Beyond the facts

Addressing gender-based violence through comprehensive sexuality education in schools in Ethiopia

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CHAPTER 2. YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ONE SCHOOL IN ADDIS ABABA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence taking place in schools is recognized as one of the major challenges regarding promoting SRHR (Wood, Maforah, and Jewkes, 1998; WHO, 2002). It is a worldwide phenomenon, yet with the HIV/AIDS pandemic it has gained increased attention in sub-Saharan African contexts (Leach, 2003; Leach and Humphreys, 2007). This is because sexual violence plays a crucial role in the spread of HIV/AIDS, increasing the likelihood of infections and spread of the virus through unsafe contact with multiple partners. For women in particular, one reason why the chance of infections is higher (alongside a higher biological susceptibility of women to HIV than men (Glynn et al., 2001)), is because they often have limited agency in deciding about condom use, particularly in the cases involving sexual violence (Mane and Aggleton, 2001; Wood et al., 1998; WHO, 2002). Now, in a time with increasing attention being paid to the effectiveness of sexuality education, its relation to addressing sexual violence can no longer be ignored. Moreover, sexual violence can lead to devastating physical and psychological consequences such as unwanted pregnancies, STIs, fear, low self-esteem, and depression, often resulting in early drop out from schooling (Bott, 2010; Gelaye et al., 2009; Gossaye et al., 2003). Nevertheless, in many schools situated in sub-Saharan African contexts, sexual violence seems to be highly normalised and tolerated (Dunne et al., 2006; Leach, 2003; Leach and Humphreys, 2007; Mirembe and Davies, 2001).

This article discusses research that aimed to gain more insight into sexual violence taking place in schools, by studying a secondary school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Schools constitute places where, ideally, young people learn in a safe environment. On top of that, schools are increasingly regarded as important sites to promote SRHR among adolescents by means of sexuality education. Ironically, the toleration of sexual violence in these supposedly safe sites which are supportive of SRHR promotion can be unsettling in terms of gender identities (Leach, 2003; Mirembe and Davies, 2001), leading to confusion for young people about, for instance, what it means to be a man or a woman (Epstein and Johnson, 1998;

Stromquist and Fischman, 2009). In order to enhance our understanding about the context and manifestations of sexual violence, it is crucial to investigate views of those who experience, witness, and/or perpetuate sexual violence in and around secondary schools, namely young women and young men.

This article looks at how young women and young men define, experience, and interpret sexual violence in schools, and considers their perspectives on how it should be addressed in formal educational settings. It reveals how the views of young men and young women are strikingly different from each other. Generally, young men's views tended to be pragmatic and instrumental, as opposed to young women's highly personal and emotional encounters with sexual violence. The divergence in views held by most young women and young men can lead to large misunderstandings between them, allowing space for continued toleration of sexual violence. The article suggests that sexual violence can be effectively addressed through CSE programmes, but in order to be successful, these programmes should firstly take into account the varying needs and interpretations of sexual violence of young people (in line with Allen, 2005). Secondly, they should be supported by broader school policy and inclusion of community members. Reasoning from a relational approach to gender (Connell, 2002), schools can address sexual violence as sites where current (patriarchal) power relations are questioned and transformed, hostile and misogynistic emotional relations are condemned, and symbolic relations reflect gender equality norms. However, despite such opportunities for a school to challenge and change the current gender order (i.e. the structure of gender relations in a given society at a given time), the perspectives of students illustrate how schools mirror and reproduce the inequalities and patriarchal structures present in Ethiopian society.

2.2 GENDER, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, AND SCHOOLING

2.2.1 DEFINING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Definitions of sexual violence vary widely among researchers, professionals, and organisations. Because of this, it is difficult to estimate the prevalence of the problem. Secondly, due to the sensitivity of the topic, exact incidence numbers are hard to determine. However, for Ethiopia, the WHO estimates that 59% of all women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2005). The WHO defines sexual violence as:

> *any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.* (WHO, 2011, cited in WHO, 2014, p. 2)

What is essential in defining sexual violence is the imbalance of power in gendered relations that is at the core of sexual violence (Leach and Humphreys, 2007). One of the causes of this can be found in the patriarchal history and structures of Ethiopian society and sub-Saharan African societies more broadly, that favour male dominance and male sexual entitlement (Jewkes, Sen, and Garcia-Moreno, 2002). Not surprisingly, most violence is thus directed against girls (Jewkes et al., 2002; WHO, 2002, 2011, 2014). Schools are a very particular site in society where this is expressed, and consequently, young schoolgirls are vulnerable to discrimination and violence (Leach, 2003; Leach and Humphreys, 2007).

What is also important to recognize is that regarding gender, a binary view of women only as victims and men as perpetrators of sexual violence should be avoided. In schools, for instance, other manifestations of sexual violence, such as homophobic or girl-on-girl violence, confirm that sexual violence is not only performed by boys against girls. These other forms of violence in gendered relations cannot be ignored (Leach and Humphreys, 2007).

