Juvenile Delinquency and School Dropout in Primary Schools in Gulu District:

A Case of Awach Subcounty.

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Declaration

I, Charles Ray Ocan, declare that this work entitled "*Juvenile Delinquency and School Drop-Out in Primary School in Gulu District: A Case of Awach Subcounty*" is my original work and has never been submitted to any Institution of higher learning for any award.

Signature..... Date..10/8/2026.....

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Approval

This is to certify that this Dissertation entitled "*Juvenile Delinquency and Dropout in primary schools in Gulu District, Awach Subcounty*" was written under our Guidance and Supervision and we approve it for examination.

Signature..... Date.....10/8/26.....

Dr. George Opio (PhD)

Signature.....Date.....10/8/2026.....

Mr. Anthony Oloi

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Mr. Kosantino Okot and Mrs. Ventorina Arem who worked tirelessly, nursed and took care of me from the time I was born up to date. In their simplicity, they showed me the road to school and committed themselves toward educating me. In them, I realised the spirit of dedication, love, zeal and sense of inspiration, hard work and belonging.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Juvenile delinquency on school dropout rates among pupils in primary schools in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. The study was guided by three specific objectives namely; 1). To assess the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District; 2). Analyze the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District and 3). Establish the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District. The study used mixed method and a sample of 444 respondents and participants were got respectively. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPPS version 25.0, which yielded descriptive and inferential statistics outputs while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which yielded codes, categories and themes. The results from research question one showed that there was high level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District. Findings for research question two also showed a high level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District while findings of research question three showed that there was a strong positive statistically significant correlation between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District. The study concluded that juvenile delinquency greatly influenced school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District and recommended that psycho-educational interventions such as establishing functional departments of guidance and counseling to enhance psychosocial support in schools was necessary.

Chapter one

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a key driver to social economic and personal development (Okumu, 2023). Despite significant efforts by governments and development partners to ensure universal access to education, school dropout remains a persistent challenge particularly in government-aided primary schools in Northern Uganda (Okumu, 2023). School dropout in primary schools is a multifaceted issue influenced by various factors, such as poverty, school factors, absenteeism, lack of awareness on the part of parents, unaffordability of school fees by children, meager budgetary allocation, juvenile delinquency (deviant deviation among learners) and teachers' attitudes towards children, among others (Aliero, 2020). This was demonstrated in terms of stealing, abortion, vandalism, truancy and bullying, among other issues.

This chapter presented the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance and the conceptual framework.

1.1 Background to the Study

This section presents the background to the study, focusing on the historical, theoretical, conceptual, and contextual perspectives of school dropout and juvenile delinquency.

1.1.1 Historical Background

Education systems globally have expanded significantly in recent decades, with increased emphasis on universal primary education as a strategy for human capital development and social transformation (Okumu et al., 2022). This expansion has resulted in increased enrollment rates across both developed and developing countries, reflecting global commitments to education for all. However, despite these improvements, completion rates remain uneven, particularly among disadvantaged populations facing socio-economic constraints (Nannyonjo, 2020). This suggests that while access has improved, systemic inequalities continue to affect retention and completion outcomes. The persistence of dropout therefore reflects deeper structural issues within both education systems and society at large.

In sub-Saharan Africa, education reforms have prioritized access through initiatives such as Universal Primary Education, which have significantly increased enrollment levels in many countries (Wodon et al., 2020). Despite these gains, high dropout rates continue to challenge education systems due to limited resources, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient infrastructure. At the same time, evidence suggests that school quality and teacher effectiveness are critical determinants of learner retention and academic success (Melesse & Mekonnen, 2021). This contrast highlights that improving access alone is not sufficient without addressing quality-related challenges within schools. Therefore, the issue of dropout must be examined from both access and quality perspectives simultaneously.

Historical inequalities also continue to shape present educational outcomes, particularly in regions where colonial legacies influenced resource distribution and access to education (Chimombo, 2021). These historical imbalances have contributed to persistent disparities in school participation

and completion across different social groups. However, contemporary studies suggest that current governance challenges and weak policy implementation mechanisms are more immediate drivers of dropout trends (Akyeampong, 2021). This indicates that both historical and present-day factors interact to influence educational outcomes. Addressing dropout therefore requires consideration of both long-standing structural issues and current policy gaps.

Efforts to promote inclusive education have gained momentum globally, aiming to ensure that all learners, including marginalized groups, have equal opportunities to access and complete education (Sabates et al., 2021). These initiatives have contributed to improved retention in some contexts by addressing barriers such as disability, gender inequality and poverty. However, the effectiveness of inclusive policies is often limited by inadequate funding and weak institutional capacity (Hunt, 2020). This suggests that while inclusive education is widely promoted, its implementation remains inconsistent across different settings. As a result, dropout continues to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups.

In East Africa, increased enrollment has not always translated into improved completion rates due to challenges associated with rapid expansion of education systems (Oketch & Rolleston, 2021). Overcrowding, limited teaching resources, and strained infrastructure have negatively affected the quality of education delivered. At the same time, household-level factors such as poverty and economic pressures continue to influence learners' ability to remain in school (Nishimura et al., 2020). This demonstrates that dropout is influenced by both school-based conditions and external socio-economic factors. Addressing dropout in this context therefore requires a comprehensive approach that integrates both dimensions.

1.1.2 Theoretical Background

Social Control Theory explains delinquency as a result of weakened social bonds between individuals and society, particularly in relation to family and school connections (Akers & Jennings, 2020). Strong bonds are believed to promote conformity and discourage deviant behaviour among learners. These bonds are formed through relationships with parents, teachers and peers, as well as engagement in structured activities. However, variations in interpretation exist, as some scholars emphasize individual decision-making alongside social influences (Walters, 2021). This indicates that delinquency cannot be explained solely by social bonds but also involves individual-level factors.

Attachment to parents and teachers is considered a key element in shaping positive behaviour among learners, as strong emotional connections encourage adherence to rules and norms (Krohn & Lane, 2021). Learners who feel supported and valued within their social environment are less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour. However, peer influence has also been shown to significantly affect behaviour, sometimes overriding the influence of family and school attachment (Lee & McGee, 2020). This suggests that attachment operates alongside peer dynamics in shaping behaviour. Therefore, effective interventions must consider both family and peer influences.

Commitment to education reflects the extent to which learners value academic achievement and future success, which reduces their likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour (Henry et al., 2020). Learners who perceive education as important are more likely to remain engaged and avoid risky activities. However, socio-economic constraints such as poverty can weaken this commitment by limiting opportunities and motivation (Baker, 2021). This indicates that

commitment is influenced by both individual aspirations and external conditions. As such, addressing dropout requires improving both motivation and socio-economic support systems.

Involvement in structured activities such as school programs and extracurricular engagements reduces opportunities for delinquency by limiting idle time (Mahoney et al., 2020). Active participation in school activities promotes discipline, social interaction and positive behaviour among learners. However, unequal access to such opportunities, particularly in under-resourced schools, can increase the likelihood of delinquent behaviour (Fredricks & Eccles, 2021). This highlights disparities in access to supportive environments within education systems. Therefore, ensuring equal access to structured activities is essential in reducing delinquency.

Belief in societal norms and values plays an important role in preventing delinquency, as individuals who internalize rules are more likely to conform to acceptable behaviour (Costello et al., 2021). Education systems play a critical role in shaping these beliefs through socialization and moral development. However, perceptions of injustice, inequality and unfair treatment can weaken adherence to these norms (Sampson & Laub, 2020). This suggests that belief is influenced by both individual values and broader social experiences. Addressing delinquency therefore requires promoting fairness and inclusivity within educational environments.

1.1.3 Conceptual Background

Juvenile delinquency refers to the involvement of minors in behaviours that violate legal or social norms, including acts such as truancy, theft, vandalism and fighting (Cary, 2021). These behaviours reflect broader social, economic and environmental influences affecting young people. Delinquency is often linked to factors such as poverty, family dynamics and peer influence, which

shape behaviour over time (Sethy, 2020). However, differences exist in how delinquency is defined, with some perspectives focusing on legal definitions while others emphasize social context. This highlights the complexity of understanding delinquency across different frameworks.

Delinquent behaviour among pupils is often influenced by their social environment, including family background, school conditions and peer interactions (Cary, 2021). These factors interact to shape attitudes, behaviours and decision-making processes among learners. At the same time, developmental perspectives suggest that some forms of delinquency are temporary and may not persist into adulthood (Moffitt, 2020). This indicates that not all delinquent behaviour is permanent or indicative of long-term outcomes. Therefore, interventions should be tailored to address both short-term and long-term behavioural patterns.

School dropout is defined as leaving school before completing a prescribed level of education, often resulting from a combination of internal and external factors (Tinto, 2020). It reflects the inability of education systems to retain learners through to completion. Similarly, dropout is influenced by factors such as poor academic performance, lack of parental support, and socio-economic challenges (UNESCO, 2021). However, the relative importance of these factors varies across contexts. This suggests that dropout is a multifaceted issue requiring context-specific solutions.

Dropout is also influenced by school-related factors such as teacher-student relationships, school climate and availability of learning resources (Rumberger, 2020). Positive school environments promote engagement and retention, while negative experiences can lead to disengagement and eventual dropout. At the same time, external factors such as poverty and family responsibilities also play a significant role (UNESCO, 2021). This highlights the interaction between school-based

and external influences on dropout. Addressing dropout therefore requires a holistic approach that considers both dimensions.

The relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout is increasingly recognized as interconnected, with each influencing the other (Tinto, 2020). Delinquent behaviour can lead to disengagement from school, while dropout can increase exposure to negative influences and risky behaviours. However, the direction of this relationship is not always clear, as delinquency may either precede or result from school disengagement (Moffitt, 2020). This indicates a gap in understanding causality between the two variables. Further research is needed to clarify this relationship and inform effective interventions.

1.1.4 Contextual Background

In Uganda, the introduction of Universal Primary Education significantly increased access to schooling, leading to a rapid rise in enrollment rates across the country (MOES, 2020). This policy aimed to promote equitable access to education and improve literacy levels among the population. However, despite increased enrollment, dropout rates remain high, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas (UBOS, 2020). This indicates a gap between access and retention within the education system. Addressing this gap requires targeted interventions to support learners at risk of dropping out.

In Northern Uganda, particularly Gulu District, historical factors such as conflict and displacement have had a lasting impact on education systems and learner participation (Amone, 2020). The effects of the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency disrupted schooling and weakened community structures supporting education. Although post-conflict recovery efforts have improved access to

education, challenges related to poverty and instability persist (SLRC, 2020). This suggests that the legacy of conflict continues to influence educational outcomes. Therefore, interventions must consider both historical and current challenges.

Gender disparities remain a major concern in Uganda, with girls experiencing higher dropout rates due to factors such as early marriage and teenage pregnancy (UNESCO, 2021). These socio-cultural practices limit girls' access to and completion of education. At the same time, practical challenges such as lack of sanitary facilities and menstrual health support further contribute to dropout among girls (Sommer et al., 2021). This highlights the need for gender-sensitive interventions within schools. Addressing both cultural and infrastructural barriers is essential to improve retention among girls.

Economic challenges such as poverty and child labor continue to influence school dropout in Uganda, as many households struggle to meet basic needs (UBOS, 2020). Learners are often required to engage in income-generating activities, which interferes with their schooling. Additionally, external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated dropout rates by increasing economic hardship and disrupting learning (Apiot et al., 2022). This demonstrates the vulnerability of education systems to external factors. Addressing dropout therefore requires strengthening resilience within both households and education systems.

Recent studies indicate that dropout rates in Gulu District remain high, with significant disparities across gender and socio-economic groups (Okumu et al., 2022). While policy interventions have been introduced to improve retention, their effectiveness has been inconsistent across different contexts (MOES, 2020). This suggests gaps in implementation and monitoring of education policies. Addressing these challenges requires context-specific strategies that consider local

conditions. Strengthening coordination between schools, communities, and policy makers is essential to reduce dropout and delinquency.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ideally, every nation, Uganda included, wants to see its children enroll in school and complete up to a specific level, in this case, from primary one to primary seven. However, there is still a persistent problem when it comes to school dropout despite numerous efforts by government and development partners. For instance, UNESCO (2022) maintained that 20% of 98 million primary school-aged children were out of school in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995) and Law Global Heb (2021), especially Article 30 of the Constitution, addressed the essence of education. Over 25,000 children of school-going age in the northern districts of Uganda were out of school during the insurgency (Save the children, 2008). Even with the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE), school bursaries, and school feeding programs, the school dropout rate still stood at 31% out of a total enrollment of 174,584. This dropout rate was significantly higher than the national average of 10%. The most affected were girls, who accounted for 69% of the total enrollment of 81,387 in primary school, according to district statistical records (2006). Furthermore, detailed statistics from Gulu District, sourced from the office of the senior probation officer (2021), revealed that a total of 2,877 pupils were enrolled in primary seven in 2021. Out of this number, only 92.3% registered to sit for the primary leaving examination (PLE) and 7.5% pupils from the total enrollment dropped out, subsequently missing the PLE. These statistics show that there is high school dropout rate among pupils in primary schools. It on this background that this study investigated the influence of Juvenile delinquency on school dropout in Gulu District.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of juvenile delinquency on dropout among primary school children in Gulu District, Awach Subcounty.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

This study was guided by the following specific objectives

1. To assess the level of Juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District
2. To analyze the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District.
3. To establish the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District.

1.4 Research question

1. What is the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District?
2. What is the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District?
3. Is there a significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District?

1.5 The Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Geographical Scope

The study was limited geographically to select primary schools in Gulu District, specifically in Awach Subcounty. Awach Subcounty, located in Gulu District, Uganda, has its geographical

coordinates at 3° 0' 0" North, 32° 24' 0" East. It had a population of approximately 19,400 people. The area was chosen for study due to numerous observed cases of school dropout which rose to up to 40% (UNICEF, 2022, Daily Monitor, 2021, Uganda Radio Network, 2021). Consequently, the research sought to determine the extent to which juvenile delinquency directly linked with school dropout rates in primary schools within this region.

1.5.2 Content Scope

The study investigated the level of juvenile delinquency in primary schools within Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. Additionally, it analyzed the dropout levels among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District. For purposes of this study, juvenile delinquency was defined as behaviours that deviated from societal norms and criminal law, particularly those perpetrated by teenagers. Such behaviours included truancy, vandalism, stealing, abortion, fighting, bullying, among others. Dropout, as per UNICEF (2013), referred to any pupil enrolled in school but either not attending or leaving before completing a primary school cycle. In this context, delinquency encompassed actions like truancy, vandalism, stealing, abortion, fighting and bullying.

