimentation:

> …marriages break up because of sexual issues. Because people did not have experience and so it became boring…So…some tell us 'go look for experiences on how to make it more interesting' (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

In a group of peers, the pressure to conform to the dominant viewpoint was arguably stronger than the desire to please a soon-to-leave researcher. Yet, William remained steadfast in his opinion, rebuffing his friends' teasing. A born-again Christian, William's understanding of sex was firmly framed within a Christian discourse, with sex outside marriage understood to be not just risky but immoral. Therefore, although younger participants agreed with adult participants' assessment that premature exposure threatened their sexual development, there was nonetheless evidence of self-governmentality and resilience, seemingly hidden from the adult gaze.

The perceived change instigated by premature exposure to sex may therefore not have been as inevitable as many adults participants feared. This supports Woodiwiss' (2014) argument that there is a need to separate harm from wrongfulness in order to allow sexual abuse to be recognized when the person does not show the expected signs of damage. In other words, there is a need to challenge dominant CSA discourses which present victims as inherently damaged. Applying this conceptual separation to my findings allows young people to be recognized as experiencing sexual abuse

through premature exposure, despite not displaying the anticipated inevitable disruption to their sexual development.

6.4 CSA as a Threat to Children's Social Well-being

I end this chapter by considering the perceived social impact of CSA on the victim and their wider social network. Two social harms were discussed with particular gravity: curtailed education and presumed infertility.

6.4.1 CSA as a Threat to Children's Educational Opportunities

The most widely discussed CSA-related harm was the perceived threat it posed to a child's opportunity for education. Throughout my fieldwork, two types of CSA were understood to pose this threat: impregnation (understood as an *effect* of penetrative forms of CSA and an *abusive act* in itself) and early marriage (understood as an *abusive act*). When explaining why early marriage was abusive, Luke argued:

> …it entails a lot. Because at the moment the child has agreed to engage in
> marriage, this child will not have a proper education and I think in future,
> the child will have poverty (Luke, 16-17, secondary school).

Similarly, when discussing the possibility of CSA-related pregnancy, Deborah and Nicholas commented:

> For example…you have gotten pregnant, you have dropped out of school,
> and as we know, without education, eh! Life is miserable (Deborah, 16-17,
> secondary school).

> (Kiswahili)…when the girl now becomes pregnant… she also drops out of
> school (Nicholas, 26-30, security guard).

The means by which a child got pregnant were understood to have little impact; whether they had been raped or conceived through an SMD relationship, the educational outcome was the same. Both early marriage and CSA-related pregnancy were therefore assumed to *automatically* lead not just to curtailed opportunities for education, but also reduced life chances.

Within the Kijiji context, curtailed education was considered a very serious outcome for both the victim and their family. Following the advent of universal State primary education in 2003 (which led to greater secondary school enrolment[79]), secondary education had become a pre-requisite for most

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[79]http://www.childinfo.org/files/ESAR_Kenya.pdf (accessed 13.5.15)

formal employment in Kenya, including unskilled labour[80]. Failure to finish primary and/or secondary school subsequently decreased a child's chances of avoiding economically-unstable informal sector work and generational economic instability. Against this backdrop, it is therefore unsurprising that the threat of curtailed education was discussed in most detail by school-going participants. Living in a community where they had day-to-day reminders that education was not a universally-achieved right, they were subsequently keenly aware of the precarious nature of their current (relatively) privileged position.

The losses associated with a child leaving education were also understood to extend to the victim's family. Dickson, for example, argued that investments made in education were wasted if the child left school before sitting his or her exams:

> (Kiswahili)…maybe the child is in high school and the parents are spending too much because of the school fees…Ksh. 20,000 and above…she drops out because she got pregnant and can't continue with school. So it becomes bad for their parents also since they had invested in the girl's education (Dickson, 13-14, primary school).

Given the strong focus on the need for qualifications in Kijiji and the wider Kenyan society, Dickson assigned little importance to the process of learning. Instead, with no certificates to show for the investment, the money was perceived to be wasted, harming the child and her family.

Furthermore, amongst adult participants, the harm associated with CSA-related pregnancy was not just understood to derive from wasted money but also from the family's foiled future investments. Critically, the State National Social Security Fund only started registering informal sector workers in 2013, meaning that many older adults expected to be reliant on their children when they retired. Investment in their children's education was therefore accompanied by an expectation of reciprocal support at times of financial difficulty or when caregivers became too old to work:

> (Kiswahili) [a girl] should be serious with her books and her education – that is a child who is having good character so that at the end of it she can come to help her family (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

Indeed, highlighting the construction of economic spending on children as an investment, five participants (three adults, two children) suggested that future-focused cost-benefit analyses may

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[80] For example, security guards used to require primary education, but now typically require a secondary school leaving certificate.

decrease girls' chances of receiving scarce resources. This was illustrated by Timothy, who explained why some families prioritize boys' education:

> Because they knew very well that after, when [boys] come old, they will support the family because they will stay with…their parents, while the girl might be married and they continue with another life (Timothy, 41-45, Director of CBO).

Timothy's statement needs to be understood in the context of Kenya being a predominantly patrilineal society. Therefore, although many girls *were* in school, in the event of limited economic capital, prioritization may be gendered in line with patrilineal family structures to ensure investments remained in the family rather than benefiting the girl's future in-laws.

Prematurely leaving school due to early marriage or CSA-related pregnancy was consequently understood to threaten the longer-term economic prospects of the victim and their family. The depiction of childhood as a time of family investment reflects a wider trend within many African cultures in which children are viewed as social insurance for old age or sickness, due to the absence of effective, universally accessible State social security schemes (Hollos, 2002; Skovdal, 2009; Skovdal, Ogutu, Aoro, & Campbell, 2009)[81]. This contrasts with western depictions of childhood, which emphasize children's innate preciousness, or emotional rather than economic value (Zelizer, 1985). Against this backdrop, it is therefore perhaps unsurprising that, whilst child participants focused on threats to their current dependency, adults also considered threats to their own future dependency on their children. Families thus operated from a functionalist perspective, in which adults and children worked together for a common collective goal of present and future survival. The effects of CSA-related pregnancy, in particular, were consequently understood to be systemically, rather than individually, harmful.

Interestingly, though, whilst the victim's *present* family were understood to be likely affected by CSA-related pregnancy, little specific consideration was given to the impact on children born as a result of the sexual abuse. This contrasts sharply with western discourses relating to teenage pregnancy, where 'the baby is increasingly seen as an embodiment of future problems' (Macvarish, 2010: 319), having been given a 'bad' start to life. With growing up in an informal settlement characterized as a threat to the well-being of all affected children, being born to a young mother

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[81] Although Kenya developed the National Social Security Fund in 1965, it was not widely utilized outside the formal employment sector until a radical overhaul in 2013. At the time of my fieldwork, old age or ill health were therefore understood to represent a time of dependency, with residents relying on informal social safety nets and family to meet their needs.

appeared to be the least of the child's problems, especially in a setting where young single mother families were not uncommon.

Finally, at a conceptual level, school attendance was widely understood to be a strong marker of childhood, since parental investment was required in the form of school fees and other expenses.

> …I think I can become an adult when I finish my school (Austin, 16-17, secondary school).

Drawing on a dominant dependency-based discourse of childhood (discussed in the Introduction to Part Two), education was therefore synonymous with continued dependence and investment:

> …right now I'm eighteen but I still go to school so I still see myself as a child because I still depend on my parents. But when you start finding for yourself, maybe you are 18 but you can work, get your money – you're an adult already (Violet, 18-25, Child Development Student).

Highlighting the strength of this discourse, Violet had achieved the legal age of majority. However, she still viewed herself as a child due to her continued engagement in tertiary education and her resulting continued dependency on her uncle.

Curtailed educational opportunities were therefore associated with the possibility of being pushed from childhood. For instance, two male participants (Bannister and James, both 16-17 years, unemployed) reported that their childhoods prematurely ended after they became uncles and were forced to leave school to look for work. As clearly explained by Bannister:

> …I cannot describe myself as a child but an adult...you know in the slums, ladies get babies and you only know the mother but you don't know the father. So when you become someone's uncle and the girl is very small...her mother is very furious about that and she doesn't want to be associated with the child. So the responsibility is thrown back to the [girl] and the uncle. So the uncle has to take responsibility, although he was not there when things were happening. So that is when I became an adult (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

Such was the strength of cultural norms around collective family support, evident in Kenya and the wider region, that Bannister felt compelled to leave school and look for ways of supporting his cousin and her baby, even though he was not the baby's father. The effects of his cousin's pregnancy thus penetrated her extended family. By reducing opportunities for education and the associated

dependency, early marriage and CSA-related pregnancy were therefore understood to have the power to push both the victim and any supporting child carers from childhood.

Questioning the Inevitability of Harm

As noted in the introduction to this section, early marriage and CSA-related pregnancy were frequently depicted as inevitably leading to curtailed education, and the aforementioned associated losses. Indeed, when discussing the possible effects of CSA, even the local District Children's Officer appeared to subscribe to this viewpoint, highlighting her lack of faith in the statutory child protection system for safeguarding children's rights:

> If [the female victim] has gotten pregnant, of course this means she will not
>
> go to school so her social life has already been messed (Irene, 41-45,
>
> District Children's Officer).

However, young people who had prematurely left school presented a more optimistic view. Specifically, that leaving school did not necessarily mean the end of childhood since it was, theoretically, possible to return to education. James (16-17, unemployed), for instance, explained that although he now considered himself an adult due to his self-sufficiency, he was actively seeking support from NGOs to attend secondary school[82]. If successful, he would re-frame himself as a child, dependent on a sponsor rather than himself. Similarly, I met a girl who was hoping to return to school after giving birth if, like James, she could find a sponsor.

This depiction of the boundaries of childhood bears similarities to Qvordrup's (1994) notion of childhood as a structural space. Nonetheless, whilst Qvordrup discussed the changing occupation of childhood in terms of future generations going on to occupy the same space, James' comments suggested a more porous view of the boundaries of childhood, with children who have left the structural space able to return. Thus, although structural inequalities, such as poverty, or triggers, such as CSA, could push children prematurely from the space of childhood, support to re-enter school, and thus regain some degree of dependency, conceptually allowed re-entry. From this perspective, childhood was depicted as a *generational* location within the social structure.

However, when discussing CSA-related pregnancy and early marriage, it became clear that barriers impeding female victims' return to education vastly outweighed support mechanisms. In the case of early marriage, girls were forced to assume the adult responsibilities associated with the role of 'wife'. Rebecca (13-14, primary school) illustrated this point when she described the case of a peer

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[82] Comments given after recording. Verbal permission obtained to include information.

who had dropped out of school after entering a *come-we-stay* marriage with her teacher, noting that the girl was now balancing domestic responsibilities alongside washing clothes for money:

> (Kiswahili) I hear she's going to [nearby area] and washing clothes to earn a
>
> few coins to buy food (Rebecca, 13-14, primary school)[83].

Underpinned by Kijiji's strong patriarchal culture, wives were expected to assume the role of carer and, often, supplementary income generator to cover food within their households. Early marriage was consequently understood to force girls into a role that directly opposed the dependency associated with childhood, normalizing their disengagement from school. Highlighting Kijiji's positon as a semi-autonomous social field, the cultural norms associated with marriage and gender roles in a patriarchal community therefore appeared to usurp both the illegality of the marriage[84] and girls' right to education.

Moreover, when considering CSA-related pregnancy, girls were given limited choice over whether to have the baby. Despite the Kenyan Constitution (2010) allowing abortion when a woman's life or health is in danger, the Penal Code (1930) still lists self-inducing an abortion as a felony. Since there is a lack of consensus over whether the new Constitution allows for elective abortions, even in cases of CSA-related pregnancy, medical professionals remain typically reluctant to perform abortions. This leaves victims who conceive with two options: illegal abortion or motherhood. Possibly because of the aforementioned expectation that girls will be left to handle motherhood alone, girls from the first primary school focus group had acquired detailed information about how to abort an unplanned pregnancy. This ranged from knowledge about who to approach for 'coat hanger' style abortions[85] to ideas about which substances could induce a spontaneous abortion:

> …somebody even can do by herself by taking tea with many….(Anita, 13-
>
> 14, primary school).
>
> (Kiswahili) concentrated tealeaves[86] (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

Anita argued that abortion is something girls can initiate, implying a degree of agency regarding their reproductive choices. Yet, the girls were concurrently aware of the association between illegal abortions and death (Ankomah et al., 1997):

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[83]Comments given after recording. Verbal permission obtained to include information.

[84] At the time of research, marriage under the age of sixteen years was criminalized by the Marriage Act (1962), with parental consent required for marriages involving sixteen and seventeen year olds.

[85] The insertion of a metal wire into the vagina to induce abortion through penetration of the cervix. Potentially fatal risks include infection and perforation of the uterus or bowel.

[86] The efficacy of drinking very strong tea to induce abortion is unsubstantiated, although this is a popularly cited method of abortion in Kenya (Ankomah, Aloo-Obunga, Chu, & Manlagnit, 1997).

(Kiswahili)…[a girl] can die in the process of aborting (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

As such, they constructed the power to abort as an illusion of agency, with restrictive State family planning laws and intergenerational power inequalities taking away their right to safe family planning based on *personal choice*. Motherhood was therefore understood as an inherently harmful, yet 'safer', option.

However, although a 'safer' option, motherhood was nonetheless routinely depicted by participants of all ages as incongruent with childhood[87]. With no State-led child benefits system, a baby was understood to represent a significant extra economic burden. Many households in Kijiji were unlikely to be able to absorb the extra costs without either cutting spending on the young mother's education or requiring her to work:

(Kiswahili)…say this girl comes from [a poor family] and she happens to drop out of school after becoming pregnant…she is unlikely for her to go back to school due to lack of finances (Dickson, 13-14, primary school).

Furthermore, as highlighted by Hellen and Anita, a baby was expected to place extra childcare responsibilities on a household, which the young mother would probably be forced to fulfil:

…you can also drop out of the school...(Anita, 13-14, primary school).

…because of the child - you cannot leave your child alone here (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

With private local childcare only available to mothers with salaried work, school-age mothers who wished to remain in education were compelled to find a family member or neighbour who was willing and able to take on the role of day-time caregiver.

Yet, even if childcare was found, school-age mothers were expected to face significant difficulties returning to school. There is certainly a firm legal basis supporting young mothers' educational rights, with the 1994 National Re-entry Policy outlining measures for promoting young mothers' re-access to education. However, highlighting the lack of resonance of State polices at a local level, in practice, policy knowledge remains low and implementation has been found to be extremely weak (Omwancha, 2012). As such, a 2011 study examining attitudes towards re-entry in Emuhaya District reported that 86% of head teachers feared their schools would be ostracized if they re-admitted

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[87] A notable exception was Purity (16-17, unemployed) who was a mother but still considered herself a child due to her parents' willingness to provide for her and her baby.

teenage mothers (Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011). Similarly, reflecting a gendered culture of blame, discussed in Chapter Seven, the teachers I interacted with in Kijiji typically argued that school-age mothers should not return to education due to their risk of stigmatization and a fear that their presence would encourage other girls to experiment with sex. This was ironic given the concurrent expectation of stigma attached to young motherhood.

Thus, it appeared that young mothers' opportunities to return to education were severely hindered by deep-rooted local stigmas, especially amongst education professionals, highlighting a significant disjuncture between inclusion policy and practice. Until this stigma is addressed, Ruto's (2009) assertion that girls may benefit from a chance to start at a new school where their motherhood is unknown appears sensible. Drawing on Korbin (1981), the lack of effective State-level mechanisms for safeguarding young mothers' rights was arguably an example of structural violence, with secondary victimization deriving from enduring stigma within the State education system. However, by normalizing, rather than challenging, the accumulation of harm from pregnancy to loss of education, residents provided little incentive for the State or schools to revisit their treatment of young mothers.

6.4.2 CSA as a Presumed Threat to Fertility

Certain acts of CSA were also perceived to inflict harm through the imposition of stigma, threatening the victim's future value and status in the community. An example of this was same-sex male rape which, as highlighted in the previous chapter, carried a high threat of stigma since it occurred against a strong backdrop of heteronormativity. The close association between CSA and stigma is not new, with a number of studies from the region identifying fear of stigma as a substantive barrier preventing victims from seeking tertiary protection (Amone-P'Olak et al., 2016; Kisanga et al., 2011). However, within this section, I focus on what participants constructed as one of the most potentially damaging CSA-related stigmas: the assumption that violent rape results in girls becoming infertile.

The possibility of infertility was raised in around a 6th of the focus groups and interviews, especially amongst female partipicants for whom the threat was most relevant:

> (Kiswahili) if it's a girl who has been raped, it's going to destroy her womanhood and she's going to be even infertile (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

> (Kiswahili)...[following rape] they may not be able to bear a child (Stella, 18-25, runs a grocery business).

Again returning to a depiction of harm as inevitable, Esther assumed that rape would lead to traumatic fistula and subsequent infertility, with no consideration for the possibility of mitigating

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medical treatment. Infertility was therefore depicted as a direct effect of rape. Mindful of this, Wycliffe noted that mothers may encourage their daughters to hide their experiences of rape:

> (Kiswahili) most of [the local mothers] think that if they talk about it, other people in the community will tell her that her daughter will not get married because she has a [reproductive] problem…so she may not bear children (Wycliffe, 31-3, carpenter).

There is little scientific evidence to suggest infertility is a common effect of CSA; indeed, as I noted earlier, even if a child suffers internal injuries, these are potentially treatable conditions. Moreover, in stark contrast to other types of CSA-related harm, concerns about infertility were not substantiated by reference to *actual* cases of resultant infertility. Instead, the combination of physical injury and no resultant pregnancy was used to evidence *likely infertility*; girls were subsequently labelled with a harm which, in all likelihood, was not a reality, with the escalation of harm merely assumed.

Despite this lack of evidence, the assumption of infertility appeared to have potentially significant implications on victims' future well-being. Within Kenya, infertility holds deep cultural significance, with motherhood understood as a critical component of femininity; for example, when discussing the possibility that a girl will become infertile after contracting certain STIs, Martin said:

> …they become barren and they will be of no use when they will want to have children (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

The association between utility and fertility clearly highlights the expectation that women should bear children, with infertile women stripped of their gendered purpose. Furthermore, since many Kenyan cultures are based on a patrilineal system, children help solidify women's position within their husband's family:

> Let's say that she cannot give birth in the future…maybe the husband will chase her away because she's not given birth (William, 16-17, unemployed).

Capturing many women's subordinate position within marriages, William recognized that it is the husband who can exercise the power of 'chasing away' his wife when she fails to conceive, forcing her to relinquish her marital rights. Motherhood is therefore perceived to assure women's status and marital stability (Kesby et al., 2006), especially if the child is a boy (Price, 1996). Furthermore, highlighting the deep-rooted patriarchal dynamics within Kijiji, when fertility problems occurred in a

marriage, responsibility was placed squarely on the woman, with no consideration for the possibility of male infertility. Infertility was consequently understood in terms of feminized blame. Indeed, amongst the Luo (one of the dominant ethnic groups within Kijiji), it is believed that women miscarry due to infidelity or breaking a traditional taboo; they are therefore ostracized until they have been cleansed by a spiritual healer (Dellicour et al., 2013).

My own status as a married, yet childless, woman gave me a very tiny glimpse into the stigma attached to childlessness, possibly influencing my choice to examine this threat. Having experienced a miscarriage in my second year in Kenya, I was aware of the potentially hurtful taboos related to fertility problems after the director of a local NGO suggested I stayed away from the project for a week as my presence could be considered a risk to another pregnant colleague. However, I was still unprepared for the barrage of questions that accompanied my disclosure that I was childless during my period of observation at the primary school. The male teachers warned me that my husband may seek another woman to bear his children if I remained 'barren' much longer. They instructed me to view him as *king* of our household and, as such, I had a responsibility to continue his dynasty. Moreover, the women I spoke to explained that once married, they had felt significant pressure to conceive quickly since they had seen women thrown out by their husbands for failing to get pregnant. Motherhood was consequently constructed as both an essential element of womanhood and a means of security.

Given the deep symbolic value placed on motherhood, the notion that penetrative acts of sexual abuse may cause infertility consequently underlined CSA as a potential threat to a girl's future value as a woman. Alongside the physical, and possibly emotional, harmful effects of rape, female rape victims were thus forced into the cruelly ironic position where the only way to avoid the deep-rooted harm of being labelled infertile was by substituting one harm for another: the assumption of infertility for rape-related pregnancy. As Wycliffe's earlier comment highlights, regardless of whether infertility was a reality or not, the belief in its possibility was enough to cause mothers to hide their daughters' abuse from the community, preserving their femininity and future value as wives. However, this also meant that girls might miss out on life-saving tertiary protection (e.g. post-exposure prophylaxis treatment that significantly reduces the risk of HIV seroconversion). Protecting a victim's reputation consequently risked her experiencing a different, yet equally long-standing, form of harm.

6.5 Conclusion

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, western discourses (such as the 'singularized story of psychological harm') have long promoted the idea that children will be inherently harmed by CSA. Similarly, within my research, harm was a dominant theme throughout all participants' narratives,

depicted as a central feature of CSA and experienced by both boys and girls. However, despite these similarities, understandings of harm cannot, and should not, be divorced from the context in which the abuse occurs. As I highlighted in figure 6.2, a plethora of factors influenced participants' understandings about how acts of CSA were experienced by victims, ranging from the type of sexual act initiated to the cultural importance assigned to female fertility. It is therefore important to question how different acts of CSA are experienced by victims within a *specific context* before designing protective responses.

Within this chapter, I have emphasized three sub-themes relating to CSA-related harm. Firstly, harm was frequently depicted as both inevitable and likely to escalate. In fact, participants of all ages frequently failed to consider that different outcomes could be possible, normalizing the weak tertiary protection systems and cultural values supporting the escalation of harm. A girl who drops out of school after conceiving was therefore constructed as experiencing harm deriving from a penetrative act of CSA rather than harm deriving from the combined forces of the sexual abuse alongside the weak systems for supporting girls' reproductive choices and young mothers' re-entry to school.

Thus, whilst structural and relational forces acting on the child were recognized when considering whether the sexual act was forced, structural forces were generally ignored when considering CSA-related harm, with weak support mechanisms accepted as normal. There is consequently a need for child protection programmes to disrupt discourses supporting the inevitability of harm escalation, encouraging communities to challenge rather than accept barriers to protective services. Alongside this, longer-term case management is required that does not just address the victim's immediate medical needs, but also identifies, and works to minimize, any accumulative harms or secondary victimization.

Secondly, underpinned by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model of children's position in society[88], harm was depicted as systemic, threatening the well-being of not just the victim but also members of their social system at a meso and exo level. The latter ranged from the impact of curtailed education on a family's future social security to the fear experienced by community members when a child was violently raped. When designing tertiary protective mechanisms, it is therefore important to question not only the type and degree of harm inflicted on the child, but also how far into the child's social system the harm is understood to penetrate.

Finally, harm did not have to be experienced as real by the victim in order for it to be damaging. Instead, as illustrated by my discussions on the threat of CSA to a child's sexual development and a

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[88] Children are situated within a broader social system, surrounded by their family (meso), community (exo) and wider society (macro).

girl's fertility, the *assumption* of harm could leave the victim labelled as damaged and facing considerable stigma. Greater community-wide education is therefore required that challenges cultural norms and myths that support stigmas associated with CSA.

Chapter Seven

CSA Prevention in Kijiji: A Predominantly Risk Avoidance Approach

7.0 Introduction

CSA, in its multiple forms, was constructed by participants of all ages as a prevalent threat to children living in Kijiji. Anita, for example, drew on a recent case of child rape to illustrate the perceived high risk of girls being raped within Kijiji's narrow alleyways:

> ...a 2 year old child like yesterday was raped – it's easier for us also to get
>
> raped, especially along the corridors (Anita, 13-14, primary school).

Furthermore, the threat of luring was also understood to be especially high in Kijiji:

> ...'Coz you know at the age of 10, 12, to 14...you see they normally get
>
> lured with people which is a risk to their life (Isaac, 36-40, businessman).

The economically-deprived context was therefore seen to provide ideal conditions for luring a child, providing access to children whose basic needs were often not being fully met.

Critically, residents' perception of risk appeared to derive predominantly[89] from the large numbers of actual cases of CSA they had witnessed, or were told occurred within the village. Indeed, when I asked Stephen (41-45, carpenter) if child rape occurred in Kijiji, he spoke for several minutes, detailing four recent cases of rape in addition to the widespread rape that had occurred during the 2007-8 post-election violence. The systematic manner in which Stephen listed these cases, giving small facts to differentiate one from another, clearly highlighted that CSA was not just an abstract threat, but a part of day-to-day life. When exploring why CSA was understood to be so prevalent in Kijiji and the surrounding settlement, a plethora of factors were cited that supported the threat of sexual violence, ranging from night-time water delivery to a cultural acceptance of male sexual entitlement (figure 7.1). Thus, the social and cultural context of Kijiji was understood to exacerbate the threat of CSA.

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[89] A few cases were discussed that had become known through media coverage.

Factors Supporting CSA in Kijiji		
Social and Economic Factors	**Cultural Factors**	**Infrastructural Factors**
High levels of economic vulnerability at a household level	Acceptance of the commodification of girls' sexuality	Poor lighting and secluded alleyways
Weak social security mechanisms	Patriarchal structures emphasizing men's right to sex	Lack of private bathrooms.
Weak implementation of statutory laws relating to CSA	Dominant discourses of masculinity that excuse male offending.	Night-time water delivery
Corruption		Congested living, reducing privacy
High levels of substance misuse	Acceptance of CSA as a 'part of informal settlement life'	
	Children's reduced status due to intergenerational power inequalities.	