2.2.2 A RELATIONAL THEORY OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

In illustrating how social institutions reflect a 'gender order' Connell (2002) employs a relational theory and distinguishes between: 1) Power relations; 2) Production relations; 3) Emotional relations; and 4) Symbolic relations, to provide a framework for gender analysis. In short, power relations refer to structures in society that could be patriarchal; they reflect male dominance by means of the overall subordination of women. Production relations refer to the presence (or absence) of a gendered division of labour. The third dimension of emotional relations could refer to sexual and non-sexual emotional attachments to others. Symbolic relations signify meanings and symbols, such as language, that express gender attributes. These types of relations, and the way they are constantly re-negotiated, for instance in a school, constitute a gender regime that is part of a larger gender order in society.

Schools, analysed according to this framework, are firstly sites where power relations are being constructed, acted upon, and played out. Common features of this form are power relations between teachers and students, and within peer group cultures (Mirembe and Davies, 2001; Leach, 2003). Such power relations could, on the one hand, reflect the patriarchal structure of society, socialising young people according to the traditional norms of society about what it means to be a boy or a girl (Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Stromquist and Fischman, 2009). On the other hand, education can also be a means of contesting existing power relations, in this case questioning the power differences based on gender. In fact, this article will show how CSE has the potential to inspire students to act against gender injustices they witness or experience. The article also points to how, at the same time, the implementation of CSE can limit a deep questioning of current gender regimes.

Secondly, schools are sites where work-based and production relations are reinforced or transformed through, for instance, a division of labour between male and female students, or purposely changing traditional divisions of labour. Thirdly, emotional relations are formed in schools, through interaction with peers and teachers, which shapes emotions about oneself, and one's sexuality. Gender violence in this case, reflects hostile relations and notions towards a certain gender category, and can reflect for instance feelings of misogyny or homophobia (Connell, 2002). The CSE programme that runs in a school could be seen as part of the re-negotiation of emotional relations, by paying attention to sexual development and identity, and the promotion of self-determination in decisions about students' own (sexual) choices. Lastly, symbolic relations of society are reflected in schools, in for example dress codes (e.g. rules about the length of the skirt) or language used towards or about young women or young men.

2.2.3 CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND CONTEXTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Young women can suffer from sexual violence from both their teachers and their peers. In authoritarian school cultures characteristic of African societies, teachers cannot be questioned by their pupils, even if their behaviour is abusive (Leach, 2003). In fact, sexual violence can be a punishment for something the student has done wrong (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, and Rose-Junius, 2005). Accounts of sexual violence directed by (mostly male) teachers to their (female) students, have been observed in the form of forced sex (rape), or manipulation for sex through students' marks (e.g. teachers give their students a low mark, and tell them they can 'solve' this problem by sleeping with them) (Omaar and de Waal, 1994; Jewkes and Abrahams, 2002). These examples illustrate power dynamics and a patriarchal societal structure as observed in schools (Connell, 2002).

Secondly, the peer group culture influences the socialisation process of young women and young men. In schools in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Ghana, young women were expected to be obedient to the aggressive behaviour of young men (Leach, 2003). Again, this illustrates the patriarchal notion that young women should be submissive to the more powerful position of their male peers. As a result, many young women experience fear (Bhana, 2012), and have limited agency in making choices concerning sexual intercourse, and with that, protecting themselves from possible STIs and unwanted pregnancies (Wood et al., 1998). This might also apply to gendered roles within transactional sexual relationships (sex in exchange for money or valuables) among youth, but also between young people and teachers (Leclerc-Madlala, 2003; Maganja, Maman, Groues, and Mkwambo, 2007; Nyanzi, Pool, and Kinsman, 2001). Another example of the segregated experiences and expectations of young women and young men is how, in Ethiopia, young men are generally expected to have sexual knowledge and be sexually active, whereas for Ethiopian young women this

would be regarded as shameful, and many women stay silent about their sexual experiences for religious, social and cultural reasons (Kebede, Hilden, and Middelthon, 2014).

2.2.4 ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Schools are often seen as a crucial site to educate and address societal problems such as sexual violence, for instance through CSE or respectful relationships education, but this claim is contentious (Braeken and Cardinal, 2008; Jewkes et al., 2002; Ollis, 2014). Braeken and Cardinal (2008) argue that CSE should include a strong gender perspective, and should promote knowledge, skills, and judgement-free education. This way, young people are given the possibility for critical inquiry, which is crucial for thinking about sexuality, and sexual violence (Bajaj, 2009). However, firstly it can be questioned to what extent the implementation of such programmes is in line with its comprehensive design. Of use here is the framework developed by Miedema, Maxwell, and Aggleton (2011) which provides three categories for conceptualising sexuality education: scientifically informed, rights informed, and moralistically informed approaches. The differences in these approaches are crucial as they bring to light underlying assumptions of the programmes, facilitators, and its intended outcomes, for example: is sexuality education aimed at changing risky behaviours; enabling young people to know and think about their rights; or instilling certain (conservative) moral values? Secondly, from a 'developmentalist' approach, the focus of many programmes is on improving health outcomes (e.g. increased condom use, decrease in STIs or maternal morbidity), which, in turn, is seen as leading to 'modernisation' (Lewis, 2002). As I argue below, this view is expressed by some students as well, and in effect reduces sexuality education to a means for economic development. Such an approach also fails to fully recognize the social structural factors that contribute to sexual violence (Ampofo et al., 2004, Miedema et al., 2011).

