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Iganga's Women: How Iganga's Culture Influences Women's Opportunities

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Abstract

A common effort to combat gender inequality is to create more access for women in employment, education, and skill development opportunities. Research has found that women continue to face difficulties to engage in such opportunities despite the policies and reforms that appear to have increased access. The structural changes have made little effect on changing the cultural factors that prevent women from effectively engaging in opportunities and thus, gain empowerment. This study seeks to explore the culture of Iganga, Uganda and how it influences women's opportunities. The research project investigated Iganga's cultural factors in which nine participants described how the local culture has impacted women on their growth in opportunities. Data was thematically analyzed and seven core themes, four of which had sub-themes, emerged that reflected Iganga's culture. Key findings are discussed in terms of significance on how community members' perspectives on women engaging in opportunities affect the overall expansion of women's development and gender equality.

Keywords: Iganga, culture, equality, gender, opportunities, women

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Chapter One: Introduction

"Iganga is an interesting town, it's a town that has been purely constructed by the locals. This is different from other towns, like Jinja, that's a colonial town. A town like Entebbe, that's a colonial town, it was the headquarters of the colonial government. Kampala was constructed by the colonialists, but Iganga is purely constructed by the efforts of the local people." (Participant 01)

"*The woman is the mother of the nation.*"
(Participant 04)

Gender inequality in Developing Nations

Gender inequality has been a continuing and persistent social issue worldwide. When the levels of gender inequality are extreme, the inequalities affect everyone and all aspects of the community because a well-functioning society requires all members to have the same available option to achieve their goals and live up to their potential. Throughout history, women and girls are the disadvantaged gender. The consequences have resulted in the deprivation of rights, privileges, and opportunities for the female gender. The substantial discrimination has resulted in gender inequality now recognized as a social issue concerning only women and girls. To counteract the resulting ramifications of gender inequality, on-going efforts have been made at local, national, and global levels.

Gender inequality has become a high priority in the field of international development and humanitarian response. In 2010, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR) introduced the Gender Inequality Index (GII). The index focuses on key measures that affect women in the human development context, such as reproductive health, empowerment, and economic status (UNDP, n.d.a). The GII exposes the differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men within a country and highlights the human development costs of gender inequality. Countries with low human development tend to have a high ranking on the gender inequality index (UNDP, 2015a).

Goals to elevate the negative effects of inequality and promote women's development for women and their communities can be found in initiatives and programs at the global scale to the local and community level. Number three of the United Nation's (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is to promote gender equality and empower women in developing regions with a main objective to eliminate all gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and in all levels of education by 2015. The UN's challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls' report (2014) stated that "between 1990 and 2011, the gender parity index [a value of the gender parity index that is greater than 1 denotes an advantage in favour of girls] for gross secondary enrollment increased from 0.76 to 0.96 and from 0.68 to 0.98 for tertiary education."

The efforts are on-going as the MDG3 continues in the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number five that was created in 2015 (UNDP, n.d.b). The SDG5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030

(UNDP, n.d.c). The UN recognizes achievements, such as the increase number of girls in schools and the increase of paid women workers outside of the agricultural sector. SDG5's agenda is to continue building on the accomplishments along with focus targets to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and affording women equal rights to economic resources such as land and property (UNDP, n.d.c). The SDGs are meant to progress further on the MDGs and aspire to complete their original objectives while creating a stronger connection towards sustainability.

Another approach is the UN General Assembly's creation of UN Women in 2010, also known as the United Nations entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UN Women believes that all human development issues have gender dimensions and focuses on areas that are fundamental to women's equality (UN Women, n.d.a). A few examples include ending violence against women, addressing HIV and AIDs, and economic empowerment in regions such as Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Arab states, and more. UN Women also conducts research to compile reports to recommend gender-responsive policy action and investments for sustainable development (UN Women, n.d.b). Such commitment towards achieving gender equality continues to shape the future worldwide.

While the progression towards gender equality is significant and should not be ignored, within the reports and success stories are the contrasting data that emphasize the work that still needs to be done. The UN's (2016) Sustainable Development Goals report stated that discrepancies continue between the two genders: women are more likely to be unemployed but perform substantial amounts of unpaid labor, men largely outnumber women in government positions, and more women than men are illiterate. Development

workers and researchers continue to direct their energy on gender issues while inequalities remain evident. An approach among researchers is to study the patriarchal system that contributes to the inequalities.

Patriarchy is deeply rooted in the history of many societies as the traditional approach to gender roles and statuses. Indicators of patriarchy are extremely prevalent in developing countries and many researchers have found that the two elements are often present together. Examples include Sultana and Zulkefli's (2012) comparative study on discrimination against women in Bangladesh and Malaysia and Gupta's (2014) study on women's status in India. All three of the countries lack development and consist of a social system that is difficult for women to gain similar levels of equality as men. Patriarchy inherently results in gender inequality, contributing to the existing discrimination upon women and girls.

Gray, Kittilson, and Sandholtz's (2006) research on women and globalization found that women tend to have better life circumstances upon their nations' achievement of globalization activity, such as industrialization that demands a larger labor force and thus provides more paid labor opportunities for women. This suggests that countries lacking in globalization and development may also lack the desired improvement for women. In cross referencing the UN Committee for Development Policy's (2016) list of least developed countries, many of those same countries rank high in UNDP's (2015a) Human Development Report's GII. This shows a pattern displaying high levels of gender inequality in a potentially patriarchal society within a developing country.

Among the regions considered least developed, the African continent consists of some of the least developed and impoverished countries. Development workers have

been advocating more equality for African women, as many African countries are

patriarchal and have high levels of gender inequality (Rani, Bonu, & Diop-Sidibe, 2004).

When patriarchal behaviors get passed down from previous generations, the behaviors

become an integral part of people's behaviors and way of living. Patriarchy is imbedded

into a country and its culture. This study focuses on the culture of Iganga, Uganda, a

district in a developing country with a patriarchal system and high levels of gender

inequality. In order to discover how Iganga's culture impacts women, this study was

conducted to analyze the various cultural factors and the levels of patriarchy and gender

inequality within.

Uganda

The country of Uganda has experienced a wide range of historical events and

traditional customs that have greatly impacted women. Due to the favoritism geared

towards men, Ugandan women have endured the negative effects of patriarchy and

gender inequality for decades. For example, wife-beating or the use of physical abuse and

violence in marriage and intimate-partner relationships is common in many Sub-Saharan

African countries, including Uganda (Rani et al., 2004). Wife-beating displays the

gender-power dynamics of the man as the oppressor and the woman as the oppressed. In

cases of wife-beating, husbands will reserve the right to discipline their wives with

physical violence as a form of punishment. Because there is a high tolerance and

acceptance of wife-beating, women will sometimes justify the abuse and believe that they

deserve punishment. The customs and behaviors concerning wife-beating lead Ugandan

men to reinforce the gender inequalities that have caused many women to become

marginalized and oppressed in their society.

During warfare, women easily became tools and disposed of at the hands of men. Gender-based violence is a common issue that greatly increases during times of war and military violence. Examples include the dictatorship of Idi Amin from 1971 to 1979, and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel military group led by Joseph Kony from 1986 to 2006 (Pham, Vinck, & Stover, 2008). While the death toll for Idi Amin's reign of terror remain uncertain, it is estimated that he was responsible between 80,000 and 300,000 deaths; another source stated the number was 500,000 out of 12 million Ugandans at a time (Anena, 2012). Numbers for the LRA are even more uncertain, with at least 20,000 children abducted, at least 1.9 million displaced, and tens of thousands of civilian deaths (Human Rights Watch, 2012). The numbers continue to increase after 2006 when the LRA fled from Uganda and began to operate in secluded areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan. In both examples the political and military leaders committed crimes against humanity and women were systematically targeted. Females of all ages were subjected to rape while young girls were abducted to become wives, child soldiers, or sex slaves where they continued to be assaulted and abused. Such action dehumanizes women and further widens the status gap between men and women.

Uganda's development remains low in several areas. The country's economic development continues to struggle despite having been a recipient of foreign aid for decades. Britain's early record in 1959 during colonial development shows an amount of five million pounds sterling to the British East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika) (Ayittey, 2014). Uganda continued to receive aid from various global donors after gaining independence in 1962. Data from one of Uganda's major donors, The World

Bank (2016), shows that Uganda has received a total of 9,089,430,752.66 USD in aid since 1991 and currently owes 2,575,505,283.97 USD.

UNDP's (2015a) Human Development Index (HDI) measures factors that directly enhance human capabilities (long and healthy life, knowledge, and decent standard of living) and create conditions for human development (participation in political and community life, environmental sustainability, human security and rights, and promoting equality and social justice). Uganda's HDI value in 2014 was 0.483, placing it in the low human development category and ranking at 163 out of 188 countries. Uganda's HDI was first measured in 1980 and progress can be seen in the numbers. However when compared to other countries, Uganda is below the average 0.505 for countries in low human development and below the average 0.518 for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP, 2015b).

UNDP's (2015b) Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) measures the non-income aspects of poverty and identifies deprivations in education, health, and living standards within a household. While a household may earn enough income that puts them above the poverty line, they may be experiencing other aspects of poverty that is not accounted for in monetary standards. When a household is deprived in one-third or more of the weighted indicators (education: years of schooling, school attendance; health: nutrition, child mortality; living standards: cooking fuel, improved sanitation, safe drinking water, electricity, flooring, assets), they are living in multidimensional poverty (OPHI, n.d.). The index also examines the amount of human potential not in use such as those who are unemployed or those who are working but their time and resources are not being effectively utilized. Women typically fall into the category of human potential not

in use. Data from the worldwide labor force participation rate in 2015 shows that 76% of

men were employed while only 50% of women were (UNDP, 2015a). The MPI consists

of three levels for households to be either in near multidimensional poverty, in

multidimensional poverty, or severe multidimensional poverty. Uganda has 70.3% of its

population living in multidimensional poverty and 20.6% near multidimensional poverty

(UNDP, 2015b).

Uganda's GII value is 0.538, ranking it at 122 out of 155 countries in the 2014

index (UNDP, 2015b). The inequality between men and women in achievements can be

seen in various areas. For example, female participation in the labor market is 75.8%

compared to 79.2% for men, and 22.9% of adult women have reached at least a

secondary education compared to 33.5% of men. While national, regional, and local

efforts have been made to address the inequalities and more opportunities have opened up

for the female gender, women and girls continue to experience barriers and obstacles.

Data from research shows that the percentages representing progression does not

necessarily suggest there more equality (Diko, 2007; Mabokela, 2003; Oanda, 2005).

There may be underlying cultural factors that affect women and their ability to participate

or become successful in opportunities of employment, education, or skill development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how Iganga's culture

influences women's opportunities. A major principle in the field of international

development is that a nation cannot achieve progress, and successful and sustainable

development while gender inequality is present. Prominent agencies such as the United

States Agency for International Development (2016) share this principle and believe that

women are the essential key to development. An important approach in solving a problem includes understanding and analyzing the problem prior to any attempts to solve it (Krile, Curphy, & Lund, 2006). Understanding why gender inequality persists can provide insight to eradicating the inequalities.

Uganda has over 42 different tribes (each speaking their own language), a total of 112 districts, and a projected population number of 36.6 million in 2016 (Population Secretariat, 2015; UBS, 2014a; UBS, 2016). The LRA largely impacted those in northern Uganda while leaving a large portion of the rest of the country unscathed. The majority of Ugandans are Christians spread throughout the country while approximately 12% are Muslims that are most populated in eastern Uganda (U.S. Department of State, 2009). Such distinctions are likely to impact the culture. In order to avoid generalizations and to have a narrower research focus, this study analyzes Iganga's culture.

As a student at Concordia University pursuing a Master of Arts in International Development and Service (MAIDS), I gained an interest in gender inequality and women's issues and pursued the topic in research papers. I learned of various gender issues that seemed to be unique to a specific country and became curious in how culture affected gender inequality. While completing a semester abroad in Iganga in partnership with the Musana Community Development Organization (MCDO), I took the opportunity to develop this project to research women in Iganga. The following research questions shaped the motivation of this study:

1. How does the Iganga culture act as a facilitator and determinant in allowing women to participate in opportunities of employment, education, and skill development?

2. If women are obtaining an education and gaining skills, can they effectively use their knowledge and skills in employment?

3. How does Iganga's culture positively and negatively affect women?

4. How has gender inequality been constructed in Iganga?

5. Does the Iganga society accept and encourage women's development? (How open-minded is society?)

The literature review in Chapter Two further explores these questions and discusses the construction of gender inequality and how culture can impact the degree and severity of gender inequalities.

Significance of the Study

The exploration of Iganga's culture and its influence on women is significant for those who strive to end gender inequality and create equal opportunities for women in Iganga. With a richer understanding of how Iganga's culture contributes to gender inequality, community and development workers can better target their efforts to achieve successful equality. Organizations such as MCDO that strive to open up opportunities and equality for women can perhaps learn how to better serve their community. The structure of this study can also be adapted to examine other cultures in other countries struggling with gender inequality. This study may provide a foundation for better understanding of gender inequality worldwide, which in turn can assist in closing the overall gap between men and women.

Nature of the Study

This qualitative study consisted of semi-structured, open-ended interviews in which participants described their knowledge of Iganga culture and women residing in

Iganga. In addition, participant observation techniques were used to further discover how the Iganga culture impacts women. My original objective was to interview only women who completed tailoring and knitting assignments at MCDO's skill development department. The women were chosen to be a part of MCDO's women's projects because they were characterized as vulnerable, living with low or zero income, and had low education attainment. However, through attempts to initiate conversations with the women, I found it was difficult to translate questions and concepts and create a flowing conversation (even with an interpreter). While developing rapport may have assisted in establishing an improved relationship with the women and I, a semester scheduled with out of town trips and daylong facilitations and experiential-learning activities created a strain in my research goals. I later decided to include both men and women in my research who had English speaking skills because they were able to provide in-depth responses that can produce richer data.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this study was to explore Iganga's culture and how it influences women's opportunities. Lenski's (1966) theory on social stratification following societal development was used to support the division of social classes that ultimately constructed gender inequalities. In addition, a principle of Wermuth and Monges' (2002) theory of gender stratification was used to support this study and aid in analyses. The connection between the two theories lies in the nature of societal structures and their associating gender inequalities. Agrarian societies' resulting gender statuses and implications were applied to Iganga to assist in connecting its culture to societies of similar societal development.

Definition of Terms

The following terms and definitions are provided below for better understanding the context in which they are used throughout the paper.

Culture. The shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behavior that allow a social group to function and perpetuate itself (Hudelson, 2004). This definition does not correspond with the common use of culture to describe a collection of people who share the same racial and/or ethnic identity – i.e. Japanese, European, Latinos – but rather it describes the product of human activity (Markus & Kitayama, 2010).

Empowerment. In the context of women and development, empowerment is the expansion of choices and an increase in women's ability to exercise choice (Mehra, 1997). This suggests that there is not only an opening of options available for women but that they are able to use those options despite barriers such as limited modes of travel, physical disabilities, debilitating health conditions, and/or language differences. Furthermore, upon the increase of choices for women, they should be able to overcome cultural barriers and gender norm roles to achieve empowerment.