1.5.3 Time Scope

The study focused on the years spanning 2017 to 2022. During this period, there was a notable increase in school dropout rates in primary schools within Awach Subcounty, Gulu District, peaking at 14%, as indicated by Ogen (2021). The research aimed to understand the reasons behind this heightened dropout rate during the specified years.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study held several implications, particularly for educational institutions and stakeholders. For policymakers within the Ministry of Education and Sports, specifically the Office of the District

Education Officer (DEO), the research may provide insights to craft policies addressing juvenile delinquency. It may facilitate a better understanding of the dynamics between students and teachers, emphasizing strategies to promote positive behaviour among pupils. The study would be instrumental in planning interventions beneficial to students, guiding them away from delinquent behaviours. Furthermore, the study is hoped to be prerequisite for obtaining a master's degree in foundational education from Gulu University. The research is postulated to address the issue of school dropout by fostering a conducive learning environment, ensuring students completed their primary education. Additionally, it was postulated to enlighten students about the pitfalls of associating with negative peer groups and guide parents in nurturing their children to lead socially responsible lives.

1.7. Conceptual framework.

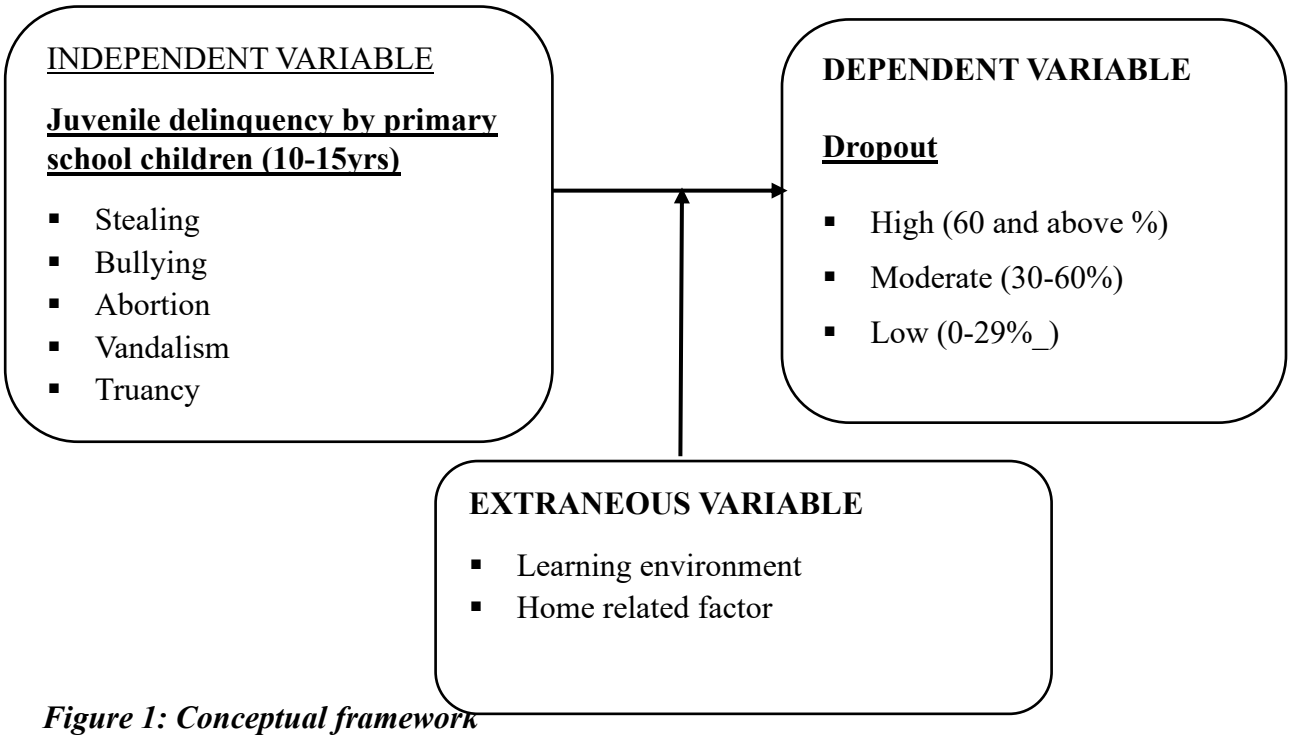

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source. Adopted with modification from Hirschis Social control theory (1969)

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework showing the relationship between juvenile delinquency among primary school children aged 10–15 years and school dropout rates. Juvenile delinquency, which is the independent variable, was measured through behaviors such as stealing, bullying, abortion, vandalism, and truancy. These delinquent behaviors are associated with increased school disengagement, poor discipline, and reduced academic participation among learners, which may contribute to school dropout (Muschert & Peguero, 2019). The dependent variable, dropout, was categorized as high (60% and above), moderate (30–60%), and low (0–29%). The framework further recognized extraneous variables such as the learning environment and home-related factors, which may influence both juvenile delinquency and dropout rates. A supportive school environment and stable family background are important in reducing delinquent behaviors and improving school retention among children (UNESCO, 2022).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this section, the literature was reviewed thematically according to the study objectives namely; the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools, the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools and the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools. The section comprised of theoretical review and review of literature according to study specific objectives.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This section presents the theoretical perspectives that explain juvenile delinquency and school dropout. It focuses on key theories that provide a foundation for understanding learners' behaviour in school and community contexts.

2.1.1 Anomie Theory

Anomie Theory was developed by Robert K. Merton in the 1940s and explains deviance as a result of a gap between societal goals and the means available to achieve them (Merton, 1949). The theory builds on earlier ideas of social breakdown and normlessness (Durkheim, 1897). It suggests that when individuals are unable to achieve socially approved goals through legitimate means, they may resort to delinquent behaviour. Recent applications of the theory show its relevance in explaining youth deviance in contexts of inequality (Agnew, 2020). This makes it useful in understanding delinquency among pupils.

The key concepts of Anomie Theory include cultural goals, institutional means and modes of adaptation such as innovation, conformity and rebellion (Merton, 1949). Innovation explains why individuals engage in delinquent acts when legitimate opportunities are limited (Featherstone & Deflem, 2021). These concepts help explain how pupils may respond differently to similar social pressures. Learners who fail to achieve academic success may adopt alternative behaviours. This shows the connection between academic challenges and delinquency.

The theory assumes that all individuals share similar societal goals such as success and achievement (Merton, 1949). It also assumes that inequality in access to legitimate means creates pressure toward deviance (Agnew, 2020). However, this assumption ignores individual differences in values and aspirations. Not all pupils define success in the same way or respond similarly to challenges. This limits the universality of the theory.

One of the strengths of Anomie Theory is that it explains how socio-economic inequality contributes to delinquent behaviour among youth (Messner & Rosenfeld, 2020). It emphasizes structural factors rather than blaming individuals alone. The theory is useful in explaining why pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds may engage in delinquency. However, it has been criticized for focusing too much on economic factors (Featherstone & Deflem, 2021). This shows that delinquency is influenced by multiple factors.

A major weakness of the theory is that it cannot explain why some individuals with adequate resources still engage in delinquent behaviour (Agnew, 2020). Factors such as peer pressure and family environment are not fully addressed. The theory also assumes uniform societal goals, which may not apply in all contexts. This reduces its ability to explain diverse behaviours. Therefore, it needs to be combined with other theories.

In this study, Anomie Theory helps explain how economic hardship and limited opportunities in Gulu District contribute to juvenile delinquency. Pupils who lack resources may engage in behaviours such as stealing to meet their needs. This behaviour may lead to punishment and eventual school dropout. However, the theory is complemented by other perspectives to account for peer and school influences. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of the problem.

2.1.2 Subculture Theory

Subculture Theory was developed by Albert Cohen and explains delinquency as a result of individuals forming groups that reject mainstream societal norms (Cohen, 1955). The theory suggests that when individuals fail to achieve success through conventional means, they create alternative value systems. These subcultures provide identity and recognition for members. Recent studies show that peer group influence remains a key factor in youth behaviour (Young, 2020). This makes the theory relevant in school settings.

The key concepts of Subculture Theory include status frustration, group identity, and alternative norms (Cohen, 1955). Status frustration occurs when individuals fail to meet societal expectations (Williams & McShane, 2021). As a result, they form groups that value behaviours rejected by society. In schools, pupils may form groups that encourage misconduct. This reinforces delinquent behaviour among members.

The theory assumes that individuals seek acceptance and recognition from their social environment (Young, 2020). It also assumes that peer groups strongly influence behaviour. However, this overlooks individual choice and personal responsibility. Not all pupils exposed to delinquent groups engage in such behaviour. This limits the explanatory power of the theory.

A major strength of Subculture Theory is its ability to explain peer influence in shaping behaviour among young people (Williams & McShane, 2021). It highlights how group dynamics can promote delinquency. The theory is particularly useful in explaining school-based misconduct. However, it has been criticized for ignoring broader structural factors (Young, 2020). This suggests that delinquency is influenced by more than peer groups.

One weakness of the theory is that it focuses mainly on group behaviour while ignoring individual differences (Williams & McShane, 2021). It also fails to explain why some pupils resist negative peer influence. Additionally, it does not adequately address economic and family factors. This limits its ability to provide a complete explanation of delinquency. Therefore, it needs to be used alongside other theories.

In this study, Subculture Theory helps explain how peer groups influence juvenile delinquency among pupils in Gulu District. Pupils may form groups that promote behaviours such as truancy and fighting. These behaviours may lead to disciplinary actions and eventual dropout. The theory highlights the importance of peer influence in shaping behaviour. It supports the need for interventions targeting group dynamics in schools.

2.1.3 Differential Opportunity Theory

Differential Opportunity Theory was developed by Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin and explains delinquency as a result of unequal access to legitimate and illegitimate opportunities (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960). The theory suggests that individuals engage in delinquency when they lack access to legitimate means of success. It expands on Strain Theory by considering the availability of

opportunities. Recent studies show that opportunity structures influence youth behaviour (Pratt & Cullen, 2021). This makes the theory relevant in explaining delinquency.

The key concepts of the theory include opportunity structures, illegitimate opportunities, and subcultural adaptations (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960). Individuals may engage in different types of delinquency depending on the opportunities available (Pratt & Cullen, 2021). In school settings, pupils may engage in misconduct if legitimate opportunities are limited. This shows the importance of access to resources.

The theory assumes that access to opportunities determines behaviour (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960). It also assumes that individuals will choose the most available means to achieve success. However, this overlooks individual values and decision-making processes. Not all pupils respond to limited opportunities in the same way. This limits the theory's explanatory power.

One strength of the theory is that it explains how both legitimate and illegitimate opportunities influence delinquency (Pratt & Cullen, 2021). It provides a broader understanding of behaviour compared to strain theory. The theory is useful in explaining variation in delinquent behaviour. However, it has been criticized for focusing mainly on structural factors. This suggests that individual and social factors are also important.

A key weakness of the theory is that it does not fully explain why some individuals do not engage in delinquency despite limited opportunities (Pratt & Cullen, 2021). It also ignores psychological and family influences. Additionally, it assumes equal awareness of opportunities among individuals. This reduces its ability to explain diverse behaviours. Therefore, it should be used alongside other theories.

In this study, Differential Opportunity Theory helps explain how limited access to resources and opportunities contributes to juvenile delinquency and school dropout in Gulu District. Pupils who lack educational and economic opportunities may engage in delinquent behaviour. This may lead to disciplinary issues and eventual dropout. The theory highlights the role of opportunity structures in shaping behaviour. It supports the need for improving access to opportunities for learners.

2.2 Level of Juvenile Delinquency among primary schools

Juvenile delinquency had been a persistent issue in various regions, notably in Rwoho Town Council within the Ntungamo District, both within Uganda and globally (Mukasa, 2021). The primary research objective was to delve into the intricate relationship between parenting practices and the prevalence of juvenile crime. Guiding this study were foundational theories from Baumrid Diana (1967) and subsequent insights from Maccoby and Martin (1983). A comprehensive cross-sectional study took place within the confines of the Ntungamo District's Rwoho Town Council, encompassing a diverse participant pool: 290 youths were chosen at random, supplemented by parents, religious figures, educational leaders, and community development representatives (Mukasa et al., 2021). The methodology integrated both questionnaires and interview sessions. For the quantitative segment, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists version 20 was harnessed, while the qualitative aspects were subjected to thematic analysis (Mukasa et al., 2021).

Upon rigorous analysis through Pearson Product-moment Correlation techniques, revelations surfaced that among the 290 youths surveyed, a concerning 15.7% confessed to partaking in juvenile delinquent activities. Intriguingly, a dominant 65.1% of these young individuals reported experiencing authoritarian parenting styles during their upbringing. Distinct parenting styles' prevalence within Rwoho Town Council was delineated: authoritarian styles dominated at 49.4%,

trailed by permissive styles at 36.5%, and disengaged styles at 22.7% (Mukasa et al., 2021). The findings and recommendations of this study underscored an imperative: the critical need to curtail certain parenting methodologies. The consensus pointed towards establishing lucid guidelines accentuating the virtues of effective and empathetic parenting (Mukasa et al., 2021).

A comparative analysis between the Ntungamo and Gulu districts illuminated significant disparities, stemming from diverse economic dynamics, cultural nuances, and geographical factors (Mukasa et al., 2021). Another noteworthy distinction surfaced in the realm of sample population: while existing literature gravitated towards 290 respondents, this investigative venture encompassed a broader spectrum of 444 respondents, thereby unveiling a methodological divergence between the two research endeavors.

Venturing into the Buhunga Sub-county situated in the Rukungiri locale, the study casted its lens on the perilous behaviours exhibited by adolescents within select elementary institutions and their consequential impacts on academic trajectories (Ahumuza, 2017). Employing a hybrid approach that amalgamated quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the study's findings delineated a landscape where certain educators perceived crime and violence rates among students as moderate, while a minority sounded alarms on its pronounced severity (Ahumuza et al., 2017). The research blueprint offered salient recommendations, accentuating the indispensability of holistic education initiatives, and endorsing tailored interventions rooted within educational frameworks (Ahumuza et al., 2017). Delving deeper into local dynamics, Shai (2021) embarked on an investigative journey exploring the evolution and intricacies of the Agur, a cohort of street-based youths in Gulu, Uganda. Informed by Assemblage Theory, the study unraveled the multifaceted identity mosaic of the Agur, intricately interwoven with socio-political, economic and historical vicissitudes (Shai et al., 2021).

Reproductive health emerged as a paramount concern, especially concerning young women in Uganda, as illuminated by Sully et al. (2018). Their seminal research accentuated the imperatives of catering to the nuanced reproductive health needs of adolescents, with specific emphasis on abortion, contraception, and associated challenges (Sully, Atuyambe, Bukenya, et al., 2018).