Secondly, whether CSE programmes are actually very helpful in acknowledging sexual violence can also be questioned, given the sexually charged environment in schools and society (Leach, 2003). It is not surprising that schools, as institutions that reflect society's regimes, experience cultural and social constraints on the successful implementation of CSE programmes (Iyer and Aggleton, 2013), and these affect how sexual violence is addressed by teachers and students. Therefore, this requires a whole school process, one that pays attention to formal and informal structures in the school, and involves not only students and teachers, but also parents and the community (Meyer, 2008). This means that power relations should not only be addressed and re-negotiated within the classroom or school system, but also at broader support levels as well as the level of formal governance (Connell, 2002).

Lastly, it is crucial to include and respond to the opinions and lived experiences of young people in the design of educational programmes such as CSE or respectful

relationships education (Allen, 2005; Ollis, 2014), including topics on sexual violence. Further, including young men is a less common approach in addressing gender equality and sexual violence, yet it is crucial to include their views and voices in investigating these matters (Barker and Ricardo, 2005; Varga, 2001). Listening to their perspectives, and especially when contrasted to those of young women, is vital for understanding the phenomenon of sexual violence, and informing policy and practice directed to addressing it.

2.3 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

This article concerns sexual violence in a secondary school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Because of the difficulty and sensitivity of the topic, there has been little research on sexual violence in Ethiopia (Gossaye et al., 2003). However, what is known about sexual violence, is that Ethiopia's rate of intimate partner violence is one of the highest among countries included in the WHO Multi Country Study of Violence Against Women (WHO, 2005). Results from community-based studies indicate that 50% to 60% of Ethiopian women experience gender-based violence in their lifetime (Deyessa, Kassaye, Demeke, and Taffa, 1998; Gossaye et al., 2003; Yigzaw, Yibrie, and Kebede, 2004). These indications reflect norms and structures in society, which are reproduced by socialisation and gendered relations in schools, as I show below.

There is also serious concern about the high rates of sexual violence among secondary school students. One dissertation study on sexual violence in secondary schools in the East of Ethiopia, reported that 70% of the young men and 68% of the young women had respectively offended and become a victim of sexual violence (measured along a continuum from intimidation to sexual force) (Bekele, 2012). Regarding sexual force, 38% of the men reported to be an offender, and 25% of the young women to be a victim of forced sexual intercourse (Bekele, 2012). In another Ethiopian study among 1401 female high school students in Addis Ababa and Western Shoa, 74% had reported sexual harassment, with consequences such as physical problems, unwanted pregnancies, social isolation, fear, phobia, hopelessness, and suicide attempt (Mulugeta et al., 1998). It has also been shown that students who have experienced sexual violence are more likely to show symptoms of depression (Gelaye et al., 2009). Yet, in Ethiopian society these matters are rarely brought to justice, due in large part to the shame and taboo attached to talking about rape or sexual harassment, and because of weaknesses in the law enforcement system (Gossaye et al., 2003). This shows how structures in society constrain how or whether sexual violence can be addressed; and it also points to how young women's well-being in particular can be negatively affected by school cultures that reinforce gender norms.

The school that is the focus of this study, is situated in Merkato (Africa's biggest market) area, known to be one of the poorer areas of the capital city. It is a government school with a population of 2,136 students (52% female), from mostly low-income migrant

and merchant families. At the time of fieldwork, the school had run a CSE programme for five months. The programme, on paper (classroom practice might diverge from the original design of the programme), had a CSE framework (Braeken and Cardinal, 2008); it aimed to empower young people to make their own decisions by giving fact-based information about sexuality, and to open up discussion around sensitive and taboo topics. Topics discussed include body change, gender relations, sexual intercourse and decision making. One of the 16 lessons covered information about sexual and gender-based violence. The sessions took place in mixed-sex classes and aimed to promote a positive view on sexuality. Eighty students joined this extra-curricular programme at the time of fieldwork.

2.4 METHODS

The results presented in this article are based on a study involving 29 interviews and four FGDs with teachers, students, and SRH professionals in Addis Ababa. The study aimed to explore how they define, experience, and interpret sexual violence in secondary schools in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and from their perspectives, how sexual violence can be addressed effectively in formal educational settings. Fourteen young women and 11 young men participated, of which five young women and five young men expressed their views in FGDs, and interviews were conducted with nine young women and six young men. All young people (aged 14 – 18) were in grades nine and 10, in the same secondary school in the centre of Addis Ababa. By hearing and contrasting their views, voice was given to these young people, which, I argue, is essential in sexuality research as it gives insight to their experiences that would otherwise not have been revealed (see e.g. Ollis, 2014).

Interviews and FGDs were held in English in a semi-structured, in-depth fashion. Open-ended questions were used, asking, for instance 'how would you define sexual violence?' or 'in your opinion, what are the causes of sexual violence in school?' It was ensured that all participants were involved on a voluntary basis and that they understood they could leave or withdraw at any time, and that all information was confidential.

A quiet classroom was chosen, so that no one could overhear the conversation, since it was important that participants felt free to share and did not fear being overheard by others (Bloor et al., 2001; Brady, 2005). While similar questions were asked in the FGDs and interviews, in the FGDs there was a stronger emphasis on finding consensus about, for example, definitions of sexual violence or its causes. Significantly, interactions between the participants in FGDs shed light on various interpretations of sexual violence; the negotiations between participants revealed important insights into their frameworks of interpretation and proved valuable in building the overall analysis of students' views.