Figure 7.1 Factors Supporting CSA in Kijiji

Against this backdrop, attempts at CSA prevention were firmly integrated into residents' daily lives, from where children played to how they were supervised. Notably, the majority of strategies were based on a risk avoidance approach, supporting children to live as safely as possible by modifying theirs, and their caregivers', behaviours to mitigate the existing risks. Within this chapter, I examine these preventative strategies, focusing on the four most frequently discussed:

1. Increasing Awareness of CSA
2. Impeding Perpetrators' Access to Children
3. Avoiding Provocation
4. Providing for Children's Basic Needs

From a western perspective, these are familiar strategies. However, recognizing Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, I explore how residents tailored protective strategies to suit the Kijiji context. I also explore the implications of a predominantly risk avoidance approach to CSA prevention, noting that little was done to address the social, cultural and infrastructural factors perceived to sustain the threat of CSA.

7.1 Increasing Awareness of CSA

The most frequently discussed primary protection strategy amongst participants of all ages, genders and backgrounds was increasing awareness of CSA. Based on a risk avoidance approach, this strategy aimed to equip children with the required knowledge to identify potentially abusive situations. Aside from being taught about local rape scripts (discussed in Chapter Five), children were also expected to learn risk avoidance behaviours, such as avoiding certain areas associated with a high risk of CSA

or dressing conservatively. Turning to Smallbone, Marshall, and Wortley's (2008) application of situational prevention strategies to CSA prevention, awareness raising therefore focused on *target hardening.* In other words, children were expected to develop the tools to make themselves more difficult targets, rather than addressing social, cultural and infrastructural factors perpetuating sexual violence and exploitation within Kijiji.

When asked who should raise children's awareness of sex and sexual abuse, the most common response amongst adult participants was that it was their caregivers' responsibility:

> …I think the parents should take the core responsibility of talking to their
>
> children (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

> (Kiswahili)…it's good for the parent to teach their children about sex (Stella,
>
> 18-25, runs a grocery business).

A similar view was shared by the majority of child participants[90], who tended to assign responsibility to either their caregivers or teachers:

> (Kiswahili)…the teachers and parents should teach the child [about sex]
> (Joseph, 13-14, primary school).

> …[the most appropriate teacher] is my parents. Because…they have passed
>
> that stage…have experienced it (Deborah, 16-17, secondary school).

With sexual encounters (whether abusive or not) understood to carry a high risk of long-term harm, child participants therefore sought educators who had personally navigated these risks, rather than relying on peers who were also in the process of learning risk management skills. This contrasted with the advice given in a paper by Save the Children (2008), in which the organization highlighted the importance of peers educating other children about child protection. Whilst the paper helpfully highlights that being a peer educator can empower children, my findings suggest that adult involvement is also needed to increase the trustworthiness of the information being provided.

Nonetheless, despite agreeing that caregivers should raise children's awareness of sexual matters, only around half the adult participants who were caregivers reported providing this information to their own post-pubescent children. This disjuncture was confirmed by the majority of younger

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[90] Four participants stated that they wished to learn from peers.

participants[91], who observed that adults appeared to hide, rather than share, knowledge about sexual matters with them:

> …our parents, they hide many things from us so we tend to grow in the darkness (Charity 18-25, unemployed).

> …our parents cannot sit down and tell us about sex (Triza, 16-17, secondary school).

When considering why this was, younger participants tended to attribute caregivers' reluctance to embarrassment:

> …my caregiver could not sit me down and talk to me about the sexual education…I just do not understand. You see there are some topics that parents can never engage with us because they are afraid or it's like they feel embarrassed (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

As part of his role as a volunteer peer-educator with an NGO, Simon talked to young people about sex. He consequently appeared bemused that his caregiver could not do the same. Indeed, having grown up in the sexually overt context of Kijiji, many younger participants appeared to recognize, but not necessarily understand, their caregivers' discomfort about discussing sex with them.

However, when exploring this disjuncture with adult participants, caregivers who had spent their childhood upcountry depicted talking to their children about sexual matters as not just embarrassing but deeply shameful:

> …in African heritage a mother would not just face a girl and talk to her directly about sex but she would be taken to the grandmother because you see a child is very free with the grandmother. So the grandmothers would open everything – all topics about sex – with the girl child. And the boys would be taken to the grandfathers…I can say it was an abomination for just a parent to talk to her girl directly about sex (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

Pauline's comments are especially enlightening since she spoke very freely about sex in her interview. Yet, highlighting the deep-rooted impact of cultural socialization, she nonetheless regarded talking to her own children about sex as an 'abomination'. Therefore, whilst Pauline's

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[91] Who currently or recently identified themselves as a child.

training as a teacher ensured she had detailed knowledge about CSA prevention, cultural norms prevented her imparting this to her own children. The shame or embarrassment of talking to one's children about sex is not confined to participants in my study. Indeed, studies in Kenya (Crichton, Ibisomi, & Gyimah, 2012), Malawi (Limaye et al., 2012), Tanzania (Wamoyi et al., 2010a) and Ethiopia (Tesso, Fantahun, & Enquselassie, 2012) have made similar observations, without necessarily questioning exactly *why* this was so.

When considering this question, it is helpful to note that within many Sub-Saharan African cultures the role of teaching children about sexual matters has traditionally fallen to grandparents (Nambambi & Mufune, 2011). As noted by James, this is also the case in many Kenyan cultures:

> ...when you reach adolescence, you are taken to a grandmother. So that
> was when...the grandmother will give you [information] about sex (James,
> 16-17, unemployed).

Why then, did most adult participants suggest that caregivers should talk to their children about sex and CSA, even if they considered it an abomination? When considering this issue, Martin argued that caregivers in informal settlements faced a specific challenge; urban migration had disrupted traditional mechanisms for teaching children about sex and sexual abuse, limiting children's contact with their grandparents:

> ...grandmothers used to teach [children] and when their grandfathers, they
> would tell children, tell them stories on moral. But nowadays that one is
> lacking because in Nairobi we don't have grandmothers...they're upcountry
> (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

Thus, grandparents' lack of proximity had thrown the responsibility to (often reluctant) caregivers. In other words, in a period of cultural and social transformation following post-colonial urban migration, traditional mechanisms for raising awareness about CSA had been severely disrupted. A tension therefore existed between the expectations of children who have grown up in urban centres (away from traditional mechanisms for imparting knowledge about sex) and the reluctance of their caregivers, for whom these traditional mechanisms still held resonance despite their dwindling applicability in the Kijiji setting.

7.1.1 Alternative Strategies for Raising Children's Awareness of CSA

In the absence of grandparents, and mindful of many caregivers' discomfort discussing sex, a number of alternative strategies for imparting knowledge to children had developed. Firstly,

responding to the erosion of traditional mechanisms for teaching children about sexual matters that appears to have accompanied the growth of urban centres, the State had adopted the role of educator, with CSA awareness added to the national school curriculum:

> …the topic of sex and all that…is now introduced in the school syllabus because I think the government also is aware that parents don't talk to their children about sex…So those children who have an opportunity of going to school can know about it (Marietta, 51-55, Director, child-focused NGO).

With informal schools also following the State curriculum, this was a potentially positive development for ensuring that all school-going children learnt about CSA. However, the school syllabus predominantly focused on rape or incest. This consequently provided a very limited view of CSA, overlooking non-penetrative forms of abuse as well as transactional forms of CSA that were understood to pose a significant threat within the village. In other words, the syllabus failed to fulfil Lalor's (2008) call for wider depictions of CSA which encompass transactional forms of CSA. Furthermore, as highlighted by Marietta (whose NGO offered a non-formal education programme targeting children from especially economically-vulnerable families), education was not an automatic right in Kijiji, but instead a privilege of the more economically stable. Therefore, although the inclusion of CSA awareness into the school syllabus should have operated as a primary protection strategy, targeting all primary school-age children, in Kijiji, its reach was likely to be more limited.

Reflecting Kijiji's positon as a semi-autonomous social field, localized strategies had therefore developed for educating children about sex. Simon, an enthusiastic proponent of the non-profit sector's role in community development, argued that community groups had attempted to fill gaps in access to State-funded awareness programmes by organizing local groups to educate children:

> We have groups here in the community that teach children about…the sexual life and the sexual abuse that surrounds them….they are just arranged by the individual who can finance them. (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

Simon's optimism was highly evident, likely deriving from the pride he took in his role as a non-profit sector volunteer. This highlighted the importance of community-led initiatives for identifying and addressing unmet local needs, and giving volunteers a sense of ownership and belonging. However, with no formal funding, the initiatives were nonetheless *ad hoc* arrangements, rather than

systematic prevention mechanisms. The extent to which they reached all children excluded from education, especially those forced to work, was therefore highly questionable. Furthermore, although Simon argued that local youth also learnt about CSA from NGO primary prevention campaigns, the effectiveness of the specific campaigns he discussed also appeared debatable. Specifically, he described how a large NGO had recently distributed leaflets on the Sexual Offences Act, written in English:

> [the NGO] called for those people...who could express themselves in both English and Kiswahili. And so they saw that through these people then we have emissaries that can spread the acts…they can even translate to those who do not understand in Kiswahili (Simon, 18-25, volunteer at NGO).

Although many residents spoke excellent English, these tended to be residents who had enjoyed greater access to education, and had therefore likely learnt about CSA at school. Thus, an English-focused campaign relied on young people with more limited English reading skills admitting their difficulties and asking a peer or adult for help. Given the high levels of pride and status associated with educational attainment in Kenyan society, this might not happen.

Moreover, as highlighted by the following exchange by Bannister and James, local community groups were understood to focus disproportionately on girls' protective needs:

> ...the [community] groups that were responsible for spreading this gospel, they did not do thorough work…We were in school with him (points to William), so when we were in class five there was a girl child programme, but they forgot about the boys (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).
>
> This country's not a boy child country (laughter) (James, 16-17, unemployed).

Both bright and articulate young men, James and Bannister had been forced to leave school due to financial constraints. James had tried to look for sponsorship, but found many organizations targeted girls, framing them as having greater vulnerabilities and needs. Certainly, girls appeared more likely to experience CSA in Kijiji. Moreover, their biological status as mothers-in-waiting was used to explain their perceived vulnerability:

> …[an adolescent girl] is delicate…you get [her] getting pregnant at the age
> of 15. So that is the delicacy I'm talking about (Daisy, 18-25, works in
> hotel).

> …you cannot compare a girl to a boy. That is something so
> different…they're at a higher risk than boys…when a man messes with this
> lady, she can get pregnant (Charity, 18-25, unemployed).

Girls' 'innate' vulnerability was therefore used to position them as a group deserving of specialized attention and thus a worthy target of secondary protection campaigns. However, as demonstrated by Bannister and James, the exclusion of boys from prevention campaigns arguably reinforced the dominant understanding of CSA prevention as a female concern. Boys' protective needs therefore risked being overlooked.

When considering why NGOs tended to target girls, Timothy, a director of a child-focused CBO (community-based organization), agreed with James' and Bannister's assessment that services for boys were overly limited:

> …in the community you find that when there's a project, they tend to look
> after the girl…I find that maybe the boys are being neglected (Timothy, 41-
> 45, Director of CBO).

However, when I later delved more deeply into this issue, he drew on his professional experience to argue that this apparent neglect of male victims was due to protection actors' reliance on external donors[92]. At a basic level, he noted that girls were more likely to be victims of CSA, so it was therefore easier to justify funding for protection programmes targeting this especially vulnerable group. Nonetheless, he also noted that many local non-profit organizations relied on western donors who, recognizing Kenya's patriarchal structures, were keen to promote western values relating to gender equity. Effective gender equality programming aims to promote the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of men, women, girls and boys (Douglas, 2007); engagement is thus required with each group. Nonetheless, a simpler explanation of gender equality programming appeared to have been internalized in Kijiji; namely, that focusing on girls increased an organisation's likelihood of funding success since it showed they were 'thinking about gender'. As such, when a funding opportunity arose, they were more likely to pitch an idea relating to girls, regardless of whether this

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[92] Reflecting his non-profit background, Timothy focused predominantly on NGO's tertiary responses, most of whom were reliant on donor funding. However, State's funding for SGBV projects also comes from western governments.

limitation was imposed by the potential donor. The importation of outsider values, reflected through western donors' *perceived* funding priorities and expectations, therefore appeared to play a role in limiting boys' opportunities for protective services.

7.1.2 Raising Awareness of CSA amongst Adult Residents

Discussions about CSA prevention focused predominantly on how children acquire self-protective knowledge. However, there was also a strong cultural expectation that caregivers would play a role in protecting their children, through active supervision and fulfilment of their basic needs (discussed in sections 7.2.1 and 7.4). As such, based on the assumption that adulthood is synonymous with parenthood, adult residents were also perceived to require awareness-raising training in relation to CSA. Although the media played a role in this, promoting awareness of the Sexual Offences Act and the UNCRC, newspapers and television remained out of economic reach of many households. Recognizing the need for child rights messaging to penetrate deep into the informal settlements, key informants reported that the State offered training seminars for informal settlement residents. However, reflecting the aforementioned underfunding of the National Child Protection System, these tended to use a peer-educator approach, in which a couple of residents from each village were trained and then expected to disseminate information back to their community. A similar approach was used by NGOs, who also offered awareness-raising trainings to residents of the settlement.

The use of community members as peer educators is a popular tool within the international development sector. In addition to saving training costs, the approach has been hailed for encouraging community-driven change due to peer credibility (Hughes-d'Aeth, 2002). However, peer-educators do not necessarily penetrate all sections of a community. This was illustrated by Nicholas (26-30, security guard), who stated his preference for talking in Kiswahili before noting that his wife only spoke her vernacular language[93]. With Kiswahili the common language across the different ethnic groups in Kijiji, non-Kiswahili speakers, such as Nicholas' wife, were therefore at higher risk of being excluded from peer-education. Furthermore, I also only met eight people who had been invited to trainings organized by the State or NGOs, and these individuals had attended multiple events. Discussing this after one of the interviews, Martin (41-45, Community Health Worker) noted that trainings typically offered per diems[94] to participants. As such, only those with strong social capital (e.g. ties to the local elders) were suggested for participation[95]. Direct access to primary protection strategies had therefore become the domain of residents with greater reserves of capital.

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[93] Language of ethnic group.
[94] Daily cash allowance of around Ksh.500 (5.55 USD).
[95] Verbal permission obtained to write down Nicholas' and Martin's points in interview notes.

A potentially more egalitarian strategy for raising awareness about CSA was the informal programme of seminars offered by local government officials. Indeed, Moses, a settlement sub-chief, proudly declared that himself, the chairman and village elders regularly educated residents on issues relating to CSA and child rights through public *barazas* (meetings) that were open to all.

> …We do old barazas and we try to teach then the rights and what the constitution of Kenya says…We behave like fathers to the youth (Moses, 46-50, sub-chief).

Moses' portrayal of himself as a 'father' highlighted a collective view of protection, with community elders acting as paternal figures to the next generation of young adults. Thus, whilst urban migration had disrupted the extended family's role in protecting children, traditional communal child-rearing patterns were nonetheless still evident. Indeed, Moses appeared to derive considerable pride from his perceived position as a community protector.

However, despite also working for the State, Irene, was more pragmatic about *barazas*' effectiveness within the urban setting, where people relied on a cash economy:

> …Upcountry when a chief calls for a meeting, everybody attends….But not in urban centres…here, we are all employed or some are doing their own business. And majority of people live at that level of hand to mouth. So, I have not time to go and sit in a *baraza*…then in the evening I have nothing to put on the table….unlike upcountry whereby there is food in the stores (Irene, 41-45, District Children's Officer).

Consequently, although *barazas* did not require invitations, adults from the most economically vulnerable households (whose children may be at especially high risk of transactional forms of CSA) were least likely to attend.

An awareness-raising mechanism that was discussed more positively was seminars on child rights issues offered by local churches during weekly services and study groups:

> (Kiswahili) Most of [the adults] are taught in churches, like, for me, I've learnt through the church seminars (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

> …[residents] are becoming aware [of CSA] through churches, NGOs and maybe the enlightened people who want to educate them on the same (Carol, police officer, 31-35).

As noted in Chapter Three, churches did not just provide spiritual support, but also provided a further social network that could offer practical help at times of crisis. Almost all the residents I met were active church participants, taking time out from income generation and domestic labour to attend church on Sundays. Churches therefore offered an effective way of targeting large proportions of the community; this highlights the benefits of using existing social structures for awareness-raising initiatives, rather than creating new, temporary groups for training sessions.

Finally, it was notable that whilst CSA awareness-raising campaigns often targeted the whole community, adult and child participants alike tended to only assign responsibility for imparting this knowledge to caregivers and adults working in the child protection sector (understood to include village elders, NGOs and faith-based organizations). When considering why community members, more broadly, were not assigned protective responsibility, Peter noted that the types of CSA found in Kijiji potentially limited opportunities for intervention. In light of the perceived prevalence of luring, for example, he argued that children may feel threatened by male non-family members endeavouring to teach them about sexual matters:

> (Kiswahili) you might meet with a child…to give advice as a responsible
> adult but…the child she is maybe going to think that this man really wants
> to entice me like the other one who did this or maybe really wants me to
> engage in sexual behaviours (Peter, 26-30, businessman).

As noted in Chapter Five, local rape scripts (which formed the basis of CSA awareness-raising strategies) depicted perpetrators as part of the community. Peter therefore argued that children were likely to view well-meaning community members as potential threats to their well-being rather than co-investors in their future. As such, the traditional notion of the community raising the child had arguably been affected by changing patterns of abuse, helping to transform childrearing from a collective to a household-based responsibility.

7.2 Impeding Perpetrators' Access to Children

A second primary protection strategy discussed by participants of all ages, genders and backgrounds was impeding perpetrators' access to children. This was achieved through two specific strategies: active supervision (primarily by teachers and caregivers), and avoidance of high risk areas (a responsibility assigned to children themselves). This strategy consequently drew on what Lee (2001) and Uprichard (2008) termed a 'being' and 'becoming' understanding of childhood; children's agency in relation to self-protection was recognized, alongside an acknowledgment of their developing points of reference and subsequent need for support.

7.2.1 Supervision as a Preventative Strategy

Echoing findings from a quantitative study examining parents' perceptions of CSA in an urban Nigerian setting (Ige & Fawole, 2011), supervision was understood to be a vital way in which caregivers could protect their children from sexual abuse. Reflecting my observations in Chapter Five, this strategy for CSA prevention was based on the assumption that perpetrators were likely to be someone in the community, or even within the household:

> …There is no-one who can come from very far and [commit rape]… only surrounding people (Teresia, 36-40, hairdresser).

> …the second [factor that could increase a child's risk of being raped] is how close they are to the rapist. Maybe most of the time you are with this person in the house (Violet, 18-25, Child Development Student).

Given the assumed close proximity of potential perpetrators, supervision was thus depicted as a necessary part of everyday prevention within Kijiji.

Underpinned by a risk avoidance approach to CSA prevention, supervision was based on the premise that the presence of a caregiver, or suitable adult, would likely deter potential rapists, lurers or sugar mommies and daddies. As highlighted by Violet's earlier comment, it was not enough for the child to be under the watchful eye of an adult or relative. Instead, the supervisor needed to be someone interested in actively protecting them from abuse rather than exploiting their proximity. School-going participants were especially strong proponents of supervision as a protective strategy:

> (Kiswahili)…in the village it's like some parents are abnormal...they don't care about their [children's] whereabouts (Monica, 13-14, primary school).

Similarly, despite boys being depicted as less vulnerable than girls, Samuel argued that neither boys nor girls should be given excessive freedom:

> (Kiswahili)…[children] are not supposed to be given that freedom to entertain people so much because others take advantage (Samuel, 13-14, primary school).

As noted in Chapter Six, with independence understood to signal the end of childhood and its associated benefits, school-going participants did not appear to crave freedom. Indeed, as highlighted by Monica, they constructed supervision as a sign that their caregivers cared.

Alongside maintaining a presence near their children, caregivers were also expected to actively intervene if someone made sexual advances. Reflecting this, James was acutely aware that as an unmarried, unemployed youth, he was perceived to pose a substantive threat to girls' futures. As such, he was frequently confronted by caregivers who thought he had ill intentions towards their daughters:

> …there are also girls who are not going to school, so when [the caregivers] see us...even greeting [the girls] is a problem. (Laughter). [The caregivers]...they might think you're seducing their daughter (James, 16-17, unemployed).

However, whilst James made light of caregivers' interventions, depicting them as over-protective, it was notable that only three female child partipicants stated that they felt able to rebuff unwanted sexual advances. This possibly stemmed from being socialized in a society where obedience and respect were valued over assertiveness. Thus, within the Kijiji context, caregiver intervention appeared to be an important aspect of supervision.

It is nonetheless worth noting that supervision was discussed solely in regards to caregivers maintaining a *physical* presence around their children. However, with smart phones and data charges dropping in price, increasing numbers of residents had access to the internet via their mobile devices. Frederick and Luke argued that this posed a new threat:

> … nowadays people download…those dirty movies (Luke, 16-17, secondary school).

> …everyone nowadays has phones and it's easy…when you enter in internet, you will find [pornography] (Frederick, 16-17, secondary school).

Given his enrolment in secondary school, Frederick was probably from a more affluent household. Thus, his perception that everyone had mobile internet access was perhaps an over-assumption, based on his own social milieu. However, mobile phones were certain gaining in prominence, potentially increasing children's access to certain forms of abuse, such as exposure to pornographic content:

> …this was posted on Facebook…There was a lady raping a young child…[my friend] shared the video (Daisy, 18-25, works in hotel).

Although Daisy now considered herself an adult, her story highlighted the need for supervision not just in the physical space of Kijiji, but also in terms of children's growing access to virtual spaces.

Finally, despite participants of all ages discussing supervision as the responsibility of 'parents' or 'caregivers', I rarely saw a man supervising his children. This arguably reflected Kijiji's working patterns (discussed in Chapter Three), with women more likely to be engaged in domestic work or village-based micro-enterprises. Nonetheless, given the high levels of unemployment, there remained a strong male presence in Kijiji during the day. The gender role division was therefore so deeply engrained and normalized within the local culture that not one female participant thought it necessary to say that supervision was actually a female responsibility. Supported by strong patriarchal structures, male caregivers were therefore able to avoid supervisory responsibilities. This also increased the potential risk of 'mother blaming' (MacLeod & Saraga, 1988), or the depiction of CSA as a failure of a woman's protective responsibilities.

Challenges of Supervision

Against this backdrop, it is perhaps unsurprising that female adult participants were most likely to discuss the challenges of effective supervision within the Kijiji context. Mirroring Monica's earlier comment about neglectful caregiving, it appeared that not all children were adequately supervised. Indeed, I observed a constant presence of infant children playing on garbage heaps, with no adults or older children in sight. In a setting where waged labour is a necessity and 10-12 hour working days are common, supervision was perceived to be significantly more difficult than in rural settings:

> (Kiswahili)…upcountry you are just around the homestead. Even though you are going to the farm at 6am in the morning…and you are coming back in the evening, it is all of [the family] who went to farm (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

With this in mind, women participants who took on the dual working roles of 'mother' and 'income generator' were especially quick to explain failures in supervision in terms of competing work commitments:

> (Kiswahili)…the child is left alone in the house since maybe the mother has gone to work. So a neighbour or anybody else comes and finds the child is alone, he takes advantage of that and entices the child with a sweet so that they can go [and have sex] (Susan 31-35, primary teacher).

Having likely had to manage competing priorities themselves, women were therefore empathetic about the challenges facing caregivers endeavouring to balance work and childcare.

In light of these difficulties, and reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, women reported turning to different local strategies to address the tension between caregiving and work within the challenging Kijiji context:

> (Kiswahili) it's a bit hard in the community to find effective [protective] measures…because there's no way you can say that you can put a fence around our small houses to act as a security measure…So you find some protective measures [that] can be of help here…for example like now probably my children are already home from school but they are at a neighbour's house (Damaris, 18-25, teacher).

Thus, whilst security measures used in formally-planned parts of the city were impossible in Kijiji, given its physical layout, this did not stop the community developing local safeguarding strategies, such as sharing childcare responsibilities with neighbours.

Recognizing this, Emma, a non-resident social worker, commented:

> …the women there are now being more vigilant with children. They're taking care of the other woman's child also and seeing them as my child when the other woman is not around (Emma, 26-30, hospital social worker).

Emma tended to be quite negative about informal settlement parenting, reflecting a recurring stigmatization of residents by non-residents. However, she nonetheless acknowledged that by drawing on their available reserves of social capital (in the form of friendships), reciprocal help between neighbours allowed mothers greater flexibility to work away from home. This community-derived solution therefore contrasted sharply with the recurring perception amongst adult participants that the community's role in child protection was decreasing. Admittedly, urban migration appeared to have disrupted extended family ties for sharing childcare. Nonetheless mothers in Kijiji had arguably re-created these reciprocal arrangements amongst their neighbours. It therefore seemed that just as patriarchal norms overshadowed the fact that women were primarily responsible for supervising children, reciprocal arrangements with other women were also overlooked.

A further strategy for addressing the tension between work and supervisory responsibilities was the use of older children as protectors. Although supervision was predominantly depicted as an adult responsibility, it was clear from my observations and focus group discussions that children as young as 8 or 9 were expected to assume the supervisory mantle for their younger siblings or cousins, rebuffing potential perpetrators or alerting caregivers to any suspicious behaviour. Charity, for instance, spoke passionately about her role as protector for her seven year old sister, a role that had started when she herself was still a child:

> ...there's this man who spanked her butts and she came crying. 'Ay, you see
> that man? he has hit me on the buttocks' and I was like, 'I will go and catch
> that man, next time he won't do that' (Charity, 18-25, unemployed).