In this theme of literature review on level of juvenile delinquency several gaps were identified which where methodological and spatial in nature for instance most of the studies in this section are alien to the study geographical location (e.g. Diana,1967; Martin,1963; Shai et. al, 2021) these studies were conducted out of Uganda therefore the findings may be different from my study conducted in Gulu District with totally different geographical landscape. Secondly, studies in this theme were mostly quantitative (e.g. Mukasa et al, 2021; Apio et. al, 2020) while some where purely qualitative (Ahumuza, 2017). The current study used mixed method combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, therefore yielding a more comprehensive result compared to studies with one approach.

2.3 Level of Juvenile Delinquency in primary schools

Over the course of the past century, there emerged a prevailing narrative that underscored the inherent distinctions between children and adults. This understanding spurred the creation of numerous national and international regulations, each designed with the primary objective of safeguarding the rights of children, including those ensnared in the complexities of juvenile delinquency. Despite these protective frameworks, a profound realization emerged: children, just like adults, could be both perpetrators and instigators of criminal activities. This recognition precipitated multifaceted debates within legal and societal circles, leading to nuanced discussions and interpretations of juvenile delinquency, its origins, and implications (Morina, 2021). It became increasingly evident that while overarching legal and ethical principles emphasize children's

inherent rights-encompassing aspects such as life, protection, development, and participatory engagement-the manifestations and intricacies of these principles could vary significantly based on unique conditions, cultural contexts and national perspectives (Morina et al., 2012).

Transitioning to specific research endeavors, this paper endeavors to provide comprehensive insights into the multifarious factors that catalyze juvenile delinquency, particularly within the urban milieu of Fushe Kosova, (Morina et al., 2012). Employing a methodological triad of qualitative analyses, statistical evaluations and legal-dogmatic examinations, the research unraveled intriguing patterns and trends. Among the most salient observations was the pronounced propensity of adolescent boys to exhibit delinquent behaviours during their formative years. This observation, coupled with subsequent legal entanglements for a considerable segment of this demographic, underscores the gravity of the issue (Morina et al., 2012). A deeper exploration illuminated a nexus between juvenile delinquency and premature school departures, with financial motivations frequently emerging as a pivotal driver. Such revelations not only highlight the complexities of the issue but also emphasize the urgency of comprehensive crime prevention initiatives that extend beyond punitive measures to encompass proactive interventions (Morina et al., 2012).

However, it's imperative to recognize and address the contextual and geographical distinctions inherent in existing literature and this research endeavor. While prior research emanating from Fushe Kosovo offers invaluable insights, this study pivoted its focus towards the distinctive landscape of Awach Subcounty, Gulu District, Uganda. This geographical shift necessitated a recalibration of analytical lenses to account for region-specific variables encompassing educational infrastructure, socio-economic dynamics, security parameters and broader sociocultural nuances. Furthermore, while preceding literature predominantly centered its

analytical framework on the Legal-Dogmatic methodologies prevalent in European contexts, this research embarked on a primary school-centric exploration of juvenile delinquency within Awach Subcounty. Such contextual shifts and methodological adaptations not only unveil critical knowledge gaps but also underscore the imperative nature of localized, context-sensitive research initiatives.

Parallelly, in a divergent geographical and sociocultural context, Davrvishi, (2022) embarked on an investigative journey within Iran, aiming to ascertain the universality of the Problem Behaviour Theory (PBT). Utilizing a robust sample of 392 respondents, the study meticulously dissected individual vulnerabilities, opportunity risk matrices, perceived support systems and ensuing delinquent behaviours. Noteworthy findings emanated from this rigorous exploration, with the data patterns aligning strikingly with the foundational tenets of the PBT, thus echoing prior empirical validations witnessed in Western contexts (Darvishi et al., 2022). However, it remains paramount to juxtapose these findings against the backdrop of contrasting respondent demographics, research methodologies, and regional idiosyncrasies, thereby facilitating a more holistic understanding of juvenile delinquency across diverse contexts.

Furthermore, a comprehensive exploration necessitates delving into the seminal work by Elaina (2017), which meticulously explored the protective dynamics of parental and institutional (school-based) bonds against the backdrop of escalating delinquency rates. Adopting a longitudinal research design, complemented by Multilevel PoissonR models, the study unearthed invaluable insights. Central to the findings was the pronounced attenuating effect of robust parental and school bonds on delinquency trajectories among adolescents. However, juxtaposing this U.S.-centric research against the current endeavor underscores the significance of acknowledging and

navigating geographical, cultural and methodological divergences, thereby enriching the collective understanding and fostering collaborative research paradigms.

In summative reflection, while foundational literature offers invaluable foundational insights into the intricate tapestry of juvenile delinquency, a nuanced, context-sensitive and interdisciplinary approach remains imperative. Such a holistic trajectory not only augments scholarly discourse but also facilitates the formulation of efficacious interventions, thereby fostering societal well-being and holistic development.

The reviewed literature of Elaina (2017), used an in-depth interview as its data collection method and instrument whereas, the researcher, used questionnaire survey and questionnaire as data collection method and instrument respectively, hence, insinuating and pivotal concern thereby delving and unveiling the gap in as far as the method and instruments for collecting data were concerned. Again, the literature reviewed used qualitative as its research approach while the research done used both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The gap was that most of the studies on the level of juvenile delinquency in primary schools were conducted far away from the current study geographical scope (e.g. Morina et al,2012; Elaina, 2018) therefore their findings may be different from the finding in Gulu District. While other studies had relatively smaller sample sizes (e.g. Nabugoomu,2019) while the current study used a huge sample size of 444 respondents and participants rendering the results more comprehensive.

2.4 Relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout

The relationship between school dropout and juvenile delinquency is a topic of profound significance, encompassing multifaceted socio-cultural, institutional and individual dimensions.

In the Ugandan district of Mbale, Skylstad, Engebretsen, Nalugya, Okello and Tumwine (2021) conducted a seminal study shedding light on childhood substance use before the age of 10. Key findings unveiled three predominant themes: a conspicuous avoidance in addressing the issue due to leadership voids, shifting peer parental norms and ambivalence regarding children's rights. Furthermore, the community's perceived lack of accessible resources, including schools and law enforcement agencies, intensified the problem. The participants underscored the exigency for government intervention, emphasizing stringent regulations to curtail minors' access to substances (Skylstad & Engebretsen, 2021).

According to the study by Okol James (2017), he explored the nexus between school dropouts and socio-economic determinants in the Chawente Sub-county of Apac District. The research illuminated pervasive challenges such as poverty, corporal punishment, and extended commuting distances to schools as primary contributors to school dropout rates. Furthermore, the repercussions of these dropouts were manifest in heightened crime rates, illiteracy and early pregnancies, necessitating community-based interventions and policy reforms (Okol, 2017).

Contrastingly, Viet and Biecker (2022) delved into legislative paradigms in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, highlighting the criminalization of consensual youth sexual encounters. The research delineated the intricacies of transforming protective legislation into patriarchal control mechanisms, underscoring the interplay between cultural norms, legislative frameworks and law enforcement practices (Viet & Biecker, 2022).

Methodologically, disparate research paradigms emerged across the studies, ranging from qualitative explorations to quantitative analyses. Furthermore, geographical variations between studies conducted in Spain, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo elucidated the contextual nuances shaping juvenile delinquency and school dropout dynamics. Such variations

necessitate a nuanced understanding, emphasizing context-specific interventions grounded in socio-cultural realities (Asuncion, Fenandeze, Juarros, & Rodriguez, 2016).

In a study conducted by Rumberger (2011), the Push and Pull factors associated with school dropout were examined within the context of the United States. However, the research I conducted put lots of emphasis on the importance of individual factors such as academic struggles, family circumstances, and socio-economic status in influencing dropout rates among others. Additionally, institutional factors like school climate, teacher-student relationships and curriculum relevance were found to significantly impact student retention. The study underscores the necessity for schools to adopt holistic strategies that address both academic and socio-emotional needs of students to mitigate dropout rates effectively (Rumberger, 2011).

Contrastingly, a study by Sserwanja, Mwesigwa and Muhanguzi (2019) explored the socio-cultural determinants of school dropout in Uganda, shedding light on factors such as early marriages, cultural practices and gender disparities. The research highlighted the inter-section of gender, culture and education, emphasizing the need for gender-sensitive policies and community-based interventions to address systemic barriers to education (Sserwanja, Mwesigwa & Muhanguzi, 2019).

Furthermore, Smith and Brooks (2017) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis examining the global trends and patterns of school dropout and juvenile delinquency. The research synthesized findings from multiple countries, emphasizing commonalities and differences in risk factors, protective factors, and intervention strategies. The meta-analysis elucidated the significance of contextual factors, including socio-economic conditions, legislative frameworks, and cultural norms, in shaping juvenile delinquency and school dropout dynamics across diverse settings. The study calls for a collaborative, evidence-based approach that transcends geographical boundaries

and fosters international cooperation to address this pressing issue effectively (Smith & Brooks, 2017).

Moreover, a study by Aluede, Imhonde and Imonikhe (2012) explored the role of school-based interventions in mitigating juvenile delinquency and school dropout rates in Nigeria. The research emphasized the efficacy of mentoring programs, vocational training and extracurricular activities in fostering academic engagement, social integration and positive youth development. The study underscores the potential of schools as catalysts for change and advocates for investment in holistic, community-driven initiatives that empower students, families and educators alike (Aluede, Imhonde & Imonikhe, 2012).

In synthesizing the extant literature, it became evident that addressing the relationship between school dropout and juvenile delinquency necessitated a multifactorial, context-specific approach. As highlighted across diverse studies, individual, familial, institutional and socio-cultural factors intersect to shape students' trajectories, emphasizing the importance of holistic, evidence-based interventions that prioritize equity, inclusivity and empowerment, Smith and Brooks, (2019).

In conclusion, the relationship between school dropout and juvenile delinquency is a complex interplay of individual, familial, institutional and socio-cultural factors. As highlighted across these studies, addressing this multifaceted challenge necessitates holistic approaches encompassing community engagement, policy reforms and evidence-based interventions tailored to diverse contexts. Future research endeavors should prioritize methodological rigor, interdisciplinary collaborations and contextual sensitivity to foster inclusive and empowering educational ecosystems globally.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter was primarily centered on research methodology, which serves as the framework guiding researchers in conducting their studies, as articulated by Kassue (2019). Key elements encompassed in this methodology included research orientation, design, study population, sample size determination, sampling procedure, data source, collection methods, instruments, quality control, ethical considerations, administration and data analysis.

3.1 Research Orientation

In this study, a Mixed-Method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Malunda and Atwebembeire (2021), citing Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), emphasized the pragmatism viewpoint, suggesting that comprehensive understanding cannot be achieved through a singular perspective. Quantitative research was utilized to describe phenomena using numerical data and measures, as expounded by Cohen (2018). This approach facilitated data analysis from a broad to specific context, aligning with deductive reasoning principles highlighted by Newman (2014). Conversely, qualitative research, as advocated by Cohen & Marrison (2018), focused on obtaining nuanced insights into individuals' experiences, beliefs and behaviours, making it particularly relevant for exploring school dropout dynamics among primary schools in Awach Subcounty.

3.2 Research Design.

The study used concurrent/ convergent research design, which is considered a suitable research design for mixed method studies (Creswell & Plano, 2009). The concurrent mixed method design underscores collection of both quantitative and qualitative data at the same instance (Creswell, 2014). Implying, therefore, that this study collected quantitative data using questionnaires from teachers and students in the schools while simultaneously conducting interviews with Head teachers, PTA within the schools at the same point in time. Data analysis using the concurrent design is also done simultaneously with a goal of triangulation findings in mind (Creswell, 2014).

3.3 Study Population

The study population comprised individuals sharing relevant characteristics qualifying them as potential respondents, as accented by Chawla and Sondhi and echoed by Malunda and Atwembehire (2021). Accordingly, the population encompassed all head teachers (5), teachers (69), District Education Officers (1), and learners (3,768) from primary schools within Awach Subcounty, Gulu District, with the expectation that they would provide pertinent data essential for the research.

3.4 Sampling Size Determination

Sample size determination involved selecting the appropriate number of observations or replicates for inclusion in the statistical sample. In this study, the sample size was determined utilizing the table of sample sizes developed by Morgan and Krejcie (1970), as referenced by Chaokromthong and Sintao (2021), ensuring a representative and statistically significant sample for the research.

Table 1: Sampling frame

SN	Category	Population N	Sample S	Sampling Technique
01	Head teachers	05	05	Purposeful sampling
02	Teachers	69	59	Simple random sampling
03	Learners	3768	379	Simple random sampling
04	DEO	1	1	Purposeful sampling
05	PTA	5	05	Purposeful sampling
06	Probation officer	1	1	Purposeful sampling
07	Cultural Leader	1	1	Purposeful sampling

Source: Primary source (2025)

3.5 Sampling Procedure

The study utilized both probability and non-probability sampling techniques, incorporating both purposeful and simple random sampling methods. For probability sampling method the study used simple random sampling particularly the lottery method (Creswell, 2014) In the lottery method participants assigned codes and names written on pieces of paper and put in a box, the researcher then shook the box so that all the participants had the same chances of being chosen, he then chose one code at a time until the sample size was reached (Creswell, 2014). The lottery method was used to select teachers and students because the population was relatively huge. The merit of this method was that it gave all participants equal chances of being selected for the study and so the results of the study can be generalized to the study population. The non-probability method used judgmental/purposive sampling to select head teachers, five (5) PTA members, one (1) probation officer, one (1), traditional leader and one (1) because the researcher believed that those category

of participants had knowledge and understanding about the teaching methods and academic achievement of pupils in primary schools which provided key information to the study (Neuman, 2014). The merit of judgmental sampling particularly expert judgmental sampling is that information is obtained from key informants who are experts in the field under study (Neuman, 2014).

3.6 Types of Data

In conducting the research, the researcher employed both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data encompassed information obtained directly from the respondents, including head teachers, teachers, learners, PTA members, Cultural Leader, Probation Officer, and District Education Officer of Gulu District. Conversely, secondary data comprised information sourced from written records such as enrollment records, dropout lists and completion rates, among others.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

The research adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, encompassing questionnaire surveys, interviews and focused group discussions.

3.7.1 Questionnaire Survey Method

The questionnaire survey method, as described by Malunda and Atwebembeire (2021), involves administering structured questionnaires to a large group of participants. This method, most suited for quantitative research, enabled the researcher to efficiently collect substantial data within a short period, cost-effectively and without compromising respondent anonymity, especially on sensitive issues like abortion. The tapestry of questionnaire survey was that it made the researcher to deliver the questionnaire by hand to individual respondents, when they filled in, he (the researcher) collected them.