A pre-defined coding scheme was developed in order to analyse how participants define, experience, interpret sexual violence and how it should be addressed as respective constructs. After this initial coding phase, 'open coding' was used to develop more detailed

insights. Construct-specific displays were then developed to organise the data and get a full view of its contents (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For instance, one display compared the responses of young men and young women about their definitions of sexual violence. With regard to gender, data analysis was done against a constructivist framework that does not treat gender as static, but as a constructed notion through interaction. This is reflected by the focus on individuals' experiences and definitions that construct their interpretations of sexual violence. At the same time, however, data analysis contrasted the views of young women and young men, which revealed crucial differences in interpretations between them.

As with any study, there were some limitations. Firstly, the majority of students found it challenging to express their ideas in English, which sometimes led to confusion. Secondly, as a relatively small number of people participated in the research, and as it is based in a specific place, generalisations cannot be made based on this study alone. Nevertheless, the aim of this study was not to generalise or to be representative, but to gain in-depth insights and more understanding about different views of sexual violence in and around school.

2.5 FINDINGS

2.5.1 DEFINING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In line with definitions from WHO (2002), young men and young women defined sexual violence as a sexual act or attempt directed against someone else (mostly young women) without their consent. Young men and young women used words such as 'inferiority' and 'superiority', typically reflecting young women's submissiveness and male dominance, to describe how they would define sexual violence. All young men and young women placed this in a framework of gender norms: gender inequality was at the heart of sexual violence, and their cultural heritage of gender unequal norms and practices was mentioned as part and context of sexual violence. In stating this, they implicitly referred to the current gender order in their society (Connell, 2002). Most students added the need to re-negotiate this order through schooling.

There were striking differences in the ways young women and young men elaborated on their definitions. Four of the 11 young men named examples of sexual violence such as hitting, insulting, unwanted touches and forced sex. The other young men could not think of any examples of sexual violence, and repeatedly said that sexual violence is a 'misunderstanding' and 'bad habit' of their society, seemingly recapitulating what they had learned in class. Young women, however, clearly spoke from their experience and were often highly emotional in talking about sexual violence. They also mentioned insults, unwanted comments, touches and forced sex as manifestations of sexual violence, adding that fear of violence also played a major part in their lives, clearly confirming that fear is an essential part of defining sexual violence. This is in line with earlier research of Leach and Humphreys

(2007) who included fear in their definition of sexual violence, and Bhana (2012) who revealed how fear of violence was a daily struggle affecting a sense of freedom for young women in South Africa. Finally, young women mentioned their 'diminished psychology' (feeling less worthy, and capable, than young men) as another influential aspect of sexual violence, something not mentioned at all by young men. It thus seems that young men's knowledge and definitions of sexual violence are often more abstract, distant, and pragmatic compared to the emotional definitions of young women affected by fear and experience.

Without a doubt, sexual violence was seen as a bad thing by both young women and young men, as they started off the interviews. What is interesting though, is that sexual intercourse itself was also viewed as bad by some young men and young women. One young man even classified sexual intercourse as sexual violence, because 'it is not safe for high school students', his discursive motive being the risk of STIs or unwanted pregnancies, which would pose educational and future economic limitations for them. These lines of thought likely reflected lessons, advice, and general opinions circulating at home and the wider society about sexual intercourse. As shown in other investigations, pre-marital sexual intercourse is often considered to be immoral, and accordingly, CSE lessons in schools have typically been shaped along abstinence-only approaches (Braeken and Cardinal, 2008; Miedema et al., 2011; Oshi, Nakalema, and Oshi, 2005). Despite its comprehensive framework on paper, it seems likely, from what students reflected, that classroom implementation of the CSE programme in the school also promoted abstinence practices and negatively judged sexual activity for high school students. These messages were clearly reflected in the views of young men and young women on sexuality and sexual violence.

2.5.2 EXPERIENCES IN AND AROUND SCHOOL

Before describing and reflecting upon how young men and young women experienced sexual violence, it should be noted that most young men and young women emphasised that the prevalence of sexual violence is decreasing in their country, particularly in Addis Ababa, as opposed to the rural sites of Ethiopia. The reason for this, they pointed out, is that people are better educated nowadays, by which they have the awareness that sexual violence is a bad habit of their society and should be stopped. According to students in this school in Addis Ababa, the gender order in Ethiopia is changing with modernisation and education, and this is happening in the capital city more rapidly than in the rural areas of the country. This might be explained by the influence of international NGOs working in, for example, health and/or women's rights. According to students, schooling has thus helped in challenging patriarchal structures and power relations in society, supporting the more general argument that the gender order is a historical product, and subject to change (Connell, 2002). However hopeful this idea and tendency is, the stories of many young women and some young men in this study rather reveal that sexual violence is still highly present in the daily lives of many.