Returning to the earlier discussed idea of boys as protectors (section 6.2), Bannister also noted that he was expected to accompany his sister when she left the house at night:

> ...whenever my mum felt that she must really send my sister anywhere, she
> had to go under my company (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

A significant body of research has highlighted the critical and yet often under-lauded role that children play as caregivers in East African settings (Abebe & Skovdal, 2010; Evans, 2011; Nyambedha, Wandibba, & Aagaard-Hansen, 2003; Skovdal, 2011). Reflecting this, sibling supervision was so deeply ingrained in the local culture that it was barely mentioned by adult participants. Rather, it was constructed as 'helping'. However, as noted earlier, very few child participants felt comfortable personally rebuffing someone who was sexually harassing them. Considering their supervisory role purely in terms of CSA prevention, unrealistic protective responsibilities therefore appeared to be placed on children, especially in a setting perceived to have high levels of sexual violence.

The final strategy for addressing the tension between work and supervision was the use of school as childcare. Whilst child participants depicted school predominantly as a source of cultural and social capital (section 6.4.1), mothers I met within the village constructed it as a much appreciated source of supervision for children over 3-4 years[96]. This shared similarities with a 1997 study examining the perceived value of early childhood development programmes in rural and urban Kenyan settings (Swadener, Kabiru, & Njenga, 1997) which found that informal settlement mothers placed greater value on the childcare element of the programmes than the education *per se*. Schools were consequently constructed as safe spaces in which the supervisory mantle was passed from

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[96] Taken from fieldwork notes.

caregivers to teachers. However, Timothy, a teacher himself, argued that not all his fellow professionals fulfilled their protective roles:

> ....Raping is so much because you find even in primary schools...something like that has happen with the teachers. You find that some girls are being pregnant with the teachers (Timothy, 41-45, Director of CBO).

Supporting Timothy's assertion, five child participants discussed friends who had entered sexual relationships or early marriages with male teachers whilst at primary school. Having seen first-hand that male teachers posed a potential threat to their well-being, it was therefore understandable that boys and girls focused less on the protective qualities of school than their adult counterparts.

These findings support growing concerns within the Kenyan child protection sector about the high levels of CSA reported in schools and low accountability for teachers found to be sexually abusing pupils (Abuya et al., 2012a; Rassi & Nyamu, 2012; Ruto, 2009). The State has purportedly cracked down on teacher-pupil relationships, with 96 teachers sacked for sexual offences in 2015[97]. However, at the time of my research, there appeared to be a tacit acceptance that children may enter into relationships with their teachers. This was highlighted by the nonchalance exhibited by 13 year old Rebecca when describing how a peer had moved in with her teacher:

> (Kiswahili)...she had engaged in such a relationship with a teacher and she just continued staying with the teacher like his wife (Rebecca (13-14, primary school).

There is therefore a strong need to challenge the acceptance of pupil-teacher relationships, (re)constructing school as a place of potential harm. Moreover, the possibility of CSA perpetrated by peers within the school setting should also not be overlooked.

7.2.2 Avoiding High Risk Areas

With supervision proving difficult for many caregivers, children were also expected to take responsibility for their own protection by avoiding areas understood to pose a high risk of CSA. As noted by Tabitha, outside areas were generally viewed as risky, especially if the child was not walking with purpose:

> ...I was advised not to be loitering around so much in the village because there are some people who are not good (Tabitha, 13-14, out of school).

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[97]http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Teachers-Banned-TSC-Sex-Misconduct/-/1056/2746550/-/lw72tv/-/index.html (accessed 1.3.16)

With cramped living conditions meaning that adults often sat outside during the day, 'loitering' was thus understood to put the child at risk of encountering someone with abusive intentions. Moreover, specific places in the village were understood to be especially risky for children. In particular, children were instructed to avoid the riverbank and bridge to the adjoining village since both were understood to pose a high threat of rape or unwanted touching:

> There is [places] where they normally do rape people…You can't pass through that road [gestures]. You have to come through the other one. Through this other bridge 'cos there it's not safe. They normally rape people and they rob (Daisy, 18-25, works in hotel).

Reflecting their position as potential victims of same-sex male rape, James and Bannister also highlighted the perceived risk of male rapists around the river area:

> the river…(James, 16-17, unemployed).
>
> …we swim there. So there were sodomists in that area so what we could do is accompany…ourselves with our dogs (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

The boys therefore mitigated the risks associated with the river by going in groups, a strategy built on safety in numbers. The potential efficacy of this strategy is supported by a study which interviewed 91 convicted child sex offenders and found that they would be less likely to target children in groups (Elliott, Browne, & Kilcoyne, 1995).

Whilst specific spaces were understood to pose a threat during the day, sundown was understood to transform *all* outside space to high risk territory, especially with regards to the threat of rape. This fear appeared to have some evidential basis. A clinical study examining twenty one cases of CSA admitted to Kenyatta National Hospital, for instance, found that nineteen of these cases occurred after the child was sent by their caregivers to undertake errands at night (Nduati & Muita, 1992). Children were therefore advised to stay indoors after dark, whether supervised or not:

> (Kiswahili)…A girl…should make sure that she is in the house by 9pm and not walking outside…because it's easy for one to be killed…that's the time when these rapists are usually roaming around (Judith, 16-17, unemployed).

With Judith's comment capturing child participants' fear of the night, come sundown, the child-friendly, *inside* space of home was juxtaposed with the blanket dangers of the *outside*. Her comment also highlights that responsibility for avoiding these places was understood to lie with the child.

However, despite children being aware of their own protective responsibilities, the social context was also depicted as a barrier to protection. Water delivery patterns, for example, meant that some children were nonetheless sent out after dark by their caregivers to collect water:

> (Kiswahili)…if the water is tapped, it's usually at night… girls are going to be
>
> forced to go draw water at night (Agnes, 18-25, tailor).

A child who was raped after being forced to enter a high risk area by their caregiver consequently risked being assigned blame by the community for putting themselves at risk, with the inter-generational power structures that forced them into that position hidden. Moreover, based on a construction of all outdoor space as risky, children were advised to confine themselves to the 'safe' spaces of home when not at school. However, with houses measuring only nine by ten feet, indoor space for interacting with friends was very limited. Thus, a child's right to play exposed them to the possibility of blame if they were abused, since interacting with friends outside their home was frequently constructed as 'loitering' or 'idling'.

It is also important to note that the designation of 'home' as a safe space ignores the possibility for incest. Research in Kenya and the wider region has identified that perpetrators of CSA are most likely to be family or friends (Mwangi et al., 2015; Rassi & Nyamu, 2012; UNICEF et al., 2012). Mirroring this, most of the CSA cases discussed by participants occurred within the home of either the child or the perpetrator, rather than in areas designated 'high risk'. However, despite participants' ostensible focus on the latter, caregivers did recognize the threat of CSA within the home. As noted in Chapter Five, mothers avoided leaving their daughters alone at night with their husbands in order to reduce the risk of paternal incest. Similarly, Martin, who was father to two teenage boys and an eight year old girl, reported reducing the risk of sibling incest by sending his boys to sleep in his neighbour's house, in turn housing his neighbour's girls:

> ...because my children, I would not feel free to have them in the same
>
> house...So [neighbours] interchange. If you have the boys, then I give you
>
> my boys and you give me your [girls] so that they can just sleep in that
>
> single room (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

With overcrowding meaning that children often had to share beds, neighbours therefore worked together to reduce the chance of sibling incest by removing the perceived temptation. This is arguably another example of rural social norms being reconstructed within the confines of the Kijiji context, replicating the widespread practice[98] of post-pubescent boys moving into their own shelters within the family homestead, away from their female relatives. Nevertheless, it was notable that strategies for preventing incest fell solely on the caregivers' shoulders. Possibly reflecting the cultural taboo associated with incest, this was the one risk which children were not expected to manage. As such, children were taught that the home was a safe place.

Explaining Spatial Understandings of Risk

When considering why specific areas were perceived to be especially risky for children, some spaces derived their high risk status from an association with previous cases of sexual violence. The bridge, for example, had recently been the scene of two separate fatal cases of child rape. Moreover, illustrating how the physical characteristics of space can affect perceptions of risk, twice when I walked over the bridge, someone highlighted how its narrow structure prevented a girl escaping if a group of men decided to stop her whilst she was crossing.

However, despite risk being linked to specific physical characteristics of the environment, only one group of primary school boys suggested a situational protection approach (Smallbone et al., 2008), arguing that better lighting would reduce the risk of rape:

> …the CDF money. [MPs should] come and develop their area (with Constituency Development Fund funds). And that reduces the risk [of CSA]….(Boniface, 13-14, primary school).
>
> (Kiswahili)…providing the street lights because most of the rapists fear the lights, that they can now be seen (Samuel, 13-14, primary school).

The boys had obvious faith in the State's promise of informal settlement regeneration. However, this faith appeared to dwindle the longer participants spent in the settlement, with projects often failing to meet expectations. Indeed, during my fieldwork, the city council introduced plans to replace electricity poles, enhancing Kijiji's connectivity. However, in order to fulfil this goal, residents from the targeted street were mandated by the chief to personally move the front walls of their houses in by about a metre to allow maintenance trucks to access the alleyway. Yet, despite depriving residents of valuable living space within their already cramped homes, two years on, work was yet to

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[98] Amongst western Kenyan ethnic groups.

commence. Consequently, whilst the boys still had faith that the settlement could be improved, older residents had generally less faith in the State to initiate changes. They therefore focused instead on living as safely as possible within the existing infrastructure.

In contrast to the bridge and corridors, the riverbank appeared to have derived its risky reputation not from its infrastructure or associated past crimes, but from the people and behaviours expected to be found there. Specifically, there was an expectation that adults within the space would be intoxicated. Alcohol brewers and bars were located by the river, and, even in day-time, there was a constant presence of intoxicated residents, frequently shouting sexual comments at passing women and children. However, rather than linking the risk of the riverbank to the risk of sexual harassment, participants typically drew on more generalized associations between alcohol or drugs and CSA, with the former 'causing' the latter:

> When they are given those things [drugs], you know that thing changes
> mind. So it also causes the rape cases (Teresia, 36-40, hairdresser).

Alcohol was used to explain why some men commit 'accidental' incest:

> (Kiswahili)…when a man has gone out to have fun and he comes home
> drunk, he may not differentiate between his wife and daughter. So he may
> end up having sex with the daughter by force (Wycliffe, 31-35, carpenter).

Returning to Finkelhor's preconditions for abuse (section 2.4.1), Wycliffe depicted alcohol as a powerful force, suppressing the perpetrators' internal inhibitors. Against this backdrop, the act of incest is transformed from the unthinkable to the explainable, with the perpetrator depicted not as a paedophile, but as an ordinary man who has drunk too much. The responsibility attributed to the perpetrator at the point of attack is therefore minimized.

Yet, surely the likelihood of a father 'mistaking' his daughter for his wife is extremely low? Supporting this, amidst the multiple adult voices depicting *chang'aa* and drugs as a direct cause of CSA, Jane asserted:

> …when a man can be drunk, then he can just do anything…he can't think
> this is good or this is bad. Though others may get drunk knowing I will just
> go [physically force a girl to have sex] so that I'll…say I was drunk (Jane, 18-
> 25, factory worker).

Jane certainly subscribed to the notion that intoxication blurs a man's moral and social norms. Yet, she nevertheless suggested that mainstream acceptance of intoxication as an explanation for CSA may motivate potential perpetrators to use it as a cover for planned assaults. Thus, the depiction of alcohol as a 'cause' of rape arguably creates a climate in which rapists can excuse their behaviour. This is not to say that perpetrators necessarily escaped action. Jane went on to explain how she had personally participated in lynching to death a drunken perpetrator following a case of suspected child rape. However, she raised the interesting possibility that it may be the widespread acceptance of intoxication as an explanation for committing CSA, rather than the intoxication *per se*, that suppresses perpetrators' internal inhibitors. This assertion is supported by findings of a qualitative study conducted with 14 male inmates of a Kenyan prison which found that convicted male sex offenders frequently used their consumption of alcohol and drugs as an excuse for their offending (Muchoki & Wandibba, 2009).

When considering the willingness of some adult residents to explain rape or incest in terms of alcohol or drug misuse, I suggest that this may have been a self-protection strategy. Illustrating this, when discussing the local issue of substance misuse, a male teacher I met during my observation at the school said, 'these here illegal brews – they make good people do bad things'. Unlike western discourses of paedophilia, in which child sex offenders are transformed into monsters through their intentions and/or actions, in the teacher's account, the misuse of alcohol allowed for a separation between the person before drinking and their actions after: a good person who made a mistake. As I discuss further in Chapter Eight, perpetrators of rape, incest and luring often returned unpunished to the village. Therefore, rather than living in fear of one's neighbour, some adults may have found it easier to live with the idea that their peer or friend had been temporality transformed by alcohol.

When discussing how best to prevent the risks associated with alcohol, little consideration was given to removing the source of the problem, namely the illegal brewers who sold potent alcohol at relatively low prices. Like other illicit business, such as videos that showed pornography, brewers were understood to pay bribes to the local elders and police, making their removal inconceivable:

> (Kiswahili)…when [illegal business owners] just give the bribe…they definitely know that no-one is going to interfere with their businesses (Bernard, 36-40, tin smith).

A lack of regulation and deep-rooted impunity therefore weakened statutory safeguards. Onus was thus placed on children to avoid the riverbank rather than removing the risk factors from the area. However, since the risk did not derive from the physical space *per se* but from the behaviours

occurring within the space, containment was unlikely. Capturing this, on one occasion when I was walking through Kijiji's main thoroughfare, an intoxicated man climbed up from the riverbank and tried to grab the breast of my female companion. His drunken behaviour therefore contaminated a supposedly safe area.

7.3 Avoiding Provocation

The third preventative strategy, avoiding provocation, has been observed in numerous western and African settings, including Kenya (Ruto, 2009; Tavrow et al., 2013), neighbouring Tanzania (Abeid et al., 2014), and Namibia and South Africa (Jewkes et al., 2005). Based on risk avoidance, this strategy advocates that girls should avoid dressing styles that might provoke perpetrators' sexual interest, leading to rape or unwanted touching. In pre-pubescent children, responsibility for appropriate dress was assigned to caregivers:

> (Kiswahili)...I had a neighbour who had the tendency of not dressing up her
>
> child and so I advised her it's wrong since she will find that her baby has
>
> been harmed (Bernard, 36-40, tin smith).

Again highlighting how the community's role in CSA prevention tended to be overlooked, Bernard took active steps to ensure his neighbour appropriately dressed her infant to avoid tempting potential perpetrators. When discussing why such actions were necessary, Pauline commented:

> Some people believe that if you sleep with a child who is under five years
>
> you get healed [of HIV]. So I think these children should be protected. I
>
> mean they should be given pants and even, if possible, the parents should
>
> dress them in the long trouser so that their private parts be hidden
>
> (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

Given Nairobi's temperate climate, young children (3 years and below) frequently ran naked in the corridors. Nonetheless, drawing on the *virgin myth*, which depicts sex with a young female virgin as a potential cure for HIV (Kisanga et al., 2011; Lalor, 2004b; Petersen et al., 2005), Pauline suggested that infant girls have a unique vulnerability. Caregivers should subsequently ensure that their genitals are covered, so as not to advertise their developing sexual organs to potential perpetrators driven by this myth. The myth was only mentioned by five participants in my research, shedding doubt on its widespread acceptance. Yet, the fact that it appeared to hold resonance for at least some of Kijiji's residents suggests that it should be factored into the development of CSA prevention strategies.

However, once a girl reached early puberty (around nine or ten years), primary responsibility for avoiding provocation shifted from the caregiver to the child. This responsibility appeared to have been widely internalized by children in Kijiji, with the need for girls to avoid 'provocative' clothes mentioned in six out of the eight focus groups:

> …miniskirts…may bring attraction of the opposite sex. That one may cause dangerous things (Triza, 16-17, secondary school).
>
> ….it may cause rape (Winifred, 16-17, secondary school).

Focus therefore shifted from concealing girls' value as potential 'healers' for men living with HIV to avoiding provoking the sexual interest of male members of the community more generally.

Mindful that perceptions of what is sexual or erotic are culturally constructed, I therefore explored what clothes were deemed socially unacceptable for post-pubescent girls within Kijiji. I found that it was not just clothes that highlighted girls' developing physiques, such as tight trousers, but also adornments that could be deemed a girl's attempt to draw attention to herself, such as bangles or hair-pieces. As highlighted by Nelson, wearing such clothing and adornments was understood as a way of purposefully attracting a male audience:

> (Kiswahili)…there are those girls…they dress in these skin tights [trousers] and tend to walk where the men are to try and please them (Nelson, 13-14, primary school).

Yet, this view overlooked the fact that girls may inadvertently contravene norms relating to appropriate dress. Whilst at the primary school, for example, I observed a teacher chastising a girl for wearing a tight jumper that emphasized her breasts. The girl appeared deeply embarrassed, explaining that her mother could not afford another jumper and immediately covered her chest with her arms. Nonetheless, for the teacher, the girl's economic vulnerability was overshadowed by her perceived deviance, wearing clothes that highlighted her sexual development.

Underpinning the recommendation that post-pubescent girls should dress conservatively if they wished to avoid rape or unwanted sexual touching was the assumption that physically forced sexual acts were sexually motivated:

> (Kiswahili)…Dressing can make the child to be raped...when the girl wears mini-skirts, when the man sees that…he has the urge for him to have sex so he rapes the girl (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

Related to the idea that uncontrollable sexual appetites are a feature of masculinity (discussed in Chapter Five), inappropriate dress was understood to sexually excite potential perpetrators to the point where control was seen as impossible.

The depiction of rape or sexual touching as sexually motivated also meant that men who had lost their outlet for sex were understood to be especially likely to become perpetrators: these included widowers, unmarried men and men who had migrated to Nairobi for work whilst their wives continued living upcountry. Indeed, when discussing why not being married increased the risk of becoming a rapist, Stephen said:

> (Kiswahili)…when rape occurs it's because this man who is raping the girl is having a sexual urge or desire to have sex. So if one has a wife at home and you sleep with your wife…there's no need of going and raping (Stephen, 41-45, carpenter).

Stephen therefore constructed marriage as a protective strategy, reducing men's chances of becoming rapists. Similarly, sudden loss of a sexual partner was understood to increase the risk of a man committing rape:

> (Kiswahili)…if I had a wife and my wife passed away and I was used to having sex…I can also go and look for a girl and rape the girl (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

So natural was the assumption of male sexual needs that Leonard felt comfortable openly contemplating the rape of a child if his sexual needs were suddenly unmet. Interestingly, Kijiji had a large group of single mothers amongst its residents. In theory, men could therefore approach these women, rather than girls, if they lost their sexual outlet. However, a number of more affluent male residents depicted single women as trying to entrap men to provide for their children. Moses, (46-50, sub-chief), for example, lamented that single mothers were 'throwing themselves' at him due to his salaried position. Children therefore possibly represented a less threatening sexual prospect, easier to attract and cheaper to silence.

The framing of rape and unwanted touching as a natural male response to provocation allowed male perpetrators to be depicted as ordinary men whose sexual instincts had been triggered. This mirrors my earlier discussion of literature (section 2.6.2), in which I noted that children could be blamed for sexual abuse that was understood to derive from 'immoral' attire or behaviour. Interestingly, though, despite female perpetrators being described by male participants in terms of typically

masculine traits, such as high sexual appetites, boys were not expected to wear clothes that hid their developing physiques from potential perpetrators. This could reflect a perception that female offenders were less driven by visual stimuli. However, given the strong patriarchal culture within Kijiji, it probably reflected a greater acceptance of overt male sexuality; for example, younger men I spoke with explained that having a girlfriend as well as a wife generated status, showing them to be economically and sexually successful. This fits with Silberschmidt's (2001) observation that multiple girlfriends are a sign of prosperity in urban Tanzania. In contrast, single mothers who sought monogamous sexual relationships were deemed 'wild'. Illustrating this, during my interview with Moses (a local government official), a woman popped her head around the door to ask if he was available. As soon as he had sent her away, Moses said:

> She's just a single lady. There are so many of them just looking for
>
> men...They're very wild. (Moses, 45-50, local government official).

The focus on girls' dress was arguably part of wider social structures that served to suppress women's and girls' expressions of sexuality, concealed under the guise of protection and respectability.

Gendered notions of respectability can be traced back to the colonial era. With urban migration increasing in the late colonial period, Mutongi (2007) noted that the 1940s saw a moral panic amongst locals about the respectability of young women travelling to urban centres. Seeing an opportunity to limit women's mobility, colonial officials fuelled rumours of young women's declining morals, generating considerable fear that young women were turning to prostitution and spreading venereal diseases. Against this backdrop of fear, colonial officials subsequently encouraged local welfare groups, led by the African Elites, to forcibly repatriate their young women back to the rural areas. Thus, Carotenuto (2012) notes:

> As African elites used the repatriation of women to assert authority and
>
> socialize urban migrants into respectability, state officials often turned a
>
> blind eye to extra-judicial activities that promoted social discipline in the
>
> settler dominated setting of urban colonial Kenya (Carotenuto, 2012: 10).

Respectability discourses therefore became a powerful tool for controlling women, by both the colonial powers and the local African Elites. Alongside this, missionaries also imported a gendered depiction of respectability, founded on sexual shame. As noted in Chapter Two, this limited women's opportunities for sexual agency, separating the respectable women, who confined sex to marriage, from the unrespectable women, who explored their sexuality outside these prescribed boundaries

(Delius & Glaser, 2005). The sexual standards expected of women were consequently set much higher than men and, as illustrated by my findings, appear to have retained significant resonance.

7.3.1 Gendered Blame

Highlighting the longevity and power of gendered discourses relating to respectability, female participants were some of the harshest critics of girls who were raped after failing to adhere to informally-understood dress codes. For instance, when discussing why some cases of rape may not be reported, Monica and Rebecca said:

> (Kiswahili)...the dressing of some children, it arouses the men and easily makes them to rape the girls. So...(Monica, 13-14, primary school).
>
> ...it is not the men's fault because the girls should know how to [dress] in the presence of the men (Rebecca, 13-14, primary school).

Consequently, female partipicants used a victim's decision to dress in a 'provocative' manner prior to the attack as an excuse for transferring responsibility from the perpetrator to the victim, excusing the former's actions.

This observation contrasts with a wealth of studies conducted in western cultures (discussed in section 2.1) which have found female respondents less likely to attribute responsibility to victims of sexual abuse. However, when considering the girls' comments, it is important to highlight that the blame attributed to inappropriately dressed victims of rape was not just normalized within local social norms, but part of State-sanctioned messaging within the national curriculum. A CRE textbook, for instance, stated:

> Sexual aggressors usually have an inferiority complex and would attack weak members of the society to prove to themselves that they are strong. Girls should dress modestly to avoid arousing people who have such tendencies (Christian Churches Educational Association, Kenya Catholic Secretariat, & Seventh Day Adventists, 2005: 18).

As Wurzburg (2011) observed, local textbooks failed to acknowledge rape is a crime, instead constructing it as an 'immoral behaviour' that girls had a 'responsibility' to avoid. Consequently, the curriculum ensured that school-going girls were being formally socialized to conceal their sexuality due to men's perceived low levels of sexual self-control. Likewise, whilst the textbooks depicted rapists as having inferiority complexes, demonstrating power by attacking 'weaker' members of

society, school-going boys were being formally socialized to understand rape as a conceivable reaction to girls wearing 'provocative' clothing. Therefore, although adhering to local dress codes possibly reduced the risk of girls being assigned responsibility if raped, the message projected within the national curriculum arguably perpetuated cultural norms, such as male sexual entitlement; these served to mitigate, or even excuse, rapists' behaviour.

Yet, despite girls *vocally* being some of the harshest critics of other girls who wore clothes locally constructed as 'sexy', I noticed hints of subtle resistance amongst the female school-going participants, individualizing and feminizing their uniforms by rolling up their skirts and wearing discreet bracelets. Moreover, after the second primary school focus group, the girls took a keen interest in mine and Winnie's clothes, expressing a desire to have nice fitting jeans so they could *bounce*[99] with confidence like their peers. A tension was therefore evident between the girls' desire to follow fashions and a fear that overtly expressing their sexuality may result in them being perceived to be shamelessly provoking male attention.

Furthermore, as noted in Chapter Five, girls were competing for boyfriends to provide for their needs. They therefore faced a fine balance between endeavouring to attract a boyfriend and fearing that they may attract, and be blamed for attracting, a sexual predator. Nonetheless, it is important to note that within Kijiji blame and victimhood were not mutually exclusive. Discussions around prevention focused on events *leading up to* a potential sexual assault, with girls understood to provoke perpetrators' sexual feelings through their dress. Yet, at the point of physically forced sex, power was understood to be exercised disproportionately by the perpetrator, leaving children with vastly thinned agency and little opportunity for resistance. To coin Policastro and Payne's (2013) phrase in relation to domestic violence, a girl's failure to downplay her sexuality risked her being constructed as a *blameworthy victim*, afforded support but concurrently stigmatized.

7.4 Providing for Children's Basic Needs

The final preventative strategy I will consider is providing for children's basic needs. As highlighted in Chapter Five, economic vulnerability was depicted by participants of all ages as a dominant factor thinning children's agency, impeding their ability to refuse transactional sexual acts[100]. This fourth strategy was therefore based on the premise that if children's basic needs were met, they would be less likely to engage in transactional forms of CSA, such as subsistence sex and SMD relationships. As captured by Sophia and Joyce, responsibility was primarily assigned to caregivers:

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[99] A walking style that demonstrates self-confidence
[100] Although transactional forms of CSA do not only occur in economically deprived settings, girls in Kijiji were understood to be especially at risk due to the backdrop of economic deprivation.