Gender. There are various and ambiguous definitions of gender. For the purposes of this study, gender will be defined as those non-physiological components of sex that are socially and culturally regarded as appropriate to males or to females (Unger, 1979).

Gender inequality. When men or women enjoy a disproportionately large share of some valued good in society (Dorius & Firebaugh, 2010).

Patriarchy. The social formation in households in which property, residence, and descent proceed through the male line and the senior male has authority over everyone

else in the family, including the younger males, and women are subject to distinct forms
of control and subordination (Moghadam, 2004).

Women's development. The efforts made towards increased equality and
empowerment for women relative to men (Longwe, 1991).

Assumptions and Limitations

This study involved researching the topic of women in Iganga with participants
who were residing in Iganga. As such, purposeful sampling was used to recruit
participants who were knowledgeable of Iganga and women in Iganga. The following
assumptions were made in this research study:

1. Those who participated in interviews provided their knowledge on women's
   issues in Iganga to the best of their ability.

2. Interview participants were honest on their accounts of women's opportunities in
   Iganga.

3. Participants providing data collected through participant observation techniques
   were sincere and truthful in their accounts concerning gender issues in Iganga.

4. Participant anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study.

5. The study aimed to gather data that was neither harmful nor exploitive to
   participants.

In addition, certain limitations of the study included:

1. The population sampling was limited to recruit only those who possessed the
   ability to speak English.

2. The target population primarily represented participants within the urban settings
   of Iganga and not those in rural village settings.

3. The number of participants was relatively small.

4. The potential power dynamic of a western researcher and the local people as research participants.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter Two is a literature review that discusses the following: the development of gender inequalities, women's opportunities in patriarchal and developing countries, the role of culture in women's opportunities, women's opportunities in Uganda, and the implications for women in Iganga through connecting the theoretical frameworks. Chapter Three presents the methodology for study design, population sampling, data-gathering and recruitment procedures, and data collection and analysis. Chapter Four provides the study's results and analysis of data collected. Chapter Five discusses the significance of the findings as well as limitations of the entire project. Chapter Six completes the study with conclusions and recommendations for practitioners and future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

An emerging trend in the development sector to address the inequalities women experience is to provide them with more opportunities in employment, education, and skill development, which are believed to be significant in increasing women's status closer to their male counterparts' (Hunt & Samman, 2016; King & Winthrop, 2015). The three opportunities are interconnected; education enables women to better comprehend skill development training that then aids them in acquiring gainful employment. Continuing efforts are being made to increase women's access to opportunities. For instance, the United States Agency for International Development and various nonprofit organizations work with local partners in developing countries to promote equal access to education and greater economic opportunities for women (Michael, 2002; USAID, 2015; USAID, 2016). Enhancing women's opportunities have become a key goal in the attempt to close the gap in gender inequalities.

Despite the trend in efforts for women's development, gender disparities continue. While Oanda (2005) found that the enrollment of girls in school have increased and are at par with boys, Stoebenau, Warner, Edmeades, and Sexton (2015) discovered that girls are more likely to drop out than boys. More women are working in government positions or in professional office settings. However, women receive lower wages than their male colleagues, are outnumbered by men, and experience gender-bias in the workplace (Chitsike, 2000; Dorius & Firebaugh, 2010; Olufemi, 2008). Claims of gender equality progression may only reveal part of women's development while ignoring other underlying factors that contribute to the disparities. These contradictions suggest there is

still much to learn regarding gender equality and women's opportunities in patriarchal and developing countries.

The inequalities and exclusion women experience are complex with many elements at work. Gray et al. (2006) stated that gender is one of few key distinctions that have social, cultural, political, and economic implications and women are disadvantaged to a greater or lesser extent in every country in the world. While structural factors contribute to gender inequalities, cultural factors and their ideologies can be just as substantial and even more impactful in influencing women's development. Culture is defined as the activity that manifests through similar values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behavior (Hudelson, 2004). Cultural factors include the tradition and customs that are passed down from one generation to the next, allowing the ideologies to continue shaping human activity. Structural factors can be changed more easily while cultural factors are imbedded into people's behavior and mindset.

Researchers studying women's opportunities in patriarchal and developing countries have found a variety of cultural factors that have impacted their participation in opportunities of employment, education, and skill development. These cultural factors include roles governed by patrilineal structures and households, statuses depicted by agrarian societies, and men and women's own beliefs in how the ideal female in their society should behave (Chafetz, 2004; Chitsike, 2000; Cummings, Mengistu, Negash, Bekele & Ghile, 2006; Oanda, 2005). As a patriarchal and developing country, similar cultural factors apply to women in Uganda (UNDP, 2015b).

Uganda's national and local governments have made structural changes to promote gender equality in policies, legal rights, and infrastructures. However, Uganda's

cultural factors continue to affect women and their opportunities. In order to have a more

narrow focus to research, the Iganga district in southeastern Uganda was the main focal

point of this study. Iganga's culture was analyzed through qualitative methods to discover

how its culture influences women's opportunities. Due to limited research in Iganga, the

following review of literature presents cultural factors that act as barriers to women's

opportunities in various patriarchal and developing countries.

Agrarian Societal Structure

A theory on how women's statuses and roles developed originated from society's

previous structures beginning from hunting and gathering, horticultural, to agrarian.

Researchers found that the different societal structures resulted in defined gender roles

for men and women. For example, men dominated agricultural activity in agrarian

societies and produced cash crops while women were excluded from production, became

primary caretakers, and occasionally practiced subsistence farming (Chafetz, 2004;

Lenski, 1966). Wermuth and Monges (2002) noted that agrarian societies contained a

high degree of control and coercion exercised over women as labor and sexual property.

Through these normative roles and social implications, the basis of gender inequalities

emerged.

According to Lenski's (1966) theory on social stratification, those who have

control of economic produce and surplus achieve more power and privilege than those

who do not have control. The social stratification theory followed the path of societal

structure development and affirmed that men and women's roles in agrarian societies

resulted in high levels of inequalities (Lenski, 1966; Wermuth & Monges, 2002). Men

had the advantage because they possessed more upper-body strength that allowed them to

assume control over agricultural labor with the use of plows and heavy tools (Chafetz, 2004). With the rise of patrilineal households, women were confined inside their homes to prevent extramarital affairs and guarantee rightful inheritance. As many developing countries consist of a strong agricultural sector and most likely evolved from an agrarian society, the status implications developed into the modern gender inequalities that persist today.

The structure of agrarian societies is one explanation for the construction of gender inequalities in Iganga. The largest proportion of Uganda's land is agricultural land, which enables the country to maintain its agricultural sector (UBS, 2016). As an agricultural society, Uganda's development likely followed the path of societal development from hunting and gathering, to horticultural, and agrarian, respectively (Lenski, 1966; Wermuth & Monges, 2002). As Chafetz (2004) indicated, men originally had full access to the agricultural economy, which allowed them to dominate all economic activity. Due to the strictness of women's roles in agrarian societies, women did not have access to economic practices and their opportunities were limited. Women in Iganga likely experience similar social implications of early agrarian societies, resulting in barriers to economic practices and other opportunities.

Patriarchal Structure

The presence of patriarchal household structures is prevalent in most agrarian societies and asserts that males are the authority figures and head of households (Chafetz, 2004; Diko, 2007). Patriarchal culture expands from inside the household to the larger society, classifying males as the favored gender. Patriarchal customs and laws have a profound effect on women's statuses, roles, and privileges (Soman, 2009). As a result,

women are excluded from rights and activity such as academic learning and economic practices.

Land Ownership and Implications. A prevailing and common patriarchal practice is land ownership and inheritance strictly through the male linage while excluding women from ownership. Women in various African countries have reported challenges regarding land ownership and their access to land. Njuki, Kruger, and Starr (2013) found that married women in Tanzania were only allowed to use their husband's land if he permits it. Men's control of land gives them entitlement to control the crops their wives produce, selling them and gaining the profits without their wives' knowledge or consent. Kes, Jacobs, and Namy (2011) reported that when widowed and divorced women in Mozambique and Uganda lose their access to land, they lose their form of income because land is often the only source of wealth. The limitations in women's land ownership and access deprives them of security and of their own economic practices. Women can increase their income or improve their chances of financial success with legal ownership and full access to land, however patriarchal customs prevent them from doing so.

While Uganda has made a legal reform to create more access of land to women, research indicates that the changes are merely a formality that has little effect in practice. Article 27 on Uganda's Land Act of 1998 states that "any decision taken in respect of land held under customary tenure . . . shall be in accordance with the customs, traditions and practices of the community concerned, except that a decision which denies women . . . access to ownership" (Uganda Legal Information Institute, 1998). However, Mushemeza (2009) stated that women's access to resources such as land remains

dependent on their relationships with men. Kes et al. (2011) surveyed 329 women in the

Masaka district in central Uganda and found that only 13% had legal documents of land

ownership. The findings suggest that regardless of the legal changes on paper, the custom

remains that men have more entitlement to land than women.

Despite women's barriers in their access to land, they are significant contributors

to agricultural labor. Njuki et al. (2013) estimated that women in African countries

provide about 60-80 percent of agricultural activity, yet they face obstacles participating

in markets. Hill and Vigneri (2014) found that there were gender differences among

coffee farmers in Uganda that resulted in women earning less than men. Among some of

the determinants, women's access in land and the size of land that they farmed on

affected their success rate in markets. Several researchers have noted that women are

mainly involved in small-scaled subsistence farming rather than large-scale cash crop

production (Federici, 2011; Glazebrook, 2011; Ogunlela & Mukhtar, 2009).

Glazebrook's (2011) research revealed that out of a sample of 150 women in Ghana,

none of them grew cash crops but farmed for immediate subsistence. The patriarchal land

ownership and implications apply to women in Iganga, which suggests that women

struggle to own or gain access to land that then impacts either their economic practices or

subsistence agricultural activity.

Bride Price and Implications. Another traditional custom in patriarchal

countries is the practice of bride price, or monetary payments from men to their future

bride's parents (Bishai & Grossbard, 2010). While the practice itself does not necessarily

create gender inequalities, it can act as a catalyst. Through the exchange of a woman with

goods and money, men reserve a claim on their wife's assets such as personal belongings,

agricultural produce, and income. For instance, Chitsike (2000) found that entrepreneurial women in Zimbabwe do not have individual economic rights because bride price signifies that women only have financial benefits given to them through spouses or male relatives. The phrase *lobola* depicts that everything a married woman owns is rightfully and consequently owned by her husband (Chitsike, 2000). Bride price considerably prevents women from gaining financial independence.

Hague, Thiara, and Turner's (2011) research in bride price in Uganda discovered that in a data set of 120 women, 95% experienced domestic violence and abuse by their husbands. Because husbands claimed they had entitlement to abuse through their payments and would demand a refund upon divorce, which many of the women's families were unable to pay back, women married through bride price felt trapped. Uganda's Domestic Violence Act of 2010 offers women protection from husbands and intimate partners (Uganda Legal Information Institute, 2010). The International Federation for Human Rights (2012) cited that Uganda's Marriage and Divorce Bill prohibits husband's demand for repayment upon divorce. However, the bill failed to pass for parliamentary reading due to lack of quorum and has since been under consideration. Despite the efforts for increased protection for women's rights on paper, the literature indicates that bride price plays a leading role in domestic abuse and violence, which deters women from gaining equality.

Hague et al.'s (2011) interviews with women in the districts of Mbale, Palisa, Tororo, and Budaka in eastern Uganda revealed that 61% out of a population sample of 83 believed bride price had mainly negative impacts. Husbands evaluated their wives' household labor and compared it to the value of their payment. Husbands chastised their

wives if they believed their labor contributions were not of good value. Muthegheki, Crispus, and Abrahams' (2012) study on bride price in Uganda identified exploitation of women as a problem resulting from bride price. Women were essentially experiencing slavery when viewed as a commodity and enduring hard labor. Therefore, bride price has the ability to restrict women's independence in labor, financial gain, and individual rights. The custom of bride price is practiced nation-wide in Uganda and women in Iganga may be experiencing the negative effects of bride price and also are similarly unable to have independent access and rights.

Gender Norms

Patriarchal and developing countries' female gender norms often consist of the traditional domestic duties that are instilled in girls at a young age. Common female gender norms include fetching water, gathering fuel, cooking, cleaning, laundering, caring for younger children, retrieving firewood or fuel, and agricultural work (Cummings et al., 2006; Kevane, 2012). Gender norms are behaviors accepted by society that are typically not questioned or undermined by both males and females. Kevane (2012) described norms as:

Different from patterns of behavior that results from unconstrained choices because people reflect and talk about the meaning of the norms, the talk itself becomes a shared discursive habit that generates reinforcement. In some social situations, the magnitude of the reinforcement may be perceived to be so high that individuals no longer weigh options and calculate tradeoffs, but rather, they act as if they were constrained (p. 5). Families who adhered strictly to traditional gender norms can influence young female family members to confine themselves to certain behaviors and thoughts. Young girls

who are taught gender norm behaviors may believe that those norms are their only acceptable form of social behavior.

Older generation family members often stress the importance for girls to follow the path in fulfilling traditional gender norms. For instance, women contribute substantial amounts of labor in agricultural activity and young girls are taught to contribute their fair share of labor (Njuki et al., 2013). Girls are expected to complete gender norm labor even when it conflicts with their education. Kea (2007) found that girls double-shifting in both school and farm work in Gambia were viewed with contradicting thoughts by their older relatives, believing that the girls were abandoning their culture by attending school despite the acknowledgement that education was important. Cummings et al. (2006) discovered that it was a common trend for relatives to discourage their young female family members from pursuing their education in order for them to remain at home to complete housework.

While double-shifting positively addressed the need for girls to attend school and allowed time for them to complete farm work, a priority was still given to their gender norm labor. Kea (2007) reported that girls often fell asleep during class due to exhaustion, their school performance and motivation decreased and an increase of labor intensified because they were still expected to complete the same value and worth of labor as adults. The conflict between fulfilling traditional gender norms and attending school became a barrier to girls' education. The Iganga culture follows similar lifestyles of instilling gender norms to girls at a young age due to its patriarchal societal patterns. Girls in Iganga may experience the same conflicts between the need to remain at home to

complete gender norm responsibilities and the need to attend school, possibly forsaking

their education in order to fulfill gender norms.

Model Behavior

Girls may be influenced to exhibit expected behaviors without being directly

taught those behaviors. According to Bandura and Walters (1977), social learning theory

provides an explanation that individuals' acquired behaviors are a result of direct

experience or through observing the behaviors of others. Van Staveren and Odebode

(2007) stated that family and households are the primary institutions where women's

capabilities are formed and biased towards gendered roles. Conforming to norms is

constantly being positively reinforced in households where girls' gendered practices are

praised and encouraged (Kevane, 2012). As a result, young girls surrounded by female

relatives who conform to the traditional gender norms may similarly model themselves

after them and learn to conform their behaviors as well.