Young women experienced sexual violence in school from both male students and male teachers. All young women had stories to share about this. Firstly, young women experienced sexual violence from young men when they commented on how young women looked, or touched young women without their permission. One young woman shared that young men in her class touched her and that this made her feel tense. With regard to their relationships with young men, young women experienced young men to be forceful and aggressive. Moreover, young women found it difficult to negotiate relationships and sex. In discussing some young men's persistent behaviour when asking for sex, one young woman explained:

> *If one boy loves any girl, he pleases them [referring to insisting on having sex]. He really really pleases them. So, she can't stop him. (…) He doesn't stop. To stop him, it's difficult. For her, it's difficult. So, if one boy pleased her or anything, or do anything for her, she can advise him, but she can't stop this.* [Addis Ababa, School1, Student19, female, FGD]

With regard to their teachers, young women reported feeling discriminated in class when teachers did not listen to them but did listen to their classmates who were young men. In addition, young women shared that especially during gym class, teachers watched and commented on the young women's clothes and looks, which made them shy and uncomfortable. More worryingly, young women feared and experienced sexual corruption; manipulation for sex by teachers through marks. The examples related to this illustrate how power relations between teachers and female students were played out in school, and how young women had difficulty opposing this gender regime (Connell, 2002). Previous research has shown that teachers can indeed be perpetrators of sexual violence by 'sexual corruption' through marks (Omaar and de Waal, 1994; Jewkes and Abrahams, 2002). Although it is thought to be a phenomenon typical at university, this research shows that young women in secondary school also experience this:

> *(…) sometimes when students get a mark, low mark, mark decrease. Then, the teachers speak about sexual intercourse (…). The students are very afraid. When the marks are zero, or incomplete, the students are very angry. Yes, therefore, the teachers ask the students for sexual intercourse. (…) When my friend, she got a small mark. In maths. In this time, the teacher asked my friend to get in sexual intercourse.* [Addis Ababa, School1, Student6, female]

Not only did young women experience forms of sexual violence from boys and teachers, toleration of it was another alarming factor that left room for sexual violence to continue and be resistant to change. Young women themselves also experienced barriers to address injustices. For instance, the young woman who shared her story about her maths teacher was

disappointed by the management of the school who could not do anything because the sexual intercourse did not actually take place, revealing how indeed teachers and school management, who were in a dominant power position, obstructed the issue from being properly addressed. As shockingly, young women themselves also seemed to tolerate or accept a 'girls-as-victims' view of sexual violence, by stating they have to accept whatever happens to them:

> *We (girls) will get difficulties from students, from boys. Or from male teachers. (…) But, if we think that, we are learning for knowledge, we have to accept whatever it is that happens to us. So, there are difficult things for females, more than for males. But we have to know that if we get trouble, doesn't matter, we'll get a better life if we are trying to know or if we are trying to get the knowledge that we want.* [Addis Ababa, School1, Student19, female, FGD]

In reference to Connell's (2002) relational theory of gender, the above examples illustrate struggles within emotional and power relations. The young women strongly emphasised the role of fear in their emotional attachments towards peers, teachers, and disappointment in their learning opportunities and relations with school management. At the same time, power relations between the young women and young men, teachers, and school management (negatively) influenced this fear, disappointment, and hope for actual change. The example of how young women were not listened to in class (but young men were), and how some young women concluded that they have to tolerate oppression in the form of sexual violence for a better life afterwards, shows the dominant power positions teachers and male students have in relation to these young women.

What is surprising given the stories and experiences of the young women, however, is that most young men were convinced that sexual violence does not happen in their school. Apart from gender inequalities that might occur at the homes of the students, most young men could not think of any examples in school that related to sexual violence. Their argument was based on the fact that they were educated, plus there was a 'school rule' (codes of ethics) stating young men and young women are equal in the school, as well as a new constitution which states that everybody is equal in the society too. Therefore, according to them, the prevalence of sexual violence was low, and sexual violence could not happen in their school. Contrary to the young women, these young men did not seem to be aware of the imbalance in emotional relations, or their dominant power positions that these young women were negatively affected by.

Interestingly, there were three young men who held different views. Some of them expressed anger and frustration about their (indirect) experiences with sexual violence. One boy, for instance, had heard from one of his female friends with whom he attends CSE class, that a teacher had tried to manipulate her through her marks for sexual intercourse. After

hearing this story, the young man got very angry, visibly sympathised with the girl, and went to the school board to do something about this. He added that in his opinion, the school should do much more to address the issue and prevent sexual violence from happening. It seems that by sharing experiences with his friend, this young man came to understand more about the emotional turbulence young women went through because of (fearing) sexual violence. The emotional attachment to his friend's well-being made him actively re-negotiate gender patterns within the school.

The two other young men described their observations of how young men in school tried to influence and manipulate young women to have sex with them, explaining that 'when boys want something, they make sure they get it'. This observation is interesting, as these young men clearly reflected on ideologies of male sexual entitlement and saw this as an explanation of violent behaviour. They seemed to be aware of the dominant power positions some young men made use of. So, despite their raised awareness through education, and accordingly the idea that the prevalence of sexual violence is decreasing in Addis Ababa and schools, the behaviour of young men in school nevertheless reflected what is considered a 'misunderstanding' in society. This contradiction is interesting and raises questions about what it means to be aware of sexual violence, and how this does or does not translate into different behaviour or reflections. To be precise, applying these findings to Connell's (2002) framework, it seems that the two young men who pointed out this notion were aware of emotional and power relations in the school that resulted in different experiences for young women than young men, whereas the majority of the young men were mainly concerned with the legalistic and pragmatic results of gender equality on paper and in relation to academic performance in school and labour market divisions later on in life. Consequently, it seems essential to have critical reflection skills to develop a thorough understanding of sexual violence, its manifestations, causes, and consequences.