> …if the parent is able to provide things like food…and also personal effects
> like the sanitary towels…the girl is going to settle at home [reducing her
> risk of being raped] (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

> (Kiswahili)…the parents should ensure that they…try their level best to
> provide those basic needs to their children [to avoid enticement] (Sophia,
> 31-35, unemployed).

Unlike the other three preventative strategies, which focused on risk avoidance, this strategy attempted to address one of the main factors understood to thin a child's sexual agency within the Kijiji setting.

The importance of basic needs provision was most strongly emphasized within the two focus groups comprising of participants who had dropped out of school. Bannister, for instance, noted that failing to provide for a girl's basic needs might encourage her to seek an early marriage where her needs were better met:

> …there is a family that has almost 9 children…who are being taken care of
> by a mother, and that mother earns around 3000 a month. So taking care
> of all the nine is a challenge. So the boys go out to look for money, through
> [searching for scrap metals] while the ladies prefer to get married at a
> younger age so that they can take care of their needs (Bannister, 16-17,
> unemployed).

Presenting a hierarchical view of harm, Bannister argued that girls may choose an abusive relationship to avoid the, perceptively, worse harms associated with unmet subsistence needs. With most of the non-school-going participants reporting that they left school due to a lack of school fees, they consequently had first-hand experience of unmet needs. This likely attuned them to the tough choices facing children whose caregivers could not meet their subsistence needs. In contrast, school-going participants (whose presence at school suggested that their subsistence needs were probably being met) tended to focus on more personally relevant prevention strategies, such as dressing in a non-provocative manner.

7.4.1 Challenges of Basic Needs Provision

Despite stressing the importance of provision, almost all adult residents with children living under their care described meeting day-to-day living expenses as increasingly difficult. This was due to their typically low and unstable incomes, the high costs associated with unregulated utility providers

and rising living costs due to nation-wide increases in taxes and VAT. The lack of physical space also eliminated residents' chances of growing their own food:

Here, there's no *shamba* [small farm] for growing food (Moses, 46-50, sub-chief).

The congestion associated with informal settlement living thus placed residents at the mercy of market forces. Moreover, twelve adult participants lamented that a growing local consumer culture had increased the economic burden on guardians, with younger residents re-defining what constituted basic needs:

…[girls] want the higher lifestyle[101]…they want to act like the other children…The same to boys. They will come and tell you, 'mum if you don't want to buy me this, I will find another way to buy it myself'. So you get the teenager going for sex…for money (Lilian, 18-25, tailor).

(Kiswahili)…[children] may be from a humble background and now target the high life (Francis, 61+, retired).

Mirroring my earlier observation that young people used the West as a symbol of 'development', a 'higher lifestyle' tended to include wearing western-style clothes, which residents procured from the local second-hand market. Emphasizing the socio-economic disparity between Kijiji's residents, younger male and female residents were therefore understood to use more affluent community members' consumption patterns as the benchmark to which to aspire, allowing them to construct desirable identities that helped them fit in with their peers.

However, despite bemoaning their children's desire to match their friends' consumption patterns, most adult participants endeavoured to meet these elevated needs, recognizing that there were adults who would happily do so in return for sex:

(Kiswahili)…if they are not given and they see their friends are able to buy what they want – they know they can go to the shop and buy mandazi – the girl is also going to start looking for a man who is going to give them [pocket money] (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

…a certain girl is going to tell you that 'my [adult] boyfriend bought for me this thing…So you find that it is very painful for you …You go and search for [a provider] (Gladys, 18-25, house girl).

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[101] A higher lifestyle may constitute eating chips or mandazi, or having a nice pair of jeans.

As noted in Chapter Five, basic needs were therefore culturally constructed, moving away from the items needed purely for survival. Furthermore, reflecting my earlier observation that adults who engaged children in transactional sex were assigned little culpability for the abuse (section 5.2.4), in discussions about CSA prevention, the perpetrator was again described in neutral terms, as a person who pays for sex. The child's agency was consequently depicted as being thinned by their peers and the local consumer culture. As such, the higher pressure placed on guardians to meet their children's needs was understood to derive from the local consumer culture rather than fellow residents' willingness to exploit children's relative deprivation by offering small exchanges in return for sex.

7.4.2 Alternative Strategies for Provision of Basic Needs

Against this backdrop, adult participants reported turning to local, informal social networks to compensate for limited State support. Sophia, for example, highlighted the potential assistance offered by friends and neighbours:

> (Kiswahili)…if as a parent you can't afford your [child's day-to-day personal effects], you can talk to someone who can help you so that your child cannot indulge in that behaviour [transactional sex] (Sophia, 31-35, unemployed).

After living in the village for over 20 years, Sophia had well-developed social networks and a strong reserve of social capital. This may have affected her view about the availability of assistance. More typically, though, adult residents stressed that informal social security mechanisms (section 3.4.5) would assist with unexpected economic shocks, like sudden medical bills. Yet, caregivers remained solely responsible for more chronic economic issues, such as unpaid school fees or the day-to-day personal effects mentioned by Sophia. As Pauline explained, when discussing rising living costs after the interview:

> …most of us struggle to make ends meet; we can't help everyone with a problem as we are struggling ourselves (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

This mirrored findings of a study exploring social support in Nairobi's informal settlements, which noted that community members would offer help in times of crisis but were less likely to offer support with day-to-day economic struggles (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Ezeh, 2005). Community-based mechanisms for supporting caregivers to meet their children's basic needs were therefore evident, but residents lacked the economic flexibility to help every neighbour or friend who was struggling.

If external support was unavailable, caregivers reported adjusting their living standards, buying cheaper food products, eating fewer meals or reducing non-essential food, such as milk for tea. Esther (36-40, small business owner), for example, explained that she had cut down on cooking fat whilst Josephine was now omitting milk from her family's tea:

> (Kiswahili)…I will try and provide the basics, even though…I make black tea …at least [my children] have something to take (Josephine, 46-50, chapatti stall owner).

Nonetheless, reflecting strong patriarchal structures at a household level, it was notable that money-saving sacrifices were only discussed by women. Indeed, one female teacher I talked to at the primary school expressed horror at the prospect of suggesting her husband missed a meal or took tea without milk, commenting that he could beat her for her impertinence. Although domestic violence was not widely discussed within my research, I had observed it to be a pertinent issue in informal settlements during my earlier work with *Rescue Dada*. This mirrored other studies exploring domestic violence in Kenya's informal settlements (Kenya National Bureau Of Statistics & ICF-Macro, 2010; Oduro, Swartz, & Arnot, 2012; Swart, 2013). Consequently, despite a popular discourse around men as providers, with the male breadwinner role highly valued, the effects of inadequate provision appeared more likely to affect women. This supports the World Bank's (2008) observation that at times of economic shocks or food insecurity, mothers sacrifice their own meals.

It was notable, though, that neither the State nor the NGO sector were discussed in relation to strategies for meeting children's basic needs. In fact, other than the two village elders I interviewed (who could mobilize their ties to garner support), adult participants had little expectation of economic help from the State. For instance, residents were aware of assistance schemes, such as the Constituency Development Fund (which offers cash to assist with secondary school fees), yet reported that substantial levels of economic and social capital were needed to make an application, in the form of bribes and a contact in the relevant office. The State's relative absence in terms of social welfare support therefore appeared to have been normalized, with responsibility instead placed on individual households.

More surprising was the lack of attention given to the non-profit sector's role, since NGOs in the community *were* offering relevant support. All the primary school students in my research were enrolled in a school-based feeding programme that ensured they received one nutritious meal a day. The same NGO also offered a secondary protection programme that offered vocational training to caregivers in especially economically-vulnerable households to boost their employability. Similarly, a

number of non-profit agencies provided loans to HIV-affected households to establish micro-enterprises, designed to boost the households' incomes. These schemes therefore supported the fulfilment of children's needs alongside the extra costs associated with managing HIV, discussed earlier. Vocational training and micro-enterprise programmes consequently have the potential to provide a more sustainable solution to children's unmet needs, boosting and stabilizing the most vulnerable households' livelihoods. However, in most cases, food security and livelihoods programming was not promoted as child protection. The lack of an explicit link to child protection may therefore have reduced the relevance of these activities in participants' minds when discussing CSA prevention.

7.5 Conclusion

Given the high perceived threat of CSA in Kijiji, it is unsurprising that CSA prevention appeared to be central to the realities of children. Indeed, preventative strategies affected many of their day-to-day decisions, such as where they walked and how they dressed. However, prevention strategies were highly gendered, emphasizing the responsibility of girls, in particular, to self-protect. In addition to overlooking the protective needs of boys, this served to reinforce colonial and Christian discourses relating to women's respectability that have been recurrently used in colonial and post-colonial Kenya to control women's behaviour. Applied to CSA prevention, these discourses reduce male culpability by casting the female victim as deviant. There is consequently a fine line between recognizing children's agency and placing undue responsibility on girls for their own protection, since failure to self-protect successfully can result in blame being shared by the perpetrator and child. A gendering of CSA prevention was also evident in the disproportionate focus on mothers' protective responsibilities. Yet, by emphasizing mothers' role as protectors, residents excused men's relative inaction in the sphere of CSA prevention. Furthermore, in a context where it appeared especially challenging to meet protective responsibilities, mothers from the most economically-vulnerable households were at greater risk of being blamed if their child was sexually abused.

The role of the community in CSA prevention was understood to have diminished, with the heterogeneity of informal settlements failing to replace the community bonds deriving from generations of the same families living side-by-side on the same rural land. Nonetheless, female caregivers appeared to replicate some of the community-based mechanisms found in rural areas, such as shared childcare responsibilities. Greater examination is therefore needed of existing, under-appreciated, community-based strategies with a view to strengthening and integrating them into formal primary and secondary protection systems. Moreover, drawing on Pasura et al.'s (2013a) assertion that responsibility for child protection should be taken at all levels of society, from the

State to the family, the State's seemingly underplayed role requires challenging. Until this happens, unreasonable responsibilities will continue to be placed on caregivers and children in a context where the risk of abuse, and the subsequent risk of blame, is high.

Finally, CSA prevention in Kijiji predominantly focused on risk avoidance strategies that failed to adequately challenge the surrounding threats to a child's well-being. This arguably reflected residents' limited faith in the transformative power of the State, NGOs and grass-roots organizations to address the social exclusion and crime blighting informal settlements. In other words, local CSA prevention strategies were underpinned by Kijiji's continuing position on the periphery of the formal municipality. Adult residents or child participants who had left school appeared especially likely to assume a position of reluctant acceptance of the status quo. If CSA prevention is to have any lasting impact, preventative strategies are therefore needed that assert residents' right to living in a setting where CSA is not understood to be part of life.

Chapter Eight

The Pursuit of Justice: Negotiating Multiple Normative Frameworks

8.0 Introduction

Within this chapter, I examine responses to CSA within Kijiji. There was considerable coherence about the perceived purpose of tertiary prevention. Firstly, as I highlighted in Chapter Six, victims of CSA were assumed to experience some degree of harm. Tertiary protection was therefore expected to play a role in minimizing any actual or anticipated harm(s), especially with regards to physical harm. Tertiary prevention was also associated with the pursuit of justice, seeking retribution for the victim and returning order to the community:

> (Kiswahili)…[rapists] should be taken to prison…that serves as a good
> example to others so that they cannot think of engaging in such behaviour
> (David, 18-25, causal labourer).

Tertiary responses that punished the offender were therefore understood to co-currently act as preventative actions, weakening the perpetrator's ability to overcome internal inhibitions. Since I considered harm minimization in Chapter Six, this chapter focuses on residents' attempts to achieve justice.

When considering the pursuit of justice, Kijiji's positon as a semi-autonomous social field is important, with two normative frameworks existing side-by-side: community-based justice and statutory law. In contrast to the majority of other studies exploring CSA in Kenyan settings, which focus predominantly on statutory mechanisms (Ajema, Mukoma, Kilonzo, Bwire, & Otwombe, 2011; Kilonzo et al., 2008), my research examines both systems. The systems appeared, at times, to complement one another; for example, although the village elders used a team of youth to informally apprehend suspects, in cases where the victim's family wished to pursue statutory justice, the elders then handed the suspect over to the police. However, more frequently, community-based justice mechanisms generated and enforced norms in opposition to statutory law. Thus, whilst the Sexual Offences Act dictates that rape of a child warrants incarceration, community-based justice mechanisms allowed for the perpetrator to remain in the community after paying a cash settlement to the victim's family.

Within this chapter, I will explore the impact of legal pluralism on the pursuit of justice, focusing on two key questions:

- What factors influenced which justice mechanisms were used following a case of CSA?
- To what extent did the co-existence of statutory and community-based justice systems advantage or disadvantage victims of CSA?

I start by highlighting the complexity that legal pluralism added to the decision-making process following an act of CSA. Specifically, I argue that it added a degree of choice not just in relation to which acts warrant intervention, but also which type of intervention to pursue. I then explore the three most widely discussed factors influencing decisions about which justice mechanism to pursue: access to justice; likelihood of achieving the desired outcome and the risks of intervening. I conclude that the co-existence of often opposing systems arguably disadvantaged children, potentially placing their interests in competition with the interests of adults tasked with deciding what action to pursue.

8.1 Complicated Choices: The Impact of Legal Pluralism on Decision-Making Following an Act of CSA

Kijiji is a society characterized by legal pluralism in which statutory law co-exists alongside community-based justice mechanisms. As part of the State's 'slum-upgrading programme', the former continues to battle for legitimacy in informal settlements through measures such as the introduction of a local police post and awareness-raising campaigns. However, reflecting the village's position as a semi-autonomous social field, residents nonetheless frequently bypassed the statutory justice system to respond through locally-derived mechanisms. These ranged from informal resident-driven actions, such as lynching, to community forums overseen by the village elders. Thus, despite the existence of the State's centralized child protection system, there was significant inconsistency with regards to how cases of CSA were handled.

Illustrating the diversity of choice that derives from co-existing justice systems, residents reported choosing elements from each system:

> …he raped the girl…the girl cried. So when people heard, people ran out, -
> we *beat* the man (laughs). Badly! (laughs). We took the girl to the police to
> report (Jane, 18-25, factor worker).

Highlighting the sense of power and solidarity that derives from collective action, Jane displayed considerable pride in the villagers' use of physical punishment to express anger at the rapist's actions and restore social order. Yet, this was accompanied by adherence to statutory justice protocols, taking the girl to report her abuse to the police. Based on Jane's comment, legal pluralism was depicted as potentially empowering residents, letting them pick the best course(s) of action.

This depiction shares similarities with Kamau's (2014) observation that Kenya's legal pluralist structures can potentially strengthen women's rights by offering the opportunity for 'forum shopping', where women choose the most beneficial legal system to suit their needs (Kamau, 2014: 8).

However, this argument arguably overstates the choice offered by legal pluralism, since not all justice mechanisms are accessible for all victims (discussed further in section 8.2). Moreover, in a society where children are socialized into a subordinate position in relation to adults, it should not be assumed that they are actively involved in decisions about which justice mechanism(s) to pursue. Indeed, a recurring theme amongst both male and female child participants was their reliance on adult gatekeepers[102] to access justice and harm minimization services. Hellen, for instance, noted that ideally she would report a case of CSA to her parents, although if they were unavailable she would go to the police:

> …your parents might be…upcountry and those people are interfering with you…if you tell [the police] that your parents are not there, they will understand that's why you're reporting (Hellen, 13-14, primary school).

Thus, although a child could, in theory, approach the police directly, it was understood to be unusual and something that required explanation.

Furthermore, although Luke felt cases of CSA should be reported to the police, he noted that if he became a victim, he would require parental support to pursue this action:

> ...if I see there's no support from the parent, then I would withdraw (Luke, 16-17, secondary school).

Reflecting Kijiji's deep-rooted culture of obedience and intergenerational respect, Luke saw no point in going against his parents' wishes; like his peers, he had internalized his reliance on adults to pursue justice. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that within the focus groups, very little consideration was given to the challenges affecting victim's access to justice; it was simply not children's responsibility or choice. Indeed, child participants were notably quiet on the issue of access to justice, with responsibility placed firmly in the hands of their caregivers.

With adults positioned as decision makers, it was therefore important to question whether victims' interests remained central to the decision-making process and the extent to which their wishes were

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[102]Predominantly caregivers, but also teachers and neighbours.

heard and respected. In most cases, child participants appeared to assume their caregivers would act in their best interests, citing them as the best people to turn to in the event of CSA:

> …I could report it to the parents or guardian (Deborah, 16-17, secondary school).

Similarly, when asked who should follow up cases of CSA, Purity simply said:

> (Kiswahili)…parents (Purity, 16-17, unemployed).

This sentiment was especially strong amongst school-going participants, whose caregivers reinforced their effectiveness and commitment on a daily basis by maintaining their children in school. However, three child participants expressed concerns that caregivers may choose justice mechanisms that suited their own interests, rather than their child's, especially in relation to picking informal compensation over statutory justice (elaborated upon in section 8.2.2).

A similar criticism was levelled at village elders, who have the power to address cases of child abuse through either community-based mechanisms or the statutory system. Fred (41-45 years), the village chairman, was adamant that he referred cases of rape to the police 'to achieve justice for the victim'. However, cases were nonetheless cited where Fred and his elders had helped negotiate victim compensation following cases of child rape. When considering why village elders appeared keen to handle cases of CSA, Timothy observed:

> The families must give them payment for hearing the case (Timothy, 41-45, Director of CBO).[103]

In other words, receiving payments for settling community disputes possibly reduced their motivation to refer cases to the statutory courts. Adults in decision-making positions were therefore understood, at times, to be 'forum shopping' to further their personal interests rather than focusing on the interests and rights of the victim.

Against this backdrop, decision-making following an act of CSA was understood to be affected by a number of factors (figure 8.1):

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[103] Said after interview, verbal permission given for use.
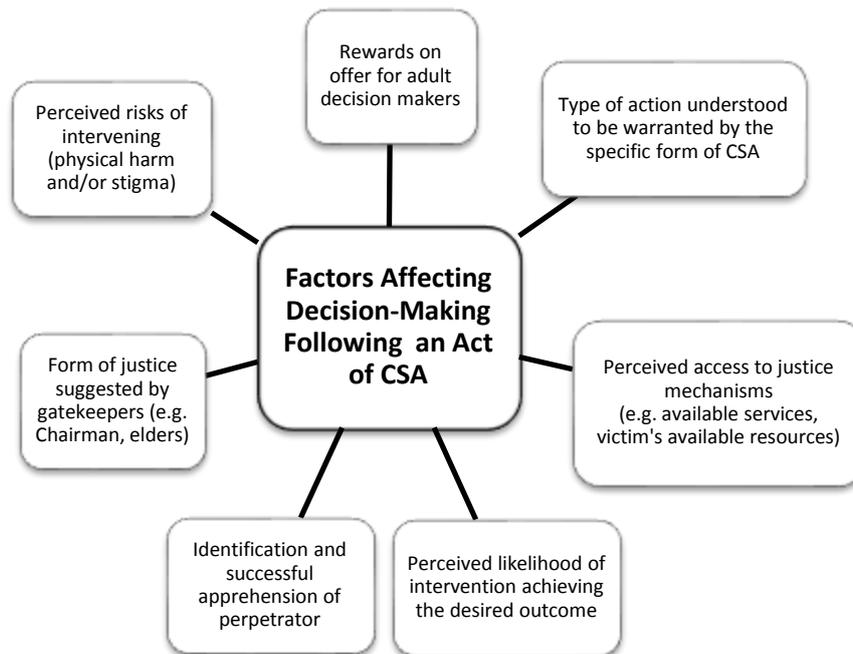
Figure 8.1: Factors Affecting Decision-Making Following an Act of CSA

With this in mind, I consider the three most widely discussed factors influencing responses to CSA within Kijiji: access to justice, likelihood of achieving the desired outcome and the risks of intervening. In addition to considering how each influenced decisions about which mechanism(s) to use, I will specially question the extent to which victims' interests were represented and their voices heard.

8.2 Assessing Access: The Challenges of Accessing Statutory Justice

For non-resident key informants (the majority of whom worked for the state), residents' continued use of community-based justice mechanisms, as opposed to statutory law, generated considerable derision. Carol (31-35, police officer), for instance, referred to community-based interventions as 'their jungle laws'. Residents' use of community-based mechanisms was taken to indicate their ignorance about CSA. However, in cases of rape or incest, where the victims' agency had been thinned through physical force or threats, residents typically depicted the statutory justice system as the ideal recourse:

> (Kiswahili) I'd opt for the government to take action...the police (Wycliffe,
>
> 31-35, carpenter).

> [following rape] you have to take the child to the hospital....the other thing,
>
> you have to report...to the police (Gladys, 18-25, house girl).

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When asked why they would ideally use statutory justice, a common response across participants of all ages and genders was the hope that the perpetrator would be sent to prison. Critically, though, as highlighted by Wycliffe's comment, the statutory system was not seen as the default protection system, but one which residents could opt for. This illustrates a significant failure of the National Child Protection System to garner legitimacy for its centralized mandate.

At this point, I should note that there were local mechanisms for removing perpetrators from Kijiji, with both the Chief and Chairman having the power, and legitimacy, to evict residents from the settlement. Daisy, for example, explained how the villagers had asked the chief and chairman to evict a woman who was using sexual language around children:

> …[residents approached] the chief…the chairman…To remove her so by
> force (Daisy, 18-25, works in hotel).

Similarly, in a case discussed in section 8.3.2, Nicholas (26-30, security guard) noted that the chief evicted a woman from the village after she was caught touching boys' genitals. Nonetheless, this type of response was typically discussed in relation to non-penetrative forms of CSA, such as using sexual language around children or unwanted touching. Although considered abusive, these were acts deemed potentially less threatening than rape or incest, with the latter considered especially serious:

> (Kiswahili)…the worst [form of abuse] is that of family members because
> you're of the same blood (Rebecca, 13-14, primary school).

As highlighted by Rebecca, the severity assigned to incest was not just underpinned by the potential harm it was understood to inflict on the victim, but also by the taboos it violated. Residents' preference for the use of prison in cases of rape or incest therefore reflected the high levels of harm and cultural deviation associated with these types of CSA, warranting not just loss of home but also loss of liberty.

However, although certain forms of CSA were understood to warrant statutory intervention, a recurring theme amongst resident participants was their relative exclusion from statutory justice mechanisms. The severity they assigned to certain acts of CSA, and thus the type of intervention each act was understood to warrant, therefore needed to be balanced alongside residents' likely access. For instance, when considering the Department for Children's Services, James argued that children from informal settlements were denied access to its services:

> …the Children Department is there but…it is in town and other formal set
> ups. Like in informal set ups we don't have [it]…the same place that you
> have serious problem [of CSA]…[yet] the Child Department is not even
> there (James, 16-17, unemployed).

James was aware that the Department for Children's Services had the power to pursue cases against perpetrators of CSA. However, despite living in Kijiji since birth, he had never seen any representatives within the settlement. He consequently concluded that the department only supported victims living in formally-planned areas of the municipality. Thus, State social workers were not considered significant actors in child protection, highlighting the extent to which the National Child Protection System has, thus far, failed to garner legitimacy in informal settlements.

Interestingly, though, the Department for Children's Services *had* recognized the need for more support to the settlements, training local Volunteer Children's Officers (VCOs[104]) to act as front-line protection workers in each village. Nonetheless, their attempts to garner legitimacy appeared unsuccessful, with knowledge of the VCOs' work, and even their existence, extremely weak:

> There's a man there…I don't know he's with - which organization - but I
> heard he's for children's rights…they don't expose that work that they are
> doing (Teresia, 36-40, hairdresser).

Possibly reflecting her long, ten year residence in the village, Teresia was the only resident who had heard of Kijiji's VCO. Yet, even she was unsure whom he worked for, showing poor dissemination about his role. This supports findings from a study exploring the efficacy of Kenya's National Child Protection System (National Council For Children's Services, 2010), which observed that many VCOs struggled to fulfil their roles due to the co-current demands of income generation. The low legitimacy of the Department for Children's Services therefore highlighted the need for child protection actors to have an *active presence* in the settlement in order to be considered a viable and accessible option. Supporting this analysis, locally-based actors, such as the Chairman, Chief and Police, were the most frequently cited sources of support.

However, even where statutory actors had a presence in the settlement, the services on offer were not necessarily understood to be accessible to *all* victims. Instead, possibly reflecting their position as gatekeepers to justice mechanisms, adult participants frequently spoke of victims' economic

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[104] Role includes raising awareness about the Department's mandate, referring cases to the DCO and supporting him or her with case management.

exclusion from statutory services. Indeed, even the police officer I interviewed lamented the relatively substantial costs related to reporting defilement[105]:

> …They'll spend over 100 shillings [on transport to hospital] which is quite hard to get. And even when they go there, it's not yet finished. When they come to the police, we have to fill a P3 form[106] and likewise, [to get to the police doctor] it's far. And us police, we don't provide for their transport. So we tell them you have to…come with your transport and some money to buy some gloves [around Ksh.50]. So they find it's quite costly (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

Highlighting the extent of the State justice system's under-resourcing, the gloves Carol referred to were the rubber gloves required by the police doctor to conduct the physical rape examination. The State's attempts to increase legitimacy of the statutory justice system within the informal settlements was therefore hindered by gross under-funding, which saw basic costs passed to the victim and their family.