Additionally, women and girls' gender norm behaviors are positively reinforced

outside of their household. For example, gendered activities are taught in schools where

female teachers commonly assume tasks of food preparation, cleaning, laundering, and

taking care of students while male teachers assume administrative leadership roles (Diko,

2007). The feminine behaviors subsequently shape the choices women make in their lives

(Van Staveren & Odebode, 2007). As cited by Kevane (2012), people act out norms

because they have effects on other people. Women are surrounded by gendered behaviors

and may default to those behaviors simply because they were exposed to them. Exposure

to gendered behaviors is likely to influence girls to model themselves similarly. Families

and communities in Iganga are also likely to positively reinforce gendered behavior,

influencing younger females to subscribe to gendered behaviors that influence their

decisions in their future opportunities.

Community Members' Influence

      Community members can substantially influence women's capacity to participate

in opportunities. Lovell (2010) interviewed young women of the Busoga tribe in

Budondo in eastern Uganda and found that there was a high expectation for women to

behave according to society's expectations and any slight deviation had the potential for

detrimental impacts. For example, if a woman is seen with a man or in a bar, community

members will report to her parents and they will discontinue supporting her with school

fees. Members of the community frequently spread stories about the young women in

their town, often on the matter of sexual activity and dating. Unproved rumors had the

power to damage women's reputation, affecting both their educational and professional

paths (Lovell, 2010).

      Community members also have an impact on women in the workplace, forming

opinions that are biased and critical of their behaviors and work performance. Mabokela

(2003) reported that when South African women in administrative roles tried to command

a sense of authority in the office, colleagues would inform their parents or community

members that they were behaving rudely. Comparatively, Hemson (2002) found that

there was a lack of general community support for women operating in rural water

committees. Women were unable to gain acceptance by both their community and their

colleagues, which suggests that others' judgments are closely related to their chances of

success. Community members in Iganga may also have substantial influence in women's

participation in education and employment opportunities. Due to the shared structure of

patriarchal societies, Iganga's community may also have an involved role in women's personal and professional life that alters their reputation and ability to progress.

Internalized Oppression

Patriarchy in developing countries stimulates the belief of male superiority and female inferiority (Rani et al., 2004). Accepted attitudes and beliefs influence many women to believe that they are restricted in their own capabilities. Pheterson (1986) described this phenomenon as internalized oppression or "the incorporation and acceptance by individuals within an oppressed group of the prejudices against them within the dominant society." Njuki et al. (2013) surveyed 3,949 households in Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana, Mali, Bangladeshi, and India collectively, and found that women generally agreed that men should make most decisions and that gender roles and workloads were fixed. Over half of the women surveyed expressed attitudes supporting the limited roles of females (Njuki et al., 2013). Similarly, Stoebenau et al. (2015) surveyed 805 girls in West Nile, Uganda and found that many of the girls' own beliefs in their own opportunities, roles, abilities, and expectations for their future were more limited when compared to their beliefs for boys.

Women's internalized oppression affects their outcome in formal employment positions. For example, Chitsike (2000) found that entrepreneurial women in Zimbabwe limited themselves to small-scaled work and when they do successfully run a lucrative business, they shared the success with male family members even when they have not contributed to the success. The women adhered to social and cultural beliefs and traditional principles that portrayed women with money as a negative image. A cultural belief of women earning a high income in Zimbabwe was considered a dirty and evil

pursuit, however it was acceptable for men to earn large amounts of money. Zimbabwean

women with money have a phrase, *ndeya baba,* which declares that money belongs to

their father or husband (Chitsike, 2000).

Similarly, Hemson (2002) found that rural women in patriarchal South Africa

working in water and sanitation projects believed in folk wisdom that depicts women as

better 'housekeepers,' such as completing secretary roles and recording finances rather

than controlling and allocating funds. Comparatively, Mabokela (2003) found that South

African women in administrative positions were tolerant of male power and readily

accepted male authority. The literature suggests that when women are participating in an

opportunity where they can exercise authority, they were prevented from doing so by

their own beliefs and behaviors.

Due to women's internalized oppression, many women often translate their

feelings of doubt to other women and their abilities. Mabokela (2003) reported that it was

common for women to question and undermine other women who were in high positions

rather than support them. Furthermore, Hemson (2002) noted that women were aware of

their tendency to subscribe to the ideas of female inferiority in the workplace. Women's

lack of support and belief for each other reinforces the occurrence of women being

unable to reach to their full potential. Because women in Iganga are living in a society

where men are the dominant gender, they may likewise internally oppress themselves and

confine to restrictive beliefs and behaviors towards themselves and to other women.

Accustomed Male-Oriented Culture

Because men have traditionally earned income and dominated the formal

economy, work environments became accustomed to men's social behaviors that have

created obstacles for women. For example, entrepreneurial work is seen as a male-dominated sector and women endure discrimination working in the biased gendered role. Chitsike (2000) stated that businesswomen were more likely to sell to a middleman than men were and they usually do not receive a fair price for their work. Male buyers perceived entrepreneurial women as too trusting and easy to lure to cheat them out of profits. Nyanzi, Nyanzi, Wolff, and Whitworth (2005) affirmed that women's increased participation in the cash economy does not challenge men's assumed cultural authority over the domains of money.

The conventional approach in teaching entrepreneurial and business skills to women only equips them with the technical skills but not the behavioral skills (Chitsike, 2000). The lack of focus on challenging the beliefs about women, men, money, and power, or changing the mind-sets of women and the rest of society prevents women from succeeding in their businesses. For instance, women working in new positions may be required to present themselves in a contradictory manner to how they were raised and taught to behave. Nyanzi et al. (2005) claimed that the nature of some professions demand a level of assertiveness and self-confidence in women that violates the standards of dignity and subservient behavior that women were expected to exhibit in the public domain.

In addition, Mabokela (2003) indicated that women do not know how to market themselves and are socialized to diminish themselves and their accomplishments at the expense of success. Women's personalities and demeanor differ to the style of behavior and self-presentation that are usually fulfilled by men. As women adjust to new roles in professional positions, demands are placed upon them to act in unfamiliar ways that are

outside of their social values. Uganda similarly has a male-populated economy that likely also has an accustomed male-oriented culture (FIDH, 2012). Women in Iganga may also be confronted with an opposing demand of behavior that is out of line with their values and comfort level. Women in the region may struggle to adjust to a male-oriented culture, impacting their likelihood of achievements.

Male Presence and Superiority

The mere presence of men can act as an inhibition for women's confidence and hinder their participation and performance. Researchers found trends that women commonly felt repressed in an office setting, regardless of their position in relation to their male colleagues. Olufemi (2008) reported that women planners in local government positions in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe questioned their participation in meetings because they were constantly met with silent responses from their male colleagues. Women also described feeling uncomfortable to express themselves without fear of reprisal or embarrassment in front of men (Hemson, 2002). Women's insecurities were strongly accentuated; however, they overcame their sense of inferiority when participating in all-women committees and difficulties were found only when they were in the presence of men. In many office settings, women's inability to participate and contribute remains unaddressed and their knowledge and expertise are ignored and excluded (Olufemi, 2008).

When women occupy positions of some authority, they remain subordinate in decision-making and exercise very little power in practice (Hemson, 2002). Olufemi (2008) found that women continually experienced discrimination and oppressive behavior and had to work harder to prove themselves in a profession where men

outnumber them. It was common for women to hear undermining statements such as "she is a woman" in regards to her position and power. Women who do challenge the patriarchal power are met with subtle resistance, reprimanded, frowned upon, and perceived as betraying traditional African values and expectations (Olufemi, 2008).

Male colleagues' attitudes and behaviors towards their female counterparts negatively affect their performance and wellbeing. Mabokela (2003) discovered that women were charged with challenging responsibilities but did not receive the respect and recognitions befitting their efforts. Their experiences are characterized by resistance, which manifested in ways ranging from psychological pressure to the undermining of the women's authority to the impact of societal norms and expectations. As a result, women were unable to effectively establish themselves in their workplace. Women in Iganga may be affected likewise by the male presence at the workplace. The typical patriarchal setting may provoke men's feelings of judgment that suppresses women in their performance.

Sexual Harassment

Women and girls are easily subjected to sexual harassment in their male-dominated surroundings. Researchers found that female students were extremely vulnerable in their school settings and on their commute to and from school. Abuya, Onsomu, Moore, and Sagwe's (2012) study on sexual harassment among girls in secondary schools in urban slums in Nairobi, Kenya revealed that 95% out of their sample of 20 girls experienced sexual harassment in school and 100% of that sample experienced sexual harassment during their commute. Imonikhe, Idogho, and Aluede (2011) also reported a high prevalence of sexual harassment in tertiary schools in

Nigeria; 95% out of 200 professors reported that sexual harassment in the form of touched, grabbed, or punched in a sexual way occurred and 92% out of 200 students reported sexual harassment occurred in the form of being leaned over or cornered.

While many countries and institutions have policies and regulations aimed to prevent sexual harassment and protect victims, research findings show that they have a miniscule effect. According to Joubert, Van Wyk, and Rothmann (2011), only 24.3% out of 161 academic staff questioned in higher education institutions in South Africa received training or guidance on how to handle sexual harassment in schools. The Kenyan Parliament enacted the Sexual Offence Act in 2006, however Abuya et al. (2012) identified school settings as a major risk factor of sexual harassment against women and girls. The occurrence was so frequent that girls had the phrase "dying slowly from within," conveying their tendency to keep their suffering to themselves because of their distrust in talking to adults. Girls who experienced harassment also developed careless attitudes towards their education (Abuya et al., 2012). The negative affects of sexual harassment not only violate women and girls' rights but also impair female students' academic performance, impacting the outcome of their education.

Women in the workplace are also easily subjected to sexual harassment. Olufemi (2008) found that women in government positions experienced a constant demand for sexual favors that caused many to resign and take on more traditional employment such as hairdressing or fashion design. Chicktay (2010) discovered that South African women were denied work opportunities or promotions because they refused to give in to their employers' sexual advances. In addition to the impairment on women's mental health, sexual harassment decreases productivity and affects the economy when victims avoid

going to work to evade their perpetrators. The high occurrence of sexual harassment

suggests that it is common in patriarchal African societies such as Iganga. Sexual

harassment may be prevalent in Iganga for women and girls in employment and

education settings, resulting in violations of their rights and affecting their outcome in

their opportunities.

Tokenism

Research shows that many patriarchal developing countries are making efforts to

address gender inequality. However, the numerical data may not translate the ongoing

inequalities that women continue to experience. Oanda (2005) asserted that many times

there is a simultaneous process of female gender inclusion and exclusion. In conjuncture,

Diko (2007) argued that the increase of female presence is commonly a misconception of

gender equality. Hemson (2002) provided that many women are in their positions only to

fulfill a quota. Women in positions or settings commonly designed for men are

considered a "token," because they are often the only or one of very few women in the

workplace and they stand out due to their female gender (Mabokela, 2003). Societies may

believe the incorporation of women in formally male-only settings is a sign of exhaustive

efforts, however tokenism easily generates the assumption that achievement in equality

has been made.

A commonplace where tokenism occurs is in higher education. It is common for

universities to praise their progress of gender equality with an increase enrollment of

female students, although in reality they may not have committed to the social

responsibility for gender inclusiveness. For example, Oanda (2005) found that female

students in private higher education institutions in Kenya were confronted with

humanities-based curricula and deferred from science, technology and mathematics. Metcalfe (2008) explained that education systems continue to sustain gender stereotypes that direct women into "appropriate" professional and education programs such as social work and teaching. While there are more female students admitted into higher universities, there might be a lack of reform in curricula and culture and schools are simply expressing tokenism.

Tokenism provides false indicators of development and progress. As previously discussed, women in developing and patriarchal countries who find themselves in new positions can experience many different cultural barriers that limit their chances of success (Chitsike, 2000; Mushemeza, 2009; Njuki et al., 2013; Stoebenau et al., 2015). Tokenism allows for an overstatement of gender equality and reflects the ineffectiveness of the attempts to combat the inequalities. Simply providing more options for women does not empower them if they are prevented from exercising their own choices or if their capacities are blocked (Mehra, 1997). Due to the history of gender inequalities in Iganga, women may similarly become tokens in education and employment settings. An overstatement of success in women's opportunities may conceal the continued need to address the inequalities between men and women.

Affirmative Action Policies and Practice

Many countries with a history of marginalizing women are making efforts in gender equality through affirmative action. Affirmative action, or positive discrimination, is defined as the situation where individuals are accorded special treatment because of their membership in a disadvantaged group or groups, thus deviating from the strictly achievement-based criteria of recruitment (Wang, 1983). The theory of affirmative action

is to achieve gender equality through an increase of access in opportunities for women, however researchers found that the implementation and practice of the policies have produced further inequalities between men and women and ignored essential aspects of cultural, social, and gender reform.

Affirmative Action in Governance. While policies and quotas have increased women's participation, researchers discovered varying motivations for their enactment. According to Bush (2011), international incentives such as foreign aid are positively and significantly related to a country's likelihood of adopting affirmative action policies and gender quotas. Gender equality is viewed as a key aspect in aiding democracy abroad and local leaders are pressured to incorporate affirmative action by the international community, particularly when constitutions are being rewritten (Bush, 2011). Post-conflict societies, such as Uganda, where women were targeted can be particularly receptive to requests by the international community (Bush, 2011; Goetz, 2002; Pham et al., 2008). The measures for gender equality may not reflect a genuine desire or effective reform because countries are extrinsically motivated or pressured to adopt policies.

Uganda's affirmative action clause in the 1995 revised constitution proclaims that "the State shall take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalised on the basis of gender . . . created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist against them" (The State House of Uganda, 1995). Through this clause, Uganda's Local Government Act of 1997 emerged that provided a guidance for every district council, also known as local councils, to be required to have at least one-third of women fill in as council members (Uganda Legal Information Institute, 1997).

While the policy intended to mobilize women as council members, barriers were found that influenced their ability to perform.

Affirmative action has a tendency overlook the qualifications and desires of candidates. Bauer (2010) claimed that gender quotas easily advantage those unqualified by providing them positions and titles. For example, Johnson, Kabuchu, and Kayonga (2003) discovered that women council members in Uganda felt thrown into their new positions and were not adequately prepared or trained for office. Women were afraid and shy to contribute to deliberations because they had limited command of the technical language and lacked comprehension of how councils operated. At times, women's level of formal education and their English speaking skills contrasted significantly with their male colleagues and prevented them from understanding meetings and operations. In some villages, community members had to persuade and plead with women to stand for office to fill the positions created (Johnson et al., 2003).

Research uncovered that women experienced internal struggles in their participation and position in governance attributed by affirmative action. Culturally Ugandan women are not supposed to express their ideas openly. Johnson et al. (2003) discovered that this was expressed more commonly among women belonging to the Banyoro, Baganda, Bagungu, and Bakiga tribes in their study. Women hesitated before speaking and spoke quietly, which allowed for more vocal and aggressive participants to talk over them (Johnson et al., 2003). Due to women's inexperience in their new roles and discomfort in behaving socially different, affirmative action simply highlighted the differences between men and women in their positions.

In addition to women's internal challenges, women encountered external

challenges from men's attitudes towards women councilors. As cited by Johnson et al.