2.5.3 CAUSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

When it concerned causes of sexual violence, all young women and young men referred to the influence of society's beliefs about the roles of men and women, and saw this as the major explanatory factor of sexual violence, recognizing that patriarchal power structures in society were reflected in their school (Connell, 2002). In addition, explanations were given for why young men and teachers showed such behaviour, and some mentioned the role of fear, and the taboo of talking about sexuality.

First, in explaining why young men violate young women, the reasoning was very simple: it was considered 'bad behaviour' of young men, or that they had not understood teaching about gender equality, which was why they performed such actions. Young women explained that young men were aggressive, forceful, and wanted to prove their powers. One young man had indeed observed this behaviour:

In school, some boys have bad behaviour. Boys, you know, as high school students, boys want different things. We want to have a girlfriend. And they decide something for the girls. (…) If she is not decide to do sex, boys push it. [Addis Ababa, School1, Student5, male]

When turning to explanations for sexual violence between teachers and students, however, these situations were often viewed from a completely different angle. In particular regarding sexual corruption, teachers' relationships with young women were interpreted as a love relationship; the teacher must like the girl, which is why he wants to start a relationship with her (this was brought up by several young men). One young woman explained that the teacher must be lonely, and therefore tries to convince a young woman to sleep with him. From another perspective, some (young men) would say it is the young woman who wants something from the teacher (such as books or money). This qualified as bad behaviour of the girl and was critically judged by these students. In contrast to these interpretations, young women feared teachers and felt unable to say no to their advances.

Not only does this illustrate how, in terms of power relations within Connell's framework (2002), the behaviour and intentions of men and boys were not questioned and instead were tolerated by means of blaming and subordination of young women. It also reveals how this painful contradiction in views reflects a massive misunderstanding or divergence between young men and young women. In fact, it is due to different experiences and socialisation processes that young men and young women have such contrasting interpretations of the causes of sexual violence. What is interesting, however, is that students obviously learned about gender equality in school, and some even considered themselves as responsible enough to pass on 'the awareness'. However, at the same time they reinforced existing power relations by not critically questioning the behaviour of offenders, who were typically in a dominant position, but rather shaming the young women. Linking this to the students' education, and more specifically the CSE programme in school, a worrying observation is that one of the powerful lessons seems to be what is silenced and what is not explicitly questioned, i.e. the behaviour and authority of the 'dominant'. This again can contribute to the continuing tolerance of sexual violence between teachers and students.

Lastly, the taboo of talking about sexuality was brought up as another cause for the high level of tolerance of sexual violence. By not learning or speaking about sexuality, young people experienced a lot of room for misinterpretations of messages they received from media, their peers, and their homes. Young women shared, for instance, how their parents told them not to speak about their experiences when they tried to bring up the topic. This discouraged them from bringing to justice cases of violence, as they learned to associate it with shame. The school programme also gave them limited information about bringing to

justice cases of sexual violence: it focused its attention on prevention but gave little to no information about what steps to take in case of violence.

2.5.4 CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

When asked about the consequences of sexual violence, young women elaborated on the deep emotional turbulence they suffered because of a range of forms of sexual violence. Not surprisingly, sexual violence in the form of rape or forced sex is traumatic, and can lead to devastating consequences such as depression, isolation, and low self-esteem (Bott, 2010; Gelaye et al., 2009; Gossaye et al., 2003). Young women also reported that sexual/gender-based violence in terms of unwanted comments, touches, or manipulation makes them fearful and tense. In some instances, it led them to taking a detour from school to home, confirming again that fear plays a major role with regard to sexual violence (Bhana, 2012); not only in defining sexual violence, but also in its emotional, psychological and relational consequences. Moreover, these severe emotional consequences can lead to young women skipping classes, not paying attention in school, and their lower academic performance (Dunne et al., 2005). Indeed, one young woman mentioned how she skipped classes of one teacher because she felt tense in his classes. Although not mentioned by these participants, sexual violence, and the fear thereof, is thus bound to have long-term implications for the emotional well-being and academic performance of its survivors. It also negatively affects the achievement of gender equality within and through education (Subrahmanian, 2005) as the emotional impact of sexual violence is shown to affect young women's academic performance. This can lead to underperformance and school dropout, which, in turn, serves to reinforce the current gender order in society in which men hold the more powerful positions (Connell, 2002).

Young men, on the other hand, had a completely different perspective on the consequences of sexual violence. Interestingly, their views were not fully in line with their own definitions: although they defined sexual violence as a range of unwanted sexual acts that can vary from unwanted comments to forced sex, the consequences they mentioned only applied to the latter. To be precise, they mentioned possible physical health consequences of sexual violence such as STIs, HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions. Some added that these can lead to shame, stigma, and school dropout. However, they did not mention any consequences of other forms of sexual violence, such as teasing, insults, and unwanted touches or kisses.