Moreover, drawing on his experiences as a community health worker, whose mandate was to refer villagers to State health services, Martin noted that indirect costs related to time also posed a barrier:

> …when you'll be going to police, you go to (hospital), you will not go to work…if you miss [work] once you might even be forced out of that job. So…they don't want to follow up because they will be missing a lot (Martin, 41-45, Community Health Worker).

Alice also referred to the time-consuming nature of justice when explaining why community members may not assist victims:

> (Kiswahili) maybe they…don't even know the child. The child is not theirs. Or seeing that it is going to be a long process (Alice, 26-30, grocer).

The time-consuming nature of statutory bureaucracy was therefore framed as incompatible with the Kijiji context, where job insecurity, high unemployment and reliance on a daily wage were frequent concerns. Hence, although caregivers appeared quick to seek medical care for victims, the time

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[105] Sex with a child.
[106] Police medical examination form

needed to pursue statutory justice was understood to be largely unaffordable for caregivers from households with unstable livelihoods; this was arguably an example of secondary victimization.

8.2.1 Community Forums: Beating the Bureaucracy of Statutory Justice

Against this backdrop, many residents turned to community-based justice mechanisms, such as community forums. These were meetings called by the elders where disputes were discussed:

> …a group of people is called for meeting [by the elders]. It usually includes those who agree that that action took place, those who disagree and those who are for an action to be taken (Dickson, 13-14, primary school).

Not only were community forums less hindered by bureaucracy, but they were *in situ*. As such, when discussing why residents took cases of CSA to the chairman, rather than the chief, Carol said:

> …he is the person nearer the people than the chief (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

The close proximity of the chairman and his team of village elders better suited the lifestyle and socio-economic status of the majority of informal settlement residents. In the case of community-based forums, for instance, justice was administered following meetings between the elders, victims and accused, with cases typically heard and adjudicated on the same day. With the forums occurring locally, there were no associated travel costs. Furthermore, non-attendees could often be found and brought to the meeting. This contrasted starkly with the statutory justice system, where non-attendance of key witnesses was reported to cause multiple postponements, making cases drag on for years. For victims, community-based forums therefore had the advantage of more immediate resolution.

However, the option of handling cases of CSA 'in-village' was also understood to have disadvantages for the victim. Firstly, although community forums allowed victims a chance to state their case, giving children a voice, decision-making lay with the predominantly male committee, arguably the most powerful social group in Kijiji. Thus, if the perpetrator was a member of the committee, justice was understood to be virtually impossible, since he could use his power to spread gossip about the child:

> …no-one reports an elder…you'll feel ashamed…he'll make sure that he has told everybody around (Monica, 13-14, primary school).

Furthermore, as illustrated by Deborah, amongst child participants it was also perceived to be unlikely that elders would pursue cases against their own social circles:

> …you have been sexually abused…in our area, there is somebody who represents that area. You go to that person and maybe that person who has raped [you] is a famous person…there is nothing they'll do because they know each other (Deborah, 16-17, secondary school).

Using the term 'famous' to imply someone in a position of power, Deborah highlighted the problem of asking peers to adjudicate peers, noting that the elite within the village might help to sustain each other's positions. This is not to say that all chairmen would allow their friends to evade justice. However, given the local importance of social capital (in the form of social relations), children perceived this a likely outcome. This perception alone could therefore prevent children from reporting cases of CSA where the perpetrator was known to be close to, or part of, the village elite.

Moreover, whilst statutory law positions all individuals under the age of 18 who engage in sexual relations as victims, community-based forums drew on local understandings of childhood. As such, subjective appraisals of the child's sexual agency were used to assess whether they were willing participants or victims whose agency had been vastly thinned. This was highlighted in a case involving an 8-9 year old girl who had engaged in a *come-we-stay* marriage with her adult boyfriend. Having been part of the village committee who adjudicated the case, Geoffrey explained how the girl's knowledge of contraception caused her to be judged an equal party in the relationship:

> We ask, did you use protection? 'Yes'. I said that this is not a child, when she's saying that she's in standard three and knows that she must use that thing (Geoffrey, 26-30, village committee advisor).

Rather than being viewed as a victim of early marriage (or defilement, as per statutory law), the girl's knowledge and ability to negotiate contraceptive use was employed to frame her as a knowledgeable participant who had disobeyed her parents' wishes. Although her voice was arguably heard, it was used to condemn her, and she was subsequently beaten alongside her boyfriend as an offering of retribution to her parents. The choices offered by the legal pluralist structure, underpinned by differing understandings of childhood and children's sexual development, therefore placed victims in a precarious position where they risked being viewed as knowledgeable participants, despite being under the age of majority.

8.2.2 Compensation: A Local Solution to Unaffordable Statutory Justice?

With statutory justice understood to be beyond the means of more economically vulnerable families, some caregivers were reported to use the community-based practice of compensation as a means of achieving retribution in rape cases. Compensation has long roots within living and codified customary law in Kenya (Kariuki, 2015), tied to traditions of restorative justice. Drawing on a discourse of childhood in which the child belongs to one's parents, the practice of compensation constructs abuse as a crime against the child's family. Compensation therefore passes from the family of the perpetrator to the family of the victim.

Reflecting the high cultural value assigned to girls' sexuality within Kijiji, compensation was discussed predominantly in relation to female victims and was understood to be a popular course of action following two penetrative forms of CSA[107]: rape or luring. Traditionally, victim compensation was associated with the exchange of symbolically-valuable commodities, such as cows or camels, with the type of commodity as important as the value (Deche, 2013). However, given the cash-based economy and chronic overcrowding of informal settlements (preventing residents keeping livestock), compensation had evolved into a purely cash-based practice within Kijiji, with child rape resulting in payments of between Ksh10,000 and Ksh20,000 ($111-222) to the victim's family:

> …So when [the perpetrator] gives a parent something…ten thousand, or twenty [Ksh]…that case will be over (Isaac, 36-40, businessman).

> …somebody tells you that if you don't take it to the police I will give you even ten thousand (Timothy, 41-45, Director of CBO).

With police involvement associated with the need for large bribes and the possibility of a prison sentence (discussed in section 8.3.2), caregivers used the duality of the justice system to bargain. This was arguably an example of Kamau's earlier notion of 'forum shopping'.

Amongst adult participants (who would bear the brunt of any financial outlay should their child be abused), compensation was perceived to have several advantages over the pursuit of statutory justice. Firstly, in contrast to the economic barriers associated with accessing statutory justice, it required little financial outlay on the part of the victim[108]. Moreover, it was understood to increase victims' access to harm minimization services, such as medical care, from which they might otherwise have been excluded:

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[107] The importance of penetration may have reflected the aforementioned assumption that penetrative forms of CSA curtail children's opportunities to accrue cultural and social capital that are valuable for both the victim and their family.

[108] A fee is typically payable to elders who facilitate negotiations.

> (Kiswahili)…the only way one could get help is through a mutual agreement
> between the victim's mother and the perpetrator's mother. So maybe the
> one who raped the girl is asked to pay for the medication of the victim
> (Nicholas, 26-30, security guard).

Compensation was therefore framed as a justice mechanism that served the interests of the victim, the victim's family and the community. Whilst the statutory system was understood to squeeze the victim's household income, both directly and indirectly, compensation was depicted as ensuring that the child and their family were not further penalized by the abuse.

However, once paid, perpetrators could stay in the village. The threat to the victim was therefore not removed, since they were forced to remain living in close proximity to their rapist. Immediate harm reduction, in terms of medical care, consequently came at a substantive price to the victim's longer-term emotional and, possibly, physical well-being. Moreover, Pauline observed that despite ostensibly being punished, perpetrators often wielded considerable power in the compensation process:

> …dare say my child has been raped, maybe…by a neighbour…you know the
> neighbour knows very well that I lack food…Maybe the neighbour will
> come with money and tell me, 'no, don't take me there [to the authorities],
> take even this twenty thousand and maybe buy for your children food'
> (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

Drawing on their intimate knowledge of the victim's socio-economic background, Pauline argued that the perpetrator could manipulate the victim's family by making them an offer that he or she knew they would find difficult to refuse. In doing so, the perpetrator could avoid the threat of incarceration posed by the statutory justice system. Far from being the weaker party, in Pauline's construction the perpetrator was depicted as driving the compensation process to his or her interests, choosing the punishment that inflicted least personal hardship. From this perspective, it is the perpetrator who is 'forum shopping', severely diluting the retributive element of compensation.

Furthermore, as highlighted by Joyce, negotiations relating to compensation were depicted as an adult domain, with the victims' caregivers negotiating on their behalf:

> (Kiswahili)… people will just come together and talk about it and maybe the
> person will pay the family [of the victim] (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

With victims' families negotiating and receiving payment, the child was thus excluded from deliberations. This mirrors Armstrong's (2000) observation of responses to rape in Zimbabwe, where a similar system of compensation allows fathers to marry their daughters to their rapists, acquiring both a (reduced) bride price alongside compensation for the rape. Having had their agency vastly thinned during the rape, compensation therefore threatens victims' agency further through *proxy decision-making*.

Professionals who worked in the statutory justice system, such as Carol (police officer), argued that the local system of compensation was potentially harmful for a child, disempowering them and constraining their opportunities to express their feelings:

> …it affects them a great deal…they can't ask their parents what happened. Even if they ask them, the parents will just tell them, 'I didn't want to pursue the case and we got money and I fed you or I bought you this'. So the child has little to complain about…Maybe deep inside it will haunt her (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

The child may certainly derive some material benefit from the compensation, with the money boosting the household income. However, Carol argued that likely feelings of powerlessness overrode these benefits. It should be noted, though, that compensation cases tended to bypass the police, meaning that Carols' views were not necessarily based on first-hand knowledge.

Nonetheless, child participants also tended to discuss the practice of compensation quite negatively: for example, Frederick commented:

> …most of the people when a girl...is being sexually abused, they just want money. And even [after] they have been given the money, they will take that child to a hospital and when that child is getting better…they will bury that issue (Frederick, 16-17, secondary school).

An articulate and seemingly measured young man, Frederick was not immune to the potential benefits of compensation, acknowledging that it may assist caregivers to pay for a victim's medical treatment. Nonetheless, his choice of language emphasized that he felt pursuing compensation was the actions of self-seeking caregivers: people who 'just want money'. Moreover, by stating that the

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[109]The majority advocated reporting cases to the police so that the perpetrator could be punished and removed from the village.

case was 'buried', he evoked an image of cases being hidden rather than closed; as such, compensation did not impose a satisfactory penalty on the perpetrator.

Possibly deriving from their aforementioned sensitivity to the potential harms that could befall a child who is raped, many younger participants displayed a similar bitterness that victims' experiences were being commodified. Monica and Bannister, for example, portrayed caregivers who sought compensation following cases of CSA as abnormal or 'anti' their children:

> …in the village, it's like some parents are abnormal (Monica, 13-14, primary school).

> …some parents are just anti their children. So such cases are not reported and even others…the person who victimizes me, they agree with my parents without even my consent…Maybe I was abused and they agree with my mum that now I'll give you this amount of money then this case is as good as done (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

Thus, even though child participants positioned caregivers as primary decision-makers following an act of CSA, the latter were nonetheless expected to seek and respect their child's wishes, rather than act alone. When considering why compensation was depicted as profiteering, or commodified justice, it is also helpful to return to my earlier observation that compensation in Kijiji was cash-based rather than based on items of monetary *and* symbolic value. In other aspects of Kijiji life, symbolic exchanges had retained resonance, with a female teacher from the local primary school explaining that she would still expect her bride price to be paid in cows. The monetization of CSA compensation therefore arguably projects a de-valued image of the child, in which the money is more important than the victim's honour (Deche, 2013) or the harm they have experienced.

8.3 Assessing the Likelihood of Achieving Justice.

When discussing what justice mechanisms to use, a further consideration was the extent to which the intended goal was likely to be achieved. For example, if pursing compensation, how likely was it that the perpetrator's family would pay? This is an enduring consideration in legal pluralist societies. For instance, in a paper examining legal pluralism in Gusiiland (Kenya) during the colonial period, Shadle (2008) noted that the 'white' courts offered female rape victims the chance to pursue a potentially harsher penalty against their attacker than would be offered by the local justice mechanisms. However, the chance of conviction was much lower. In Kijiji, it was noticeable that faith in the statutory system achieving its goals was especially low. Although, the majority of participants

favoured using the statutory justice system for handling perpetrators of rape or incest, it was apparent that prior direct, or indirect, experiences of different agencies within the system had weakened their faith in its efficacy. Two themes were especially prominent within both the interviews with adult residents and the focus groups: the powerlessness of the police to apprehend perpetrators and the expectation that corruption would impede the effectiveness of statutory justice.

8.3.1 Apprehending Perpetrators: The Need for Self-Policing

Before justice could be sought through either community-based justice mechanisms or the statutory system, the perpetrator required apprehending. However, despite the police having the formal mandate to fulfil this role, they were frequently portrayed as ineffective, too slow to respond effectively or too scared to enter the settlement. When describing the police's weak response to a case of child rape, for example, Samuel recalled:

> (Kiswahili)...[the perpetrator] was caught by a mob and was almost beaten
> to death. So the police came and caught him but the mob were so angry
> with the perpetrator that they grabbed him from the hands of the police –
> seems like the police were weak since they didn't stop the mob - so these
> people beat the perpetrator to death and left him lying there...the police
> were threatened and then they ran away (Samuel, 13-14, primary school).

Having witnessed first-hand the police officers' ineffective action and subsequent decision to flee the scene, Samuel questioned their power. Specifically, he pondered how they could apprehend a suspect but then lose him to the mob. Unfortunately, Samuel's depiction of the police as fearful and ineffective mirrored Carol's (31-35, police officer) admission that, despite being armed, some of her colleagues were scared to enter the research settlement due to the potential violence they feared from residents. As such, the rights of children and suspects, outlined within the legal statues, appeared unenforceable.

The State's failure to sufficiently engage in the settlement had forced the Chairman, Fred, to develop a localized solution to the problem of policing in Kijiji. This comprised an alternative policing force, referred to by Fred as 'his youth', consisting of young men in their late teens and early twenties who were called upon to apprehend suspects:

> ...such cases you don't go alone, you go with your youth and some area
> elders...if it is something big, I have that mandate to mobilize the villagers.
> Then we go together (Fred, 41-45, village chairman).

Since the youth were called on for cases of child rape, Fred's comment demonstrated that he considered these to be 'big', or serious, cases. Unlike the police, the youth were expected to use brute force to apprehend suspected perpetrators; for example, James and Bannister (both 16-17, unemployed), who had occasionally been enlisted to help, noted that their role involved beating the suspected perpetrator so that he could not resist arrest:

> [the youth give]...some small beatings (laughter). Exercise! It is very thorough, but to the society it is just a small exercise the person is given…he'll just live in pain that he'll live to remember (James, 16-17, unemployed).

Whilst James described his role with some joviality, Bannister appeared to derive pride from his temporary deployment, explaining that suspected perpetrators had no chance of fighting back:

> We are many and strong (Bannister, 16-17, unemployed).

The depiction of the 'youth' as a powerful local force contrasted sharply with depictions of the formal police force, whilst Bannister's use of the collective 'we' highlighted a sense of solidarity and collective action. Furthermore, illustrating the informal mechanisms of social control governing the youth, the group's jurisdiction lay solely within the settlement. Thus, when describing the case of a two year old who had been raped the previous night, Fred explained:

> …[the perpetrator] ran away…it is the parents to look for him now (Fred, 41-45, village chairman).

Bound by the parameters of the settlement, Fred could not send his 'youth' to search for the perpetrator; outside the operating zone, this responsibility fell to parents. Belonging to the 'youth' was thus portrayed as a community service, bound by informal operating codes.

With participants of all ages reporting the police to be ineffective, the creation of the 'youth' was arguably a socio-political statement against residents' exclusion from the formal system of policing. In other words, the creation of the 'youth' was an overt gesture of strength that highlighted the community's capacity to mitigate their exclusion. Indeed, in a setting where gun crime levels are reported to be some of the highest in the city, it is unsurprising that Fred wanted the accompaniment of his 'youth' to safeguard his well-being as he undertook his local governance role:

> [Rapists] have knives, *pangas* [machetes]. So you see?…When you are going to his house or where the rape was, it is now your life, your own life.

> Because you never know...what [the rapist] has in hand (Fred, 41-45,
>
> village chairman).

Fred's role was vested with significant power, allowing him to decide how crimes and disputes in the village were handled. However, despite his role appearing to have considerable legitimacy, this was not enough to protect him from a man wielding a machete.

However, from a human rights perspective, the use of 'youth' as a policing device raises considerable concerns. Not only were suspects badly beaten before they had been given a case to answer, but residents under the age of majority were being enlisted to help with the assault of a suspect. Admittedly, according to local discourses of childhood, James and Bannister were both considered adults since they had left school and were living independently. However, when viewed in accordance with statutory law, the State police's failure to attain legitimacy and power within the settlement arguably resulted in children being co-opted into criminal activity, trained to re-create the village's culture of violence.

8.3.2 The Spectre of Corruption

As noted earlier, most participants believed that cases of rape or incest should ideally be reported and processed through the statutory justice system. However, despite dozens of CSA cases being mentioned that legally warranted prison sentences, only six residents knew of cases that had resulted in the perpetrator serving time.

Highlighting how perceptions are formed by actual experiences, residents had grown to expect that rather than being punished, perpetrators would be quickly released back into the community, at best on extended bail, or possibly even without charge. This perception was especially strong amongst longer-term adult residents, who reported seeing multiple perpetrators evade punishment during their years of residence. Indeed, although Francis had lived in Kijiji for over a decade, he commented:

> (Kiswahili) I've never heard of a person who was raped as a victim and they
>
> have gotten their justice (Francis, 61+, retired).

Moreover, when describing a case of child rape that she had witnessed in Kijiji, Susan noted that despite being handed to the police by villagers after being caught in the act, the perpetrator was released the following day, with no explanation:

> (Kiswahili) [the police] are not so effective…sometimes you go and report
> and the following day you get to see the man (Susan, 31-35, primary
> teacher).

It is not clear whether the case Susan referred to had actually been disregarded. However, given the lack of information provided to the victim's family and the community, coupled with the perpetrator's return, residents assumed the case was not being pursed.

When considering why cases were dropped, one explanation dominated the interviews and focus group; this was the belief that perpetrators evaded punishment through payment of bribes. As noted by Hope (2014), Kenya is widely perceived nationally and internationally to have a deep-rooted institutionalized culture of corruption[110]. During the Presidency of Moi, for example, patronage and looting of the state coffers by the ruling class cost the taxpayer an estimated 10 billion dollars (Wrong, 2009 *in* Hope, 2014). Since then, the practice has trickled through the State apparatus, from MPs through to volunteer arms of the State, such as village chairmen. Corruption has thus infiltrated community-based mechanisms.

Against this backdrop, amongst child and adult participants alike there was a strong sense that statutory justice was impeded by corruption:

> Police? But they are being bribed…they just come here and they see the
> tragedy but they can't do anything because they are being bribed with
> money (Boniface, 13-14, primary school).

> …when [elders] get bribed, they keep things cool [quiet] (Isaac, 36-40,
> business owner).

At 14, Boniface had already learnt that the people charged with protecting citizens and upholding the law were willing to turn a blind eye for money. Punishment could therefore be evaded, at a price, known locally as paying *kitu kidogo* (bribe). This observation mirrors findings from a study examining perceptions of child abuse in two informal settlements in Mombasa, Kenya, in which Kostelny et al. (2013) similarly concluded that corruption was a barrier to justice. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that corruption is only a barrier for those who lack the economic and social capital, or do not wish, to pay *kitu kidogo*. With sufficient capital, one can either push a case through the

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[110] Transparency international (2011) found that only 28 countries were perceived to be more corrupt than Kenya.

criminal justice system, or, in the case of perpetrators, mobilize one's social and economic capital to evade retribution.

I should note that the government officials I spoke to denied that bribes changed hands in relation to CSA cases. Nevertheless, later in the interview, possibly once he felt more at ease, Moses, the sub-chief, said:

> Once such a case comes to me, I don't entertain many things. I deal with the case in truth because I fear God but if one gives me money willingly, I will take it (Moses, 46-50, sub-chief).

Despite depicting forced monetary exchanges as a sin, Moses was able to reconcile receiving cash as part of his work by re-constructing the exchanges as 'willingly' offered. However, since the exchange of power vested in governance roles for money was so deeply engrained within the local culture, Moses' depiction of these culturally-expected exchanges as willing becomes contentious. This is not to say that all officials would fail to treat cases of CSA seriously without the accompanying *kitu kidogo*. However, the apparent normalization of exchanges within the State child protection and justice systems transformed perceptions of *kitu kidogo* from a voluntary to a mandatory incentive, whether the individual official expected it or not. This, in turn, appeared to potentially prevent residents from seeking retribution through the statutory justice system if they lacked sufficient economic and/or social capital to mobilize the power vested in local officials. For example, after the second primary school focus group, I explained the role of the District Children's Officer (DCO) to the girls. They immediately expressed resignation that they would never be able to approach her since they lacked the money needed to request her to listen to their case. Although they had never even heard of the DCO prior to our conversation, they transposed their knowledge of how other State officials operate to assume the same rules applied.

Interestingly, although the problems of corruption were predominantly discussed in relation to the statutory justice system, community-based justice mechanisms were also affected. Indeed, in more formalized mechanisms, such as community-based forums, there was a similar expectation that the adjudicating leader would receive *kitu kidogo.* However, as noted in section 8.2.1, community-based justice was understood to be less constrained by bureaucracy, allowing for quick and effective action. Hence, when describing the case of a female sexual offender who continued to touch boys' genitals after being released from prison, Nicholas described how the chief quickly evicted her from the area:

(Kiswahili)…she came back in the village and she continued in the same behaviour...[the community] told the chief about her then the chief sent her away (Nicholas, 26-30, security guard).

Rather than pursuing another lengthy court case, such was the legitimacy of community-based mechanisms that the chief could simply tell the woman to leave. This was a move that admittedly transferred the problem to another community, and another group of children. However, for Nicholas, whose concern was his own community's safety, this was a satisfactory solution. Away from the multi-layered statutory justice system, where multiple opportunities exist for a case to be dropped, residents of all ages appeared to have considerably more faith that closure was possible when pursued through more direct community-based retribution. At this level, *kitu kidogo* was therefore understood to be a *facilitatory payment* rather than a barrier to action.

8.3.3 Lynching: Bypassing the Opportunity for Corruption?

Against this backdrop of apathy, residents also reported turning to a less organized retributive practice: lynching. This involved members of the community grouping together to punish, and possibly kill a suspect through stoning, beating or setting the perpetrator alight[111]:

> …there's one man who was caught [raping a boy] and beaten to death by a mob and thrown into a nearby river (Bernard (36-40, tin smith).

> (Kiswahili)…[following a rape] the person will be beaten up and can even be murdered (Joyce, 18-25, unemployed).

Based on eleven specific accounts of lynching discussed during the research, lynching was used as a response for four sexual crimes: incest, same-sex male rape, violent rape[112] and rape of a pre-pubescent child. In other words, it was used for cases where a victim's agency was understood to be vastly thinned, justifying the severity of the action. For example, when considering why young victims were more likely to trigger lynching, Damaris drew on local understandings of children's sexual development to say:

> (Kiswahili)….You cannot say that a small girl who is 10 years or 12 years or 13 years intended to have sex with that man because she does not have that thought to think. So…most of the time, we cannot be spared...when noticed, we can be stoned to death (Damaris, 18-25, teacher).

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[111] Suspected perpetrators were reportedly placed inside a tyre, doused in petrol and set alight.
[112] Cases using bottles or knives to inflict internal damage.

With the victim's agency understood to be significantly thinned due to their developing sexual knowledge being exploited, the crime was consequently understood to warrant a more drastic response. However, it is worth noting that lynching tended to be confined to cases where the perpetrator was caught in the act, or shortly after. In contrast to more considered forms of community-based justice, such as punishment deriving from elder-led forums, lynching was arguably a more spontaneous form of justice.

Lynching was given such legitimacy in the village that it usurped the statutory laws relating to murder. Knowing that it would be impossible to prove who killed the suspect, residents' collective action shielded them from statutory retribution. It was frequently justified by adult participants as a way of successfully 'ending cases':

> (Kiswahili)…the man raped the daughter [of 6 years]. Well he went home and found that his wife was not in so he just raped [his daughter] until she died. And so when people knew about the case, they also went to his house, found him there [with the body], beat him up until he also died …and now with such a case, it just ends there (Esther, 36-40, grocer).

Again the backdrop of widespread corruption, the immediacy of lynching was understood to ensure closure of the case, removing the threat. Moreover, successful lynchings were understood to prevent recidivism:

> ….if you are known that you have been raping, there are some cases...one man can just rape ten girls in the village, or even...continually. Today, tomorrow, next week, next month. And so if you are caught, you have to be stoned (Lilian, 18-25 tailor).

It is important to note that Lilian was not necessarily saying that those who were lynched were repeat offenders. Instead, she arguably used the *possibility* of recidivism to justify killing the perpetrator. Lynching, in the form of stoning, was therefore framed as a way of preventing further cases of CSA.

Younger participants also appeared to have accepted lynching as a response to cases of violent CSA. When discussing the prevalence of lynching, James said:

> …[it occurs] very often. Like here some are burnt alive, some are shot, you know (James, 16-17, unemployed).

Similarly, Schola and Monica described how they had witnessed the attempted lynching of a man caught raping a two year old child:

> …he was denying that it is not him (Schola, 13-14, primary school).
>
> …even he was crying (laughter) (Monica, 13-14 primary school).