(2003), men feared losing their own roles and identities as more women entered into

leadership positions. Men were uncomfortable with the possibility of power relations

changing and their wives becoming the head of household. It was also presumed that

women had little knowledge in budget decisions, such as the national graduated tax that

is levied only on men. Because women have traditionally not been engaged in finances,

they were perceived as unqualified and lacked authority to make decisions that would not

affect themselves (Johnson et al., 2003). While affirmative action may have achieved in

numerical objectives for local councils, findings indicate that the overall goal of bridging

the gap between men and women were not met. Women local council members in Iganga

may experience comparable challenges due to affirmative action policies and continue to

encounter a division between themselves and men.

Affirmative Action in Higher Education. Affirmative action has a long history

in education for female students in Uganda. Kwesiga and Ahikire (2006) noted that

Makerere University, a public higher education institution located in Kampala, first

admitted female students in 1945 through positive discrimination. In 1990, Makerere

University began awarding female students 1.5 extra points to ensure more women were

admitted (Onsongo, 2009). The 1.5-point scheme remains current and female students

have increased from 23.9% in 1989-1990 to 45.8% in 2003-2004 (Kwesiga & Ahikire,

2006). While the number of female students enrollment have increased, researchers have

provided that affirmative action policies in higher education neglects to accommodate the

different needs and positions of female students, consequently failing to create effective equality.

In 2001 Makerere University launched the Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI) that was supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York (Onsongo, 2009). The FSI aimed to admit more females into science disciplines and bridge the socio-economic gap among women students. Conversely, Kwesiga and Ahikire (2006) illustrated that women who pursued sciences came from affluent backgrounds and the FSI failed to account for rural women who were much poorer and in need of scholarships. In comparison, Onsongo's (2009) study on affirmative action in university admissions in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania showed that the gender equity policy failed to review socio-economic statuses and was bias towards female students from privileged families. Sawyerr (2004) summarized that while the enrollment of women have expanded, access has not broadened when mainly elite women benefited from affirmative action.

Affirmative action has also been found to aggravate the inequalities between women and men rather than minimize them. As Onsongo (2009) have cited, affirmative action perpetuates the myth of the inferior female among students. This has led to verbal harassment and teasing by men to women who were admitted through affirmative action and in some cases, women avoided joining programs mainly to evade the persecution. Kwesiga and Ahikire (2006) also shared that previous women admitted into Makerere University through affirmative action were scrutinized because some of the women did complete their secondary education, which simply supports the inferior female myth since they were not yet qualified for admittance to higher education.

Furthermore, the admission of women in male-dominated institutions has brought on an increase of sexual harassment. Sawyerr (2004) discovered that women who were unable to afford on-campus housing at Makerere University found attending evening classes or staying late at the library unsafe and incidents of sexual assault and rape have increased. As other researchers have indicated, many schools fail to offer protection for female students from sexual assault (Abuya et al., 2012; Imonikhe et al., 2011; Joubert et al., 2011). Through the policy, female students simply entered into an arena where they were exposed to higher risks of sexual harassment and assault without the reform for more security.

While affirmative action assists in the entry of female students, it does little to retain them and women were more likely to drop out then men. Aguti, Nakibuuka, and Kajumbula (2009) cited that female students' common reasons for dropping out were gendered. Women's university dropout reasons included husbands being unsupportive of their wives' aspiration for education, husbands threatening to marry other wives, and husbands being suspicious of other male students. Regardless of scholarships funding women in their education, affirmative action is not immune to cultural norms where husbands exercise authority and control or when women's responsibilities at home deter them from completing school. These findings illustrate that affirmative action policies are prone to ignoring the inequalities produced after university admission. Women in Iganga admitted to higher education through affirmative action may experience similar circumstances and continually experience inequalities due to the misinterpretation that admission parallels equality.

Implications of Agrarian Societies' Inequalities in Iganga

This review of literature presented findings from patriarchal and developing countries, with the majority of findings concerning women within the African continent that may apply to women in Iganga. The Iganga district consists of an agricultural sector and comparisons may be inferred because of the similar path of development in agrarian societies (Chafetz, 2004; Lenski, 1966; UBS, 2009). In addition, comparisons to Iganga may be made from findings in research completed on women's opportunities in Uganda. There are differences among Uganda's different regions, however the general implications of gender inequalities in agrarian societies relating to modern gender inequalities of agricultural countries such as Uganda suggests that they transfer to typical agricultural communities such as Iganga.

Research findings concerning men and women's current agricultural practices appear to have developed from men and women's previous agricultural practices in agrarian societies. As previously noted, women were limited in agricultural practices in agrarian societies, which parallels with women's current patterns for small-scaled subsistence farming (Federici, 2011; Glazebrook, 2011; Ogunlela & Mukhtar, 2009). According to Lenski's (1996) theory, women's production of subsistence agriculture should provide them power and privilege to a certain extent. As societies progressed into the industrial era, men retained their access to the economy but withdrew from farm work, which accounts for the now larger percentage of women in agricultural labor (Ogunlela & Mukhtar, 2009). However, the status implications from agrarian societies remained. The enduring inequalities from agrarian societies in conjuncture with

traditional and social customs, religious practices, and distinctive culture created the vast gender inequalities that now occur in Iganga.

Iganga, Uganda

The Iganga district is located in the southeastern region of Uganda and consists of a central area known as Iganga town with rural villages scattered throughout the rest of the district (UBS, 2009). According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2016), the district has 3 counties, 16 sub-counties, and a total of 354 villages with a total population of 530,100. The common native languages spoken are Lusoga, Luganda, Samya, and Swahili with the population consisting largely of the Basoga tribe (UBS, 2009).

Within the country of Uganda, 49.4% of women produce subsistence agriculture compared to 36.9% of men (UBS, 2016). A recorded total of 64,011 households out of 102,703 practice subsistence farming in Iganga (UBS, 2014b). While the numbers have likely changed, a total of 489 female farmer groups exist in Iganga compared to 363 male farmer groups (UBS, 2009). The statistics on rural agrarian land and subsistence agriculture implies that the previous gender implications of women coincide with women in Iganga.

The religious composition of Uganda comprises of 85% Christians, 12% Muslims, and 3% following other beliefs; the Iganga district is reported to have the highest percentage of Muslims (United States Department of State, 2014). Njoh and Akiwumi's (2012) study on the impact of religion in African countries revealed that the Islamic religion had significant negative associations with women's empowerment. The Islamic religion accentuated female domesticity and men's responsibilities for their wives. The religious teachings of Islam may reinforce the female Muslim population in

Iganga to comply more strongly with gender norms, undergo internalized oppression, and experience conflicting behaviors to their values.

According to the UBOS (2015), the literacy rates in eastern Uganda for females aged 10 and above were 59% while the rate for the male corresponding age group were 70%. Throughout the regions in Uganda, females usually receive less education than males and have lower literacy rates. The national literacy rate for females aged 18 and above is 67.6% whereas males' literacy rate is 77.4% (UBS, 2016). The numbers suggest that females in Uganda may be afflicted by the gender elements previously stated that results in them receiving less schooling than males. The lower literacy rate for females in eastern Uganda proposes that females in Iganga may be more strongly afflicted in their education.

Uganda is one of the countries among with a high fertility rate of 5.8 (The World Bank, 2014). The Iganga district's population growth rate is 2.95% with the average household size of 4.9 (UBS, 2014b). Iganga's fertility rate was projected at 6.8 children per women (Parikh, 2012). While the district's fertility rate may have changed, the close fertility rate's range to the national rate suggests that women in Iganga may have more childrearing and domestic responsibilities than women in other regions. About 16.9% out of 2,141 of formal employment in eastern Uganda have a designated workplace, suggesting that most other employments are done at home or informally (UBS, 2016). Due to Iganga's high fertility rate and the numbers of formal employment, it can be concluded that women's increased childrearing responsibilities likely limit their ability to participate in formal employment in Iganga and that there is a likelihood of more men fulfilling formal employment positions than women. This supports any previous literature

findings dated prior to year 2016 on women in Uganda that the cultural factors influencing women's opportunities are more likely to remain in effect for women in Iganga.

In this literature review, a foundation was provided for women's patterns of experiences in employment, education, and skill development opportunities in Iganga. It is likely that the same occurrences that acted as barriers to women in other African countries appear in Uganda and they may be presented even stronger in Iganga. The lack of research on women's opportunities in Iganga specifies the need for this research study. According to Wermuth and Monges (2002), the system of gender inequality that exists corresponds to the type of society it belongs to and its stratification system. This suggests that women's experiences in other African countries can be compared to women in Iganga because of their likely development from agrarian societies. However, due to regional and historical differences in Uganda, Iganga's culture remains distinctive and influences only those within the district. The gaps in research also provide the need to raise more awareness on Iganga and how women's opportunities are carried out within their culture. As a result, this research study invited local Ugandans residing in Iganga to tell their knowledge of women engaging in the available opportunities in the Iganga district. The research methods will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Methodology

As a student hosted by the Musana Community Development Organization (MCDO), I had the opportunity to live, study, and work in Iganga for a semester and became immersed in the community and the local people's presence. Being surrounded by Ugandans provided ample occasions to hear about the roles of men and women in its traditional setting. Iganga town is considered a small-scaled town, where many resources and organizations for women's development are less abundant. Individuals were extremely aware of their culture's gender issues. The current study was designed to uncover the lifestyle and upbringing of women in Iganga in order to explore the current underlying conditions of women's opportunities.

Uganda's many regions have differences in history, tribes, communities, resources, development, and culture. Iganga was chosen as this research study's main focus rather than the entire country of Uganda in order to avoid generalizations. The specific culture of Iganga may act as barriers to women's opportunities. This research study looks at Iganga's culture for a better understanding of how it impacts women's development and the growth of gender equality. Each interviewed participant provided their knowledge and/or experience on women's opportunities in Iganga. Through the assessment of Iganga's culture, this study seeks to provide a more thorough knowledge of women's development within the context of Iganga, Uganda.

Design

The design of this study was qualitative in order to discover more fully the unique culture of Iganga in regards to women's opportunities and their empowerment levels. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information

about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). This study was also exploratory in nature as the first stage involved observing the community's views and opinions on the topic of women in Iganga (Beazley & Ennew, 2006). Accordingly, the current research design employed a qualitative research framework in order to develop a more comprehensive and rich understanding of Iganga's culture.

Non-experimental methods were used to elicit perspectives from both Ugandan men and women in efforts to better understand their knowledge and/or experience within Iganga. Semi-structured interviews were specifically used to gather data. Mack et al. (2005) described semi-structured interviews as an appropriate method to generate an in-depth interview that gathers data about an individual's perspectives on a specific topic. Utilizing the semi-structured style of interviewing provided flexibility for participants to respond accordingly from their own personal experiences and involvement with Iganga's culture. Interview questions were open-ended for participants to provide as much information as they desire while providing the option for the researcher to probe with follow-up questions (Turner, 2010). Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and coded through an ecological framework. Thematic analysis was then conducted to highlight common themes and patterns.

Participant observation was also used to assist in gathering data. Guest, Namey, and Mitchell (2013) described participant observation as flexible and can be employed to great benefits in addressing a range of research objectives. Almost any setting in which people have complex interactions with each other, with objects, or with their physical environment can be usefully examined through participant observation. In the current

study, participant observation provided the freedom to engage in conversation with community members and to be among them to identify relevant information that could then be used as data. As participant observation is inherently interactive and unstructured, it supports the qualitative approach of this study in order to learn and understand Iganga's culture.

Participant Sampling

A population of participants who spoke English and with whom I had built rapport with was sought for this study. The population of interest was Ugandan men and women of adult age (ages 18+), literate, and completed at least secondary education in order to comprehend questions and concepts asked during the interview. As a result, purposeful sampling was used for recruiting as all participants were specifically chosen and invited to partake in the study. Initial recruitment began with participants who either assisted in the Masters of Arts in International Development and Service (MAIDS) program or were a staff member of MCDO. As the study progressed, individuals who were not directly involved with MCDO or the MAIDS program but who were connected through networks with the two programs were invited to participate. I aimed to recruit ten participants with an equal number of men and women. Five men and four women agreed to participate. The sample of participants was taken from the Iganga district.

Participants were either approached and invited to participate or invited through a phone call. They were not provided with any form of compensation and completed the study voluntarily. In addition, all participants were clearly informed that they could terminate their participation at any time. Participants received an informed consent form that presented the study's purpose, procedures, and confidentiality measures in

accordance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards at Concordia University.

Prior to the interview, participants were also informed of the estimated length of time of

the interview and that the interview session would be audio-recorded for further analysis.

Participants were given code numbers (e.g. "01" or "03") throughout the data collection

process to ensure that identifying names would not appear in any data analysis or

reporting. The following demographic table (Table 3.1) offers an overview of participants

of their age, tribal origin, religion, education level, occupation, and marital status.

Code name	Age	Tribe	Religion	Education level	Occupation	Marital status
01	44	Samia	Roman Catholic	Master's degree (Ph. D candidate)	Manager/Professor (MCDO)	Married
02	26	Buganda	Christian	University degree	Doctor (MCDO)	Single
03	24	Munyoro	Muslim	University degree	Nanny (MCDO)	Single
04	27	Basoga	Christian (born-again)	Senior 4	Teacher	Married
05	25	Munyankole	Christian (born-again)	University degree	Teacher	Single
06	27	Basoga	Protestant (born-again)	University degree	Community facilitator (MCDO)	Married
07	45	Atesot	Catholic	University degree	Teacher	Married
08	50	Basoga	Catholic	Ph. D	University lecturer	Married
09	31	Basoga	Muslim (Christian born)	Certificate – Nursery teacher	Teacher (MCDO)	Married - Polygamous

Table 3.1 Participant demographics

Data Collection Strategy

The Uganda semester program duration was from January 18, 2016 to April 13, 2016. Upon arriving in Iganga, I began the initial stages of this study by interacting with Pauline, the coordinator of the Uganda-MAIDS semester program. Pauline co-founded MCDO, was a former MAIDS student, and conducted social research methods at MCDO. I received guidance on how to approach conducting research at MCDO and learned how it can proceed with the community members. My identified strategy to collect data consisted of interviews with Ugandans residing in Iganga. Kvale (2007) described interviews as a construction site for knowledge because they generate rich data and is an interaction that allows the interviewee to provide their personal knowledge and opinions. I expected interviews to be the method that would produce substantial amounts of data and prioritized it as my primary research method.

I originally intended to recruit participants among the women working at MCDO's skill development department because they were characterized as vulnerable, living in poverty, and/or were widows. Due to my interest in women's development, I was placed as an intern working at MCDO's skill development office. Upon my conversations with some of the women, I noticed difficulties in interaction as they predominately spoke in their native Lusoga language. Even through the use of an interpreter, the conversation was limited and I concluded that the women as interview participants might not generate the amount of data needed for this project. Because of these limitations, I went to the next level of community expertise that was serving the targeted population. These individuals had proficient English speaking skills, had the knowledge of women in Iganga, and of women's experiences in opportunities. Although

the participants may not identify as the focused individuals of this research study, their

knowledge was not discredited and taken into consideration.