What is interesting is that young men also mentioned that their country's development was affected by sexual violence. By doing this, it again seemed that young men repeated the knowledge they had learned in classes of gender inequality. Their line of reasoning was that when women are discriminated against this leads to a gendered division of labour and poor economic participation of women. Similarly, when young women are

victims of sexual violence and have to drop out of school as a result of, for example, pregnancy, this would negatively affect the country's development. Young men saw this as a key reason for why sexual violence is bad. Their approach to sexual violence, and its relation to the importance of CSE, thus seemed mostly pragmatic and focused on the results for equal production relations (Connell, 2002), which again is completely different from the highly emotional views expressed by young women. The lack of reflection of young men on the emotional consequences for women and girls, and an emphasis on the productive (labour) aspects of a gender order in society, testifies to the huge differences in understanding sexual violence.

2.5.5 ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL

Despite the enormous differences between young men and young women in views on definitions, experiences, and interpretations of sexual violence, their views were surprisingly similar with regard to addressing sexual violence in formal education. First, young women and men expressed a great need to be able to talk about sexuality, without taboo or judgement. They put forward that discussions in the classroom and co-curricular clubs are the best means for them to share thoughts and learn about sexuality related topics, including sexual violence. In line with the work of Allen (2005), it is not surprising that when hearing young people's views, their ideas of what is effective might diverge from what adults and programme designers conceptualise as effective or appropriate. Crucially, students emphasised that during class discussions, their views should be accepted and taken seriously. However, teachers often found it difficult to teach about sexuality in ways that differed from their own social and cultural ideas (in line with findings from Iyer & Aggleton, 2013; Oshi et al., 2005). Students recognized this, yet also saw the need to break such taboos and speak freely in class.

One regularly recurring topic concerns the conflicting messages in society about modern and traditional values, and gender relations associated with these. These messages were sometimes a strong judgement of sexual activity, accompanied by a judgement of modernity. To illustrate, some students and teachers judged modernity to be a cause of sexual violence as watching films, pornographic films in particular, and going to *khat* (a local drug) houses was bad for young men, as 'it makes us want to have sex' (and at the same time, this comment rests on the assumption that girls do not go there in the first place). Some young women commented on influences such as modern hairstyles and bracelets, because they could give the wrong messages to young men. At the same time, other students and teachers felt there needed to be more tolerance of such instances of modernity, as well as greater acceptance of young people's desires for these things. For some teachers, it was essential that students learnt how to deal with these influences through their sexuality education, and importantly, a need for awareness that wearing make-up and bracelets does

not equal interest in sex. These are examples of symbolic relations within the gender regime, with porn videos and stimulants being concerns for young men and their sexualised nature, and beauty products associated with young women and seduction. This illustrates again the segregated relations and attributions between young men and young women, which could be seen as a possible explanation for their completely different experiences and interpretations of gender relations and sexual violence. However, for the purpose of addressing sexual violence in schools, it is questionable to what extent addressing these symbolic relations (and in the opinion of some, causes for sexual violence) are sufficient to also pay attention to the more dominant and pressing matters of unequal emotional relations and power relations in school.

A second important finding around discussions in CSE is that students had learned that young men and young women can be friends in a 'brotherly and sisterly' manner. This made them more open to interactions with each other, which is normally quite uncommon in Ethiopian schools where students prefer same-sex friends (Rose and Tembon, 1999). This could reduce the differences in gender socialisation processes, by having shared experiences and interpretations of what happens around them. It also has the potential for transforming emotional relations (Connell, 2002) between the two sexes, and fostering more respectful ones. An example of this is the young man who stood up for his female friend when he heard that the teacher was trying to talk her into unwanted sexual intercourse.

In discussions, young women reflected that young men should be taught to be less aggressive, and that teachers should pay more attention to giving young women self-confidence. One young man believed that all students should be taught about causes and consequences of sexual violence. Most other young men rather shared the opinion, together with many of the young women, that it is the society that needs to be educated too; awareness raising programmes should not only reach students, but also families and communities, who function in the same patriarchal power structures and gender order in society.

With regard to the school level, both young men and young women expressed their disappointment in the school management for not properly addressing sexual violence and found it should be a higher priority in school-wide policy and more strictly regulated. The two young men who went to the school administration office to express their anger about instances of sexual violence which they had witnessed, were left disappointed and angry about the lack of action from the school board. The young woman who shared how her maths teacher tried to corrupt her friend for sex through her marks was also left powerless when she received the news that the school board could not do anything about the situation as the sexual intercourse had not actually happened, and she was deeply affected by this approach. These students found that the school board could and should act much more strongly against such injustices.

Not only these students who directly experienced lack of action, but most students actually expressed the need for a code of ethics in the school. In their opinion, this should forbid relationships between teachers and students, and there should be a policy for punishing perpetrators of sexual violence, whether they are students or teachers. Moreover, as some students added, the school board should contact the parents of offenders, and cooperate more closely with communities and other NGOs to address problems in the school. In other words, a comprehensive approach needs to be adopted in the implementation of CSE, and in the whole school and surrounding society.

2.6 CONCLUSION

2.6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As illustrated by the discussions on the definitions, experiences, interpretations, the views held about sexual violence can be remarkably different among and between young men and young women in secondary school. Generally, young men's views were rather pragmatic, as opposed to the highly emotional, and perhaps more realistic stories of young women. Interestingly, though, young men who had a more critical view, had often heard stories from their female friends, or had observed instances of sexual/gender-based violence; they tended to show more personal responses to the topic than their male peers, who were usually quite distant from the topic in their descriptions.