The light-hearted manner in which the girls described this very violent scene highlights the normalization of lynching within Kijiji. Indeed, although their laughter may have been a coping mechanism for discussing a sensitive topic, both Monica and Schola seemed to take genuine satisfaction from the man's distress. However, their reaction perhaps needs to be understood against the backdrop of violence and a strong fear of being sexually abused, factors which may have intensified their scorn for the alleged perpetrator.

Yet, one cannot escape the fact that in cases where the perpetrator was caught close to the scene, they were only suspects. Innocent people may therefore have been killed due to suspicion rather than fact. Moreover, as noted by 13 year old Regina, the extreme action did not only possibly deter potential offenders, but also deterred victims from reporting crimes committed by those known to them:

> (Kiswahili)…I have a friend who was being disturbed by a teacher who had just finished [secondary school] and started teaching…she doesn't want to report [him] because she's fearful that if she reports, the guy is going to get hurt (Regina, 13-14, primary school).

Regina thus highlighted how the unregulated and spontaneous nature of lynching takes away victims' opportunities to make their wishes known or choose the intervention that best represents their interests. Her friend was apparently unhappy with her teacher's sexual harassment. Yet, this did not mean that she wanted the responsibility of knowing she had placed him at risk of being physically hurt.

This again raises concerns about whose interests are actually served by lynching. Critically, as highlighted in Chapter Six, the four forms of CSA for which lynching was typically used carried potentially high levels of stigma for the child. Victims of such crimes were consequently understood to normally wish to keep their experiences quiet. However, lynching makes cases inherently public, taking away a child's opportunity to handle the case discreetly. It therefore undermines victims' right to privacy and choice about what action to take. Moreover, by killing the perpetrator, the

community takes away victims' opportunities for compensation, potentially limiting their access to medical care. Whilst bringing restoration to the community, the victim is left at risk of being further harmed.

Furthermore, although lynching was frequently justified due to the particularly harmful forms of CSA it addressed, it is important to note that it was also used against petty thieves:

> (Kiswahili)…there was [a thief] who was stoned to death like a week ago because of stealing clothes from the hanging lines (Marianne, 36-40, casual work).

In a low income setting, such as Kijiji, theft was understandably taken seriously. However, as an outsider, I initially struggled to understand how raping and killing one's daughter could trigger the same response as stealing clothes. When I explored this further, it appeared that the outrage expressed during lynchings did not only derive from the specific crime *per se*. Highlighting this, the day after a lynching in an adjacent village, I asked a teacher at the primary school why normally law abiding citizens would lynch. His response was that most had been a victim of crime at some point in their lives. Lynching presented a means of expressing their anger, not just at the current crime, but also at their own past victimhood. This mirrors findings from a study examining mob justice in Cameroon, in which one participant told the researcher that his participation was driven by his past experiences of being a victim of armed robbery (Orock, 2014). In a paper examining lynchings in Guatemala, Godoy consequently argued that lynching reflects communities' lack of access to justice and are 'more a reaction to fear and insecurity than they are to crime *per se…*lynchings take place in communities in crisis' (Godoy, 2004: 628). Lynching within Kijiji therefore arguably represented an outlet for residents to express anger at the settlement's insecurity, alongside disassociated feelings of victimhood. Returning to the potentially disempowering effects of legal pluralism, by initiating a lynching, villagers were arguably acting, in part, with their own interests in mind rather than the victim's.

Finally, despite the ostensible purpose of removing the perpetrator from the village, in cases where the perpetrator survived, they sometimes returned to Kijiji. Susan, for instance, described a case of a suspected rapist who, after being rescued by the police, returned the following day. When asked how the community responded to his return, Susan simply said:

> They just ignore it (Susan (31-35, primary teacher).

Admittedly, based on my own experiences of witnessing lynchings, there is little doubt that the perpetrator probably suffered severe injuries, thus experiencing some punishment. In one attempted lynching I witnessed (following an attempted theft), over fifty men, women and children kicked and threw rocks at the perpetrator, with some violently smashing the rocks into his skull. The police successfully used their weapons to disperse the crowd before the man was killed. However, he had lost consciousness, was covered in blood and his skull was visibly cracked. It is impossible to believe that he would not have had lasting effects from the attack, if indeed he survived.

However, despite the alleged perpetrator discussed by Susan probably suffering a similar punishment, I initially found it strange that residents could go from being angry enough to almost kill a suspect one day, to allowing him or her to return home the next. When examining why this occurred, I believe the underpinning emotion of anger is again important. Indeed, in contrast to the negotiated practice of compensation or elder-led forums, or the formalities of the statutory justice system, lynching was an intervention driven by emotions: a spontaneous reaction to finding a child being hurt. From this perspective, the depiction of lynching as a legitimate mode of justice served to excuse violent expressions of anger. Whilst individually confronting a potential perpetrator was understood to be fraught with risk (discussed in section 8.4.1), the solidarity of the mob appeared to give a temporary sense of collective protection and justification. However, once emotions tempered, this collective solidarity and protection were lost.

8.4 Choosing 'Inaction': Balancing the Benefits and Hazards of Intervention

Up to this point, I have suggested that the statutory justice system had not adequately adapted to suit the realities of residents in informal settlements. As such, local, community-derived mechanisms continued to garner considerable legitimacy, often to the disadvantage of the victim. However, in this final section, I consider why, in certain cases, residents took no action at all. Amongst non-resident key informants, residents' apparent 'inaction' was widely constructed as 'not caring' or not comprehending the seriousness of the act:

> …they find somehow it's normal (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

> Like I'd said earlier, they just don't care (Emma, 26-30, hospital social worker).

Evoking a 'them' and 'us' dichotomy, evident in all the non-resident key informant interviews, Emma therefore constructed residents' apparent lack of action as a lack of regard for the child's well-being. This mirrors findings from a study examining perceptions of CSA in urban Tanzania (Kisanga et al.,

2010), where members of the socio-legal profession spoke derogatorily about community members' perceived passivity and non-cooperation. For Carol, ignorance was understood to underpin inaction.

However, within this section, I argue that 'inaction' was not necessarily a sign of passivity or ignorance, but potentially *an active choice to do nothing*. Specifically, that in a context fraught with risks and challenges, the pursuit of justice (through either statutory or community-based justice mechanisms) could potentially further threaten the victim's well-being. For example, as discussed in Chapter Six, fear of stigma was understood to encourage victims to keep their abuse quiet. Non-disclosure was therefore framed as a self-protective strategy, based on the expectation that the effects of stigma would be more harmful than keeping the abuse to oneself. Indeed, in a context where adults acted as gatekeepers to the justice process, non-disclosure represented one of the few points at which victims could control the decision-making process. Within this section, I consider two further contextual features that were understood to affect decisions about whether it was in the child's best interests to pursue justice: criminal insecurity and economic insecurity.

8.4.1 The Risks of Intervening Against a Backdrop of Insecurity

The first factor I consider is the risk of pursuing justice in a context with perceptively high levels of insecurity and violent crime. This factor was predominantly discussed in relation to sexual offences that carried a potentially long prison sentence, such as incest or the rape of a pre-pubescent child. At this point, it is relevant to note that Kenyan prisons are very basic and overcrowded, with prisoners reliant on their families for adequate provision of basic staples, such as underwear and toilet paper. Even when compared to the basic facilities of Kijiji, residents agreed that prison was a place to avoid. Moreover, as noted in Chapter One, the Sexual Offences Act (2006) significantly extended the minimum sentences assigned to sexual offences, with section 8(2) imposing a life sentence on perpetrators who rape a child under twelve years old.

Against this backdrop, a recurring theme within the adult interviews was the risks associated with reporting perpetrators through the statutory justice system: specifically, the danger that the latter may try to silence the victim or harm their family in order to encourage them to drop the case:

> (Kiswahili)…the parent would be silent…because the perpetrator would say
> that they are going to kill the parents or even the child (Sophia, 31-35,
> unemployed).

> …[sexual offences against a child] is a very tough charge nowadays…So
> somebody might think anything else about you for that case to be finished
> that way. You can even be murdered (Peter, 26-30, businessman).

The longer sentencing introduced by the Sexual Offences Act aimed to serve as a deterrent. Yet, Peter's comment implied that in a context where residents did not feel adequately protected, stiffer sentencing was understood to increase the risk to witnesses' safety. This risk was supported by the aforementioned deep-rooted culture of corruption, with perpetrators having the option of using bribes to evade prosecution:

> …if you will let the police know, the person may come and kill you…because they are not afraid of anything. Because they will say 'the lawyers are nothing to me' because…(Kiswahili), the case is concealed in court (Boniface, 13-14, primary school).

Thus, the ability of more affluent, well-connected perpetrators to evade prosecution was perceived to give them a sense of invincibility; if rape could be concealed through impunity, then so could murder. Faith in the State, and indeed the community, to protect victims or witnesses from retribution consequently appeared very low. This supports Mildred and Plummer's observation that 'child protection systems are inadequate in Kenya due to a lack of knowledge and resources and an emphasis on punishing the offenders rather than protecting the victims' (Mildred & Plummer, 2009: 607).

Admittedly, evidence supporting the use of murder as a means of silencing witnesses or achieving revenge was unsubstantial. For instance, whilst Carol, a police officer, agreed that CSA victims and their families were certainly threatened and intimidated, she had not come across threats of murder being followed through:

> …They will not harm her but to make her fear. You know, or send a gang of young boys to threaten her and tell her if you…pursue this case in court we'll kill you. You know, those are the things that will make the parents never pursue the case (Carol, 31-35, police officer).

Cases may have occurred which the police had not been privy to. However, it is worth noting that no actual examples were given where a child or their family had been killed to prevent them testifying, with the threat only being discussed hypothetically. Nonetheless, in a context where both the police and residents reported murder to be a day-to-day concern, the perceived threat was enough to encourage residents to choose to do nothing. Indeed, the perception of risk often matters more than the actual threat (Loseke, 2003).

Fear for one's personal safety also appeared to affect onlookers' willingness to informally intervene in cases of CSA which they witnessed:

> (Kiswahili)…there was this girl who was in primary school…she met this group of boys…I heard a loud scream and on opening the door, I found this boy raping the girl…I was told that around this area it is not easy to help the girl [due to the security risks] so I just closed the door because I was told there is no way that I can help the girl…I saw that there is no action that can be taken (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

Given his background as a security guard, Leonard told this story with a nonchalance that initially surprised me. I am certainly not sure that I could have so readily disclosed that I witnessed a young girl being raped and did not try to intervene. However, it was clear that he had made a calculated assessment based on the context; intervening would have been unsafe and likely ineffective. This is not to say that all residents would ignore a child being abused. Teresia, for example, described how she had confronted a distant relative who was mistreating her children:

> …I have no man there…I do fear somehow but…doing [acting] like I'm courageous but I'm fear[ful], I don't know what he might come out with (Teresia, 36-40, hairdresser).

Teresia's fear for her own safety was evident, especially since she was a single mother without a male 'protector' to come to her aid. Consequently, even though she appeared to be a strong, resourceful woman who believed that intervening was the right move, she was nonetheless aware that her actions placed her at risk of personal harm.

Against this backdrop, it is perhaps unsurprising that some guardians chose to either keep their child's abuse quiet, or turn to community-based interventions, such as negotiating compensation. The latter still penalized the perpetrator, especially if they came from a low-income household. Yet, this one-off financial penalty was nonetheless understood to have a far less detrimental impact on the perpetrator's life than prison, and thus be a less risky course of action. Furthermore, residents also reported using less formalized community-based mechanisms, drawing on safety in numbers, to group together to challenge a suspected perpetrator. When discussing a case of a boy enticed by a sugar mommy, for instance, Josephine explained how a group of neighbours had supported the boy's mother to intervene:

> (Kiswahili)...[the neighbours] went and approached the mother of the boy...they told her, come and let us take you to where your boy usually sleeps (Josephine, 46-50, chapatti stall owner).

The gender of the perpetrator may have encouraged the neighbours to pursue this case alone, with a woman appearing less threatening than a male perpetrator. However, as highlighted by the practice of lynching, collective action, or action sanctioned by the community elders, was generally understood to be less risky than pursuing action through the statutory justice system, where victims were perceived to be individuals wading throughout the system with little support.

8.4.2 The Risk of Intervening in an Economically Deprived Context

A final factor appearing to influence participants' unwillingness to intercede following a case of CSA was the risk of intervening in an economically-deprived context. Writing about western sexual abuse recovery literature, Woodiwiss (2013) notes that focusing on the symptoms of abuse risks overlooking other factors in a person's life that may contribute to negative outcomes. In other words, whilst CSA may impose harm, it is not necessarily the only threat to a person's well-being. Applying this argument to the Kijiji context, it was clear that although CSA was undoubtedly associated with likely harm, it was overwhelmingly understood by all participants to be one of many detriments that may befall a child living in Kijiji, rather than the ultimate violation. The harms associated with CSA were therefore understood relatively, in relation to other harms affecting children, such as homelessness or lack of food. This more relative way of assessing harm consequently affected responses to CSA, with adult gatekeepers balancing the benefits of intervening with the risks of not doing so.

Firstly, in cases of incest where the perpetrator was a substantive contributor to the household income, residents of all ages acknowledged that legal action was unlikely to be taken against the perpetrator. Doing so would not only force the child to live with the shame of their incestuous relationship becoming known, but their family would also be forced to bear the associated financial burden of reporting a family member. Highlighting this, Pauline recalled a case of father-daughter incest that she had witnessed, where the family's strong economic dependency on the perpetrator led the mother to fight for charges to be dropped:

> ...the mother would still want maybe to rescue the father because he's the breadwinner in the family. So she felt if the man is arrested for those years...there will be nobody...to take care for the family (Pauline, 41-45, teacher).

Recognizing the lack of social security mechanisms for families of prisoners, and her inability to meet the household costs alone, the mother was willing to ignore the abuse, assessing the prospects of living without a breadwinner as more harmful than living with a sexual perpetrator.

Furthermore, although generally critical of adults who chose not to intervene in cases of CSA, Irene, the District Children's Officer, was nonetheless sympathetic to the challenges facing mothers of incest victims. She noted that even if a mother felt comfortable becoming the main breadwinner, they may still be expected to cover fines incurred by the perpetrator:

> …because he's depending on me, it means it's me who will have to get that money to pay for the fine…Or even if I'm not the one to pay for the fine, if I go 'fine let him be jailed', again the family will look at me. 'How can [she] allow the brother to be imprisoned'? (Irene, 41-45, District Children's Officer).

In cases of incest, the statutory system's focus on individual punishment thus failed to take into account the retributive effect on the family, who likely bore both the direct and indirect costs of the perpetrator's offending; the family arguably shared his (or less frequently her[113]) punishment. Returning to Aretxaga's (1997) notion of 'choiceless decisions' (in Burnet, 2012), Irene therefore depicted mothers' decision-making ability as especially constrained in cases of incest due to deep-rooted patriarchal structures at a household level that positioned men as the main earners. This is not to say that all mothers refused to report incest. Bernard (36-40, Tin Smith), for instance, recalled a case of a woman who reported her husband to the police after discovering he had sexually abused their daughter, leaving her pregnant. However, the penalties of reporting were understood to affect the whole family, discouraging action.

Reflecting their acute awareness of the fragility that accompanies dependency on one's guardians, a recurrent theme amongst younger participants was the notion that, in the case of incest, reporting could threaten the child's dependent status. Violet, for example, recalled a friend's decision to keep quiet after being raped by her uncle:

> …she was in form 2 [15-16] I think. She was staying with an uncle. So one day she came from school…the aunt was not there…and the uncle raped her. She couldn't report because actually she thought of losing school, where she was going to stay…a lot of support because the uncle was paying school fees. The way she was living, she was a total orphan. So actually she

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[113] One case was cited where a woman had been imprisoned for sexual offences against a child.

thought of that and decided not to report (Violet, 18-25, Child
Development Student).

As an orphan, Violet's friend was especially vulnerable, dependent on the support of relatives other than her parents. More communal discourses of caregiving in Kenya meant that her situation was not unusual. However, the relationship between a child and their extended family guardian was not bound by the same expectations of responsibility intrinsic to the child-parent relationship, relying more heavily on the guardian's good will. As such, reporting her uncle's abuse threatened the girl's basic material needs, from housing to schooling. Disclosure was therefore understood to likely inflict substantive harm. In a context with only limited material support for economically vulnerable children (especially older teenagers), the vulnerability accompanying dependency was understood to not just *encourage* children to agree to abusive acts, but also *dissuade* them from taking action against their perpetrator.

The potential economic penalties of reporting cases of subsistence sex were also frequently discussed:

> (Kiswahili)…[members of the community] don't take any action [if they see a child offered money for sex]…because they don't know whether this child slept without food….it's not that it is good, but the people won't be against it (Leonard, 18-25, security guard).

Subsistence sex was widely understood by participants of all ages to be a form of CSA in which children's agency was substantially thinned. Yet, mindful of the child's much needed material gain, residents were reticent to report cases of subsistence sex since doing so could result in the child going without food or shelter. Having worked with street families in Kenya, I am aware that the latter poses significant threats to a child's well-being; this is due to the high levels of sexual violence experienced by street children, through rape, forced prostitution or the exchange of sex for protection (Smeaton, 2012). Interceding to stop a subsistence sex relationship was therefore understood to risk further worsening the child's plight.

Consequently, western discourses tend to depict CSA as the worst thing that can happen to a child. However, in a setting like Kijiji, where a liberal approach to child protection is arguably failing economically vulnerable families, CSA was understood as one of a number of competing threats challenging a child's well-being. This hierarchical view of harms mirrors findings from a township in South Africa, where the authors noted that amongst residents, child rape was viewed 'as bad, but not always terribly bad' when faced with other social problems, such as losing their house or

extreme poverty (Jewkes et al., 2005: 1817). In such contexts of difficulties, CSA therefore becomes one of an array of factors that may reduce the life chances of sexually abused children, rather than the one pertinent trigger that explains all future harm.

8.5 Conclusion

Despite the growing infiltration of the statutory justice system into informal settlements, it is yet to garner enough legitimacy to usurp locally-derived justice mechanisms. Indeed, whilst Lalor (2004a) suggested that CSA in East Africa is caused by a breakdown in clan authority, through urbanization, my research found that traditional mechanisms had been transported to urban settings and remain infused with considerable power. Reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, residents could therefore pick which justice mechanisms to use. However, despite legal pluralism potentially offering a greater choice to victims about how their case was handled, it was clear that residents of all ages understood the pursuit of justice to lie in the hands of adults. The majority of child participants did not appear to see this as a problem, trusting their caregivers' judgements. However, concerns were nonetheless raised that adults in decision-making positions did not always act in the victim's best interests. The legal pluralist structures therefore allowed adults to potentially balance the victim's needs alongside their own personal interests and opportunities for gain.

Moreover, even when adults endeavoured to act in the best interests of the victim, they were not necessarily able to access the desired justice mechanism(s). Instead, residents explained how they felt excluded from some statutory mechanisms, and did not trust the effectiveness of others within the informal settlement context. Against a backdrop of insecurity and economic vulnerability, residents were also forced to weigh up the benefits and risks of seeking justice. Based on these assessments, statutory justice was frequently depicted as largely incompatible with informal settlement life. Therefore, even though it was predominantly viewed as the most appropriate course of action in cases of rape or incest, residents frequently turned instead to community-based mechanisms. However, whilst the latter was arguably more accessible, cases were cited where it disempowered, and even further harmed, the victim.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

9.0 Introduction

I introduced my research by positioning it alongside a growing body of researchers who argue that western notions of childhood and abuse should not be applied uncritically to non-western settings (Aitken, 2001; Bass, 2010; Kjørholt, 2007; Montgomery, 2009b; Okoli & Cree, 2012; Robson, 2004). Instead, there is a need to explore local understandings of these concepts, adopting a stance that interrogates the impact of social contexts on understandings of childhood and abuse, observes the child *in situ* (Lawrence, 2004), and recognizes that culturally-specific understandings of key concepts need to be developed before relevant protection strategies can be devised. My research subsequently used a case study approach to explore how residents of a Kenyan informal settlement understood (and responded to) the concept of CSA. Within this final chapter, I summarize my findings, before considering their implications for theory, policy, practice, and future research. I conclude by acknowledging the limitations of my research.

9.1 Summary of Findings

I start by outlining key findings in relation to my two main research questions: how was the concept of CSA locally understood, and to what extent did these understandings shape local protective strategies?

9.1.1 Residents' Understandings of CSA

Despite often been treated as having a fixed meaning, the concept of child abuse remains highly contested, differing in and between cultures (Gough, 1996; Korbin, 1981). Reflecting this, participants' understandings of CSA drew on local discourses relating to childhood, children's sexuality and abuse. Thus, whilst statutory definitions[114] frame any sexual act that occurs under the age of 18 years as sexual abuse, definitions of CSA in Kijiji were less fixed, taking into account local understandings of childhood, the dynamics of the sexual relationship and subsequent consequences.

A key finding was the importance assigned to social markers (such as dependency) when defining the boundaries of childhood, and thus who constitutes a victim of CSA. Kenya's Children Act (2001) follows the UNCRC (1989) in defining a child as someone under the age of 18. Yet, reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, statutory definitions of childhood resonated weakly with residents. Instead, mirroring other studies examining markers of childhood in Sub-Saharan African

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[114] Sexual Offences Act (2006).

contexts (Beguy et al., 2011; Kesby et al., 2006; Langevang, 2008; Renne, 2005; Twum-Danso, 2009a), participants drew predominantly on children's dependency and physical maturation to assess their progression towards adulthood.

For children whose caregivers could afford secondary, and perhaps even teritiary, education, a construction of childhood based predominantly on social markers allowed the protection associated with childhood to extend past the age of majority. However, children not afforded this support risked being pushed from childhood, losing their special protective status. Mirroring Wells' (2009) assertion that the UNCRC represents a middle-class childhood, the protective status associated with childhood thus became a privilege enjoyed by children who had duty bearers (caregivers, local elders, teachers) who were willing and/or able to invest in their futures. The legitimacy given to less-fixed definitions of a child consequently added a level of ambiguity over who constitutes a victim of CSA, potenitally affecting victims' access to protective services.

Similarly, when considering what constitutes an act of CSA, little consideration was given for statutory definitions. Instead, participants' understandings of CSA were contextually situated, drawing on dominant local discourses relating to masculinity, femininity and children's agency. For instance, participants' nuanced understandings of structural and relational factors thinning children's agency in relation to sexual consent allowed for a relatively broad conceptualization of CSA that took into account less visible coercive forces, such as intergenerational power inequalities and gender inequality. This brought potentially more overlooked forms of CSA into view, such as forced sex within a romantic relationship.

Residents' acknowledgement of the many different structural and relational factors thinning a victim's agency appeared to strengthen community-level child protection mechanisms. In the case of SMD relationships, for example, an outsider could easily conclude that a child was knowingly exchanging sex for commodities rather than 'basic needs', constructing the relationships as a site of potential empowerment (Wamoyi, et al., 2010a). However, having lived on the periphery of the municipality (and seen the lifestyles enjoyed by more affluent urban dwellers), participants of all ages within my research could clearly empathize with the draw of sugar mommies and daddies. As such, the latter were framed as perpetrators manipulating the child's *relative deprivation* and the child was constructed sympathetically, as a victim whose agency was substantially thinned. Participants' first-hand experiences of the pressures facing residents of informal settlements therefore better attuned them to the more subtle coercions impacting on children growing up in Kijiji. This, in turn, increased the likelihood that they would offer protective assistance, such as alerting the child's caregivers to a budding SMD relationship.

At a conceptual level, residents' acknowledgement of children's albeit thinned agency builds on a growing body of literature stressing the importance of acknowledging children's ability to make challenging decisions in *unchildlike* contexts (Bhana & Epstein, 2007; Montgomery, 2002). Indeed, when considering child trafficking, Cree et al. noted:

> Assuming a lack of agency undermines the choices made by children and young people, and demonstrates the way in which contemporary constructions of childhood and adolescence assume the dependence and incapacities of children, rather than their strengths and capacities (Cree, Clapton, & Smith, 2014: 430).

Thus, whilst no child should have to choose between unwanted sex and unmet needs, many are nonetheless faced with such decisions. Rather than undermining their agency, children's resilience and decision-making capacity should therefore be acknowledged and, if possible, built upon, rather than erased from view. Working with children to understand what factors influence their decision-making, for instance, can facilitate the design of more context-specific protection interventions.

However, residents' recognition of children's agency, and, in particular, their nuanced understandings of the structural factors impeding it, came at a price. With transactional sexual relationships believed to be increasingly more prevalent in African contexts (Lalor, 2004a), the boundary between exploiter and romantic partner has become more difficult to distinguish. In cases of subsistence sex, that clearly fit Jones' and Trotman Jemmott's notion of 'transactional child sexual abuse' (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2013: 191), the person procuring sex was therefore often rendered barely visible, or worse, depicted as a 'helper'. The contextual factor of 'poverty' was thus cast as the perpetrator. Participants' acute awareness of the challenges facing children in informal settlements therefore increased the risk that subsistence sex would be constructed as an act of *structural violence* (Korbin, 1981), rather than an act triggered by an adult's willingness to sexually abuse a vulnerable child. This in turn allowed perpetrators to escape justice.

My research also highlighted the importance of developing context-specific understandings of how CSA affects victims. Western CSA discourses have tended to emphasize the psychological harm inflicted by CSA (O'Dell, 2003; Woodiwiss, 2014). However, within a context supported by very weak social security mechanisms and safety nets, social and physical harms (such as HIV or resultant pregnancies) were constructed as significantly greater threats to a victim's long-term well-being. My research also uncovered locally-specific forms of secondary victimization, such as the perceived threat of infertility, that are unlikely to be included in standard CSA awareness training. These

observations consequently highlight the importance of exploring exactly *how* acts of CSA are experienced within a specific social and cultural context, and the benefits of asking beneficiaries for their priorities in terms of harm minimization services.