Data Collection Process

I recruited participants and administrated interviews after spending the first two

months building rapport with individuals at MCDO. Recruitment for interviews began

April 3, 2016 and ended April 11, 2016. Individuals invited for interviews were asked for

a convenient time to participate in the study. Three participants were arranged to

complete the interview according to their schedule while four participants were able to

complete the interview upon the invitation to the study. The location varied depending on

the participants. Individuals of MCDO staff were interviewed at MCDO's compound,

while those who were not a part of MCDO's staff were interviewed at their workplace or

homes. Interviews were conducted one-on-one in a private setting and participants were

informed prior that they will be asked to answer questions. Participants retained the right

to refuse and end the interview process at any time. They were also allowed to skip any

questions that they wish not to answer and to pause the interview process and return at a

later time. Participants were informed that interviews were estimated to be an hour or

less.

As a student attending lectures, facilitations, and naturally engaging in

conversations with the local community, participant observation techniques were used to

gather data concerning my research topic. The purpose of participant observation was to

interact and engage in conversation with local Ugandans. As Guest et al. previously

(2013) stated, participant observation is flexible and can be applied in a variety of

interactions between the researcher and their surroundings, including other individuals.

As participant observation did not require IRB approval, it was ongoing throughout my length of stay in Iganga. Data generated from participant observation was collected throughout the various experiential learning activities hosted by MCDO and MAIDS. The coordinators of the semester program invited individuals to the experiential learning activities for their involvement with organizations or entities focused on women's development or addressing women's issues in Iganga. These individuals became key informants as they provided essential information and their knowledge on topics such as domestic violence, entrepreneurial, microfinance, skill development, and religion.

The experiential learning activities typically began with a classroom lecture and discussion, following with an interactive tour. I gathered data through observing and listening to key informants' expertise on the subject of women in Iganga. This initial step assisted in building rapport and allowed the method of participant observation to proceed towards follow-up questions. I engaged with key informants in an informal question and answer style discussion to obtain more information and data. Being with a cohort of students, questions were sometimes directed by a fellow classmate. Any relevant information pertaining to this research was noted and taken as data. In addition, any conversation and/or interaction with community members that provided pertinent information were used as data for this research.

Data Analysis Procedures

The current research project was an exploratory study that used semi-structured interviews as the main instrument to collect data. In addition, participant observation generated data in the form of field notes. As a result, words served as the qualitative data and thematic analysis was used to analyze. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), thematic

analysis involves pieces of text that are organized into networks that produce various themes. A coding framework assisted in conducting thematic analysis, as it dissects text into manageable and meaningful segments. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) referred to codes as labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information complied. Codes can be a straightforward and descriptive label or a more evocative and complex label that are attached to "chunks" of data of varying size, such as paragraphs or a single sentence. In this study, codes were assigned to paragraphs to translate an interpreted meaning. This initial coding, referred to as First Cycle Coding, assisted in examining and recording the data as a category (Miles et al., 2014).

Two coding approaches were done during First Cycle Coding, holistic coding and in vivo coding. Holistic coding applies a single code to a large unit of data in the corpus to capture a sense of the overall contents and the possible categories that may develop (Miles et al., 2014). Holistic coding was chosen because codes can be assigned to any sizable chunks of data that were of similarity. In vivo coding uses participants' own language from the data record as codes and was used because words spoken by participants that were perceived to be significant could be turned into a code. First Cycle Coding aided in summarizing segments of data. Coding is a heuristic, or a method of discovery, because the application requires careful reading, re-reading, and reflection for the central content and meaning. It is important to note that coding is inherently subjective, as it requires personal perception to filter data that are meaningful to the research study. In order to continue constructing more meaning from the assigned codes, Second Cycle Coding was conducted.

Second Cycle Coding assisted in grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories or constructs into Pattern codes. Miles et al. (2014) described Pattern codes as explanatory or inferential codes that identify an emergent theme. Pattern codes are summarizers of categories or themes, causes/explanations, relationships among people, and theoretical constructs. The series of codes from First Cycle Coding was grouped together according to an interpretation of their relevance into clusters. Each cluster was then labeled with a Pattern code, or a word or phrase that highlights the commonality within the cluster. Any code repetitions were consolidated into one code. This narrowing of the chunks of data into clusters enabled ease of analyzing because the data were condensed. These cycles of coding identified the initial broad categories, which subsequently led to more narrowed and defined categories of data. The Pattern codes assigned serve as the themes of this research study's analysis. The themes were connected to existing literature for support in the findings.

Miles et al. (2014) defined inductive coding as allowing codes to emerge progressively during data collection and analysis. Inductive coding was used for its flexibility for codes to develop throughout this research study and continue during analysis. There was not a preexisting list of codes created and codes were formed through an open-ended process. Through inductive coding, data were transformed into contextualized summaries during First Cycle Coding. These contextualized summaries were grouped into clusters and Pattern codes were discovered during Second Cycle Coding. The revision and removal of codes was permitted as analysis required codes to relate in the manner of the research question. Coding was done manually on printed-paper and electronic documents without the use of software tools or programs. The data

from interview transcripts in its entirety were not coded, data of the most relevance and

importance was coded while small talk, introductions, and digressed topics were

excluded from analysis in order to preserve the focus of the study.

Transcriptions for all of the interviews took place from April 27, 2016 to May 13,

2016, which was after departing Uganda. The audio recording of each interview were

played and listened to at least three times in order to ensure the word-for-word

transcription was accurate. Each transcript was read through numerous times to become

familiar with the content before coding was done. Notes taken through data collection in

relation to the interviews were taken into consideration for their relevance during coding.

Field notes from participant observation also went through the coding framework and

were incorporated with the rest of the data.

Ethical Considerations and Safeguards

Ethical considerations were taken as guided by the United States Department of

Health and Human Services' [HHS] (1979) Belmont Report: the basic ethical principles

demand respect for persons treated as autonomous agents, beneficence and taking all

measures to avoid harm, and justice and equal distribution of burdens and benefits. The

research participants' well-being was a top priority while the research questions was of

secondary importance (Mack et al., 2005). Guest, Mitchell, and Namey (2005) stated that

researchers can have a profound impact on participants, and the more sensitive the

content of the research, the higher the impact may be. In order to prevent any possible

impacts, careful considerations were taken in recruitment and during interview sessions.

The invitation to the study was benevolent to allow individuals to freely agree or disagree

to participate. The interview questions were drafted with consideration and asked without

any suggestive tones, judgmental facial expressions, and approving or disapproving attitudes in order to prevent any potential bias. Caution and heed were taken for each participant for sensitivity measures throughout the entire length of their participation. All interviews began with introductory questions that generated conversations similar to small talk and participants were asked to describe their childhood upbringing. This assisted in creating rapport as questions following were intended for the primary purpose of this research study.

A letter of permission written by the co-founder of MCDO granted approval to conduct research at MCDO while offering assistance and guidance to follow cultural propriety. The risks involved were minimal as participation were comparable to class facilitations and discussions at MCDO. Prior to initiating the interview, participants were verbally informed of the nature of the study and what their participation involved. Participants were provided an informed consent form with as much time needed to understand the contents and ask questions if desired. Interviews were not to commence without participants agreeing to continue and signing the consent form. For extra assurance, permission to audio record was obtained upon the start of the interview questions. Confidentially was maintained throughout recruitment, data collection, and data analysis to protect participants from being exposed in potentially vulnerable conditions. The identities of participants were protected and any identifying information was not released in the study.

The method of participant observation did not require an informed consent form. There was no identifying information concerning any members of the community recorded during data collecting such as addresses, street names, and distinctive physical

features of an individual. Participant observation was conducted with cultural awareness throughout the interaction with key informants. Safeguards were taken to ensure field notes, data, and any forms of artifact relating to the study were kept safe and private. Any electronic equipment containing data were password protected. A journal used for the purpose of recording data were kept with the researcher during data collection or kept in a private space in accommodations. Any printed paper materials were securely stored with code names to protect participant identity. As a student at Concordia University MAIDS program, a research proposal was submitted to the IRB and was examined and approved prior to the start of the study. The following chapter presents the findings from these qualitative and methodological processes.

Chapter Four: Findings

The research question of this study centered on how Iganga's culture influences women's opportunities in employment, education, and skill development. As a reminder, the questions that guided this research were:

1. How does the Iganga culture act as a facilitator and determinant in allowing women to participate in opportunities of employment, education, and skill development?

2. If women are obtaining an education and gaining skills, can they effectively use their knowledge and skills in employment?

3. How does Iganga's culture positively and negatively affect women?

4. How has gender inequality been constructed in Iganga?

5. Does the Iganga society accept and encourage women's development? (How open-minded is society?)

Some of the themes that emerged were in accordance to those questions and some were unexpected.

The interview transcripts and participant observation field notes were combined into matrices that were analyzed thematically through inductive coding. Seven core themes emerged: stalled progress; conformity; presumed traits; change agents; glass ceiling; polygamous marriages; and Islamic religion. Four themes, stalled progress, conformity, presumed traits, and change agents have sub-themes. The main themes and their sub-themes are displayed below in Table 4.1.

Stalled progress	Conformity	Presumed traits	Change agents	Glass ceiling	Polygamous marriages	Islamic religion
Infrastructures	Towards conformity	Presumed positive traits	Allies			
Attitudes and mindset	Against conformity	Presumed negative traits	Support groups			

Table 4.1 Emergent themes and sub-themes

The themes and their corresponding sub-themes are on: (a) how infrastructures and community members' views shape women's opportunities, (b) how the established set of roles, beliefs, and lifestyles of women affect them and the rest of the community, (c) the positive and negative stereotypes and perceptions of women, (d) how local efforts are change agents for women, (e) how far women can advance in their employment, (f) how polygamous marriages affect women's responsibilities, and (g) how the Islamic religion impacts women. All of the themes and sub-themes reflect Iganga's cultural factors that affect women in their opportunities and will be discussed in their own sections. Data from participant observation had the strongest support and was mainly used for the change agents theme and its sub-themes.

Stalled progress.

As a developing nation, Uganda's development progress is reflected in Iganga. Two sub-themes appeared out of the stalled progress theme. Findings revealed that there was a lack of infrastructures promoting women empowerment or gender appropriate employment in Iganga. In addition, stalled progress was found in community members' attitudes and behaviors in women's opportunities. Responses revealed that there were community members in Iganga that share the belief that women were not meant for opportunities outside of their home.

Infrastructures. In describing the Iganga district, participants claimed that accessing basic resources such as educational facilities or services for life improvement in Iganga was difficult because there were not many resources available. Participant 02 illustrated that "the lifestyle here is, the people here are I would say much poorer and their resources are not as abundant, they only have so many options to choose from . . . there's limited service, if there's a good service then there are minimal chances to thrive . . .." Participants perceived Iganga's capacity to maintain and support the growth of services to be low. Consequently, community members are unable to enhance their life without the essential resources.

As participant 03 clarified, people in Iganga "find it hard to get food, to get jobs, and its population is really high whereby even though you try to get a job within it's really hard. And schools are there but as I said, most people are poor or it's the poor region, it's hard to afford these schools for the kids." The conditions described affirm that it is difficult for most of Iganga's inhabitants to thrive. The combination of high population and poverty results in difficulties sustaining development in infrastructures.

The scarcity of resources affects the growth of women's development. Participant 02 further claimed that the "empowerment skills and facilities that offer those empowerment skills are really really not very many, like it's just a handful of organizations that are empowering women. Whereas in Kampala, there's a whole pool of options to choose from." The statement suggests that the services targeting women in Iganga were bleak and limited and that women were less likely to be engaged in opportunities because of the lack of facilities for women empowerment.

When asked about the differences of opportunities for men and women, participant 02 shared that "[women] are not supposed to do hard jobs, they're supposed to do white collar jobs whereas there's not so many white collar jobs in Iganga." Participant 08 supported this response and stated that "many of the jobs that we have are manual and our society, women were looked at to be like very soft. You don't give them that kind of challenging, so you find very many jobs like taxi driver or lifting a bit of things, you never find women in those places. Just because of the belief that women are really, they should not be subjected to heavy pieces of work." As these participants described, many of the employment opportunities available in Iganga were considered unfitting for women. The "appropriate" positions of white collar jobs or more administrative positions for women were less prevalent in Iganga, which affected their ability and success in gainful employment.

The stalled progress concerning Iganga's growth of infrastructures impacts women's development and their opportunities. The prevalence of community members in poverty suggests that they may experience barriers in accessing resources, such as tuition for education. Women are more likely to face difficulties in accessing opportunities with a lack of options and services geared towards women.

Attitudes and mindsets. The lack of infrastructures regarding women-oriented resources and employment is reflected in the lack of agreement in attitudes towards women's opportunities and gender equality. Participants frequently used the phrase "local" in their narratives to convey a sense of preserved culture. For example, participant 01 remarked that the district was "purely constructed by the efforts of the local people" and participant 03 similarly expressed that "Iganga is taken as a local place . . . it's a local

village or a local district." The use of the word "local" demonstrated the idea that Iganga

had less external influences than other regions in Uganda and that the culture was more

untouched, maintaining more traditional African values.

In describing women's emancipation, participant 02 explained that in other

regions in Uganda "people talk about all that women's emancipation, how women have a

right, people are against domestic violence, people are now against polygamy, [but] those

things do not apply in Iganga because . . . people do not know where to run to for their

right." This statement reveals that community members are less open about a change in

lifestyles for women. Additionally, it relates back to a lack of infrastructures that promote

women's development or provide services for women's life improvement. Without a

substantial presence of organizations to establish a strong affect towards gender equality,

community members are less inclined to change their views.

The stalled progress of Iganga's inhabitants' attitudes and mindsets in women's

rights affects their willingness to support women's opportunities. For instance, participant

02 continued and stated that "women in Iganga are stilled viewed as the typical Ugandan

woman and by that I mean again, the woman is supposed to be the home caretaker, the

woman are not meant for office work, the woman is not meant to be the bread winner of

the family. So women here are still viewed that way . . . people still have the mentality

that the women are supposed to be in the kitchen cooking. You don't come to the dining

room when men are discussing business issues." This suggests that community members

are slow to adapt to the ideas of women's development and the concept of women

working outside of her home. Community members maintain a traditional view of

women remaining in their gender norm roles.

The restrictions on women are still apparent even when they manage to branch out and seek employment. Participant 02 further provided that "people still think men are better workers than women. If I have a job for someone to work in my shop, and I have one spot and I have to choose between a girl and a boy, a woman will have to prove themselves. There's always that thing of a woman that you have to prove yourself that you can do this. Because people still think that men are the workers. Women are the ones that are trying, so you really have to prove your point." This statement shows that employers generally have little faith that women can perform well in their work. The belief of women's inability appears to stem from the patriarchal approach that women are not meant to be in a formal workplace.

The Iganga culture appears to have significant influence over the rate of progression and accounts for the stalled progress in community members' attitudes and mindsets towards women's opportunities. The stereotype that women belong inside their homes is reinforced without the community's acceptance on women's potential. Because participant 02 gave the most compelling responses, this section was primarily focused on that data.

Conformity.

Conformity as a theme highlights women and community members' tendency to resort to the existing social and traditional behaviors and established lifestyle in Iganga. The sub-theme, towards conformity, refers to women adhering to the existing and more widely shared beliefs and practices of the rest of the community, which consists of stereotypical women's roles and behaviors. The contrasting sub-theme, against

conformity, presents women behaving in ways that are moving away from the existing and established behaviors and attitudes.