The most striking differences can be summarised as follows: first, young women included fear as an essential dimension of defining sexual violence, whereas young men did not mention that. Second, almost all young women recognized the influence of sexual violence in their daily lives. On the contrary, most young men seemed to live in the illusion (or at least presented themselves to do so) that there is no sexual violence in their school, thanks to education on this topic and gender equality. In terms of causes, young men typically viewed sexual relationships between teachers and young women as a romantic or transactional relationship, whereas young women again emphasised fear of teachers. It is important to note, though, that two young men held a different view on this. They recognized the unjust treatment by a teacher and its effect on their female peer, and they attempted to take action against the teacher. The close relationship between these young men and their female peers, however, seems uncommon in their school and for Ethiopian adolescents in general (Rose and Tembon, 1999). The contribution that sexuality education can have to fostering friendly and supportive relationships between both sexes should not go unacknowledged. Lastly, both young women and young men recognized the impact of taboos in speaking about sexuality as an explanation for confusion. With regard to consequences, young men typically mentioned dangerous physical consequences as a result of rape (e.g. HIV/AIDS, or unwanted pregnancy), where young women emphasised their

psychological and emotional experiences, which could also be the result of seemingly more 'minor' manifestations of sexual violence such as unwanted comments or touching. Ironically, this can lead to drop out and lower academic performances (Dunne et al., 2005), in the very institutions where they should be in a safe environment, learn about sexual health, and have equal opportunities to young men within and through education (Subrahmanian, 2005). Equally worrying is the messages they learn, through such experiences, about what it means to be a girl or a boy (Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Stromquist and Fischman, 2009). Moreover, the school as a site where gender norms can be questioned and transformed, is experienced by students to be a place where relational gender regimes obstruct this role (Connell, 2002).

With respect to how to address sexual violence in school, young men's and young women's views were strikingly similar: they need to learn and talk about sexuality and the formation of their own identities in an environment free from taboo and judgement (in line with Allen, 2005). This applies to the attitude of both teachers and students. One notable point is that despite their desire for not feeling negatively judged because of their views, some students themselves reflected moralistically informed notions that blamed young people who are involved in so-called 'modern' lifestyles. The underlying values resonating in these opinions might thus reflect the clashing and contradictory messages that young people are given to make sense of the present, often leading to confusion. In fact, the perceived influences of 'modernity' (a term used by participants, typically referring to the desire of living a 'Western' lifestyle, moving away from traditional Ethiopian values), and not knowing how to interpret various contradictory messages about gender and sexuality was seen to lead to increased misunderstandings of sexuality. The influence of modernity thus not only applies to transactional sexual relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, 2003), but to general understanding and confusion about sexuality, which should be further investigated.

2.6.2 IS SEXUALITY EDUCATION THE ANSWER?

The fact that young men and young women generally put forward views that were completely different, suggests that there are major mismatches in understandings about the form and effects of sexual violence and this can again lead to continued tolerance of the phenomenon. However, critical reflection among some students as a result of CSE proved to be crucial in formulating more informed ideas about sexual violence in school. Based on findings from this study, it is therefore recommended that schools adopt a comprehensive approach to sexuality education, with the needs of young people central in the design and implementation of the programme (Allen, 2005). Alongside this, students recommend and urge schools to commit to a code of ethics, and the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (UNESCO, 2009) is relevant here, in particular with reference to safe schools and zero tolerance for relationships between teachers and students.

Yet, implementing CSE in a way that questions the current gender order (Connell, 2002) seemed a challenge for this school. In fact, with students repeating factual knowledge about the dangerous aspects of sexual intercourse, the implementation of the programme seemed to have taken a 'developmentalist' approach to health, emphasising why for example, gender equality is important for the country, while failing to recognize the completely different experiences, emotional relations, and socialisation processes young men and young women experience. Sexual violence was also placed in line by many male students with such a developmentalist framework, making pragmatic interpretations, limited to production relations, and leaving fear, tensions, and emotional relations, including consequences of depression and low self-esteem, unrecognized. A more rights informed and comprehensive implementation could stimulate critical reflection and questioning of current norms and structures in society (Braeken and Cardinal, 2008; Connell, 2002; Miedema et al., 2011), and go beyond a liberal framework for addressing gender inequality and sexual violence (Ampofo et al., 2004). The question remains though, how to develop adequate CSE programmes that are responsive to students' needs (Allen, 2005; Ollis, 2014) as well as culturally appropriate to unpack and challenge existing gender regimes (Connell, 2002).

The findings from this study underline the importance of continuing to address the highly sensitive and controversial topic of sexual violence. Sexual violence should be placed in the context of gender relations (Connell, 2002; Leach and Humphreys, 2007); students supported the view that the current gender order in their society is a result of a patriarchal history that can potentially be changed through education. Yet, despite considerable efforts, sexual violence seems to be highly tolerated in schools (Mirembe and Davies, 2001) and the gender regime in the site of research seemed limited in its support of questioning gender relations beyond a liberal notion of production relations and gender equal laws and governance. The contradictory messages of schools as a promotor of sexual health, but at the same time tolerating sexual violence, need immediate action, as well as structural attention through, for instance, the implementation of comprehensive CSE, sensitive to students' needs, and responsive to gender relations.