3.7.2 Focused Group Discussion

Focused Group Discussion entailed gathering a select group of 8-10 participants associated with the research problem for an interactive session lasting between one to two hours, as outlined by Patton (2002) and cited by Malunda and Atwebembeire (2021). This method fostered focused discussions, encouraging authentic data sharing due to the researcher's presence and the informal, interactive setting.

Additionally, this method became a pivotal aspect of this research because it insinuated the researcher into getting an instant data from the informants. These were the teachers who knew one another well and they became free to discuss without hesitation, because they had developed trust and confidence upon one another.

3.8 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instruments comprised questionnaires and interview guides.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire served as a structured set of questions aimed at eliciting specific responses from the respondents, as described by Ahmad (2022). The research employed both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires to cater for varied response categories. For the case of my study, questionnaires were administered to learners and teachers. This was because teachers and learners were in great numbers. Additionally, a Likert Scale scoring system, ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1), facilitated efficient data analysis, given the literacy level of the population studied and the substantial sample size of 144 respondents. Questionnaire addressed all the three objectives: the level of juvenile delinquency, the level of school dropout, and the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout.

3.8.2 Interview Guide

An interview was defined as a planned dialogue, where one party posed questions and the other provided answers, as per Merriam Webster's 2018 definition. As Malunda and Atwebembeire (2021) had cited Best and Kahn (1986), the interview method encompassed one-on-one interactions. It was observed that interviews were flexible tools, allowing for in-depth exploration of people's behaviour, opinions, and actions, as highlighted by Cohen (2018). Both structured and unstructured interviews were employed, depending on the nature of the information sought from key informants like Head teachers, teachers, school management members and select learners. After scheduling appointments, interviews were conducted to gather essential qualitative data, offering insights into various aspects, including internal, external and instructor effectiveness. Interview Guide addressed for this case the research objective three that geared toward knowing the opinion, behaviour and action of the respondents.

3.9 Quality Control

To ensure the instruments used for data collection were appropriate, the researcher focused on both validity and reliability.

3.9.1 Validity of the questionnaire data instrument

Validity, referring to the accuracy of the tool, particularly content validity concerning juvenile delinquency and school dropout, was upheld, aiming for a content validity index of at least 0.70 or 70%. The researcher endeavored and constructed data collection tools which typically measured what they were to measure. The Researcher made it a point that the instruments he applied were appropriate. This, therefore, explains why in the study, the researcher was able to arrive at the

content validity index which is from 0.70 and above, reiterating the appropriateness of the instruments used.

3.9.2 Reliability of the questionnaire data Instrument

Reliability is defined by Newman (2014) as the consistency in measuring a concept, was maintained through open-ended questions, clear instructions to research assistants, and pretesting of instruments. Pretesting was done especially with some selected participants who did not surface in the actual data collection. Participants in the pretest worked so hard and made some reasonable words, like “it yielded the same result” that added up on the structure, layout of the question. Further, different method of data collection used as stated. This was to allow for triangulation-meaning that the more methods the researcher used the better for the reliability.

3.9.3 Trustworthiness of questionnaire data instrument

Picking from Yvonna (1985), trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence that the research findings are accurate, reliable and reflect reality. It therefore ensures that the research is rigorous, credible and acceptable by others. To achieve this, therefore, I prolonged engagement with participants used various methods of data collection and tools to allow for triangulation. Finally, I kept checking the participants time and again. To sum it up trustworthiness was useful to me because it made me did rigorous research allowed my research acceptable for academic work and policy use.

3.9.4. Credibility.

This refers to the extent to which the instrument produces accurate, truthful, and believable data about what it is intended to measure, (Uma and Bouge, 2026). In order to arrive at this I made the questions to appear appropriate and understandable to the respondents. I also pretested the questionnaire on a small sample to avoid ambiguity-question with double sides; and lastly I also endeavored to ask same question in the same way to rule out and doubt. All these helped to bring the accuracy of the data I collected improved quality of data analysis and further reduced greatly measurement error.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to key ethical principles to ensure the protection of participants and the integrity of the research process. Approval was sought from the relevant ethics body, and the study complied with ethical requirements such as confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent. These principles were observed to safeguard participants' rights and promote responsible research conduct. Ethical compliance also helped to build trust between the researcher and respondents, thereby improving the quality and reliability of the data collected.

Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study to protect participants from any potential harm or exposure. All information provided by respondents was treated as private and used solely for academic purposes. Identifiable details were not disclosed, and data was stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. The researcher also avoided the use of covert recording devices without participants' permission, ensuring transparency in the data collection process. This approach encouraged openness among respondents and enhanced the accuracy of the information collected.

Voluntary participation was ensured by giving respondents the freedom to decide whether to take part in the study without any form of coercion. Participants were informed that their involvement was entirely optional and that they could decline or withdraw at any stage without facing any negative consequences. No incentives or pressures were used to influence participation, allowing respondents to make independent decisions. This ensured that the data collected reflected genuine views and experiences of the participants.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection began. Respondents were provided with clear information about the purpose of the study, procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, and their rights as participants. For minors, assent forms were used alongside consent from guardians to ensure ethical compliance. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This process ensured that participation was based on full understanding and willingness.

Overall, the study upheld ethical standards by respecting human dignity, autonomy, and privacy of participants. These ethical considerations enhanced the credibility and integrity of the research while ensuring that participants were not exposed to harm. By maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the research process, the study fostered a positive relationship with respondents and ensured the collection of reliable and valid data.

3.12 Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 25.0) and quantitative output realized. Descriptive statistics output was presented in frequencies and percent to illustrate any central tendencies and dispersions (Kaur, et. al (2018). Inferential statistics was used to analyze research questions (1, 2 and 3) and inferential statistics output were

obtained at univariate level, bivariate level and multivariate levels. At univariate level item analysis was used using descriptive statistics, while at bivariate level Standard deviation was used to analyze differences between two variables and at Multivariate level. Research Questions 1 and 2 was analyzed using Standard Deviation while Research Question 3 was analyzed using Pearson Product-moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression analysis for Hypothesis Three (3).

For qualitative data, data from interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis and the researcher identified, analyzed, and reported the patterns of an interview and identified the main themes that emerged from the responses given by the respondent (Bryman, 2016). Upon completion, the researcher proceeded with the interpretation of data.

3.13 Limitations and Delimitations

The study was geographically limited to five selected primary schools in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District and focused on pupils aged 10 to 15 years. This delimitation was intentional in order to obtain in-depth and context-specific insights into juvenile delinquency and school dropout within a manageable scope. However, this narrow focus limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions or age groups. Despite this limitation, the selected area provided a relevant setting due to its known challenges related to dropout and delinquent behaviour.

The study also faced limitations related to the sample population, as it concentrated mainly on primary school pupils and key stakeholders within the selected schools. This excluded perspectives from other groups such as out-of-school youth or parents who may have provided additional insights. While this may limit the breadth of perspectives, the focus allowed for detailed

exploration of school-based experiences. The delimitation ensured that the study remained aligned with its objectives and research questions.

Potential response bias was another limitation, as some respondents may have provided socially desirable answers, especially on sensitive issues such as delinquency and dropout. This challenge was addressed by ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and creating a safe environment for respondents to express themselves freely. Additionally, the training of research assistants helped minimize errors and improve the consistency of data collection. These measures enhanced the credibility and reliability of the findings.

Logistical challenges were also encountered due to the distance between Amuru and Awach Subcounty during data collection. Transportation constraints and accessibility of some schools posed difficulties in reaching respondents on time. To address this limitation, the researcher secured reliable means of transport and temporarily resided in Awach during the data collection period. This helped to ensure timely completion of the research activities and reduced delays.

Time and financial constraints also limited the scope of the study, particularly in terms of sample size and duration of data collection. These constraints restricted the ability to cover more schools or extend the study period for longitudinal analysis. However, careful planning, efficient use of resources, and clear research focus helped to mitigate these challenges. Despite these limitations, the study was successfully conducted and produced meaningful findings relevant to the research objectives.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data, analysis, and interpretation of findings derived from the field study. The presentation is guided by the study objectives and key research questions, which focus on the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools, the level of school dropout, and the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout. The analysis seeks to provide a clear understanding of the patterns, trends, and relationships emerging from the data collected.

The section is organized into different components, including demographic characteristics of respondents, descriptive statistical analysis and tabular presentations addressing each research question. The use of tables and percentages helps to simplify the data and make interpretation more meaningful. Each set of results is carefully analyzed to ensure that it aligns with the study objectives and provides relevant insights into the problem under investigation.

Out of the 444 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 300 were successfully completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 66%. This level of response is considered adequate and acceptable for educational research, as it provides a reliable basis for analysis and generalization of findings (Amin, 2006). The relatively high response rate enhances the credibility of the study and ensures that the conclusions drawn are based on sufficient and representative data.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents in terms of gender, level of education and school type.

Table 2:Demographic of the respondents

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	213	71.0
Female	87	29.0
Total	**300**	**100.0**
Level of Education	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Certificate	187	62.3
Diploma	90	30.0
Degree	23	7.7
Total	**300**	**100.0**
School Type	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Government Aided	175	58.3
Private	125	41.7
Total	**300**	**100.0**

In the study titled "Juvenile Delinquency and School Drop-Out in Primary Schools in Gulu District: A Case of Awach Sub County," the demographic breakdown provides essential insights into the profile of the respondents.

Firstly, concerning gender distribution, a clear disparity emerges. Out of the 300 respondents surveyed, a significant majority were males, comprising 71% of the total. In contrast, females constituted a minority, making up just 29% of the sample.

Shifting the focus to the educational backgrounds of the respondents, that is the learners, teachers, cultural leader, probation officer, head teachers and District Education Officer the data reveals

distinct patterns. The largest segment of respondents, accounting for 62.3%, held certificates as their highest educational qualification. Following this, 30% of the respondents possessed diplomas, signifying a substantial proportion with mid-level formal education. A smaller fraction, 7.7%, had attained a degree. Cumulatively, this educational breakdown underscores that a majority of the respondents have either lower or mid-level formal educational qualifications. This information becomes pivotal when contextualizing the factors and dynamics contributing to juvenile delinquency and school drop-outs, especially concerning educational attainment levels.

Lastly, when examining the type of schools attended by the respondents, another noteworthy observation surfaces. A majority, specifically 58.3%, were enrolled in government-aided schools. In contrast, 41.7% of the respondents received their education in private institutions. This distribution indicates a predominant focus on the dynamics, challenges and nuances present within government-aided educational settings in the Gulu District. Understanding these nuances becomes crucial as it can shed light on systemic factors, resources and environments influencing juvenile behaviours and school attrition rates.

4.2 Level of Juvenile Delinquency among Primary Schools

This section presents findings on the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools based on respondents' perceptions across different forms of behaviour.

Table 3: Juvenile delinquency

Juvenile delinquency	SD	D	SD+D	NS	A	SA	A+SA
a) Stealing							
High number of pupils engage in stealing	21.0%	16.7%	37.7%	24.3%	18.7%	19.3%	38.0%
There are rules against stealing in school	10.3%	12.0%	22.3%	17.3%	30.7%	29.7%	60.3%
Moderate number of pupils complain of losing property at school	9.0%	17.4%	26.4%	20.1%	31.8%	21.7%	53.5%
Low number of pupils complain of losing property at school	10.0%	18.3%	28.3%	25.7%	30.3%	15.7%	46.0%
b) bullying							
There is low rate of bullying	11.7%	20.0%	31.7%	22.0%	27.0%	19.3%	46.3%
There is moderate rate of bullying	14.3%	24.0%	38.3%	24.7%	23.3%	13.7%	37.0%
Candidate class practice high rate of bullying	24.7%	23.0%	47.7%	24.0%	18.7%	9.7%	28.3%
Low number of pupils left school due to bullying	16.0%	21.3%	37.3%	30.0%	18.0%	14.7%	32.7%
Bullying is punishable in the school	13.0%	10.7%	23.7%	19.0%	26.7%	30.7%	57.3%
c) Vandalism							
High number of pupils destroy school property	18.0%	16.7%	34.7%	20.3%	26.3%	18.7%	45.0%
Moderate number of pupils destroy property of the community	14.0%	19.0%	33.0%	25.7%	32.0%	9.3%	41.3%
Low number of pupils have paid fine due to vandalism	13.7%	16.3%	30.0%	25.3%	32.3%	12.3%	44.7%
Vandalism occurs during sports day	11.7%	13.0%	24.7%	15.3%	38.3%	21.7%	60.0%
There is a system in place to handle vandalism in the school	17.3%	14.7%	32.0%	12.7%	31.3%	24.0%	55.3%
d) Truancy							

Some pupils jump over the fence from school	8.3%	13.0%	21.3%	13.7%	35.0%	30.0%	65.0%
There is punishment for those who jump over the fence	10.0%	9.7%	19.7%	14.3%	36.7%	29.0%	65.7%
Pupils are helped not to jump over the fence	11.0%	9.7%	20.7%	19.3%	33.7%	26.3%	60.0%
Some pupils create their own path to get out of school	14.0%	13.3%	27.3%	29.7%	21.7%	21.3%	43.0%
e) Abortion							
Low number of pupils do abortion in the school	11.7%	15.0%	26.7%	31.0%	24.0%	18.3%	42.3%
Moderate number of school girls feel sick due to abortion	13.7%	12.0%	25.7%	31.7%	23.3%	19.3%	42.7%
There is a rule against abortion in the school	18.7%	13.7%	32.3%	27.3%	19.3%	21.0%	40.3%
High number of school girls are sent out of school due to involvement in abortion	12.3%	14.0%	26.3%	29.3%	23.3%	21.0%	44.3%
Cases of abortion is punishable in the school	13.7%	19.7%	33.3%	25.0%	26.7%	15.0%	41.7%
d) Fighting							
There is high rate of fighting among pupils	11.7%	18.7%	30.3%	20.0%	28.0%	21.7%	49.7%
Moderate number of pupils hurt themselves in school due to fighting	14.7%	13.0%	27.7%	18.3%	35.3%	18.7%	54.0%
Low number of pupils have been sent home due to fighting	11.0%	11.7%	22.7%	17.0%	28.3%	31.7%	60.0%
Fighting is not allowed in the school	12.3%	9.7%	22.0%	14.0%	37.3%	26.7%	64.0%

Field data 2023

The data from Table 4.2.1 provides a revealing insight into the prevalence and perceptions surrounding juvenile delinquency within primary schools in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. The data sheds light on various concerning behaviours, including truancy, bullying, fighting, vandalism, stealing and abortion. These behaviours have a significant impact on the safety, well-being, and educational experience of the students. The data highlights the urgent need for

interventions and support mechanisms to address these challenges and create a safe and conducive learning environment for all students.