Towards conformity. Participants revealed that women in Iganga follow rules and display submissive behaviors that affect their ability to engage in employment. For example, participant 01 commented that some husbands control their wives' mobility and that bride price contributes to women's obedience: "Maybe she wants to open a business a hundred kilometers away from [her] husband, [her] husband will say 'no I need you at home you're not suppose to move, you're a wife. I paid dowry for you, I bought you, so even if you have wonderful ideas, you are still my wife and you are under me.' So she cannot really move, she will respect her husband because it will break the marriage, so she won't move." Similarly, participant 09 shared that women working "depends on the man, other men don't want women who work. So it depends on the husband. You may be having your papers and then the man says 'no, I don't allow my woman to go and work' so it also depends." The compliant behavior women exhibit represents their inclination to act and behave as told by patriarchal customs. Women's willingness to obey to their husband's requests to remain at home prevents the possibility for them to engage in opportunities.

Participants also disclosed that some women comply with the concept of being dependent on men to provide for them rather than pursuing opportunities to supplement their husband's income. Participant 03 explained: "[other women] they just don't want to work. Others they have opportunities and they have a chance . . . but because they feel 'I'm a woman I can get a good man with money.' They are just lazy. Some are not just lazy but they just want easy money, like fast money." Participant 05 similarly stated that

"[Women,] they may be having man so that [men] can cater for them." Due to the accustomed habit of women being dependent on men, some women may expect to be cared for and voluntarily choose to subscribe to dependent behavior.

Participant 07 expresses similar thoughts and stated that "according to my observation, [women] are lazy. They are lazy in the way that sometimes some women have the hands, have every body parts, they are normal, but she would prefer to wake up, sit, and talk and yet if they used that time to do something, maybe weave or make a mat, do some sewing, life can be better. But you can admit sometimes, watch with my neighbors, when you always come [here] you'll find some women just sitting." Women's apparent choice of dependent behavior subsequently feeds into the stereotype of women being confined to their homes. The dependent behavior then reinforces the belief that women should not be allowed to work.

In regards to education, participants explained that Uganda's national government has made efforts to increase female students in higher education through affirmative action. Participant 06 stated that "if the girl gets a point, maybe 25, they have to add 2 or 3 points to make her above. And the boy they don't add anything." With this policy is in place, participant 08 described a gender imbalance in higher education and that "in some courses, there are fewer girls than there are boys. Like engineering, mathematics, physics, you see fewer women in those classes. The women outnumber men in arts, social science, those really." This statement indicates that despite an opening in opportunities through affirmative action, women conform to the typical education programs that are considered gendered appropriate. While the policy is working towards providing more education

opportunities for women, it reinforces the system and belief that women are only meant to partake in gendered programs.

All nine of the participants alluded to women's traditional gender roles as home caretakers and childrearing responsibilities as a vital part of a woman's future. Women learned from a young age of the expected roles as parents emphasize and instill the responsibilities to their daughters. Responses suggest that parents believed stressing those roles and responsibilities were especially important to leading a successful life. In responding to the question of what girls are expected to do in the future, participant 04 shared that "after studies . . . they go and get married, you organize a marriage, after introduction, wedding, I expect that girl to do domestic work. They must care for children, cooking, fetching water." Participant 06 complements this statement by claiming that "what I know is a girl, they expect to do what belongs to the girl child only." Women and girls fulfilling the expectation of marriage and gender norm responsibilities takes precedence over them completing their education and seeking future employment. Such expectations can affect how women and girls approach their future and their likelihood to pursue opportunities beyond family and marriage.

Community members in Iganga appear to accept or exhibit many of the conformed behaviors and ideas of women, which can delay the advancement for women's development. Because the conformed behaviors and ideas are more widely shared among the community, women who express those behaviors are less likely to be met with disapproval. The conformed behavior allows women to either remain dependent on men or to be directed away from potential opportunities.

Against conformity. In contrast to the lifestyle of following the traditional, submissive, and dependent habits of women, participants provided responses that revealed some of Iganga's community members moving against the subscribed habits. Participant 03 shared that adhering to traditional gender roles was one of the reasons why women face disadvantages in Iganga but education has changed that. However, the new ideas that education has brought on concerning women's development in Iganga contrasts and conflicts with those abiding to the more traditional roles: "You can find out that someone who is really strong in the belief of the culture, will hate those people who contradict the culture. Because if the culture says an African woman should stay home and do housework and the women go and do work like for men, they feel like [those who go and work] are abusing their culture." This statement suggests that because some community members disagree with the idea of women working, that they believe it is unacceptable behavior and that it is against the conformed way of living.

In conversing about the affects of education on gender equality, participant 01 described a divergence between community members who have learned to step out of traditional gender roles and those who have not: "It's a big battle because we still have people that are resisting that approach [of stepping out of traditional gender roles] because it is counter-cultural, it is unheard of, it is ashaming, it is like poking your nose in a constituency where you are not supposed to be. There's some resistance [to traditional gender roles] and quite a lot of educated people now are trying to adopt that approach." This finding reveals there are community members who support women stepping out of their gender roles. Furthermore, those who support the deviation of

women's roles are typically those who had a significant amount of education to change their views.

Participants cited that the idea of women engaging in opportunities outside of their homes invoked contradictory opinions. Participant 08 declared that "these days, there is no one who supports a woman who sits there and wait for everything," suggesting that it is encouraged for women to work. However, participant 02 expressed that women who do work receive negative feedback: "Women are going to be crucified because how are [they] going to leave home and [they] leave [their] children home . . . So yes, women are still being criticized for working hard or working out of their communities." Participant 07 also shared that women should work to have "good economic status" but when asked how the community would respond to women working outside of their homes stated, "it will not work very well when women are out because women are great contributors in the running of the homes." It appears that the idea of women working was acceptable for some community members, however the importance of being a home caretaker surpasses being a formal employee. Women moving against conformity face the struggle to have balanced roles between being an employee and being a wife and mother.

Due to the resistance women experience when stepping out of traditional gender roles, it is likely that those who are moving against conformity are a minority group in the community. The opposition in women's development and opportunities may impact the rest of the community to be less accepting of women working out of their homes. The lack of acceptance and agreement among the community acts as a barrier that prevents or discourages women's opportunities.

Presumed traits.

Presumed traits refer to community members' belief that women possess certain characteristics in their personalities. Findings show that both positive and negative presumed traits influenced women's opportunities in Iganga. The presumed positive traits emphasized what were perceived to be qualities of women that they were able to benefit from. In contrast, the presumed negative traits accentuated what were perceived as qualities of women that worked against them.

Presumed positive traits. Many participants described good-natured and favorable presumed traits of women that gave them an advantage in finding employment. As participant 02 noted, "people think women can be better nurses because they are caring and [because] of their mother nature. People think [women] are better secretaries and better physical assistances, better receptionists because of their attractiveness and everything." These presumed traits created a shift in community members' mindset, as participants explained that people used to believe women were not meant for any form of employment but now believe they were fitting for specific professions.

Women were also presumed to be more honest and trustfworthy than men. Participant 02 continued and stated that "women are known for their honesty, so that the community encourages that I would rather trust a woman with money than trust a man because woman are meant to be faithful." Comparatively, participant 03 explained that girls "are encouraged to be honest" growing up. These findings reveal that honesty is a positive trait that women were presumed to have, which seemingly also helps them in appearing trustworthy and better at handling certain tasks such as finances.

Furthermore, women were claimed to be transparent and participant 06 expressed that women's transparency provided them with higher chances of obtaining employment than men: "The reason is ladies are always transparent than guys, sometimes [men] tend to hide other things. Sometimes [men] try to pretend [they are] doing the right thing but [are] not, normally [women] are always transparent . . . When I get a job and I get some good money, I will start boozing, I forgot that tomorrow there's work but the lady will be so much focused on the work . . . when [a woman is] late, [they will say] 'I'm late, I'm okay.' Guys tend to deny that, if he's late he'll say 'oh I hope it's not the first time I have come late'." This statement proposes that women's presumed transparency would not only assist them in gaining employment but that they have better work ethics than men.

Participant 08 asserted that women were believed to be less corrupt than men: " . . . Opportunities are coming and they are going to women because of that feeling that women are less corrupt . . . in Uganda, if you give that opportunity to a man, probably [he] will earn money then he'll want to earn more and he'll earn more and more, and probably want to add another [raise] for a wife and another, probably unlimited, so you better employ a woman." In a nation with a history of corruption sustained by male figures, the notion of women being free of corruption appears to be a readily believed trait. If corruption has been associated with men in Uganda's history, a lack of corruption was seemingly associated with the opposite gender. The statement also implies that because women are thought to less taxing to employers and are less money-driven, they are more preferable to hire than men.

Women's experience as home caretakers and the presumed positive traits of childrearing have transferred to formal positions aimed for the female gender. As cited by

participant 05, women teaching in nursery and early primary education are the most

common female professions: " . . . majorly in schools, women, they are taken in lower

classes [such as] nursery and primary 1, 2, [and] 3. So you find that [gender] imbalance

there. So you find that in schools there are many women but most of them are in lower

classes . . . for the reason for them at least they can take care of the young children

properly than the men. They understand children, that's why most of them are taken in

lower classes." Because women are traditionally in charge of childrearing and most likely

have experience caring for younger children, they were more easily able to gain

acceptance working in the formal sector as nursery and primary teachers.

The presumed positive traits of women focused on feminine attributes that aligned

with maternal behaviors. The image of an ideal nurturing woman corresponds with

qualities of being faithful, honest, and less corrupt. These apparent traits of women

viewed by community members and employers resulted in women being fitting

candidates in specific fields and professions, or gender-bias positions.

Presumed negative traits. The belief of women unfit for certain positions were

found in the sub-theme of presumed negative traits. These presumed traits were

unfavorable towards women and acted as barriers for women in employment

opportunities. Participants commented that women possessed traits that were considered

weaknesses. For example, participant 02 stated that women were seen as emotional weak

vessels that made them appear less capable of completing the same tasks as men: "People

think they cannot push women to the point, to the endless point because they break easily

and the women will be emotional and they're very sensitive. If my boss had to come and

give me the assignment, they're be like 'you need to do this assignment!' They don't use

the same tone to women, and people need results so they're going to have to hire

someone that they can throw a tone at to get things done. Women are being emotional

and being very very delicate, some people feel that they cannot do that to them." The

perception of women being unable to handle assertive and commanding tones results in

the belief that they are less qualified for employment. The statement also suggests that

women are commonly measured up against men in their ability to behave similarly.

Participant 03's statement further supports this finding, explaining that women do

not express the same typical behaviors that are related with successfully gaining

employment: "For men it's easy for them to get a job because they can speak out,

sometimes in this region, ladies, they lack confidence in themselves but for a man, [he]

would be confident . . . and another difference for the opportunities between women and

men, men if they go for a job, they show more interest in jobs than the women." To

supplement that statement, participant 06 explained that "in African setting[s], girls are

always down [with] low self-esteem, [their] decision making in the culture, they [do] not

really give it priority, when the boys talk in the family, [the family is] eager to listen in

the culture." These assertions suggest that regardless of women's self-confidence, self-

esteem, or expression of thought, compared to their male counterparts, their respective

levels will always be seen as lower than men's. Employers' interpretation of women

lacking certain behaviors affects their decision in hiring or giving women credit for their

performance, regardless of whether or not women actually lack the behaviors.

Another aspect of presumed negative traits of women is that they are simply inept

to fill higher-level positions and to execute managerial tasks. As cited by participant 05,

"people in Iganga do not want to empower women in politics. Whereby they think that

women, they are weak, so [the community] can't be led by women." Participant 02

provided support by stating that the community shares this belief of women unsuitable

for politics: "There are other things that women absolutely cannot do, people believe

women cannot be presidents and never never would a woman be a president, it's like an

abomination . . . and there are absolutely some other level like managerial levels that are

absolutely meant for men." The statement reveals that community members have little

faith in women being in high-power leadership positions. Whether it is a high-power

governing position or a high-level managerial position, women were believed to be

incapable of fulfilling the occupation.

Furthermore, participant 06 responded with claims such as "there are some

technical areas like I said, where maybe a lady can do but sometimes it's a guy to be in

that . . . sometimes when making decisions, sometimes ladies can't do compared to guys.

You know guys always have [the upper hand in] decisions than ladies in terms of work."

This statement highlights the perception of women's brainpower and ability to perform

well in positions traditionally held by men. The perceived lack of women's skills inhibits

women's development, as community members believe women are incompetent of

handling the same tasks and responsibilities as men.

The presumed negative traits of women centered on a perceived lack of qualities

or perceived lack of ability to manage situations, which results in community members'

lack of support and belief in women overall. Women's presumed negative traits largely

contrasted with men's presumed traits. Participants' responses showed that women were

frequently being compared to men and that the stereotypes were baseless, as it was not

women's actual work performance that are compared but their assumed qualities. The

presumed negative traits allow community members and employers to justify not hiring

women and disregard their actual capabilities, creating a barrier for women in their

opportunities.

Change agents.

The theme change agents represents an individual, organization, or influence that

promotes women's opportunities and are geared towards women's development and

gender equality. Change agents occurred at the local level and positively affected women

in their opportunities. They can be described as those diverging to a certain degree from

the traditional roles and beliefs that are normally barriers for women. The sub-theme

allies signify those who work to create more access for women in opportunities. The sub-

theme support groups refer to the women themselves forming into groups to better offer

support to each other.

Allies. Allies were individuals or organizations that supported women's

development in Iganga. Allies acted as catalysts, encouraging and enabling opportunities

for women with the desire to transform structural, social, and cultural elements. Findings

showed local organizations were common allies for women. For example, the Musana

Community Development Center (MCDO) located on Kanga road, about 1.4 kilometers

from Iganga town, was found to be a strong ally for women. As participant 09 stated,

"Now for women, like at Musana, there is that chance . . . they are helping women build

their skills." Findings from participant observation supported that statement, as MCDO

has a skill development department aimed specifically for employing women in tailoring

and knitting. Through assessments made by MCDO's social worker, women who were

financially vulnerable were offered the opportunity to learn new skills to generate an

income. A key informant explained that the combination of MCDO's social work department and skill development department provided new opportunities for women to increase their livelihoods.

MCDO also manages three women's groups located in three different villages. Each women's group were also taught skills that enabled them to earn an income. Staff members of MCDO traveled to villages and spoke with women community members, inquiring of their interest to join. Knitting skills were taught to women in Bukona, tie and dye fabric production were taught to women in Bukonko, and tailoring skills were taught to women in Buwongo. Through the skills training, MCDO enabled the women to learn how to support themselves and their families. The key informant illustrated that the women were provided jobs and they would fulfill knitting or textile projects requests by MCDO. Each group became a social support network for the women, as they all learned new skills together and stepped into new employment positions.

Individuals also served as allies for women's development and gender equality. In responding to the question of why Iganga is different from the other districts in Uganda, participant 05 explained that one reason was the local leaders: "There are leaders but [sometimes] they have not catered for their area . . . the people in the area, they keep on telling [the leaders], 'please go and do this', so that leader also hears the voices of the people . . . [and] makes sure that he fulfills people's needs. That's why some parts are different than others, the type of leaders we have and the responses." Depending on the individual, those who support women's development are more likely to be allies for women and incorporate approaches to enable women to engage in opportunities.