It is therefore important to engage in participatory programming (through participatory action research); this can allow communities to play a meaningful role in identifying their current challenges and gaps in service delivery, before developing interventions suited to the locality (Onyango & Worthen, 2010). It is important, though, to ensure that a cross-section of community members are consulted so that less visible harms (such as those experienced by male victims of CSA) are not overlooked. Furthermore, Estivill (2003) observed that people who experience high levels of social exclusion may start to accept, rather than challenge, the inequities of their day-to-day lives. Reflecting this, it was notable that the harm inflicted on victims (in part) by their exclusion from basic protective services appeared to have been normalized by the majority of participants; for example, the State's failure to provide emergency medical care to all citizens was depicted as normal rather than a basic rights' violation. Similarly, the State's failure to support young mothers' right to education was overlooked. Rather than challenging victims' exclusion from education or emergency medical care, the resultant harm was framed as inevitable. There is consequently a need to draw on residents' unique understandings of their context, whilst challenging deep-rooted inequalities that deny children tertiary protection or compound any harm they may experience following an act of CSA.

Finally, despite general thematic trends relating to understandings of force and harm, understandings of CSA were nonetheless highly subjective. Mirroring studies exploring perceptions of CSA in western settings (Ayala et al., 2015; Davies et al., 2007; Esnard & Dumas, 2013; Giglio et al., 2011; Klein et al., 2011), understandings were found to be shaped by a plethora of characteristics, including an individual's personal experiences, gender and age. For example, despite a surprising level of overlap between adults' and child participants' viewpoints, differences were still evident, such as children's greater emphasis on the threat of CSA to their position in childhood. This degree of subjectivity introduced a risk that a child's experience would not necessarily be recognized as CSA by the person who discovered the abuse.

9.1.2 Preventing and Responding to Acts of CSA

My second research question examined the impact of residents' understandings of CSA on child protection. When considering this in relation to CSA prevention, there was little doubt that preventative strategies were especially affected. Brownmiller argued that rape is a 'conscious process of intimidation' in which men control women through fear (Brownmiller, 1975: 15).

Although women were also depicted as potential perpetrators, the basic point of intimidation and fear applies in Kijiji. Indeed, such were the high levels of harm associated with penetrative forms of CSA that preventative strategies were a part of children's everyday existence, from decisions about what to wear to choices about which routes to walk through the village. The threat was especially acute for girls, who feared multiple associated losses: loss of education (following pregnancy), loss of fertility (following rape) and the loss of life (following rape). Drawing on understandings of post-pubescent children as developing sexual actors, children were consequently expected to take a lead role in their own self-protection. Thus, in what is arguably an 'unchildlike' context (Bhana & Epstein, 2007: 123), children could not hide from the threat of CSA, but were expected to face it head on.

The day-to-day realities facing children in Kijiji stand in stark contrast to the special protection ostensibly afforded by the UNCRC (1989), the ACRWC (1990) and the Kenyan Children Act (1990), all of which have declared that children are entitled to a life free from sexual exploitation and abuse. Nonetheless, the capacity of children to protect themselves in 'unchildlike' contexts has been well-documented across Sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting children's considerable capacity for resilience in the face of adversity (Davies, 2008; Evans, 2011). However, within Kijiji, children's capacity for self-protection was not just recognized, but expected. This placed them at significant risk of blame if they are abused. Supporting these findings, a Kenyan study exploring rape myths found that girls would probably be afforded little sympathy if raped when out alone at night (Tavrow et al., 2013). A perceived failure to self-protect thus risks the child being constructed as a 'blameworthy victim' (Policastro & Payne, 2013). A balance is therefore needed between recognizing children's capacity for agency and using it against them.

Moreover, the aforementioned national and international statutes assign responsibility to the State, community and caregivers for safeguarding children's rights. However, within Kijiji, responsibility was disproportionately placed on mothers, a gendering of protection which leaves them open to blame if their child is abused (MacLeod & Saraga, 1988) and reduces the accountability of male caregivers. Compounding this, despite living in a context where CSA was understood to be a very real threat, mothers identified few resources to support them in their protective roles. Reflecting the under-valued role of the community, they instead drew on informal social networks and NGOs to help with supervision and financial support in times of economic need, although it was clear that community resources were stretched. It is therefore unsurprising that prevention strategies within Kijiji tended to focus on risk avoidance, or merely staying safe, rather than risk reduction. The latter requires both significant financial investment to improve infrastructure and social security

mechanisms, alongside a commitment by State actors to reinforce statutory safeguarding measures, such as closing down illegal brewers. There is little sign of either.

Against this backdrop, the relative absence of the State should be challenged. When considering child protection in Zimbabwe, Mushunje (2006) argued that parents can only be expected to successfully fulfil their duty bearer roles with the support of other key duty bearers, such as the State. However, in Kijiji, the State was perceived to take a relatively weak role in CSA prevention, offering little in terms of subsidized childcare, improved infrastructure and social security at times of economic need. Indeed, the only substantive and systematic State mechanism for preventing CSA was the incorporation of CSA awareness into the national school curriculum. However, State schools currently accommodate only a fraction of the children living in the settlement. The most economically-vulnerable families (who cannot afford alternative, non-formal schools) are thus excluded from curriculum-based CSA awareness. Given the current inadequate levels of State investment in the settlement, it consequently seems unlikely that CSA prevention will shift from risk avoidance to risk reduction any time soon.

Responding to CSA

Tertiary protection was understood to fulfil two key purposes: minimizing the harm experienced by the victim and the pursuit of justice. Despite CSA being associated with significant physical, social and emotional harm, harm minimization focused predominantly on medical care. With secondary victimization occurring from responses to the abuse (Williams, 1984), there is a need for more comprehensive case management that also addresses emotional and social harms, such as resultant stigmas or curtailed education. However, at present, State child protection mechanisms tend to be hugely underfunded (National Council For Children's Services, 2010), reducing the likelihood that victims of CSA will be offered holistic case management. Harm minimization services in Kijiji's vicinity also focus predominantly on girls. Since sexual stories which reinforce dominant discourses may be easier to tell (Plummer, 1995; Woodiwiss, 2014), it is therefore potentially harder for male victims to openly frame themselves as victims of CSA in a context where female victimhood is normalized. The tailoring of protective services to the needs of female victims consequently reflects and reinforces the dominant discourse of CSA as a female problem, reducing boys' opportunity to occupy the position of victim.

When considering the pursuit of justice, the impact of local understandings of CSA was evident when exploring which forms of justice were warranted. Drawing on the degree to which a child's agency was understood to be thinned and the likely harm they would suffer, participants ranked acts of CSA

according to their perceived severity. This affected the type of intervention that each act was perceived to warrant, with cases of rape or incest (depicted as the most serious forms of CSA) understood to warrant either loss of liberty or loss of life. Nonetheless, a disjuncture emerged between *ideal* and *actual* interventions. Echoing findings from Kostelny et al.'s (2013) study exploring understandings of child abuse in two informal settlements in Mombasa, residents' access to statutory justice was understood to be severely impeded by anticipated high levels of corruption, weak policing and insurmountable access costs. Against this backdrop, residents frequently turned to community-based justice mechanisms, ranging from community forums chaired by village elders, to more spontaneous forms of justice, such as lynching. Reflecting Kijiji's position as a semi-autonomous social field, residents were therefore able to initiate some statutory mechanisms, but not others. Decisions about which justice mechanism to pursue were consequently not just guided by what was the best course of action, but also by what was an accessible form of action.

Reflecting the prioritization given to older voices in Kenyan society, responsibility for deciding which justice mechanism to use fell predominantly to adults, and, in particular, caregivers. Thus, whilst in western countries, such as the UK, the normalization of increasing levels of State intervention in overseeing parenting is eroding families' autonomy (Waiton, 2016), the family unit retained significant autonomy in Kijiji. The majority of child participants appeared comfortable with this, assuming that their caregivers would act in their best interests, if needed. Nonetheless, concerns were raised that caregivers may manipulate the choices available in order to further their own interests, especially in the pursuit of compensation. This contravenes the key child rights principle of participation, which positions children as agents whose voices warrant recognition (Save the Children, 2004). The opportunity for 'forum shopping' is underpinned by the absence of clear and consistent pathways for handling cases of CSA within the National Child Protection System. In other words, 'forum shopping' indicates the absence of a centralized and accessible child protection system that is recognized as the only legitimate means for addressing cases of CSA.

9.2 Implications for Theory, Research, Policy and Protective Practice

Within this section I consider the implications of my research findings in four key areas: theory, research, policy, and protective practice.

9.2.1 Theory

My research makes two theoretical contributions to the study of CSA within informal settlements in East Africa. Firstly, in addition to exploring what acts were considered CSA within the Kijiji context, I asked what makes a sexual act *abusive*. As noted in Chapter One, studies in East Africa have started to explore community members' perceptions of CSA and child abuse (Abeid et al., 2015; Abeid et al.,

2014; Kisanga et al., 2011). However, to my knowledge, these have not explored exactly why some acts are considered abusive and others not, focusing instead on what types of acts are considered abusive. This is important, not just for understanding how residents conceptualize abuse, but also for identifying why certain acts fall outside popular definitions of abuse (e.g. child prostitution or forced sex in romantic relationships). Such information is needed in order to develop effective, localized awareness-raising initiatives. My research also provides a deeper insight into sexual abuse within informal settlements in East Africa. Whilst Kostelny et al. (2013) explored understandings of child abuse in two informal settlements in Mombasa, Kenya, their study covered multiple forms of abuse, from physical abuse and neglect, to sexual abuse. My research therefore offers a much deeper insight into CSA within this type of setting, considering the impact of the context's social, cultural and economic dynamics on understandings of, and responses to, CSA,

The second theoretical contribution is my use of Moore's (1973) concept of semi-autonomous social fields to understand the dynamics of informal settlement life. Razzaz (1992) drew on this concept to explore the relationship between community and State in an informal urban settlement outside Amman, Jordan. However, whilst Razzaz focused predominantly on land rights, I have illustrated how the tension between community-based and statutory normative frameworks permeates every facet of residents' lives, from marriage to access to services, such as education and water. Moore's concept therefore provides a helpful starting point for considering the ways in which patterns of social existence in informal settlements are affected by their ever-developing relationship with the State. The concept may be helpfully applied to look at displaced populations elsewhere in the world, considering the tension between the cultural and normative frameworks of involuntary migrants and their host communities.

From a child protection perspective, I also found the concept especially helpful for examining children's access to justice in legal pluralist societies. Within East Africa, discussions on protection have tended to focus predominantly on statutory systems (Ajema et al., 2011; Kisanga et al., 2010; Mildred & Plummer, 2009; National Council For Children's Services, 2010). However, this overlooks the co-existence of different, often competing, normative frameworks in post-colonial settings, such as Kenya, where traditional, customary-derived frameworks compete for legitimacy with modern, statutory systems. The impact of co-existing legal systems has been helpfully discussed in relation to women's rights (Kamau, 2014). However, discussions relating to CSA protection have been more superficial, often considering the merits and limitations of each system in turn (ACORD, 2010; Hanzi, 2006) or comparing residents' actions with statutory protection frameworks (Wessells et al., 2012). Moreover, even when tensions deriving from co-existing systems are explicitly acknowledged, they

have tended to be interrogated in terms of the legal conflicts between deep-rooted traditions and current discourses relating to human rights (Bowman & Brundige, 2014; PLAN & SRSG, 2012). In contrast, my research has specifically questioned the extent to which the co-existence of legal pluralist structures affects decision-making at a local level. In other words, it considers the impact of Kijiji's semi-autonomy on victim's access to justice.

9.2.2 Research

My research supports the use of focus groups and extended interactions with child partipicants in order to build rapport. Although the ethical issues of conducting research on sex and sexual abuse with children have been widely discussed (Oliveira, 2011; Priebe, Bäckström, & Ainsaar, 2010), I believe children should nonetheless be given opportunities to express their views on a topic so pertinent to their day-to-day lives. Focus groups proved an excellent tool for sensitive topics, enabling children to exercise a level of control over the process by switching between participation and observation. My research also highlighted the value of getting to know child participants before undertaking interviews or focus groups. In terms of safeguarding, it better enabled me to read the children's individual and collective non-verbal cues during the focus groups, knowing when to change topics. Furthermore, it gave them a chance to get to know me and ask questions about the research process once they felt more at ease. Whilst Oliveira (2011) consequently noted that familiarity can facilitate discussions, I found it additionally played a critical role in ensuring children's willing participation and informed consent.

My research also highlights the importance of considering non-verbal cues in cross-language research. I noted very little discussion on the importance of non-verbal cues in articles on cross-language research. Yet, there is a significant delay between asking a question and receiving the interpreter's response. Although I could follow much of what was being said, at times my understanding was nonetheless limited. Since participants often switched quickly from humour to more sensitive issues, or discussed sensitive issues very matter-of-factly, it was therefore important not to get 'left behind' in terms of the message my body language was projecting. Sitting in a triangular formation certainly made this easier, as did using an interpreter whose social work background enabled her to quickly adapt her own body language to participants' narratives. Consequently, whilst the technical aspects of cross-language research certainly justify attention, it is important not to overlook more subtle social facets of interpretation that can help build, or lose, rapport.

9.2.3 Policy and Legislation

Within this section, I consider implications for policy and legislation.

Increase Funding for Local Protection Roles: The State has made an ostensible commitment to extending the National Child Protection System into informal settlements through the Kenyan Slum-Upgrading Programme (UN-Habitat, 2008). However, key local positions (such as Village Chairmen, Volunteer Children's Officers and Community Health Workers) remain unpaid. The use of volunteers is not a problem *per se*. In fact, as noted earlier in the thesis, volunteers can derive considerable pride from their roles, which encourage residents to personally invest in their communities. However, the volunteer posts in Kijiji are overly time-intensive. This, in turn, contributes to either corruption or workers not being able to dedicate enough time to their roles due to income-generation commitments (National Council For Children's Services, 2010). In the informal settlement context, this is especially pertinent, since the proliferation of low paid, unstable work means that a few hours of volunteer work can potentially affect a household's ability to meet their basic needs.

My research has also suggested that even if volunteer officials do not openly solicit bribes, there is still the risk that they may engage in 'forum shopping', with certain justice mechanisms more financially advantageous for those overseeing the process than others. In particular, it appears that handling cases 'in village' is potentially more profitable than referring cases to external statutory or non-profit actors. Victims' interests are therefore at risk of being overshadowed by the competing interests of unpaid officials. The ethics of asking economically-vulnerable, unpaid workers to oversee cases of CSA is subsequently questionable, with significant funding needed for local protection workers if the referral pathways outlined within the National Child Protection System are to have any chance of success within informal settlements.

Greater Subsidization of The Statutory Justice System: At a more general level, under-funding of the National Child Protection System means that costs are frequently passed to victims. Highlighting the failure of current neoliberal policies, residents with low-socio-economic reserves consequently perceive statutory justice to be unaffordable. This contravenes the basic human right of access to justice. In order to prevent what is arguably secondary victimization, there is consequently a need to ensure victims do not bear the financial brunt of their abuse. This could be achieved through initiatives such as subsidized transport, protection workers who can accompany children to court and *totally* free medical care. Better linkages between the State and non-profit sector, which already provides many of these services, would also address this concern.

Promote Young Mothers' Right to Education: Implementation of the 1994 National Re-entry Policy (supporting young mothers' return to education) requires urgent review (Omwancha, 2012). When combined with Kenya's restrictive family planning laws, weak implementation of this policy serves to further victimize girls who have fallen pregnant through penetrative forms of CSA by denying them

their educational rights. It also increases the risk that they will attempt life-threatening illegal abortions. Victims are consequently being asked to choose between their right to life, health and education, rights that should be co-currently promoted. As many of the schools in informal settlements are privately run, there is a need for the State (through the District Education Officers) to ensure that dissemination and monitoring of young mothers' right to education extends to the non-formal education sector.

Subsidized childcare and maintenance grants for young mothers would also ensure that young mothers can attend school alongside meeting the day-to-day needs of their children. Kenyan-based NGOs working with street children (e.g. *Rescue Dada*, Undugu Society of Kenya) are currently using an accelerated learning model to help children catch up on missed school. A similar approach could be offered to young mothers. This would enable them to catch up on any school-time lost prior to and following the birth, ensuring they did not have the extra expense of repeating a school year.

Review CSA Education in Schools: The introduction of CSA awareness into the national curriculum has been a positive development, bringing the issue into public discourse. However, the manner in which it is being taught reinforces a number of potentially damaging discourses. Firstly, the current syllabus teaches children that girls have a responsibility to avoid being raped by suppressing their sexuality. It also depicts rape is a 'natural' response to sexual stimulation. These discourses serve to excuse male offending, inhibit expressions of female sexuality and promote victim blaming. There is consequently an imperative need to re-frame CSA as a crime for which children should not be blamed. I would also suggest that greater focus is needed on educating children about the different avenues for reporting cases of abuse and their rights as a victim within the judicial systems. Finally, the current syllabus heavily emphasizes the harm a victim will experience. Whilst it is important to acknowledge possible harm, I would suggest a concurrent message of hope, that with appropriate support, a victim's life does not have to be 'ruined'.

9.2.4 Protective Practice

Within this section, I consider implications for practice, focusing predominantly on changes that are possible in the current social and economic climate. With this in mind, I have focused less on the role of vastly over-stretched State actors, such as the District Children's Officer, and more on the roles of local, *in situ* actors, such as teachers, church leaders and local CBOs.

Flexible Awareness-Raising Programmes: When considering SGBV programing in South Sudan, Rivelli (2015) highlighted the need for SGBV trainings to be culturally-sensitive and less didactic in order to garner communities' trust and engagement. My own research supports these recommendations. However, the awareness-raising programmes, which I was privy to during my

fieldwork, used very fixed formats in which participants were taught about statutory terms and definitions. In other words, they assumed that participants would passively absorb the information given, rather than considering any tensions between local and statutory normative frameworks. Since concepts relating to CSA are socially constructed, my research has highlighted the importance of allowing sufficient time at the start of awareness-raising trainings to establish participants' understandings of key concepts, such as who is a child, what is rape and what is abuse. I am not suggesting that local understandings should necessarily be adopted in trainings. However, it is important to take time to explore, and learn from, any disjuncture between statutory and community-level understandings. Where time and resources allow, it would also be helpful to involve members of the community, including children, in developing training modules to suit the context.

Utilization of Existing Community Mechanisms for Awareness-Raising Activities: Despite the aforementioned popularity of the peer-educator model for knowledge dissemination within the non-profit sector, no participants linked their CSA knowledge to peer-educators. Yet at least five participants related their knowledge to posters they had seen in health clinics or television campaigns. This highlights the continued importance of community-wide primary prevention campaigns. However, in a context where not all residents can access television or printed media, careful consideration is needed about how best to reach the whole community. With this in mind, Kijiji has the advantage of a number of central spaces that are frequented by the majority of residents, including water points and communal washrooms. These provide an excellent opportunity for widespread dissemination of educational posters.

Furthermore, supporting Thompson's (1995) assertion that informal mechanisms of support need to be strengthened, it is important to map, and build upon, existing local dissemination mechanisms. Churches, for instance, have developed their own initiatives for educating villagers about social issues, such as CSA, by offering trainings after Sunday services. Critically, since most residents reported taking time out to attend church on Sundays, these are forums where CSA information can be shared with residents of all ages without disrupting households' income generation activities. However, most churches operate on extremely small funds, limiting the workshops they can offer. Given churches' popularity within the village, their potential for disseminating knowledge about CSA could be maximized through stronger partnerships with the State and NGOs, combining resources and establishing common objectives.

Enhanced Coordination Between Protection Actors: Several NGOs offer Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) services across the settlement, including an international NGO which offers free,

round-the-clock specialist support to victims. Similarly, Childline Kenya offers a Freephone service, where children can directly report cases of abuse and receive relevant tertiary referrals and assistance. However, awareness of these services was mainly confined to residents working in the non-profit sector. Weak knowledge about local services could be addressed by simple poster campaigns. Moreover, whilst key informants working for the State were aware of the aforementioned international NGO, they nonetheless reported that victims were typically referred to the nearby State-run hospital, a move that would incur costs for the victim and their family. In line with Mushunje's (2006) observation that collaboration between key duty bearers is a critical element of effective child protection, linkages between the non-profit sector and statutory actors need to be strengthened. A city-wide mapping of SGBV services, which is then shared amongst State and non-profit actors within the National Child Protection System, would provide a helpful starting point.

Better co-ordination between actors in the National Child Protection System at a community-level is also needed. Child-focused NGOs and CBOs in the settlement reported that they used to meet regularly to co-ordinate services and share practice-based learning. In light of the settlement's current disjointed protective services, it would be helpful to revive this mechanism. This would hopefully reduce service overlap and enhance linkages between organizations, ensuring stronger referral pathways. The latter would also broaden the scope of care available to victims of CSA, especially if referrals were offered not just to social work and medical organizations but also to organizations focusing on economic empowerment. Despite limited resources, enhanced co-ordination could allow victims to potentially receive a more holistic package of care.

Prolonged Engagement with Key Local Stakeholders: UNICEF (2008) has argued that an effective child protection system needs to address harmful attitudes, beliefs and practices. However, work on eradicating female circumcision within Kenya has demonstrated the need for prolonged engagement with communities if lasting cultural changes are to be initiated (Moranga, 2014; Ondiek, 2010). As such, I would argue that since village elders are the gatekeepers to both community-based and statutory justice, it is most strategic and resource-efficient to target this key group of stakeholders. I also observed strong patriarchal views amongst the village elders, supporting victim blame. Challenging these deep-rooted values is not easy, requiring sustained engagement. It is therefore important to convey respect for tradition and culture, whilst encouraging elders to consider the extent to which traditional values are best serving children's interests. There is therefore a need for the State and/or NGOs to offer prolonged regular coaching, in addition to more formalized training, where groups of elders can review cases they handled and have an open dialogue about any

challenges or barriers they faced. This recognizes the need for child protection strategies to be underpinned by regular monitoring and evaluation (UNICEF, 2008).

Increased Participation of Women and Children in Community-Based Forums: Positions of power within the village were overwhelmingly occupied by men. A 2013 study by an NGO, The Supply, found that young people in Nairobi's informal settlements are open to civil engagement, but feel their age precludes their voices being heard (Winkler, 2016). Yet, children's position as individuals currently negotiating the risks associated with childhood means they have unique insight into the pertinent threats facing children growing up in Kijiji. Indeed, children are best placed to explain their experiences (James & James, 2004; James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996). Similarly, women's position as primary protectors of children ideally places them to understand the local protective challenges of caregivers in informal settlements. I would therefore suggest that both these groups need a greater, formalized role within community forums, possibly in the form of child and women village representatives. They should also play a key role in the design of new protection interventions.

Longer-Term Case Monitoring for CSA Victims: The importance of holistic case management following an act of CSA has been routinely stressed (Department for Education, 2009; IRC & UNICEF, 2012). However, although some local NGOs follow up on cases of CSA, victims are often only offered immediate medical care. My research has highlighted that certain harms emerge later (e.g. stigma, assumption of infertility, dropping out of school). Longer-term case management therefore appears prudent. Under-funding of the National Child Protection System means this is currently unlikely to be offered by the State, with District Children's Officers already struggling with excessive caseloads. Moreover, NGOs who offer longer-term case management have finite budgets, and thus target cases perceived to be the most serious, such as rape or incest. This overlooks the potentially long-term impact of non-contact forms of CSA (Kelly, 1988). Teachers and school counsellors could therefore be trained to operate as victim focal points within schools, meeting with children who have experienced CSA to check how they are coping and linking them to NGOs who can offer more technical support, if needed.

9.3 Future Research

Throughout my thesis I have identified research gaps that would benefit from further study, including:

> ➢ **Research with victims of CSA**: in order to challenge the notion that children have only very limited capacity for resistance and compare perceptions of harm with actual experiences of CSA within the Kijiji context.

> **Research that focuses on male victims of CSA**: in order to explore male victims' experiences of CSA and provide insight into how SGBV service providers can tailor their interventions to meet the needs of male victims.

My research has also mirrored literature highlighting a strong association between economic vulnerability and CSA (Abeid et al., 2014; Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, & Mhlongo, 2015). At present, a number of local NGOs are offering food security and livelihoods programming as part of broader child protection programmes (offering vocational training, school sponsorship packages or small loans to families experiencing chronic economic vulnerability). However, these predominantly aim to increase households' longer-term earning potential, and thus reduce their chronic economic vulnerability. There are far fewer external resources available for residents experiencing economic shocks, deriving from, say, sudden illness or death. A 2009-2010 project by the World Food Programme, Oxfam and Concern in the informal settlement, Korogocho[115], offered eight months' emergency cash transfers ($20) to predominantly female-headed households (Smith & Mohiddin, 2015). This was found to increase school enrolment and enhance households' economic resilience, allowing them to start or revive a family business. Further research would therefore be helpful to explore whether emergency cash transfers reduce children's risk of transactional forms of CSA following an economic shock at a household level.

9.4 Limitations of the Research

Radley and Chamberlain (2012) highlight that researchers utilizing a case study approach frequently use non-probability sampling, reducing the sample's representativeness. Furthermore, when deciding on the boundaries of their case, researchers subjectively construct a specific event or population as worthy of investigation. With these observations in mind, it is important to question the extent to which my findings can be applied to other villages or informal settlements in Kenya or the wider region. By offering a detailed contextual overview, I have attempted to provide the reader with the tools to make associations from one context to another, or *naturalistic generalizations* (Stake, 1995). However, with the majority of participants coming from either the Luo or Luhya ethnic groups, there is a strong likelihood that some findings will not apply to settings where other ethnic groups dominate. A further limitation is the fact that I did not include children who reported being sexually abused in my sample. In particular, it means that my findings relating to tertiary responses to CSA are based, to a large extent, on second-hand or observed accounts rather than victims' own experiences.