Truancy emerges as a prominent issue in the data, with a substantial 65.0% of pupils admitting to jumping over the school fence, indicating a significant challenge in maintaining attendance and ensuring the safety of students. This concern is closely followed by the 55.3% who believe that truancy is a prevailing issue, reinforcing the urgency for strategic interventions and support mechanisms to encourage regular school attendance and deter risky behaviour.

Bullying is another significant concern, with a notable 47.7% of candidate class students acknowledging practicing bullying at high rates. This emphasizes the critical need for anti-bullying initiatives and awareness campaigns to foster a positive and respectful school culture. Additionally, the data reveals that 46.0% of pupils affirm the existence of bullying, highlighting the pervasive nature of this behavioural concern within the school community.

Fighting is also a pressing concern, with 49.7% of students indicating a high rate of physical altercations among peers. This alarming statistic is juxtaposed with 41.7% acknowledging its prevalence, suggesting an urgent need for conflict resolution strategies, counseling services and fostering a positive school culture to address aggressive behaviour and promote peaceful interactions among students.

Vandalism is recognized as a significant issue, with 57.3% of respondents acknowledging its existence and 34.7% of pupils engaging in destructive behaviours towards school property. The occurrence of vandalism during sports days, as noted by 24.7%, necessitates heightened vigilance, monitoring and interventions targeting specific events or contexts to prevent property damage and maintain a safe school environment.

The data also highlights concerns related to stealing, with 38.0% of students attesting to its high prevalence and 37.7% actively engaged in such illicit activities. However, there is a significant disparity, with only 22.3% acknowledging rules against stealing, highlighting the need for increased awareness of disciplinary measures and the importance of maintaining a safe and secure school environment.

Regarding abortion, the data indicates that 43.0% of students agreed or strongly agreed with statements related to abortion in school. This suggests an urgent need for comprehensive sexual education programs and support services to address reproductive health issues among schoolgirls and promote a safe and supportive environment for all students.

Therefore, the data from Table 3 provides valuable insights into the prevalence and perceptions surrounding juvenile delinquency within primary schools in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. The findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions, awareness campaigns, and support mechanisms to address truancy, bullying, fighting, vandalism, stealing and reproductive health issues among students.

4.2.1 Research Question One: What is the level of Juvenile Delinquency among pupils

Respondents were asked about the level of juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District and the responses were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as presented in the table below.

Table 4: Level of Juvenile Delinquency among Pupils in Primary Schools

Juvenile Delinquency Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stealing				
High number of pupils engage in stealing	1	5	2.99	1.405
There are rules against stealing in school	1	5	3.57	1.305
Moderate number of pupils complain of losing property at school	1	5	3.40	1.253
Low number of pupils complain of losing property at school	1	5	3.23	1.210
Bullying				
There is low rate of bullying	1	5	3.22	1.291
There is moderate rate of bullying	1	5	2.98	1.264
Candidate class practice high rate of bullying	1	5	2.66	1.295
Low number of pupils left school due to bullying	1	5	2.94	1.274
Bullying is punishable in the school	1	5	3.23	1.210
Vandalism				
High number of pupils destroy school property	1	5	3.11	1.375
Moderate number of pupils destroy property of the community	1	5	3.04	1.203
Low number of pupils have paid fine due to vandalism	1	5	3.13	1.230
Vandalism occurs during sports day	1	5	3.45	1.283
There is a system in place to handle vandalism in the school	1	5	3.51	1.365
Truancy				
Some pupils jump over the fence from school	1	5	3.65	1.262
There is punishment for those who jump over the fence	1	5	3.82	1.171
Pupils are helped not to jump over the fence	1	5	3.55	1.278
Some pupils create their own path to get out of school	1	5	3.30	1.425
Abortion				
Low number of pupils do abortion in the school	1	5	3.22	1.243
Moderate number of school girls feel sick due to abortion	1	5	3.23	1.276
There is a rule against abortion in the school	1	5	3.10	1.383
High number of school girls are sent out of school due to involvement in abortion	1	5	3.27	1.281
Cases of abortion is punishable in the school	1	5	3.23	1.310
Fighting				
There is high rate of fighting among pupils	1	5	3.29	1.311
Moderate number of pupils hurt themselves due to fighting	1	5	3.30	1.315
Low number of pupils have been sent home due to fighting	1	5	3.59	1.340
Fighting is not allowed in the school	1	5	3.56	1.311

The findings indicate that stealing among pupils exists at a moderate level across schools in Gulu District. The mean values for stealing-related items range from (mean = 2.99, Std. Deviation = 1.405) to (mean = 3.57, Std. Deviation = 1.305), suggesting that while some pupils engage in stealing, the behaviour is not extremely widespread. The relatively higher mean for the presence of rules against stealing (mean = 3.57, Std. Deviation = 1.305) indicates that schools have established control measures to address the issue. However, the moderate level of complaints about lost property (mean = 3.40, Std. Deviation = 1.253) suggests that enforcement of these rules may not be fully effective. This implies that stealing remains a persistent challenge despite institutional efforts to regulate it.

Bullying was also found to occur at a moderate level, with mean scores ranging from (mean = 2.66, Std. Deviation = 1.295) to (mean = 3.23, Std. Deviation = 1.210). The relatively lower mean for high levels of bullying in candidate classes (mean = 2.66, Std. Deviation = 1.295) suggests that severe bullying may not be dominant. However, the presence of punishment mechanisms (mean = 3.23, Std. Deviation = 1.210) indicates that schools recognize bullying as an issue that requires disciplinary intervention. The moderate ratings for both low and moderate bullying levels imply that the behaviour exists but varies across schools. This highlights the need for strengthened preventive measures and awareness programs.

The results on vandalism indicate a moderate prevalence of destructive behaviour among pupils. The mean values range from (mean = 3.04, Std. Deviation = 1.203) to (mean = 3.51, Std. Deviation = 1.365), suggesting that incidents of property destruction occur but are somewhat controlled. The relatively higher mean for the existence of systems to handle vandalism (mean = 3.51, Std. Deviation = 1.365) indicates that schools have mechanisms in place to address such behaviour.

However, the occurrence of vandalism during events such as sports day (mean = 3.45, Std. Deviation = 1.283) suggests that supervision may be limited during certain activities. This implies that while management systems exist, there are still gaps in monitoring pupil behaviour.

Truancy appears to be one of the more prominent forms of juvenile delinquency in primary schools. The mean scores range from (mean = 3.30, Std. Deviation = 1.425) to (mean = 3.82, Std. Deviation = 1.171), indicating relatively higher levels compared to other forms of delinquency. The high mean for punishment for jumping over fences (mean = 3.82, Std. Deviation = 1.171) suggests that schools actively respond to truancy. Additionally, the high mean for pupils jumping over fences (mean = 3.65, Std. Deviation = 1.262) indicates that such behaviour is quite common. This suggests that despite the presence of disciplinary measures, truancy remains a significant challenge that requires more comprehensive interventions.

The findings on abortion-related issues indicate a moderate level of concern within schools. The mean scores range from (mean = 3.10, Std. Deviation = 1.383) to (mean = 3.27, Std. Deviation = 1.281), suggesting that while cases exist, they may not be highly prevalent. The presence of rules against abortion (mean = 3.10, Std. Deviation = 1.383) indicates that schools have policies addressing the issue. However, the relatively moderate means for cases of illness and school dismissal related to abortion (mean = 3.23, Std. Deviation = 1.276) suggest that the issue persists. This may also indicate underreporting due to the sensitive nature of the subject.

Fighting among pupils was also found to occur at a moderate level across schools. The mean scores range from (mean = 3.29, Std. Deviation = 1.311) to (mean = 3.59, Std. Deviation = 1.340), indicating that physical conflicts are fairly common. The relatively higher mean for pupils being sent home due to fighting (mean = 3.59, Std. Deviation = 1.340) suggests that disciplinary

measures are enforced. Additionally, the high mean for rules against fighting (mean = 3.56, Std. Deviation = 1.311) indicates that schools have clear policies in place. However, the continued occurrence of fighting suggests that these measures are not entirely effective in preventing conflicts. Overall, juvenile delinquency in Gulu District primary schools exists at a moderate level, with varying intensity across different forms of behaviour.

4.2.2 Qualitative Findings on the Level of Juvenile Delinquency among Learners

The qualitative findings are based on in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including head teachers, teachers, the District Education Officer (DEO), PTA representatives, a probation officer, and a cultural leader. The respondents, coded as A, B, C, D, and E, comprised both male and female participants drawn from different institutional levels. Respondent A (Male, Head Teacher), Respondent B (Female, Teacher/PTA), Respondent C (Male, DEO), Respondent D (Male, Cultural Leader), and Respondent E (Female, Teacher) provided insights grounded in their daily interactions with learners. These participants were purposively selected due to their involvement in school management, discipline, policy implementation, and community engagement, enabling them to provide rich, experience-based perspectives on juvenile delinquency. The analysis followed a systematic qualitative procedure involving transcription, coding, identification of patterns, and grouping of responses into themes, while verbatim quotations and real-life examples were retained to enhance authenticity and contextual understanding.

The findings reveal that juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional issue influenced by social, economic, cultural and psychological factors operating within family, school, peer and community contexts. There was strong convergence in views across respondents, indicating that delinquency

is a shared concern cutting across institutional and social structures rather than an individual problem.

Table 5: Summary of Respondents, Gender, Themes and Quotations

Code & Respondent	Gender	Theme	Quotations
A (Head Teacher)	Male	Social & Environmental Drivers	*"The desire to fit in or be accepted often leads kids down the wrong path."*
B (Teacher/PTA)	Female	Family Influence	*"The absence of strong parental figures… leaves kids susceptible to negative influences."*
C (DEO)	Male	Socio-Economic Factors	*"Growing up in environments marred by poverty… pushes kids towards criminal activities."*
D (Cultural Leader)	Male	Cultural & Media Influence	*"Today's media often romanticizes criminal activities."*
E (Teacher)	Female	Mental Health Factors	*"Many times, kids act out as a cry for help."*
A (Head Teacher)	Male	Prevention Strategies	*"Communication is the key for any successful prevention strategy."*
B (Teacher/PTA)	Female	Mentorship	*"Mentoring programs stand out as transformative."*
C (DEO)	Male	Institutional Support	*"Schools need structured systems to identify and support learners early."*
D (Cultural Leader)	Male	Cultural Integration	*"Traditional values should guide learners' behaviour."*
E (Teacher)	Female	Early Intervention	*"Schools should equip educators with tools to recognize early signs."*
A (Head Teacher)	Male	School Impact	*"The ripple effects… impact the entire school environment."*
B (Teacher/PTA)	Female	Academic Impact	*"Misconduct often leads to a decline in academic performance."*
C (DEO)	Male	Behavioural Cycle	*"Juvenile misconduct can become a cycle if not addressed early."*
D (Cultural Leader)	Male	Moral Decline	*"Such behaviours weaken respect for authority."*
E (Teacher)	Female	Emotional Impact	*"The emotional toll… is often underestimated."*

Theme 1: Social and Environmental Drivers of Juvenile Delinquency

Peer influence was consistently identified as a major driver of juvenile delinquency within the school environment. A male head teacher explained that learners often feel compelled to conform to peer expectations in order to gain acceptance and recognition among their colleagues. He noted that *"the desire to fit in or be accepted often leads kids down the wrong path,"* indicating that adolescents may engage in misconduct to maintain social belonging. A female teacher further observed that learners tend to imitate behaviours of dominant or influential peers, even when such behaviours are inappropriate. This suggests that peer groups play a critical role in shaping attitudes and actions among learners.

Family background was also highlighted as a key factor influencing learner behaviour, particularly in relation to parental supervision and guidance. A female teacher explained that learners who lack strong parental figures often struggle with discipline and are more likely to adopt negative behaviours. She stated that *"the absence of strong parental figures… leaves kids susceptible to negative influences,"* emphasizing the importance of family involvement in shaping behaviour. A PTA perspective reinforced this by noting that limited parental engagement in school activities weakens the reinforcement of discipline at home. This creates a gap between school expectations and home environments.

Socio-economic challenges were identified as underlying structural drivers of juvenile delinquency, particularly in relation to poverty and lack of opportunities. A male DEO explained that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds often experience deprivation and frustration, which may push them towards delinquent behaviour as a coping mechanism. He stated that *"growing up in environments marred by poverty… pushes kids towards criminal activities,"* highlighting that such behaviour may be driven by necessity rather than intention. A probation perspective further emphasized that neglect and lack of basic needs at household level contribute significantly to cases of theft and other minor offenses among learners.

Cultural influences and exposure to media were also identified as contributing factors to juvenile delinquency. A cultural leader explained that the erosion of traditional values and mentorship systems has weakened moral guidance among young people. He stated that *"today's media often*

romanticizes criminal activities," suggesting that such portrayals influence learners' perceptions and behaviours. It was further observed that learners often imitate behaviours seen in media without fully understanding the consequences. This highlights the role of modern socialization agents in shaping youth behaviour.

Psychological and emotional factors were equally emphasized as underlying causes of delinquency among learners. A female teacher explained that delinquent behaviour may be an expression of emotional distress, trauma, or unmet psychological needs. She stated that *"many times, kids act out as a cry for help,"* indicating that such behaviours may reflect deeper issues. Examples cited included *a learner shoplifting to impress peers*, *a child engaging in theft due to lack of supervision*, *youth vandalizing property due to poverty*, and *students imitating behaviours from media*. These findings demonstrate that juvenile delinquency is influenced by interconnected social, economic, cultural, and psychological factors.

Theme 2: School-Based Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Communication was identified as a fundamental strategy in preventing juvenile delinquency within schools, particularly in creating awareness and promoting positive behaviour among learners. A head teacher explained that engaging learners through assemblies, discussions, and real-life testimonies helps them understand the consequences of their actions. He noted that *"communication is the key for any successful prevention strategy,"* emphasizing that open dialogue fosters understanding and accountability. Such platforms provide opportunities for learners to reflect on their behaviour and make informed decisions. This approach also strengthens the relationship between learners and school authorities.

Mentorship programs were highlighted as effective in guiding learners towards positive behaviour and personal development. A female teacher explained that *"mentoring programs stand out as transformative,"* noting that learners benefit from guidance provided by responsible adults and peers. Mentorship creates supportive relationships that help learners navigate challenges and make better decisions. A parental perspective reinforced this by emphasizing that mentorship efforts should be aligned between home and school environments. This ensures consistency in discipline and values across different settings.