In the Buwongo village, the local village council's chairperson was an ally for the women in MCDO's Buwongo women's group. The chairperson, who was a woman, was involved in the group's activity and selected a number of the women to participate in MCDO's business training course. After successful completion of the course, the women received microloans from MCDO and started their own businesses. While discussing the results of the training and microloans with two of the women members, both shared that they successfully paid off their microloans and continued to run their business of selling vegetables from grocer stalls. The two women greatly benefited from having the village chairperson and MCDO as allies. They expressed how the new skills they learned from MCDO enabled them to gain an income to pay for their children's school fees and support their family.

Support groups. Support groups with the purpose of integrating women together and promoting women's development were found as change agents in Iganga. Participant 01 described the purpose of women support groups: "Most of our women, who are running small businesses, they are in small groups, small setting groups. Which they normally sit once in a while, maybe once in a month, once in a week. So they pool their resources together for a week and give those resources to person A. Next week they pool the same amount of money because they contribute equally and give it to somebody [else]. So somehow it helps them to start up capital." Support groups aim to provide financial support to supplement women's small businesses and when they are unable to obtain support elsewhere, such as financial institutions that often have requirements for women to be married and have their husband present with them to take out a loan.

Participant observation provided similar findings of women support groups that were change agents for women in Iganga. In a discussion with a key informant, this individual described how they formed a women's group through their church membership. The women in the support group were members of the same church. The individual stated that the group's purpose was to create a space for the members to learn about women empowerment and build self-confidence. Similarly, the women also contributed money and drew tickets each meeting for everyone to have equal chances to receive funding.

The key informant also shared that the group was eligible to become a Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) group, which would partner them with a micro-loan institution. As a SACCOs group, the women would be able to take out micro-loans for business purposes and receive guidance on financial management and savings, which can assist them in building their businesses in addition to the weekly finance draws. The only action the support group needed to take to become a SACCOs group was to have their church's commissioner review and sign their meeting minutes, which the key informant explained that it was only a matter of scheduling a convenient time for the commissioner and the group to meet.

The women's act of using each other as resources signifies that they (a) have the desire to be involved with businesses and (b) are open to the change of empowering each other. In the field of international development, local community members are sometimes encouraged and urged into behaviors and ideas that they may not want themselves. The support groups reveal that the women themselves have a genuine desire to start and run businesses. In addition, their association with the support groups conveys that they agree

with the idea of women working. In a community where both women and men conform

to the confinement of women's roles, the support groups indicate a change in attitudes

among the women themselves.

Glass ceiling.

A glass ceiling was found to be a common phenomenon for women in their

employment in Iganga. The Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) defined a glass ceiling as

the unseen and unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the

upper rungs of the business ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements.

Responses portrayed that some women in Iganga have stepped out of the traditional home

caretaker roles and assumed roles in employment opportunities. Participant 04 shared that

most women work in "hairdressing, even cooking and serving people in big restaurants,

and selling some things. Most of the people in Iganga are shopkeepers, even in the

market most of the population are women. If you go to the department of fish, you would

find women. Department of greens, they are there, department of clothes, they are

women." Similarly, participant 06 described that "most of the ladies want to work. The

business ladies are in market there, they work there to make sure their lives are okay.

They are looking at the largest number in the market, the society in town, they are

ladies." Iganga town characterized with women owned small businesses reveal that small

businesses are a common and acceptable form of employment for women.

However, participants explained that the businesses women run do not provide as

much income as men's professions. Participant 08 described that "women are working,

they are working so hard. But they are involved in small small things that do not generate

a lot of money. And men, if you went to the market for instance, the morning there are

many people and you would see all the women. They are not many men in markets, maybe it doesn't generate that big amount of money so, and we're in a patrilineal society so men are expected to fend for the family and women are not expected to do that as men. So women are involved in businesses but businesses are not that big. But when you go to jobs that earn higher incomes, you would get more men than you would get for women. There are many opportunities for women at levels that don't earn a lot." This statement reveals a glass ceiling for women and a contributing factor was the patriarchal expectation that women do not need to generate an income as large as men do. Furthermore, it shows that women's businesses typically remain at the same level of growth.

Women's techniques in agricultural production were another contributing factor to women's glass ceiling in employment opportunities in Iganga. Participant 01 stated that women ". . . do subsistence farming. Very few will do cash crop farming, where they can get money. Subsistence farming, they'll have more small chunks of land. Others have bigger chunks of land but it's hard more because the farming practices are very very traditional. So they don't produce much. So what they produce they eat, and sell some that is very very minimal." The scale of women's agricultural practices result in smaller amounts of production for sale. Participant 01 continued and expressed that "women don't own land in most cases, land ownership as far as women are concerned is an imagined trend," which indicates that women experience difficulties accessing land in Iganga. Due to women's restricted access to land and their agriculture production approach, they are limited in sales and income.

The prevalence of women owned small businesses implies that women can start-up small businesses with more ease than getting involved in other professions, which indicates that there are few barriers in starting up small businesses for women. Women's ease in small businesses allows for the numbers to easily be at par or exceed that of men's small businesses in Iganga. However, the ease has amounted to a plethora of the same businesses, making it difficult for women to advance and generate more income when so many women are offering similar services. Patriarchal traditions affect women's grocery businesses as accessing land continues to be a challenge that then affects the scale of crop production. Whether women produce subsistence agriculture by default or because there are complexities for them to advance to cash crops in Iganga will not be further explored in the current study but can be a potential question for future research.

Polygamous marriages

Participants shared that women in polygamous marriages experience more strains in life than women in monogamous marriages. Polygamous marriages were also seemingly associated with the Islamic religion, although polygamy can be independent from the religion. Participant 06 expressed that "Iganga has the largest number of Muslims and the first challenge women face is to get multiple, one husband will have more than one wife. It is the biggest challenge and it is written in the Koran that man is supposed to have four ladies and he has that ability to have them. Man that have five or whatever, at the end of the day it is a challenge to the ladies . . .." Participant 07 supplements this statement and explained that "producing is easy but to provide the basic needs for the children becomes a challenge. So you find that it's sometimes the women who have produce those children, the ones to look after, to struggle hard to make sure

that they bring up their children." The findings indicate that the larger family size is a

burden for women. Women's primary role as caretakers suggests that the added

responsibility largely falls on them instead of their husbands to raise and care for the

extended family.

Women were also believed to experience more disadvantages as a wife in

polygamous marriages. Participant 05 provided that "most of the men they get more than

two wives and they could not provide enough the basic needs for them . . . you find that

the women they are just struggling to look for the basic needs instead of the man." In

addition, participant 02 stated, "most of those women [in polygamous marriages] do not

want to be in polygamous families because they don't have so much options to choose

from, so they're limited to stay in that way . . .." These findings indicate that the

hardships women in polygamous marriages experience exceed the benefits and that the

hardships are a result of the marital structure.

Due to the larger family size, both men and women struggle to contribute and

provide for themselves and their children. Since polygamous marriages form more

obligations for women to remain at home, they are less likely to engage in opportunities

outside of their home caretaker role.

Islamic religion

Participants also provided examples of the Islamic religion leading away from

gender equality. Participant 02 expressed that the religious doctrine has created ideas of

how the ideal women should be: "the Muslim community does not believe in women

being leaders at all. They believe women should be in the back, they should be followers,

so that [behavior] comes in their ideologies." In comparison, participant 01 shared that

the teachings in Islam "say that women are supposed to be submissive, so this has also in

a way affected women's growth in a way." Because the religious statute was believed to

depict that women should be a certain way that is against women's development, it limits

women in their engagement in opportunities.

The Iganga district reportedly has a large number of Muslims. While the

percentage is likely not based on an accurate census and is meant to convey a high

population, participant 01 provided that "around 70% of people in Iganga are Muslims,

and the other percentage are Christians." Referring to the statute that determines how

women should be, participant 01 continues and stated that "most of the women who are

Muslims cannot bear to venture . . .." This statement suggests that Muslim women are

more confined and face more barriers to opportunities in Iganga than women of other

religious faith. Additionally, the high number of Muslim women also implies that most of

the women in Iganga experience difficulties in opportunities.

Gender equality and women's development are difficult to achieve because the

Islamic constitution characteristically does not allow for women to step into roles that

challenges the female ideology. Participants' responses regarding the Islamic religion

indicate that the religion itself is a determinant in women's roles and privileges. Muslim

women in Iganga are impacted more strongly by gender discrimination and subsequently

are unable to engage in opportunities.

The themes discussed above are components of Iganga's culture that reflects how

they influenced women's opportunities. These cultural factors impacting women are

diverse, covering a range of both enabling and disabling components for women. The

next chapter will further explore the significance of these findings and connect them to

the previously discussed themes affecting women's opportunities and to the theories

involving the development of inequalities.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Significance of Study

The purpose of this study was to discover the complexities of Iganga's culture to get a broader understanding of what influences women's opportunities in employment, education, and skill development within the district. The themes presented in Chapter Four suggest that Iganga's culture has two contrasting pulls: one that is for women's opportunities and encouraging of women's development and one that is against women stepping out of their traditional home caretaker roles and thus is opposed to women's opportunities; the latter was found to have a stronger pull than the former. The contrasting pulls are reflective of the global challenge to support women's development while simultaneously, the movement to advance women's rights conflicts with millennia old cultural customs, values and traditions. Such cultural shifts can be painful and take time for people to adjust and adapt.

Participants provided the various cultural factors that emerged as themes in how Iganga's community members responded to women engaging in opportunities outside of their homes, how women themselves responded to opportunities, how women are viewed in their society, what action the community has taken, how marital structures, and how religion has affected women. The cultural factors are intricate with various determinants that can either positively or negatively influence women's opportunities depending on its constitutes.

The current data reveals that the gender inequalities in Iganga are reminiscent of the gender inequalities resulting from agrarian societies and parallel with Lenski's (1966) theory on the development of inequalities and social stratification. Accordingly, women's

practices in subsistence agriculture indicate that they do not possess significant economic

surplus, which prevents them from gaining power and privilege. Another strong indicator

that Iganga followed Lenski's path of societal development is the patriarchal system that

coincided with the increase custom of bride price and male only land ownership. In

agrarian societies, bride price allowed men to gain access to their wives' property while

land inheritance through the male lineage allowed men to keep the wealth to their side of

the family (Lenski, 1966). These patterns, although with slight modification due to

reforms and globalization, are currently still in place.

Discussion

If Iganga followed the path of societal development presented by Lenski (1966),

then the cultural factors that influence women's opportunities are comparable to the

cultural factors researchers found in patriarchal African countries. The stalled progress of

infrastructures results in less access to women's empowerment facilities in Iganga, which

is reflected in community members' attitudes and mindsets on women's development.

Findings revealed that there were not many community members in support of women's

opportunities, which may also be attributed to limited resources. Whether the community

supports and agrees with the idea of women being engaged in more opportunities affects

the overall goal in gender equality. This finding aligns with Hemson's (2002) discovery

that whether or not the community supported women stepping out of their traditional

gender roles is a determining factor on the outcome of their opportunities. Women

experience more difficulties engaging in opportunities and gaining equality without the

acceptance of their community.

Furthermore, the stalled progress of resources in Iganga results in fewer job opportunities for women that the culture considers gender appropriate. Participants described that community members tend to be more accepting of women working when they were in gender-bias positions. Similar findings from Diko (2007) and Metcalfe (2008) expressed that gender stereotypes direct women into gender-bias professions that were considered acceptable positions for women. Although gender-bias positions do not represent genuine gender equality, it can represent progress to some degree as society shifts from believing that women should not be able to work to believing that there are some positions that are acceptable for women. Gender-bias positions can act as a slight pull for women's opportunities but because Iganga does not have many white collar positions for women, the existing infrastructures does not provide women with adequate gender-bias positions nor equal gender opportunities.

Findings presented Iganga as a local district with the implication that there were fewer foreign entities that influenced the community. Movements such as women's rights, protection against domestic violence, and opposition to polygamous marriages were claimed to be absent or to have a lesser effect in Iganga. In relation to Bush's (2011) research, the international community can play an essential role in the attempts to promote gender equality. Because Iganga seemingly has less external, foreign influences than other regions in Uganda, that impact may be connected to fewer cultural changes in the district. This connects back to the stalled progress in infrastructures, as participants described the area as poor and with fewer resources, which would subsequently affect the growth of infrastructures. Without the initial exposure for women's development in infrastructures, community members' are less inclined to change their attitudes and

mindsets on women's opportunities. The shortage of progressive views on women's development symbolizes the pull against women's opportunities.

The stalled progress on community members' attitudes and mindsets correspond with the sub-theme towards conformity. Participants shared that women can have unquestioned dependency and obedience to men. Findings presented women adhering to gender stereotypes in life choices such as choosing not to work and being lazy or enrolling in female appropriate education programs. Research conducted by Njuki et al. (2013) found that it was common for women to believe that their roles were fixed. This supports the fact that women conform to these behaviors because they believe that is how they should act. This belief also transgresses into Pheterson's (1986) concept of internalized oppression because women make the active choice to conform to behaviors that prevent them from other roles and paths in life. Women acting towards conformity add to the pull against opportunities.

Narratives on women and community members in support of equal gender opportunities represented the sub-theme against conformity. Participants described that the changes in opinions were mainly due to the effects of education. Education as a tool to transform community members' views on gender equality appears to be effective in Iganga. Findings presented that for some women who have stepped out of their traditional roles, their behavior has created a drift from the rest of the community who continue to behave according to traditional customs. In support of this finding, Mabokela (2003) found that community members responded negatively towards women who had stepped out of their traditional roles and tried to establish an equal presence in their workplace because their behavior was viewed as contrary to the stereotype of the ideal female. In

connection to the sub-theme of attitudes and mindsets, community members' reaction and views are extremely important in how women's development can expand, or not expand, in Iganga. Because a society consists of both men and women and gender equality requires a majority of the community's support, women's ability to engage in opportunities is dependent on other people's views.

Those who are moving against conformity are a minority group in Iganga. As education was perceived to be the catalyst, the combination of poverty and lack of infrastructures implies that not many community members in Iganga complete the adequate levels of education to transform their beliefs on women's development. Community members acting against conformity aids in the pull for women's opportunities, however due to the modest number of individuals with more progressive opinions on gender equality, the support is gradual.

Women's presumed positive traits open up opportunities, albeit findings showed that the opportunities were mainly gender-bias positions. Similar to the white collar positions that were believed to be more appropriate for women, participants described professions such as receptionists, secretaries, nurses, and nursery and primary school teachers as the most fitting employment. These gender-bias positions reflect women's traditional roles, as they exhibit maternal behaviors of providing service to others. Consistent with this finding, Diko (2007) found that female teachers completed gendered activities such as caring for children, cooking, or laundering. Gender-bias positions lead women to behave more towards conformity because they are acting out their caretaker roles. The presumed positive traits can only contribute to women's development to a certain extent because they reinforce gender stereotypes. Positive traits in women that are

culturally acceptable can assist in the pull for women in the workplace, but only to a

certain point. A strict adherence to these traits will limit women's further advances.