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[115]Situated in East Nairobi.

My positon as an outsider also requires reflection. As I noted in Chapter Four, this position did have advantages, such as encouraging participants to explain their views in greater detail. However, I am acutely aware that I am likely to have missed cultural nuances. My western, social work background also probably affected which occurrences I considered important, and even the questions I asked. By maintaining a reflexive stance throughout, I have tried to mitigate this as much as possible, but it would be naive to suggest that reflexivity solves the problem. Finally, although I went to significant lengths to address the challenges presented by interpretation, the cross-language element of the research is certainly a limitation since information is 're-presented' through the interpreter (Hsin-Chun Tsai et al., 2008).

9.5 Final Thoughts

I started this thesis by arguing that it is problematic to uncritically apply western understandings of childhood and CSA to a non-western setting, such as Kijiji. As I stressed in Chapter One, this is not a call for unbridled cultural relativism. Children, regardless of where they are born, have a right to a life free from sexual abuse and exploitation; culture should not be an excuse for these rights being overlooked (Korbin, 2003). However, before effective and relevant protection strategies can be developed in order to support these rights, it is first essential to understand children's day-to-day realities.

Throughout my findings, I have demonstrated how western-influenced statutory understandings of childhood and abuse do not necessarily resonate at a community level. Instead, residents draw on dominant discourses that derive from their social and cultural context when assessing whether an act constitutes CSA. Specifically, they reinforce discourses that are firmly rooted in the often 'unchildlike' context that Kijiji's children are forced to contend with on a daily basis. However, in face of this adversity, children demonstrate considerable resilience, taking significant responsibility for their own protection. This resilience warrants acknowledgement, and needs to be harnessed within local protection strategies.

Furthermore, informal settlements' position on the periphery of the formal municipality cannot be under-estimated when considering children's access to protection. Not only do residents contend with multiple, and often competing, justice systems, but the settlements' relationship with the State and external actors, such as NGOs, is constantly shifting. As such, I end with Mushunje's observation that child protection 'should be informed by and respond to socio-economic and cultural dictates prevailing at the time' (Mushunje, 2006: 31). In other words, child protection strategies cannot be divorced from a sound understanding of the current social and cultural context in which they are being delivered.

Appendix A: List of Participants

Name	Age (years)	Gender	Family Composition	Ethnicity	Occupation	Length of Time Living in Village
Male Adult Participants						
Peter	26-30	Male	Married with one boy	Luo	Small Business Owner	6-10 years
David	18-25	Male	Single, lives with 2 friends	Kalenjin	Casual Labourer	Less than 1 year
Bernard	36-40	Male	Married with 4 children	Luo	Artisan (Tin Smith)	26-30 years
Wycliffe	31-35	Male	Married but lives alone (Wife and two children living upcountry)	Luhya	Artisan (Carpenter)	6-10 years
Stephen	41-45	Male	Married with 6 children	Luo	Artisan (Carpenter)	11-15 years
Francis	61+	Male	Married but lives alone (Wife and 11 children living upcountry)	Luo	Retired	11-15 years
Nicholas	26-30	Male	Wife and 2 children (Boy 1, Girl 3 months)	Luo	Salaried Employment (Security Guard)	6-10 years
Simon	18-25	Male	Single, no children	Luo	Volunteer with NGO	6-10 years
Leonard	18-25	Male	Lives with uncle and 2 brothers	Kisii	Salaried Employment (Security Guard)	1-5 years
Isaac	36-40	Male	Married with four boys	Luo	Business Owner	21-25 years
Geoffrey	26-30	Male	Married with 1 boy.	Luo	Salaried Employment (Engineer)	5-10 years
Female Adult Participants						
Stella	18-25	Female	Married with 2 boys	Luo	Small Business Owner (Grocer)	1-5 years
Violet	18-25	Female	Single, no children (Lives with uncle)	Luo	Studying Early Childhood Development	1-5 years
Juliana	26-30	Female	Married with 3 girls	Luhya	Unemployed	6-10 years
Alice	26-30	Female	Married with 2 children	Luo	Small Business Owner	11-15 years
Sophia	31-35	Female	Married with 2 boys and 1 girl	Luo	Unemployed	16-20 years
Jane	18-25	Female	Married with stepdaughter (7 years)	Akamba	Salaried Employment (Factory Supervisor)	1-5 years
Gladys	18-25	Female	Lives with uncle and 2 brothers	Luo	Casual Labour (House Girl)	1-5 years
Charity	18-25	Female	Lives with mother and 2 siblings	Luo	Unemployed	6-10 years
Joyce	18-25	Female	Single mother with one boy	Pokomo	Unemployed	6-10 years

Daisy	18-25	Female	Lives with sister, no children	Luo	Salaried Employment (Hotel Employee)	Less than 1 year
Marianne	36-40	Female	Single mother with two girls and a boy. One of the girls has a child (3 months).	Coastal (Mijikenda)	Casual Labour	11-15 years
Agnes	18-25	Female	Married with 2 children	Luo	Undertaking Vocational Training (Tailoring)	1-5 years
Josephine	46-50	Female	Widowed, 4 children, 1 niece and 1 nephew	Luo	Small Business Owner (Chapatti Stall)	16-20 years
Lilian	18-25	Female	Married with 2 girls	Luo	Undertaking Vocational Training (Tailoring)	1-5 years
Esther	36-40	Female	Single mother of 2 boys and 2 girls	Luo	Small Business Owner	11-15 years
Teresia	36-40	Female	Single mother (widow), 3 girls and 1 boy.	Luo	Salaried Employment (Hairdresser)	6-10 years
Resident Key Informants						
Timothy	41-45	Male	Married with 4 girls	Luo	Teacher/Religious leader	21-25 years
Pauline	41-45	Female	Married with 7 children	Luo	Teacher	6-10 years
Damaris	18-25	Female	Married with 2 children (boy 7, girl 5)	Kikuyu	Teacher	1-5 years
Susan	31-35	Female	Married with 4 children	Luo	Teacher	1-5 years
Martin	41-45	Male	Wife, with boys and 1 girl	Luo	Teacher and Community Health Worker	41-45 years
Fred	41.45	Male	Married with 4 children.	Luo	Village Chairman	6-10 years
Non-Resident Key Informants						
Marietta	51-55	Female	Married with children	Luo	Project Director (Child -Focused NGO)	Non-resident
Irene	41-45	Female	Married, 2 teenage boys, one adopted girl	Meru	District Children's Officer	Non-resident
Carol	31-35	Female	Single mother, 1 girl	Embu	Police Officer	Non-resident
Emma	26-30	Female	Single, no children	Luo	Social Worker at State Hospital	Non-resident
Moses	45-50	Male	Married with 3 children	Luo	Assistant Chief	Non-resident
Female Child Residents						
Regina	13-14	Female	Living with both parents, 3 sisters, 3 brothers	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Hellen	13-14	Female	Living with father and step-mother, 7 brothers	Luo	Attending Primary School	1-5 years
Anita	13-14	Female	Living with both parents, 1 brother, 2 sisters.	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Rebecca	13-14	Female	Living with father and sisters	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth

Monica	13-14	Female	Living with Brother	Luo	Attending Primary School	6-10 years
Schola	13-14	Female	Living with mother, sisters, brother	Luo	Attending Primary School	6-10 years
Martha	13-14	Female	Living with mother and Father	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Triza	16-17	Female	Living with sister	Luo	Attending Secondary School	1-5 years
Winifred	16-17	Female	Living with brother	Luo	Attending Secondary School	6-10 years
Deborah	16-17	Female	Living with mother, 2 sisters, I brother	Luhya	Attending Secondary School	6-10 years
Purity	16-17	Female	Living with mother, son (1-2 years)	Luo	Unemployed	6-10 years
Judith	16-17	Female	Living with mother, 1 sister, 6 brothers	Luo	Unemployed	Less than 1 year
Tabitha	13-14	Female	Living with mother, 5 sisters	Luo	Unemployed	Less than 1 year
Male Child Residents						
Boniface	13-14	Male	Living with father	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Daniel	13-14	Male	Living with both parents, 1 brother, 1 sister	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Samuel	13-14	Male	Living with both parents, 3 brothers, 1 sister	Luhya	Attending Primary School	Since birth
William	16-17	Male	Living with father, 2 brothers, one sister	Luo	Unemployed	11-15 years
Bannister	16-17	Male	Living with grandmother, 3 sisters	Luhya	Unemployed	Since birth
Alex	13-14	Male	Living with mother, 2 sisters, one brother (polygamous family)	Luo	Unemployed	1-5 years
James	16-17	Male	Living with mother, 3 brothers, 1 sisters, 3 grandchildren.	Pokok	Unemployed	Since birth
Nelson	13-14	Male	Living with father	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Dickson	13-14	Male	Living with father	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Joseph	13-14	Male	Living with father	Luo	Attending Primary School	Since birth
Frederick	16-17	Male	Living with father	Luo	Attending Secondary School	6-10 years
Austin	16-17	Male	Living with brother	Luo	Attending Secondary School	6-10 years
Luke	16-17	Male	Living with mother, father, 4 sisters	Luhya	Attending Secondary School	1-5 years

Appendix B: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Adult Participants

PART ONE: CHILDHOOD

Background Information

- ➢ Name of participant
- ➢ Age of participant - ask participant to choose from following categories, written on a card: 18-25; 26-30; 31-35; 36-40; 41-45; 46-50; 51-55; 56-60; 61 and over.
- ➢ Gender of participant
- ➢ Upcountry home[116]
- ➢ Family composition
- ➢ Occupation
- ➢ Length of time participant has lived in Kijiji.

Ideas about Childhood:

- ➢ In an ideal world, how should a boy-child spend his day? And a girl-child?
- ➢ How does this compare with the experiences of boys and girls living in Kijiji?
- ➢ What are good character traits in a boy-child? A girl-child?
- ➢ What kind of behaviours would you not accept from a boy-child? A girl-child?

Transition from child to adult:

- ➢ What must happen for a boy to be recognized as a man?
- ➢ What must happen for a girl to be recognized as a woman?

Children's Sexual Knowledge and Sexuality:

- ➢ At what age is it appropriate to start teaching/talking to children about sex? Why this age? *Probe around who is responsible.*
- ➢ How would you describe ordinary, healthy relationships between girls and boys growing up in your village? *Probe around age of first relationships, first sex, acceptable sexual exploration.*

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[116] This, coupled with participant's name, will allow their ethnic community to be known, but is a more sensitive way of obtaining this information as asking outright can be viewed as inappropriate.

Refreshment Break

Light refreshments will be provided.

PART TWO: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND PROTECTION

Before starting this section, the researcher will alert the participant that the following questions are potentially more sensitive, and remind them of their right to skip over any questions they feel uncomfortable answering.

Defining Sexual Abuse

➢ You learn that a child in your village has had a sexual encounter. Your neighbour tells you details of what happened, and you conclude that the encounter was abusive. What could make you reach this conclusion? *Probe around types of encounters, details of partner, age of child, gender of child, relationship between child and partner. Also probe around what terminology (e.g. abuse, harassment etc) is used to describe different behaviours. What makes an act abusive?*

➢ Within Kijiji, what do you think are the most common forms of abusive sexual behaviour committed against children? Is this the same for boys and girls?

➢ What factors increase the risk of a child being abused?

➢ What effects can abusive sexual behaviour have on a girl? Is this the same for boys?

Protection from CSA

➢ How are children within Kijiji protected from abusive sexual behaviour? *Probe around formal and informal mechanisms, and effectiveness of these mechanisms.*

➢ What would you do if you heard a child was being sexually abused? *Probe around whom they would tell, specific actions taken.*

➢ Are cases of sexual abuse normally reported? When might they not be reported?

De-Briefing

The participant will be offered a chance to ask any questions, or discuss in detail any of the answers they gave earlier in the interview. Interviews will not be booked back to back, in order to allow the participants ample time to talk. At the start of the session, all participants will be given a card with the number of a counselling service and two organizations who work in the field of GBV and CSA, and will be reminded of these numbers during de-briefing. The participant will be informed that they have a right to meet with the researcher to look through their transcript, and given the researcher's number should they have further questions.

Appendix C: Children's Consent Form (English Version)

CONSENT FORM
Children/Young People

Please read through the following statements, and tick the box if you agree with the statement.

☐ I have read the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

☐ I confirm that I have not been offered an incentive to take part.

☐ I understand that I will be invited to attend a focus group with other people of my age to talk about the research topic.

☐ I understand that I do not have to take part and can leave the study at any time. It is my choice.

☐ I know that I do not have to say anything in the focus group if I do not wish to do so.

☐ I understand that Helen may use the information I give her in research reports or publications, but will use a pseudonym (false name) rather than my real name.

☐ I understand that I can request an individual interview with Helen if I have information I do not want the group to hear.

☐ I understand that Helen will record the focus groups and individual interviews.

☐ I understand that the information I give will be kept in secure conditions for a period of five years at the University of Huddersfield in the UK.

☐ I understand that if I am 16 years old or under, Helen will need to get written permission from my parent or guardian before I can take part in the research.

If you have ticked all the statements, you now need to decide whether you would like to take part in the project. Please circle YES if you would like to take part, and NO if you do not want to take part:

No   Yes

Signed: (Participant)............................... Please print your name..
Age (years).. Date: ....

Signed (Researcher)............................. Date: ....

For more information, please contact the researcher, Helen Shipman (Research Student at the Centre for Applied Childhood Studies, University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, HD1 3DH, UK), on 0731512267 or via email at helen.r.shipman@gmail.com.

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Child Participants (13-18 years)

Participants will be young people aged 13-18 years who are living in Kijiji. They will be invited to take part in one focus group session, based on the following plan. It is envisaged that the session will take about 1 and a half hours, including a break. Group rules, including rules around confidentiality and respect for others, will have been developed in a short introductory session, and will be displayed during the focus group discussion. Before the group starts, children will be given a card with the contact details of a counselling organization and the number for Childline Kenya.

NB: for all questions, try to get participants thinking about whether the situation is different for boys and girls.

Part One – Childhood and Children's Sexuality

1) How are children in Kijiji expected to behave? *Probe around behaviour and actions – a child's role and status in their family. Probe around their behaviours when they are with peers and behaviours when they are with adults.*
2) How do you know when you have become an adult? *Probe around whether their parents/guardians share this viewpoint. Probe around differences between adults and children.*
3) How would you describe ordinary, healthy relationships between girls and boys growing up in your village? *Probe around age of first relationships, acceptable sexual exploration, how children learn about sex.*

Part Two – Child Sexual Abuse

Start this section of questions by reminding the group of their group rules and their right to either stay silent or leave the group if they do not feel comfortable. Participants will also be alerted that if they have any specific stories they wish to share, they can request an individual meeting with the researcher.

1) In your opinion, what kinds of sexual behaviour (or talk) are abusive to a child or young person? (researcher to write on flip chart paper) Is this different for boys and girls?
2) Rank these behaviours according to how bad you think the behaviour is. *Probe why they have chosen this order and how they think a child may be affected. Probe how the participants would describe each of these acts (e.g. crime, abuse, assault, abuse, harassment, sexual violence). What makes an act abusive?*
3) How common are these behaviours [refer to behaviours listed in question 1-2] in Kijiji? *Probe if any children are at particular risk, whether some places are especially risky.*

Refreshment Break

Participants will be offered soda and snacks.

Part Three – Protection

1) If someone's sexual behaviour made you feel unhappy or unsafe, what could you do?
    In 2 small groups, ask participants to write down the exact steps they would take, then discuss the two ideas as a group. Probe around their exact strategies, informal protection measures, and their understanding of state protection services.
2) Can you think of any situations where a child or young person may not tell anyone if they were being sexually abused? *Probe what types of sexual behaviour, why the child may keep quiet, and whether they would keep quiet if the perpetrator was a partner.*
3) If a child or young person reports that they have been sexually abused, what kinds of reaction could they expect from: peers, parents, family, community?

De-Briefing

Participants will be reminded of the contact details for child-appropriate counselling services. They will be given the chance to ask questions and further discuss anything that arose in the focus group discussion.

Appendix E: Risk Management Plan

ACTIVITY: Field work (interviews, observation, focus groups) for PhD project.				Name: Helen Shipman	
LOCATION: Kijiji (Informal Settlement), Nairobi, Kenya				Date: 3.9.12	Review Date: 1st review
	Details of Risk(s)	People at Risk	Risk Management Measures	Other Comments	
Conducting fieldwork in a low income community setting with above average risk of crime due to the poverty.	Increased risk of theft / mugging compared to outside the settlement Risk of getting lost in research setting, due to no street markings.	Researcher and Interpreter	Carry copies of ID cards, simple cell phones and personal alarms at all times during fieldwork. No branded clothes or jewellery to be worn. Log time and date of fieldwork with contact people (Husband or project co-ordinator of Rescue Dada Centre). Place call to agreed contact person prior to and after leaving the field. Male member of the community (recommended by Rescue Dada Centre social workers) to act as an escort in and out of the settlement. Entering with a resident greatly reduces the risk of becoming a target for crime and getting lost. No fieldwork to be conducted outside daylight hours or in participants' homes where risks cannot be adequately assessed. Interviews and focus groups to be conducted in public sites where confidentiality and privacy can be offered (e.g. [name removed] office, counselling room in Rescue Dada Centre).	Having lived in Nairobi for over 3 years, and frequented many informal settlements for work, the researcher has a solid understanding of security risks in the research setting and ways to successfully mitigate these risks. Escort will only take the researcher to the agreed location, but will not be present for interviews or focus groups. Researcher receives security bulletins from CARE international (husband's work), warning of immediate or developing security concerns (e.g. protests). Risk management plan to be reviewed immediately in the event of an alert affecting the research setting or surrounding access roads.	
Female researcher and interpreter interviewing young men.	Increased risk of sexual comments or harassment.	Researcher and Interpreter	Conduct interviews and focus groups in pairs (with interpreter) in public locations which guarantee privacy but are not isolated. Agree upon a sign or phrase that the researcher or interpreter can use if the encounter is becoming inappropriate and needs to be carefully ended. Immediately cancel fieldwork if participants appear affected by drugs/alcohol, or make sexually offensive comments.	The researcher has previously worked in a drug rehab, and is familiar with signs of common locally-used drugs, such as Bhang. The researcher has experience working with hostile service users and closing down an encounter in as non-confrontational way as possible.	
Risk of emotional distress due to the sensitive nature of the research topic	Personal wellbeing	Participants	During interpreter's training, researcher and interpreter to jointly develop a distress protocol detailing warning signs and action to be taken if a participant appears distressed. Inform participants that they can stop an interview or leave a focus group at any time. If a child requests an individual interview, give them cards to	The researcher received training in communication skills and asking sensitive questions when training to be a social worker – this involved training on body language, question wording and ordering. The researcher has experience discussing sensitive	

			indite if a topic is too intrusive – orange to indicate that they want to skip the question, and red to immediately stop the interview. The researcher will use laddered questions, using her social work background to assess the participant's demeanour to judge what type of question to ask: this can be questions relating to actions, knowledge (more intrusive) or values & beliefs (potentially most intrusive). Both before and after interviews/focus groups, offer all participants contact details of counselling organizations who have both male and female counsellors and experience offering child counselling (see SREP application form).	issues, such as sexual abuse, with service users in her professional social work role and has handled disclosures of sexual abuse.
Risk of escalating any potential abuses that participants may be experiencing.	Personal Wellbeing	Participants	If a participant voices concerns about someone finding out that they have participated in a study on CSA, dummy questions will be agreed at the start of the interview which can be used if someone interrupts the interview. Participants will be given information and contact details for organizations which provide support in the event of GBV and CSA. These organizations (names removed) provide health services alongside GBV so should the contact information be found by a perpetrator, it is not obviously connected to CSA or GBV. No child, aged 16 and under, will be interviewed without a parent/guardian's consent. Whilst children experiencing incest may therefore be prevented from participating, the risk of retaliation could be greater if an abusing guardian finds out about participation without being consulted.	The World Health Organization have highlighted that participation in research relating to GBV can lead to an escalation of violence if the perpetrator is living in the household and becomes aware that a victim has participated in research.
Risk of cases of abuse being disclosed.	Risk of continuing abuse. Risk of recrimination against the child or inadequate protection offered following disclosure.	Participants, children in the community.	At the start of every interview or focus group, inform participants that the relevant government authorities will be informed if they disclose any specific information that suggests a child is at risk of significant harm. If abusive behaviour is reported that contravenes the Kenya Children Act (2001) or the Sexual Offences Act (2006), thus necessitating statutory investigation, researcher will report the case to the District Children's Officer or representative of the Area Advisory Council. Participant will be told this action will be taken; those with knowledge about children at risk will be empowered and supported to disclose information to aforementioned statutory services.	Researcher will display group rules (including a rule on confidentiality) and regularly remind focus group participants not to disclose any specific cases of abuse within the groups using identifying material. Participants will be offered separate interviews if they wish to discuss specific examples
Risk of emotional pressure due to sensitive topic	Personal wellbeing	Researcher and Interpreter	Local social worker with extensive counselling experience and work in the field of CSA has been identified to provide emotional support to researcher and interpreter.	No identifying material will be disclosed to the social worker during this counselling/de-briefing.

Loss/ theft of data	Security of data	Participants	Electronic data to be stored only on password secured computer equipment and storage devises, and university K drive (through remote access). Interviews to be recorded onto the SD disc, not the Dictaphone's inbuilt memory. The SD disc to be carried on the researcher's person in a concealed pocket during transportation following an interview, reducing the risk of the data being stolen in the event of theft. Hard data to be stored in locked cupboards at researcher's home which has extensive security measures. Identifying data (e.g. consent forms) to be stored in a separate cupboard from transcripts (which will be coded with non-identifying details). At the end of the project, transcripts and consent forms to be stored in a locked cabinet on University of Huddersfield premises.	When driving, Dictaphone and storage devices to be stored under the seat with all doors locked – this is likely to be safer than in the boot, since the boot is normally the first place checked by security guards and police during random checks (during which driver and passengers must remain seated), so items in the boot can be easily stolen. Whilst in the UK, I would carry the Dictaphone in a locked case, the highest risk of theft in Kenya is 'snatch and grab' – security companies consequently recommend NOT carrying items of value in a way which advertises their value, such as in a briefcase.
Risk of politically motivated violence around the time of the elections (1st poll scheduled for the 4th March 2013, and run-off vote extremely likely).	Personal safety	Researcher and Interpreter	CARE International (husband's work) provides security advice and support to staff and dependents, including emergency evacuation. Researcher to adhere to security advice released by CARE during the election period. Decisions about when to resume fieldwork will be taken following consideration of CARE's security briefings and consultation with gatekeepers & researcher's supervisors. No fieldwork at least two weeks preceding the election(s) or during political rallies at the research site. These are advertised in advance, but in the event of a rally occurring without warning, the researcher will immediately leave.	In the 2007 election, there was widespread violence across the country, including the research setting. However, the 2010 constitutional referendum passed without event. Researcher will undertake regular risk assessments, shared with her supervisors. Researcher has confirmed residency in Kenya until December 2013, so fieldwork could be postponed for longer than the planned 4 months if needed.
Environmental health risks due to poor infrastructure in research setting.	Personal wellbeing	Researcher and Interpreter	Researcher to ensure that all travel vaccinations are up-to-date (after taking advice from the Centre for Tropical and Travel Medicine (CTTM) (http://www.cttm-kenya.com/), and that both herself and the interpreter have adequate medical cover (interpreter under national health scheme, and researcher under CIGNA International).	The researcher has used CTTM for the past three years, and they regularly provide treatment and advice to expatriates undertaking work with organizations in informal settlements.
Display screen Equipment	Musculosketal problems, visual/ physical fatigue	Researcher	Researcher's work station has been assessed by her physiotherapist and appropriate alterations made, including the purchase of an ergonomic chair.	

Appendix F: Themes and Sub-themes

Theme	Sub-themes
Childhood in Kijiji	Lack of consensus about the boundaries of childhood
	Childhood as a time of investment/accruing capital for the future
	Gendered childhoods
	Childhood as a time of dependency
	Childhood as a generational location
	Control discourse of childhood
CSA as Forced Sex	Blurring consensual and non-consensual sex
	Gender inequalities in sexual relationships
	Poverty as a form of structural violence
	Empowered (masculine) perpetrators
	Intergenerational power inequalities
	Manipulating children's developing sexual knowledge
CSA as Inherently Harmful	Sex as dangerous in childhood
	Harm as gendered
	Harm as an inevitable feature of CSA
	Expectation of harm accumulation
	Harm as systemic (affecting child and those around him or her)
	Harm understood as hierarchical
Children as Sexual Actors	Sexuality as normal part of childhood
	Children as sexual decision-makers
	Balancing agency and respectability
	Gendered sexual development
Protective Responsibilities	Gendered blame
	Child as protector
	Protection as a key responsibility of caregiving
	Perpetrators' motivations
	Reduced community intervention
Competing Justice Systems	Legal pluralism in Kijiji
	Impeded access to statutory systems
	Adults as gatekeepers to protective services
	Ineffective justice mechanisms
	Inaction as a choice
	Tension between informal and formal protective mechanisms
Kijiji as a Dangerous Place for Children	Normalization of CSA in Kijiji
	High perceptions of crime and insecurity
	Exclusion from municipal services
	Kijiji as a highly sexualized environment

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