Institutional support through guidance and counseling services was emphasized as essential in addressing behavioural challenges among learners. A DEO explained that schools should establish structured systems for identifying and supporting learners at risk of delinquency. These systems enable early intervention and provide appropriate support mechanisms. From a probation perspective, it was noted that rehabilitation-oriented approaches are more effective than punitive measures. This ensures that learners are supported in correcting their behaviour while maintaining their well-being.

The integration of cultural values into school programs was also identified as a strategy for promoting discipline and moral behaviour. A cultural leader explained that traditional teachings emphasize respect, responsibility, and social cohesion, which are essential in shaping behaviour. Collaboration between schools and cultural institutions was suggested as a way of reinforcing these values. This approach provides learners with a sense of identity and belonging within their communities. It also strengthens the moral foundation necessary for positive behaviour.

Early detection and intervention were emphasized as critical in preventing the escalation of delinquent behaviour among learners. A female teacher stated that *"schools should equip educators with tools to recognize early signs,"* highlighting the need for teacher training in identifying warning indicators. Examples included *school assemblies with testimonies*, *mentorship programs*, *guidance and counseling sessions*, *teacher training workshops*, and *community engagement forums*. These strategies demonstrate the importance of proactive and coordinated approaches in addressing juvenile delinquency within schools.

Theme 3: Effects of Juvenile Delinquency on Learners and School Environment

Juvenile delinquency was found to have significant effects on the overall school environment, particularly in disrupting teaching and learning processes. A head teacher explained that misconduct creates instability and tension within the school, affecting both learners and teachers. He stated that *"the ripple effects… impact the entire school environment,"* indicating that even a single incident can influence the broader school climate. This disruption often leads to reduced concentration and increased fear among learners. It also affects the effectiveness of classroom management.

Academic performance was identified as one of the major areas affected by juvenile delinquency among learners. A female teacher explained that learners involved in misconduct often struggle to keep up with academic work due to absenteeism and lack of focus. She stated that *"misconduct often leads to a decline in academic performance,"* highlighting the link between behaviour and educational outcomes. This concern was also reflected at the administrative level, where it was noted that indiscipline contributes to poor school performance indicators. Such outcomes have long-term implications for learners' educational attainment.

The persistence and recurrence of delinquent behaviour were also highlighted as major concerns, particularly when early intervention is not implemented. A DEO explained that *"juvenile misconduct can become a cycle if not addressed early,"* indicating that such behaviours may develop into long-term patterns. A cultural perspective further noted that repeated misconduct can influence other learners, leading to the normalization of deviant behaviour. This creates a cycle that is difficult to break without targeted interventions.

The broader societal implications of juvenile delinquency were also emphasized, particularly in relation to moral decline and respect for authority. A cultural leader explained that such behaviours extend beyond schools and affect community values and social cohesion. This highlights the role of schools in shaping not only academic outcomes but also moral and social development. It also underscores the importance of addressing delinquency at both school and community levels.

Emotional and psychological effects were identified as significant consequences of juvenile delinquency for both victims and perpetrators. A female teacher noted that *"the emotional toll… is often underestimated,"* explaining that learners experience anxiety, fear, and trauma as a result of such incidents. Examples cited included *classroom disruptions*, *declining academic performance*, *repeat offenses*, and *emotional distress*. These findings demonstrate that juvenile delinquency has wide-ranging impacts on learners' well-being and school functioning.

Theme 4: Holistic and Multi-Stakeholder Approaches to Address Juvenile Delinquency

Addressing juvenile delinquency requires a collaborative approach involving multiple stakeholders working together to create supportive environments for learners. Emphasis was placed on continuous engagement with learners through open communication and dialogue. A

head teacher explained that such engagement fosters trust and accountability, enabling learners to respond positively to guidance. This approach also strengthens relationships between learners and school authorities.

Mentorship and parental involvement were identified as critical components of effective intervention strategies. A female teacher emphasized that consistent guidance helps learners make informed decisions and avoid negative behaviour. Parental involvement was also highlighted as essential in reinforcing discipline and ensuring consistency between home and school environments. This collaborative approach strengthens the support system available to learners.

Policy support and resource allocation were emphasized as necessary for effective management of juvenile delinquency. A DEO explained that schools require adequate staffing, training, and infrastructure to implement intervention programs successfully. This ensures that guidance and counseling services are accessible to learners in need. It also enhances the capacity of schools to respond effectively to behavioural challenges.

The role of cultural institutions and community leadership was highlighted in promoting discipline and moral values among learners. A cultural leader emphasized that traditional mentorship systems play a crucial role in guiding young people. Collaboration between schools and community leaders was seen as essential in addressing the root causes of delinquency. This approach integrates cultural values into modern education systems.

Mental health support was identified as a key component of a holistic approach to addressing juvenile delinquency. A female teacher explained that providing counseling services helps learners cope with emotional challenges and reduces the likelihood of misconduct. Examples highlighted included *counseling services*, *skills development programs*, *community-school partnerships*, *policy interventions* and *cultural mentorship initiatives*.

4.3 Level of School Dropout among Pupils in Gulu District

This section presents findings on the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District.

Table 6: School Dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District

School Dropout	SD	D	SD+D	NS	A	SA	A+SA
High (60 and above %							
Some pupils have dropped out of the school	12.0%	15.3%	27.3%	15.7%	34.3%	22.7%	57.0%
Low number of pupils leave the school	14.7%	16.7%	31.3%	17.3%	29.3%	22.0%	51.3%
Higher number of pupils leave the school	13.3%	14.3%	27.7%	14.0%	29.0%	29.3%	58.3%
Pupils are helped to finish up to P.7	11.0%	12.3%	23.3%	17.7%	32.0%	27.0%	59.0%
Some pupils leave school without completing due to indiscipline	12.0%	11.0%	23.0%	20.7%	34.7%	21.7%	56.3%
Moderate (30-60%							
Some pupils lure others to leave schooling	15.7%	12.3%	28.0%	18.7%	31.0%	22.3%	53.3%
Nearly good number of pupils leave school	12.7%	13.3%	26.0%	20.3%	30.7%	23.0%	53.7%
Some parents tell their children to stay at home	10.0%	15.1%	25.1%	21.4%	33.8%	19.7%	53.5%
Some pupils get pregnant at school	14.0%	16.7%	30.7%	19.7%	32.7%	17.0%	49.7%
All pupils report back to school after holidays	13.0%	15.3%	28.3%	23.3%	29.7%	18.7%	48.3%
Low (0-29%							
Very few pupils leave dropout of school	12.0%	19.3%	31.3%	25.0%	28.3%	15.3%	43.7%
Pupils are rewarded to remain at school	11.3%	14.0%	25.3%	26.3%	29.7%	18.7%	48.3%
Some pupils do not love to finish their studies.	9.3%	14.7%	24.0%	19.0%	37.7%	19.3%	57.0%
Some pupils remain to dig at home	10.7%	15.3%	26.0%	19.0%	31.7%	23.3%	55.0%
Some pupils get married during school	11.3%	14.7%	26.0%	23.7%	33.7%	16.7%	50.3%

Field data 2023

The table presents data on the rate of school dropout in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District, categorized by the level of agreement and disagreement with various statements related to school dropout and juvenile delinquency. The percentages within each category provide insights into the prevailing sentiments and experiences related to school dropout and its association with juvenile delinquency.

The data from the high (60% and above) school dropout category reveals that a significant percentage of respondents (57.0%) acknowledged that some pupils have dropped out of the school, underscoring the prevalence of this concerning issue within the community. Additionally, a high percentage (58.3%) agreed that a higher number of pupils leave the school, highlighting the substantial impact of school dropout on the community and the urgency of addressing this issue.

Transitioning to the moderate (30-60%) school dropout category, a notable percentage (56.3%) agreed that some pupils leave school without completing their education due to indiscipline, signaling a troubling link between juvenile delinquency and incomplete education. The data also suggests that peer influence and parental decisions contribute to moderate levels of school dropout, as indicated by the agreement percentages for statements related to luring others to leave schooling and parents encouraging their children to stay at home.

In the low (0-29%) school dropout category, although the percentage of agreement is lower, there are still concerning factors contributing to school dropout. These include students' lack of interest in completing their studies, engagement in domestic responsibilities, and early marriage during school. This underscores the multifaceted nature of school dropout, influenced by various socio-cultural and personal factors.

The data also points to a strong association between juvenile delinquency and school dropout, as evidenced by the prevalence of statements related to indiscipline, peer influence, and socio-cultural factors contributing to students' disengagement from the educational system. This highlights the need for comprehensive interventions that address both juvenile delinquency and school dropout as interconnected challenges.

Therefore, the data provides valuable insights into the complex relationship between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. It underscores the urgency of implementing comprehensive interventions that encompass community engagement, parental involvement, counseling services, and targeted programs to create a supportive, inclusive, and conducive learning environment for all students.

The analysis of the school dropout rates in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District underscores the multifactorial nature of students' decisions to disengage from the educational system. While juvenile delinquency emerges as a significant factor, influencing factors encompass peer dynamics, parental decisions, socio-cultural norms and students' perceptions of the value and relevance of education.

Addressing these challenges necessitates a holistic approach, encompassing community engagement, parental involvement, counseling services and targeted interventions to foster a supportive, inclusive and conducive learning environment for all students. The data highlights the need for proactive measures to address the multifaceted factors contributing to school dropout and juvenile delinquency.

The prevalence of peer influence and parental decisions in shaping students' educational pathways underscores the importance of community engagement and parental involvement in supporting

students' academic journey. Moreover, the socio-cultural factors influencing school dropout, such as domestic responsibilities and early marriages, call for culturally sensitive interventions that address the unique challenges faced by students within their social and cultural contexts.

Overall, the data provides valuable insights into the complex web of factors influencing school dropout in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District. It serves as a foundation for informed decision-making and targeted interventions aimed at addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by students and fostering an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all.

4.3.1 Research Question Two: What is the Level of School Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools in Gulu District?

Respondents were asked about the level of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District, and the responses were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to determine the levels as presented in the table below.

Table 7: Level of School Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools

School Dropout Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
High (60% and above)					
Low number of parents are called to school on cases of fighting involving their children	300	1	5	3.57	1.237
Some pupils have dropped out of the school	300	1	5	3.40	1.314
Low number of pupils leave the school	300	1	5	3.27	1.363
Higher number of pupils leave the school	300	1	5	3.47	1.389
Pupils are helped to finish up to P.7	300	1	5	3.52	1.305
Moderate (30–60%)					
Some pupils leave school without completing due to indiscipline	300	1	5	3.43	1.274
Some pupils lure others to leave schooling	300	1	5	3.32	1.363
Nearly good number of pupils leave school	300	1	5	3.38	1.315

School Dropout Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Some parents tell their children to stay at home	299	1	5	3.38	1.240
Some pupils get pregnant at school	300	1	5	3.22	1.300
Low (0–29%)					
All pupils report back to school after holidays	300	1	5	3.26	1.287
Very few pupils drop out of school	300	1	5	3.16	1.245
Pupils are rewarded to remain at school	300	1	5	3.30	1.245
Some pupils do not love to finish their studies	300	1	5	3.43	1.221
Some pupils remain to dig at home	300	1	5	3.42	1.289
Some pupils get married during school	300	1	5	3.30	1.233

Primary data, 2023

The findings under the high category indicate that school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District is moderately high. The mean values range from (mean = 3.27, Std. Deviation = 1.363) to (mean = 3.57, Std. Deviation = 1.237), suggesting that dropout is a noticeable concern. The relatively higher mean for parental involvement in discipline-related issues (mean = 3.57, Std. Deviation = 1.237) indicates that schools attempt to involve parents, although dropout persists. The mean for pupils being helped to complete Primary Seven (mean = 3.52, Std. Deviation = 1.305) suggests the presence of support mechanisms, though these are not entirely effective in preventing dropout.

The results further show that a considerable number of pupils have dropped out of school, as reflected by (mean = 3.40, Std. Deviation = 1.314). The finding that a higher number of pupils leave school (mean = 3.47, Std. Deviation = 1.389) reinforces the presence of dropout as a persistent issue. Although some respondents indicated a low number of pupils leaving school (mean = 3.27, Std. Deviation = 1.363), the overall trend suggests that dropout is not minimal. This indicates inconsistencies in retention levels across different schools.

In the moderate category, the findings indicate that behavioural and social factors contribute significantly to dropout. The mean for pupils leaving school due to indiscipline (mean = 3.43, Std. Deviation = 1.274) suggests that behavioural issues play a key role. Similarly, peer influence is evident, with pupils luring others to leave school (mean = 3.32, Std. Deviation = 1.363). The perception that a considerable number of pupils leave school (mean = 3.38, Std. Deviation = 1.315) further supports the presence of moderate dropout levels.

Parental influence also emerged as a significant factor, as indicated by (mean = 3.38, Std. Deviation = 1.240) for parents telling children to stay at home. This suggests that some dropout cases are influenced by decisions made at household level. Additionally, the issue of pregnancy among pupils (mean = 3.22, Std. Deviation = 1.300) highlights gender-related challenges affecting school retention. These findings indicate that dropout is influenced by both school-based and home-based factors.

Under the low category, the findings indicate that while some retention mechanisms exist, challenges still persist. The mean for all pupils reporting back after holidays (mean = 3.26, Std. Deviation = 1.287) suggests moderate compliance with school attendance. However, the perception that very few pupils drop out (mean = 3.16, Std. Deviation = 1.245) contrasts with other findings, indicating variability in dropout levels across schools. This suggests that dropout may be higher in some areas than others.

The findings also show that personal attitudes and socio-economic factors contribute to dropout. The mean for pupils lacking interest in completing studies (mean = 3.43, Std. Deviation = 1.221) indicates motivational challenges. Additionally, involvement in domestic work (mean = 3.42, Std. Deviation = 1.289) and early marriage (mean = 3.30, Std. Deviation = 1.233) further contribute to

dropout. Overall, the results indicate that school dropout in Gulu District exists at a moderate level, influenced by a combination of behavioural, socio-economic and cultural factors.

4.4.2 Qualitative Findings on the Level of School Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools

The qualitative findings presented in this section are based on in-depth interviews conducted with key education stakeholders, including head teachers, classroom teachers, education officials and community representatives. The respondents were coded as A, B, C, D and E, and included both male and female participants with direct experience in handling issues of pupil attendance and retention. Respondent A (Male, Head Teacher), Respondent B (Female, Teacher/PTA), Respondent C (Male, Education Officer), Respondent D (Male, Cultural Leader) and Respondent E (Female, Teacher) provided detailed insights grounded in real-life school and community experiences.