The findings of women presuming to be honest, faithful, and less corrupt

unquestionably appear to present them as better operators with money than men. This

contrasts with the patriarchal approach that men are the main providers who handle

finance. However, these traits that are now viewed as favorable for women's employment

is merely an alteration of an essential trait of women during the agrarian period. As

previously cited, Chafetz (2004) explained that extreme measures were taken to preserve

women's premarital virginity and postmarital faithfulness. Agrarian societies enforced

honest and moral ethical behavior upon women, which has translated now to them being

viewed as more trustworthy and suitable for financial management. Despite these traits

stemming from men's controlling dominance on women, this aspect of their presumed

positive traits works as a pull for women's opportunities.

The sub-theme of women's presumed negative traits presented community

members' beliefs that women were incapable of fulfilling the same tasks as men.

Findings showed that women were constantly being compared to men in terms of

behavior, emotion, and intelligence. However, the negative presumptions were those

perceived to be women's personalities rather than their actual work performance. In

relation to this finding, Steele and Aronson's (1995) stereotype threat depict that "the

existence of negative stereotypes means that anything one does or any of one's features

that conform to it make the stereotype more plausible as a self-characterization in the

eyes of others, and perhaps even in one's own eyes." Participants' description on

women's presumed negative traits illustrate that community members were aware of

women's negative stereotypes. Due to the male majority and male-oriented culture in

formal employment, women are frequently subjected to the stereotype threat, making it

all the more easier for men to form such opinions and presumed negative traits on

women's capabilities. Because this was an unanticipated finding, stereotype threat in

relation to women's opportunities was not reviewed in Chapter Two. Community

members' presumed negative traits of women represent the pull against women's ability

to partake in opportunities in Iganga.

Participants suggested that organizations can act as allies to support women's

opportunities. Iganga has a combination of local leaders and foreign development

workers acting as ambassadors for positive change. For instance, the Musana Community

Development Center (MCDO) operates with foreign development workers in support

teams while local community members lead their projects. Findings indicate that efforts

from development workers can be effective in opening more access to opportunities for

women. However, the span and scope of MCDO is likely because the organization works

with local efforts and revenue generated from local businesses in conjuncture with

foreign development workers and foreign aid. MCDO's approach is unique in that it

empowers local community members to be the change and trains them with the

knowledge and skills to complete community development projects. In other

circumstances, development workers commonly complete projects to fill the gap of

unavailable trained personnel but MCDO creates the access for local community

members to fill the gap themselves.

According to Fowler (2013), sustainable impact operates from local levels to

global levels and back to the local. Findings demonstrated that MCDO relates to the

concept of the local level, however it also shows that Iganga's infrastructures were unable to provide opportunities because the women in MCDO's women's groups engaged in employment through the organization. This emphasizes the need for foreign development workers to build more allies within the local culture and leadership so that Iganga's cultural progress may continue, but be led by locals. Change that comes from within is longer lasting and broader, but global partners may serve as catalysts for change. Organizations like MCDO act as a pull for women's opportunities, as long as they cooperate with and include the local leaders and community members in management and operations for sustainable impact.

Findings revealed that the Iganga society accepts and encourages women's development when women were facilitators for increasing opportunities. The company of fellow women enabled greater support for business and other growth opportunities. Similar to Hemson's (2002) finding that women participating in an all-women setting created an enabling environment, women in social support groups were encouraging of each other and assisted in financing each members' businesses. In these all-women group settings, women were able to dedicate time and effort for discussions on their businesses and engage in self-confidence building activities.

Additionally, women serving as local village councilors represent positive change and an ally for women's opportunities. As every village consists of their own governing party, it is highly conditional whether or not women can gain empowerment because of the difference in leaders and their priorities. In the case where local leaders do not prioritize women's development, not all women in Iganga will experience the same sense of support for opportunities. Allies serve as a pull for women's opportunities and can be

strengthen and have a stronger pull depending on the local leaders and the fellow women that they surround themselves by.

Descriptions of Iganga town portrayed that the vast majority of small business owners were women. Common businesses include hairdressing and tailoring, however the most prevalent women's businesses involved grocery stalls. In explaining the high concentration of women's businesses selling agricultural crops, Ogunlela and Mukhtar (2009) claimed that women became the main producers of agricultural activity while men had more access to white collar employment due to globalization. This allowed for women to start-up small businesses selling some of their subsistence crops. However, findings provided that despite the considerable amount of women in such businesses, they typically do not earn significant amounts of income. Although women's small businesses represent success and pulls for women's opportunities, the direction can only go so far until it reaches a glass ceiling.

The cultural assumptions that women do not need to provide significant contributions of income may be a factor to their glass ceiling. Participants stated that the male preference of land ownership and access continues in Iganga, which can affect women's agricultural practice and their grocery businesses. Findings presented women adhering to the subsistence farming approach, which may also impact their businesses in the amount or variety of crops. Various other cultural factors such as childrearing or physical endurance may cause women to continue in subsistence farming instead of cash crops despite the overwhelming percentage of women as the main source of agricultural production (Njuki et al., 2013). Women's subsistence agricultural practices remain a potential topic to be further explored in future research.

Responses concerning polygamous marriages provided assertions that women in polygamous marriages experience more responsibilities and burdens in raising a family. The effects of polygamous marriages may be explained in Iganga's high fertility rate of 6.8 children per women (Parikh, 2012). Lenski (1966) had noted that polygamy during the agrarian period allowed men to achieve higher status and accumulate more resources, such as their wives' land. Men in Iganga can easily benefit from polygamous marriages and gain economic advantages because women produce subsistence crops. Furthermore, more children, particularly daughters, provide more household assistance due to their gender norm labor (Kevane, 2012). The marital structure indicates a pull against women's opportunities because women are tasked with additional domestic and childrearing obligations.

Participants' statements regarding the Islamic religion indicated that Muslim women had gender role and status consequences that women of other religious faith do not have. The religion was said to dictate women to be more submissive and did not advocated for women leadership. According to Njoh and Akiwumi (2012), negative associations were found between women in the formal labor force and the Islamic religion. Their research supports responses from Iganga participants arguing that Muslim women experience more restrictions in mobility such as employment. Additionally, women's literacy levels and Islam were also found to be negatively associated (Njoh & Akiwumi, 2012). The indication that Muslim women receive less education because of religious deferments would also inhibit their ability to gain employment. The religion functions as a pull against women's opportunities and women's overall development.

The pull towards women's opportunities is slow in growth in Iganga. Women empowerment facilities and gender-appropriate opportunities are currently minimal. Iganga's culture as a facilitator for promoting women's engagement in employment, education, and skill development requires a stronger mental shift in community members' views for equal gender opportunities. The theme of presumed traits and its corresponding sub-themes were the most significant finding in this study because it represents community members' opinions on women and how they perceived the outcome of women in their opportunities. As Hudelson (2004) defined culture as the shared set of ideas belonging to a social group, the shared set of ideas of women's presumed traits reflects the culture of Iganga.

To conclude the discussion of the findings, there are various pulls for and against women's opportunities in Iganga. While there are some factors that are for women's opportunities, they are extremely contingent on other determinants such as availability of resources, the community's acceptance, and local leadership. When women do obtain the skills for formal employment, they typically utilize their knowledge in gendered positions. It was also expected that women who are employed must continue to devote the same amount of their informal labor at home, maintaining the stereotype of female domesticity that reinforces gender inequality. Nevertheless, findings showed that there is evidence of support for women's opportunities in Iganga. The existing achievements signify that women's development has begun and that equal gender opportunities are possible so long as efforts continue to be made. The topic of encouraging and creating more access of women's opportunities in Iganga will be discussed in Chapter Six for future recommendations.

Limitations and Weaknesses

A limitation of this research largely involved the limitations associated with qualitative research, which consists of subjective interpretation. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), subjective interpretation is necessary in analyzing qualitative data but can produce limitations to the research. Findings may differ depending on the researcher and may lack focus because it is filtered through subjective analysis (Miles et al., 2014). Since the researcher is the fundamental instrument in qualitative research, the researcher's choices, assumptions, and bias impact all aspects of the research throughout data collecting and analysis (Paulus, Lester, & Dempster, 2013).

An approach to counteract subjectivity was to engage in reflexive practice, or the awareness of the relationship with participants and the context of the study (Watt, 2007). A westerner as an outsider in a community of a developing country can invoke reactions that are prejudicial. Maintaining awareness of behaviors, tone of voice, facial expressions, and positionality was essential to avoid possibly influencing participants' responses. The context of being in a country and continent with a complex history with western foreigners may have resulted in power dynamics and potentially swayed participants to behave a certain way with foreign researchers. While reflexive practice may not prevent all biases, it can assist in mitigating them.

The sample population was small-scale due to time constraints. A significant portion of the three-month duration of the semester was dedicated for the Masters in International Development and Service (MAIDS) experiential-learning courses that also included time spent outside of Iganga, creating a time constraint for conducting research. In addition, purposeful sampling aimed to recruit only those who had the ability to speak

English. Many of the participants had similar backgrounds in education and religion and were currently residing in urban settings. A significant number of participants were also employees of MCDO, which may have affected the data because MCDO actively supports women's development and the growth of equal gender opportunities. Women engaging in employment, education, or skill development opportunities would have been the ideal sample population. However, data collected from participant observation techniques elucidated difficulties in generating descriptive responses from women fitting that profile. This led to participant observation techniques to be less successful in gathering data as interviewing did. To compensate for the challenge and change of not targeting women as the main participants, the findings of this research study derived from participants' knowledge on women's opportunities in Iganga rather than women's first-hand experience. The change in ideal participants was a limitation nevertheless, community members' expertise maintained the focus of this research and provided substantial amounts of data.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This study explored how Iganga's culture influenced women in employment, education, and skill development opportunities. The results suggest that cultural factors are extremely significant and impact whether women are able to initially engage in opportunities and affect their outcome in opportunities upon engagement. The implications specified that the acceptance and support for women's opportunities greatly relied on community members' views on women stepping out of their traditional gender roles. The attitudes and mindsets of the community were a compelling factor in the growth of women's development. To summarize, whether or not gender equality can be effectively established is largely dependent on the local people's perspectives.

The policies and reforms for equal gender opportunities are stepping stones to begin change, though the efforts should not stop upon implementation. Opportunities created through policies and reforms only offer structural changes that women will not be able to benefit from if cultural factors prevent them from doing so. By definition, women's empowerment is a phenomenon that only occurs when women overcome an obstacle (Mehra, 1997). Women in Iganga can only gain empowerment if there are structural changes creating more access and if enough cultural barriers are reduced that enable them to participate.

The movement for gender equality requires the cooperation and support of all societal members, which should involve inclusive approaches to have both men and women in the efforts. As previously defined by Dorius and Firebaugh (2010), gender inequality occurs when one gender group enjoys a disproportionately large share of some valued good in society. The efforts to increase women's development is not to achieve a

goal of women's status exceeding that of men's but to place both genders in equal

positions.

In order to have both genders in agreement of equal opportunities, education

efforts on the social and economic benefits of women effectively engaging in

opportunities should be delivered for both men and women with an emphasis on

overcoming cultural barriers. If the two genders are not educated together on equal

opportunities, then the separation in opportunities will only continue. It is recommended

that any policies and reforms made should be supplemented by workshops led by local

leaders to ensure community members fully understand why they were created and the

predicted benefits and challenges. A suggestion would be to hold workshops with men

and women in their respective gender groups to create a comfortable environment for

discussion prior to having a mixed gender workshop to investigate whether both groups

have an equal understanding.

Maintaining respect and sensitivity is a fundamental condition for practitioner

considerations in the efforts to combat gender inequality. Because the cultural factors act

as barriers to women's opportunities and reflect the local community's culture,

boundaries must be set between what needs to change and what needs to be preserved.

This is crucial in Iganga as findings indicated that the district continues to have a

considerable "local" atmosphere, implying that Iganga has not yet been largely exposed

to foreign influences. Because foreign influences often coincide with their attempts to

promote women's development and has a tendency to remove a group's culture, whether

it is intentional or not, Iganga is at a highly pliable and flexible stage while the district

currently retains its local lifestyle and may be subjected to external influences at the

liberty of foreigners traveling or working in the region.

Due to the findings on Iganga's stalled progress, development workers can be a

beneficial resource for local community members. However, it is recommended that local

council members first work with men and women to safeguard the traditions that they

believe are most important and to consider what the community needs for positive

change. This allows local leaders to be an accurate representation of their community's

desires. While it may be difficult to preserve all aspects of Iganga's culture because of

globalization, it is important to allow for community members to speak and have their

voices heard. Following this approach, local leaders can partner with development

workers to ensure their agendas match with community members' priorities as well as

share the traditions that need safeguarding.

Although development workers can be essential players for women's

development, they should not be the forerunners of projects. Another method to

safeguard the local culture is to empower community members to be the leaders and

embody the efforts while development workers indirectly support projects. As Chambers

(1997) illustrated, the bottom-up approach asserts that the local people are the appropriate

experts on their own community and their knowledge should be valued, appreciated, and

sought after by development practitioners. The bottom-up approach can effectively

balance the issues of gender inequality and the potential threat of western influences.

It is also imperative for development workers to focus on the needs of the

community rather than project their own interests and desires for change. Development

workers' awareness of their own agenda and intentional work to not insert these agendas

will limit the imposition of new demands that the community itself cannot meet. The issue of dependency in the developing world has a long history that only continues to grow in the current interdependent global society. If development workers and local leaders communicate and work together to ensure that efforts are focused on the appropriate issues then they can avoid creating new needs. Employing the bottom-up approach would also allow community members to see that their own local people can be change agents. This would prevent or at least minimize the chances of the community forming expectations and depending on foreigners for aid.

As the most critical finding of this study involved Iganga's community members' presumptions on women, recommendations for future research can be on how to approach shifting the community's perspective on women's development and equal opportunities without changing too much of their core beliefs and lifestyle. This especially applies to religion, as data revealed that the local community perceived the Islamic religion to hold restrictions on women in Iganga. The balance between promoting gender equality and maintaining respect for the local people's religious beliefs is a delicate and complex situation that deserves further exploration. Future research might focus on asking locals to generate ideas on how Islamic customs can be honored while also allowing women to receive an education and create meaningful income similar to that of men's.

Lenski's (1966) societal development indicates that industrial societies follow agrarian societies. Iganga's current societal structure has strong agrarian elements with some indication of an industrial society. If Iganga's societal structure develops more components of an industrial society, then the levels of gender inequality will likely

correspond to its stratification system (Wermuth & Monges, 2002). Because industrialization will create technological and economic changes that would increase the access in opportunities for women, their status is predicted to increase and the levels of gender inequality will decrease (Chafetz, 2004). Such progress will undoubtedly affect Iganga's culture and impact the local people's lifestyle.

As a final thought, the efforts for women's development and promotion for gender equality should not be confused with the idea for the local community to abandon their way of life. The findings in this study affirmed that there were cultural factors in Iganga that can both positively and negatively affect women. As culture permeates all aspects of an individual's life, it is essential that cultural factors be carefully considered in efforts for women's development. The culture of all those involved, the community, women, men, and development workers will shape the outcome. The challenge that remains is to discover how to empower women in their opportunities without substantially changing their local culture. The local culture embodies some of the distinct elements that have caused and continue to maintain gender inequality, and yet culture is the very much the feature in life that has created diversity that is both alluring and covert.

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