Table 8: Summary of Respondents, Gender, Themes and Quotations

Code & Respondent	Gender	Theme	Quotations
A (Head Teacher)	Male	Economic Factors	*"Economic factors are undeniably pivotal in understanding drop-out rates."*
B (Teacher/PTA)	Female	Institutional Challenges	*"Systemic inadequacies within schools contribute to drop-out rates."*
C (Education Officer)	Male	Social Pressures	*"Societal pressures and peer dynamics influence students to drop out."*
D (Cultural Leader)	Male	Curriculum Limitations	*"Rigid systems alienate learners with diverse needs."*
E (Teacher)	Female	Family Responsibilities	*"External pressures compel students to leave school."*
A (Head Teacher)	Male	Accessibility Challenges	*"Geographical isolation makes education inaccessible."*
B (Teacher/PTA)	Female	Inequality	*"Economic disparities widen educational gaps."*
C (Education Officer)	Male	Cultural Influence	*"Community expectations shape educational decisions."*

Code & Respondent	Gender	Theme	Quotations
D (Cultural Leader)	Male	Safety Issues	*"Safety concerns contribute to drop-out rates."*
E (Teacher)	Female	Environmental Factors	*"Poor facilities affect educational outcomes."*

Theme 1: Economic and Household Factors Influencing School Dropout

Economic constraints emerged as a major factor influencing school dropout among pupils, particularly in households facing financial instability. A head teacher explained that *"economic factors are undeniably pivotal in understanding the escalating drop-out rates,"* emphasizing that many families prioritize immediate income over long-term educational benefits. In such contexts, pupils are often required to contribute to household income through labour, which interferes with regular school attendance. This creates a conflict between schooling and survival needs, where education is viewed as secondary to economic demands. Such situations highlight the structural nature of dropout, where poverty directly limits access to education.

Financial hardship within families often leads to difficult decisions that result in pupils leaving school prematurely. It was observed that some learners voluntarily withdraw from school to engage in income-generating activities aimed at supporting their families. For instance, *a pupil leaving school to work in a factory to support household needs* demonstrates how economic pressure disrupts educational continuity. These decisions are not necessarily due to lack of interest in education but are driven by necessity and responsibility. This illustrates how poverty creates conditions that force pupils out of school.

Family dynamics and parental involvement were also identified as critical factors influencing dropout. A teacher explained that *"family dynamics and parental involvement play a pivotal role,"*

noting that pupils from supportive households are more likely to remain in school. In contrast, those from unstable or neglectful family environments often lack encouragement and guidance, which affects their motivation to continue with education. The absence of parental support weakens the reinforcement of school values at home, leading to increased absenteeism. This highlights the importance of family engagement in promoting educational retention.

The educational background of parents and guardians was found to influence pupils' perceptions of schooling and their likelihood of dropping out. It was explained that children from families with limited exposure to education may not fully appreciate its long-term benefits. Conversely, families with higher levels of education tend to prioritize schooling and encourage persistence among children. This indicates that attitudes toward education are often shaped by intergenerational experiences. It also underscores the importance of community sensitization on the value of education.

Sociocultural expectations within households further contribute to dropout, particularly where children are expected to take on responsibilities that conflict with schooling. A respondent noted that *"external pressures compel students to leave school,"* especially in cases where pupils are required to engage in domestic work or caregiving roles. Examples include *children caring for siblings or working in family businesses*, which limits their ability to attend school consistently. These competing demands create barriers to sustained participation in education. Overall, economic and household factors play a significant role in influencing school dropout.

Theme 2: School and Institutional Factors Contributing to Dropout

Institutional challenges within schools were identified as major contributors to pupil dropout, particularly in relation to inadequate resources and poor learning conditions. A teacher explained that *"systemic inadequacies within educational institutions contribute to drop-out rates,"* highlighting issues such as overcrowded classrooms and limited teaching materials. In such environments, pupils struggle to receive adequate attention from teachers, which affects their understanding of lessons. This often leads to frustration and disengagement from learning activities. Over time, this disengagement contributes to increased dropout rates.

The lack of adequate infrastructure was also identified as a significant barrier to effective learning. Some schools were reported to lack essential facilities such as classrooms, libraries, and sanitation systems. These deficiencies create an unconducive learning environment that discourages pupils from attending school regularly. For example, *a school with a student-teacher ratio of 70:1* limits effective interaction between teachers and learners, reducing the quality of education provided. Such conditions negatively affect pupil motivation and retention.

Curriculum rigidity was also highlighted as a factor contributing to dropout, particularly for pupils with diverse learning needs and interests. A respondent noted that *"rigid systems alienate learners with diverse needs,"* indicating that the education system does not adequately accommodate different learning abilities. Pupils who struggle academically may feel excluded and lose interest in school. This lack of inclusivity contributes to disengagement and eventual dropout. There is therefore a need for more flexible and learner-centered approaches.

Safety concerns within and around schools were also found to affect pupil retention. A community perspective indicated that unsafe environments discourage pupils from attending school consistently. This includes risks associated with traveling long distances, exposure to violence, or unsafe school surroundings. Such conditions create fear and anxiety among pupils, which affects their willingness to continue schooling. In some cases, these safety concerns directly lead to dropout.

Environmental factors such as poor sanitation and overcrowding were also identified as contributing to dropout. A teacher explained that *"poor facilities affect educational outcomes,"* noting that inadequate learning environments reduce pupil comfort and participation. Examples include *overcrowded classrooms and lack of sanitation facilities*, which negatively impact attendance and performance. These conditions highlight the importance of improving school infrastructure to enhance retention.

Theme 3: Socio-Cultural and Community Influences on School Dropout

Societal pressures and peer dynamics were identified as influential factors in shaping pupils' decisions to remain in or leave school. A respondent explained that *"societal pressures and peer dynamics influence students to drop out,"* noting that pupils often feel pressure to conform to community expectations or peer behaviours. In some cases, learners may be influenced by peers who have already dropped out of school. This creates a social environment where leaving school becomes normalized. Such influences significantly affect pupils' educational choices.

Cultural beliefs and community expectations were also found to shape attitudes toward education. A respondent noted that *"community expectations shape educational decisions,"* particularly in

areas where traditional practices take precedence over formal education. For example, in some communities, children are encouraged to engage in agricultural or vocational activities instead of attending school. These cultural norms influence both parents and pupils, contributing to dropout. This highlights the need for culturally responsive education strategies.

Gender roles and expectations were also identified as contributing to dropout, particularly for girls. In some communities, girls are expected to take on domestic responsibilities at an early age, which interferes with their education. These expectations limit their opportunities for continued schooling. This reflects broader gender inequalities that affect access to education. Addressing such norms is essential for improving retention rates.

Community attitudes toward education also play a significant role in influencing dropout rates. In communities where education is not highly valued, pupils are less likely to remain in school. Conversely, communities that prioritize education tend to have higher retention rates. This demonstrates the influence of collective beliefs on individual decisions. It also underscores the importance of community engagement in promoting education.

Social exclusion and bullying were also identified as factors that contribute to dropout. Pupils who feel marginalized or unsupported within the school environment may lose interest in education. For example, *a pupil facing bullying due to cultural background* may choose to leave school to avoid continued distress. Such experiences highlight the importance of creating inclusive and supportive school environments.

Theme 4: Accessibility, Safety and Environmental Factors Affecting School Dropout

Geographical accessibility was identified as a significant factor influencing school dropout, particularly for pupils in remote areas. A respondent explained that *"geographical isolation makes education inaccessible,"* noting that some pupils travel long distances to reach school. These journeys often involve difficult terrain and unsafe conditions. As a result, pupils may become discouraged from attending school regularly. This contributes to absenteeism and eventual dropout.

Transportation challenges were also highlighted as barriers to school attendance. In areas with limited or unreliable transport systems, pupils struggle to reach school on time. This is particularly challenging during adverse weather conditions. Such difficulties increase the likelihood of irregular attendance. Over time, this leads to disengagement and dropout.

Safety concerns were identified as major factors affecting pupils' willingness to attend school. A respondent noted that *"safety concerns contribute to drop-out rates,"* particularly in areas affected by crime or insecurity. Pupils may face risks while traveling to and from school or within the school environment itself. These risks create fear and anxiety, which discourage continued attendance. Ensuring safe learning environments is therefore critical.

Environmental conditions within schools were also found to influence dropout rates. A teacher explained that *"poor facilities affect educational outcomes,"* noting that inadequate infrastructure reduces pupil comfort and engagement. Issues such as lack of clean water, sanitation, and proper classrooms create unfavorable learning conditions. These challenges negatively affect attendance and performance.

Ecological and environmental challenges were also identified as barriers to education. In some cases, schools are located in areas prone to flooding, pollution, or other environmental hazards. These conditions disrupt learning and make it difficult for pupils to attend school consistently. Examples include *schools affected by flooding or poor sanitation systems*. These findings highlight the importance of improving environmental conditions to support educational continuity.

4.5: Research Question Three: Relationship between Juvenile Delinquency and School Dropout among Pupils

This section presents the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District.

Table 9: Relationship between Juvenile delinquency and school dropout

Relationship between Juvenile delinquency and school dropout		Juvenile delinquency	rate of school dropout
Juvenile delinquency	Pearson Correlation	1	.563**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	39754.401	16335.822
	Covariance	133.404	55.003
	N	299	298
rate of school dropout	Pearson Correlation	.563**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	16335.822	21310.187
	Covariance	55.003	71.511
	N	298	299

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout in Awach Subcounty, Gulu District reveals a statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient for juvenile delinquency and the rate of school

dropout is 0.563, indicating a moderate to strong positive correlation. This suggests that as the prevalence of juvenile delinquency increases, the rate of school dropout also tends to increase. The significance level of 0.01 (2-tailed) further confirms the robustness of this relationship, indicating that the observed correlation is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The positive correlation between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout underscores the interconnected nature of these phenomena within the educational context. It suggests that factors contributing to juvenile delinquency, such as indiscipline, peer influence and socio-cultural norms, may also play a role in influencing students' decisions to disengage from the educational system. Additionally, the correlation highlights the need for comprehensive interventions that address both juvenile delinquency and school dropout as interconnected challenges.

The significant positive correlation also emphasizes the importance of adopting a holistic approach to address these issues. Interventions aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency may have a positive impact on reducing the rate of school dropout and vice versa. This underscores the need for coordinated efforts that encompass community engagement, parental involvement, counseling services, and targeted interventions to foster a supportive, inclusive and conducive learning environment for all students.

Moreover, the correlation analysis provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators and stakeholders in designing evidence-based strategies to address juvenile delinquency and reduce school dropout rates. By recognizing the strong correlation between these two phenomena, educational institutions and community organizations can develop targeted programs and support structures that address the underlying factors contributing to both juvenile delinquency and school dropout.

Therefore, the positive correlation between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout highlights the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to address these challenges. Understanding the interconnected nature of these issues is crucial for developing effective interventions that promote student well-being, academic success and a safe and inclusive educational environment.

Table 10: Regression analysis table

Descriptive Statistics

Relationship between Juvenile delinquency and school dropout	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Juvenile delinquency	300	97.00	44.00	141.00	22939.00	76.7191	.66796	11.55007	133.404
rate of school dropout	300	47.00	22.00	69.00	15025.00	50.2508	.48905	8.45640	71.511

The descriptive statistics present a quantitative overview of the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout rates. The juvenile delinquency data, with a range of 97.00 (from 44.00 to 141.00), indicates considerable variability in delinquency rates among the 300 participants. The sum of juvenile delinquency scores is 22939.00, with a mean of 76.7191, reflecting the average delinquency rate. The standard deviation of 11.55007 and variance of 133.404 suggest a moderate level of dispersion around the mean.

In comparison, the school dropout rates exhibit a range of 47.00 (from 22.00 to 69.00), indicating variability in dropout rates across the sample. The sum of school dropout scores is 15025.00, with

a mean of 50.2508, representing the average dropout rate. The standard deviation of 8.45640 and variance of 71.511 suggest a moderate level of variability in school dropout rates.

The relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout is apparent in the means, with a higher mean for juvenile delinquency (76.7191) than for school dropout (50.2508). This suggests a tendency for higher delinquency rates to be associated with increased school dropout rates within the studied population. The provided descriptive statistics offer valuable insights into the central tendencies and variability of both juvenile delinquency and school dropout, forming a foundation for further analysis and exploration of potential correlations or causal relationships.

Table 11: Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.563[a]	.317	.314	7.01154	.317	137.103	1	296	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Juvenile delinquency

The Model Summary provides valuable insights into the relationship between the variables "Juvenile delinquency" and the "rate of school dropout." The R-squared value of 0.317 indicates that approximately 31.7% of the variability in the rate of school dropout can be explained by changes in juvenile delinquency. This suggests that juvenile delinquency is a significant predictor of the rate of school dropout, and it has a moderate to strong influence on the variability observed in school dropout rates.

The Adjusted R-squared value of 0.314 accounts for the impact of sample size and the number of predictors on the model's accuracy. This adjusted value indicates that approximately 31.4% of the

variability in the rate of school dropout is explained by changes in juvenile delinquency, considering the complexity of the model and the number of variables included.

The Standard Error of the Estimate, which is 7.01154, represents the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line. This value provides a measure of the accuracy of the prediction, with lower values indicating a better fit of the model to the data.

The Change Statistics indicate that the R-squared change is 0.317, which represents the increase in explanatory power resulting from including juvenile delinquency as a predictor in the model. The F Change statistic of 137.103 with a significance level (Sig. F Change) of 0.000 suggests that the inclusion of juvenile delinquency as a predictor significantly improves the model's ability to predict the rate of school dropout.

Table 12: ANOVA on rate of school dropout

Rate of school dropout						
Rate Of School Dropout			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)		9735.295	52	187.217	3.969	.000
	Linear Term	Weighted	6740.213	1	6740.213	142.891	.000
		Deviation	2995.082	51	58.727	1.245	.141
Within Groups			11556.762	245	47.170		
Total			21292.057	297			

The table above provides insights into the variations in the rate of school dropout across different groups. Specifically, it reveals a statistically significant disparity in dropout rates among these

groups, supported by an F-value of 3.969 and an associated p-value of .000. This implies that there are meaningful differences between the groups in terms of school dropout rates. Additionally, a pronounced linear trend is discernible across these groups, with a robust F-value of 142.891 and a corresponding p-value of .000, underscoring the consistency of this trend. However, when examining deviations from this linear pattern, the data suggests a lack of statistical significance, as evidenced by a more modest F-value of 1.245 and a p-value of .141. This indicates that while a linear trend exists, some variability around this trend is not statistically meaningful.

Table 13: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	18.593	2.735		6.798	.000	13.210	23.976			
	Juvenile delinquency	.413	.035	.563	11.709	.000	.343	.482	.563	.563	.563

a. Dependent Variable: rate of school dropout

The Coefficients table provides detailed information about the unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients, t-values, and significance levels for the regression model with "Juvenile delinquency" as the predictor and the "rate of school dropout" as the dependent variable.

The unstandardized coefficient (B) for the constant term is 18.593, with a standard error of 2.735. This constant term represents the value of the dependent variable when all independent variables are equal to zero.

For the predictor variable "Juvenile delinquency," the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.413, with a standard error of 0.035. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for "Juvenile delinquency" is 0.563, indicating the strength and direction of the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout.

The t-value for "Juvenile delinquency" is 11.709, and the associated p-value is 0.000. This indicates that the coefficient for "Juvenile delinquency" is statistically significant, suggesting that changes in juvenile delinquency have a significant impact on the rate of school dropout.

The 95.0% Confidence Interval for the coefficient of "Juvenile delinquency" ranges from 0.343 to 0.482. This interval provides a range of values within which the true population parameter is likely to fall with 95% confidence.

The Correlations section provides information about the correlations between the independent variable "Juvenile delinquency" and the dependent variable "rate of school dropout." The zero-order correlation (r) is 0.563, indicating a moderate to strong positive correlation between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout. The partial correlation and part correlation are also 0.563, reflecting the strong relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout rates after accounting for other variables in the model.

In summary, the Coefficients table provides detailed information about the regression coefficients, their significance and the strength of the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the rate of school dropout. The results indicate that juvenile delinquency has a significant and positive impact on school dropout rates, highlighting its importance as a predictor of student disengagement from the educational system.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of findings, followed by the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research based on the study objectives.

5.1 Discussion

The study examined the level of juvenile delinquency, the level of school dropout and the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout among pupils in primary schools in Gulu District. The discussion is presented according to the study objectives.

5.1.1 Level of Juvenile Delinquency among Pupils in Primary Schools

The findings from the study revealed that juvenile delinquency among pupils exists at a moderate level, with behaviours such as truancy, bullying, vandalism, stealing, fighting and abortion-related cases being reported across schools. Truancy emerged as one of the most prominent forms of delinquency, with pupils engaging in acts such as jumping over school fences, indicating absenteeism and weak enforcement of school rules. This finding is supported by Mukasa et al. (2021), who observed that poor parenting styles and lack of supervision contribute to delinquent behaviour among learners. However, this contrasts with Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who emphasized that school-related factors such as poor academic performance and lack of engagement are stronger predictors of learner disengagement than family influence alone. This suggests that truancy is shaped by both home and school environments rather than a single factor.

Bullying was also identified as a major concern, particularly among upper primary or candidate classes, reflecting the influence of age differences, power dynamics and peer pressure. This finding is consistent with Ahumuza (2017), who reported moderate levels of youth violence and aggression in school environments. However, it contrasts with Jangseng and Miyang (2022), who argued that cultural and gender norms, rather than peer dynamics alone, are the dominant drivers of aggressive behaviour among learners. This comparison indicates that while bullying is influenced by peer interactions within schools, broader socio-cultural expectations may also shape how such behaviours manifest.

The presence of vandalism and stealing points to deeper issues related to discipline, moral values, and respect for institutional property. These findings are supported by Shai et al. (2021), who highlighted that socio-economic and environmental challenges significantly influence youth involvement in delinquent behaviours. In contrast, Mwesigye (2018) argued that weak institutional control and ineffective school leadership are the primary causes of indiscipline, rather than external socio-economic pressures. This contrast suggests that while community conditions may influence behaviour, the role of school management and enforcement of rules is equally critical in shaping learner conduct.

The study also identified cases related to abortion among school-going girls, indicating gaps in sexual and reproductive health education. This finding is supported by Sully et al. (2018), who emphasized the need for comprehensive reproductive health services for adolescents in Uganda. However, it contrasts with Apiot et al. (2022), who attributed early pregnancies and related challenges more to economic hardship and school closures, particularly during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This comparison suggests that while lack of reproductive health education

is a key factor, broader socio-economic disruptions also play a significant role in influencing such outcomes.

Fighting among pupils was also found to be common, reflecting both peer influence and external societal pressures. This finding aligns with Ahumuza (2017), who identified aggression as a common behavioural issue among youth in school settings. However, it contrasts with Mukasa et al. (2021), who argued that family discipline and parenting styles are the primary determinants of aggressive behaviour among learners. This contrast indicates that fighting in schools may not only stem from family background but also from peer interactions and wider community influences, reinforcing the need for holistic interventions that address multiple contributing factors.

5.1.2 Level of School Dropout among Pupils in Primary Schools

The findings revealed that school dropout among pupils in primary schools exists at a moderate to high level, influenced by behavioural factors such as indiscipline, fighting, and lack of interest in studies. This finding is supported by Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who identified poor academic performance and indiscipline as key contributors to school dropout among learners. However, this contrasts with Jangseng and Miyang (2022), who argued that structural factors such as high costs of education and socio-economic inequalities play a more dominant role than behavioural issues. This suggests that while indiscipline contributes to dropout, economic barriers cannot be overlooked as major determinants.

Peer influence was also identified as a significant factor, with some pupils encouraging others to leave school, thereby increasing dropout rates. This finding is consistent with Mwesigye (2018), who emphasized the role of peer pressure in shaping learners' behaviour and educational decisions.

In contrast, Mukasa et al. (2021) argued that parental supervision and family environment have a stronger influence on learner retention than peer dynamics. This comparison indicates that dropout is influenced by both peer relationships within school and parental guidance at home.

Parental influence emerged as another critical factor contributing to dropout, particularly where parents instruct children to remain at home due to economic or social reasons. This finding aligns with Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who highlighted lack of parental support and care as major contributors to school dropout. However, it contrasts with Apiot et al. (2022), who emphasized that external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and economic disruptions are more significant drivers of dropout than parental decisions alone. This suggests that parental influence is often shaped by broader socio-economic conditions.

The study further revealed that socio-economic challenges such as poverty and engagement in domestic work significantly contribute to school dropout. This finding is supported by Jangseng and Miyang (2022), who identified economic hardship and household labor as key barriers to education. On the other hand, Mwesigye (2018) argued that lack of motivation and poor school environment may play a greater role than poverty alone in influencing dropout. This contrast highlights that while poverty is a major factor, internal school conditions also affect learner retention.

Early pregnancy and early marriage were also identified as major contributors to dropout, particularly among girls. This finding is consistent with Apiot et al. (2022), who emphasized that adolescent pregnancies and early marriages significantly disrupt girls' education. However, it contrasts with Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who focused more on academic and parental factors rather

than gender-specific challenges. This suggests that dropout among girls requires targeted interventions that address both educational and socio-cultural barriers.

5.1.3 Relationship between Juvenile Delinquency and School Dropout

The study established a statistically significant positive relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout, indicating that increased delinquent behaviour is associated with higher dropout rates. This finding is supported by Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who highlighted that indiscipline and behavioural challenges contribute directly to learners leaving school. However, this contrasts with Jangseng and Miyang (2022), who argued that economic and structural factors are more influential in determining dropout than behavioural issues. This comparison suggests that both behavioural and structural factors interact in shaping dropout outcomes.

The relationship between delinquency and dropout can also be explained through peer influence and social interactions among pupils. This finding aligns with Mwesigye (2018), who emphasized that peer dynamics play a critical role in shaping both behaviour and educational outcomes. In contrast, Mukasa et al. (2021) argued that family background and parenting styles are more significant determinants of both delinquency and dropout. This contrast indicates that both school-based and home-based factors jointly influence learner behaviour and retention.

The findings further suggest that socio-cultural factors contribute to both juvenile delinquency and school dropout. This is supported by Jangseng and Miyang (2022), who highlighted the influence of cultural norms and community expectations on education. However, it contrasts with Shai et al. (2021), who emphasized socio-economic and political factors rather than cultural influences as the

primary drivers of youth behaviour. This comparison suggests that delinquency and dropout are shaped by a combination of cultural and socio-economic conditions.

External factors such as economic hardship and crises were also found to influence both delinquency and dropout. This finding is consistent with Apiot et al. (2022), who noted that the COVID-19 pandemic increased both behavioural challenges and school dropout rates. In contrast, Sully et al. (2018) focused more on reproductive health challenges as key drivers of dropout rather than broader economic disruptions. This suggests that multiple external factors, including health and economic conditions, contribute to the relationship between delinquency and dropout.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that juvenile delinquency and school dropout are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. This aligns with Nabugoomu et al. (2019), who emphasized the need for integrated interventions addressing both behaviour and academic engagement. However, it contrasts with Mwesigye (2018), who suggested that addressing school-related factors alone may be sufficient to reduce dropout. The current study instead indicates that a holistic approach involving schools, families, and communities is necessary to effectively address both challenges.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study found that juvenile delinquency among pupils in primary schools exists at a moderate level, characterized by behaviours such as truancy, bullying, vandalism, stealing, fighting and abortion-related cases. These behaviours are influenced by a combination of family, school, and community factors.

The study also established that school dropout occurs at a moderate to high level and is influenced by factors such as indiscipline, peer pressure, parental influence, poverty, early pregnancy and lack of interest in education. These factors interact to create conditions that hinder continuous school attendance.

Additionally, the study found a significant positive relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout, indicating that increased delinquent behaviour leads to higher dropout rates. This highlights the need for integrated approaches to address both issues simultaneously.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that juvenile delinquency is a significant challenge in primary schools in Gulu District and contributes to school dropout. The presence of behaviours such as truancy, bullying, and fighting indicates gaps in discipline and guidance within schools and communities. It is further concluded that school dropout is influenced by a combination of behavioural, socio-economic, and cultural factors. Without addressing these underlying causes, efforts to improve retention may not be effective. The study also concludes that there is a strong relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout, suggesting that interventions targeting delinquent behaviour can positively impact school retention. A holistic approach involving schools, families and communities is therefore necessary.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends the implementation of early intervention programs in primary schools to identify and address signs of delinquency and disengagement. These programs should include counseling, mentorship and life skills training to support pupils' development.

There is a need to strengthen community and parental involvement in education by promoting awareness on the importance of schooling and encouraging active participation in pupils' academic lives. This will help create supportive environments for learners.

Teachers should be provided with training and resources to effectively manage behavioural challenges and create conducive learning environments. This includes skills in counseling, conflict resolution and classroom management.

Policy makers should develop and implement policies aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency and school dropout, including the provision of adequate resources for schools and support programs for vulnerable learners.

Finally, schools should establish strong guidance and counseling systems to address issues such as bullying, fighting, and reproductive health challenges. These systems will help pupils cope with challenges and remain engaged in their education.

5.5 Areas for Further Study

Further studies should adopt longitudinal approaches to track pupils over time and better understand how juvenile delinquency leads to school dropout. This would help establish clearer cause-and-effect relationships.

There is also a need for more qualitative research to explore pupils' experiences, perceptions, and motivations behind delinquency and dropout. This would provide deeper insights beyond quantitative findings.

Comparative studies across different districts should be conducted to identify regional differences and best practices in addressing delinquency and dropout. This would improve the applicability of interventions.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Questionnaire

I Charles Ray Ocan, a student pursuing a master degree in education in Foundations of Education of Gulu University. I am seeking opinion from people of credibility and integrity to respond to the questionnaire. Its purpose is neither political nor financial but academic.

I therefore, kindly request you to support me by providing relevant pieces of information that I can use for my study.

Section A: Bibliography

1-Gender Female ☐ Male ☐

2-Level of Education: Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐

Other ☐

3- School Type: Government Aided ☐ Private ☐

Section B: Juvenile delinquency

SD= Strongly Disagree ….....1

D = Disagree…….....2

NS = Not Sure…….....3

A = Agree…….4

SA = Strongly Agree……5

	SD	D	**NS**	A	SA
a)- Juvenile delinquency-stealing					
High number of Pupils in this school engage in stealing					
There is rules against stealing in this school					

Moderate number of pupils complain of losing property					
Low number of pupils complain of losing property					
b)- Juvenile delinquency-bullying					
There is low rate of bullying in this school					
There is moderate rate of bullying in this school					
Candidate class carry out bullying at high rate in this school.					
Low number of pupils have left school for bullying					
Bullying is punishable in this school					
c)- Juvenile delinquency-vandalism					
High number of pupils destroy school property					
Moderate number of pupils destroy property of the community					
	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Low number of pupils have paid fine because of vandalism					
Vandalism occurs during sports day there is system in place to handle vandalism					
d)-truancy					
Some pupils jump over the fence in this school.					
There is punishment for those who jump over the fence.					
Pupils are helped not to jump over the fence					
Some pupils create their own path to get out of school.					
e)-Abortion					
Low number of pupils do abortion in this school					
Moderate number of school girls feel sick due to abortion					

There is rule against abortion in this school					
High number of school girls are sent out of school due to abortion					
Case of abortion is punishable in this school					
f) Juvenile Delinquency-Fighting					
There is high rate of fighting among pupils in this school.					
Moderate number of pupils hurt themselves due to fighting					
Low number pupils have been sent home due to fighting					
Fighting is not allowed in this school					
Low number of parents are called to school in the case of fighting					
SECTION C					
Dropout					
High (60 and above %					
Some pupils have dropped out of this school					
Low number of pupils leave this school					
High number of pupils leave this school					
Pupils are helped to finish up to P.7 in this school					
Some learners leave school without completing due to indiscipline					
Some pupils lure others to leave schooling					
Moderate (30-60%					
Nearly good number of pupils finish from this school					
Some parents tell their children to remain at home					
	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Some pupils get pregnant at school					
All pupils report from holiday					
Low (0-29%					
Very few pupils leave school in this school					

Pupils are rewarded to remain at school					
Some pupils do not love to finish their studies					
Some pupils remain to dig at home					
Some pupils get married during school					
SECTION D					
Relationship between Juvenile delinquency and school dropout					
Those who fight in school are the ones that dropout					
High number of pupils in this school with delinquent behaviour dropout.					
Moderate number of pupils with delinquent behaviour dropout					
Low number of pupils with delinquent behaviour dropout.					

Appendix II: Interview Guide

I Charles Ray Ocan, a student pursuing a Masters of Education in Foundations of Education of Gulu University. I am seeking opinion from people of credibility and integrity to respond to the Interview Guide. Its purpose is neither political nor financial BUT academic.

I therefore, kindly request you to support me by providing relevant pieces of information that I can use for my study.

1. Is there juvenile delinquency in this school?

2. Are there some indicators of juvenile delinquency in this school?

3. What strategies school is using to curve juvenile delinquency?

4. What are some effects of Juvenile delinquency?

5. What is the rate of school drop-out in this school?

6. Do you think your school location leads to school dropout?

7. Are there home related factors that can lead to school drop-out?

8. What is the rate of juvenile delinquency in this school?

9. What is the rate of school dropout in this school?

8. What is the relationship between juvenile delinquency and school dropout?

Appendix III: Morgan table

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970